

An Analysis of Two World War II Propaganda Films:
The German *Feuertaufe* and the Polish-British *This is Poland*

by

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ABSTRACT

At the beginning of the 20th century, the introduction of the motion picture as a medium changed the way people disseminate information between each other and to the masses. The magnitude of this change was supplemented and amplified first by, the addition of sound, then color, and finally (possibly most importantly) the invention of the technology to send and receive motion picture signals along with their corresponding sound tracks. This would eventually all be combined in the production of the first television sets. Some of the most stunning illustrations of the power brought about by this medium can be observed in the way that Germany was able to utilize film during (and before) World War II. The idea of using cinema as a propaganda tool led to the creation of UFA during WWI (1914-1918). Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels' fascination with film and its propaganda potential led to the development of many successful public communication techniques and numerous tactics used to influence the people's thoughts and actions.

This thesis provides background information pertaining to the outbreak of World War II including the German propaganda machine, and examines the role that motion pictures played in the distribution of anti-Polish messages before and during the early stages of the war. It focuses specifically on the film *Feuertaufe* as an example illustrating six major tenants of Nazi film propaganda namely: oversimplification, appeal to emotions, harnessing the power of the visual image, intentional blurring of lines between entertainment and facts, repetition, and the use of graphics combined with music. Next, this essay explores how each of the abovementioned characteristics were used by the

Poles and the British in their pro-Polish film *This is Poland* in order to sway public opinion and spread messages aligned with their political views respectively. This thesis concludes by stressing the importance of being aware of these techniques so that one may be able to separate fact from hype, and by looking at the possible utilization of the six tenants in the years to come as smart mobile-devices usher in yet another metamorphosis of the art of information distribution.

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FOREWORD

Firstly, I would like to thank my family for teaching me to be a life-long learner and for exposing me to not just my culture, but to the entire world. Next I would like to say thank you to Frau Willhelm at the Genseliese Schule in Munich, Germany, the person who introduced me to the study of the German language and culture. I would also like to express my gratitude to Paradise Valley Community College for being the first of many stepping-stones, which would eventually lead me to the pursuit of a M.A. in German Studies. An extra special thanks to the Department of German Studies at the University of Arizona in Tucson, especially Dr. Chantelle Warner, Dr. Peter Ecke, and Dr. Albrecht Classen who broadened my horizons and instilled in me a sense of curiosity about all things German.

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, the emergence of new communication technologies and media platforms has repeatedly brought about global changes in the way people share information, both locally as well as worldwide. Such has been the case since prehistoric, cave dwelling people began using cave walls as a medium for preserving their pictographic depictions of information. Their use of stone cave walls as a medium marked the beginning of written history by setting in motion a tradition that would eventually evolve into the written word, and in turn allow for the preservation and sharing of today's knowledge with the people of tomorrow. Gutenberg's invention of the printing press also serves to highlight the unbelievable influence and global change that a communication related technological breakthrough can exert on the way people live, learn, share information, entertain themselves, etc. Another such breakthrough was the invention of the moving picture around the beginning of the 20th century, although the development of this medium, as well as its rate of adoption were stifled by the outbreak of World War I. Once the War had ended in 1918, the popularity of film began growing again.

Since then, the invention of television has added to the informative power of the moving picture by allowing for the wireless transmission of television signal and thus the possibility for information to be tailored, targeted, and sent directly to people's homes without any effort on the receiver's part. Although the incredible saturation of this medium throughout the civilized world is something no one in the first half of the 20th century could have imagined, there were some people, like Joseph Goebbels for example,

that became fascinated with the medium and understood the unprecedented influential power that this medium could yield. Due to his interest in film and his leadership role in the Nazi Party, Goebbels, who would eventually become Hitler's Propaganda Minister during World War II, devoted much time as well as an unprecedented amount of resources to the advancement and improvement of the medium of film. This in turn resulted in the development of numerous fundamental, film-related mass-communication strategies, many of which are still being used by today's television networks.

This thesis identifies and analyzes six recurring mass communication strategies and techniques that were pioneered, polished, and implemented by the Nazi Party during and even prior to World War II. Although propaganda was used by virtually all nations involved in either or both of the World Wars to disseminate positions on countless subjects, and with various intentions, the main focus of this essay is the role of motion picture production techniques as utilized by Germans under Hitler's control in anti-Polish Nazi propaganda. The six principal mass communication characteristics presented in this thesis reappear in some incarnation in most, if not all Nazi films produced between 1939 and 1945. They are identified herein as oversimplification, appeal to emotions instead of logic, harnessing the power of the visual image, intentional blurring of lines between entertainment and facts, constant repetition, and the use of graphics combined with music. The film *Feuertaufe*, a 1939 production directed by Hans Bertram is used in this essay as a representative example of a German propaganda film from the Nazi era, that provides an authentic illustration of each of the six above-mentioned communication techniques.

Next, this essay aims to show that many of these same techniques pioneered and implemented by Hitler's propaganda machine were also used by Nazi Germany's enemies, specifically Poland and England. The pro-Poland propaganda film *This is Poland*, produced in England in 1940 will be utilized to highlight the use of mass communication techniques similar if not identical to those used in *Feuertaufe (Baptism by Fire)*. The aggressive German propaganda film appeals to the heroic yet violent side of man, whereas the Polish/British production with a bland title, tries to appeal to the cultural instincts of the viewer.

Finally, the importance of media literacy in the 21st century is stressed and examples illustrating the potential dangers of media illiteracy in everyday life are provided. Predictions of the inevitable continued use of some, if not all of the abovementioned tenets of intentional mind and opinion control in the foreseeable future are also discussed, in an attempt to alert the audience of their presence so that the reader may be better able to understand and deal with the media's constant attempts at influencing opinions.

