



Using & abusing history

by Joe Escobar - Wednesday, 6 May 2009, 11:26 AM

Throughout human history, catastrophic wars have erupted, and history is never the same during, or after, the occurrence. Enemies are demonized, morality is pondered, and historical truths are difficult to determine as the past is written, re-written, forgotten, and sometimes deliberately obscured.

Under the HTD Materials link, you will find the materials you need for this assignment: two recent articles, a pdf file with 9 images, and a video. I suggest you view them in this order. Then, discuss how history is used or abused, both in these examples, and by all human participants in the conflict. What are the ramifications of these actions.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by Heath Dilley - Wednesday, 6 May 2009, 05:34 PM

Saw the picture of Bush as Hitler and Cheney as... someone, not sure who. Anyway, comparing Bush to Hitler is pretty much like comparing Obama to Stalin.

I'm not a fan of Bush myself, and I also happen to be a little ignorant when it comes to politics, but I'm pretty sure, I heard no propaganda speeches made to take back the land that was once ours. As well as I don't recall us having concentration camps where we would house thousands of innocents just to starve them, work them, torture them, kill them, and then use their corpses as products for ourselves.

I'm as sure of this as I am that Obama isn't trying to bring us into a communist nation.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by Robin Patterson - Monday, 11 May 2009, 04:34 PM

Ya that is true, but at the same time that is where the power of the article comes from. That is what makes it funny and that is what allows the article to catch the viewers attention allowing it to get its message across!

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Re: Using & abusing history

by Elliott Rose - Wednesday, 27 May 2009, 01:58 PM

I thought we did have concentration camps. Im from southern Oregon and i remember hearing about one up in the Lakeview area. but i could be mistaking it for an internment camp. Anyways i know that back when all this was going on we sent a bunch of japanese people to these camps

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Re: Using & abusing history

by Stephenie Fraga - Saturday, 30 May 2009, 10:28 AM

We had internment camps. Although we did not treat the Japanese nearly as bad as Hitler did on the Jews, I still think it was wrong to put them in these camps. We took them out of their homes and businesses. Their lives were very much affected by this and it was wrong of us. I think we overreact so much in a time of war. Not all the Japanese were spies in the 40's, not everyone was a communist in the 50's, and not all people from the middle east are terrorists now!

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Heath Dilley](#) - Thursday, 7 May 2009, 11:25 AM

More on the cartoons, I didn't appreciate the cartoon with the Time magazine taking the photograph of Iwo Jima and replacing the American flag with a tree. Had I been a Veteran for that war and saw this photo, I'm pretty sure I'd be pissed that the flag that I stood proudly to uphold and preserve to be replaced by a tree.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Nicholas Simeone](#) - Tuesday, 12 May 2009, 03:50 PM

I don't think the Time Magazine cover is offensive at all, I mean how do we convince old people we have an ecological responsibility??? I thought that was a pretty smart way of getting their attention.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Brandon Mc Nutt](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 11:29 AM

I think that you have to take all of those cartoons with a grain of salt. I can see a possibility of someone getting offended by that pic, but for me it is hard to be upset considering all of the other photos that are put out by everybody. It is even hard for me to get upset knowing that original Iwo Jima photo that got published in our country was a fake. It is hard for me to get upset when somebody parodies something that was staged in the first place.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Hari Khalsa](#) - Saturday, 16 May 2009, 11:35 AM

Brandon, I have seen and heard convincing arguments suggesting that the US landing on the Earth's moon were staged video propaganda. Of course I do not believe that our government lied to the US public about this issue, but this event occurred in a time of extreme unrest over the US continued involvement in Vietnam. And it would not have been difficult to stage these grainy, black and white images of an American astronaut on the lunar surface. Wasn't it beneficial to the US government to have its' people see something so positively astounding as our nation's ability to place a human being on the moon? And weren't we in some sort of "space race" with the communist USSR at the time? Wouldn't this have been seen as a generalized victory for democracy against communism, by this I mean that Democracy was portrayed as winning the "space race" against communism? The Vietnam war, being, at the time, so very unpopular, was also a sort of race between democratic S. Vietnam and Communist N. Vietnam, meaning that these two events were both democracy against communism. I believe that the US government felt it needed any victory against communism it could get, for the benefit of the support of the US people in a war against Communism, and to help heed the rising rate of US political unrest among the US population.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Brandon Mc Nutt](#) - Sunday, 17 May 2009, 05:44 PM

Absolutely I agree that Americans needed a victory at the time, as much as they need something great to put their hopes on. I don't believe that the moon landing was fake, but if it was that was an excellent use of propaganda to really sway the people, and really re-energize their will to fit the commies in the "space race" because they were definitely tired of the fighting in Vietnam. I don't necessarily believe that propaganda is all bad. The photo of the flag being put up on Iwo Jima for instance. The re-enactment of that event so that the U.S. could put that photo in the paper was a stroke of genius by the government. It totally bolstered the people back home's moral and helped them push through.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Kobin Patterson](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 10:30 PM

