Print Propaganda Art in World War II America

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Introduction: Print Propaganda Art in World War II America

World War II started in Europe with Germany's invasion of Poland on September 1st 1939. Many major countries around the globe were involved in the Second World War. The major Axis Powers were Germany, Japan, and Italy. The major Allied Powers, on the other hand, were Great Britain and France, joined by the Soviet Union in June 1941. The U.S., after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7 1941, would also join the war and become a crucial member of the Allies.

During the Second World War, Americans often followed war-related news through newsreels playing in theaters, radio broadcasts, and newspapers. Through these resources, the public remained informed about the progress of the war. In addition to providing information, however, these resources could also be used to distribute propaganda. Although propaganda assumed many different forms throughout the war, this project will focus only on print propaganda, and more specifically, posters and cartoons.

Propaganda, defined as "ideas, facts or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause,"[1] played a crucial role in uniting World War II America against the Axis powers. The use of propaganda helped influence the nation's way of thinking. Moreover, print media was a very effective way in which propaganda was spread throughout the nation. Initially, prior to U.S. involvement in World War II, propaganda was not as widely used in the U.S. compared to Europe where Communists, Nazis and Fascists were using print propaganda

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[1] "Propaganda," Merriam-Webster, accessed December 23 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/propaganda

actively.[2] The precedent to this had been World War I, during which the U.S. had not started engaging in propaganda art until after it had joined the war in 1917. The non-interventionist period in between wars did not support heavy use of propaganda.

After experiencing the drastic results of World War I, which in fact had not been the "war to end all wars," the American nation seemed reluctant to join a second war such shortly after the first. Propaganda efforts in World War I had inspired citizens to defend their nation by joining the fight, often by triggering emotional responses such as nationalism or fear. Nevertheless, the end of the war had not brought hopeful results: Many soldiers and civilians had been killed during the war. Moreover, after experiencing prosperity in the 1920s, the nation had gone into great economic decline with the stock market crash in 1929, which commenced the Great Depression that lasted until 1941. Therefore, there was skepticism as to whether one could believe new propaganda attempting to convince American citizens to join the war effort.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933, he initially ensured the country that the U.S. would remain neutral. Nevertheless, because most Americans sympathized with democracies despite being neutral, he also added that he could not ask for everyone to remain neutral in consciousness as well.[3] Despite underlying support for democracies, the U.S. ideology seemed to remain neutral until U.S. intervention in war. Neither British nor German propaganda appeared successful in the U.S., as many were against British imperialism, and even more were against Nazism.

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[2] Anthony Rhodes, and Victor Margolin, *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion, World War II*, (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet Press, 1987), 139
[3] Ibid., 141

Although the U.S. did not officially join the war until 1941, the non-interventionist period in between wars requires further examining. Despite the Neutrality Act of 1937, American opinion on joining the war seemed to be changing drastically, especially over the year prior to U.S. entry into war. In this time, although more and more Americans saw Germany as a threat, and started supporting ways to help Britain, a big percentage of the country was also opposed to joining the war.[4] Although Roosevelt had stated that he would keep the country out of war, he was also in favor of helping Britain mobilize and continued these efforts especially after the Final Neutrality Act in November 1939, allowing the U.S. to sell arms to countries in war, as long as these countries came to the U.S. to buy these weapons in cash. Furthermore, in March 1941, the Lend-Lease Act allowed the U.S. to trade with countries whose survival was crucial to U.S. security.[5] After the Lend-Lease Act, the Atlantic Charter was issued in August 1941. This policy statement was signed by the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and the U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and defined what the Allied goals were for the result of World War II.[6] Therefore, although the U.S. did not officially enter the war until December 1941, the ideology in the country could certainly not be characterized only as "isolationist." Although there was a divide between interventionist and non-interventionist groups, it can be observed that the U.S. was slowly shifting to a more interventionist ideology.

As U.S. ideology started shifting, propaganda used in the country nevertheless remained different compared to that used in the dictatorships of Europe. Unlike Germany, in which all propaganda was organized by the Nazi party, and specifically the Reich Minister of Propaganda,

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[4] Schiffrin André, *Dr. Seuss & Co. Go to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of America's Leading Comic Artists,* (New York: New Press, 2009), 27
[5] Ibid., 28
[6] "The Atlantic Conference and Charter, 1941," *Office of the Historian*, accessed December 25 2017, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/atlantic-conf

Joseph Goebbels, in democracies such as the U.S. propaganda could not utilize censorship in order to convey its message. As the American population grew increasingly aggravated by the unsuccessful Allied struggles for success against Germany in World War II, more people started embracing interventionist views.

Two departments were set: The Office of War Information (OWI) to deliver propaganda domestically and internationally, and The Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the WWII intelligence agency that was also the predecessor of the CIA.[7] Both were responsible for propaganda in the U.S.; however, the OWI requires further examining due to the essential role it held in World War II propaganda distribution. The Office of War Information was created in June 1942, was often in charge of the visual representation of World War II in the U.S., and depicted different aspects of the war such as the need for labor or the variety of roles that women assumed. Journalist Elmer Davis was appointed as the director of the OWI, and stated "This is a people's war, and the people are entitled to know as much as possible about it." In this way, the OWI seemed to employ a manner of propaganda that utilized a truthful approach. Nevertheless, director of the OWI Domestic Branch, Gardner Cowles Jr., stated that the OWI was not neutral, and that although they attempted to use "free exchange of information" and "employ the 'strategy of truth,'" they did so to "help win the war."[8]

The OWI issued propaganda in various manners, and therefore different means of propaganda gained popularity in the U.S.: Newsreels, radio broadcasts and print media. Perhaps the most memorable propaganda that the OWI distributed was posters; however, radio broadcasts

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[7] Anthony Rhodes and Victor Margolin, *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion, World War II*, (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet Press, 1987), 144

[8] David Kennedy, *The Library of Congress World War II Companion*, (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 843

and newsreels are also worth mentioning briefly: Although radios delivered information on the progress of war, as the U.S. officially started sympathizing with the Allies and as it eventually joined the war on this side, these broadcasts quickly identified the Axis powers as the enemy. At the same time, the documentaries and newsreels being produced started focusing on the war and why it was necessary for the Axis powers to be defeated. Later, these films would even give information about the concentration camps in Germany.[9]

This report, however, will focus only on print propaganda. The two main types of print propaganda that will be discussed are posters and cartoons. Posters, although not as popular as the radio, were used for a plethora of reasons such as encouraging citizens to work, to enlist in the army, to buy war bonds, or to abstain from careless talk. By doing so, posters would ensure the nation that everyone could be part of the victory if they wished to be. They united Americans against the enemy by encouraging volunteerism. Cartoons, on the other hand, reminded the American people of the situation in Europe and Asia[10] while also encouraging them to do their part. Cartoons were often used to criticize the Axis powers, but at times were also used to criticize different aspects of the government, such as the non-interventionist approach assumed until the policy changes around the end of 1940 and mid-1941.

In this project, several artists will be highlighted due to their popularity in their respective fields. The artist, who will be highlighted for his work in poster illustration is Norman Rockwell. The artists who will be further analyzed for their cartoons, on the other hand, are Bill Mauldin and Dr. Seuss. While Dr. Seuss recognized and conveyed the severity of the situation before the U.S. even entered the war, Bill Mauldin depicted the battlefront realistically. Through the use of poster

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[9] Anthony Rhodes and Victor Margolin, *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion, World War II*, (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet Press, 1987), 158
[10] Ibid., 150

and cartoon art created by these artists among others, the subsequent sections will analyze the use of poster and cartoon propaganda in World War II America.

Posters

Poster art carries some of the most-well known propaganda produced during the Second World War. Posters easily accessed a vast majority of the citizens in the country, mobilized them, and addressed them as a crucial part of achieving success in the war.[11]

Posters in World War II served a similar purpose to the mass media and commercials that are used today, and featured beautifully painted artwork. They were accompanied by concise slogans or comments, and while at times they asked for American citizens' involvement in war, at times they mocked the enemy. The posters often carried a serious tone, appealed to feelings of patriotism, and conveyed their message in a direct manner even when they used satirical approaches. Many posters were realistic and were even adapted from photographs of the time.[12]

Posters were also important in the fact that they attempted to bring various parts of society together. They appealed to different groups in society such as farmers or workers. Similarly, posters often showed men and women united against the enemies. Appeals for women were especially popular. Some posters advised women to work in factories, asking for women's help in the war economy. Other posters on the other hand, urged women to wear uniforms either as nurses who tended to the wounded soldiers, or as part of the military in branches such as the WACS or WAVES.[13]

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[11] William L. Bird and Harry R Rubenstein, *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front*, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 1
[12] Denis Judd, *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 7
[13] Ibid., 9

American World War II posters were also different from those utilized in dictatorships in Europe, in the way that they carried both patriotism and democracy. By evoking patriotic feelings, these posters filled their audience, American citizens, with pride for their country. This pride was induced by reminders of freedom and of a country in which all had a right to live life the way they chose to, such as the right to freedom of speech or freedom of worship. These posters also created a sharp contrast between the U.S. and the enemy countries in which there was a lack of democracy. By celebrating the "nation's heritage of liberty,"[14] American posters reminded the nation once again of why it was crucial for one to help protect the country against the enemies.