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Political Context in Europe

As World War I (1914-1918) came to its end on November 11th (Reinhardt, 1969) after years of unprecedented destruction and horror, it seemed to people across the Western and Central Europe¹ that the utter chaos of the preceding four years, including any conflict as regards Germany had permanently been resolved. Civilians in Europe welcomed the end of fighting. After the creation of the League of Nations and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the situation in Europe had become relatively stable. The Treaty, written by the victors, placed sole blame for the War on the defeated Germans, and ordered Germany to do away with much of its army. This included the destruction of hundreds of planes, tanks, boats, and submarines (Trueman, “The Treaty of Versailles”, 2013). Germany was also forced by this same Treaty to pay millions of dollars in reparations, as well as to give up vast amounts of land, mostly to France and the newly reestablished country of Poland which had been partitioned and taken off the map just years before, for the second but not the last time (Dolecki, 2013). France, having just lost Russia as its ally, was left relying on Britain and the United States for support in case of any future military threat from a now crippled Germany. On February 1921, Poland also signed a treaty of political and military cooperation with France (Dolecki, 2013). This helped both countries feel better prepared for any future conflict with Germany, and Poland felt that this alliance would also help in case of any attack from the Russians (Dolecki, 2013). Meanwhile, the United States was, against the wishes of

¹ Russia was still dealing with the aftermath of the October Revolution of 1917 and there was also unrest in China, but fighting had ceased in the “Western” World

President Woodrow Wilson, returning to its prewar approach of isolation politics (Trueman, “The Treaty of Versailles”, 2013).

In Germany, the defeat left the country smoldering and scrambling to rebuild and to pay the agreed upon reparations (Bell, 2010). This somewhat dystopian situation left a country full of people longing for a new source of hope and a scapegoat for all that was not right. Such an outlook was not unwarranted as German civilians, including women and children were starving in 1919. This was largely the result, among other things of the significantly delayed lift of the Allied Forces’ naval blockade which prevented the delivery of food into Germany (Reinhardt, 1969). Enter Adolf Hitler.

Having joined a Bavarian regiment in Munich in 1914 after leaving Vienna to avoid being forced to fight for the Habsburg Empire (Noakes, 2011), Hitler is said to have finally found a true purpose for his existence, one that resonated with his pseudo-artistic spirit and lofty ambitions (Noakes, 2011). Four years later, in 1918, as a defeated Germany was attempting to resurrect from rubble, Hitler, desperately longed to remain in the Army, hoping to avoid returning to the life of a mediocre painter and give up on his newfound purpose (Noakes, 2011). As luck would have it, he was soon recruited by the Intelligence and Propaganda division of the Bavarian Army. His job there was to fill the minds of fellow soldiers with nationalism and anti-Communist ideas, something that he turned out to be quite good at (Noakes, 2011). This was the beginning of his role as a political rhetorician. The following year, he would be invited to join the then insignificant NSDAP (National Socialist German Worker’s Party), where he would gradually climb in rank and end up as a heroic leadership figure better known as “der Führer” of the Nazi

Party on July 29th 1923 (Gavin, 1996). This title was modeled after Benito Mussolini's "Il Duce" (the leader) who Hitler looked up to throughout his political career (White). It would be just four months later, in November that Hitler, motivated by his growing popularity orchestrated the "Beer Hall Putsch" in Munich, his attempt to gain control in Bavaria (Trueman, "The Beer Hall Putsch of 1923", 2013). After a failed outcome, he would feel betrayed and decide that he was going to have to take full control of the spirit of the German people in order to become the next all-powerful leader of Germany (Noakes, 2011), so that he could have a chance at getting back at his personal and political enemies and defeat democracy through democratic means (Trueman, "The Beer Hall Putsch of 1923", 2013).

Perhaps his greatest asset, Hitler's ability to influence the minds of the masses through postulated solidarity and charged rhetoric, played a crucial role in his ability to achieve such an incredible level of influence and control in Europe and beyond. Hitler capitalized immensely on speaking very loudly and openly against the brutal Treaty of Versailles². By taking a stand against the Treaty of Versailles, Hitler officially aligned himself with the majority of Germans who felt that any hardships encountered in their post-World War I existence were in some way related to the Treaty. This was arguably one of Hitler's smartest moves.

He appeared to the masses as the only person who understood their point of view and who could actually do something about the situation at hand. Furthermore, by clearly

² The Treaty of Versailles see Reinhardt, K. (1990). *Germany 2000 Years*. Revised Edition. Vol 2. New York, N.Y.: Continuum. p. 651-56.

identifying a scapegoat³ (the Treaty and those nations involved in its enforcement, including England and Poland among others) Hitler was able to harness the energy of his people's dissatisfaction and anger at what the enemy had imposed upon them, channeling and molding it into virtually unwavering support and an almost blind following, as outlined in his book *Mein Kampf* (Hitler, 1933). Now that he had the People's attention and support, he employed the recently reborn concept of propaganda in every imaginable form, to morph public opinion into the opinions that would serve his interests best (Bachrach, 2009). At the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Hitler's was most interested in creating a negative, blood-thirsty image of neighboring Poland and its ally brutal England.

The signing of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, which reinforced Poland's status as a sovereign nation after it had been divided up by its neighbors and wiped-off the map (for the second time in history), then reestablished as part of a political ploy by Imperial Germany in November 1916 (Chickering, 2004), was still fresh in defeated Germany's memory and the relationship between the two neighboring countries was not especially amicable, although it may have seemed so from a distance. Poland, mindful of its relations with its powerful neighbors on both the east and west, had the most to gain from peaceful relations with both Russia and Germany. With such intentions, Poland, under the leadership of Marshal Józef Piłsudski (1867-1935) signed a peace treaty with Russia in 1932, which two years later, during the Polish Foreign Minister Josef Beck's visit to Moscow, would be extended for another decade (Dolecki, 2013). That same year (1934),

³ Besides Poland, Hitler also blamed the Jewish "Plutocrats" of Great Britain and the USA as well as the Bolsheviks of the SSSR (Herf, 2006)

Poland and Germany also signed a non-aggression pact. Unlike the French and Belgian borders, the border between Poland and Germany was not specifically settled by the Treaty of Versailles, and although Hitler was preaching peace and promising non-aggression, he was actually preparing for an attack on Poland (Cherrett, 2013) in order to regain the once German territory known as “the Polish Corridor” which was a strip of land stretching from Gdansk (Danzig) in the north down to Poznań (Posen) in the south. (“Danzig”, 2013).

