



University
of Glasgow

Avina, Avital Zuk (2015) *Political communication through iconographic propaganda posters as potential components of female perpetrated violence in WWII Germany*. [MSc]

<http://endeavour.gla.ac.uk/63/>

Copyright and moral rights for this work are retained by the author(s)

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This work cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author(s)

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, institution and date must be given



School of Social and Political Sciences

Political Communication through Iconographic
Propaganda Posters as Potential Components of Female
Perpetrated Violence in WWII Germany

September 2015

2152975

Presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of:
M.Sc. in Political Communication

University of Glasgow

Word Count: 14,996

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	3
Introduction	4
Chapter 1: Propaganda as Communication	7
<i>Propaganda through the Ages</i>	7
<i>Propaganda Theory</i>	9
<i>Methodology</i>	18
Chapter 2: Nazi Propaganda.....	22
<i>Nazi Propaganda—Characteristics, Themes, and Effects</i>	23
<i>Posters as Communication</i>	28
<i>Communication and Violence</i>	41
Chapter 3: Women and Propaganda.....	44
<i>Women and Violence</i>	50
<i>Women as Perpetrators</i>	52
<i>Women in Denial and Dissent</i>	57
Conclusion	60
Appendix	63
Bibliography.....	66

ABSTRACT

This dissertation looks at World War II Germany's visual political communication in the form of propaganda posters and the potential connection to increased female perpetrated violence. Chapter one introduces the history and theory of propaganda, followed by methods of assessing efficacy on the masses. Nazi propaganda characteristics and themes are explored in chapter two and are analysed in propaganda poster exemplars representing overall themes observed during content analysis. These propaganda messages and themes are then connected to violent behaviour during the Third Reich by comparing behaviour and dissent with the official Nazi Party political communication. The final chapter explores female representations in the poster art, how they are incorporated into a gender equal (if not opportunity equal) national community by the propaganda, and their role in Nazi German violence.

INTRODUCTION

All propaganda is lies, even when one is telling the truth.

-George Orwell

Not all propaganda is lies. This common misconception stems from the predominantly negative use of propaganda in World War I and World War II. However, while all propaganda is not lies, it is not exactly truth either. Propaganda uses frames, cognitive manipulation, and persuasion to change the information to the benefit of the propagandist; this includes all forms of information, truth, lies, and everything in-between. Herzstein (1979) described the propaganda of the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP) or Nazi Party as ‘The War the Hitler Won’, referring to the strength of said propaganda. It implies, that although Germany lost the physical war, in many ways the battle of the masses’ public opinion was won by the Hitlerian propaganda that was pervasive within the Nazi state. This dissertation attempts to expand on previous studies and establish a connection between the ideological battle and the physical one.

The strength of Nazi propaganda is often considered one of the main causes for some of the most horrific war crimes to date. It incited widespread hatred of non-Aryan peoples, classifying them as an Other, enemy, sub-human, or vermin. This common war tactic depersonalized the enemy and made it easier to take extreme actions (Perry, 1983: 232). It also built a shared unified identity for those considered Aryan, an in-group that garnered significant favour, reward, and honour in Nazi society. This in-group/out-group dynamic encouraged by propaganda influenced public opinion to either engage with the violence, or to at least remain silent and acquiescent. Most studies on the effects of Nazi propaganda investigate it by looking

at the apparent strength of the propaganda, rarely comparing general public engagement and opinion. Some do look at public opinion (Kershaw, 1983; Welch, 1993), the Hitlerian coterie (Kershaw, 1987; Kershaw, 1993), or male perpetrated violence. The propaganda engagement of the female citizen is rarely addressed.

Prior to 1939, propaganda aimed at women in Nazi society encouraged women to give up jobs and return home to raise large families. Incentives in the form of monetary compensation and medals of honour were awarded to women with particularly large families (Stephenson, 1975). As Germany transitioned to a nation at war, women replaced men in the workplace, becoming an integral part in the everyday workings of the Nazi war machine (Welch, 1993: 111; Grunberger, 1971: 324). Despite this transition to active roles in society, there seems to be a lack of scholarship tracing the connection between propaganda and female perpetrated violence in Nazi society.

This dissertation proposes to examine this gap by looking at the potential effects of iconographic propaganda posters as a political communication pathway that may have led to increased violence among the female population in Germany. This paper defines violence to include overt violent actors, witnesses, bystanders, supporters, and enablers. Though it is nearly impossible to prove a direct correlation between propaganda and violent effects, this paper proposes to use propaganda theory and previous established methods of assessing efficacy to examine its effects. Propaganda published from 1929-1944 will be used to investigate the potential connection between propaganda posters' messages and changes in female agency and female perpetrated violence.

Chapter one focuses on propaganda theory, including an historical examination, propaganda theories, effects, and methods. It also outlines the

methodology used to select, analyse, and establish efficacy of the posters. Chapter two looks more specifically at Nazi propaganda. It takes several posters to exemplify overarching messages and themes found during analysis. The posters will be categorised by Welch (1993)'s Nazi propaganda themes: national community, Hitler Myth, racial purity, and enemy definition. The final chapter focuses specifically on the female effects and the roles they played in the violence.

RQ: What were the potential effects of propaganda posters on female agency and female perpetrated violence in the Third Reich?

CHAPTER 1: PROPAGANDA AS COMMUNICATION

Originally referring only to propagation in the biological sense of reproduction (Fellow, 1959: 182), the origins of the term ‘propaganda’ can be traced to a papal bull issued by Pope Gregory XV in 1622 establishing the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Taithe & Thornton, 1999: 1; Prendergast & Prendergast, 2013: 20; Jason, 2013: 216). This neutral, religious undertone remained fairly consistent throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with more political associations slowly introduced in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It was not until WWI that the term’s meaning truly shifted to incorporate both a highly political form of communication as well as the modern negative undertones. The evolution of propaganda during the Great War was just the beginning; WWII continued the progress of propaganda technique and persuasion to perfection (Fellows, 1959: 185).

This chapter first introduces a brief historical background of propaganda. Next, it examines propaganda theory, including common characteristics and psychological underpinnings. In addition, there will be a discussion of propaganda’s use of rhetorical manipulation as well as propaganda’s effects on public opinion and behaviour. Following this, a literature based method of measuring effects will be presented. Finally, the methodological approach used here is established.

Propaganda through the Ages

Despite the relatively recent coinage of the term ‘propaganda’, its roots can be traced back into ancient history. From the domineering architectural achievements of Ramses II at Abu Simbel through to the present forms, propaganda has had a hand in political and military persuasions of all sorts (for an overview of the history of

propaganda see O'Shaughnessy, 2012; Middle Ages propaganda see Gaunt, 1999; Protestant Reformation see Soergel, 1991; War of 1812 see Ivie, 1982). As history progressed, the steady flow of population from rural and agrarian living to urban and industrialized centres coupled with technological advances in mass production and transportation of information led to a greater prominence and reliance on propagandist techniques to communicate as well as to fuel wars. The technological improvements of colour printing, photography, and radio significantly advanced propaganda's dissemination and importance.

Twentieth-century propaganda '[m]ethodologies, technologies and causes [coalesced] in an incendiary combination' (O'Shaughnessy, 2012: 32). WWI brought about a shift in meaning as well as a marked increase in use of the term (Robertson, 2014). One of the key transformations of propaganda was the more centralised control of information and total proliferation across all media outlets; posters, cartoons, photographs, newspapers, pamphlets, official documents, cinema, and radio reports were among the most widely used propaganda sources of WWI (Taithe & Thornton, 1999: 14; Rose, 2014: 45). One of the defining styles of propaganda during this time period was atrocity propaganda, later deemed a manipulative technique based in untruths whose sole purpose was to manufacture hatred and legitimise WWI as a 'just war' (Robertson, 2014). In the 1920s and 1930s there was a popular backlash against propaganda with many regarding the wartime use with distrust, fear, and suspicion (Fellows, 1959). While WWI initiated the concept, WWII perfected it—becoming more organised, developed, and psychologically persuasive (Fellows, 1959: 185; Taithe & Thornton, 1999: 14) and confirming the negative attitudes when 'Nazi Reich made propaganda a vehicle for promoting invasion and genocide' (Auerbach & Castronovo, 2013: 3).

Propaganda Theory

The study of propaganda is a twentieth-century phenomenon. Early studies of propaganda dissected the WWI manifestation. Lasswell (1927) asserted that propaganda is primarily the manipulation of symbols, particularly culturally grounded symbols, used to express, reaffirm, or redefine attitudes and can be spread through spoken, written, pictorial, or musical means (631). Furthermore, war propaganda revolves around images of the enemy, ally, and neutral as well as attitude control. Lasswell's early suppositions about propaganda are the foundational concepts later expanded by propaganda theories and institutions.

As WWII progressed, the study of propaganda began to flourish. The Institute for Propaganda Analysis, founded in 1937, studied both domestic and war propaganda (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 182). It defined propaganda as 'the expression of opinions or actions carried out deliberately by individuals or groups with a view to influencing the opinions or actions of other individuals or groups for predetermined ends and through psychological manipulations' (Ellul, 1968: xii). This definition, though more comprehensive than Lasswell, fails to provide a complete definition. There is overlap between persuasion and propaganda; however, the terms cannot be used interchangeably. Propaganda is not just a piece of rhetorical persuasion, rather it is a direct part of the entire political process and institution which aims to influence and transform the masses from heterogeneous individuals with distinct thoughts into a homogeneous mass (Markova, 2008: 41). Propaganda's overarching goal is to garner a response from the target that further benefits the propagandist while persuasion is based on a mutual benefit for both the initiator and the recipient (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 1). Therefore, this dissertation will use Jowett & O'Donnell (1992)'s definition: 'a form of coercion without the appearance of coercion; its purpose is the deliberate

and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist' (4). This deliberate manipulation is part of a social system that attempts to shape the truth for all reaches of society through mass political communication (Classen, 2007; Markova, 2008; McCrann 2009).

Propaganda aims to shape perceptions through cognitive manipulations or by direction of a specific behaviour (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 5-6) using symbols, language, and images. While propaganda can introduce new ideas, it is at its most effective when it is confirming, reinforcing, and expanding pre-existing trends and beliefs (Ellul, 1968: vii; Kershaw, 1987: 4; Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 153; Welch, 1993: 5; Bajomi-Lazar & Corvinus, 2013: 221; Marlin, 2013: 351). Therefore, introducing a new idea, is a long term game which entails building the ideology from the ground up. This notion is known as pre-propaganda (Ellul, 1968) or sub-propaganda (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992). Pre-propaganda introduces new, unfamiliar, or imprecise ideas over a long period of time in order to build a certain frame of mind among the masses and direct them towards acceptance of the doctrine (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 15) as well as 'readies the masses to be triggered by active propaganda' (Ellul, 1968: 33). This can be through conditioned reflexes, guiding myths, and education. The myth is especially strong, making the persuasive task of the propagandist easier by building upon their own pre-propaganda ideas (Marlin, 2013: 352).

Propaganda can be broken down into four dichotomous categories: political-sociological, agitation-integration, vertical-horizontal, and irrational-rational (Ellul, 1968). Political propaganda has definite architects, targets, and aims (Marlin, 2013: 352) and 'involves techniques of influence employed by a government, a party, an

administration, a pressure group, with a view to changing the behaviour of the public' (Ellul, 1968: 62). This type of propaganda is strategic, tactical, deliberate, and calculated with clear goals and solely political ends. Sociological propaganda is a more subtle and diffuse method of cultural indoctrination whose aim is to spread a unifying ideology and influence gradually and is often imperceptible (Ellul, 1968: 62; Marlin, 2013: 352).