Posters were an important aspect of World War II propaganda also because they were cost-efficient to produce.[15] Despite their inexpensive nature, posters were very effective due to the images and slogans they embraced. They accessed a great portion of the population all around the nation, and provided many Americans with ways in which they could be useful in the war effort. Since posters were both informative and persuasive, populations all around the country could find ways to be productive.

Unlike those in the First World War, posters in World War II were often small. The intention behind this was the attempt to place posters not only on billboards (as audiences had been used to), but in unexpected places all around the country. Posters were placed in hotel lobbies, railroads, restaurants, and schools.[16] This way, people would come face to face with propaganda when they were least expecting it.

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[14] Denis Judd, *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 9
[15] William L. Bird and Harry R Rubenstein, *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front*, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 1
[16] Ibid., 11

The importance of posters in World War II America also meant that there was a newfound interest in artists who could illustrate these posters. These artists often had their own democratic ideals, as well as different opinions on how posters should be designed: Some artists were in favor of effective and factual designs, while others supported beauty as the basis of poster making. When war broke out, these artists linked "techniques of audience engagement with professional aspirations"[17] and searched for jobs through which they could design posters. This did not mean, however, that all wartime artists were supported by the government. Although some posters were issued or commissioned by government agencies such as the Department of Treasury, other artists such as Norman Rockwell designed their illustrations as covers for magazines. Most of these posters, however, would nevertheless be distributed by the Office of War information.

American World War II posters often presented collaboration between factory workers and their management. Although this was not always the case, the instant need for labor made it necessary for the visual representation of the situation to be this way.[18] The urgency of war went hand in hand with the urgency of the need for laborers. Posters focusing on labor were used very frequently, reminding the population of the need for production and asking a majority of the citizens to perform his or her part. Another important aspect of posters focusing on labor was that they shifted the perspective from "workers" to "production soldiers."[19] In posters, production was strongly linked to patriotism and employees were crucial characters in the fight against the enemy. In addition to focusing on patriotism, posters also generated a sense of guilt for those who neither served in the military nor helped with production in factories.[20]

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[17] William L. Bird and Harry R Rubenstein, *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front*, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 27
[18] Ibid., 52
[19] Ibid., 66
[20] Ibid., 70

Below are more detailed examples of specific types of poster art that was used as propaganda in World War II America. Most posters presented below were commissioned by government agencies or supported by the OWI, and published by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Nevertheless, certain images such as the famous "We Can Do It!" that J. Howard Miller created for Westinghouse Electric, were not supported by the government.

Some of the most well-known posters focused on purchasing war bonds and stamps. This way, there would be a "widespread ownership of the debt,"[21] which would in return ensure that American citizens were not merely observers, but rather participants in the fate of the country. The propaganda for the purchase of wartime bonds acted as motivation for the public to participate in this movement willingly, and instead of demanding certain actions from the American society, these posters instead depicted bond purchasers as patriotic and heroic. The following images are examples of wartime bond posters.

U.S. Department of the Treasury, 1942, in *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front,* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 9

U.S. Department of the Treasury, 1943, in *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front*, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 36

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[21] William L. Bird and Harry R Rubenstein, *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front*, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 21

BUY WAR BONDS

U.S. Department of Treasury, 1942, in *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 45

KEEP THESE HANDS OFF!

BUY *the New* **VICTORY BONDS**

G.K. Odell, 1942, in *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion*, World War II, (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet Press, 1987), 169

Another one of the most widespread uses of poster art was recruitment. After the U.S. entered the Second World War, posters were often used to recruit American men and women into the army. These posters, such as the James Montgomery Flagg illustration (the first image on page 15) reused for World War II,[22] played a significant role in reaching out and motivating American citizens to register for the military. These posters were not only directed towards men, but also towards women joining the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) which was a unit serving the army that was converted into the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in 1943, and officially became part of the army. Other examples of such posters included those for the United States Coast Guard (SPARS), the Army Nurse Corps or the Marine Corps Women's Branch. The following images are examples of these recruitment posters.

James Montgomery Flagg, 1942, in *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 48

James Montgomery Flagg, 1942, in *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 49

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[22] Denis Judd, *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 13

James Montgomery Flagg, 1941, in *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 13

Recruiting Publicity Bureau, 1943, in *Posters of World War Two,* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 17

John J. Floherty, *Your Duty Ashore... His Afloat*, 1944, State Archives of North Carolina, from: North Carolina Digital Collections

Marine Corps Women's Reserve, *Be a Marine, Free a Marine to Fight*, 1943, State Archives of North Carolina, from: North Carolina Digital Collections

American National Red Cross, *You are Needed Now: Join the Army Nurse Corps*, 1943, State Archives of North Carolina, from: North Carolina Digital Collections


Crandell, Bradshaw, *Are you a girl with a Star-Spangled heart? Join the WAC Now! Thousands of Army Jobs Need Filing*, 1943, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, from: Library of Congress

In addition to recruitment purposes, posters were also used to reach out to those who were not serving in the military. Posters focusing on labor, for example, aimed to fill the gaps in the labor force by motivating the public to get war jobs in order to support the economy. An important aspect of this attempt was the propaganda towards women. With eligible men serving in the military, women had to take over jobs in order to support the economy and the production of wartime necessities. One of the most well-known posters produced in World War II, the one of Rosie the Riveter, was one of these labor force posters. The "We Can Do It!" poster of Rosie the Riveter, however, was not popular throughout the country during the war. Designed by J. Howard Miller for the Westinghouse Electric Company, this poster was intended to be displayed in Westinghouse factories only for a brief period of time, in order to boost worker morale.[23] During World War II, the "We Can Do It!" illustration was not associated with the "Rosies" throughout the nation, and was not distributed by the OWI throughout the country. It was in the 1980s that this poster was rediscovered and utilized as a symbol of feminism.

Other examples of labor force posters included those encouraging women to join the American Red Cross, and those encouraging women to join the Women's Land Army. Below are examples of such images.

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[23] "We Can Do It!," The National Museum of American History, Smithsonian, accessed December 21, 2017, http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_538122
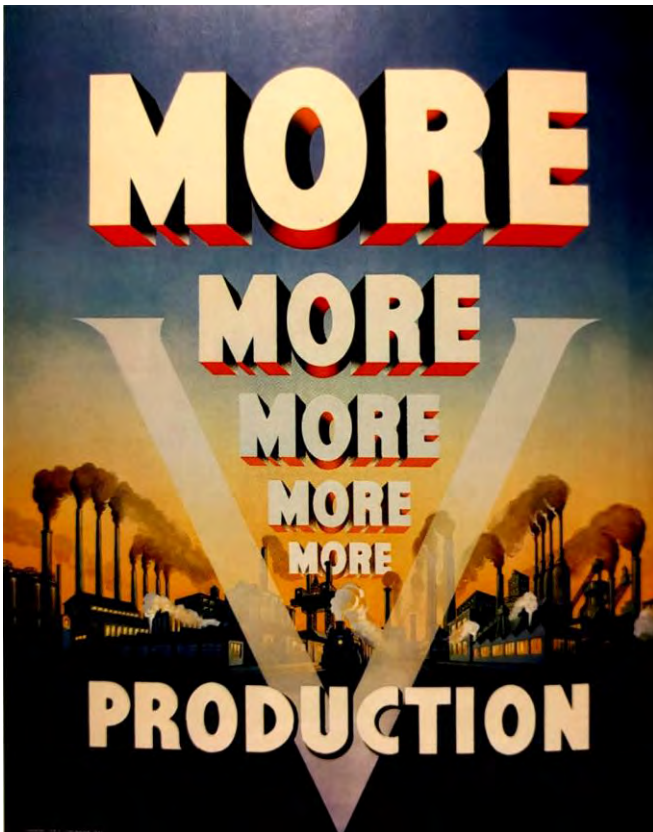
William L. Bird and Harry R Rubenstein, 1942, in *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front,* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 62

J. Howard Miller, Westinghouse Electric Corporation, 1942, in *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front,* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 78

TOGETHER WE WIN

Get behind your labor-management committee

U.S. War Production Board, 1942, in *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 37

GET A WAR JOB

to help him fight

SEE NEAREST U.S. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

U.S. GPO, 1942, in *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 96

I'm Proud... my husband wants me to do my part

SEE YOUR U. S. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
WAR MANPOWER COMMISSION

U.S. GPO, 1944, in *Design for Victory: World War II Posters on the American Home Front,* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 87

Join American Red Cross

American Red Cross, *Join American Red Cross*, n.d., State Archives of North Carolina, from: North Carolina Digital Collections

Join WOMEN'S LAND ARMY

War Food Administration, *Join the Women's Land Army of the U.S. Crop Corps*, 1943, National Agricultural Library, from: United States Department of Agriculture

Other examples of wartime posters focused on a variety of different topics, ranging from those concentrating on the duties of housewives, to intimidating images warning the public against "careless talk." "Careless talk" posters warned people against insensitive talk that might disclose military information to enemy that might be eavesdropping. Below are examples of such posters.