I agree with Nicholas and Brandon. I don't see this photo as being offensive at all! I saw it as simply taking an meaning and switching it to emphasize the importance of our eco-system.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Rebecca Millican](#) - Friday, 29 May 2009, 09:15 AM

I don't see the tree as being offensive maybe distasteful, but the one that got my attention was the one with the anarchist with the anti-america flag being placed in the ground its disrespectful and tacky.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Thursday, 7 May 2009, 10:23 PM

Hi Everyone,

It seems that history is another tool the government uses to further its national goals. True history would show a complete picture of an event through the eyes of the winners and the losers but that is not done. History is abused when facts are embellished, omitted, or made up to support a particular cause. History is also abused when there is not a balance. While the Chukiren Peace Museum purports to present an accurate history of Japanese atrocities it runs the risk of abusing history by looking at the event through a single perspective-Japanese atrocities. As the World War Two generation dies out the chances for accurately collecting that balanced history are coming to an end and the newer generations will learn about World War Two only through resources like the above mentioned museum. History is what happened..... meaning the truth. The closer we get to that truth the closer we are to understanding the world and our place in it. I am still re-reading the article on Demonizing the Enemy a Hallmark of War. On the first read through it my initial thoughts are that it does seem to be easier to dislike something/someone if you have heard terrible things and if you see pictures depicting something in a negative manner. I think often it is part of human nature to have negative thoughts and dislike towards that something/someone. Critically thinking and having the ability to stay open-minded is not something all people know how to do. This is something the media is *absolutely* aware of. Sadly, many people will follow the masses and never question the path they are taking.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Friday, 8 May 2009, 09:05 AM

It is called propaganda during war, during peace time it is called spin and patriotism and uses principles well understood in advertising. It is not going to go away. Propaganda is most effective when it uses images we all understand. We may not like that some images are used in this way but it does not change the fact that the modified image can be effective and gives us a focus for our aggression or speaks to the cause. If we limit propagandist's right to use certain images we limit their right of free speech. It may be offensive but a person can ignore it and not allow it to offend. I realize a person could find the Time magazine cover offensive however I feel it is effective depending on how the person viewing the image interprets it. Without the title next to the picture it could be viewed that after a period of war and devastation the military is used to begin the process of rebuilding. Is that what was intended? Maybe not but it is all in the way that an individual sees an image/words and reacts or doesn't.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Robin Patterson](#) - Sunday, 10 May 2009, 12:17 PM

I found the materials provided to be pretty interesting. The photos provided were mostly humorous although some did supply some truth to them. The picture that depicted Bush as Hitler and Cheney as Benito Mussolini made me laugh. It is definitely a far fetched idea to compare them to these two extremists, but I believe that is what makes the picture humorous. Propaganda is a strange thing. I believe that it has worked in the past in order to justify the killing of another people using it as a defense mechanism to hide the guilt that one would feel for the violent actions that were taking place. As for now in the present I truly think that the effectiveness of these things has diminished. I would like to think that as a people these days we have learned the meaning behind propaganda and using history to relate to current topics and be able to assess the information on the topic and

decide our beliefs on it for ourselves whatever the topic being referred to may be. Maybe it does still work on a subliminal level influencing our overall outcome. I would say using propaganda is wrong, a cheap way to get your point across, but this is America and the right to free speech/ expression is our right. (unless we are in a major war of course.)

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Brandon Mc Nutt](#) - Sunday, 10 May 2009, 08:06 PM

Seeing these posters especially made me laugh simply because these posters have not really changed through history. The biggest difference between the old one and the new ones is what the character is compared with. In ww1 and ww2 the reason that the Germans and Japanese were compared with animals is because there wasn't such horrible historical figures from recent past as we have now. Hitler did have another Hitler to be compared with so they made them gorilla like or shady. Now they just compare you to Hitler, or Stalin.

As far as the propaganda goes both sides of any conflict seem to totally abuse dissemination of information and then accuse the other side of being the one that is spreading propaganda. In this day and age I feel like the propaganda is much less blatant, but it is still everywhere and still just as subversive. The T.V. show cops is a great example of propaganda that has nothing to do with war time. Most people don't even look at it as propaganda, but it is used to try and scare people into staying in line.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Robin Patterson](#) - Monday, 11 May 2009, 04:38 PM

That is a great observation about cops! That would actually be called a deterrent, but it could fall under the propaganda category as well. It is most definitely interesting how propaganda has built up on itself over the years.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Brandon Mc Nutt](#) - Monday, 11 May 2009, 06:39 PM

I think that if you really look at it a lot of shows are really nothing but propaganda. It's not just one side of an issue that does it either. Look at show like Little Bush (comedy central) and Whale Wars (animal planet). There's a lot of shows on T.V. that try and paint many things in a negative light while trying to make themselves look righteous.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Robin Patterson](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 10:01 PM

Ya, I definitely agree with you on Little Bush, but I'm not sure how Whale Wars would fall under the category of propaganda. Do you mean trying to convince people that whales need to be saved or what? Can you elaborate a little for me so I can follow your argument a little better?