Agitation propaganda 'leads men from mere resentment to rebellion' while integration propaganda 'aims at making them adjust themselves to desired patterns' (Ellul, 1968: vi). Agitation or explicit propaganda is the most visible and widespread form of propaganda, provoking a reaction from the audience that leads them to a specific, and often significant change (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 8; O'Shaughnessy, 2012: 29). Used by rebels and governments alike, it mobilises followers to violence or war (Ellul, 1968: 71). This form of propaganda is the easiest to initiate and fulfil because it only needs to engage the most simple and violent segments of society. Furthermore, the less educated the target audience is, the easier it is to convince them of the merit of the cause through propaganda (Ellul, 1968: 74). However, it is difficult to maintain over a long period of time, it needs constant reinforcement and new episodes to keep it going. On the other hand, integration propaganda is designed to facilitate conformity through implicit or cultural means (O'Shaughnessy, 2012: 29). This type of propaganda is pervasive throughout developed countries and a modern phenomenon unique to the twentieth-century (Ellul, 1968). Unlike agitation, integration propaganda aims to create a passive and accepting audience that lets the propagandist enact their policies without any resistance (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 8). It often leads to a level of conformity and societal acceptance of communal norms and behavioural patterns. Furthermore, it does not get the same immediate results as

agitation propaganda, with hatred being one of the only underlying themes that can have immediate satisfaction; all other ideas take longer to manifest.

Vertical, or top-down propaganda is initiated by an authority figure aimed at the masses (Ellul, 1968: 79-80; Bajomi-Lazar & Corvinus, 2012: 225). Generally, the targets are passive and react from a conditioned reflex, not critically. The individual thus becomes part of a homogenous crowd (Marlin, 2013: 356). This approach is a one-way, monological form of communication that originates with the propagandist and the message is then transmitted to the intended audience. Monological communication is a characteristic of propaganda, whereas a dialogical, two-way negotiation, is more characteristic of persuasion (Markova, 2008: 49). Horizontal propaganda is a type of propaganda that is perpetuated at the mass level originating within small homogenous groups, where the individual participates in their own indoctrination (Marlin, 2013; 357).

According to Welch (1993) the most effective propaganda uses both irrational and rational appeals (8). Irrational propaganda is based on myth, emotion, group norms, and societal stereotypes. It uses the traditionally grounded myths along with any pre-propaganda myths and relies heavily on emotional responses. WWI's atrocity propaganda backlash led to a transition in WWII towards a more rational approach (Fellows, 1959: 185), although there was still a substantial amount of emotive propaganda. Rational propaganda uses facts, figures, statistics and other forms of seemingly credible information to make their persuasive argument. For instance, a misleading opinion poll or framing statistics to sound better than they actually are (Marlin, 2013: 357-8).

Whether rational or not, '[p]ropaganda [...] runs the gamut from truth to deception. It is, at the same time, always value- and ideology-laden' (Jowett &

O'Donnell, 1992: 15). There are many different kinds of 'truths' offered by propaganda including full lies, half-truths, limited truths, and truths out-of-context (Ellul, 1968: v; Welch, 1993: 5). One way to differentiate the different kinds of truth involved in propaganda is to distinguish between 'white', 'black', and 'grey' propaganda. White propaganda is information that is correctly attributed to the proper source and contents are generally accurate. Whereas black propaganda's true source can be difficult to discern, its contents are false and deceptive, and it uses any type of deceit deemed necessary to elicit the desired response. Grey propaganda is somewhere between the two; the source may or may not be clear, and the information's level of truth varies (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 8-10). Whether true or false, the information in propaganda is always framed in a way that favours the propagandist. One of the easiest ways to control the level of information is by 'monopoliz[ing] the truth' (Bajomi-Lazar & Corvinus, 2013: 222). This control involves withholding, strategically timing releases, distortion or manufacture, and contrasting information. The two most common ways to do this are controlling the media outlets of the state or 'presenting distorted information from what appears to be a credible source' (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 32).

Charismatic leaders are the ideal credible source, especially in a top-down form of propaganda. Seen as both identifiable and deific, they inspire their followers and in this way construct a personal bond with the audience (Ellul, 1968: 8; Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 183; Markova, 2008: 41). The 'charismatic bond' between the leader and the masses is often described as a near religious relationship that leads to a 'compulsive, inexplicable emotional tie linking a group of followers together in adulation of their leader' (Eatwell, 2006b: 142). By using missionary vision, demonization of specific enemy, and personal presence the charismatic leader can

manipulate his audience towards the desired behaviour and draw them to their mission (Eatwell, 2006a: 271; Eatwell, 2006b: 147; Kershaw, 1993: 111).

Rhetorical manipulation of symbols, shared experiences, facts, and metaphor encourage participation and acceptance. In addition, coercion and terror can potentially be considered a valuable propaganda technique that attracts, repels, or encourages silence (Delia, 1971: 143), or at the very least acts as a reinforcing agent (Welch, 1993: 15). Rhetoric can be found throughout all forms of propaganda, including speeches, writing, mass meetings, art, and films. According to Delia (1971) symbols take on a certain amount of persuasive power because they make it easier for people to identify with each other and with the symbol (139). As Lasswell (1927) identified, propaganda relies heavily on the manipulation of significant symbols. These symbols generally have culturally significant references and can evoke strong emotions and nostalgia. Symbols can be either verbal cues or non-verbal images and gestures. For example, the colour red, the image of an eagle, or marching can all evoke an emotional response from viewers. A leader can play on shared experiences, both large and small, to unify the masses. Furthermore, symbol manipulation is primarily to entice the individual into the organization's framework, provide justifications for promoted actions, and gain total loyalty from the participant (Ellul, 1968: 23). Similarly, rational persuasion, in the form of framing factual information to the benefit of the propagandist, is a strong method because the 'facts' cannot be refuted and therefore the only logical conclusion is that the information *and the frame* must be true.

A metaphor is a "“meaning transfer” based on tacit comparison’ (Musolff, 2007: 23) and is often viewed as being primarily based in language and thought (Forceville, 1994: 1). However, visual metaphors are common in propaganda. These

metaphors are particularly powerful because they are one of the essential features of discourse and an integral part of how people interpret reality (Ivie, 1982). By creating the metaphor, the propagandist in a sense can create the reality in which the masses think. This can range from creating a unified identity to a vilified enemy. Figurative imagery is especially powerful, because it can convey multiple meanings within one image. According to Berelson et al. (1954) ambiguity in the propaganda actually promotes efficacy because the audience can define the message in a way that best suits them while still being in the confines of the message (217). Finally, repetition, no matter the form, helps to reinforce the message and increase salience. If the propaganda is not continuous, the message loses its strength (Ellul, 1968: 17). All of these forms of rhetoric use stereotypes, double standards, substitution of names, outright lies, assertion, enemy identification, authority, and censorship to impart their ideology (Bajomi-Lazar & Corvinus, 2013: 223).

Ultimately, these techniques all further the desire to influence mass behaviour, beliefs, values, and attitudes. '[P]ublic opinion and propaganda remain [...] inexorably linked' (Welch, 1993: 51). Propaganda influences public opinion and group norms by eliciting support for the institution, leader, regime or political system, in-group identification and loyalty, leader preferences, and strong opinions held by a large portion of society concerning public issues and current affairs (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 33). Furthermore, it appeals to both the masses and individual and reduces the individual to an average (Ellul, 1968: 7). In this way, the propagandist targets the majority. One of the most important effects is that it creates a unified identity, a belonging to a group with shared ideology, beliefs, and attitudes that the propagandist has suggested. It also creates conditioned reflexes or response shaping, generally through pre-propaganda. Certain words, slogans, phrases, and symbols are

used to provoke reactions from the masses (Ellul, 1968: 31; Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 22). Propaganda creates a desire and need for propaganda among the masses, they can no longer know what to do without being told. The more propaganda there is, the more it is needed to guide public opinion (Ellul, 1968: 182).

In addition, it creates an emotional attachment through canalization, mithridization, crystallization, and/or sensibilization (Ellul, 1968; Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992). Canalization takes a pre-existing attitude, stereotype, or feeling and builds upon it to direct its growth (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 222). Mithridization is an inundation of information that may appear to desensitize the audience to the message; however, the individual is rather 'deeply imbued' with the message and no longer *needs* to consume the message—a buzzword, slogan, or image is enough to prompt the proper response (Ellul, 1968: 182-3). Crystallization is clarification of vague and formerly undefined feelings and beliefs into powerful and direct objectives. This is especially potent when reinforcing and hardening hatred, for once propaganda crystallizes such an emotion it is difficult for the subject to back away or reconcile with the hated object. Part of the appeal of such crystallization is that it reduces anxiety by eliminating inner conflicts, self-doubt, and external tension and provides pre-made opinions that allow the individual self-assurance in the proper behaviour (Ellul, 1968: 162-5). It also increases cognitive dissonance, where only the propagandist's views are heard and anything contradicting the pre-made notions are dismissed out of a desire for consistency (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 133). Finally, sensibilization is an emotional attachment to the propaganda. 'The smallest excitement, the feeblest stimulus, activates [their] conditioned reflexes, awakens the myth, and produces the action that the myth demands' (Ellul, 1968: 184). In the end,

these emotional management systems create a unification of opinion that wholly comes from the propagandist's ideology and allows them to accomplish their goals.

Propaganda can include a wide range of media based information including news, visual, and participatory, but what matters most is a continuous and consistent message. This incorporates the use of slogans, buzzwords, overlapping messages, and horizontal allusions. Overt propaganda, where the message is clear and the identity of the propagandist is identifiable generally uses all these forms; however, more covert propaganda can use a majority of these methods as well. Another form of propaganda is terror and coercion. At first glance this may not seem to be a propaganda technique, but its efficacy is by convincing people through fear, a tactic also used in the propagandist's messages.

While 'propaganda alone cannot change social and political conditions', it is necessary to consider it as one of the factors, alongside organisation and history (Welch, 1993: 15). Measurement of effects can prove difficult, especially when public opinion polls are absent; however, there are several ways to infer propaganda effects from an historical lens. Though no zero-point exists, analysis over a period of time helps to identify consistencies and shifts in ideology. Furthermore, identifying the messages in the propaganda and comparing it to mass behaviour can allow some assumptions as to the efficacy of propaganda. According to Jowett & O'Donnell (1992) the most important measure of efficacy is the behaviour of the target audience gauged through voting records, organization membership, monetary contributions, or crowd behaviour. Furthermore, propaganda should be evaluated by the intended ends of the propaganda. Because one of the primary aims of propaganda is to provoke action (Ellul, 1968: 25), looking for ideologically based actions that reflect propaganda's message is one method to establish efficacy.

Another potential effect is even more difficult to measure, that of inaction, whether that manifest itself as silence, indifference, or acquiescence. While some people engage with the message, others privatise their situation and no longer engage in mass society as a way of dealing with the messages of the propagandist. This is not a failure on the part of propaganda, rather it is successful side effect. Passivity allows the propagandist to do what they want; only active resistance is to be avoided. Bystanders and witnesses that do nothing to change what a regime is doing, out of loyalty or fear, are still subscribing to the propagandist's goal. 'The most important effect is whether the purpose of propaganda has been fulfilled or not' (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 227). Adoption of the propagandist's language, slogans, buzzwords, and images (including fashion) can also be a method of measurement of the effectiveness of the propaganda.