Hitler had little regard for truth when it came to the public messages that he sent out to the world. For this reason he was able to clandestinely prepare to attack Poland, while simultaneously using his propaganda machine and rhetoric to manufacture and publicize “proof” alleged Polish atrocities against Germans (*Feuertaufe*, 1940). On August 22nd 1939, he was quoted saying: “I will give propagandistic cause for the release of war, whether convincing or not. The winner is not asked later whether he said the truth or not” (“Danzig”, 2013). This statement clearly illustrates his lack of concern for a separation of truth from the “official” messages that his propaganda machine fed the Germans. He was also very outspoken about the fact that Germany was in no way interested in any violence, that it was English Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940) in London and the Poles who are plotting to invade Germany.

Public statements such as “If there’s the slightest provocation, I shall shatter Poland without warning into so many pieces that there will be nothing left to pick up” (“Danzig”, 2013) combined synergistically with systematically repeated stories and images of Polish crimes against Germans, (in print, radio, and propaganda films) to make

“The Gleiwitz Incident⁴” and the start of World War II something that thousands of Germans believed and even supported. Despite all of the diplomatic posturing and peaceful rhetoric, as soon as Hitler was able to sign a non-aggression treaty with Russia in August 1939, he ordered that Poland would be attacked (“Danzig”, 2013). He would however, need a concrete pretext for the invasion. By agreement, the Soviet Union was to receive the land east of the Curzon Line (as well as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania).

In order to portray the planned attack on Poland to the Germans and the World Press as an act of retaliation rather than an outright declaration of war, Hitler ordered SS-*Gruppenführer*⁵ Richard Heydrich and *Oberführer*⁶ Müller to stage the most famous of the fake border incidents, “Fall Weiss” or “the Gleiwitz Incident”. German soldiers dressed in Polish uniforms were to attack and take over a small radio station where German soldiers were working. A well-known supporter of Poland, Franz Honiok was selected from some German police files to be drugged, brought to the scene, and killed wearing Polish rebel attire in order to show one of the alleged attackers killed in the fight. Once the radio station was captured, the plan was to send out a pro-Polish, nationalistic broadcast (in Polish) that was to interrupt all other radio frequencies that thousands of Germans would be listening to in their homes.

Although the attack did not go exactly as planned, the staged attack was widely publicized over all Nazi controlled media outlets, especially the press and the radio

⁴ The staged attack on a German radio station to create a reason to use military force against Poland (“Danzig”, 2013)

⁵ *Gruppenführer*- rank in the Nazi Army translatable as “Group Leader” – Lieutenant (?)

⁶ *Oberführer*- rank in the Nazi Army equitable to Major General

(“Danzig”, 2013). Due to the skill and energy with which the Nazi propaganda machine disseminated the so called evidence of Polish brutality, the German public remained convinced of the alleged Polish provocation. The simplistic yet emotionally charged headline “takeover of a German broadcast by Poles” spread like wildfire within Germany and was being repeated by the BBC and the New York times the very next morning. Similar messages were being disseminated in late August 1939 through newsreels and various print publications such as the *Völkischer Beobachter* that printed the headline *Ganz Polen im Kriegsfieber* (All of Poland in War Fever) just four days prior to the German invasion. After putting on his carefully constructed and choreographed media show, Hitler, backed by the support of thousands, declared war on Poland on September 1st 1939.

The Gleiwitz Incident alone, illustrates the immense influential capacity of communication technologies in the hands of someone who understands their power and has the time and money to focus on spreading a clear, focused message to the masses of average, unsuspecting citizens. The following section briefly summarizes the German propaganda efforts of the 1930s and 1940s. This section is dedicated to highlighting the presence of five recurring methods employed by Goebbels and Hitler’s propaganda machine while preparing for and during World War II. These techniques proved to be quite effective for Nazis for the better part of the War (regardless of how terrible their message was) and modern applications of them can still found be found in the media today.

THE GERMAN PROPAGANDA MACHINE

“Totalitarian police states aspire to absolute control of all media of mass communication in an attempt to control the opinions of the masses. And of all the means of exerting such covert and psychological influences, none was as highly esteemed by the Government of the Third Reich as the cinema” (Welch, 2001)

The term “propaganda” has multiple, yet related definitions today. Some define it as “a specific type of message presentation directly aimed at influencing the opinions or behavior of people rather than providing objective information” (“Propaganda”, 2014), while others prefer to say that it is any “information put out by an organization or government to promote a policy, idea, or cause, or that it is deceptive or distorted information that is systematically spread (“Definition of propaganda”, 2014). Before 1914, it was a little known term unused by most. Yet despite the chaos of combat, the unprecedented numbers of soldiers to command and civilians that needed to be persuaded to join the war effort during the First World War brought about the need for more effective, wider reaching communication methods (Bachrach, 2009). Technological advances during the beginning of the 20th century, such as wireless radio transmission capabilities and the production of silent moving picture newsreels among others, also helped to bring the concept of mass communication even more into the foreground by 1918 (Bachrach, 2009). After the end of World War I, the word “propaganda” was not only being included in most encyclopedias and dictionaries (Bachrach, 2009), but it

suddenly become regarded as “...an essential component of modern warfare ...” by global politicians and military leaders alike (Bachrach, 2009). All of the major governments from Britain, to France, Poland, Germany as well as the United States and many others established their respective agencies dedicated to the creation, dissemination, study, and manipulation of messages to be sent to the World and their own citizens alike, each placing a high value on new emerging technological breakthroughs pertaining to new media platforms such as radio and the emerging motion picture (Bachrach, 2009).

In Germany however, the government placed the control of official propaganda not in the hands of the citizens of the Third Reich, but in the hands of the military⁷ (Bachrach, 2009). This crucial difference eventually paved the way for Hitler’s total takeover of virtually all media in Germany.

