

HST 203: ONLINE U.S.History Sp19 (Escobar)

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Using & Abusing History

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, May 11, 2019, 11:23 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Using & Abusing History topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, which clearly describes the picture set and questions you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Using & Abusing History

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Re: Using & Abusing History and the Kissing Soldier

by [Carisa Snell](#) - Tuesday, May 14, 2019, 11:57 AM

I chose the image of the kissing sailor, because that is the photo I most recognize from that era, and also because sexual assault is unfortunately something I have personal experience with. This photo, at the time, was thought to represent the relief of the war ending, and shows what appears to be a celebratory passionate kiss between a couple. Given the historical event that took place that day (WWII ending and Japan surrendering) it would be reasonable to assume there were many such couples elated and celebrating in much the same way. I think it's an honest representation of the time and the general view of women sexually. In our book, it talks about how women at the time were sexualized, and how "tanks and planes were decorated with images of female sexuality." (page 875 under 'Gender Issues') It also says that "military culture fostered a 'pinup' mentality toward women," and that the entertainment industry promoted "glamorous female stars as anxious to 'please' their 'boys' in the military," which possibly explains the actions of the sailor in the photo. (same paragraph on pg 875) It's hard for me to understand how exactly the culture was back then, but from what I read in our book as well as other information from that era, it's a far cry from the "me too" and informed consent topics we have today. I think without a doubt that most people would look at this photo, and not knowing anything other than that the war ended that day, would assume this was a romantic and happy moment in American history. And it was definitely a happy day for almost everyone in America, but knowing the full story behind the photo does show just how much our mentality has changed and that this photo isn't the "happy couple kissing" most would assume it to be.

After many years of not knowing the backstory behind this kiss, it has been determined that the sailor in the photo didn't know the nurse at all (who was actually not a nurse but a dental assistant) and that he drunkenly grabbed her off the street and kissed her without her consent. (you can read the story [here](#))

I think this specific photo was chosen to be altered because it shows just how perceptions can change given the context of the story or people involved. It's about consent. Sexual Assault is defined as contact that is forced "upon a person without consent" (Merriam Webster [dictionary](#)) and knowing what we know now about the photo, it was definitely a forced kiss upon an unsuspecting woman on the street without her consent. I think the alteration of the photo is a relevant lesson, especially these days.

On a personal note, I will say I was sad to find out the truth about this story. I think most everyone enjoys a good love story, and I so wanted the couple in the photo to be that happy celebrating couple they appear to be.

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Re: Using & Abusing History and the Kissing Soldier

by [Christina Dukes](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 11:42 PM

Carisa,

I am sad to hear that your opinions behind the meaning of the picture of the sailor and the woman "nurse" (aka dental assistant) kissing in Times Square is something of a negative thought to you, and I am sorry that it may have brought up some unpleasant feelings for you. You may be pleased to hear that after I made my post about the Times Square photo, I looked around and researched some information on different interpretations of the photo - as it is one that is most reputable among U.S. history I believe. The woman in the photo was later identified years later and when interviewed responded "It wasn't that much of a kiss," Friedman, who came forward as the woman in the photo years later, said in a 2005 interview with the Veterans History Project. "It was just somebody celebrating. It wasn't a romantic event." You can find the article here: (<http://time.com/4486812/wwii-kiss-photo-vj-day/>). As cheesy as it sounds, the woman in the picture (even though I had hoped for the same outcome that you had; a lovely romantic couple in love celebrating rather than a set of complete strangers), was not all too offended by the occurrence.

I'm not trying to change your judgement at all here, but maybe to shed a little light into a negative thought, theres an additional article I found here: <http://100photos.time.com/photos/kiss-v-j-day-times-square-alfred-eisenstaedt> where it states from the photographers perspective "People tell me that when I'm in heaven," Eisenstaedt said, "they will remember this picture." (referenced above). For me, I envisioned the couple as a spur of the moment type situation that not everyone agreed with, but some viewed as a happy random second amongst two overjoyed individuals. The connotation of the term "sexual assault" written across the image directly to the right of the actual image, kind of makes me view the original as a little different, and not as happy - compared to if I had seen just the single unaltered image.

Again, not trying to be mean or judgmental or anything of that sort, but just trying to lend a little happy classmate cheer into an alternative perspective and interpretation!

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Rationing

by [Genevieve Martini](#) - Tuesday, May 14, 2019, 12:18 PM

I chose this image pair because I have actually seen this specific poster layout used for other memes or political agendas such as the one above. After analyzing this poster, I believe that this specific layout was chosen for the alteration for his facial expression.

I don't believe that the history of WWII is being manipulated appropriately in this image. The use of the poster(on the right) is completely different than what it was originally made for(on the left). The original poster was created to tell the American people that they should ration to help their soldiers, something that was needed during the war and helped to conserve the food in America. The poster it was turned into is obviously a conservative agenda poster created to degrade liberals. The message is most definitely not a positive one, it is a negative one that doesn't contain any lesson or warning at all. It is simply an insult directed at people solely for their political beliefs.

