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The Development, Impact, and Long-term Significance of Wartime Propaganda on the Doughboys in World War I: Personal Appeal vs Moral Imperative

Maggie Woods

“Army Strong” is now entering its sixth year as the official recruiting slogan of the U.S. Army. It promises that soldiers will possess strength in everything: purpose, body, character, obedience, authority, and success. Explicit ideals like patriotism and humanitarianism and national goals like vanquishing a particular enemy have been absent since the unpopular Vietnam War, suppressed in favor of an emphasis on personal benefit. A recruitment ad from 2011 emphasizes the Army’s role in individual soldiers’ lives, showing poignant footage of soldiers with their families, at the funerals of their peers, and in training alongside fellow recruits. With many Americans feeling tricked into fighting an unnecessary war in Iraq, the video avoids identifying a specific enemy or political cause. The song “American Soldier” plays in the background, its lyrics stating proudly a more nationalistic message: “when liberty’s in jeopardy, I will always do what’s right” and “I don’t do it for the money...I don’t do it for the glory, I just do it anyway.”¹

¹U.S. Army, “Army Strong: The Strength of the Nation,” *The Official Homepage of the United States Army*, Army Media Player video file, 9 Oct. 2011.

<<http://www.army.mil/media/amp/?bctid=1211220712001>> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012).

The 2011 version represents the blending of personal and national appeals that the American government used to encourage enlistment and draft registration in 1917. A study of the evolution of World War I enlistment propaganda places that blend in historical context, demonstrating that propaganda provides an accurate representation not of war but of popular opinion toward war.

Many works have examined the propaganda of World War I. Robert A. Wells's "Mobilizing Support for War: An Analysis of American Propaganda during World War I" (2002) reveals the pivotal role of anti-German propaganda in shifting public opinion toward war. Jennifer D. Keene's chapter "Morals and Morale" in *World War I: The American Soldier Experience* (2011) reveals American efforts to indoctrinate soldiers and uplift their morale. Neither, however, addresses in depth the soldiers' relationship with the propaganda, what messages they found most appealing, how they reconciled those messages with their experiences at the front, and how propaganda evolved in response.

Propaganda's Task

By 11 November 1918, the United States had mobilized approximately four million men to serve in the Army, a staggering accomplishment considering that the nation began the war with not even one-twentieth of that force. Despite the record of battles whose Allied death tolls measured in the hundreds of thousands, young American men eagerly enlisted within the first week of declaration. Many did not know even where the war was being fought and often did not care. As enlistee William Langer admitted, "I can hardly remember a single instance of serious discussion of American policy or of larger war issues.

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We men, most of us young, were simply fascinated by the prospect of adventure and heroism.”²

Recruitment propaganda had to appeal to this typical man, who did not necessarily understand the war, was probably uneducated or even illiterate, and was often motivated more by personal than national interest. The resultant propaganda played to personal ambition, emphasizing material enticements over moral ideals. Once in the trenches and faced with the reality of war and of their own unpreparedness, soldiers realized the falsity of this materialistic propaganda. The official campaigns of the Committee on Public Information (CPI) had presented the glories of war, not the realities: body lice, equipment and food shortages, and seemingly endless barrages around their heads. The resolve of the recruits, however, was fortified rather than undermined by the emotional propaganda that persisted alongside the materialistic propaganda. Many remained heartened by their underlying belief in the morality of their mission, inspired by German atrocity stories, posters, and films presenting Germans as beasts that had to be vanquished for the sake of humanity.

The British Emotional Precedent

Even when the U.S. was still nominally neutral, the British government primed American public opinion through an effective anti-German propaganda campaign that set the sensationalized tone for later propaganda produced by the CPI. The British government

²William L. Langer, *Gas and Flame in World War I* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), xviii-xix, in James H. Hallas, ed., *Doughboy War: The American Expeditionary Force in World War I* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 9.

based its domestic campaign on Germany's "Rape of Belgium," an event hyperbolized to dehumanize the Germans. The initial intellectual justification, that Germany had violated international law by invading neutral Belgium, was quickly replaced with a more successful emotional version of the event, in which German soldiers became medieval barbarians who raped and pillaged defenseless Belgians.³ The Germans' trespass of international law became a transgression against human decency. Cultivating this savage image abroad, Britain released the "Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages" (Bryce Report) in the U.S, a detailed list of every crime German soldiers committed in Belgium since 4 August 1914. Scholar Nicoletta Gullace asserts that the Committee and its report were especially crafted to appeal to Americans: the head of the Committee, James Bryce, had served as British ambassador to the U.S., and the report was released barely a week after German U-boats torpedoed the *Lusitania*, killing American civilians.⁴

This British "Rape of Belgium" justification for war reverberated throughout American films, posters, and spoken word as the most cogent and memorable reason for American involvement. The *Lusitania* became an irrefutable symbol of German aggression. An enlistee was told in 1917 that the "sinking of the *Lusitania* was the last straw that led us into the war,"

³Nicoletta F. Gullace, *"The Blood of Our Sons": Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 22-23.