U.S. OWI, 1943, in *Posters of World War Two*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 82

Anthony Rhodes, and Victor Margolin, 1942-1943, in *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion, World War II,* (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet Press, 1987), 172

Norman Rockwell

Norman Rockwell is one of the most famous illustrators of the *Saturday Evening Post*. An artist who gained success at an early age, Rockwell worked as a freelance illustrator for various publications, and worked for many magazines. Rockwell's first *Saturday Evening Post* cover was published when he was 22 years old, and over the next 47 years he would illustrate 312 more covers for the magazine.[24] After working for the *Saturday Evening Post*, Rockwell would also work for *Look* magazine. Below are some of Rockwell's most well-known works, accompanied by brief analyses.

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[24] "Norman Rockwell: A Brief Biography," Norman Rockwell Museum, accessed September 07, 2017, https://www.nrm.org/about/about-2/about-norman-rockwell/

This image of Rosie the Riveter published on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1943, is amongst the most iconic of Rockwell's illustrations. This depiction of Rosie portrays her as standing tall and proud, as she steps on a copy of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. This suggests that Rosie plays an important role in the fight against the enemy. Both Rosie's strength and the American flag behind her are depictions of patriotism, while the visor on her head signifies a halo.[25] This painting that went around the country to raise money for war bonds, has since then been sold for $4.9 million by Sotheby's.[26]

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[25] Haley M. Palmore, "Beyond Objectification: Norman Rockwell's Depictions of Women for the *Saturday Evening Post*," Norman Rockwell Museum, accessed November 23, 2017, https://www.nrm.org/2014/02/beyond-objectification-norman-rockwells-depictions-of-women-for-the-saturday-evening-post/

[26] "Rosie the Riveter," *The Saturday Evening Post*, accessed November 23, 2017, http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2013/07/01/art-entertainment/norman-rockwell-art-entertainment/rosie-the-riveter.html

Unlike J. Howard Miller's *We can Do it!*, Rockwell's Rosie the Riveter presents a more masculine depiction of the character. Rockwell's Rosie the Riveter, in contrast to Miller's *We can Do it!,* had traveled the country during World War II, and was very well-known even during the war. On the other hand, years after the end of the war, Miller's *We can Do it!* seemed to gain more popularity as a symbol of the working woman in World War II, compared to Rockwell's Rosie the Riveter.

From left to right, "Freedom of Speech," "Freedom of Worship," "Freedom from Want," and "Freedom from Fear" are Norman Rockwell's *Four Freedoms* series. This series was inspired by, and was a reference to, President Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech, or the 1941 State of the Union address, to Congress in January 1941.[27] The paintings were published in subsequent issues of the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1943, and later toured the country to raise money for war bonds.[28] These images helped conceptualize Roosevelt's ideas of the four freedoms that everyone should enjoy: The freedom of speech, the freedom of worship, the freedom from want, and the freedom from fear.

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[27] "Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms," The Saturday Evening Post, accessed September 07, 2017, http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2009/01/01/art-entertainment/norman-rockwell-art-entertainment/rockwells-four-freedoms.html
[28] "Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms," Norman Rockwell Museum, accessed September 07, 2017, https://www.nrm.org/2012/10/collections-four-freedoms/

Another one of Rockwell's famous works, "Home on Leave," depicts a sailor on leave peacefully sleeping in a hammock. Published in September 1945 on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post*, this image was part of a series of works Rockwell illustrated after the end of the war, in order to depict the American soldiers' return home. Other illustrations in the series included "The Homecoming," "Homecoming Marine," and "Back to Civvies." All four paintings were published on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post*. "Home on Leave" celebrated the newfound peace in the U.S., as soldiers could finally return to the comfort of their homes.[29]

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[29] "Norman Rockwell, Home on Leave," Sotheby's, accesed December 23, 2017,
http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2007/american-paintings-n08322/lot.36.html

Cartoons

Before the Second World War, cartoons almost lost their popularity. Nevertheless, the events leading to World War II and the emergence of the war helped cartoons re-gain their status in society. Cartoons during the early and mid-20th century were seemingly less popular compared to radio broadcasts and motion pictures. Furthermore, cartoons often found it difficult to compete with the increasing popularity of celebrity culture that was being highlighted in print media. With the expectations that radios and movies had set, the need for entertainment had increased in the American society. The problem with the new and popular sources of entertainment revolving around Hollywood, however, were that they often did not encourage critical assessment of political issues.

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt became president in 1933, cartoonists once again received an important subject they could depict. Roosevelt had many characteristics that made him an interesting topic to convey. Cartoonists focused on his physical appearances as well as his character and his policies. A group of cartoonists illustrated anti-Roosevelt cartoons, while another group supported him.

Another event that gave cartoonists an important topic to cover, of course, was the rise of fascism in Europe. With Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini gaining power, the U.S. initially chose to officially identify with neither the Allies nor the Axis. Before the U.S. intervention in war, while some cartoonists such as Dr. Seuss chose to criticize the non-interventionist approach of the U.S., other cartoonists tended to focus more heavily on seeking out humorous subjects rather than questioning the government. Often, what made cartoonists thrive was not creating truthful

depictions of dictators, but rather depicting them as "buffoons" and subjects to be mocked.[30] This was ironic due to the fact that dictators posed a great threat to the world, but were depicted as humorous subjects in cartoons.

Two cartoonists who had accurately predicted the U.S. entry into war were Daniel Fitzpatrick, who often used the swastika as a symbol of death and destruction, and Theodor "Dr. Seuss" Geisel, who treated both Hitler and Mussolini as very serious topics even while the nation as a whole had not yet embraced interventionism.[31] Eventually, as the U.S. entered the war, the country embraced a more nationalistic view.

Donald Dewey describes cartoons produced in World War II as "lacking imagination" and not being startling enough.[32] However, an important cartoonist to mention is Bill Mauldin, who used his characters Willie and Joe to tell stories of the difficulties of life in the military. Mauldin's cartoons were some of the most original of the Second World War. Willie and Joe became very popular throughout the nation, and although some viewed the cartoonist's work as "undermining" of the military, others were sure that it increased public morale. Mauldin was the youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning.[33]
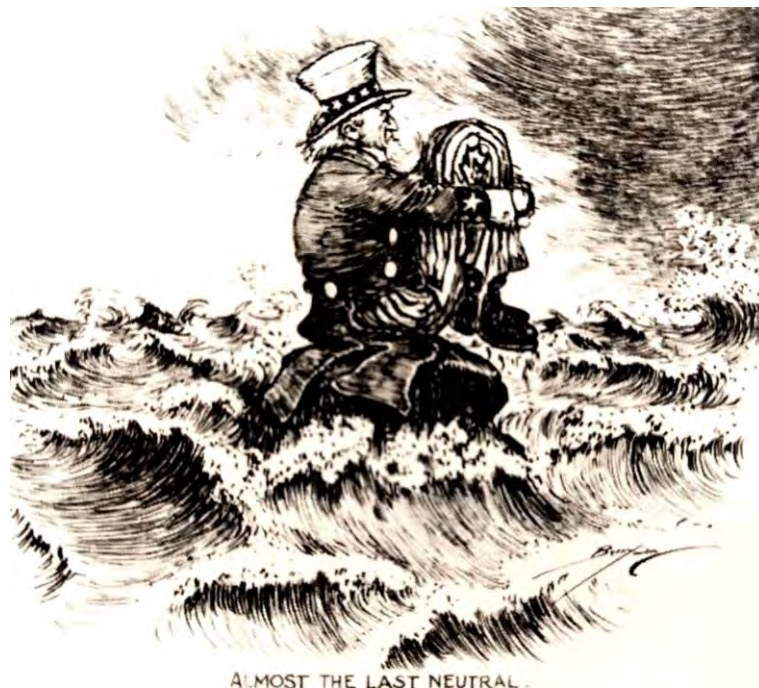
It is perhaps best to examine the use of cartoons in World War II America through a direct analysis of the cartoons themselves.

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[30] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 54
[31] Ibid., 54
[32] Ibid., 55
[33] Ibid., 55

ALMOST THE LAST NEUTRAL.

The cartoon on the left by Lute Pease, and the cartoon on the right by Clifford Berryman, both belong to the non-interventionist period between World War I and World War II.[34] Until December 1941, the U.S. chose not to become official allies with either side in World War II. However, after the initial attacks of the war such as Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939, American patience started declining. Although there remained a group of isolationists, a large group of American interventionists could not help but sympathize with democracies.[35] These cartoons depict the decreasing patience with isolationism, which would eventually end and give way to American entry into war.

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[34] Anthony Rhodes, and Victor Margolin, *Propaganda: The Art of Persuasion, World War II*, (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet Press, 1987), 139
[35] Ibid., 140

"Come on in, I'll treat you right. I used to know your daddy."