I believe that this is manipulating history inappropriately because rationing and sharing is somewhat of a left side of the political spectrum. Obviously the poster doesn't reach the extremes that communism does, but it is leaning more toward the liberal beliefs of helping others. The poster that it was edited into is simply calling liberals "morons", saying that they don't believe in freedom or America. The original was created to inform people on how to help their country, and it was edited to degrade and insult people for their personal beliefs, manipulating history to fit their own agenda.

UAAH.tiff

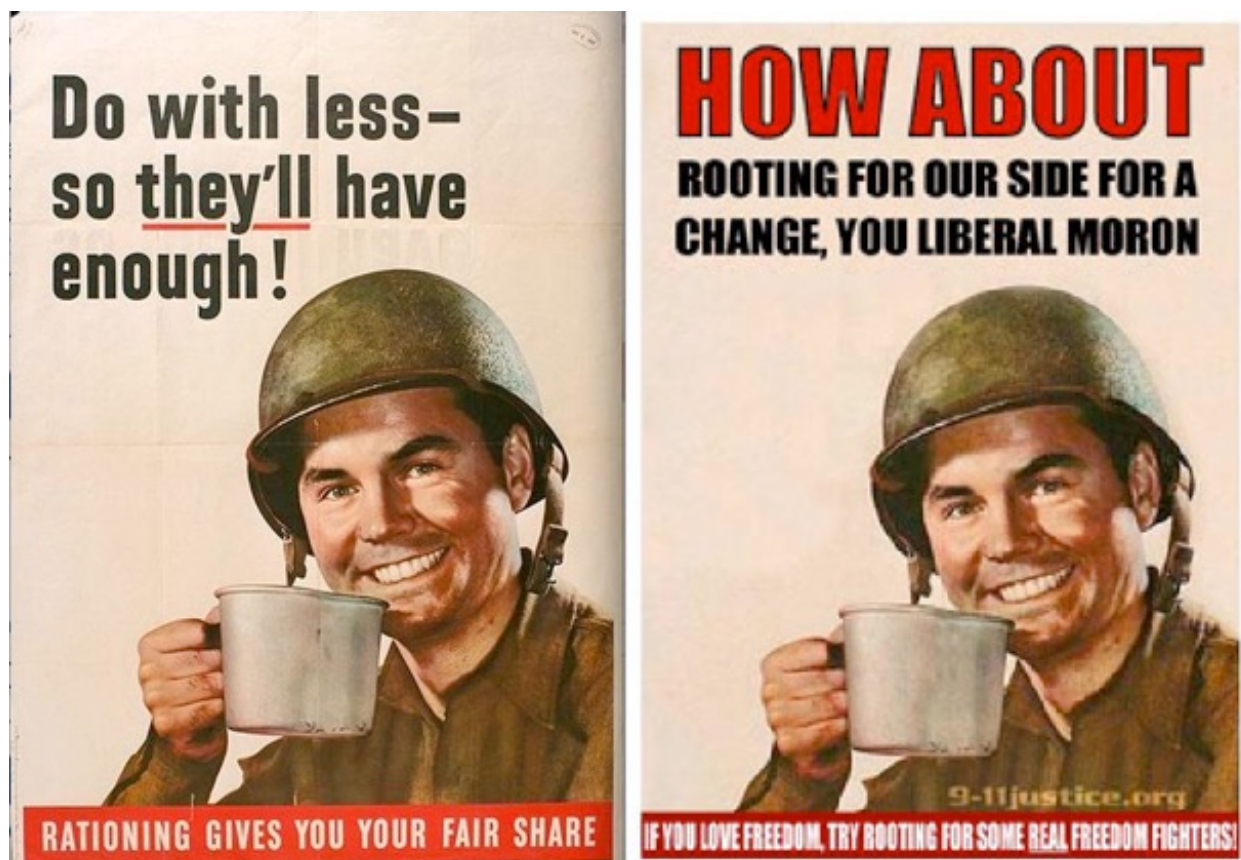
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Re: Rationing

by [Jamie Atkins](#) - Saturday, May 18, 2019, 10:35 AM



Hi Genevieve,

You've made some great points and I certainly agree that whoever corrupted this piece of propaganda was extremely confused. First, let's address what it means to be a liberal. It most certainly does not mean someone who doesn't love freedom: "Liberalism in the United States is a broad [political philosophy](#) centered on what many see as the [unalienable rights](#) of the [individual](#). The fundamental [liberal](#) ideals of [freedom of speech](#), [freedom of the press](#), [freedom of religion](#) for all belief systems and the [separation of church and state](#), right to [due process](#) and [equality under the law](#) are widely accepted as a common foundation across the spectrum of liberal thought."-(Wiki) Next, let's talk about "moron". Most people don't know the nasty origin of this word, it was coined by a psychologist named Goddard for use in his study of eugenics, so it shouldn't even be used by those who value freedom(NPR.org link below). People who identify with liberal ideology are also generally the more educated (atlantic.com article below) (Wiki). FDR's New Deal and Truman's Fair Deal are the start of a major trend toward liberal policies, so obviously a good amount of Americans agree with them. Liberals of the time were almost completely for the war and even for Truman's containment to stop the spread of communism. I think(from the 9-11justice.org tag), that this must have been made to express the caution and question of all left-leaning persons in the country concerning military engagement in Iraq. Just because there were people asking for facts and evidence before waging war on another country doesn't mean they are not on the side of America, it also didn't mean that they didn't want those responsible for the attack on 9/11 held accountable. There's also this-"The latest poll from Military Times shows that less than half of the military identify themselves as Republicans. The poll goes on to show that much of this anti-Republicanism comes from the bungling of the Iraq war."-(Huffington Post article below) That war had little to do with "Freedom Fighting" in my opinion. This is far-right reactionism at its worst.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberalism_in_the_United_States

