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“Propaganda is a truly terrible weapon in the hands of an expert.” —Adolf Hitler, 1926

During the course of two decades, Nazi propagandists skilfully used their “terrible weapon” to win broad voter support in Germany’s young democracy, implement radical programmes under the party’s dictatorship, and justify war and mass murder.

State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda examines how the Nazis sought to manipulate public opinion in order to attain their goals, the end result of which was a war that cost the lives of some 55 million people, including the systematic murder of 6 million Jewish men, women, and children in the Holocaust.

As you explore these posters, consider what propaganda is, what makes people vulnerable to it, and what responsibilities producers and consumers of propaganda bear for its consequences.
PROPAGANDA

is biased information designed to shape public opinion and behaviour.

Its power depends on
- message
- technique
- means of communication
- environment
- audience receptivity

Propaganda
- uses truths, half-truths, or lies
- omits information selectively
- simplifies complex issues or ideas
- plays on emotions
- advertises a cause
- attacks opponents
- targets desired audiences
USHMM Exhibit on Nazi Propaganda

European Parliament, Brussels
January - November 2018
PROPAGANDA IS ALL AROUND US.

Do you know how to recognize and respond to it?
Recognizing Propaganda

Propaganda appears in a variety of forms and uses common techniques to successfully influence people, including:

1. Activating strong emotions
2. Responding to audience needs & values
3. Simplifying information & ideas
4. Attacking opponents
Beneficial or Harmful? Analyzing the Impact of Propaganda

To assess whether a particular example of propaganda is beneficial, benign, or harmful, consider these factors:

- **Message**: The nature of the information and ideas being expressed
- **Techniques**: The use of symbols and rhetorical strategies that attract attention and activate emotional response
- **Environment and Context**: Where, when, and how people encounter the message
- **Means of Communication & Format**: How the message gets to people and what form it takes
- **Audience Receptivity**: How people think and feel about the message and how free they are to accept or reject it
The best coffee
For the best YOU.
RATE THIS EXAMPLE FROM "BENEFICIAL" TO "HARMFUL"
LOVE YOUR LUNGS

SIMPLE REFRESHING SMOKE FREE

0%  0%  0%  13%  87%

BENEFICIAL  SEE HOW YOUR RATING COMPARES TO OTHERS  HARMFUL

RATE MORE >
State of Deception poster set is freely available on our website in 10 languages:

- Arabic
- Chinese
- Dutch
- English
- French
- Hungarian
- Kiswahili
- Russian
- Spanish
- Ukrainian

www.ushmm.org/sod-posters/