⁴Ibid., 29.

even though that event happened two years earlier.⁵ Within a week of Congress's declaration of war, President Woodrow Wilson established the Committee on Public Information to present the war effort from a distinctly American perspective, but built on previous British efforts. Years of exposure to Britain's publicity made the rhetorical transition to war almost seamless and might explain many men's eagerness to enlist the first day to fight in the Britons' "chivalrous war."⁶

Recruitment and Draft Propaganda

Appealing variously to men's sense of sympathy, patriotism, honor, adventure, and ambition, recruitment propaganda cultivated the perception that this morally unambiguous war was not only a necessary action against an irrationally brutal enemy but also an opportunity for American men to prove *and* improve themselves. CPI's chairman George Creel considered visual and auditory propaganda, such as posters, movies, and the speeches of Four Minute Men, particularly important in rousing support among the nation's considerable non-English-speaking and illiterate populations. Continuing the "Rape of Belgium" tradition, incipient Hollywood produced anti-German films featuring close-up depictions of the suffering of French and Belgian women and children's inflicted by merciless German soldiers.⁷

⁵Connell Albertine, *The Yankee Doughboy* (Boston: Branden Press, 1968), 9-10, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 7.

⁶Stewart Halsey Ross, *Propaganda for War: How the United States Was Conditioned to Fight the Great War of 1914-1918* (Jefferson: MacFarland, 1996), 3.

⁷Robert A. Wells, "Mobilizing for War: An Analysis of American Propaganda during World War I" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association,

Movie theaters provided venues for the remarkably successful Four Minute Men, who addressed audiences while the movie reels were changed. These speakers were initially charged with stirring up enough enthusiasm for the war so that the draft's introduction would not result in riots, as had occurred during the Civil War.⁸ Creel made sure his speakers appealed to the broadest demographic possible. Typically well-known, respected members of the local community, such as doctors and lawyers, Four Minute Men represented different ethnic backgrounds, addressing audiences in Italian, Polish, Lithuanian, Magyar-Hungarian, Russian, Ukrainian, Armenian, Bohemian-Slovak, and Yiddish.⁹ The CPI standardized the Four Minute Men's messages by providing the speakers with suggested material.¹⁰ The resultant speeches neatly packaged Wilson's and Creel's public sentiments explaining why America had to join the war.

According to scholar Carol Oukrop, the Four Minute Men's speeches established that the U.S. was savior not only of the Allies but also of liberty, democracy, and humanity. The speeches referenced the Rape of Belgium, the invasion and sacrifice of France (fondly associated with the Revolutionary War's General Lafayette), the sacrifice of England (in the spirit of

New Orleans, LA, 24-27 Mar. 2002), *ISA*,
<<http://isanet.ccit.arizona.edu/noarchive/robertwells.html>>
(accessed 14 Mar. 2012).

⁸Lisa Mastrangelo, "World War I, Public Intellectuals, and the Four Minute Men: Convergent Ideals of Public Speaking and Civic Participation," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 12, no. 4 (2009): 612.

⁹*Ibid.*, 610.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 618.

Anglo-American solidarity), and the faltering participation of Russia.¹¹ This last was particularly important once Russia liberated itself from autocracy. As President Wilson said in his speech to Congress on 2 April 1917, "The world must be made safe for democracy." Some speakers were so persuasive and passionate that male audience members enlisted or registered as soon as the speech ended. Corporal Martin J. Hogan determined to sign up even while the speaker was still talking and was the first to jump up when the speaker "wound up by asking all the men willing to serve the country, to see her through her present emergency with rifles in hand, to step upon the stage."¹²

Although Creel's Four Minute Men program reached most of the home front population, including non-English-speaking minority groups, it is difficult to evaluate the Four Minute Men's success in encouraging men to enlist or to register for the draft and in inculcating in them specific justifications for the war. Scholar Lisa Mastrangelo notes that the CPI declared the program a success when, on 5 June 1917, ten million men registered for the draft with "no publicized riots and few protests."¹³ Mastrangelo, however, doubts

¹¹Carol Oukrop, "The Four Minute Men Became National Network during World War I," *Journalism Quarterly* 52, no. 4 (Winter 1975): 635.