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Brandon Mc Nutt](#) - Thursday, 14 May 2009, 06:46 PM

It may not be particularly dangerous propaganda, but they certainly only give info that furthers their own cause while painting the other side as dead wrong, or even evil. By saying the Japanese whalers and even the government is totally in the wrong.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Robin Patterson](#) - Saturday, 16 May 2009, 07:35 PM

Ok I get what you're saying.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Tszho Ng](#) - Monday, 11 May 2009, 03:57 AM

In observance of Mr. Escobar's clarification on the distinction between stupidity and ignorance, I would like to first give definition to the word "propaganda" from Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

"Propaganda"

Pronunciation: \,prā-pə-'gan-də, ,prō-\

Function: noun

Etymology: New Latin, from "Congregatio de propaganda fide" (Congregation for propagating the faith), organization established by Pope Gregory XV †1623 Date:1718

1capitalized : a congregation of the Roman curia having jurisdiction over missionary territories and related institutions

2: the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person

3: ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause ; also : a public action having such an effect

As the definition suggests, "propaganda" has the underpinning of the intent to "further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause." Whether such intent is benevolent or malicious is in the eye of the beholder or, as our instructor likes to say, where on the spectrum one belongs.

In the "Time" magazine's cover, as Heath Dilley (Post #3) points out, the stars spangled banner was replaced by a tree. However, my take on its fabrication is that the editor's intent was to borrow the heroism of erecting a beacon of hope, of freedom and of democracy by the American people against Japanese imperial militarism through sacrifice and compare it with the sacrifices and struggles America must confront in owning up to our shared ecological responsibility to the environment. While the comparison is inappropriate to some, the cause is no less noble in my view.

In the image where Bush and Cheney were disguised as Mussolini and Hitler, I gather that the intent is to make an analogy between neo-conservatives (even such labeling is arguably propagandistic) and World War II fascists. I agree with Heath Dilley (Post #2) and Kolin Patterson (Post #6) that the picture is "too far-fetched" and "ignorant" of historical facts. Also, while such a propaganda angers the opponents and reinforces the proponents, it yields no useful information for the "neutrals" to become better informed and aware of any one of the four people's views on any given issue. What is more likely is that the neutrals would turn apathetic to public issues since everything is to be taken with a grain of salt.

My definition of "propaganda," and what qualifies as an "abuse" of history to me is that when there is a departure from factual descriptions to an hypothesis of one's intention found; such is characteristic of a "slippery-slope" over-simplification. Nevertheless, I do recognize the profound power of persuasion found in propaganda. The establishment of the Committee on Public Information in 1917 by President Wilson, for example, did perform its purpose in suppressing the dissents.

In a democracy, voters give their mandate to an elected leader to act in the people's behalf. Now, what is considered to be "in the behalf" of the people in the view of President Wilson, or any president before and after for that matter, can be very subjective, but the people can always answer this question by passing their judgment at the next round of election. However, until the presidential term is up (short of impeachment and removal), the sitting president has the final say. I do not wish to stray off to another discussion about direct democracy vs. representative democracy, just yet, but inasmuch as voters making THEIR best judgment in election, so too must the president in times of war; might the question be how best to win a war, or be engaging in one serves the best interest of the people. Our instructor asks what ramifications of the abuse of history are there, I would say that the general public can be more comprehensive and specific in the study of history in order to formulate substantiated opinions that has breath and depth on their basis. Over-simplification and generalization of the past often prevent us from making an informed judgment in the future. Sometimes, "a picture is NOT worth a thousand words."

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Sara Little](#) - Monday, 11 May 2009, 02:47 PM

The history that we encounter today, I believe is, is some regards, sugar coated. For example, our history books tells what happened, and the battles that were faught but it doesn't bring to light how gruesome and brutal the wars actually were. While demonizing propaganda was used to manipulate the American people, and enhance support for the war, a lot of Americans were kept in the dark about what was really happening. The soldier from the video talked about censoring true events because, "the military didn't want the folks at home to know how bad the war really was." Even today the media sugar coats events, by leaving out details and such. My question is if we wern't manipulated by propaganda, and knew the full truth, would the government be able to gather the same support?

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**Re: Using & abusing history**by [Robin Patterson](#) - Monday, 11 May 2009, 04:40 PM

I highly doubt the government would be able to get as much support without the use of propaganda! The government certainly doesn't have much support for the war in Iraq now WITH propaganda. We can only imagine the outcome if no one's view was corrupted by propaganda!

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**Re: Using & abusing history**by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Monday, 11 May 2009, 07:14 PM

This is an excellent point. The government along with many other organizations get support (negative or positive) with the use of propaganda. Even though what we view may or may not be true many people will take a side just based on the ad, article, movie etc. Often the history, as you said is sugar coated and depending on who wrote the history book slanted to one side or the other. The support given is often based on incorrect history. Once a truth comes to light it often changes how something is viewed and whether or not is supported.

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**Re: Using & abusing history**by [Brandon Mc Nutt](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 11:34 AM

Of course not! People would be sick if they knew every thing that our government does. Some of which actually help protect us and our interests. Part of the reason for this is manipulation, and part of it is a lot of people don't have the stomach for what is sometimes necessary, and don't really want to hear the truth. As far as history being jaded, that's because it is always written by the winners.