It is also important to look at the propaganda methods. If the methods were strong and monopolistic, it is logical to assume that there is likely to have been at least *some* amount of influence. The effects of dissent can also lend to the overall picture. If there is little or no dissent, the propaganda may have silenced those disagreeing; if there is mass dissent and the propagandist therefore listens and changes the propaganda—that is also an effect.

Methodology

Propaganda posters were used to investigate the potential influences of propaganda on female violence in WWII Germany. Visual propaganda is a highly effective means of message dissemination because it can reach all strata of society, from the illiterate to the most intellectual. Adapting the methods of the visual advertisement, the propaganda poster's design and imagery were first perfected by the

Bolsheviks (O'Shaughnessy, 2012: 32) and can be seen as a pervasive form of propaganda.

Posters were chosen as the medium of study for a number of reasons. First, the poster was a common means of propaganda throughout the entire Third Reich, including areas that Germany captured during the war. The posters were often adapted to the cultural norms of the area in which they were posted. They could be hung anywhere, were often incorporated into traveling exhibitions that people were 'encouraged' to attend (Grabowski, 2009; McCrann, 2009), and even attached to 'propaganda lorries' which had posters hung on them and the passengers shouting out the slogans (Zeman, 1964: 24). Second, the propaganda posters were 'simple and effective' (Zeman, 1964: 30) and featured simple messages, bold colours, symbols, and dominating slogans (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 188). In addition, because they were officially produced, they carried the authority of the leaders within their messages (McCrann, 2009: 57) and are part of the monological one-way forms of communication.

Furthermore, the posters reinforced messages from other sources. This 'total propaganda' used all available means of dissemination at their disposal (Ellul, 1968: 10). Speeches delivered by Hitler and his coterie were excerpted into slogans, printed, and hung in German cities (Herf, 2005: 56). Posters could also repeat or reinforce other messages that the propaganda office wanted to impart, such as film posters, campaign displays, or 'advertisements' (Welch, 2004: 219). In addition, similar themes ran throughout exhibitions, posters, and films (Grabowski, 2009: 387). Because the propaganda was centrally controlled, the message was uniform and therefore repetitive and ubiquitous (Herf, 2005: 58). This ubiquity of the messages across the propaganda mediums means that unpacking the messages and themes in the

posters can be extended to propaganda as a whole and allows potential generalisations to be made about Nazi propaganda.

Because propaganda posters were printed in large quantities and widely distributed many of the posters have survived. According to the NSDAP publication *Unser Wille und Weg* (Die Arbeit, 1941), between the beginning of the war and the publication more than 60 million newspapers, wall posters, leaflets and so on had been distributed. Several posters listed by name had hundreds of thousands of copies produced and circulated. It further outlines that approximately 700,000 posters and pictures of Hitler had been distributed through the conquered territories and two posters each of which had 23,000 copies for *The Wandering Jew*. According to Bytwerk (2005) and Herf (2013) from 1937 to 1943 the *Parole der Woche*, a wall poster publication produced weekly and disseminated from the central propaganda office, alone distributed between 70,000-125,000 copies a week, totalling a distribution of 8 million copies as of 1941. Its counterpart, the *Picture of the Week*, had 128,000 pictures published weekly (Die Arbeit, 1941). Though many of these figures were published in 1941, it gives an idea sheer volume of posters disseminated.

This project relied on online databases as well as Bachrach & Luckert (2009)'s *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*, a publication from the United States Holocaust Museum to analyse the posters. The primary database used for the posters, *Das Bundesarchiv*, is an online picture archive of the Federal Archives in Germany. This database has a total of 4,423 NSDAP posters available for the years 1929-1944, of which 941 pictorial posters were analysed for this project. The rest of the posters were either fully text based or photographs and were therefore excluded. This archive was supplemented with examples from the book *State of Deception* and another online archive called The Digital Poster Collection. In order to avoid selection

bias, this project analysed all pictorial posters in these archives. The content analysis included classifying them into the four categories: *Volksgemeinschaft* (national community), *Führer* or Hitler myth, racial purity, and/or enemy definition. Each category was then further broken down into symbols, visual images, and metaphors. The analysis of the posters presented here exemplifies the larger themes and propaganda messages found during analysis.

These posters were analysed for effectiveness, using Jowett & O'Donnell (1992)'s ten-step method of analysing propaganda¹. In order to demonstrate general effects on compliance and violence, the situation in Nazi Germany (actions and behaviour) will be compared with the propaganda's messages. In addition, several examples of dissent will be shown to provide instances where the propaganda does not seem to have been effective. This dissent can also be contrasted later to lack of dissent, and perhaps therefore attributed to acquiescence or silence on the part of the general public. Following this general connection between Nazi German society, propaganda, and violence, chapter three will continue this method of comparing messages of propaganda posters to the situation in Nazi Germany, this time honing in on the role of women in the violence.

¹Identification of: (1) ideology and purpose, (2) context, (3) propagandist, (4) structure of propaganda's organization, (5) target audience, (6) media utilization techniques, (7) special various techniques, (8) audience reaction to various techniques, (9), counterpropaganda (if present), (10) effects and evaluation (p.212)

CHAPTER 2: NAZI PROPAGANDA

While all WWII participating countries utilised propaganda, some of the most haunting and purposeful propaganda to come out of that war was from Germany. Nazi propaganda is famous for its bold messages, emotional appeal, and ethnocentrism. The propaganda's messages polarized the nation—creating a unified in-group of the Aryan race and a despised out-group consisting of a wide variety of 'contaminants', including people with mental health issues, nervous disorders, homosexuals, Slavs, Bolsheviks, but primarily Jews (Welch, 1993). Not only was this out-group separated and associated with negativity, they were often labelled as the reason for the economic troubles and the force behind the Allies (Bytwerk, 2005). Several authors (Kershaw, 1993; Welch, 1993; Carlton, 1995; Bytwerk, 2005; Grabowski, 2009; Jason, 2013) have maintained that the horrible violence seen during the war was in large part due to the messages relayed in the official propaganda that criminalised and dehumanised the Other.

This chapter first looks at the existing literature on Nazi propaganda specifically focusing on the characteristics and efficacy. This exploration will present a wide range of themes, but particularly emphasize the type of propaganda that relates to enemy definition and hatred. It then presents a content analysis of general propaganda posters, identifying key themes and symbols used across a variety of different posters. Finally, it looks at potential connections between these general posters and the violence of WWII.

Nazi Propaganda—Characteristics, Themes, and Effects

The Nazi Party was inexorably linked to propaganda from the very beginning; propaganda and organisation being the two political activities that they excelled at (Zeman, 1964: xii). *Mein Kampf*, published in 1925, established propaganda as a central component of persuading the masses. This seminal work outlined the cardinal rules of Hitlerian propaganda: simple ideas with emotional appeal, repetition of a few key ideas, stereotyped slogans and phrases, ideological frames, no pluralism, constant engagement and criticism with the enemy, and identification of a singular enemy (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 185-6). 'Hitler's theory of persuasion is grounded in his total ideological system and is inseparably bound to his racial theory' (Delia, 1971: 137). The propaganda used throughout the Third Reich drew its methods from those outlined in *Mein Kampf* and was expanded by Hitler and his Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels over the years. Before the electoral victory in 1933, the NSDAP used propaganda in a similar manner to a sales pitch; appeals to emotions of humiliation and justice along with promises of economic improvement garnered support during the tumultuous post-Versailles and depression entrenched Germany. Innovation and repetition marked the propaganda of this time. Though not yet having the information monopoly of later years, the Nazi Party used every avenue available to them—speeches were especially powerful. Using the technological advances of the twentieth-century to their full advantage, the NSDAP was the first party to fly their leader from city to city, town to town to deliver speeches and appear at rallies. This was called 'Hitler over Germany' and allowed Hitler to visit a significantly larger audience than was previously possible (Eatwell, 2006a: 266).

After the events in 1933 that led to Hitler and the NSDAP to become the sole party throughout Germany, propaganda took on a new role. It was now seen as a

means for gaining mass support and even more importantly, maintaining power (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 63). Propaganda, terror and coercion, and legalities were the three pronged method that the NSDAP used to hold power from 1933 to 1945 (Welch, 1993; Welch, 2004; Bachrach & Luckert, 2009). From 1933 onward there were no competing propaganda messages, counter-propaganda, or pluralistic media forms available to the public (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 193; Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 6); the party took monopolistic control of both domestic and international media, including newspapers, radio, and broadcasting. Throughout the twelve years in power, Hitler and Goebbels used every means possible to create a uniform, simplistic, and repetitive message to convert the masses to achieve their ultimate goal. From extensive pre-propaganda in school and youth groups, media, architecture, art, and physical demonstration of power they maintained a vice-like grip on public opinion and behaviour. According to Bachrach & Luckert (2009) the purpose of the Nazi propaganda was two-fold, to both 'inculcate hatred in masses of the population and incite true believers and "ordinary men" to carry out brutal atrocities and genocide, but also to foster a climate of indifference toward the sufferings of neighbors, former friends, and other peoples' (10).

Welch (1993; 2004) identifies four major themes throughout Nazi propaganda as the *Volksgemeinschaft* (national community), *Der Führer* (the Hitler myth), hatred of the enemy, and racial purity. The first two, myths of *Volksgemeinschaft* and *Der Führer*, served as fundamental aspects of pre-propaganda as well as active integration propaganda and were 'all-encompassing, activating image[s]' (Ellul, 1968: 31). These myths began to manifest themselves even before the electoral victory in 1933. *Volksgemeinschaft* established the German people not solely as a nation-state but as a heroic mystical manifestation of an historic people (Classen, 2007: 549; McCrann,

2009: 61) that overcame social and class obstacles to create a ‘new ethnic unity based on “true” German values’ (Welch, 2004: 213). It fused the ultra-nationalistic ethnocentric and anti-liberal aims of the Nazis into a united German in-group that valued the collective masses over the individual (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 75). Building a pure national community was a persistent goal of the Third Reich (Kershaw, 1993: 114).

The Hitler myth, one of the greatest propaganda achievements of the war, created a man that was both infallible and identifiable (Zeman, 1964: 35) and established itself as such an integral part of the Nazi system that it was ‘scarcely distinguishable’ (Kershaw, 1993: 108). As a charismatic leader, Hitler’s monolithic strength of personality enabled him to rise in legitimacy during a national crisis and embody the NSDAP’s aims and ideology. From early on he established his mission as a national rebirth based in racial purity and irredentism (Eatwell, 2006b: 145; Kershaw, 1993: 112). The leading aspect of Hitlerian propaganda was the intense demonization of the Other. This established a clear authority figure that used a vertical, monological form of communication and that all further propaganda gained legitimacy from; this even worked with anticipation of Hitler’s desires and intentions, what Kershaw (1993) called ‘working towards the Führer’.

Racial purity and hatred of the enemy were intrinsically interconnected. While the former two themes can be seen as a form of integration propaganda, these latter two are agitation propaganda. Building on pre-existing anti-Semitism, Nazi propaganda canalized and crystalized the former prejudices into a more concrete, central, and vituperative hatred (Murray, 1998: 45; Jason, 2013: 211). The ‘Jewish Myth’ allowed for a multi-layered propaganda engagement of the masses that worked as both a unifying agent as well as a justification for the atrocities that lay ahead

(Delia, 1971). The hatred of the enemy transformed itself over the years, sometimes being associated with plutocracy, sometimes with Bolshevism, but always with anti-Semitism. This hatred propaganda later developed into legislative and performative hate that manifested itself as the 'Final Solution' (Murray, 1998). Racial purity, establishing the Aryan race, is integral to this hatred. The Other group, consisting of primarily Jews and Bolsheviks, but also gypsies, homosexuals, people with physical and mental disabilities, and others, were seen as contaminants to the ideal racial group. This revealed itself in both an attempt to increase the Aryan members of society as well as a mass euthanasia campaign to rid society of any groups it felt did not belong. This tapped into a deep-seated ethnocentrism that created strong in- and out-groups (Adorno et al., 1950: 102).