¹²Martin J. Hogan, *The Shamrock Battalion of the Rainbow* (New York: D. Appleton, 1919), in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 8.

¹³According to Alfred E. Cornebise [*War as Advertised: The Four Minute Men and America's Crusade 1917-1918*, Memoirs 156 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984), 3-6], the Four Minute Men started as a local group in Chicago on 28 April 1917 and were not endorsed formally by the CPI until 16 June 1917, but Creel took credit for starting the program [in George Creel, "Public Opinion in War Time," *American Academy*

the CPI's claim that the Four Minute Men were the most effective recruiting tool. She attributes the results to a pre-existing general desire to take part in the war, a conclusion that does not take into account the presence of three million draft dodgers, nearly eleven percent of draft-eligible American men.¹⁴ But the CPI's claim is undeniably weakened by the fact that only a few veterans were like Corporal Hogan, who remembered enlisting after listening to a Four Minute Man. Veterans instead widely echoed messages from recruitment posters.

Posters visually displayed a variety of reasons to enlist or register for the draft. Many fostered the hatred that the British had planted: the famous "Destroy This Mad Brute" poster (see Appendix 1) depicted the German soldier as a drooling ape encroaching on America's shore from a ruined Europe, clutching a distressed, partially naked Lady Liberty.¹⁵ Propagandists expected that moral outrage at the actions of the "Huns" (a term coined with the initial "Rape of Belgium" propaganda that emphasized Germans' barbarity) would inflame men to enlist. The poster "Tell That to the Marines!" (see Appendix 2) shows a man who angrily strips himself of his civilian clothes after reading the newspaper headline "Huns

of Political and Social Science 78 (July 1918): 186-87]; Mastrangelo, "World War I," 612.

¹⁴Statistic from Jennifer D. Keene, *World War I: The American Soldier Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 37.

¹⁵H.R. Hopps, "Destroy This Mad Brute," 1916, in Ross, *Propaganda for War*, ii.

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Kill Women and Children.”¹⁶ Few soldiers, however, attributed their eagerness to enlist to moral outrage.

Propagandists rapidly revised their posters to encourage enlistment and registration in ways that might appeal to the majority of their audience, beginning a trend that sacrificed ideological appeals. The emphasis shifted from explaining why America was fighting the war to explaining why an individual should enlist. Since moral outrage at Germany’s belligerence and cruelty was not enough to provoke sufficient enlistments, new posters presented more material justifications. The potential of upward mobility was a popular theme: “Earn While You Learn” posters (see Appendix 3) promised education and vocational training to recruits, benefits which might have been particularly appealing to this generation of soldiers, a third of whom were illiterate.¹⁷ The considerable presence of these posters suggests their relative success, but recruits had mixed opinions regarding the realization of this promise, particularly its education component. Non-English-speaking recruits were often eager to receive free ESL education.¹⁸ Other recruits, however, expressed annoyance that they were required to take remedial English classes as a part of their

¹⁶James Montgomery Flagg, “Tell That to the Marines!,” 1918, *Library of Congress*, JPEG, <<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008679015/>> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012).

¹⁷William Oberhardt, “General Pershing Says,” [1917 or 1918], *Library of Congress*, JPEG, <<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00651737/>> (22 Feb. 2012); Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 20.

¹⁸James M. Howard, *The Autobiography of a Regiment* (New York: n.p., 1920), 25-26, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 22.

training: they were “going over there to shoot Germans, not to write letters to ‘em!”¹⁹

Many men attributed their enlistment to various forms of social pressure or to the sheer excitement of adventure overseas, and posters quickly adapted to reflect these attitudes. Poster creators emphasized feelings of camaraderie and subtly applied peer pressure, noticing that men often enlisted in groups. Saddler John Joseph Brennan made a point in his wartime diary that he and his friend Harry Willard joined the Army together.²⁰ Sergeant Dan Edwards, already in the reserve, reenlisted the day of declaration, as did all of the men at his ranch. Even though “[h]alf of them barely knew where the war was and didn’t give a damn,” they were “sure one happy crowd,” having enlisted together.²¹ Posters responded to this social phenomenon by featuring calls to arms like “Enlist Now and Go with Your Friends” or “Fight alongside Your Friends” (see Appendix 4 and 5).²²

¹⁹Evan A. Edwards, *From Doniphan to Verdun: The Story of the 140th Infantry* (Lawrence, KS: World Company, 1920), 19, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 22.