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**Re: Using & abusing history**by [Stephenie Fraga](#) - Saturday, 30 May 2009, 10:12 AM

This is true about history books. I do think though, as we get older and are in higher level classes this issues from the past are talked about. Obviously as a middle schooler you are not going to talk about Vietnam and how horrible it was and see the videos and images.

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**Walt Disney's "Seven Wise Dwarfs" Propaganda in Canada**by [Tszho Ng](#) - Tuesday, 12 May 2009, 02:47 AM

This is not the first time I have heard about war propaganda done by Walt Disney Pictures, but it is the first time I learn of its release aiming at the Canadian audience. The contrast between the benign kind dwarfs as the Canadian public and the bullet-blasting war planes of the Luftwaffe as the mechanical representation of the German people is a propagandistic technique used this film to promote war bond purchase. According to the Internet Movie Database (IMDb), this short film was released in 12 December 1941, within a week of the Attack on Pearl Harbor. Apparently, the war effort was well underway before the U.S. formally declare war on Japan. In fact, Canada's Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, requested King George VI to issue a declaration of war against the German Reich on behalf of Canada in September 10, 1939 (see references below).

Watch this film at <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvV00wax1Uo>>.

This three-minute film begin with the industrious dwarfs mining their diamonds and stocking them into bags. Then they march in unison while singing what seems to be an army cadence-like song that goes,

"We'll do our part with all our heart ~~,
We all must help, you know?
We'll fight the war, we've fight before ~~"

Their singing comes to a sudden stop when one of them takes notice of a post outside a post office building that reads "Do your share in the WAR WEAPONS DRIVE -- WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES." Then the dwarf says, "Well, there it is!" Six dwarfs dash into the post office to buy war bonds, but one of them did not get into the building in time before its door closes. Fortunately, he sees the bank next door is still open and war bond posters were posted outside, too. So, he rushes in to make the patriotic purchase. All seven dwarfs eventually come back out cheerfully with stacks of war bond papers in their arms and

pockets, and they continue to sing, "We help to fight the foe, We've done our part with all our heart ~~."

As the wind blows some of the certificates into the air, the papers then animatedly roll into a round of anti-aircraft munition firing at the German Luftwaffe. Then pops out "LEND YOUR SAVINGS."

Reference:

See Canadian Prime Minister's Petition for War Declaration digital image at <<http://data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ap/c/c140955.jpg>>.

IMBb website at <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0168163/>>.

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Re: Walt Disney's "Seven Wise Dwarfs" Propaganda in Canada

by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 11:25 PM

Hi Tszcho,

This cartoon of the dwarfs/Canadians was really interesting. Thank you for posting it. I found it quite helpful to be able to watch it already having your thoughts on it and explaining it. One thing I found amazing was how many cartoons are listed as war propaganda. I recognized some right away that I watched after school. I was pretty little and I remember thinking some of them were funny but not having any understanding of what the message was or even really caring. It was just my favorite characters. It is so much different to look at them now as an adult.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Nicholas Simeone](#) - Tuesday, 12 May 2009, 03:43 PM

I love Propaganda, this topic reminds me of my time in Korea. I served on the DMZ. Once in a great while, we would get briefs about how picking up a piece of Propaganda that the North Korean's would put on balloons is a criminal offense. They would then show us an example of this Propaganda and if we were to find it, we were supposed to report it immediately.

They once had a picture of Kim Jong Il shaking hands with our president (I think it was Clinton during the time) but in all reality he was shaking hands with a nuclear missile, not Kim Jong Il, and the words on it, stated that you had better make friends with the enemy, or get blown up. Or something to that extent.

They also have an entire city devoted to their Propaganda. The North Koreans promise prosperity and a wonderful future in the North. They have this massive city, all of the buildings there are very nice, but all of them are also empty. I also believe they have the 3rd largest flag in the world hanging from a massive Flag pole. To assist in illustrating how wonderful this city is.

When we would have missions patrolling the DMZ, they would have these loudspeakers that would say in Korean, as well as English about how great it is in North Korea and we should get across the DMZ and turn ourselves over to a better life.

This was my first time realizing the extent of how Propaganda is used. It seemed pretty ludicrous to me when I was there, but I try to put myself in the shoes of someone like my grandfather before he signed up with the Air Force and went to WWII. The cartoons illustrated seem racist but in all reality I think the article was dead on when they mentioned that was the whole point to dehumanize the enemy. I remember my grandfather telling me before he died he was sorry for all the people he killed during WWII, the women and the children. He had a bomber jacket with a bomb for each mission he had done, and on the bomb was the name of the city that he was on a mission with. I think he bombed Leipzig, as well as Berlin 4 times each. The jacket is cluttered with these little atom bombs all over it, I think he had 40 bombing missions.

I never quite understood his regret. But the more I read into the history of things like the fire bombings and what not, it definitely makes me think, maybe some of the Airmen fighting in the war didn't really question their orders, but knew deep down inside maybe they were doing the wrong thing.

