

# Unveiling the Power of Hitler's Propaganda:

Examining the Impact of the Propaganda of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Regime on the Nation Before and During World War II



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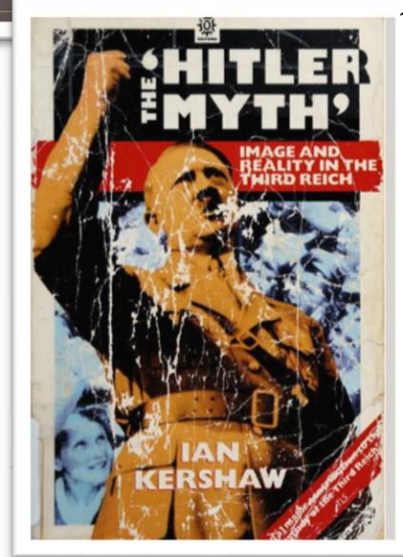
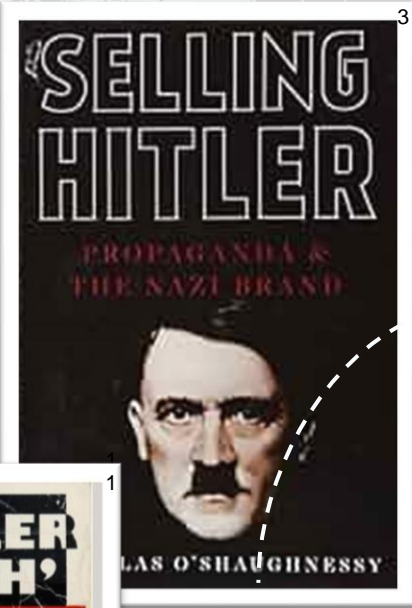
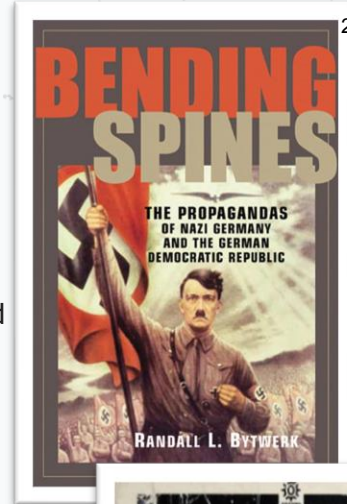
01

# Historiography



# Historiographic Views

- IAN KERSHAW. (2001). *The "Hitler Myth": Image and Reality in the Third Reich*. Oxford University Press.
  - Explores the ideology of Hitler as a demagogue and as the mighty defender/savior of Germany, perpetuated by propaganda.
- NICHOLAS O'SHAUGHNESSY. (2016). *Selling Hitler: Propaganda and the Nazi Brand*. Hurst & Co.
  - Argues that Nazism was a brand and that propaganda was the mechanism through which, the brand and its power was utilized
- RANDALL L. BYTWERK. (2004). *Bending Spines: The Propaganda of Nazi Germany and the German Democratic Republic*. Michigan State University Press.
  - Examines the propaganda used by the Nazis and concludes that it was a failure because they expected more from the propaganda than it could deliver on.





02

# Background



# Historical Origins

Traced back to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*

Creation of the Reich Ministry for  
Public Enlightenment and  
Propaganda (RMVP)

Elimination of Freedoms,  
Introduction of Controls

Propaganda and Power





03

## Ministry & Methods



# The RMVP

- ★ **The Ministry's Directive**
- ★ **Targeting and Exploitation**
- ★ **The "Machine" and Party Goals**





“The first duty of the propagandist is to win over the people...so that the doctrine may finally triumph.”