Nazi propaganda relied heavily on pre-propaganda and rhetorical persuasion grounded in symbols, metaphors and 'truths'. Seeing the masses as 'malleable, corrupt, and corruptible' (Zeman, 1964: xvii), Hitlerian propaganda was fundamentally simple, repetitive, and highly emotive. The education system in the Third Reich served as a strong pre-propaganda centre, with all students required to take 'racial hygiene' lessons. Within the propaganda itself, symbols connoting strength, unity, and optimism often used images such as Hitler, the swastika, eagles, blood and soil, people and homeland, fire, swords, and marching; while propaganda establishing hatred took on more sinister metaphors including *untermensch* (sub-human), parasite, blood poisoning, disease, death, and guilt (Delia, 1971; Welch, 1993; Bytwerk, 2005; Herf, 2005; Mussolff, 2007). Colour was also very important to the symbolism of Nazi Germany; enemies drenched in their nationalities' flags or stark red, white, and black images of the hero were both common visual themes to make it easy to identify who was who (Taylor, 1981). Finally, the use of 'truth' was an

important method of propaganda within Nazi Germany. While Hitler believed that lies were a perfectly acceptable form of propaganda, Goebbels believed that ‘truth pays off’ and therefore Nazi propaganda used all forms of truth from the outright lie to the full truth as well as omission (Ellul, 1968: 53). In addition, Nazi propaganda used another kind of truth. They defined truth. ‘Hitler was convinced that the persuader had an obligation to lead the Aryan race toward the realization of the moral “truth” of Aryan superiority and toward the fulfilment of the moral “ought” of world supremacy’ (Delia, 1971: 137).

‘Ineffective propaganda is no propaganda’ (Ellul, 1968: x). By this definition, it cannot be called propaganda unless there is an effect. As noted earlier, the strength of the propaganda may lend to the ability to infer efficacy; however, it is still difficult to conclusively link propaganda to effects. Lacking public opinion polls and the use of coercion to supplement the propaganda makes gauging the effects of propaganda in Nazi Germany difficult (Welch, 1993; Welch 2004). Nevertheless, drawing conclusions is only weakened by this lack of survey data. The NSDAP did keep a constant record of public approval, opinions, and effects of specific propaganda campaigns through morale reports from the Gestapo, Secret Police (SD), Party officials, local government officials and judiciary sources; Goebbels personally regularly received reports from the SD (Zeman, 1964; Welch, 2004: 215; Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 72). The Social Democrats, in exile, also maintained close monitors of public opinion. If a campaign was not popular, generally the Propaganda Ministry would alter the form of propaganda, the message, or disengage from the program entirely. Therefore, there is some evidence of the link between public opinion and propaganda (Welch, 1993; Welch, 2004). Taking it to the next level, that propaganda may have a link to either silence or violence is an extension of logic. By comparing

behaviour and propaganda inferences may be able to shed some light on this relationship.

The NSDAP used a wide variety of methods that immersed the population in the single-minded messages of party-line propaganda. The propaganda techniques can be broken down into three categories: informative, participative, and visual. Informative propaganda was media based information dissemination via newspaper, newsreels, and radio. These usually were more rational and news oriented, despite obvious ideologically based frames. Participative propaganda was a common form in Nazi Germany involving marches, mass rallies, attending speeches, participation in youth groups and so on. These potentially led people to feel that they were part of a bigger whole. Visual propaganda, or aesthetic propaganda was also in common practice in the Third Reich, though it took on a surprising number of forms. Artwork such as oil paintings of Hitler, the vivid posters discussed later, towering architectural feats, as well as finely planned cinematic features were all prominent.

Posters as Communication

Posters in Nazi Germany were a ubiquitous form of propaganda throughout the Third Reich. They were easily understandable, communicated the party ideology to the masses, and also reflected the Party's philosophy concerning effective propaganda. They often played to the emotions of the audience, were mass produced, and simple to understand. The posters were distributed by the Propaganda Ministry employees as well as members of the local and regional Party offices and were hung 'in post offices, factories, offices, hotels, universities, railroad stations, metro stops, and other public places [...] They were a unique mixture of newspaper editorial, political leaflet, political poster, and tabloid journalism' (Herf, 2013: 96). They could

carry their own singular messages, but much more commonly repeated, reinforced, or mirrored other propaganda. Consistency across propaganda media was a defining characteristic of the Nazi system, particularly when it came the WWII and the Jews (Herf, 2013: 92). They were completely coordinated with other forms of propaganda including speeches, newspaper articles, and magazines. These were excerpted or condensed down to key slogans and buzzwords that were placed on posters and hung up weekly (Herf, 2005: 56). This raised the salience of the issues as well as the accessibility of the ideology. If it was mentioned once in a speech, it could be easily forgotten; if raised in a speech and then seen throughout your daily life, the message is reinforced and not forgotten. The posters used language and symbols to ‘encourage both goal framing and group identification’ (McCran, 2009: 61). Furthermore, they reflected cultural norms and communicated one-way message through self-contained narratives. (McCran, 2009: 64).

This study looked at approximately a thousand pictorial posters in order to identify recurring themes, symbols, and messages that may have influenced behaviour, particularly violent behaviour, in Nazi Germany. These themes were triangulated with other author’s observations. The posters in this section are broken down into the four themes discussed earlier. Recurring symbols such as the eagle, swastika, flags and flag colours, swords, and blood are some of the numerous symbols used to connote Nazi power, but they also have another purpose. By using the symbols in the posters, they indicate that the message within the poster is official. Other frequent images imply the ideals of the party including square-jawed young men, simply dressed women, athletic figures, light hair and eyes, large families, hard workers, and militaristic poses. On the opposite end of the spectrum are the images that portray the out-group. These images associate the Other with stereotypes, sinister visages, disease,

vermin, money-grubbing, and other negative imagery. Often these negative images are portrayed as 'getting in the way' of the Nazi ideal, the force behind the Allies, or poisoning the Aryan race.

The *Volksgemeinschaft* myth enabled the heterogeneous individuals to morph into homogenous masses through ethnocentrism. The ethnocentric group view clearly defined an Aryan in-group and a non-Aryan out-group, and can be seen throughout many of the Nazi propaganda posters starting from before they were elected in 1933 and remaining a common theme throughout the Nazi regime. One of the strongest and most prevalent symbols that ties together much of the NSDAP propaganda is the image of the eagle (Delia, 1971). The eagle, often carrying a swastika, symbolised the Party, power, and nationalism. It can be seen in numerous posters, as a badge on a soldier's uniform, as an emblem on the poster itself or as can be seen in Figure 1 (Ahrlé, 1933) as an integral part of the image. Figure 1 shows ideal, racially pure members of the national community. The oversized eagle stands strong and tall in the background, looking off into the distance. His gaze seems to imply that he is looking towards a brighter future. With his wings he embraces in a protective manner a large German family, with blonde hair and smiling faces, standing prominently in the foreground. In this way

the NSDAP, is people, but an ideal. The corner translate to 'The national community'. sense of protection and people by the State. on the bottom centre, need your help and local group' appeals to the people to contribute to this community.



the eagle, symbolising embracing not just the words in the upper left NSDAP secures the This reinforces the security lent to the Furthermore, the writing 'National comrades advice as you turn to the

Figure 1 (Ahrlé, 1933)

‘The NSDAP secures the national community; National comrades need your help and advice as you turn to the local group’ 1933-1939

Figure 2 (Assmann & Asska, 1934) embodies a different aspect of the national community. Using the red and black of the Nazi flag, a common theme that indicated that the image was a part of the whole Nazi system, three men stand facing a shield with the initials SHF in the upper left corner. SHF was the Sudetenland Home-front. This poster indicates that the national community was not based solely in Germany, but was a uniting force for ethnic Germans everywhere. It also establishes the Nazi Party’s irredentist goals to reincorporate ‘lost’ territory and return it to its former glory. The men, each a unique figure, represent the different strata of society reinforcing the breakdown of class barrier to a greater unity of the national community. In large fraktur type are the words ‘One People, One Will, One Goal!’, the goal being a united supranational community under the Third Reich.



Figure 2 (Assmann & Asska, 1934)
‘SHF One People, One Will, One Goal!’

Der Führer myth established Hitler as a deific champion of the people, both a part of them as well as soaring above them. To this end, there were two primary types of posters that portrayed the leader. This first, shown in Figure 3 (Werner, 1938), depicts an imposing figure of Hitler standing alone in military dress, a red swastika armband visible on his left arm. The background halos him in a red glow, a glow that seems to emanate from him. He, like the eagle in Figure 1, is looking out into the distance. At the bottom of the poster are the words: ‘One People, One Reich, One Leader!’. These words imply absolute power over the national community and that this relationship *is* the future. Though not shown here, he is also often depicted with his Iron Cross that he earned during WWI and/or a military hat with the eagle on it. The second type of poster usually is a similar pose as Figure 3, but shows him amongst people or with people in the background.



Figure 3 (Werner, 1938)
'One People, one Reich, one Leader!' 1938/1939

The final two categories, racial purity and hatred of the enemy are integral parts of the violence that came to define WWII. Racial purity, the perpetuation of the Aryan race, was central to Nazi ideology. These images of racial purity can be seen in a number of different narratives throughout the propaganda posters, including images of the ideal family, Olympic scenes, Hitler Youth, and other directives. Any poster that was targeted at the in-group consisted of the ideas of racial purity. Figure 4 (Deutschland, 1936) shows a male Olympics participant with a red cap and neckerchief. On his chest are the Olympic rings and his arm is raised towards the air, in a *Sieg Heil* salute. He looks in the same direction as his hand, somewhere in the distance. Red and white lettering announces the German Winter Games of 1936. While not asking the audience for anything, the poster's propaganda qualities are quite strong. The man is strong and fit, has the characteristic square jaw, and gives the appearance of honour. He is a representative of Germany in the international arena of the Olympics.

Perhaps one of the most important set of images in the racial purity category are the Hitler Youth images. They are important because they show the next generation as an integral part of Nazi Germany, but more importantly, that Nazi

Germany is an integral part of the youth. The posters depict boys ranging from young children all the way through adolescents, but the images share many common features. They are almost exclusively blonde, athletic, and happy. All wear the military-like uniforms and swastika armbands on their left arm (similar to the poster of Hitler earlier). Many of the images contain other Nazi symbols, most commonly the swastika flag and the eagle. Figure 5 (Hohlwein, 1935) is an example of the kind of poster regarding the Hitler Youth. The sister chapter, The League for German Girls will be discussed in Chapter 3.