This image is Clarence Batchelor's *Come on In, I'll Treat You Right. I Used to Know Your Daddy* (1936).[36] This caricature that won the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning in 1937, is an example of anti-war ideology manifested through comics. Batchelor, an artist against U.S. inclusion in World War II, created this cartoon with the powerful leaders of the Axis powers in mind. The illustration depicts how European youth were being tempted into joining the war, unaware of the horrors to come as they only saw the "glamour" promised to them.[37]

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[36] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 144

[37] Heinz-Dietrich Fisher, *Political Caricatures on Global Issues: Pulitzer Prize Winning Editorial Cartoons*, (New York: Lit Verlag, 2012), 35

These cartoons by Clifford Berryman[38] were also created prior to U.S. entry into World War II. Unlike cartoons that were used as a means of propaganda after the attack on Pearl Harbor, images like these carried more humorous tones as they examined other countries' situations in the war. These cartoons, in particular, focused on the nonaggression pact between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, which the cartoonist deemed unrealistic, expecting Germany to soon invade the Soviet Union.

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[38] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 140
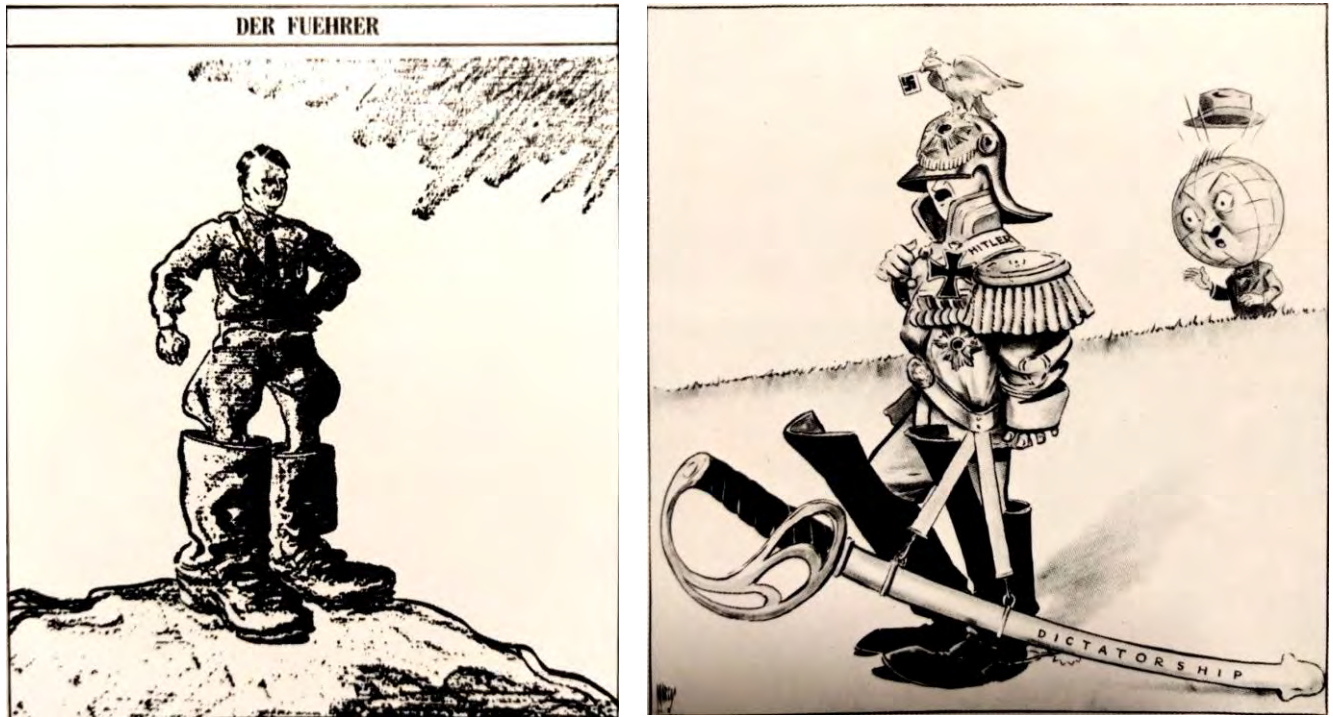
Other examples of cartoons prior to U.S. entry into the Second World War are these by Herbert Lawrence Block (more commonly known as Herblock) (left) and an unknown cartoonist (right).[39] As mentioned above, cartoons in the U.S. had become more comical as opposed to serious, treating political figures as laughing stocks rather than menaces. These cartoons are examples of the way in which American artists depicted Hitler in the 1930s. Although the illustration by Herblock demonstrates an early grasp over Hitler's desire of conquest, the image on the right depicts him in a more humorous manner. The comical approach in depicting Hitler is ironic due to the fact that in both cartoons, he is about to start his invasion plans and is therefore a great threat.

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[39] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 142

This cartoon, *Poland's Fall*, was published in 1939 by Daniel Fitzpatrick.[40] Fitzpatrick was a cartoonist who managed to foresee the destruction that Nazi Germany would bring upon Europe, and often used the swastika in his illustrations as a symbol for "an engine of death."[41] This cartoon, depicting the swastika about the roll over Poland, was published a week before Germany's invasion of the country in 1939. This cartoon is neither humorous nor satirical, but rather very direct in its depiction of Nazi Germany as a threat.

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[40] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 146
[41] Ibid., 54

WINGS OVER EUROPE.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1940.

This cartoon, also by Daniel Fitzpatrick[42] was published after the beginning of the Battle of France in 1940. An increasingly negative view of the Axis powers and especially Germany had been emerging, as levels of hopelessness rose. Americans expected that the war would spread quickly after this point, and comics such as this one represented the negative point of view. Fitzpatrick once again uses the swastika as a symbol of destruction and death in his cartoon.

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[42] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 145
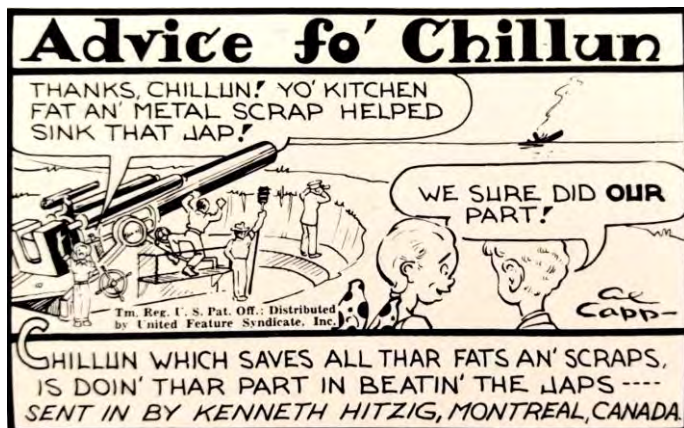
After the attack on Pearl Harbor, cartoons were used not only to poke fun at political figures or to bring attention to the situation in Europe, but also as propaganda to recruit Americans into the armed forces. There was now an internationalist idea that prodded U.S. intervention in the war by joining the Allies. The comic on the left by Al Rapp, and the comic on the right by an unknown artist,[43] are examples of comic art created after the United States' entry into World War II. Both cartoons were used as propaganda. Al Rapp, through this illustration, supported the "national campaign to save fat and scrap metals."[44] The image on the right, on the other hand, was a recruiting poster transformed into a comic strip and served to motivate American citizens into joining the armed forces.

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[43] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 150
[44] Ibid., 150
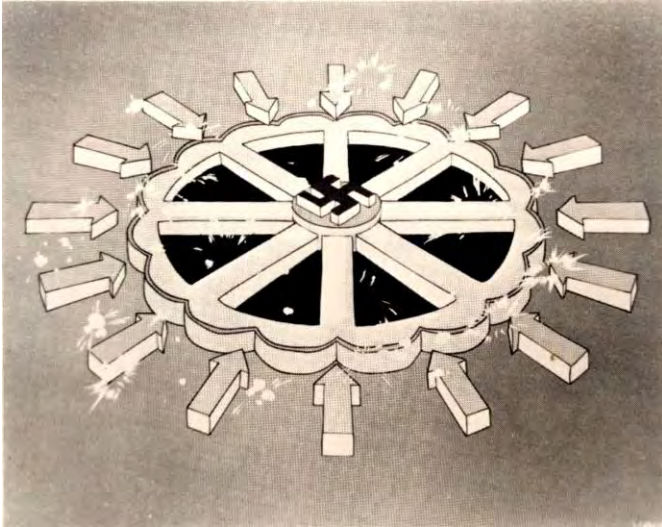
Walt Disney was one of those who illustrated cartoons for American propaganda. The cartoons above, titled "Victory through Air Power," were made for the U.S. Army Air Forces[45] and are examples of illustrations used as propaganda in order to attract citizens into wearing uniforms. Another way in which these cartoons are striking is due to the fact that they were created by Walt Disney. This is an example of how vast the influence of politics was on popular media, as characters widely known by the American society were used to impact the way in which the public thought.