²⁰John Joseph Brennan, *My Own True Story of My Experience in the Army* ([Albany, NY?]: self-published, 1982), 9, *World War I: The Great War, in Veterans History Project: Experiencing War*, Library of Congress, 26 Oct. 2011 <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.00282/pageturner?ID=pm0001001>> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012).

²¹Lowell Thomas, *This Side of Hell* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1932), 73, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 7.

²²Arthur N. Edrop, “Make the World Safe,” 1917, Willard and Dorothy Straight Collection, *Library of Congress*, JPEG, <<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001700145/>> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012); Unknown artist, “Give the Guard a Fighting Chance,” [between 1917 and 1919], *Library of Congress*, JPEG, <

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Featuring pictures of recruits with captions like “He Did His Duty—Will You?” (see Appendix 6), posters evoked peer pressure like that experienced by Navy firefighter Russell Powers, whose “buddies...wanted to know why the hell [he had] waited so long, from the 6th. to the 8th. [of April] to get in.”²³

Regardless of material or social incentive, the prospect of transcending their mundane lives by crossing the Atlantic to take part in a glorious war was enticement enough for many young Americans. “[H]ope and enthusiasm” characterized the attitude of these enlistees: hope and enthusiasm for an adventure in which they were the heroes “following the flag over a shell torn field, with fixed bayonet.”²⁴ Recruitment propaganda did not disabuse soldiers of this idealized, swashbuckling image of war but encouraged men to enlist on the promise of adventure. Such posters emphasized the once-in-a-lifetime quality of this opportunity to travel outside of the U.S., expenses paid. One poster (see Appendix 7) proclaimed, “Here Is Your Chance To See FRANCE AND THE RHINE” [original capitalization] in large letters overpowering

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00651605/> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012).

²³Unknown artist, “He Did His Duty,” [between 1914 and 1918], *Library of Congress*, JPEG, <<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00651865/>> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012); Russell Powers, interview by Tammy Lien, PDF transcription of audio cassette recording, unknown location, 9 Nov. 1984, 1.

²⁴Robert W. Kean, *Dear Marraine* (n.p.: n.p. 1969), xi-xii, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 6; Justin M. Klingenberg, in *One Hundred Thirteenth Engineers in France* (Nancy, FR: Berger-Levrault, 1919), 78, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 9.

even the call in the bottom lines to enlist.²⁵ William Langer remembered that he and his friends felt keenly the urgency of this type of message. Fighting in this Great War was their “one great chance for excitement and risk.” They “could not afford to pass it up” only to continue lives that “would run in familiar, routine channels.”²⁶ The war did offer a break from routine, but not in ways that Langer and most other enlistees anticipated.

Camp and Battlefield Realities

The war in Europe resembled no other in its stagnation and bloodshed, and certainly it did not present the kind of adventure American men had been promised. When recruits, both enlisted and drafted, arrived at American and European training camps, and later the European trenches, they discovered that propaganda had sugar-coated or omitted entirely the shortcomings of American military preparation. The American government was undeniably unprepared for war, despite the claims of the CPI. The Four Minute Men tried to counter negative publicity by tailoring facts to fit their message. They spoke glowingly of the number of men signed in the different military branches, the activities of non-military government organizations, and the mobilization efforts of railways and industries.²⁷ They omitted (blatantly, in hindsight) information about troops’ equipment and preparedness.

²⁵Unknown artist, “Here Is Your Chance,” [1917 or 1918], *Library of Congress*, JPEG, <<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00651738/>> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012).

²⁶ Langer, *Gas*, xviii-xix, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 9.

²⁷Oukrop, “The Four Minute Men,” 635.

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Speakers neglected the fact that training camps in the U.S. were still being built. The first divisions were sent overseas to train under Allied leaders before being re-inducted into General Pershing's American Expeditionary Forces. Supplies, such as weapons and uniforms, were insufficient because industry was still mobilizing. Two months prior to the declaration of war, in response to the government's requests for heavy artillery, machine guns, clothing, and other necessities, suppliers predicted that production of adequate numbers would take over a year.²⁸ Recruits trained with sticks instead of guns and in civilian clothes instead of uniforms. When camps did manage to provide uniforms, they were often the wrong size. John Brennan complained that the seat of his pants "were big enough for a couple of bread baskets to hide away in."²⁹

Even the shock of camp life, with its rigid discipline and shortage of supplies, did not prepare troops for the conditions at the front. The comparative attitudes toward the camps and the trenches are summed up by Brennan as his division marched closer to enemy fire: "We used to think that we were treated pretty rough and had hard times. But as the days roll by and we are getting nearer to the actual fighting, we seem to look back and say those were the happy days."³⁰ Daily rations in the camps had been almost five thousand calories and heavy in protein to sustain recruits during intense training, but "a feeling of gnawing hunger prevailed almost from the period at which

²⁸Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 24.