During that first article, I read about how they utilized Popeye in "scrap the jap" I found the video on Youtube and thought maybe someone else would wanna see it from the group. (obviously its racist and offensive)

<http://www.youtube.com/v/6ACltvNXXSI&hl=en&fs=1>

There was another one that the article didn't mention though that my father did when we were discussing this topic. I thought I would share it as well. This is a cartoon with Donald Duck as a nazi, obviously an anti-nazi cartoon. It also portrays all of our favorite leaders during WWII.

<http://www.youtube.com/v/mZiRlpZVF4&hl=en&fs=1>

And finally this is a Winnie the Pooh anti-nazi cartoon.

<http://www.youtube.com/v/fwYyFzhVtzE&hl=en&fs=1>

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Tuesday, 12 May 2009, 07:50 PM

Thank you for this great post. I never thought I would see a Winnie the Pooh war cartoon. I have seen the Bugs Bunny cartoons regarding the war; they have them on some of the Looney Tunes collections. I never gave them much thought as propaganda until now. I find myself remembering all of the cartoons I grew up watching that mentioned war and there were quite a bit. Daffy Duck and Bugs, Elmer Fudd and Porky Pig. This may seem like a bit of a silly question but who were these cartoons being aired for? I was born in the late sixties and I don't recall at any time my parents ever watching cartoons. Was this a time period when parents were sitting down and watching cartoons with their children? If yes, then I could see the drive to include war propaganda in the cartoons, if not then what was the point given that children of that viewing age were too young to serve or to be in a large supportive role.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Bryn Riley](#) - Tuesday, 12 May 2009, 08:41 PM

I love propaganda for it's immediate purposes, that is, to prove a point in an entertaining or especially provocative manner. The point is to get people to think. When propaganda makes it difficult to decipher history is when I begin to lose my appreciation for it. I consider myself to be moderate on the political spectrum and can find some way to appreciate all of these materials. The "Blogging" image is a great way to appeal to people today and it was relatively harmless (in my opinion). On the other end of my scale was the "Americans are not what they used to be" while it didn't sit well with me at first it did get me to think about how I regard my relationship with this country. Do I take my liberties for granted? Some would argue that we are merely pushing the envelope as early Americans did. I personally would not argue that just a thought I have heard expressed. I guess even the nastier ones I don't mind as long as I can take a moment to find out why the image has been created and what they want me to think about.

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Why Cartoons?

by [Tszho Ng](#) - Tuesday, 12 May 2009, 09:27 PM

Perhaps, making cartoons has more room for imagination since special effects come later in history. Or, maybe it is simply cheaper to produce cartoons than real-life films. Also, I might be stretching this, but oftentimes, don't recruits join the military to fight for a better future for, or to protect the future of, their children, so it stands to reason that propaganda associate with what children watch.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Nicholas Simeone](#) - Tuesday, 12 May 2009, 09:53 PM

I am not sure, I know that most of these cartoons were in 1943. As for the lecture we received in class today referring to more women working in the labor sector, it could be possible that the TV was a glorified baby sitter.

I know that the children may not understand war, but maybe justifying the Nazi's as being the end all, and this is your life if we lose the war, would help them understand why their daddy is going to war, or fighting in war.

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**Re: Using & abusing history**

by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 09:57 PM

After our instructor showed the liberty picture in class I looked at it again.

The one shown in our HTD materials I found quite entertaining. Blogging is often associated with people who do not accurately check facts. Frequently Blogging can be the tool for conspiracy theorists, undereducated "interneters" and over-egotistical people who believe the world hangs on what they say, to voice opinions and unfortunately revise history to fit their position.

NPR recently interviewed an author who referred to Blogging as the "dumbing down of America." The internet abounds with blogs and web pages emphasizing the views that the Holocaust was not a historical reality, the US government had advance warning of the Pearl Harbor attack, and Air Force personnel captured live aliens and held them for decades in area 51. For many bloggers, historical facts muddy the view they are trying to support *hence* this is one of the many ways history is abused and spoon-fed to the non fact-checking masses.

For people that may be on the fence as to if the U.S. had advance notice of the bombing of Pearl Harbor the following disproving information might be enlightening: *West Wind Clear: Cryptology and the Winds Message Controversy –A Documentary History* by Robert J. Hanyok and David P. Mowry of the NSA 2008. Skeptical Inquirer Vol. 33 No. 1 March/April 2009 has an article based on this report. This report disproves the existence of an advance warning of the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

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**Re: Using & abusing history**

by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 09:55 PM

Hi Nicholas,

I liked your suggestion that maybe the cartoons were being used in a way to help explain why a parent is going to war. Depending on a child's age they may not understand the war but they can understand "going after a bad guy". That suggestion makes sense to me.

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**Re: Using & abusing history**

by [Robin Patterson](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 10:07 PM

That's a nice way of thinking about propaganda, but I just can't say that is the case. If you really think about how the government works they wouldn't be paying a department to come up with these posters so that a little kid could understand why his daddy is going to war. The little kid doesn't vote/pay taxes has no money to buy war bonds and can't be enlisted in the army so why would they spend money on tricking him into supporting war? They wouldn't.