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[45] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 158

Both cartoons above are by Arthur Szyk.[46] Both are examples of cartoons created after the American entry into World War II, and instead of motivating the public's contribution to the war, they instead focus on creating depictions of the Axis powers. The image on the left, made in 1942, portrays Mussolini's compliance to Germany and Japan, therefore identifying these two countries as the real enemies, and Italy as their subservient. On the other hand, the image on the right was published in 1941, several days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and instead of triggering American anger, it served the purpose of portraying Japan in a demeaning manner. Both cartoons, therefore, make use of the method to depict dictators as comical figures. This is ironic due to the fact that these dictators posed great danger to the world, but were instead depicted in humorous manner by

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[46] Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will : The Story of American Political Cartoons*, (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 163 - 167

cartoonists. Furthermore, Arthur Szyk's caricatures are significant examples of how these illustrations reached the public, as a great number of his work was published on *Collier's* covers.[47]

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[47] Ibid., 166
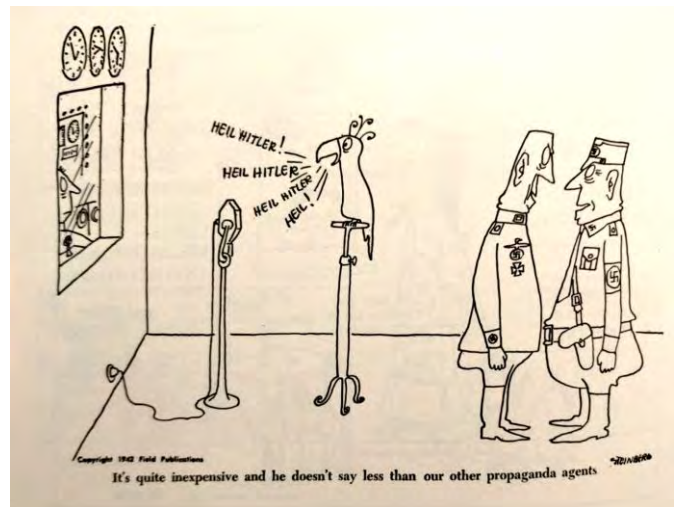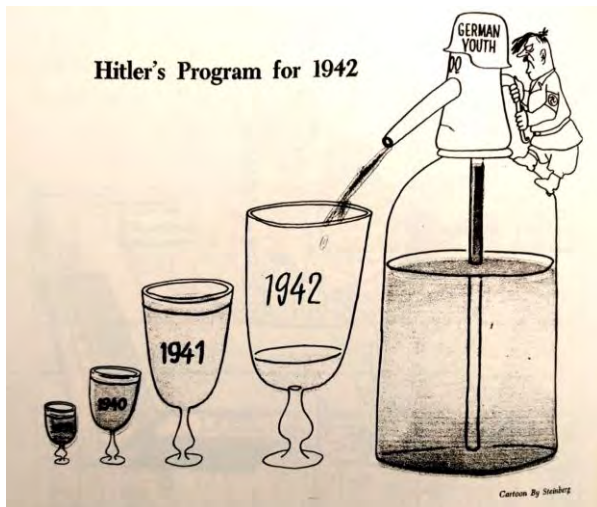
Both cartoons above were drawn in 1942 by Saul Steinberg.[48] Although these cartoons are not necessarily propaganda promoting contribution to the war, they are instead criticism of Germany. The cartoon on the left brings attention to Hitler's use of the German youth, explaining that his policies are draining the future of the country. The cartoon on the right, on the other hand, criticizes German use of media in a way that states that all German propaganda repeats only the greatness of Hitler.

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[48] Schiffrin André, *Dr. Seuss & Co. Go to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of America's Leading Comic Artists,* (New York: New Press, 2009), 156 - 162

SYMPATHY

TRANSFER

The comics above[49] are by Sergeant George Baker, and can be found in his book *The Sad Sack*. The comic strips "Sympathy" and "Transfer" are both about the rough conditions under which the soldiers lived. In "Sympathy," the character is expected to get right back to work after experiencing injury, and as soon as he regains consciousness, loses sympathy from his superior. In "Transfer," the character is happy upon learning that he has been transferred to the band. However, the conditions here are just as tough. The comic strip "V Mail" depicts the excitement with which soldiers awaited the mail that they would receive. The character here, after the initial happiness of receiving mail, is later saddened. Due to the minimal size of the V-mail, he attempts to read it with a magnifying glass, which later causes the letter to burn with the sunlight projected through magnifying glass. This, therefore, causes the character to be extremely distressed by the

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[49] George Baker, *The Sad Sack*, (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1944)

situation. What all strips above have in common is that George Baker depicts all scenarios in a lighthearted way, despite the fact that they are in fact difficult situations. This approach appears similar to that of Bill Mauldin, whose work will be examined in the subsequent section.

Bill Mauldin

Bill Mauldin was an Army Sergeant and an editorial cartoonist, who won two Pulitzer Prizes for Editorial Cartooning and created the characters Willie and Joe. He created most of his work while he was in the armed forces. He is perhaps the most well-known cartoonist of World War II, and therefore will be examined in an additional section.

In the 1930s, Mauldin received ROTC training when he was in school, around the same time he started creating political cartoons.[50] During his first years in the military, he believed that the U.S. should aid the Allied powers against the Axis. His earliest work for the *45th Division News* was unlike his later work, and included "busy panels" full of complex settings and many characters, with "extreme character development."[51] Eventually, however, his comics evolved into simpler styles that he would later be known for.

In addition to the *45th Division News*, Mauldin also tried to get his cartoons published in *Yank*, a weekly magazine published by the army, but only six of his illustrations were ever accepted by the magazine.[52] Mauldin therefore held a grudge against *Yank*. The beloved war reporter Ernie Pyle, however, appreciated Bill Mauldin and informed his readers of Mauldin's cartoons. In 1944, he expressed, "Sgt. Bill Mauldin appears to us over here to be the finest cartoonist the war has ever produced. (…) [His cartoons] are also terribly grim and real. Mauldin's cartoons (…) are about the men in the line – the tiny percentage of our vast army who are actually up there in that other world doing the dying. His cartoons are about the war. (…) Unfortunately for you and Mauldin

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[50] Todd DePastino, *Bill Mauldin: A Life Up Front*, 1st Ed. ed, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 34
[51] Ibid., 57
[52] Ibid., 80

both, the American public has no opportunity to see his daily drawings."[53] After Pyle's column about Mauldin, *Life* magazine published several cartoons Mauldin had drawn in Naples, which led to even more success for Mauldin.

Mauldin's work was most frequently published in *Stars and Stripes* newspaper, an independent news source for the U.S. Army. After the end of the war in 1945, he was awarded his first Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning, "for distinguished service as a cartoonist."[54] Instead of happiness, however, Mauldin often felt guilt about degrading the "traumas of combat"[55] through his cartoons. Also at the end of the war, Mauldin published a compilation of his wartime work: *Up Front.*

Mauldin's colleagues in *Stars and Stripes* expressed that Mauldin did not have many ideological opinions earlier in the war and instead received his political education mostly through the newspaper.[56] He now aimed to show the American public the realities of war, and delivered a talk called "The War Isn't Won."[57] This would later cause him to be accused as a communist. Although he produced fewer cartoons in his later career, Mauldin won a second Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning in 1959 for his cartoon *I won the Nobel Prize for Literature. What was your crime?*.[58]

Bill Mauldin's comics were well-known and appreciated for their truthfulness, as Mauldin depicted war as he experienced it. His cartoons were not propaganda to support the war, neither were they to criticize the Axis powers. They were instead for other soldiers to find parts of

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[53] Todd DePastino, *Bill Mauldin: A Life Up Front*, 1st Ed. ed, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 126
[54] Ibid., 197
[55] Ibid., 197
[56] Ibid., 219
[57] Ibid., 220
[58] Ibid., 278

themselves in, and for others to get realistic depictions of war. Veterans told Mauldin that his cartoons "saved their souls in war," and "kept their humanity alive."[59] Others expressed that "You would have to be part of a combat infantry unit to appreciate what moments of relief Bill gave us. You had to be reading a soaking wet *Stars and Stripes* in a water-filled foxhole and then see one of his cartoons."[60]

Others who appreciated Mauldin were those who experienced the war not from the front, but through stories of those who had fought for the country. Mauldin's cartoons did not simply depict the war, but also offered an analysis of the youth that was made to age and take on responsibility beyond their years.

Bill Mauldin also often stated that editorial cartoonists needed to be "stirrer uppers."[61] Through his cartoons he depicted all sorts of topics, ranging from "insensitive drill sergeants" to "glamour dripping Air Force pilots in leather jackets."[62] His most memorable characters, Willie and Joe, were regular characters. According to Mauldin himself, they "weren't even good characters"[63] due to their similar figures, and the fact that they were not like most other "young American manhood"[64] sent to the fronts. Nevertheless, these characters were determined to survive, and were loved by audiences all over the United States.

The following section examines several Bill Mauldin cartoons featured in his book, *Up Front*.