Figure 4 (Deutschland 1936)
'Germany 1936 IV. Winter Olympic Games Garmisch-Partenkirchen 6-16. February 1936'



Figure 5 (Hohlwein, 1935)
'Germany-bearing'

The fourth category, enemy definition, was a much darker category. Though the target of these posters varied depending on the treaties at that time (there is a distinct lack of anti-Bolshevist propaganda during the truce with the Soviet Union), a common theme ran throughout: anti-Semitism. This theme was often used by itself, but also attached to anti-British, anti-American, and anti-Bolshevik sentiments. Many of the posters also reinforced messages that were dispersed by other propaganda. Figure 6 (Stalüter, 1937) is a poster of 'the Wandering Jew', the subject of a film and traveling exhibition throughout Reich. Multiple posters advertised and reinforced this propaganda message. Some bore sinister stereotyped Jewish faces. While others, like the one pictured here, had a Jewish man standing in a background of yellow, representing a similar identification purpose as the yellow stars worn by the Jewish population. In one hand he holds a handful of money and in the other a whip, in the crook of his arm is a piece of a map with the Soviet hammer and sickle printed on it. The Jew, standing with the money and whip in hand is the reason for all the problems that Germany was having as well as an obstacle to be overcome to reach Germany's end goal. The lettering at the bottom, reminiscent of the Hebrew alphabet says 'the Wandering Jew' which implies that the Jew comes to countries, undermines them and then moves on.



Figure 6 (Stalüter, 1937)
'The Wandering Jew'

Another common theme, infestation and disease, strikes at the heart of fear of the German people. They depersonalise and dehumanise the enemy, and make it easier for the in-group to persecute and kill them. The infestation/vermin metaphor used throughout the Third Reich, identifies the agent to be blamed for the 'sickness' within the Weimar Republic and present a cure through the NSDAP and their ideology (for in-depth analyses of the infestation metaphor see: Perry, 1983; Musolff, 2007). Words like exterminate, destroy, wipe-out, extirpate, and annihilate (Bytwerk, 2005; Herf, 2013) reinforce the idea of the enemy being less than human, a pest to be excised from the German nation. Another way that the disease metaphor was used was defining German society as a healthy body, whole and pure. The enemies, Jews and other undesirables are an ethical and moral blood poison that was slowly, but surely killing the German body from the inside out. The cure was given from Hitler as 'the healer of the suffering patient' (Musolff, 2007: 29) and his mission was to eradicate the infection by any and all means necessary. This language was used throughout various propaganda media, including the poster. Figure 7 (Bachrach &

Luckert, 2009: 122) shows a poster from Poland circa 1940-1944. The image's metaphor is clear—the Jew, shown huddled with stereotypical clothes and features, is covered in oversized lice crawling over his body. In the background an etched skull looms over his left shoulder. In case there is any doubt as to his identity, a large Jewish star hangs in the upper right hand corner. Red lettering emphasizes the message stating: 'Beware of Typhus—Avoid Jews'. The purported cure of the Nazi regime was simple, to remove the disease by fairly standard methods: removal of the cause.



Figure 7 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 122)
'Beware of Typhus—Avoid Jews' 1940-1944

The final two posters define the enemy in very different terms from the last two. They are no longer a subversive and plotting threat, but an immediate overwhelming menace. Figure 8 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 102) shows a stereotypical Jewish man with large features, a sinister expression, and a gold watch chain, Jewish star hanging from it. He is standing behind slightly parted flags of the Allied forces—Britain, America, and the Soviet Union. The white lettering states:

‘Behind the enemy powers’, and then for emphasis of the words ‘The Jew’ in larger cursive type are written in yellow and underlined. This poster portrays a common theme amongst the hatred of the enemy style posters. The Jew is seen as the force behind the obvious enemy, the ones carrying out bombing raids and the soldiers on the ground. This was often reinforced by stories of the Jews wanting to annihilate the German people and therefore the Germans must initiate a pre-emptive strike to defend themselves from such a hostile force (Bytwerk, 2005).

Figure 9 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 136) combines several of the themes into one poster. In the foreground a black and white battle is ensuing. A German soldier wields a large sword in one hand and shield emblazoned with a partially visible ‘SS’ on it. He is fighting a vicious four-headed monster, each head representing a different enemy. The words Judaism, Bolshevism, Capitalism, and Plutocracy are written in large capital letters near each of the heads. In the background to this clash of wills are marching Hitler Youth. The young men give the appearance of a homogenous group, marching in-step, the foremost boys carrying the swastika flags; all are in full Hitler Youth garb. This poster engages with all four themes discussed here. The advancing force of the racially pure youths represent the ideal future national community led by the Nazi Party and their leader. The soldier is fighting the state’s enemies on behalf of the national community with traditional symbols of power (sword and shield). The words on the top and bottom of the poster, ‘Hatred and Destruction to our Enemies; Freedom, justice and bread for our people’ further promote this idea. The first half, all in black identifies the struggle with the enemy and calls for both hatred and destruction of them. The corollary on the bottom, in red, seems to signify that once this destruction is accomplished then, and only then, can freedom, justice, and bread be freely available to the Aryan nation. The whole poster overwhelmingly uses the

black, white and red of the Nazi flag to connote that the message is within the Nazi ideology and gives it the power of authority.



Figure 8 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 102)
'Behind the enemy powers: The Jew' 1942



Figure 9 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 136)
'Hatred and destruction to our enemies; Freedom, justice and bread to our people'

All four categories also contained highly militaristic images. Soldiers and citizens alike were both protecting and needing support from the national community. They were the backbone of ridding the nation of contaminants and protecting the ideals of racial purity.

Communication and Violence

Nazi propaganda's unification of the national community under a charismatic and authoritative leader in combination with definition of *the* threat to this in-group was extremely powerful. According to Lower (2013) being a member of the national community 'meant participation in all the campaigns of the Reich, including the Holocaust' (Introduction). Furthermore, this enemy of the community was generally depicted as an *untermensch*, vermin, disease, and poison, making dehumanising the people and performing violence against them easier. The extent of the violence and mass genocide of WWII are well known facts in history, therefore this work will not attempt to outline in detail the enormity of the violence. Rather it will attempt to establish a connection between the violence of that time with the propaganda of Nazi Germany. In order to do this, Jowett & O'Donnell (1992)'s ten step process will be used to determine propaganda effects. Many of the steps have already been established; therefore, this section will focus on identifying audience reaction, effects, and evaluation. Counter-propaganda will not be considered since the Nazi regime had complete monopolistic control of the media after 1933 and counter-propaganda rarely, if ever, penetrated this system (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992: 193). In addition, a few examples of actions will be given to compare behaviour with messages.

There are three forms engagement in the Nazi system: participation, silence/acquiescence, and dissent. Each of which can be used to measure propaganda's effect on the population. Active participation in the Nazi system is the most highly documented and easiest to see. Violence started first with 'unhealthy' Germans with 32,268 killed in 1934, 73,174 in 1935, and 63,547 in 1936. Despite propaganda that attempted to justify this campaign, this state-sanctioned euthanasia did garner significant public outrage, and the killings stopped (Stoltzfus, 1992: 86;

Welch, 1993: 70). When the same methods were applied to the Jews through both propaganda and extermination, it ‘did not give rise to the same ostensible debate or public outcry’ (Welch, 1993: 72). According to Carlton (1995) the destruction of an entire segment of the population became a methodical and systematic extermination without precedent, with approximately 150,000 people *directly* engaged in the ‘Final Solution’ (40). These people were not just the military *Einsatzgruppe* (who killed hundreds of thousands), directly responsible for mass shootings, having been directed to kill ‘all racial and politically undesirable elements’ (Carlton, 1995: 27). Others that were involved in the violence included doctors, guards, bureaucrats, secretaries, and office assistants, to name a few.

Though mass murder was not necessarily an obvious end to the propaganda, it did suggest that Jews would suffer; the average German was ‘not distressed at the prospect’ (Bytwerk, 2005: 55). Propaganda made an environment where violence against the Other was tolerated (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 88). Indifference, though not a support of the genocide, still allowed the Nazi propaganda to achieve its goals. SD reports from late 1941 noted boredom and indifference to the Jewish Question; in fact, interest in the Jews’ fate rapidly declined after the events of *Reichkristallnacht*. According to Welch (1993) ‘[p]ropaganda had helped to create such apathy and indifference by persuading people that they could retreat into the safety of their depoliticised private lives and leave the “solutions” to such “problems” to others’ (82). Disinterest in the fate of the Other often manifested itself in creating bystanders and witnesses; people who saw but did not care or do anything to stop it. They went about their lives, ignoring the fate of their former neighbours, friends, and business associates. Furthermore, many Germans used a form of cognitive dissonance and denial to deal with the atrocities happening to the Jews—they knew enough to want to

avoid knowing more (Bytwerk, 2005: 55), while others remained silent and allowed the behaviour to continue. In addition, for the average German, the solution to the Jewish problem gradually became more hostile and violent (Murray, 1998). By accepting each stage, starting with re-enforcing of prejudice and ending with the Final Solution, it became more and more difficult to dissent.

However, resistance and dissent did occur within Nazi Germany, and when it did it was generally effective. This gives rise to the idea that if more people had dissented to the treatment of the Other, the violence would not have been able to transpire, or would have at least been lessened. As already mentioned, dissent to the euthanasia of 'unhealthy' Germans forced the Nazi regime to discontinue the campaign. One example of public outcry was in response to Nazi attempts to remove the cross from Catholic public schools in Oldenburg. Non-cooperation and public protests resulted in the 'Nazis [...] backing down' (Stoltzfus, 1992: 86). Several other protests over the same issues led to the same result: dissent meant that the Nazi regime backed down or changed their tactics.

CHAPTER 3: WOMEN AND PROPAGANDA

Prior to the 1933 electoral victory, the NSDAP targeted specific groups with their propaganda, focusing less on lower class workers and more on the middle class and women (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 56). Women in Nazi society were often targeted specifically by propaganda, but studies of women and propaganda in Nazi society generally focus on the motherhood/homemaker propaganda and the Third Reich's preoccupation with boosting their birth rates after a severe decline at the turn of the century (Stephenson, 1975; McCloskey, 2012). With the start of WWII, there is a marked shift in Nazi policy towards women as more and more men were being conscripted to join the war effort. With an almost complete reversal of some of the policies from the previous decade, women were encouraged into the work place, education, as well as to take up roles within the war machine itself (Stephenson, 1975; Stephenson, 2001). This chapter will expound upon the propaganda-violence relationship established in chapter two by discussing several more posters, with women as the central focus. It will show women as the subject of the posters, but also establish parallels between the female oriented posters and the previously discussed posters. It will then present detailed behaviour and effects of the propaganda in the Third Reich.

While men dominate the imagery of the poster, depicted both in everyday life as well as soldiers, there are many instances of female portrayals within the propaganda. Many of the Nazi posters that have women as the main subject are similar to Figure 1 in the previous chapter. The women are portrayed as mothers and homemakers. McCloskey (2012) argues that the propaganda posters of women were seen primarily as mothers, muses, and sex objects (2). While this theme does present

itself within the posters, it does not necessarily contradict women's participation in violence. Just because the propaganda did not specifically identify women as perpetrators of violence, like the straightforward depictions of men with guns and military uniform, women were nonetheless activated by the propaganda to perform within the cultural norms of Nazi Germany. Furthermore, women's roles as homemakers and mothers was emphasised less as the country came closer to war. Also, women often played a dual role, comforting men returning from the killing field or even as nurturing mothers at home and killers of Jewish children without (Lower, 2013). Besides this theme of posters, women were present in a number of other poster types that link directly into chapter two's themes.

Figure 10 (Schweitzer, 1940) embodies the national community theme. Starkly drawn in red, white, and black it depicts rows of people marching out towards the left of the audience. Like Figure 2, a wide variety of people are shown to give the impression that this movement is all inclusive. To that end, fourth from the right, is a woman marching in step with the men. This lends to the national community definition as being made up of *all* people. This poster reinforces the supranational function of the national community with the black and red words: 'You are committed to Lorraine, German National Community!' The swastika in the background is large and glowing, shining its light onto the national community.