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**Re: Using & abusing history**

by [Roxanne MacDonald](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 10:47 PM

Hi Robin,

This is from my original post.... *This may seem like a bit of a silly question but who were these cartoons being aired for? I was born in the late sixties and I don't recall at any time my parents ever watching cartoons. Was this a time period when parents were sitting down and watching cartoons with their children? If yes, then I could see the drive to include war propaganda in the cartoons, if not then what was the point given that children of that viewing age were too young to serve or to be in a large supportive role.*

I do like the suggestion that cartoons were being used to explain, I don't know that it is accurate but at this point there has not been many other suggestions or musings as to why the government would pay a department as you said to advertise the war to young children. Were the parents of these children actually watching these cartoons? If parents were sitting down with their children on the couch and watching Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and the grand Porky Pig then yes, it would make perfect sense to have war propaganda in the cartoon. If parents were not viewing the cartoons then why target children because they were certainly not giving up bumpers from

their car to the cause or able to go to war themselves.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Stephenie Fraga](#) - Friday, 22 May 2009, 06:30 AM

I completely agree with you that it seems a bit odd that they would use propoganda towards little children, however I can see their view. They want to get out their point of view on the war any ways possible and childrens cartoons are just another way of getting that out into the mass media. Not that I am condoning it because I do think it shows a mixed message to children, I just can see where they are coming from.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Nicholas Simeone](#) - Wednesday, 13 May 2009, 10:53 PM

We were referring to cartoons, not the posters. No department paid for these cartoons. These were courtesy of Walt Disney. Kind of far fetched, I realize that. But I know if your family supports you while you are in combat. It makes being there a little bit easier (troop morale maybe) I don't really know.

Why do you think these cartoons were made then Kobin?

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Kobin Patterson](#) - Saturday, 16 May 2009, 07:46 PM

Well if you remember from class when Joe told us about Walt Disney working with the government making his own posters of propaganda then who can be certain that the government had no part in them? As for why, I don't know...current events show up on tv shows/cartoons/movies all the time and their not necessary purposeful propaganda. It's just material to be used. Maybe Walt Disney did put it in there to comfort the kids, but I personally am not buying it.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Hari Khalsa](#) - Thursday, 14 May 2009, 02:00 AM

I feel that the War Crimes museum in Japan is very important for their people to not forget what kind of horrific war crimes were perpetrated by the japanese against the chinese and other occupied nations. There definitely has been an amnesia on the part of many different perpetrators of horrific events. I believe that the U.S. has developed a sort of amnesia about exactly how horrible the dropping of the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were. It is important that we aknowledge the effects that this had on both the residents of japan--even to this day, and the effects it had on the whole world.

Also By de-humanizing the enemy throug propaganda, cartoons and other media outlets to make our enemies seem more animalistic and less human definitely makes killing them easier for a soldier whom has never killed another human being. If these enemies are portrayed as animals or as un-human then it subconsciuously allows us to kill without remorse.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Hari Khalsa](#) - Thursday, 14 May 2009, 02:38 AM

 [veterans_archives.html](#)

Of course it is true that history is written by the victors, but also there are independent sources of information about certain events, People who witnessed, experienced and even participated in wars and their horror including war crimes are a very valuable source of information for us--and future generations to learn from. It is very important that we archive the survivors of these events while they are still alive so that we can hear what things were like- in their own words- . One example of this is that many of ww2's veterans, politicians and citizens whom were alive and experienced first hand these events are now beginning to

become an endangered few. We need to archive, either on video or audio, these peoples stories for us and future generations to learn from.

Some of the last surviving veterans of the american civil war and the period of american slavery were recorded before they died and now are available for us to listen to and learn what it was like for these people in comparison with what we read in our history books.

Similarly, some of the last survivors of the period known as the "old west" were archived using available audio recording devices of the times, to tell their own tale of what living in this period was actually like.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Hari Khalsa](#) - Thursday, 14 May 2009, 09:19 AM

I'm not too sure what to make of some of these pictures in the HTD materials link. For instance, the poster suggesting that people tend to think that republicans are warmongers but actually democrats were the main declarators of war in the 20th century. Is this a pro-republican propaganda image? I don't quite know. I do know that as far as the presidents listed as the starters of wars---these wars were --in the beginning supposed to be for a just cause, such as stopping the spread of communism to Korea and Vietnam--yes these were democrat presidents who got us into these wars but wasn't it a republican in office when the american public was sick and tired of losing the Vietnam war and losing their own children and ready to have our involvement end in this region--but the president--nixon kept sending more and more of our troops to die a horrific death halfway across the globe. And wasn't it G. "W" Bush that got us into an internationally unpopular war, unilaterally w/out the approval of the U.N.? This war was, in my opinion, a personal agenda for the bush administration. To control the vast oil resources in Iraq and to depose former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. And wasn't there some personal animosity between Mr."W" and Mr. Hussein-- because of a failed assasination attempt on Mr "W"'s fathers life?