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[59] Todd DePastino, *Bill Mauldin: A Life Up Front*, 1st Ed. ed, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 3

[60] Ibid., 3

[61] Richard Severo, "Bill Mauldin, Cartoonist Who Showed World War II Through G.I. Eyes, Dies at 81," *The New York Times,* January 23, 2003, http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/23/arts/bill-mauldin-cartoonist-who-showed-world-war-ii-through-gi-eyes-dies-at-81.html

[62] Ibid.

[63] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 41

[64] Ibid., 42

"Why ya lookin' so sad? I got out of it okay."

This cartoon focuses on what Mauldin describes as "by far the most important reading matter that reaches soldiers overseas."[65] The mail was the only way in which soldiers overseas kept in touch with their lives back home, and therefore is crucial to the emotional well-being of those in uniform. This cartoon, therefore, depicts grief caused by the destruction of the letters, which were of vital importance to soldiers.

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[65] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 23

BLOWUP IN GERMANY

8-30

"Maybe th' sun's comin' up, Joe."

This cartoon is what Mauldin describes as the "only purely editorial cartoon" he could remember.[66] It was drawn after the 1944 assassination attempt towards Hitler, and the cartoon depicts how this event filled the American army with hope that Germany might fall.

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[66] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 30

"Footprints! God, wotta monster!"

This cartoon is yet another one that depicts everyday life from the viewpoint of the soldiers. Mauldin describes those who splash mud on foot troops as people who either "don't appreciate their jobs," or are "plain damned stupid."[67] This cartoon focusing on mud is a perfect example of an image depicting how soldiers experienced the warfront, as mud prevented them from keeping their feet dry and was therefore a very serious problem.

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[67] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 35

"Th' krauts ain't followin' ya so good on 'Lili Marlene' tonight, Joe. Ya think maybe somethin' happened to their tenor?"

Mauldin uses this cartoon to depict how American soldiers were not as hateful as the other armies, due to the fact that they had seldom been in contact with Nazis, but had instead been in contact with Germans.[68] Nevertheless, it can be observed that in this cartoon American soldiers use the derogatory term "kraut" to refer to Germans. Although "kraut" meant "cabbage" in German, it was often used during the First and Second World War to depict Germans negatively.[69] Despite the negative nature of the word "krauts," Mauldin explains that American soldiers viewed Germans as professional and emotionless, which caused respect and disdain by the American

[68] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 50
[69] "Kraut," Oxford Dictionaries, accessed December 25, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/kraut

army. This cartoon is important as Mauldin uses it to show how Willie and Joe observe the "krauts" not in the hateful manner that the negative connotation of the word suggests, but rather in a way that unites them all in combat. The significance of the song "Lili Marlene" is that the song, despite being German, had gained popularity on both fronts and therefore is used in the cartoon as another indication of sympathy.

"Joe, yestiddy ya saved my life an' I swore I'd pay ya back.
Here's my last pair of dry socks."

This cartoon is an example of those in which Mauldin refers to the importance of friendship on the front.[70] Mauldin explains how friends depend on one another during wartime, and that friendships are a crucial part in the livelihoods of soldiers. The cartoon does not depict friendship in glory or in an enviable manner, but rather in a realistic and simple way. Not only does this drawing focus on friendship, but it also focuses on the importance of simple needs on the battlefront.

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[70] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 59
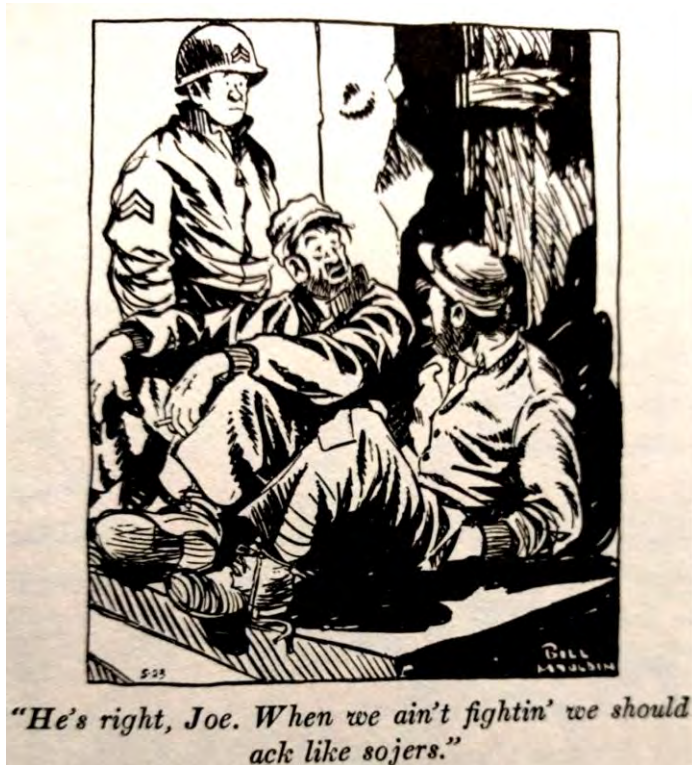
"Are you seeking a company of infantry, mon capitaine!"

This cartoon is different compared to others as it does not necessarily depict the battlefront, but rather how soldiers were treated in the countries that they travel to.[71] Mauldin explains that Europeans mostly greeted them welcomingly, but that there were towns in which they detested soldiers and treated them with aggression. Mauldin adds that soldiers in these towns behaved worse than they did in the towns they were welcomed to. This cartoon is an example of a town in which soldiers were disliked. Furthermore, it is significant that this cartoon is set in France, as there were accusations of American soldiers of raping French women during the liberation of Paris in in 1944.[72] Therefore, in this cartoon, the way in which the school teacher asks the soldiers if they are

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[71] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 72

[72] "The GIs who raped France: We know about the mass rape of German women by Stalin's soldiers. Now a new book reveals American troops committed thousands of rapes on French women they were 'liberating,'" Daily Mail, accessed December 23, 2017, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2334204/The-GIs-raped-France-We-know-mass-rape-

seeking the company of infantry is symbolic as it references the relations between American

soldiers and French women.

German-women-Stalins-soldiers-Now-new-book-reveals-American-troops-committed-thousands-rapes-French-women-liberating.html

"He's right, Joe. When we ain't fightin' we should
ack like sojers."

In this cartoon, Mauldin focuses on the emotional state of soldiers.[73] He explains that soldiers were expected to retain gravity in their manners. This cartoon therefore is not an ode to how soldiers had to remain professional even when they were not in combat, but rather a criticism of the way in which men in uniform were not expected to laugh. Mauldin explains in *Up Front* that their superiors expected the soldiers to retain serious exteriors, as it fit with their image as soldiers.[74] Therefore the problem was not that soldiers could not engage in entertaining activities outside of duty, but that they were expected to retain gravity in their manners at most times.

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[73] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 83
[74] Ibid., 83

"Ever notice th' funny sound these zippers make, Willie?"
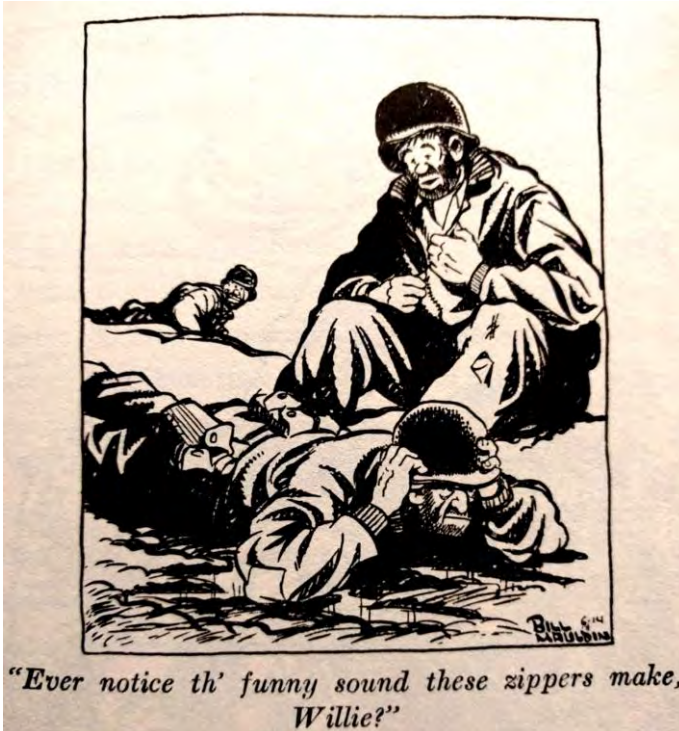
This cartoon focuses on a seemingly simple issue that in reality was a daily concern in the life up front.[75] The zipper is in fact a reference to the shells on the battlefront. Mauldin explains that despite how much time they might spend on taking cover, soldiers were unprotected against shells, and that they came to recognize the different sounds that each shell made. This drawing is a reference to the sounds made by these shells, which caused infinite terror on the battlefront. This cartoon was illustrated after the arrival of the U.S. troops in France on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

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[75] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 95

Unlike most other cartoons in which Bill Mauldin focuses on a daily struggle faced by those on the fronts, he describes this one as a "very funny cartoon."[76] The cartoon is very simple in that it depicts an old cavalryman shooting his malfunctioning jeep. From his commentary on this cartoon, it is easy to observe that Mauldin greatly appreciates this drawing because of how the old cavalryman is inclined to treat his car in the same manner that he would treat a horse. It is perhaps the comical nature of the image, that served as a helpful mechanism to cope with the gravity of the battlefront that has caused the artist to carry such deep gratitude towards it. Although the cartoon does not necessarily include a message on life on the battlefront, and is also sad due to the fact that the cavalryman has to say goodbye to his car, Mauldin explains that he found entertainment at a time of war by illustrating this image.