Figure 10 (Schweitzer, 1940)

‘You are committed to Lorraine; German National Community!’ 1940/1944



Figure 11 (Berlin, 1930; Bachrach & Luckert, 2009)

‘For unity, progress, people’s community!’ 1930

The women depicted in Figure 11 (Berlin, 1930; Bachrach & Luckert, 2009) also show them as an active part of the national community. This poster, circa 1930, begins to establish the national community even before the Nazi takeover in 1933. The blonde woman in the foreground stands smiling in a blue dress giving the *Sieg Heil* salute. She stands in front of a sea of people, some old, some young. A mother nursing a child is visible on the left and two children on her right stand above the crowd. In the far background on the right is a crumbling town and on the left is a new industrial centre. The words, in red and black: ‘For unity, progress, people’s community!’. The white wording at the bottom says ‘State’s party’. This poster engages female voters and community to engage with Nazi rhetoric at a time when

they were not monopolistically controlling the state. Though the Nazi party was not overly popular with women, not allowing them to serve in any capacity within the party, the promises of economic progress and protection as a member of a national community were compelling during the Depression.

Another key method of portraying women in Nazi propaganda posters was through mimicry. Many of the posters that featured women and girls were similar to those featuring men and boys. This can potentially be seen as a method to make all propaganda applicable to everyone, or at least it could have been taken that way by the audience. If men and women were doing similar actions in the posters, the posters potentially engaged all audience members regardless of gender. Many of these imitative posters show genderless bodied women, often muscular and with flat chests. Figure 12 (Hohlwein, 1934) shows a young woman in a similar pose as the Olympic man in Figure 4. She stands looking off into the distance with swastika flags draped in the background her arm upraised in the '*Sieg Heil*'. Her short blonde hair, a common style of that era, is swept away from her face. The words, all in white say 'The League of German Girls in the Hitler Youth'. Another imitative poster is shown in Figure 13 (Frau im Luftshuk. 1939-1944), where a woman in full military-style uniform with official equipment looks to the left of the poster. A swastika appears in the background as if caught in the beam of a search light. The white words read: 'Women in the Air Protection Service'. These women were serving the same function as men in the air protection service, and this poster shows the official government desire for the women to serve equally as the men in this capacity.

**Figure 12 (Hohlwein,
'The League of
Hitler Youth'**



**1934)
German Girls in the**



**Figure 13 (Frau im Luftschutz. 1939-1944)
'Women in the Air Protection Service'**

Finally, a key message imparted to the women and girls of the Third Reich started when they were very young. The League of German Girls (BDM) had posters nearly identical to those of the Hitler Youth. Sometimes, the two groups were even

featured in the same poster to emphasize that they were working together. Figure 14 (Bund Deutscher Mädel, 1939-1945) shows a young woman in her BDM uniform, smiling with hair pulled back in plaits on either side of her head. In the background swastika flags fly high and the words in Fraktur type in white and red at the bottom of the poster state: League of German Girls in the Hitler Youth. Figure 15 (Hohlwein, 1936) is shown next to it to show the similarities between the BDM posters and the Hitler Youth posters. Figure 16 (Wir sammeln; Ihr gebt!, 1939-1945) shows a BDM girl and a Hitler Youth boy working together collecting money for the Nazi cause. The collection pail, in red, white, and black denotes that the cause is an officially sanctioned cause and the two youths, in full uniform are fulfilling their duty to the Reich.



Figure 14 (Bund Deutscher Mädel, 1939-1945)
 'League of German Girls in the Hitler Youth'

Figure 15 (Hohlwein, 1936)

'The fights for people in NSD'



German student leaders and the teams of Student Union'

Figure 16 (Wir sammeln; Ihr gebt!, 1939-1945)
‘We collect, you give!’

Women and Violence

Propaganda defined the national community through an exclusivity that shifted the power dynamic, where those that were part of the Aryan in-group were superior and the out-group inferior. The posters featuring women discussed above do not actively promote violence; however, taken as a whole the propaganda of Nazi Germany encouraged violence from all members of society, including women. The posters established men and women as equally part of the national community, led by the charismatic leader Adolph Hitler. By having propaganda posters that specifically integrated women into the national community, all national community propaganda became applicable to them, even posters that depicted men; and thus all enemies of the national community became their enemies. Reflecting on her feelings toward the ideas of national community, former BDM press and propaganda officer, Melita Maschmann stated:

No catchword has ever fascinated me quite as much as that of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. I heard it first from the lips of [my mother's] crippled and care-worn dressmaker and, spoken on the evening of [Hitler's ascendancy to the chancellorship], it acquired a magical glow [...] The manner of my first encounter with it, fixed its meaning for me: I felt it could only be brought into being by declaring war on the class prejudices of the social stratum from which I came and that it must, above all, give protection and justice to the weak. What held my allegiance to this idealistic fantasy was the hope that a

state of affairs could be created in which people of all classes would live together like brothers and sisters (quoted in Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 79)

From a very young age, the boys and girls of the Nazi system were established as integral parts of the society and were each expected to contribute to this community. Though women were never depicted as soldiers, images of women in uniform or similar dress to soldiers did occur and women as nurses was a frequent image as well; '[p]ropaganda boasted of women's readiness to serve' (Stephenson, 2001: 103). The women that perpetrated violence were not on the battlefield, but were at home in Germany or on the Eastern front. Many of the men performing violence were not acting as soldiers under the auspices of war either. German women within Nazi society were given unprecedented power over those designated subhuman, both within Germany but more especially in the East. 'Career tracks in camp and other bureaucracies opened up for women in the modern Nazi state, not in subordinate roles but in a hierarchy that placed them in commanding positions with unprecedented power, with the revered status of a uniformed government official' (Lower, 2013: Ch. 3).

Though female perpetrated violence examples given here primarily focus on WWII and the Holocaust, there is some evidence of a marked increase female criminality during the war years (Grunberger, 1971: 166). The crime rates in Germany declined rapidly after Nazi ascent to power due partially to their more domineering legal system and partially to the economic alleviation from the Depression (Wachsmann, 2004: 70). However, from roughly 1937 to 1943 numbers of incarcerated individuals rose drastically, and this included women. Crimes like anti-*Untermensch* violence and fighting for the national community were given judicial amnesty and never came before the courts (Wachsmann, 2004: 69-70). Despite these amnesties, both men and women incarceration rates increased. In 1937, 10,015

women were recorded in penal institutions more than quadrupling by 1943 to 43,091. Furthermore, the judicial system sentencing statistics also show an increase of women (Wachsmann, 2004: 396-7). Between 1933 and 1938 women made up only fourteen percent of all defendants tried. In the first half of 1943, this figure rose to roughly forty percent of convicted Germans being female defendants. After these figures were reported to State Secretary, collection of statistics on female incarceration was halted (Wachsmann, 2004: 221). This dramatic increase may be a testament to the extent of the legal terror utilised by the ever stricter Nazi regime, but it potentially sheds some light on increasing female criminality as the war progressed.

Women as Perpetrators

Perhaps the most infamous manifestation of female violence during WWII were the female concentration camp guards, the *Aufseherin*. Heinrich Himmler maintained that female camps required female guards and superintendents. *Birkenau* was appointed the first female SS superintendent in 1942, Johanna Langefeld (Lower, 2013: Ch. 4). Approximately 3,600 women were employed in the concentration camps and according to survivor accounts ‘were the most vicious among all of the guards’ (Morris, 2011: 63) and ‘in terms of arrogance and self-righteousness, inventiveness in kinds of torment and unbounded sadism, there was no gender-specific difference in women’s favor’ (Stephenson, 2001: 112). Though the policies and campaigns were all devised by men, both men and women served to reinforce the programs of cruelty (Stephenson, 2001: 112). Present in the instruction manuals for the camp guards was the in-group/out-group dichotomy. Strongly identifying the prisoners with a long list of negative attributes including criminals, enemies of the state, and antisocial parasites, the manuals state that these are dangerous persons that

are intent on ‘destroy[ing] the unity of our people, cripp[ing] our power, and endanger[ing] our victory’ (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 113). Parallels are also drawn between duties of the ‘comrades at the front’ and the camp guards, to defend against the internal enemy just as a soldier defends from the external (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 113). This comparison is important in that it connects the duties of the guards (male and female) to the duties of the military; both are defending their homelands and people from an enemy. Furthermore, just as the military uses violence to defend against the enemy, so too should the guards.

Majdanek was a camp near Lublin whose guards, both male and female, were known for their cruelty to prisoners (Stephenson, 2001: 112). This camp housed a variety of prisoners, including Eastern Europeans, Jews, and POWs. The camp guards were first trained at other concentration camps, with those of particular cruelty and lacking mercy sent to *Majdanek*. The asymmetry of power between the guards and the prisoners was fuelled by rhetoric and propaganda that became a reality at the camp. The constructed images of the Jew and Other in propaganda defined them as dirty, subhuman, and rife with disease. Because the prisoners were malnourished and were housed in horrible living conditions, typhus and disease were rampant (Koslov, 2008). This perpetuated the notions of posters like Figure 7, warning of Jews carrying disease, and therefore much of the propaganda became ingrained in the minds of the guards. ‘Such feelings had a direct impact on the violence perpetrated and on its fervor. In particular, fear—anger, disgust, hatred and horror all contain elements of fear—was one of the dominant emotions in *Majdanek*’ (Koslov, 2008: 577). As a result of the fear, guards used whips and other implements to avoid touching prisoners, kicking them with boots if nothing else was available. One survivor recalled that the female guards often screamed “itchy Jewess” at the women in the camp and lashed

them with whips like they were animals (Koslov, 2008: 577). According to Koslov (2008) the guards' fear of the epidemics coupled with the hatred of the prisoners 'was a decisive factor in the SS personnel's indifference toward the suffering of inmates and should not be underestimated as a main cause for physical violence' (578).

One especially powerful example of the violent female camp guard was Irma Grese, nicknamed 'The Blonde Bitch of *Belsen*'. One of the most notorious *Aufseherin*, she was known for her sadistic treatment of prisoners, often whipping them and beating them with sticks. (Becker, 2015: 53; Morris, 2011: 65). From 1939 to 1941 she served as a nurse's aide before being recommended to *Ravensbrück* concentration camp in Northern Germany; however, she was too young and was told she would have to wait until she was eighteen. Determined to become a camp guard, she returned a year later to take up a post with the auxiliary guard service. According to Morris (2011), Grese is especially deplorable because she *volunteered* for the position. Throughout her time as a camp guard she worked at *Ravensbrück*, *Auschwitz-Birkenau*, and *Bergen-Belsen*. After the war she was sentenced to death at the *Belsen* Trials, and executed 13 December 1945 (Morris, 2011). Although she is perhaps the most infamous of the camp guards, she was not an anomaly. Other female guards were known to beat prisoners without mercy, set dogs on them, and arbitrarily decide the deaths of prisoners on a whim.

According to Lower (2013) camp guards may be the most well-known female perpetrators, but the first Nazi female killers were actually nurses. First and foremost, nurses killed in hospitals. They were part of the initial euthanasia program administering overdoses of sleeping pills, lethal injections, and denying food and water. Nurses also gave lethal injections to soldiers that were unable to resume active duty because of severe injury. At the *Meseritz-Obrawalde* asylum it is estimated that

nurses and doctors killed between 6,000 and 18,000 such people (Lower, 2013: Ch. 5). Another key role that nurses served was in the concentration camps helping with the torture and ‘experiments’. In addition, many nurses and midwives identified, segregated, and persecuted those who were racially impure or had a ‘hereditary disease’ (Stephenson, 2001: 112). They also taught young girls about ‘racial hygiene’ (Lower, 2013).