[/www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/11/education-gap-explains-american-politics/575113/](http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/11/education-gap-explains-american-politics/575113/)

[/www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/02/10/267561895/it-took-a-eugenicist-to-come-up-with-moron](http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/02/10/267561895/it-took-a-eugenicist-to-come-up-with-moron)

www.huffpost.com/entry/the-military-is-more-libe_b_115934

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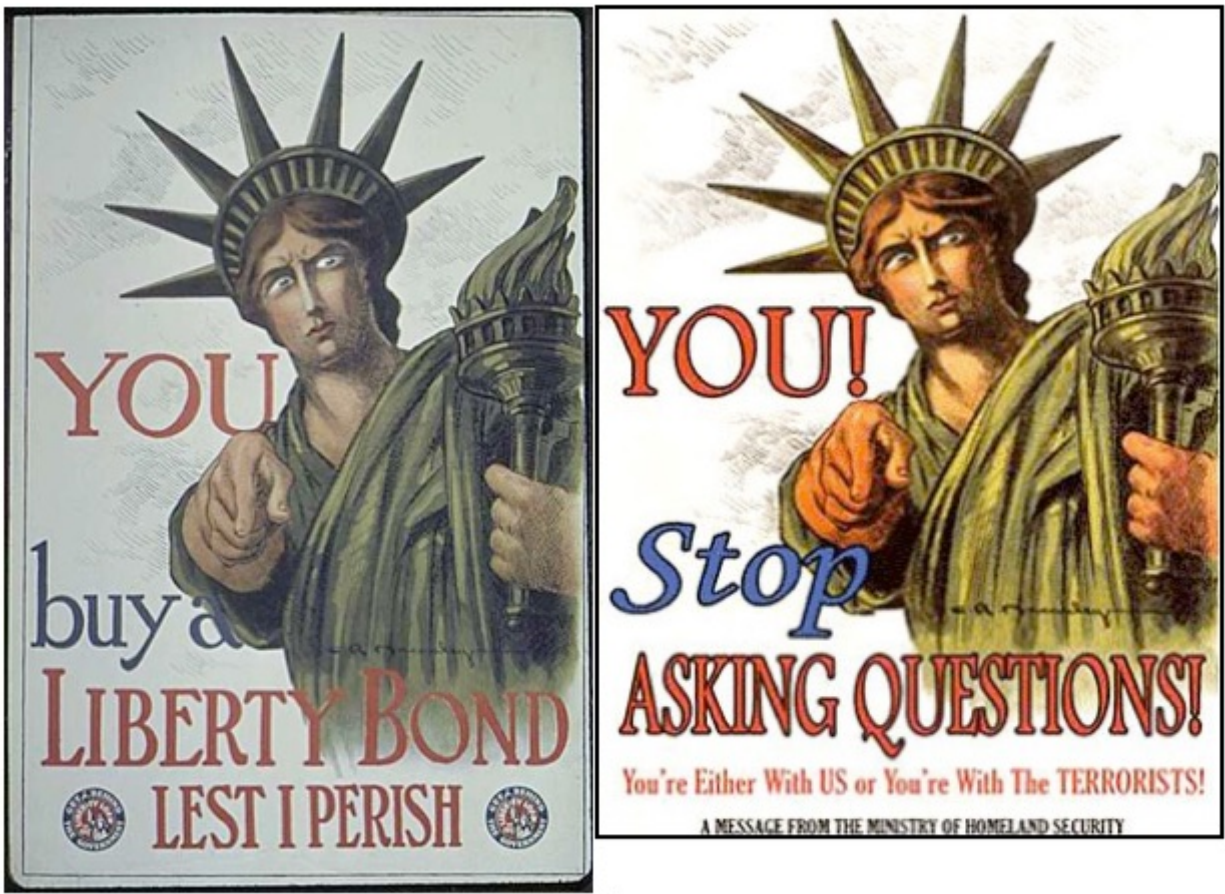
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American Nationalism in Using and Abusing History Picture set 10

by [Kara Miner](#) - Tuesday, May 14, 2019, 5:11 PM

I choose this image because it brings to light how American Nationalism promotes hysteria during war time. I believe that the remake of this picture is manipulated appropriately given the tension around communism at home during and after WWII. The first picture was released to encourage people to buy war bonds, a commodity necessary to fund the war (Life, Liberty and Equality pg. 869 last paragraph). The second picture cleverly mocks and reveals the ideology of Americans after the war. Tensions at home and fear of communism led to the internment of hundreds and thousands of Japanese Americans (Life, Liberty and Equality pg. 876), people suspected of having communist ties or subversive political opinions lost their jobs (Life Liberty Equality pg. 887). Americans both during and after the war faced being singled out if they didn't fully support the war effort. The second picture to me, gives a positive message by showing how extreme American Nationalism can become during war time. I believe this picture was chosen because during this time, National Security and containing communist ideology was just as important as the war itself during this time



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Re: American Nationalism in Using and Abusing History Picture set 10

by [Genevieve Martini](#) - Wednesday, May 15, 2019, 11:03 AM

I agree with you that this image was manipulated appropriately due to it's nature. The amount of fear associated with communism during the cold war was so intense that it drove the president to fire people from their jobs based on sexuality and other non-related attributes. "One homosexual can pollute a Government office," (Liberty Equality, Power. pg. 900).