As Hitler’s popularity and military power grew, so did his control over German media. Step by step, he tightened his grip by taking advantage of every opportunity to place himself or one of his trusted men in positions of greatest potential influence. One of these men was Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945) who, as one of Hitler’s closest associates, would become the Propaganda Minister in Germany from 1933-1945.

Just two months after Hitler became Chancellor of the Reich (Jan. 30th 1933), Goebbels was appointed to head the newly created *Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* (Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda; Welch, 2001) on March 13th 1933. Having played an active role in the

⁷ With the exception of France and Russia, such operations were overseen principally by civilians (Bachrach, 2009)

rebuilding of the party since 1926, an avid fan of the motion picture, Joseph Goebbels, like Hitler understood the importance of controlling the thoughts⁸ of the masses and of political enemies. “The knowledge that film was an important propaganda medium was present from the early beginnings of the (Nazi) party” (Welch, 2001). Hence enormous energy money and attention were allocated towards the development and control of this medium. Goebbels fascination with film and Hitler’s love for grandiose opera as well as operetta performances⁹ combined to give birth to a slew of elaborate Nazi film productions with the help of director Leni Riefenstahl,¹⁰ among others (Welch, 2001). Through measures such as the creation of the FKB or *Filmkreditbank* in conjunction with the intentionally restricting and censorship imposing Cinema Laws (and amendments thereto), the party effectively took over control of all aspects of motion picture production in Germany, from the financial aspects, to the race of the production teams, as well as the content and even distribution (Welch, 2001). This paved the way for propaganda efforts of unprecedented proportions until the end of World War Two.

The following chapter defines six techniques incorporated by the Nazis in their propagandistic endeavors. These techniques will be used as a point of focus in the

⁸ Hitler avidly studied works of American psychologists such as Singer pertaining to persuasion and advertising

⁹ Especially Wagner with his incorporation of Germanic themes as well as others such as *Merry Widow* by Lehár

¹⁰ Leni Riefenstahl (1902-2003) was a German dancer, photographer, actress, and director. She was a driving force of innovation in the film world and worked on numerous Nazi film productions. She is best known for directing *Triumph des Willens* as well as being in charge of filming the 1936 Olympic Games ("Leni Riefenstahl", 2014)

upcoming analysis of the anti-Polish Nazi film *Feuertaufe* as well as the succeeding examination of the pro-Polish propaganda film *This is Poland*.

MAIN VEHICLES FOR TRANSMITTING PROPAGANDA IN NAZI FILM

Oversimplification

For the purpose of the upcoming analysis, the term oversimplification refers to the combination of dumbing down and shortening of featured stories, news reports, facts (both real and intentionally manufactured), and all other messages being disseminated. Rather than pass on all related information to the audience, biased producers often choose to present only carefully isolated parts or fragments. This provides the opportunity for manipulation of meaning and the possibility for spinning the message in virtually any desired direction. By engaging in this practice, the author often removes and/or intentionally decides to omit so much relevant context that the final product ends up having little if not nothing in common with the original, unsimplified message. If one's intention is to downplay the issue of global warming for instance, presenting a story on the internet, television, or radio about the abnormal freezing temperatures on the East Coast of the United States during January of 2014 caused by the polar vortex, without mentioning anything about the fact that the polar vortex responsible for the frigid weather is thought by many scientists to be related to a phenomenon known as "the Arctic Paradox" which in turn is tied by scientists to the gradually rising temperature of the entire planet (Freedman, 2014). A producer on the opposite side of the global warming debate may instead choose to omit much of the information other than that pertaining to the "Arctic Paradox" connection, thereby imposing the opposite conclusions on the mind of the majority of his or her audience. Although this manipulatory device is a welcomed tool in the hands of many (pseudo)journalists, its existence is often excused by and

blamed on time and budgetary constraints (not having endless funds and time to explain all relevant information, and the audience not having unlimited time and interest in the message at hand). These factors surely do play a role in why it may be necessary to shorten some material, but an ethical journalist has a duty to make every attempt to remain unbiased.

Thus, through calculated, skillful truncation of messages, the conclusions drawn by one's audience from the same described occurrence or happening may be influenced to the extreme in virtually any desired direction. This is (and has been) extremely evident in political rhetoric as well as advertising, but its utilization within the medium of the moving picture was most prevalent in its beginning stages in Nazi films.

Power of the Visual Image

The depiction of a message through a visual image is regarded as “the most powerful and persuasive of all illustrations” (Welch, 2001). Used for centuries by everyone from prehistoric man to the ancient Egyptians, to religious institutions, as well as artists of all kinds, still images have the power to almost instantly provoke emotional and even rational responses in the minds of their audiences. The nonverbal cues contained within a visual image provide for an instantaneous exchange of messages that are not able to be accurately translated into words, although the main idea might be. For example, the intensity of the message sent to one’s mind by looking at a close up picture of a corpse with the eyes still open, even for just a second, far supersedes the intensity (and thus the impact the message will have on its audience) of reading even an oversized, bold type, written headline depicting the words “dead man with open eyes”. When multiple visual images are connected in a series, as in a motion picture and/or on television, this intensity and persuasive power becomes multiplied. This phenomenon can be manipulated to influence perception even further when combined with words in the form of text, or a synched sound track. The depiction of someone regarded as attractive, healthy, and fit holding up a sign will be met with more positive reactions than if the same sign was being held by a dirty, emaciated Hunchback of Notre Dame lookalike. This is a technique that the Nazis utilized quite skillfully in both still pictures and films such as *Jud Süß* (1940) for example.¹¹

¹¹ Another example of the power of the visual image were the first televised presidential debates in the United States between Richard Nixon and John f. Kennedy (Postman, 2006). Kennedy embraced the new medium, felt comfortable and this was communicated by his image. Nixon, somewhat older, less handsome, and sweaty from the heat of the lamps in the studio did not send out such positive nonverbal

Appeal to Emotion

When attempting to persuade an audience or individual, rather than take the chance of possibly getting into a logical debate based on facts, intentional manipulators regularly choose to present arguments which rely heavily on exerting a desired emotional response. The Nazis were convinced that this approach would be the best and most efficient way to achieve their desired results of massive, far reaching propaganda saturation (Welch, 2001). This technique is especially effective when dealing with an audience that is not fully informed. By limiting background information (as described in the oversimplification section above), the producer also limits the audiences logical decision making skills in that any decisions made will be based on incomplete context. This was what the Nazis desired and aimed for (Bachrach, 2009).