Just like the imitative posters, ‘German women mimicked men doing the dirty work of the regime’ because the concept of *Volksgemeinschaft* made men and women racial equals (Lower, 2013: Ch. 2). The racial equality essentially eliminated gender inequalities when it came to treating anyone considered less than them and often made husbands and wives ‘partners in crime’. During the war, approximately 240,000 women became SS wives (Lower, 2013: Ch. 2). Though not acting in an official capacity of any sort, wives of SS officers stationed at camps and in the Eastern frontier could also be exceptionally violent towards Jews and other *untermenschen*.

One such woman was Vera Wohlauf, wife of SS and Order Police company commander Captain Julius Wohlauf. Dressing in men’s military dress, Wohlauf would attend massacres carrying a whip and humiliating the Jewish men and women being led to their deaths (Lower, 2013). Another famous violent wife was Ilse Koch, wife of the Buchenwald camp commander, who was known as the ‘beast of Buchenwald’. Among her many crimes, she was alleged to have had a fascination with unusual skin markings and tattoos and there were claims that she used prisoner’s skin with such designs to make lampshades (Becker, 2015: 55; Morris, 2011: 62). Though this was never proven, her cruelty towards prisoners was well-known.

As witnesses and bystanders these women were part of the silent acquiescence discussed earlier, by not saying or doing anything they allowed the government to

continue its genocidal plans. Many became disillusioned and just continued to work unthinkingly. Ilse Struwe, a secretary in Rivne Ukraine, was one such witness. After witnessing some of the atrocities happening to the Jews near her post, she shut down emotionally and just completed her work mechanically (Lower, 2013). Even though she was uncomfortable with what was happening, she still engaged with some of the Nazi party rhetoric, showing how pervasive such a mind-set was. While describing the Ghetto near her post, she called it a ‘filthy Jewish nest’ (Lower, 2013: Ch. 3) reflecting much of the anti-Semitic rhetoric present in the Nazi propaganda—likening Jews to filth, garbage, animals, and vermin. Many of the bystanders were overcome by feelings of helplessness, fear, and frustration, but they continued to work and make the most of their lives (Lower, 2013).

‘Thousands of [female] Gestapo secretaries were direct witnesses and administrative accomplices to massive crimes’ making up as much as forty-percent of the Gestapo offices in Berlin and Vienna (Lower, 2013: Introduction). The *Einsatzgruppe* also had a large number of secretaries at their disposal. They held immense power in their hands. While they could influence their superiors or make suggestions, some of their true power was as ‘desk murderers’. They were the bureaucratic cogs behind the machine and not only processed paperwork, typed reports, and helped administratively, they also often had tasks such as choosing names off lists to send to the camps and gas chambers. ‘They performed these duties with the knowledge that they were contributing to the goal of total extermination of the Jewish people’ (Lower, 2013: Ch. 4). Furthermore, by making the whole situation into just figures on a page, they were able to help normalise the acts into the everyday standard procedures.

Other secretaries took a more ‘hands on’ approach—planning, attending and participating in the massacres. Liselotte Meier, a secretary in Belarus, assisted in planning the massacres and attended several of the shootings in 1942-1943 and was often described as knowing more about what was going on than her superiors. She also actively helped choose who would live or die, and called anyone not immediately valuable to her the ‘*Dreck*’ or garbage (Lower, 2013: Ch. 4). Secretaries could take on an even more gruesome role, committing the violence themselves. Johanna Altvater, a secretary stationed at a town on the Ukrainian-Polish border, was known for parading around in her Nazi Party uniform as well as her particular cruelty to children. She would bash them against walls, throw them out of windows and even would lure them in with sweets or affection and then shoot them in their mouths (Lower, 2013). Though this behaviour paints a particularly stark contrast to much of the propaganda promoting female as nurturing and caregivers, these children were different. In their eyes, these people were no longer human beings worthy of compassion, they were an enemy and a problem, and what they were doing was part of the solution.

Women in Denial and Dissent

There were also women who were in denial. This involved a certain level of cognitive dissonance since much of the rhetoric surrounding the ‘Jew’s fates’ was fairly clear. The denial came in different levels, just like the violence. Some, like Maschmann quoted earlier, claimed that they never realised that their Jewish friends could not be part of the *Volksgemeinschaft* (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 86). With the levels of propaganda throughout the Third Reich it is somewhat unbelievable that Maschmann was unaware that Jews were targets of hateful propaganda and actions. Others denied the fact that the violence was even happening. They shut it out, often

retreating into the home and taking care of their families. This privatisation is a form of self-protection, where the individuals are turned off from politics, is also a key effect of propaganda. It gives the state a free hand to do what it wants, so denying the situation still allows the situation to continue (Ellul, 1968: 191-3). The propaganda used throughout the Third Reich therefore served a dual purpose, both to activate those that wanted to participate in the violence, but also to pressure those uninterested in the violence to at least retreat into their own private sphere. Dissent was the only thing to be avoided.

So far, this dissertation has illustrated several examples of female violent behaviour that defined WWII and the Holocaust. Women also were part of the dissent to Nazi policies. Most of the dissent was exhibited when there was a personal connection, whether that be through family, religion, or other private sphere effects. Women were part of the dissent to remove the crosses from churches. They were also the primary actors in the *Rosenstrasse* protest. Prior to 1943, Jews married to Aryans were exempt from the arrests and deportations; however, in early 1943 the Nazi party initiated a final round-up of all the Jews left in Berlin—kidnapping them from their homes with no explanation. Many of those Jews married to Aryans were men, and hundreds of wives came to the *Rosenstrasse* administrative centre where the men were locked up. ‘Day and night for a week they staged their protest, and the crowd grew larger’ (Stoltzfus, 1992: 86). Despite threats to shoot them, the women continued to press for their husbands’ release. As a result of their protests all those held at *Rosenstrasse*, some 2,000 people, were later released. Goebbels and the Gestapo office wanted to end the protest as quickly as possible (Stoltzfus, 1992: 86). Negative public opinion and specifically dissent were to be avoided at all costs, in order to maintain power the Nazi party needed to maintain the support of the people.

Dissent is one of the key areas that sheds light onto the connection between propaganda and behaviour, in this case the violent behaviour of the Holocaust. The Nazi party generally yielded when they were put under the pressure of dissent, so it follows that if more people had dissented the violence potentially would not have happened. So why did not more people dissent? One possible explanation is the efficacy of the propaganda: the people believed in what they were told. Furthermore, the Nazi party used fear, terror, and coercion to supplement their propaganda.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation examined the potential connection between Nazi party propaganda posters and female perpetrated violence. It does not intend to make sweeping generalisations that all women in Nazi Germany were complicit in the war crimes of the Holocaust. According to Stephenson (2001) ‘there was neither a united female cause nor a uniform female experience’ (125). While most literature in this field focuses on the housewife motif, this analysis probes the effects of female integration into the *Volksgemeinschaft* or national community. By connecting women to the national community as a whole, even depictions of men (as long as they were representing the national community) were speaking to women too.

The posters examined here were exemplars of a larger message. Nazi propaganda perpetuated a dual image of ‘us’ versus ‘them’. This was previously studied by a large number of scholars (Zeman, 1964; Welch, 1993; Welch, 2004). The examination presented here furthers this scholarship by extending the research to look specifically at the effects of propaganda on female perpetrated violence. Female perpetrated violence is rarer, which makes the connection between the propaganda and violence all the more interesting. The case chosen here, that of Nazi Germany, was chosen because the violence within the society is an established fact as was the strength of the propaganda. Recently some scholars (Stephenson, 2001; Lower, 2013) have just started to look more deeply at female acts of violence during that era.

This work first established the ways in which Nazi propaganda engaged with society as a whole and encouraged violence or acquiescence from Nazi society. By identifying key messages, themes, and symbols in the posters, a connection between the regime’s ideals and the messages presented could be ascertained. These messages were then compared to the behaviour and actions present in the Third Reich in order

to gauge the propaganda's effects. This was applicable to all behaviour, including enrolment in youth groups, Party membership, and most importantly in this case, participation in the violence of the Holocaust.

After identifying the more general connection between the Nazi propaganda and violence, the roles of women both in propaganda and the violence were explored. Even though portrayals of women were fewer than men, and fewer still were portrayals of women outside of the domestic housewife/mother ideal, propaganda was still able to establish a connection to these women and influence their behaviour. The Nazi regime created the overarching national community myth that permeated all levels of propaganda from pre-propaganda through active propaganda and took on characteristics of both integration and agitation propaganda. This national community plus racial purity in-group definer was key to activating people to engage with the intended behaviours of the propagandist. Both Aryan men and women were defined as part of this in-group, and therefore potentially *all* propaganda aimed at the national community was incorporated into their self-identity and mind-set.

This in-group was then juxtaposed to the inimical *untermenschen*. By playing on fear and hatred, the propaganda inspired incredible violence from all members of the in-group; they believed that they were protecting themselves from an enemy that was subverting the future thousand-year Reich utopia or even actively engaged in trying to annihilate the Germans. It was therefore the responsibility of the national community members to help fight this any way they could. Though men had more opportunities to commit these crimes due to their greater engagement with the public sphere and their military roles, when women were given the opportunities, they engaged with them fully (Stephenson, 2001: 127).

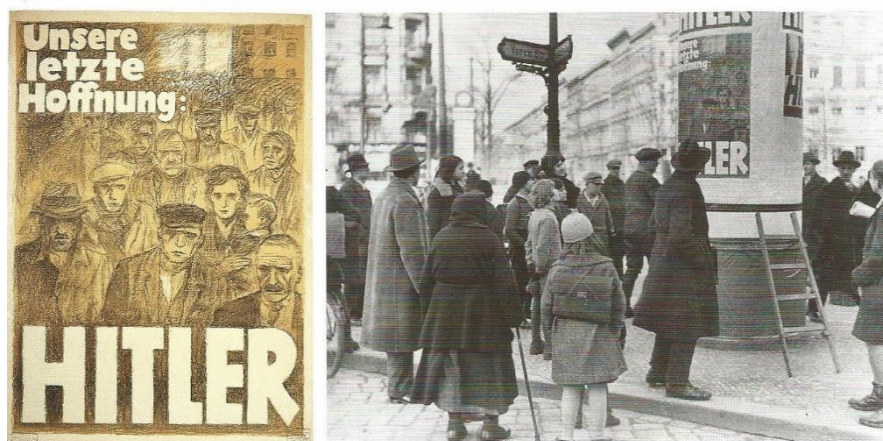
Though propaganda lost some of its efficacy as realities of the war started to clash with the idealic future presented, the messages coming from the Ministry of Propaganda continued to be disseminated right up until the end. It continued to mark members of the Aryan race as the in-group and members of the non-Aryans as the out-group. Right up until the very last minute, the Propaganda Ministry was rolling out this divisive propaganda and the Nazi regime continued to persecute and kill the enemy. Women like Irma Grese and Ilse Koch continued their torment of the prisoners until the camps were liberated, not even attempting to hide what they did or somehow gain favour with those that would soon condemn them. They, as many others, believed that despite the encroaching forces, they were still going to win. That is what the propaganda told them.

APPENDIX

This appendix includes several images from Bachrach & Luckert (2009)'s *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda* that show poster placement.



Appendix Figure 1 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: inside cover)
Posters hanging on the wall. Note figure 14 discussed earlier is in the left panel.