For myself, it seems that there is a trend of economic stimulation whenever the U.S. wins a war abroad. Was this just another way of stimulating our economy that backfired? This i do not know. What I do know is that this war has made the U.S. universally unpopular among nations all over the globe.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Hari Khalsa](#) - Friday, 15 May 2009, 09:25 AM

I was not aware of the "hidden holocaust" that occurred in Nanking China. This just reiterates my opinion of the brutality of the japanese during WW2. As for F.D.R. having any prior knowledge of the Dec. 7th 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, I believe that he did have at least some prior knowledge of the japanese plans for an attack on U.S. naval interests in the pacific. I think that this was brought on, in part, by the parading of the U.S. Navy in the waters surrounding Japan. In my opinion, F.D.R. believed that we as the American people had a duty to do something to intervene in this so called "total war" occurring everywhere but the americas. I believe that F.D.R. felt that he couldn't attain the support of thr American people for a U.S. declaration of war without some sort of event that would anger the American public into supporting such a declaration of war. If this is true, then FDR must have seen the emminent Japanese Attack on U.S. interests as a last resort type of necessary collateral damage. It seems horrible to think that FDR had any prior knowledge of an attack but I can see why he may have chosen to keep this data secret and let this attack occur anyway, simply to bring the U.S. public out of their neutral-isolationist perspective and into supporting important allies of the U.S. that desparately needed our help. In my opinion the outcome of WW2 may have been different if the allies hadn't had the U.S. military on board. What would the map of the world look like today if the U.S. military had not participated in WW2? This is a very disturbing thought, in my opinion, so disturbing that I could understand why FDR may have allowed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor to occur.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Joshua Tokich](#) - Friday, 15 May 2009, 02:50 PM

I think the information provided was very informative. I believe that yes, in order for a country's people to feel comfortable killing people from another country, dehumanizing is a very effective method. Though real stories in WWII were not nearly as accessible as they might be in the information age; our government and big companies who stand to gain in our current war have definitely produced massive amounts of propaganda. Our media is obviously censored, but the text that described Japan's museums really proved to me that other nations like Japan have gone to extremes to silence the voice of their people. I think history used out of context can prove anything. I believe that the end result of the abuse of history is that many people are uninformed of the actual truth and believe the lies they have been spoon fed; other people seem to just not care. I believe it is important to know what really went on. Exposing the atrocities of war might help others in the future to chose a different and possibly more humane path.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Hari Khalsa](#) - Friday, 15 May 2009, 09:36 PM

During the propaganda campaign of WW2 the US used images, cartoons and other sources of media to de-humanize the enemy, thus making the horrific reality of taking human lives less traumatic. There was a difference between the way we de-humanized the Japanese from the Germans and Italians. The Japanese were portrayed as sub-human ape-like creatures simply for reasons of racial difference. The reason this racial tactic was not used in anti german propaganda was because pro-war US nativists were also of the same religion and culture as their anglo, German enemies.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Robin Patterson](#) - Tuesday, 26 May 2009, 12:24 PM

That's a nice thought and I could see how you would make that connection with the anglo heritage, but actually they did use the ape like figures for German's too. Not to say that the Japanese ones didn't have certain racial stereotype features, but they did also use the same concept for the German posters. Don't believe me? Do some research on google.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Joshua Tokich](#) - Sunday, 17 May 2009, 06:22 PM

Although I don't believe that FDR knew specifically about the when and where of the Pearl Harbor attack. I believe he was expecting some sort of action from the Japanese concerning the trade embargo the US asserted on them. It sounds to me that he wanted it to happen so the US could have an excuse to enter the war they already had soo much invested in. Many facts have been skewed over the years to support or oppose liberal and conservative agendas alike. The images in the HDT materials link I personally found amusing especially the image of little Bush and Cheny as Hitler and his right hand man. Before taking this class I would have said that the Republicans were the war mongers; but I have learned that no matter the party war is inevitable. In my opinion there is not so much of a difference between Republicans and Democrats, they both seek out that which is self-serving and not that which would benefit the greater good. On the subject of the Atomic Bomb I feel that it was inevitable and if the US had not used it someone else would have. And that brings up the issue of morality, in my mind the use of the bomb was neither "bad" or "good" it just happened. Right and wrong are creations of our minds; and judging other people and thier actions will only lead to more judging. In the end where does that leave you?

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Kerry Gleasman](#) - Monday, 18 May 2009, 10:50 AM

I believe that FDR provoked the Pearl Harbor attack. U.S. citizens didn't want to go to war and FDR did, but still wanted the full support of the citizens. He provoked the attack that sent us into war...making it look like they made the first move! It is true that war is inevitable. A democrat in office could make different countries mad in one year and however many years when a republican is in office it comes back to bite us in the butt, or vise versa. I think it is crazy how different WWI and WWII were. WWII new, improved and more intense in a bad way.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Kerry Gleasman](#) - Monday, 18 May 2009, 10:45 AM

I think it is ridiculous that we as U.S. citizens are lied to. During WWII everything was sugar coated so that the public would support the war. Horrible things were happening that I wouldn't even be able to make real in my head. I wonder what would have happened if the U.S. citizens of WWII were knowledgeable of what was actually happening over seas. War propaganda upsets me...they tell us things that are not necessarily true and distort everything to make it alright. Distorting the truth during war time has happened a lot in the past which makes it seem ok to do now days.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Stephenie Fraga](#) - Saturday, 30 May 2009, 10:07 AM