However, I don't believe I agree with you opinion that the poster contains a positive message. To me, the way lady liberty is demanding the public to stop asking questions comes across as taking away rights and freedom of speech. It looks as though lady liberty is a dictator demanding that people stop questioning her ways. And although I do understand the communism was a huge deal during the 40s-50s, I don't believe that that justifies a lot of what the government did to prevent its spread. "Two to the arrested, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the parents of two young children and members of the Communist Party, became central characters in the legal-

cultural controversy... The couple’s trial, the guilty verdicts, the death sentences, the numerous legal appeals, the worldwide protests, and their 1953 executions...” (Liberty, Equality, Power. pg. 901) The fact that these two people were killed for their political beliefs is something that I believe is in direct contradiction with the first amendment.

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Re: American Nationalism in Using and Abusing History Picture set 10
by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Saturday, May 18, 2019, 11:07 PM

Kara, I completely agree with your forum post. The original image is a clear statement for citizens to do their part in supporting the war by purchasing liberty bonds. The image on the right is pushing the point of supporting a the war even farther. The initial image leave one with a choice to support financially aid in war efforts where as the second image clearly states that if you don't support the war you are no better then the enemy.

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Iconic Kiss Reveals Darker Side
by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Wednesday, May 15, 2019, 11:54 PM

I chose the V-J day kiss pair, because it is the most iconic of the bunch to me and because I have recently read a few articles about its back story. This picture was first featured in *Life* magazine in celebration of the end of the war. The U.S. had been at war, fighting on multiple fronts for years. When the announcement was made by president Truman that the Japanese had surrendered, and the war was finally over there was rejoicing everywhere. It has been dubbed V-J day or victory over Japan. People spilled into the streets in celebration. When this shot was snapped it became an instant cultural icon showing two icons of the era, a military man and a working woman in what appeared to be joyous embrace of celebration for Americas victory in the famous Times Square. It highlighted everything all in one shot. The dedication and hard work of Americans in the war and their tremendous passion for the country’s success in the war all in a well known American city.

But recent years articles have surfaced about the identity of the woman and her story of the day. A story that is backed up by the photographer who took the picture. The woman in the picture did not know the sailor and was suddenly grabbed by him and kissed. The photographer’s story is very similar, and he states that he saw the sailor grab and kiss multiple women. In the excitement of the day and with women’s rights being different in 1945. No one thought anything of this. But with laws nowadays and activist groups they used this picture to highlight what it really was sexual harassment. A woman being kissed without her permission. I believe they used this image very cleverly to show how women have been sexually assaulted for years without anyone doing anything about it. A fact they point out that a picture of sexual assault has been made an icon in our country.

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Re: Iconic Kiss Reveals Darker Side
by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Saturday, May 18, 2019, 11:12 AM

It is interesting to me how one picture can say so much. I too feel that this was the most iconic image of the bunch. As it captures the era perfectly. I agree that we do not think of the individuals themselves when looking at this image and its parts. The picture on the right brings some of this to our attention by calling it out as a sexual assault. As you pointed out the image captures a navy soldier, a working women, Time Square (a known American location) and onlooker who are sharing in the joyous occasion. But if we look a touch deeper at he photo. The woman involved in the kiss not only is not resisting the kiss but does not appear to be taking an active part in the kiss either. To me this is very revealing. It shows her lack of knowledge of the other individual and her discomfort with the situation taking place.

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Re: Iconic Kiss Reveals Darker Side
by [Steph McGuire](#) - Saturday, May 18, 2019, 10:34 PM

I have always enjoyed this picture. When I look at it I see joy and relief. It is also easy to get caught up in the moment and assume that they are a couple. This was a very exciting time. Everyone was ready for the war to be over. And now it was. But, like you, I noticed that she doesn't seem to be actively participating. If you look closer at the picture you notice that her arm is laying limp at her side. This tells me that she did not expect or want this kiss.

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Re: Iconic Kiss Reveals Darker Side
by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 3:40 AM

I agree with both of you that the woman’s body language is very telling in this picture. I see her stance not only as her discomfort and unwanted of the kiss. But also, as a passive aggressive way of not participating in the kiss. She didn’t have a choice and even if she had tried to do anything about it. Nothing would have happened to the man. If she had voiced anger or tried to look for justice for this event. People would have played down what had happened to her. It was a joyous light-hearted moment and boys will be boys. He didn’t mean anything by it, he was just excited about the end of the war. So, when this man grabbed her and kissed her. She instantly goes into passive aggressive stance waiting for it to be done. Because what’s the point in fighting back or creating a huge scene when nothing will come of it. So, in the meantime she’s just going to stand there passively, endure it, and think of America.