As the propaganda efforts of the Nazis evolved, they became aware that the public responded quite favorably to messages reinforcing common, already existing prejudices like those against the Jews which were laden with nationalistic overtones. These messages in turn developed into major nationalistic themes such as *Blut und Boden* (Race and Heritage) as well as *Volk und Heimat* (Hearth and Homeland) which were extendable to virtually all aspects of life (Welch, 2001). Playing off of these themes, Goebbels and the National Socialists created entire families of characters designed to inspire nationalistic emotions in youngsters such as the film about heroic *Hitlerjunge Quex* (1933) who persuaded underage citizens that their best and really only way to serve

messages. Although the content of what each candidate said remained unaltered, those that saw the debates on television were convinced that the younger, handsome JFK, was the undisputed winner. The Americans who listened to the exact same words spoken by each candidate on the radio, however, maintained that Nixon was the clear victor. (Postman, 2006)

Germany and save German culture was to join the movement as part of the *Hitler Jugend* (Welch, 2001). When your message is divorced from reality and truth, appeal to emotions as was the case with the NSDAP¹² (Welch, 2001) becomes the obvious vehicle of choice.

¹² *National Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei* (National Socialist German Workers' Party)

Visual Effects

Less of a tenet, and more a well-fitting accenting detail, the development and incorporation of special effects, in film was a major innovation in the decades preceding World War II (1939-1945) (“widescreenmuseum.com”). Sound in the form of dialog was not added to film until the late 1920s (“widescreenmuseum.com”) and prior to the premier of the television in Berlin in 1935 (Todd, 2008), the motion picture was the only place where a person might have been exposed to any kind of special visual effects (sometimes combined with sound). This, increased the appeal and awe surrounding the emerging medium of the motion picture. By harnessing such effects and using them as message vehicles in cohesion with the plot, as well as the visual images, and dialogue in a motion picture, a producer attains yet another channel to reinforce his intended meaning. In addition, when flashing text on a movie screen that is synchronized with verbalized utterances of the displayed words, the words reach out to two of the audience’s senses rather than just one. For the purpose of this essay, visual effects are operationalized as any superimposed graphic, that is not part of the footage shot by the camera but has been added in the post production and editing stages.

Entertainment as a Propaganda Vehicle

Propaganda is most effective when it is not seen as propaganda (Welch, 2001). If it is skillfully enough embedded in a culturally accepted form of entertainment, it is even possible to make the audience enjoy propaganda so much that they may even pay for access to it. Since film was cutting edge technology in the 1930s (Todd, 2008), it was regarded as something special. For this reason, people were often glad to attend film showings, and since the *Reichsfilmkammer* (Film Chamber of the Reich) controlled the film industry in Germany at the time, only approved films were shown (Welch, 2001). Since Hitler was heavily influenced by operas that he saw as a young man, (especially those of Wagner and Marschner) and his Propaganda minister Goebbels believed deeply in the power of the motion picture as an indoctrination tool, the films they produced, such as the 1938 film *Olympiade* (Welch, 2001), and even their *Jugendfilme* (youth films) were elaborate and expensive.¹³ In 1939 there were 8300 cinemas in Germany alone and the attendance numbers in the Nazi controlled cinema were also increased by laws introduced which in the mid-1930s made it a crime to miss film showings (Welch, 2001). For the purpose of this essay, propaganda as entertainment is defined as politically charged messages presented in a form where the line between fictional entertainment and factual reporting of current events is blurred.

¹³ Similarly to today's Hollywood productions, even if the plot was not gripping, the expensive effects, super-human camera angles (bird's eye), star power, buzz, and numerous other factors often convinced people to enjoy films anyway

Repetition

All of the five abovementioned techniques have the potential to be effective even if the audience is only exposed to them on a single occasion. However, as the number of times that the audience is exposed to a message increases the chance for that message to remain in their mind increases (“Repetition”, 2012). Furthermore, sending the same message consistently repeated out through various sources, rather than just one, gives off the illusion that the message in question is more widely supported and/or accepted. It also provides the opportunity for the message to reach a wider audience, less concentrated in a particular geographic location. Goebbels regard for this technique is illustrated by his quote: “If you repeat a lie often enough, it becomes the truth.” (“Repetition”, 2012). When a company or government has many different media entities under its control, as was the case in Nazi Germany when the *Propagandaministerium* oversaw and had the power to censor everything from radio and film to print media (Dobroszycki, 1994)¹⁴ it has the capability to reemit the same point(s) of view over its various media outlets. This amplifies the impact of the other five techniques described in this section extensively. In Goebbels’ mind, the propaganda films of the Party were intended to complement and work together with all other Nazi controlled media (Welch, 2001). It is important to note that media conglomerates such as they exist today were nonexistent in comparable size and scope until the rebirth of the concept of propaganda after 1918 sparked a world-wide acceptance of the importance of communication (Bachrach, 2009). In this essay,

¹⁴ Similarly to today’s news outlets like MSNBC which is a part of the much larger NBCUniversal (Capus, 2012), and The Fox News Channel which is owned by parent company News Corporation (“Resources”, 2013).

repetition refers to multiple presentations of a strategically reiterated message, both inter- and intra-media.

Now that the six recurring propaganda dissemination methods have been defined, the subsequent chapter will present a breakdown of the utilization of each of these six devices, as present in the 1940 German propaganda motion picture *Feuertaufe*.