²⁹Brennan, *My Own True Story*, 10.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 56.

campaigning began to the point where it ended.”³¹ Troops on the march and in the trenches relied almost exclusively on canned foods for their one daily meal.

Some soldiers, with no other way in which to cope with the shock but humor, joked that they envied their “cooties” (body lice) because they at least “always ha[d] something warm to eat.”³² Vermin such as lice and rats presented unique problems. Soldiers had to improvise in their encounters with cooties and rats, as they had received no official warnings about their existence, let alone their persistence. Their uninformed solutions were often just as harmful as the pests themselves: some would steal kerosene to pour over themselves, discovering much to their discomfort that it burned them but left the lice unharmed.³³

In addition to the living conditions, European trench warfare was utterly alien to Americans and did not conform to the image of open warfare depicted by posters and films. The first episode of the popular newsreel series *America Goes Over* (1918) cleverly emphasizes Allied soldiers’ progress and motion: it glosses over the stagnation on the Western Front and shows instead activities like building bridges in Italy and marching across open fields, projecting purposeful

³¹Keene, *World War I*, 45; Leonard P. Kurtz, *Beyond No Man’s Land* (Buffalo, NY: Foster & Stewart, 1937), 30, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 183.

³²Charles Minder, *This Man’s War* (New York: Pevensey, 1931), 342, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 184-85.

³³Horatio Rogers, *The Diary of an Artillery Scout* (North Andover, MA: n.p., 1975), 217, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 185.

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industriousness.³⁴ Also absent is footage of attacks on the Allied trenches. During such attacks veterans remembered being so “enveloped in tremendous fear” that they lost the “ability to exert muscular control.”³⁵ Veterans recalled images of themselves balled up and clutching their knees as they hid in shell holes or against the back walls of their trenches. This was not the glorious, open-field fighting that “American soldiers love[d]”; it was not fighting at all, at least in their minds.³⁶ Even in battle, soldiers lost the worth that propaganda had awarded them. They were reminded not of their heroism but of their expendability: they were ordered to take care of the horses before themselves because “a man could take care of himself while a horse couldn’t, and...if a man was lost, another could take his place, but horses were scarce!”³⁷

The Doughboys’ Creative Response

Faced with these dire circumstances, many soldiers found comfort in their own popular culture that flouted official propaganda and represented not the home front culture they left but their own current experiences at the front. Officers who censored letters were frequently disappointed in the lack of ideals discussed by the soldiers; instead they read letters

³⁴U.S. Army Signal Corps, *America Goes Over* (Part I) (1918), Prelinger Archives, *Internet Archive: Digital Library of Free Books, Movies, Music & Wayback Machine*, online video file, <<http://www.archive.org/details/AmericaG1918>> (accessed 22 Feb. 2012).

³⁵William F. Clarke, *Over There with O’Ryan’s Roughnecks* (Seattle: Superior, 1966), 55-56, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 175.

³⁶Brennan, *My Own True Story*, 83.

³⁷George Mozley, *Our Miracle Battery* (n.p.: n.p., 1920), 48, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 182.

“about [the soldiers] health, minor discomforts of military service and family gossip.”³⁸ Likewise, songs popular among the troops were rarely patriotic but rather raunchy, nonsensical, humorous, or dreamlike. Army Field Clerk Will Judy recorded that the national anthem was “sung very seldom and never of our own accord.”³⁹ A private, remembering a photograph in the *Literary Gazette* of a chaplain blessing his troops, who sang a Protestant hymn as they marched, laughed because the songs sung by his own division “were as bawdy as the collective imaginations of 3,000 horny men could conceive.”⁴⁰

Some soldiers did find strength in the humanitarian appeals of early propaganda, envisioning themselves as saviors of the overrun Allies and the free world. Seeing the bedraggled dregs of British draftees in his shared trench, Lieutenant Joseph Douglas Lawrence realized that the fresh, ready-for-the-fight Americans were indeed needed: Allied forces were physically depleted and psychologically defeated in their attitude toward the war.⁴¹ Americans were a new hope. They were healthy and well-fed, and they sang so raucously as they marched toward stagnant battle fields that they had to be quieted so as not to attract enemy attention. They were seen as the heroes, albeit naïve ones who did not understand the rather unhe-

³⁸Keene, *World War I*, 60.