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Re: Iconic Kiss Reveals Darker Side
by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 2:10 PM

Hi Kimberly,

Thank you for your points and interesting comments. I would have to say I disagree with your paragraph regarding the kissing couple. I do however agree that it was uncalled for to kiss a woman without her permission. It is important to have that consent before pursuing any type of physical contact. The celebration after the war was huge though, and many people showed their celebration in different ways. I have looked into this particular image a lot and read a lot of articles on it. The woman Greta Zimmer Friedman was coming out of her office to see what all the celebration was about. When the sailor Mendonsa was running around celebrating and he came across Friedman. He thought Friedman was a nurse, and was so excited he went to kiss her. Mendonsa knew how hard all the nurses worked and thought she must be celebrating too. When in fact Friedman was actually a dental assistant, so they wore very similar clothes. The kiss lasted so short they both went on their way. Friedman states in an interview, "It was just somebody really celebrating. But it wasn’t a romantic event, It was just an event of 'thank god the war is over.'" Friedman never wanted the kiss to happen but the event didn't upset her. Friedman told the New York Times that she did not view it as sexual assault. I really think the only articles that should matter on this subject is the articles where Friedman speaks directly for herself. The articles that don't matter are the ones from people who don't really know what happened and are not letting Friedman's words speak for herself. An interview also stated this sort of spontaneous celebration was pretty common. There were men and women kissing everywhere and celebrating. But for Mendonsa his kiss was caught on camera and blown way out of proportion. Focusing on a picture that was taken decades ago is a waste of time, when people could be spending their time on subjects that matter. Friedman herself didn't think it was sexual assault. She is now passed and it is important for people to move forward and stop focusing on a past they can't change. Women's rights were different in the 1940's, but women's rights today are still very poor. Sex trafficking is still a huge issue in the US. There are girls all over the world who are forced into marriage, and forced to have children at a young age. These are real issues that we should be focusing on today. And unlike the past; we can work on changing these outrageous acts; to make our world safer for women and giving women equal rights.

Lewis, Danny. “The Woman in the Iconic V-J Day Kiss Photo Died at 92, Here's Her Story.” Smithsonian.com, Smithsonian Institution, 14 Sept. 2016, www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/woman-iconic-v-j-photo-died-age-92-heres-her-story-180960435/.

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Re: Iconic Kiss Reveals Darker Side

 by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 11:22 PM

I think the real question we are confronting here is if moral relativism is acceptable. You stated that you feel it is uncalled for for men to kiss girls without their permission. But then you go on to say that it was acceptable because of the current situation of excitement they were in. This indicates to me that you think moral relativism is acceptable. To me it is not. If something is wrong at one point it is wrong at all points. This would account for our difference of opinion in this set of pictures.

As for the fact that the woman in question did not feel that she had been assaulted, there are still plenty of women who would have felt assaulted by what happened. Including myself. The remade picture was not commenting on that particular man and woman but the act in general. That what he did was in fact assault and that nothing was done about it. In fact its documentation went down in history as a icon of that era. While I agree that there are more pressing problems to deal with today. This picture influences how they are dealt with. It is part of our social history what happened to that woman and effects how we feel about social issues in our country. If a woman sees this picture and knows that it is a picture of sexual assault she is also aware that her country has made it into an iconic cultural moment instead of addressing the issues it carries. Maybe they will address other important issues the same way.

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When you ride ALONE, you use more fossil fuels.

 by [Jamie Atkins](#) - Thursday, May 16, 2019, 12:04 AM


The image on the right is a clever use of the original propaganda, and in many ways, it is more relevant than the original. In WWII the government rationed gasoline and other commodities and encouraged scrimping and saving to ensure enough resources for the war effort (Murrin text p. 869). I imagine this situation would have been more serious if any of their oil had been imported from an enemy. The image on the right illustrates how importing oil from the Middle East is possibly financing terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda. Reducing our consumption of fossil fuels would not only take this money out of their hands but also give them one less target to destabilize international markets.

www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/11/al-qaeda-iran-cia/545576/

"Oil Revenues, Rogue States, and Terrorist Groups." Imported Oil and U.S. National Security, by Keith Crane et al., RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, CA; Arlington, VA; Pittsburgh, PA, 2009, pp. 43–58. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg838uscc.12

www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.php?page=oil_imports

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Serious Feminism Please
by [Jamie Atkins](#) - Thursday, May 16, 2019, 1:32 PM



I chose this pair of images because the comparison is irritating. To me, it seems a bit whiney and disrespectful. While I fully acknowledge that mansplaining is annoying and sexist, to the women that stepped up for their country in WWII, I imagine this was the least of their worries. The women who entered the industrial workforce must have endured much, much more than mansplaining. There were no laws against sexual harassment, the definition of sexual assault at the time was far different. The Equal Rights Amendment, first proposed by in 1923 by Alice Paul and the NWP(Murrin text p 677) would take 49 years to be signed and sent to the states for ratification. From our textbook, we know that the only reason unions fought for equal pay for them was to maintain wage levels for men upon their return from the war (Murrin text p. 873). Women entered and thrived in this hostile, unfair environment and were given a taste of independence, only to have it taken away promptly at the end of the war. The women of the WWII era, and before, paved the way for the rights and protections we as women have now, to equate these sacrifices with a mere annoyance is perfunctory.