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[76] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 113

"Hell. Just when I git me practice built up they transfer me to another regiment."

This cartoon focuses on the aid man.[77] Mauldin explains how the aid man had the responsibility to carry injured soldiers from the battlefront to the surgeons, and that he therefore held a crucial role in the wellbeing of the army. The artist says that the medics are "good subjects for drawing," as they were part of the few "human and good things"[78] that showed up on the battlefront. This cartoon is one conveying medics. Since the aid man was such an important part of the battlefront, such cartoons also played roles in depicting this in a realistic manner.

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[77] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 119
[78] Ibid., 117

"Congratulations. You're the 100th soldier who has posed with that bottle of Icey Cola. You may drink it."

This cartoon is important as it depicts the difference between the reality of war, and the way in which soldiers were conveyed through media.[79] Mauldin explains that although he attempts to convey war as realistically as he can, the only way to truly comprehend how it is, is to experience it. This cartoon shows how advertisement produced unrealistic images of war. The caption of this cartoon is also significant because Coca Cola was very popular during World War II. The president of Coca Cola had attempted to make it easy for soldiers to have access to the drink, and it had become an important matter to provide Cola for those soldiers abroad.[80] Coca Cola was a symbol of the American way of life, and was therefore used as a way to boost the morale of the military.

[79] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 130
[80] "Our Story 1941-1959: The War and What Followed," Coca Cola History, accessed December 15, 2017, http://www.coca-cola.co.uk/stories/our-story-1941-1959--the-war-and-what-followed

Nevertheless, the glory depicted by advertisements of Coca Cola did not match the harsh conditions of the military. This cartoon conveys the way in which media depiction of the military, as well as advertisement relating to the military, was not always accurate.

"He says we kin git a room in th' Catacombs. They useta keep Christians in 'em."
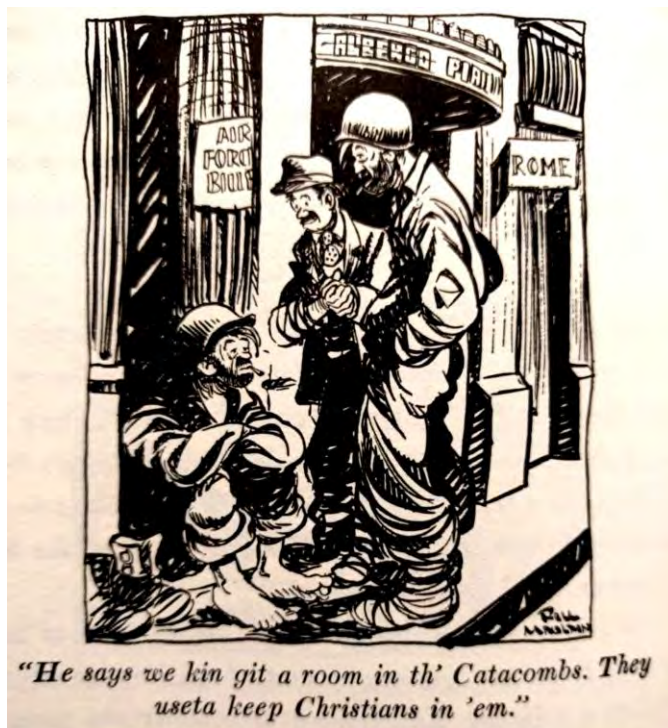
This cartoon is another example of the many difficulties that the army faced when overseas.[81] Mauldin explains how the Air Force always took hold of the better hotels, leaving no place to stay for the infantry. He explains that this was particularly disappointing as it was a result of rapid change. The cartoon above, therefore, is a result of this disappointment and is intended to influence change in the way that the infantry was treated.

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[81] Bill Mauldin, *Up Front: The Classic Portrait in Text and Drawings of the American Combat Soldier in World War II*, 50th Anniversary Ed. ed, (New York: Norton, 1991), 164

Fresh, spirited American troops, flushed with victory, are bringing in thousands of hungry, ragged, battle-weary prisoners. *(news item)*

"I won the Nobel Prize for Literature. What was your crime?"

These two cartoons are those for which Bill Mauldin won the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning first in 1945, and then in 1959. The first cartoon that made Mauldin the youngest Pulitzer Prize recipient[82] depicted the trauma of war that remained upon soldiers as they returned home. The reality of these soldiers returning from war was far from the glory depicted by the media. The second cartoon, about Russian author Boris Pasternak winning the Nobel Prize for Literature,[83] was about the writer being prevented from accepting the award. At the time this cartoon was illustrated, the U.S. and the Soviet Union were in the Cold War, and in 1958, the

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[82] Todd DePastino, *Bill Mauldin: A Life Up Front*, 1st Ed. ed, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 198
[83] Ibid., 277

Soviet Union had launched Sputnik 3 into space after the U.S. had launched Explorer 1. This cartoon, therefore, was set at a time in which the U.S. and the Soviet Union were in competition with one another, and although the Soviet Union had advanced in the space race, it still endured censorship that prevented the creative fields from advancing.

Dr. Seuss

Theodor Geisel, more commonly known as children's cartoonist Dr. Seuss, was a political cartoonist in his early career. He commenced his career in the 1920s as a cartoonist for the humor magazine *Judge*, and the magazine *Life* that was known for its photojournalism.[84] He expressed that he had "no great causes or interest in social issues until Hitler,"[85] after which he started drawing for *PM*, a daily liberal newspaper that published from 1940 until 1948. Dr. Seuss was successful at conveying his ideas, which he did through his political cartoons carrying subtle messages under the humorous nature of his illustrations.

Theodor Geisel spent his life in New York between 1927 and 1941, where he worked for the oil company Esso and therefore managed to avoid suffering during the Great Depression. During these years, he also published several books. Although these books did not bring him immediate fame, they did eventually become successful.[86]

In 1939, after Germany's invasion of Poland, Dr. Seuss started exploring political cartoons. He worked as an editorial cartoonist for *PM* newspaper, from early 1941 until 1943. His cartoons explored ideas from isolationism to war, and the subject he most frequently touched upon was Hitler.

Below are analyses of Dr. Seuss's wartime cartoons.

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[84] Richard H Minear, and Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, (New York: New Press, 2000), 6
[85] Ibid., 6
[86] Ibid., 6
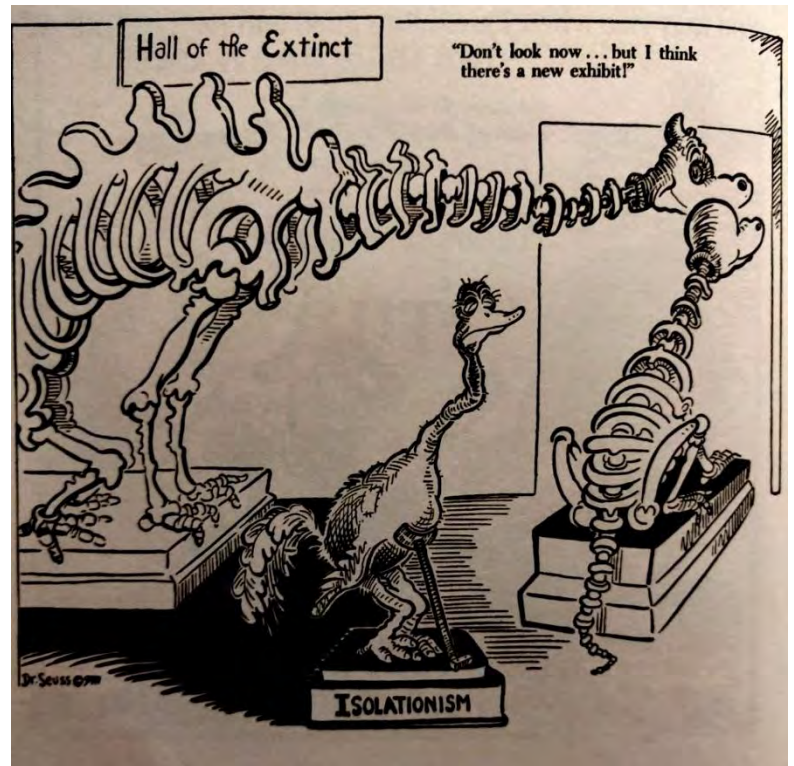
These cartoons both explore the extinction of the isolationist ideology. The cartoon on the left[87] was the first one that Dr. Seuss published after the attack on Pearl Harbor, as a reaction to the changing opinions in the United States. It depicts the already weakened isolationist view being completely abandoned with the emergence of war, as even prior to December 7, Dr. Seuss had been against isolationism and had been in favor of joining the war.[88] The cartoon on the right,[89] illustrated in 1941, is another example of the abandonment of the isolationist ideology, as Dr. Seuss places it in the "Hall of the Extinct."