FEUERTAUF

“By creating an esthetic effect, films were able to manipulate the cinema-going public into the more acceptable forms of behavior such as discipline and obedience, comradeship, heroism and subordination of the individual will to that of the Fuhrer . . . In this way, by subtly reinforcing existing values and beliefs rather than openly declaring the Nazis’ intentions, the cinema was able to move the thinking process toward such elements of Nazi philosophy as German nationalism, the superiority of the Aryan race, the Volk, community, elitism and militarism” (Prop & Ger Cin p38)

Context and Summary

The 1940 Nazi production *Feuertaufe* is an anti-Polish movie highlighting the seemingly unstoppable German Air Force or *Luftwaffe*. Throughout the 90 minutes of its duration, the Poland is portrayed as the evil, bloodthirsty neighbor to the east that is planning to widen its empire into German territories. Simultaneously, the film reiterated the superiority of the *Luftwaffe* and the need for Germany to be prepared for Polish aggression. The film uses various graphic effects, fear invoking scenes intertwined with visual illustrations of the *Luftwaffe* as the answer, thereby reiterating carefully crafted and targeted nationalistic messages of German military superiority as well as various incarnations of both *Blut und Boden* (Race and Heritage) and *Volk und Heimat* (Hearth and Homeland). There is no plot or main characters, but the film still seems to provide some form of entertainment value given its medium, production value, and the collective

appreciation for motion pictures which was acknowledged in Germany even after the outbreak of World War II (1939-1945). The film was intended (and did) work synergistically as a part of the larger, multimedia Nazi Propaganda Machine.

Power of the Visual Image

From the very beginning of the film, powerful visual images act upon the consciousness of the audience. Within just the first four minutes, the ideology behind the film is clearly defined through the inclusion of symbols such as swastikas and the SS¹⁵ logo. In minute five, immediately following a fear-evoking narrated description of alleged Polish aggressive intentions toward the Germany, the audience is cleverly pacified with a visual of clean, smiling, and well groomed German soldiers marching with only the sky in the background. They are presented as the obvious answer to the Polish problem. A montage beginning in the following minute (min 6) further elaborates on the introduced image of German military and its apparent might, by showing enormous German warships in the Gdańsk (Danzig) harbor lined with elated civilians welcoming the sight of the ships. This is followed up by numerous shots of shiny, clean German airplanes belonging to the almighty *Luftwaffe*, the films collective protagonist. To complement and reinforce the anti-Polish sentiment introduced at the onset, the scene in minute eight provides visual “evidence¹⁶” of the already present aggression against Germans within Polish borders through shots of burning homes and fleeing families of *Volksdeutsche*.¹⁷ This is again followed up with shots of “the answer” in the form of

¹⁵ *Sturmstaffel*

¹⁶ As the Polish Army was retreating after Hitler’s invasion in late 1939, over 1000 German civilians were killed in the town of Bydgoszcz (Blomberg) and the much of violence and destruction was filmed by the Germans

¹⁷The NSDAP categorized Germans into one of three groups
Volksdeutsche- people considered German although not born in Germany and not residing there
Auslandsdeutsche- Germans born in Germany who live elsewhere; and
Reichsdeutsche- Germans born and residing in Germany

shiny Luftwaffe planes and German soldiers wearing clean white shirts with perfect hairdos. Within just the first 11 minutes, the images of this production alone clearly identify the good guys, and the enemy, and also simultaneously attach predetermined characteristics to each group (aggressive Poles, and clean innocent Germans with superior power forced to prepare to defend themselves).

These characteristics are reinforced throughout using countless additional shots of majestic German planes in the sky and a burning, destroyed, hellish land (Poland) below. The power and superiority of the *Luftwaffe* being the key motif of the motion picture is difficult to miss. After plenteous depictions of German “retaliation” in the form of very heavy bombing (always from shiny planes flown by cleanly shaven and groomed German airmen), the contrast between the inferior enemy and the Germans is repeatedly emphasized by a juxtaposition of Germans in the sky and a dark, gloomy Poland below, often in flames or otherwise destroyed. Germans are shown throughout the film riding in cars, on ships, and planes (except for in one scene) while Poles are shown using horses and carriages. Retreating Poles are also shown walking with/among their animals, depicting them as just as dirty and much more like animals than the technologically and hygienically superior Germans. Such images alone, provide memorable illustrations of the intended, predetermined points of view that the producers had in mind. The victory of the Germans is illustrated in the 85th minute by images of Germans taking the Warsaw City Hall building and a handful of defeated Polish officials reluctantly exiting the building for the last time.

Visual Effects

In addition to the actual footage shot and edited together to make this motion picture, messages are also transmitted through visual effects such as superimposed text, still shots of newspaper headlines, and even graphics. The film actually begins utilizing such effects in the very first minute when the title, followed by the text *Der Film vom Einsatz unserer Luftwaffe in Polen* (The Film about our Air Force Effort in Poland) is displayed. The text displayed continues to inform that the scenes contained in this film come from authentic footage shot during the conflict, and is also used to list all of the Germans who died during the making of the film. After only one minute, prior to the narrator's verbal introduction and explanation of the Polish issue, the audience already knows that German soldiers have lost their lives and that Poland is most likely to blame. This illustrates how much information can be transmitted without sound or even any actual footage when visual effects are available.

In order to help the audience visualize Polish intentions of taking over German territory, a graphic still shot of a Polish propaganda poster showing a Polish general among tanks and planes is shown as the narrator begins to explain that Poland wants to widen its borders. Close-ups of various French, English, Polish and German newspapers are used throughout the film to reinforce messages of planned aggression against Germany. At one point, headlines accusing Germany of wanting war are shown on the screen and immediately dismissed as foreign propaganda.

