Propaganda
Analyze the use and effects of propaganda in WWI

Political language... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.-George Orwell

What is propaganda?
- A way of manipulating people using images and words to achieve a desired affect or outcome
- Propaganda clouds reality and gets in the way of clear and honest thinking
- During wartime, propaganda is designed to provide a focus for our mistrust and hatred, to dehumanize the enemy so they may be killed without remorse

Why use propaganda in WW1?
- Prior to the war, propaganda was used to increase militarism and nationalism in countries
  - Glorify the military or the state
  - Vilify the enemies
- Total War demanded the commitment of all a society's resources
  - Men & women needed to enlist
  - Civilians sacrificed quality of life because of blockade or rationing
  - Extremely high causality rate had to be tolerated
  - The war was going to be long
  - People had to abandon traditional morals or values

Propaganda was the mobilization of the mind
What did propaganda call people to do?

- Enlist in the military
- Fund the war through "War Bonds"
- "Work hard!" at their job
- Don't waste materials
- Follow certain rules ("Loose lips sink ships")
- Be Patriotic
- Support the war politically

**Propaganda Techniques**

**Bandwagon**

- Hop on the bandwagon or else you don't fit in. Everyone is doing it, so you should too. This technique is contrived peer pressure – no one wants to be left out or behind.

**Bandwagon**

- Everyone listens to the Fuhrer
Testimonial

• A celebrity or expert who endorse a product, candidate, or idea. Think about all of the commercials with celebrities. The celebrity may not always be qualified to speak on the subject.

Euphemisms

• The use of words or statements that deter from the meaning, to make it not as bad, and more tasteful to the general public. The Nazis used the term resettlement to describe the mass murder of the Jews.
**Appeal to Authority**

- Appeals to authority have important and powerful people supporting a candidate or idea. Similar to testimonial.

**Plain Folks**

- This technique has a person or cause being associated with regular people. Candidates who are just like you – they put their pants on one leg at a time too.
Transfer

- Propagandists transfer the fame, prestige, or reliability of something or someone to an issue that may or may not be related. Any politician who publicly says a prayer is transferring religion to their image. Use of a flag or patriotic leader is also commonly utilized. The Nazis justified treatment of the Jews by “proving” their inferiority through their own science.

Logical Fallacies

- Drawing a conclusion from a series of premises. For example: Religion is good. Wars are fought over religion. Therefore, religious wars are good.
Fear

- During wartime this technique is used often. It informs people that personal danger is imminent if they do or do not do some specific action.

Glittering Generalities

- Use of words and images that generally carry a favorable meaning to everyone; including liberty, democracy, freedom, and civilization. It hopes to associate a person, idea, or group with a positive feeling, but no direct evidence. The largest problem with this technique is that all of these words mean different things to different people.
Glittering Generalities

Name-Calling

• This technique links a person or idea to a negative image. It is hoped that association with this negative symbol will cause the viewer to reject it outright. A derivative of this technique involves carefully selecting descriptive words. Compare the connotations word determined and aggressive. This is the opposite of glittering generalities.

Name-Calling

"The Jew: The inciter of war, the prolonger of war."
Other Techniques *

- **Misery** - Appeals to pity or sympathy to gain support.
- **Fancy Words** - Use of elegant or technical sounding words to persuade and camouflage the truth.
- **Word Magic** - Uses emotional or catchy words to create a positive feeling and makes it easier to remember the product or idea.

Other Techniques *

- **Black and White** - Presents an issue as having only two choices. If you don’t like one choice, you must choose the other.
- **Simplicity and Repetition** - Keep it simple and say it often enough so people will remember it and believe it.

Categories of Propaganda

**Propaganda from Below**
- Originated from independent groups (community groups, churches, mass media)
- Most effective because it easily connected with viewers
- It seemed authentic
- Took the form of posters, mugs, toys, souvenirs
- Business adopted patriot themes for products

Like a giant ad campaign for the war effort

**Propaganda from Above**
- Originated from the government
- Not particularly effective
- Tended to be heavy-handed
- Germans govt used it extensively during the war
- British adopted it late (1918)

What was the impact of propaganda?

- The overall effect of propaganda is highly disputed
  - In general: it made negotiating a peace harder since the war-mindset was for “total victory”
  - Germany blamed allied propaganda for their loss
    - Gen. Ludendorff claimed it was the blockade and allied propaganda that demoralized the German troops
  - What about German military defeats???
    - Some claim Allied propaganda led to US entry into the war
    - Unrestricted sub warfare and atrocities were more responsible
- Propaganda was used effectively to stir-up internal revolts in enemies
  - Germans supported Lenin & Bolsheviks in Russia
  - Germans supported nationalist groups in Ireland & India
  - Allies also used propaganda in A-H and Germany