www.history.com/topics/womens-rights/equal-pay-act

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Re: Serious Feminism Please
by [Genevieve Martini](#) - Saturday, May 18, 2019, 9:23 PM

I'm glad that you chose this image because it's one of the images that caught my eye as well. Changing a poster that was made for women in the workforce, telling them that they needed to work while the men were away to: 'mansplain survivor' is somewhat demeaning. The women of WWII were only allowed to work in those kinds of jobs because there was a severe lack of men due to the war. And as you already stated, the textbook says, "The unions' primary purpose in advocating equal pay was to maintain wage levels for the men who would return to their jobs after the war." (Liberty, Equality, Power. pg. 873) They were earning the same pay that men were! This was the very first time that this'd ever happened! I'm not saying that men that were left in the workplace mansplaining to them wouldn't have been irritating(as I'm sure it would have been even worse than it is now). I'm simply inferring that receiving equal pay as men helped them get over the mansplaining quite well.

The women in WWII were doing things that they had never done before, because it was not available to them. The poster on the left was meant to be empowering, while the poster on the right is, although not necessarily negative, reducing the revolutionary idea of women in the workplace, into a meme.

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Re: Serious Feminism Please



by [Carisa Snell](#) - Saturday, May 18, 2019, 9:25 PM

Hello Jamie.

I, too, think that this was a poor use of Rosie the Riveter. During World War Two, with so many men leaving the work force, women had to step up and fill their shoes. Before the war, most women only did "womanly" jobs like teaching or secretarial work. During the war, however, jobs in the skilled industry needed to be filled where women would need to roll up their sleeves and get dirty. "Public officials began encouraging women to join the paid labor force," (Murrin text page 872) and Rosie's poster showed just how strong and capable women were to be doing those jobs with hard labor. This poster was meant to encourage and inspire women.

The photo on the left however, seems like they're trying to take a strong women (clearly in a mans world back then) and make her some type of a scapegoat for feminism. Don't get me wrong, I am all for equal rights and think of myself to be someone with strong feminist ideals, however I feel like the use of "survivor" cheapens what Rosie stood for. I am sure there was a ton of "mansplaining" back then, as in the book it said, "Many fathers and husbands resented wives and daughters who had taken over their breadwinning roles," (Murrin text page 840) but I also agree with you that those women back then had much more important things to worry about then.

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Re: Serious Feminism Please
by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 9:39 PM

Jamie,

I can not agree with your argument more regarding these imagines. Not only did these women who paved the way for our equal rights endure poor working conditions, sexual harassment in the workplace and the knowledge that they were only being used as a place holder for positions that would be later filled by men once returning from war. Many of these women had never been in the workforce and never through they would have to be. The culture shock alone for some of them would have been a hard thing to get used too. Prior to WWII many women were home makers, raising their children. To be thrown into this type of environment due to the need to fill the void left by those at war, in order to continue production would not have been an easy feat for many. The original image of Rosie the Riveter gives strength to these women, while the second image seems more mocking.

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The Sailor Kiss
by [Taylor Hunter-Rogers](#) - Thursday, May 16, 2019, 5:25 PM

I specifically choose this image pair because to me this photo has always been one of the sweetest moments to ever be captured, I believe that they manipulated the photo of "The Kissing Sailor" in a disrespectful way in the second photo by saying that it was "sexual assault".

The message did not turn out to be a positive one, no. Yet whomever made this "adaptation" didn't look at the picture like something as sweet as is it, but jumped to the idea that it was something that it very much wasn't, sexual assualt, which then of course turned this message into a negative one.

I think that this photo was chosen for a alteration because is was a easy to make an assumption based off of.

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Re: Using & Abusing History
by [Carisa Snell](#) - Thursday, May 16, 2019, 8:40 PM

Hi Taylor. I think your post is an example of where just viewing the photos without context or backstory can truly hinder a person's view of the images. You're right that the image does look sweet and innocent at first glance, but if you look harder, you can see her hand frozen and clenched, the strong grip he has around her head, and the fact that she's off balance. Now, given that there weren't sexual assault laws back then, this occurrence

wouldn't have caused any type of a stir. However, as the altered photo shows, the same type of innocent sweet image when given context to the people in it paints an entirely different picture of someone who is being sexually assaulted against her will. Also, given the fact that in today's day and age we do have laws on consent and take strong stances on things that were considered acceptable 100 years ago, I disagree that the image was manipulated in a disrespectful way but rather is now giving respect to the victim.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Re: Using & Abusing History
by [Alexandra Selig](#) - Thursday, May 16, 2019, 9:34 PM

The image that I am drawn to the most is the iconic photograph from August 14th, 1945. This image catches a kiss between two strangers in celebration of the victory in Japan or V-J Day, in the middle of Time Square in New York, New York. This historical image can be recognized by most as poster for the rejoice shared by all over the victory of Allied forces over seas. Taken by Alfred Eisenstaedt the photograph features a Navy soldier and War time nurse embracing in a passionate kiss. At first glance one would think that the individuals share more than just their patriotism and happiness over the end of a deadly war, when in contrast it is that alone that brings these two individuals together. When comparing the image on the right and the same image on the left featuring an added black out banner for the sexual assault that could have been interpreted by this action, we are given a clear view in the difference that have evolved in our way of thinking over time. What was once acceptable would now be seen as completely out of line. The amount of support, compassion and allegiance to one's country was a force once to be reckoned with, felt by all and appreciated by most.