I don't necessarily agree with the government in sugar coating what was happening in WWII, however I do also do not agree with the media showing those horrific images from Vietnam. I think there needs to be a good spot in the middle to stay. We should not be exposed to images of people being shot in the head nor should we not know what's going on at all. Honestly, I think that this war in Iraq has been covered well by the media. I get to see all that I can handle but I still get information.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Elliott Rose](#) - Monday, 18 May 2009, 07:42 PM

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<!-- /* Style Definitions */ p.MsoNormal, li.MsoNormal, div.MsoNormal {mso-style-parent:""; margin:0in; margin-bottom:.0001pt; mso-pagination:widow-orphan; font-size:12.0pt; font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-fareast-font-family:"Times New Roman";} @page Section1 {size:8.5in 11.0in; margin:1.0in 1.25in 1.0in 1.25in; mso-header-margin:.5in; mso-footer-margin:.5in; mso-paper-source:0;} div.Section1 {page:Section1;} -->
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One way we abused history was by using propaganda to instigate a war. They had a picture of an ape with a nazi helmet holding a mallet in one hand and a baby in another. And that's supposed to make us as Americans pissed off so when we get angry we know who to attack. And that's what one of the articles talked about. How it's easier to kill someone when you relate them to some kind of animal like a monkey. That way in your mentality you're not killing a human your killing what that human represents.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Joshua Tokich](#) - Friday, 22 May 2009, 02:47 PM

Elliot I agree with you in that propaganda was used to convince the public that the war was a good thing. Using animals as portrayed as the enemy led the people to believe that they were right in supporting the war. However I believe that when it came down to pulling the trigger and killing another human being none of the propaganda ment anything. The people doing the killing knew they were killing someone else, and I'm sure that the propaganda posters didn't sooth their consience or help them live with the horrible things they did.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Stephenie Fraga](#) - Tuesday, 26 May 2009, 06:42 AM

I am totally with you on this one! I do not think is appropriate to tease the public and incite them to go to war. I believe with war that we should only be there when necessary so if we were really there for a good reason we wouldn't need this type of propoganda to get people to support it. They would see what we are doing and choose to support the war themselves.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Joshua Tokich](#) - Tuesday, 26 May 2009, 12:14 PM

Yes for sure, why did the Govt need propaganda if it was "in the right". Any propaganda is very misleading for that matter and I believe it is an even greater misfortune that the media these days plays in to the govt's hands and supports massive propaganda including movies and music of the time. Personally I think it portraies just how our system of Govt dosen't work and why we NEED a new system.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Stephenie Fraga](#) - Friday, 22 May 2009, 06:26 AM

It seems like the government uses history and historical figures as propognada to get whichever point across they are looking to sell. Some of the pictures shown were quite funny. I do not necessarily believe though that making your opponent look like a fool is the right angle to go at. It seems like a low blow to say I am better because he sucks. I just think you should show your strong points to show how you are the stronger country or running mate. Another thing is that in todays society so many of those propoganda poster would cause huge controversy if they were used. Many of them are demoralizing to women and racists towards the other countries.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Megan Lanphear](#) - Monday, 25 May 2009, 03:01 PM

It is weird to think that people today use pictures from the past to make examples of today and the future. Some people don't know about history and to make examples from them can be confusing to some. I don't know. Some people might think that they are comparing the past to now. The past was different then what we see now. It can be confusing.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Rebecca Millican](#) - Friday, 29 May 2009, 09:28 AM

You think that people would be creative and make new pictures to depict the war on terrorism or what ever you want to call it, I think it would be more respectful to the people that fought in WWI and II if we would not use pictures from the war or the propaganda.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Rebecca Millican](#) - Friday, 29 May 2009, 09:25 AM

I don't like war and I don't like propaganda, especially today, they are distasteful and ridiculous, now that doesn't mean that I like propaganda that went on in the WWs, using racism as a way to affect the american population. We are dehumanizing the enemy, its esier to shoot a rat, a rodent, then a friend, our neighbor, our brother. You think we would know better, but who knows.

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Rebecca Millican](#) - Friday, 29 May 2009, 09:35 AM

what is the point of using propaganda from the past? I was just thinking that it causes more of an impact on us because this war that we are doing in Iraq is nothing compared to the WWII I suppose it helps out with the thought of true americanism, but are we truly american anymore do we still hold the same thought of a wonderful world that we have once created, or are we taking it down with us, are we falling as a society?

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Re: Using & abusing history

by [Stephenie Fraga](#) - Saturday, 30 May 2009, 10:20 AM

I think it's a good idea to use people from the past because the whole point of propoganda is to get someone on your side. I can conidently say that no american is a fan of Hitler so if we compare Osama Bin Laden or whoever to Hitler, the point is to get americans to not like Osama either. Not that the wars are the same or that the motives for the wars are the same, but in some way the leaders have similar qualities.

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