Appendix Figure 2 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 48)
A poster incorporating both men and women can be seen on the central kiosk in the square surrounded by people.



Appendix Figure 3 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 58)
An example of a propaganda lorry.



Appendix Figure 4 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 124)
Anti-Semitic posters hung in windows.



Appendix Figure 5 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 135)
Anti-Semitic poster visible on the notice board to the right.



Appendix Figure 6 (Bachrach & Luckert, 2009: 139)

The kiosk visible in the right-hand foreground with posters still attached.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources-Databases

Das Bundesarchiv. *The Digital Picture Archives of the Federal Archives*. Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> 23 August, 2015. [Last Accessed: 25/08/2015].

Digital Poster Collection. *World War II 1939-1945 Germany*. [online archive] Available at: <http://digitalpostercollection.com/1939-1945-world-war-ii/germany-ww2/>. [Last Accessed: 12/06/2015] (This collection was shut down on 12/06/2015 and was therefore only partially completed for analysis. It has only recently been reopened with slightly different format and publication. Full written records of the posters analysed from the previous version of the website are available upon request).

Primary Sources-Individual Posters

Ahrlé, R., 1933. *Die NSDAP sichert die Volksgemeinschaft Volksgenossen braucht Ihr Rat und Hilfe so wendet Euch an die Ortsgruppe*. [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de> . [Last Accessed: 23/08/2015].

Assmann, R. & Asska A., 1934. *SHS Ein Volk ein Wille ein Ziel!* [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].

Berlin, 1930. *Für Einigkeit, Fortschritt Volksgemeinschaft!* [digital image, colour version of Bachrach & Luckert, 2009 Appendix image 1] Available at: https://www.dhm.de/lemo/bestand/objekt/xp991575_1 [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].

Bund Deutscher Mädel in der Hitlerjugend. 1939-1944. [digital image] Available at: <http://digitalpostercollection.com/1939-1945-world-war-ii/germany-ww2/> [Last Accessed: 12/06/2015].

Deutschland 1936 IV. Olympische Winterspiele Garmisch-Partenkirchen 6.-16. Februar 1936 [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].

Frau im Luftshuk. 1939-1944. [digital image] Available at: <http://digitalpostercollection.com/1939-1945-world-war-ii/germany-ww2/> [Last Accessed: 12/06/2015].

- Hohlwein, L., 1934. *Bund Deutscher Mädel in der Hitler Jugend* [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].
- Hohlwein, L., 1935. *Deutschland-Lager Juli - August 1935 Welttreffen der Hitlerjugend* [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].
- Hohlwein, L., 1936 *Der deutsche Student kämpft für Führer und Volk in den Mannschaften des NSD-Studentenbundes* [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].
- Schweitzer, H. 1940. *Wir Lothringer bekennen uns zur deutschen Volksgemeinschaft!* [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15]
- Stalüter, H. 1937. *Der Ewige Jude.* [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].
- Werner, C. 1938. *Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer!* [digital image] Available at: <http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/> [Last Accessed: 23/08/15].
- Wir sammeln; Ihr gebt!*, 1939-1945. [digital image] Available at: <http://digitalpostercollection.com/1939-1945-world-war-ii/germany-ww2/> [Last Accessed: 12/06/2015].

Secondary Sources

- Adorno, T., Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D., & Sanford, R., 1950. *The Authoritarian Personality*. USA: Harper & Row, Inc.
- Auerbach, J. and Castronovo, R., 2013. Introduction: Thirteen Propositions About Propaganda. In: J. Auerbach and R. Castronovo, eds. 2013. *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Introduction.
- Bachrach, S. and Luckert, S., 2009. *State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda*. USA: W.W. Norton & Company
- Bajomi-Lazar, P. & Corvinus, D., 2013. The continued relevance of the concept of propaganda: Propaganda as a ritual in contemporary Hungary. *Global Media and Communication*. 9 (3), pp. 219-237.
- Becker, J. 2015. The Cruelty of Nazi Women: An Examination of the War-time Trials of Irma Grese and Ilse Koch. *New Views on Gender* 15, pp. 52-58.

- Berelson, B., Lazarsfeld, P., and McPhee, W., 1954. *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bosmajian, H., 1966. The Use of the Symbol 'Unknown' in Nazi Persuasion. *Folklore*. 77 (2), pp. 116-122.
- Bytwerk, R., 2005. The Argument for Genocide in Nazi Propaganda. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. 91 (1), pp. 37-62.
- Carlton, E., 1995. Extermination: Nazi Policies and the SS Intelligentsia. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. 15 (6), pp. 21-58.
- Classen, C., 2007. Thought on the Significance of Mass—media Communications on the Third Reich and the GDR. *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*. 8 (3-4), pp. 547-562.
- Delia, J., 1971. Rhetoric in the Nazi mind: Hitler's theory of persuasion. *Southern Speech Communication Journal*. 37 (2), pp. 136-149.
- 'Die Arbeit der Partei-Propaganda im Kriege,' *Unser Wille und Weg*, 11 (1941), pp. 1-12. Available at: <http://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/warprop.htm>
- Eatwell, R., 2006a. Explaining Fascism and Ethnic Cleansing: The Three Dimensions of Charisma and the Four Dark Sides of Nationalism. *Political Studies Review*. 4, pp. 263-278.
- Eatwell, R., 2006b. The Concept and Theory of Charismatic Leadership. *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*. 7 (2), pp. 141-156.
- Ellul, J., 1968. *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Elman, R., 1996. Triangles and Tribulations. *Journal of Homosexuality*. 30 (3), pp. 1-11.
- Fellows, E., 1959. 'Propaganda:' History of a Word. *American Speech*. 34 (3), pp. 182-189.
- Forceville, C., 1994. Pictorial Metaphor in Advertisements. *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*. Y (1), pp. 1-79.

- Gaunt, S., 1999. Visual Propaganda in England in the Later Middle Ages. In: B. Taithe and T. Thornton, eds. 1999. *Propaganda: Political Rhetoric and Identity 1300-2000*. Sutton Publishing Ltd. United Kingdom. Ch. 2.
- Grabowski, J., 2009. German Anti-Jewish Propaganda in the Generalgouvernement, 1939-1945: Inciting Hate through Posters, Films, and Exhibitions. *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. 23 (3), pp. 381-412.
- Grunberger, R., 1971. *A Social History of the Third Reich*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson.
- Herf, J. 2005. The 'Jewish War': Goebbels and the Antisemitic Campaigns of the Nazi Propaganda Ministry. *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. 19(1), pp. 51-80.
- Herf, J. 2013. Narrative and Mendacity: Anti-semitic Propaganda in Nazi Germany. In: J. Auerbach and R. Castronovo, eds. 2013. *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 1.
- Herzstein, R. 1979. *The War that Hitler Won*. London: H. Hamilton.
- Ivie, R., 1982. The metaphor of forge in Prowar discourse: The case of 1812. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. 68(3), pp. 240-253.
- Jason, G., 2013. Film and Propaganda: The Lessons of the Nazi Film Industry. *Reasons Papers*. 35(1), pp. 203-219.
- Jowett, G. & O'Donnell, V., 1992. *Propaganda and Persuasion*. London: Sage Publications.
- Kershaw, I. 1983. *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria 1933-1945*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kershaw, I. 1987. *The 'Hitler Myth': Image and Reality in the Third Reich*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kershaw, I., 1993. 'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship. *Contemporary European History*. 2 (2), pp. 103-118.
- Koslov, E., 2008. "Going east": colonial experiences and practices of violence among female and male Majdanek camp guards (1941-44). *Journal of Genocide Research*. 10 (4), pp. 563-582.

- Lasswell, H., 1927. The Theory of Political Propaganda. *The American Political Science Review*. 21 (3), pp. 627-631.
- Lower, W., 2013. *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields*. [Kindle version] First Mariner Books. Available at: Amazon.co.uk, <http://www.amazon.co.uk> [Accessed 31 July 2015].
- MacDonald, S., 2006. Words in Stone? Agency and Identity in a Nazi Landscape. *Journal of Material Culture*. 11 (1/2), pp. 105-126.
- Markova, I., 2008. Persuasion and Propaganda. *Diogenes*. 217 (37), pp. 37-51.
- Marlin, R., 2013. Jacques Ellul's Contribution to Propaganda Studies. In: J. Auerbach and R. Castronovo, eds. 2013. *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 3.
- McCloskey, B., 2012. Marking Time Women and Nazi Propaganda Art during World War II. *Contemporaneity: Historical Presence in Visual Culture*. 2 (1), pp. 2-16.
- McCram, G., 2009. Government Wartime Propaganda Posters: Communicators of Public Policy. *Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian*. 28 (1-2), pp. 53-73.
- Morris, F., 2011. Beautiful Monsters. *Legacy*. 11 (1): 6.
- Murray, J., 1998. Constructing the ordinary: The dialectical development of Nazi ideology. *Communication Quarterly*. 46 (1), pp. 41-59.
- Musolff, A., 2007. What role do metaphors play in racial prejudice? The function of anti-Semitic imagery in Hitler's Mein Kampf. *Patterns of Prejudice*. 41 (1), pp. 21-43.
- O'Shaughnessy, N., 2012. The death and life of propaganda. *Journal of Public Affairs*. 12 (1), pp. 29-38.
- Perry, S., 1983. Rhetorical functions of the infestation metaphor in Hitler's rhetoric. *Central States Speech Journal*. 34 (4), pp. 229-235.
- Prendergast, M. & Prendergast T., 2013. The Invention of Propaganda: A Critical Commentary on and Translation of Inscrutabili Divinae Providentiae Arcano. In: J. Auerbach and R. Castronovo, eds. 2013. *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 1.

- Riefenstahl, L., 1936. 'Olympia - Fest der Völker'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNnDBAdF2sI> [Last accessed: 31/07/2015].
- Robertson, E., 2014. Propaganda and 'manufactured hatred': A reappraisal of the ethics of First World War British and Australian atrocity propaganda. *Public Relations Inquiry*. 3 (2), pp. 245-266.
- Rose, K., 2014. The First World War: Propaganda and Recruitment. *Reference Reviews*. 28 (5), pp. 45 – 46.
- Soergel, P., 1991. The Image of Saints in the Bavarian Counter Reformation. *Historian*. 53 (2), pp. 223-240.
- Stephenson, J., 1975. *Women in Nazi Society*. Great Britain: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc.
- Stephenson, J., 2001. *Women in Nazi Germany*. Great Britain: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Stoltzfus, N., 1992. Dissent in Nazi Germany. *Atlantic*. 270 (3), p. 86.
- Taithe, B. & Thornton, T., 1999. Propaganda - a misnomer of rhetoric and persuasion? In: B. Taithe and T. Thornton, eds. 1999. *Propaganda: Political Rhetoric and Identity 1300-2000*. Sutton Publishing Ltd. United Kingdom. Ch. 1.
- Taylor, S., 1981. Symbol and Ritual under National Socialism. *The British Journal of Sociology*. 32 (4), pp. 504-520.
- Wachsmann, N., 2004. *Hitler's Prisons: Legal Terror in Nazi Germany*. Bury St. Edmunds: St. Edmundsbury Press Ltd.
- Welch, D., 1993. *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*. London: Routledge.
- Welch, D., 2004. Nazi Propaganda and the Volksgemeinschaft: Constructing a People's Community. *Journal of Contemporary History*. 39 (2), pp. 213-238.
- Zeman, Z., 1964. *Nazi Propaganda*. London: Oxford University Press.