Source: Smithsonian.com

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1

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Kissing the War Goodbye
by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Friday, May 17, 2019, 12:22 PM

The image that really stuck out the most to me was the navy sailor kissing the girl. On the left is the famous image of a sailor swooping a girl and kissing her. On the right it is the same image with a sticker saying "sexual assault" plastered right in the middle. This poster gave me such an unsettling and conflicting view of the picture. I would like to note I have watched and read many interviews of both the man and woman in that photo. This photo to many is romantic and adorable. The US had just won the war, and people were celebrating, this photo truly is a huge event in time! It shows the happiness and cities coming together to celebrate. I don't think this sailor in any way meant for his kiss to be considered sexual assault or uncomfortable for the woman. The woman Greta Zimmer Friedman in her interviews said, "it wasn't her choice to be kissed," but she never claimed he was assaulting her in any way. "Some have called it documentation of a sexual assault, and while Friedman reportedly did not view it that way." I will have to admit I think it would have been better for him to ask or not kiss her at all without her permission; but unfortunately those weren't the circumstances. Friedman also said in one of her interviews, "The guy just came over and kissed or grabbed," she told the Veterans History Project with the Library of Congress in 2005. "It was just somebody really celebrating. But it wasn't a romantic event, It was just an event of 'thank god the war is over.'" To me this is a statement from someone who would've preferred the event not to happen, but she wasn't upset about it. People were celebrating! I think in our world today people's views on things are much different today than in past years. If an event like this happened now it would probably cause an uproar, but that is not the case in this situation. The interview also states, "Friedman and Mendonsa's story might have been made famous by Eisenstaedt's photograph, but this sort of spontaneous celebration was pretty common." Here is another supporting statement that the people were just celebrating, and it really was just an innocent act. I don't agree how many people today have felt the need to bring this story up and label it as sexual assault. Especially, when Friedman said herself she didn't view it this way. The people need to let her words speak for herself and to stop trying to change the story. Times have changed, events were different back then, just how events are different now. The people need to move forward, and stop trying to bring up the past and make it something it's not. I would also like to say that sexual assault is a very serious thing and of course I would not be okay or tolerate any type of sexual assault. No one ever should have to endure that! Thank you.

Lewis, Danny. "The Woman in the Iconic V-J Day Kiss Photo Died at 92, Here's Her Story." Smithsonian.com, Smithsonian Institution, 14 Sept. 2016, www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/woman-iconic-v-j-photo-died-age-92-heres-her-story-180960435/.

Kenyon, Maureen. "'Kissing Sailor' from an Iconic Photo Died. Now a Statue of It Has Been Graffitied: '#MeToo'." USA Today, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 20 Feb. 2019, www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/02/19/george-mendonsa-death-kissing-sailor-statue-painted-with-metoo-sarasota/2916338002/.

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Joy or Abuse of History?

by [Steph McGuire](#) - Friday, May 17, 2019, 9:37 PM



I chose this picture because it always stands out to me when I see it. I watched a documentary on the what happened during this picture. The people in this photograph did not even know each other. Everyone was out in the streets celebrating the end of the war. People were overjoyed at the prospect of being able to live their lives. George Mendonsa was so relieved that Japan surrendered that he went out to celebrate. He saw a bunch of nurses and remembered how hard the nurses worked with the wounded on his ship. He grabbed the first nurse he saw and that just happened to be Greta Zimmer Friedman (an immigrant from Austria).

I think I would probably have been the same as Mr. Mendonsa. Sometimes your just so excited or happy that you do something drastic. He actions just happened to get caught on film.

I do think that the picture on the right is a negative picture. But it is also true in a way. I am not one to see a conspiracy in everything around me. I do not look at this picture and think "sexual assault". I see relief and joy. I see what was a dramatic, quick kiss, then he walked away and that was the end of it. At the same time, he did grab her and kiss her without her permission. No one should be in your personal space without permission. But I would not count it as a sexual assault. Definitely wrong, but not an assault.

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Re: Joy or Abuse of History?

by [Kara Miner](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 1:05 PM

I think this picture duo is probably the perfect set of pictures when thinking of people as a product of their environment and looking into using and abusing history. This picture is used frequently in present day to show the joy Americans had when soldiers returned home at the end of the war. If anything I would say we are abusing this photo today by using it in such a way especially now that many people are aware of what really happened when the photo was took.

Today, randomly grabbing and kissing a stranger is not only taboo, but considered sexual assault. But is it really practical to condemn the man in this photo for doing something as seemingly small as kissing a stranger. I don't think that we should condemn the man in this photo because like you said, it was a small quick gesture. But at the same time, laws for sexual assault in the '50s were very different than what they are today. Something like this kiss wouldn't be considered sexual assault, or even acknowledged as an assault at all.