³⁹Will Judy, *A Soldier's Diary* (Chicago: Judy Publishing, 1930), 125, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 199.

⁴⁰Albert M. Ettinger, *A Doughboy with the Fighting 69th* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane, 1992), 150, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 197.

⁴¹Joseph Douglas Lawrence, *Fighting Soldier: The AEF in 1918* (Boulder: Colorado Associated University Press, 1985), xiii.

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roic ways of this war. One veteran reiterated the propagandistic notion that he became convinced that the Allies' "fight [was] our fight, because it espouse[d] the principles of the United States of America, democracy, justice, and liberty."⁴²

Others fought because they were convinced that Germans were indeed monsters. Some harbored personal vendettas against Germany after being wounded, and others could not abandon their fellow doughboys. However, a considerable portion possessed a zeal for annihilating the Germans that surpassed even these reasons, as the German atrocity stories featured in early propaganda spread across the frontline. Lieutenant Robert Hoffman, although he conceded that "little homelike touches to the places [the Germans] had left showed them to be men like ourselves who could enjoy the simple pleasures of life," still believed that the Germans "weren't quite human."⁴³ He even quoted the Bryce Report to provide an example of the rumors that the soldiers "were always hearing."⁴⁴ Sergeant Arthur Havlin echoed the sentiment that the Germans were inhuman, remembering that "the number of prisoners captured by [his] division was materially less than what it should have been" because the soldiers had heard the atrocity stories and had decided that they could not suffer a

⁴²Arthur Guy Empey, *Over the Top* by an American Soldier Who Went (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1917), v.

⁴³Robert Hoffman, *I Remember the Last War* (York, PA: Strength & Health, 1940), 124, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 187.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 185-86, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 186.

German to live.⁴⁵ This same mindset encouraged Havlin's division to die fighting rather than to risk capture at the hands of the Germans.

Although wartime propaganda did not influence all soldiers to the degree it did Havlin and his men, it did shape most recruits' expectations of war so that many felt shock upon entering even the training camps and were unprepared both physically and mentally for trench warfare. Many veterans, however, remembered their determination to fight more than any resentment of their government. In his wartime diary, John Brennan admitted, "I don't know what would happen to us if we got discouraged," thinking only that "it would be a sad ending."⁴⁶ Yet despite his sickeningly uncomfortable sea journey to Europe, his confrontations with flesh-nibbling rats and body lice, and his experiences of frantically hiding from shots and shells, he affirmed that he and his fellows were "not down-hearted" but eager to fight.⁴⁷

Conclusion

Recruitment propaganda never features the unattractive realities of war. Instead propaganda reveals a government's effort to understand and use the prevailing emotions, needs, and desires of its citizens. In World War I, propaganda adapted, not to reflect the changing realities of war, but to account for public reactions to war itself and to offer a variety of inducements to enlist, tailored to differing motives. Some of the lessons provided by the development of World War

⁴⁵Arthur C. Havlin, *The History of Company A 102nd Machine Gun Battalion Twenty-Sixth Division, A.E.F.* (privately printed, 1928), 66, in Hallas, *Doughboy War*, 186.

⁴⁶Brennan, *My Own True Story*, 54.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 78.

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I propaganda are evident in subsequent military recruitment campaigns. When political goals are not sufficiently clear or compelling, more emphasis is placed on the benefits to the individual enlistee.

In the context of the shifting focus of World War I propaganda, recruitment campaigns during subsequent wars can be seen as a measure of popular support (or lack thereof) for political goals. The almost total lack of political content in today's recruitment efforts indicates the political unpopularity of current American military actions. Studies of popular opinion during wartime often examine the impact of propaganda targeting civilians rather than potential fighters, such as the famous Four-Minute-Men and poster campaigns that promoted the purchase of Liberty Bonds. However, the development of recruitment propaganda provides just as, if not more, valuable a gauge of public opinion toward war because such propaganda has to convince people to sacrifice not just their money but their lives.

Maggie Woods is double-majoring in history, with a European emphasis, and Latin and Greek, with a preference for Latin. She is also a member of Phi Alpha Theta and Eta Sigma Phi. When she graduates from SCU in 2014, she plans to continue her historical studies in graduate school, probably on topics in medieval English history. She thanks Professor Nancy Unger for her painstaking work with her on the paper in HIST 101.