A map graphic depicting Poland and Germany is also utilized repeatedly in this film. First showing a prediction of Polish intentions in minute seven, the dark colored

Polish part of the map is shown growing west¹⁸ through graphic effects, in turn, turning the white colored German part dark and making it smaller. In the first half hour of the movie, each time the map is shown, Poland is larger until Germany is but a sliver. Then, starting in the 33rd minute, the German pushback begins, exemplified by the white (German) part of the map beginning to take over the dark (Polish) parts. The map graphic reappears again in minute 41, 43, 59, and 62, and each time Germany's portion of it is larger than before. In minute 62, all that remains of Poland is a part of small circle of dark color around Warsaw.

These graphic representations, although not even real, serve to supplement the simultaneously present narrations. The message is thus clearer and appeals to more than only the auditory sense. Furthermore, it takes the guesswork out of imagining a Polish invasion and illustrates it plain as day, as if it was really happening.

¹⁸ In the 1920s Poland indeed wanted to expand its territory west to the Elbe river and had to be restrained by England

Oversimplification

At any given instance, *Feuertaufe* is broadcasting an intended set of messages. In order to decrease any chances of ambiguity, the NSDAP knew that the context surrounding the messages would have to be adjusted, since, as is now known, most of the “facts” presented in this film pertaining to the reasons behind German military action in Poland were actually fabricated and often the exact opposite of the truth. Furthermore, the messages had to be simple. One example of oversimplification is the recurring portrayal of Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940), Prime Minister of England at the outbreak of the War, as the instigator and driving force behind Polish aggression as well as World War II (1939-1945) itself. By stripping virtually all background information away, and presenting only the message that Chamberlain wants war (*Feuertaufe*, 1940), the audience is left without much doubt about the message. The control of all media and the limitation of the flow of true information in Germany by Goebbels and the *Reichsfilmkammer* at the time, made it possible for fragmented messages and utterances taken out of context to be taken seriously by the public. As long as there was nothing contradicting to compare it to, anything could be twisted into looking and functioning as the truth.

The film actually goes beyond just simplifying, it actually replaces some facts with their opposite (Chamberlain wants war, Poland wants to expand its borders into Germany), and in turn project Hitler’s true intentions onto the enemy instead. Through easy to understand slogans like *Ganz Polen im Kriegsfieber* (all of Poland in war fever) or *Hier Brennen ja schon Häuser* (houses are already burning here), the Nazis were able

to systematically convince their audiences of virtually anything they wanted. Knowledge is power, and if you are in position to control the background knowledge of your audience, you become the one in power.

Propaganda as Entertainment

Viewing motion pictures at home was not an option in 1940 as television was still in its infancy and although it had premiered in Germany some five years before (Todd, 2008) the outbreak of the War halted the medium's saturation. Film viewing, however, was one of the most popular forms of entertainment that was not only accepted by the Nazi Party, but actually encouraged.¹⁹ Since all entertainment media were censored and adjusted to be in unison with the ideology of the Party, the nationalistic themes present did not get in the way as they were everywhere, in virtually every film. Film showings were promoted heavily by the Nazis and attending them was regarded as one of the best ways to entertain oneself. The fact that this movie is a documentary rather than a fictional love story or comedy did not mean that people did not enjoy watching it if it was the feature of the evening. Since the Party decided what would be shown, it was not as much about what film one would see, but more *that* one was going to spend an afternoon or evening at the cinema. In order to provide supplementary excitement and buzz surrounding the film, the Party decided to add some star power to the film. Hitler himself appears in the film on two separate occasions. This, given the almost fanatical support he enjoyed in 1940, translates by today's standards to a cameo by the most popular Hollywood star. By constructing a cultural norm reinforcing the habit of movie going, and at the same time allowing not only propaganda filled productions such as *Feuertaufe* but also lighter films which provided a temporary escape from the harsh reality of the times, the Party created for itself a balanced platform of message dissemination.

¹⁹ The UFA (Universum Film AG) was founded specifically for that purpose during WWI (1914-1918)(Welch, 2001)

Furthermore, each screening, regardless of the type of film to be shown that night, was always preceded by a short *Wochenschau* (newsreel) that informed of highly censored and adjusted facts, current events, and political developments (Courtade, 1977). Thus even when the feature of the evening had little or nothing to do with propaganda, the audience was still exposed to propagandistic messages right before.

Appeal to Emotion

Messages disseminated in this motion picture center heavily around the main themes of *Volk und Heimat* (Hearth and Homeland) as well as *Blut und Boden* (Race and Heritage). Both of these themes are closely tied to emotions as they relate closely to nationalism²⁰, and thus to that which was most important in Germany under Nazi rule. The visual images and effects described above, as well as the carefully chosen and well-synchronized background music and narration provide guidance as to how one should feel while watching *Feuertaufe*. Happy and victorious music is played when Germans are on screen and when Poland is being talked about or depicted, the music is either fear evoking or gloom. Fear is aroused in the audience's mind from the beginning through identification of an enemy (Poland) who dares to threaten the Reich and interfere with the German collective nationalistic pride. The *Volskdeutsche* (people considered German although not born or residing in Germany) shown in the film fleeing from burning houses in a large way represent the entire *Volk* and their flight home to the *Heimat* (the ancestral land of the forefathers) proves that the Poles are doing them harm.²¹ In this way the film introduces and then cements both fear and anger against a clearly defined enemy in the minds of the audience. Once the fear is established, it is used to sell the predetermined answer to the problem - the clean and groomed German soldiers with their superior air fleet and weaponry. This is very similar to the way many advertisements are structured

²⁰ Maurice Barres (1862-1923) was a French politician and anti-Semite who was known for his highly nationalistic rhetoric. It is said that Hitler modeled his themes of *Volk und Heimat* as well as *Blut und Boden* after some of Barres' ideas. ("Maurice Barres (French author and politician)", 2014)

²¹ See Bydgoszcz Massacre Sept 1939

on television today. The film proposes only two ways out, kill or be killed. Faced with only those two choices, the audience is easily persuaded to support the so-called violent response to Polish aggression.