That being said, I do agree with who recreated the picture for the topic of sexual assault. This reinvisioned picture on the right is meant for the present when sexual assault is very much so a big concern. I believe it is very appropriate to take a photo that was used almost out of context so readily and abundantly to celebrate, and use it to combat sexual assault in today's day and age. As you said, it appears to be a loving embrace to the naked eye, however we all know it was a forced encounter for the woman. This picture has traditionally been used to celebrate the end of World War II, just as the man used this encounter with the woman to share his joy. And now we are using the picture in a way that almost honors the woman in this photo and her perspective of the whole event.

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Re: Joy or Abuse of History?
by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 6:58 PM

Hi Steph,

I completely agree with you! The photo on the right has been taken by our generation today and has been very manipulated. I as well have read many interviews, and both persons involved did not consider this sexual assault. The sailor without a doubt should have asked for her permission; but unfortunately he did not. A kiss is extremely personal, and that probably violated her personal space. I agree this is not sexual assault. It is two people celebrating after a tremendous victory.

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Raising the Tree
by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Saturday, May 18, 2019, 7:19 AM

I chose the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima and the Times magazine cover of the same picture. I chose this pair because global warming is a cause that I am very interested in. I also chose this picture because I saw it as a positive way to use the original image. The original image was taken at the battle of Iwo Jima. The battle was a major initiative in the Pacific campaign of WWII. The U.S. were capturing islands shrinking the gap between U.S. forces and Japan. Our textbook does not mention the battle in any great detail but it does talk about the victory of Iwo Jima significantly shortening that gap on pg. 865. By taking control of the island they also took control of the Japanese airfields and ports on the island. Setting the U.S. up for the war in Japan and cutting Japan off from the island's resources. Thereby setting up the U.S. for victory in the war with Japan. The use of the picture on the Times cover implies that following the advice in the article will bring us closer to winning the war on global warming. That to succeed in doing what is suggested, will guarantee us the long term victory in the global warming war.

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Re: Raising the Tree
by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 7:10 PM

Hi Kimberly,

I am happy to see someone who wrote on this poster! Global warming is a very interesting topic, and it is important for us to take care of our world. The US is extremely important, and winning wars, and claiming our independence really helped define who we are. But now is our time to start taking care of the world and putting our climate first. Global warming really is a war, and it is absolutely crucial we win it. The use of solar panels, cleaning our trash up, cleaning our oceans etc. It is interesting to see how they used the two pictures and related them. Iwo Jima was a huge step for the US in the world. If the US begins taking action in helping global warming it will be a huge step for us, and help us in the long run.

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Manipulating Historical Images

by [Christina Dukes](#) - Sunday, May 19, 2019, 10:57 PM

Within the subset of pictures provided in this weeks forum topic, the picture set that stood out the most to me was the iconic picture of the U.S. sailor swirling around a nurse and kissing her in a public setting. To me personally, this picture is one of the most notable images of World War II for me, simply because it was not something of mainstream media depicting a really racially biased picture to promote war efforts of this time - the picture is of a random spur of the moment emotional outburst of the American people during WWII. To give a little background, the nation was promoted to promote the war, military personnel, acts in favor of helping aid in the efforts of the war, etc. At the time, media were encouraged to capture pictures of military men in a more caring and emotional manner (such as kissing a beloved one), to show that they weren't brute monsters and that they were caring and kind hearted souls. This picture specifically, is showing a complete stranger grasping a random woman and embracing her with a kiss in the middle of New York's Time Square immediately following the announcement of the end of the United States war with Japan.

To me, since the picture was taken during 1945, public displays of affection were notably frowned upon, especially between two individual people who weren't married to one another. The picture defy's all sense of boundaries of the American Lifestyle and censorship during the time (even though it was progressively becoming more accepted the further into the 1900's you went), AND to note the fact that a notable magazine (LIFE magazine) published the picture nationally. It was criticized of course, but to me I believe that this publishing of this article (along with a few other similar images in the same article), sort of gave a huge shove towards morality and standards of the American public.

From all of the pictures, this picture is being manipulated in the most un-racial and unfair way i believe that it could have been represented. The couple can be seen with a large label across the front saying "sexual assault", which was a common thought amongst the more conservative folk of the time, and it was not largely misinterpreted. Its simple - some American's loved the idea of America letting loose all of the stress of the war, and some people believed that even in the news of relief to the nation an act like this is still indecent. It is not misinterpreted or given some radical misjudgment of a viewer trying to discredit the media or the government, as so someone protecting their own morals to be more censored. The original photo depicted a positive message of the world letting loose and showing extreme gratitude that we had won the war against Japan. As depicted in the course textbook in chapter 26 ".....but in those late summer days of 1945, most Americans sighed with relief. News reports of August 15 proclaimed Japan's surrender, V-J Day. All across the nation people spontaneously flooded into the streets to celebrate the end of the Second World War." (pg. 868, "Liberty, Equality, Power").

To me, most of World War II (especially with the notable destruction of our conflict with Japan on both nations sides), was notably a very cruel and notably destructive war. The atomic bombs, the number of people who died, the systematic impact of nations involved in the war, the lasting effects, etc. are all something that just illuminates tragedy. This picture is the purest, most iconic moment of the American people finally coming to an end of such a terrible time in our history and embracing happiness and good news for the first time in a very long time.

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