—**Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf***

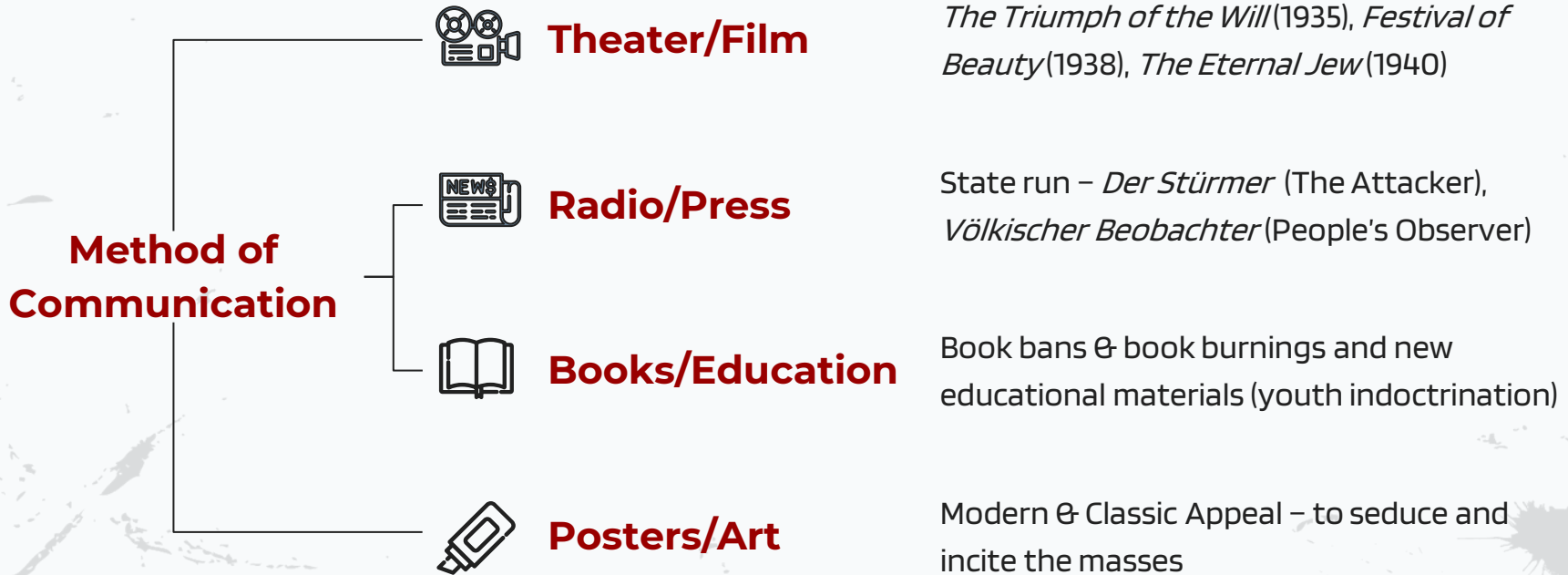


# The Methods

- ★ Deification of Hitler
- ★ Defining and Justifying
- ★ Rallying the Masses



# The Message and the Method





*Illustration from an antisemitic children's book. The sign reads "Jews are not wanted here." Germany, 1936.*

A pedestrian stops to read an issue of the antisemitic newspaper *Der Stuermer* (The Attacker) in a Berlin display box. Berlin, Germany, 1930s.





# Social & Attributional Bias



## Halo Effect

Positive or negative traits “spill over” from one area of their personality to another in others’ perceptions.

## Superiority Bias

Overestimating one’s desirable qualities and underestimating undesirable ones, relative to other people.

## Herd Instinct

Tendency to adopt opinions and follow behaviors of the majority to feel safer & avoid conflict.

## Self-Service Behavioral Confirmation Bias


Tendency to claim more responsibility for successes than failures. Also a tendency to evaluate ambiguous information in a way beneficial to them.

## Trait Ascription Bias

Tendency to see oneself as relatively variable in terms of personality, behavior, and mood while viewing others as more predictable.

## Projection Bias

Tendency to unconsciously assume that others share the same or similar thoughts/ideas, beliefs, values, or positions.





# Decision-Making Bias



## Authority Bias

Tendency to value ambiguous stimulus based on the opinion of someone who is seen as an authority on the subject.

## Bandwagon

Tendency to do/believe things because many other people do/believe the same.

## Clustering Illusion

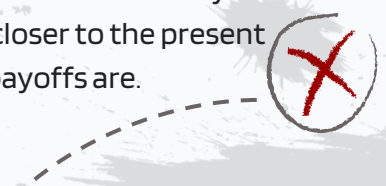
Tendency to see patterns where none exist.

## Semmelweis Reflex

Tendency to reject new evidence that contradicts an already established program.

## Hyperbolic Discounting

Tendency for people to have a stronger preference for more immediate payoffs relative to later payoffs, where the tendency increases the closer to the present the payoffs are.



04

# Analysis





## Nazi Propaganda: “Hero,” “Deity,” Dictator, Man...Hitler

“...the Greater German, the Führer, the Prophet, the Fighter, the last hope of the masses, the shining symbol of the German will to freedom.”

- Joseph Goebbels, *Der Angriff*





## Nazi Propaganda: War Support

- The Wehrmacht ("Hitler's Army"), pseudo-religious Hitler cult, believing in the ideology of the "propaganda" and a distortion of reality.

*Hard Times. Hard Duties. Hard Hearts.*



## Nazi Propaganda: *Lebensraum*

- Nazi propaganda to promote *Lebensraum*, a principle tenet of Nazi extreme nationalism and foreign "policy" goal.





*He is to Blame for the War!*

## Nazi Propaganda: Genocide...The Holocaust

- Defining the "enemy" and the blame game.
- Jewish equals inferior and the "reason for all of Germany's failures and problems."
- "Others" also inferior, the enemy, or agents of the enemy.





05

**Impact**



# Impact of Nazi Propaganda Prior to WWII



## Membership

Increase Nazi membership and party legitimacy



## Rise of Hitler

Economic and political instability, disillusionment and Adolf Hitler, the hero and savior of Germany.



## Nazi Govt.

Adolf Hitler, Chancellor, Leader, Dictator, Der Führer and the Nazi Regime; the creation of a new "fascist" government.



# Impact of Nazi Propaganda During WWII



## ***Lebensraum***

The only "effective defense  
against [the others]...



## **War**

Mobilization, support,  
motivation, and conquest.



## **Genocide**

The Holocaust and the death  
of approximately 17 million  
through mass murder and  
ethnic cleansing.



06

# Conclusions





# The End is Near...

- ★ Change the Public Opinion, the Mass Appeal Worked Like a Charm
- ★ Communication Is Key
- ★ Goals Accomplished...Kind of





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