Appendix 1


"Destroy This Mad Brute"

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Appendix 2

"Tell That to the Marines"



**General
Pershing
Says:-**

"The Task of Supplying an Army, the size of the American Expeditionary Forces in a Field of Operations, in many thousands of miles from home depots, was never before attempted. The Quartermaster Corps carried this task to a triumphant conclusion and thereby Made Possible the Success of Our Fighting Troops on the Marne, at St. Mihiel and in the Argonne."

A Chance For You
Enlist in the Quartermaster Corps of the Army Where
Business Training Makes One Man in Every Three
a Sergeant or Higher in Grade

Earn While You Learn
Pay \$30 as Private to \$105 per month for a Quartermaster
Sergeant, Senior Grade---equal to \$90 to \$175 outside
the Army. Enlist for 3 years, or 1 year if you
have had previous service.

Your Government Furnishes Everything
GO NOW to the nearest Army Recruiting Office or any Army Camp, Post
or Station, or write the Quartermaster General of the Army, Washington, D. C., for
FREE Booklet entitled "From Private to General" showing the latest War Pictures
from France and Germany, together with other interesting information.

ENLIST NOW WHILE VACANCIES EXIST

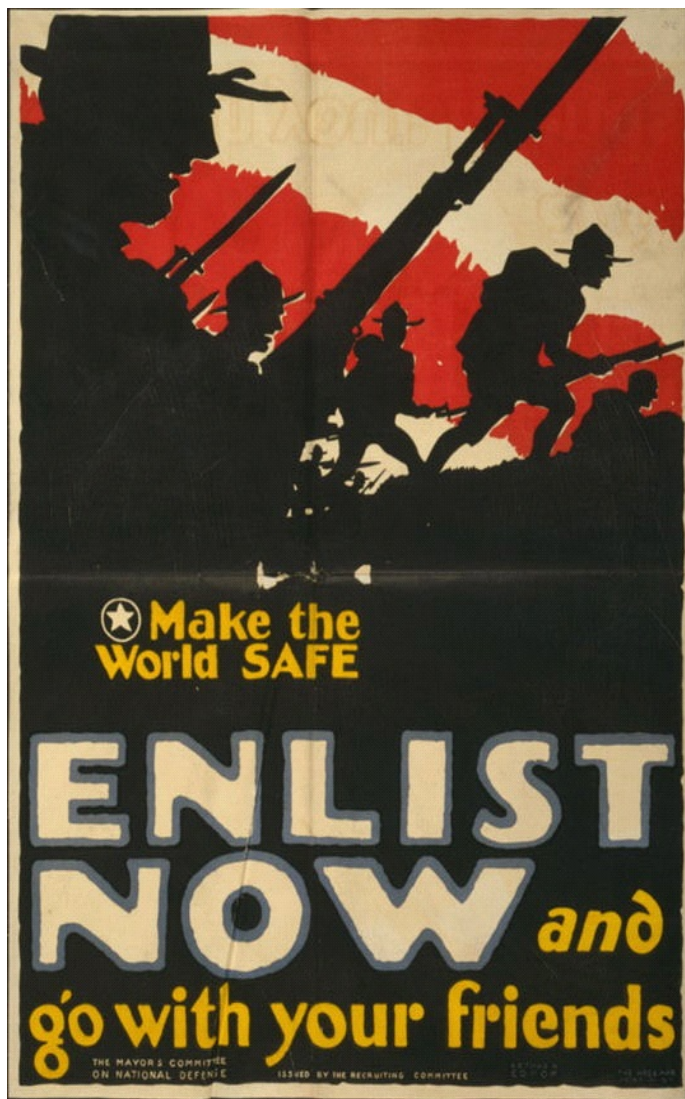
MEN ARE NOW ENLISTING AT—

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Appendix 3

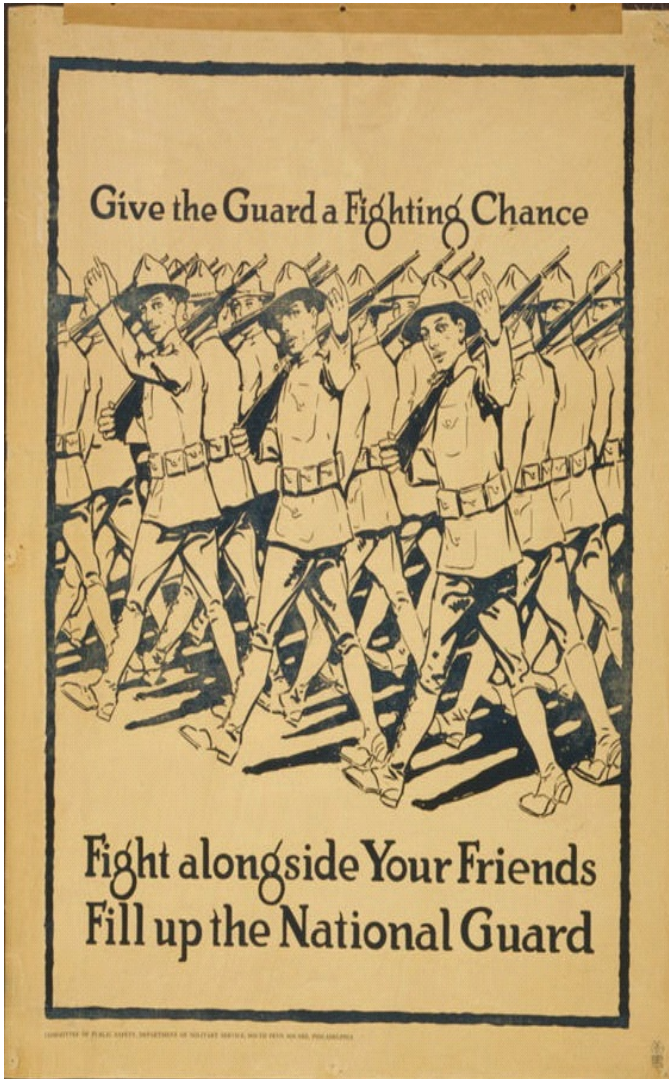
"General Pershing Says"

Significance of Wartime Propaganda 103



Appendix 4

"Make the World Safe"



Appendix 5

"Give the Guard a Fighting Chance"

HE DID HIS DUTY

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ADMIRAL OF THE NAVY



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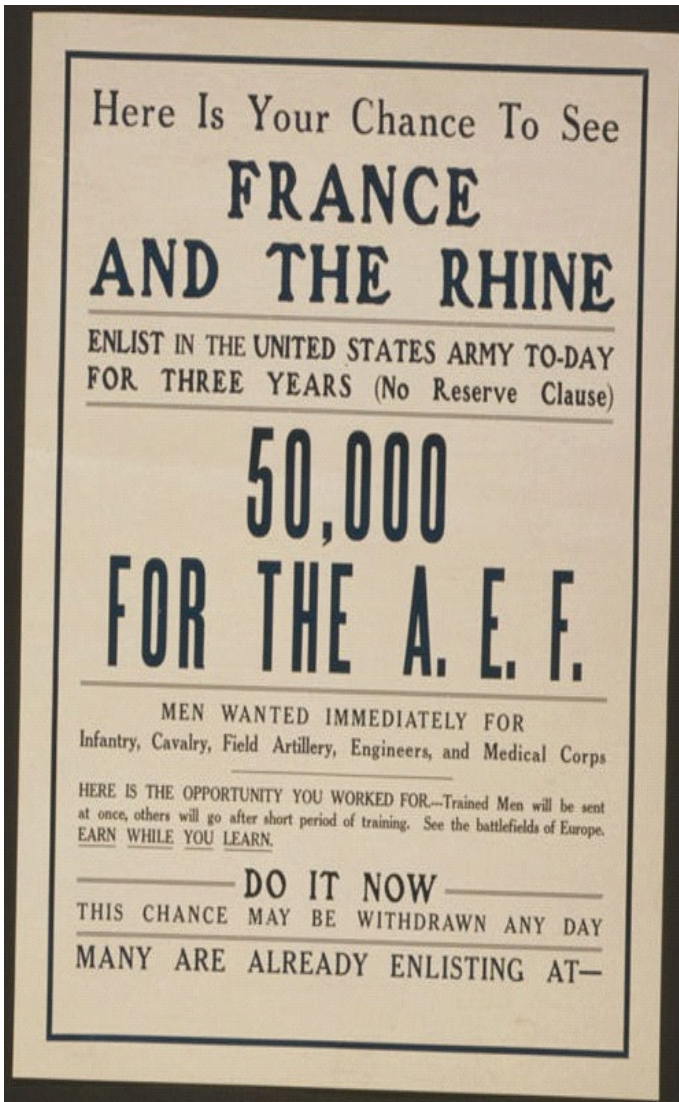
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Appendix 6

"He Did His Duty"



Appendiz 7

"Here Is Your Chance"