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[87] Richard H Minear, and Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, (New York: New Press, 2000), 28
[88] Ibid., 17
[89] Ibid., 48

These cartoons focus on the flaws of the isolationist ideology. The cartoon on the left,[90] published in mid-1941, depicts Uncle Sam. He is healthy as he remains away from the many diseases and problems that reign over Europe, and that have killed the cat below the bed. The image conveys the way in which the United States remained unaffected by the disasters in Europe, as it chose not to engage in war. The cartoon on the right depicts the U.S. as comfortable, as it stays away from the war.[91] Dr. Seuss implies that this approach shows insensitivity, as although America hears stories about the destruction in Europe, there seems to be no attempt to help those

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[90] Richard H Minear, and Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, (New York: New Press, 2000), 31
[91] Ibid., 45

countries affected by the devastation. This cartoon can be viewed as propaganda prodding the U.S.

to join the war.

These cartoons both depict ideas related to Adolf Hitler, and the general state of Germany during the Third Reich. The cartoon on the left[92] shows Hitler's contentment about hearing of the news of the labor unrest in America. Not only does this cartoon show that there was labor unrest in the U.S., it also directs attention towards Hitler's control over the media in Germany[93] as he allows his subordinates to be informed of this situation. The cartoon on the right[94] includes Hitler only as a picture on the wall. This image depicts the destitution of the German public in various ways.[95] Not only is the child starving, but the plants on the windowsill are dying.

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[92] Richard H Minear, and Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, (New York: New Press, 2000), 66
[93] Ibid., 26
[94] Ibid., 95
[95] Ibid., 76

The cartoons above are about the many countries that Hitler aspired to rule, and the various roles he attempted to assume at once. The image on the left[96] was drawn before America entered the war, but after Hitler had gained control over Eastern Europe.[97] It depicts Hitler attempting to play the musical notebook entitled "New World Symphony," with the many countries that Germany had conquered in the form of musical instruments. He is struggling to maintain control over all of the instruments symbolizing the different Axis powers. In "The Latest Self-Portrait,"[98] "Hitler is "simultaneously the sculptor, subject, mermaid and the *putti* crowning Hitler with knight's helmet."[99] The multiple characters that Hitler assumes, mocks his ego.

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[96] Richard H Minear, and Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, (New York: New Press, 2000), 84
[97] Ibid., 73-74
[98] Ibid., 86
[99] Ibid., 74
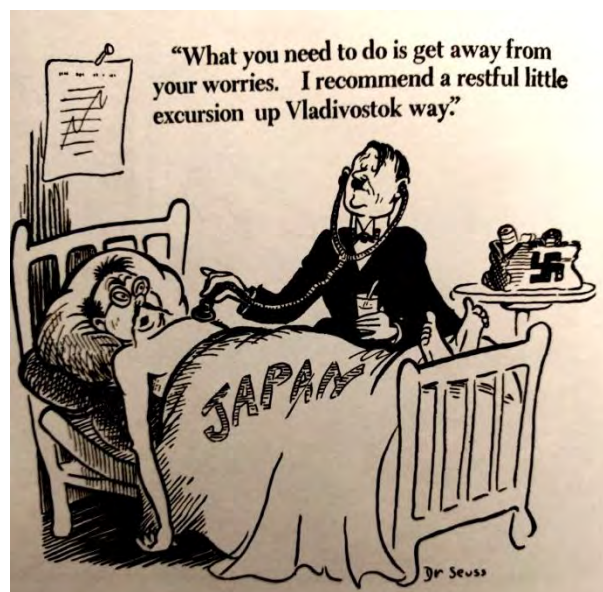
The cartoons above both deal with the foreign policies of Germany. The first image,[100]

drawn on December 2, 1942, once again explores the idea of extinction (similar to "Isolationism"

in the "Hall of the Extinct"). In this cartoon, Dr. Seuss foresees Mussolini's future,[101] as an already-

extinct dodo bird asks him whether he is ready to take his place at the museum. The second

cartoon[102] drawn in mid-1941, conveys Japan's unwillingness to fight in Europe against Russia,

as Hitler urges them to do so.[103]

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[100] Richard H Minear, and Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, (New York: New Press, 2000), 137
[101] Ibid., 117
[102] Ibid., 138
[103] Ibid., 117

This cartoon[104] focuses on the "Dream of a Short War." Here Dr. Seuss explores how, in July 1942, this dream had come to an end as the war kept going on. Therefore, the driver asking the passenger to "walk" from then on interrupts the magical scene in this image. In July 1942, the war seemed to be advancing on both the European and Pacific fronts. Following the American victory in the Battle of Midway, the Japanese had built an airfield in Guadalcanal.[105] Moreover, Germany was successfully advancing in Soviet Russia, and would continue to do so until the Battle of Stalingrad during which Soviet Russia successfully defended its city in late July.[106] Therefore, in July 1942 it appeared that the war would not be a short one and that the battle would continue.

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[104] Richard H Minear, and Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, (New York: New Press, 2000), 214

[105] "World War II in the Pacific," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Holocaust Encyclopedia, accessed December 25, 2017, https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005155

[106] "World War II in Eastern Europe," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Holocaust Encyclopedia, accessed December 25, 2017, https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005186

Conclusion

Propaganda art played many important roles in World War II America, from influencing citizens of the nation to increase production or to serve in the military, to depicting the realities of the war in a relatable manner. An important part of all propaganda art used in the U.S., was print propaganda. This project has utilized illustrations from two different categories of print propaganda in order to further examine propaganda art in World War II America: Posters and cartoons.

During the Second World War, war-related information was spread in the U.S. through visual media, radios, and print media. These sources were also used to distribute propaganda, and print propaganda often took the form of posters and cartons. Propaganda was a way in which ideas were spread to influence the nation's way of thinking. Although the American nation initially appeared skeptical as to whether they could believe the World War II propaganda after the devastation following World War I, propaganda during the Second World War nevertheless reached great success.

Although the U.S. did not officially enter the war until the end of 1941, the policies during the years prior were rapidly changing in favor of the Allied powers. Eventually, in 1941, the Lend and Lease Act allowing the U.S. to trade with countries whose survival was crucial to U.S. security, and the Atlantic Charter defining Allied goals for the result of World War II, had made it clear that the U.S. was increasingly shifting towards an interventionist approach. The U.S. joined World War II in December 1941, and one of the most crucial organizations set after U.S. entry into war, was the Office of War Information. The OWI was in charge of the visual representation of World War

II in the U.S., and also distributed most of the propaganda throughout the country. Although the organization claimed to use a truthful manner of depicting the war, it also clearly stated that the propaganda used in the country could not be neutral and that it would help bring the U.S. to victory.

The two main types of propaganda discussed in this report, posters and cartoons, appear to differ from one another in certain manners. Posters, for example, seem to have often been used to unite American citizens for a common goal. Whether it be for production of wartime goods, or mobilization of women and men, posters often used feelings of heroism and patriotism in order to remind Americans of the freedom they enjoyed, and to motivate them to perform a variety of tasks through which they could become part of the effort against the Axis powers. One of the most famous painters of the time, Norman Rockwell, illustrated many *Saturday Evening Post* covers, including that of Rosie the Riveter. His *Four Freedoms*, inspired by Roosevelt's speech by the same name, also gained great popularity.

Cartoon art, on the other hand, seems to have focused more heavily on criticizing different aspects of the war and of American non-interventionism, or on depicting the lives of American soldiers. Although cartoons also conveyed very strong messages, unlike posters they were often not the first measure used to motivate Americans to become part of the wartime effort. Instead, through an analysis of cartoonists such as Dr. Seuss, one can observe that cartoons (especially those published in independent or liberal newspapers such as *PM*), were used to draw attention to and criticize wartime problems such as U.S. non-interventionism or the situation in Germany. These cartoons often depicted dictators in comical ways, which was ironic due to the fact that these figures posed a great threat to the world. An analysis of artists such as Bill Mauldin and Sergeant George Baker, on the other hand, gives us the understanding that cartoons were also used to illustrate the daily lives of the soldiers. These cartoons reached a wide variety of populations

throughout the U.S., and became effective because of the simplistic and realistic manners in which they depicted the struggles faced by military. Characters such as "Willie and Joe" gained popularity in America due to their relatability, and they increased army morale.

In conclusion, print propaganda in the U.S. during the Second World War took many forms, but those that appeared most often in print form were traditionally posters utilized throughout the country, or cartoons published in newspapers and magazines. These forms of propaganda were used not only to boost morale, but for a variety of reasons ranging from influencing American citizens in helping the fight against the enemies, to criticizing the dictatorships of the Axis powers.

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