Repetition

When utilized appropriately, all five of the techniques described in this chapter are capable of producing desired results. When they are put together, they combine synergistically and their collective effectiveness grows. This effectiveness can be amplified further through systematic and abundant repetition. Once the initial themes and points of view are introduced and established (within the first 10 minutes), they are repeated for the remainder of the film. The audience is constantly being reminded of German superiority through recurring scenes depicting smiling, healthy, clean Germans with superior weaponry, usually following a fear evoking, negative scene related to the Polish enemy. Such juxtapositions are present at least six times throughout this film. Takes featuring dozens of shiny German *Luftwaffe* planes reoccur in minutes 6, 9, 13, 34, 43, 44, 45, 46, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 76, 88, 89, 90, and 91 and montages of Polish inferiority and defeat occur in minutes 39, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 62, and 64. The visual effect of the animated map of Poland taking over German territory is also numerous repeated in the beginning, then after minute 34, the graphic is used 5 times to illustrate Germany fighting back. The narrator is also continuously reiterating that Poland and Neville Chamberlain want war and that Germany is just defending herself. The sheer amount of times that the same talking points are repeated in various ways within this film is astounding. However, it is important to remember that these same talking points were present in virtually all Nazi propaganda outlets including broadcasts, films, newsreels, posters, etc. Such a combination of inter-media and intra-media

repetition created a situation in which it would have been nearly impossible to avoid exposure to the propaganda messages.

The object of this essay is not to argue for the correctness of any political party, or country but rather to highlight the uncanny similarities between techniques that are clearly identifiable in Nazi propaganda films from 1940 – specifically the previously analyzed anti-Polish production *Feuertaufe*, and the techniques used by Nazi Germany's enemies at the time. The next section analyzes the use of the same techniques identified in *Feuertaufe* as present in the pro-Polish, British film *This is Poland* from 1940.

THIS IS POLAND

Context and Summary

Cursory research led to the film *This is Poland* (1941), a British-Polish production made several months after the fall of France (Spring 1940). It is propagandistic in nature and indicates the use of techniques similar to those utilized in *Feuertaufe*. *This is Poland* was produced to justify Britain's entry into World War II alongside a wrongfully attacked Poles. It was also intended to stiffen the English will to fight as well as to help England and Poland gain sympathy for their cause from the United States. The film is divided into two halves. The first shows Poland before the outbreak of World War II and the second half shows the country after Germany had invaded.

Contrary to *Feuertaufe's* portrayal of Poles as a semi-barbaric, dirty, and uncultured people, *This is Poland* depicts Poles as a pious, highly cultured folk with over 1000 years of rich history. The entire first half is dedicated to informing the audience about only positive aspects of Polish culture. It is basically a montage of Polish castles and other beautiful scenery, combined with a narration that informs of Polish (intellectual and military) achievements throughout the country's long history (*This is Poland*, 1941).

The second half documents the destruction brought about by the German invasion. This is accomplished through a montage of gloomy, dark shots of a war-torn Poland with its suffering citizens, and is narrated by an emotional, worried, and distraught voice.

Since visual special effects are not used in this film, and the film was not viewed as entertainment, the following section will focus on oversimplification, power of the visual image, appeal to emotion, and repetition.

Oversimplification

The Polish-British film *This is Poland* presents a heavily one-sided argument and message from beginning to end (Poland is good), not unlike the previously discussed Nazi film *Feuertaufe*. Poles are introduced and painted as having nothing but positive qualities and these qualities are reiterated during the entire first half of the motion picture through visual depictions of a heavenly looking place filled with beautiful people who sing, dance, pray, long for peace, and help England, and also through carefully selected facts about Polish culture and Polish historical achievements, as presented by a satisfied, almost proud sounding narrator. The background information offered to the audience is free of any statements or images contradicting with Poland's positive image. This creates a simplified context, comparable to that in *Feuertaufe*, which, when presented to people who don't know much else about Poland (or Germany), becomes their only context, in turn shaping their interpretation of subsequent messages related to the topic at hand.

In addition to the intentional lack of balanced background information included by the producers of *This is Poland*, a very similar schematic progression to the one present in *Feuertaufe*, consisting of clearly identifying the protagonist (in this case Poland) and the enemy (the Nazis), introducing the problem (Germany's invasion of Poland), and instantly thereafter providing the solution (Polish British military cooperation), is also utilized in this pro-Polish film. The main difference being that the message presented (Germany, not Poland is the problem this time) is the opposite.

Power of the Visual Image

The use of visual images as vehicles for predetermined messages in this pro-Polish film also has much in common with the utilization of this vehicle by the Nazis' in their anti-Polish Nazi film *Feuertaufe*. As in the German motion picture, scenes portraying clean, well-groomed, well-fed, smiling soldiers (and civilians alike), are employed to introduce the collective protagonist, in this case the Poles (not the Germans as in the way that images of clean, happy soldiers are used in *Feuertaufe*), and to bestow upon them characteristics associated with a civilized and respect worthy people. Even the elderly woman depicted in minute six getting water out of a well with a bucket is wearing a bleach white long sleeve shirt. Poland's cleanliness and its rich culture are also highlighted through numerous interwoven takes of beautiful architecture including the Wilanów Palace in minute one, as well as the Wawel Castle in minute three, combined with shots featuring Polish art like the statue of the Polish national hero Tadeusz Kosciuszko (1746-1817) on horseback in minute two. Furthermore, the weather is sunny and enjoyable in all of the scenes until minute ten when the German invasion begins. Thereafter, for the next six minutes, as the Germans carry out their attack on Poland, the skies are dark, gray, and often filled with smoke. The use of the sky as the background in scenes to set the mood and reinforce it is yet another example of virtually the same technique and imagery being utilized by two opposing sides with the exact opposite argument and message.

Appeal to Emotion

By showing Poles as innocent, pious, cultured, and happy from the onset until the end of the first half of the film, the audience is subtly conditioned to feel empathy for them. In addition, the inclusion of scenes featuring Polish peasants (dressed in traditional Polish attire so clean that it looks new) praying, cleaning, tending to animals, dancing, and singing, has the potential to appeal to a wide audience of people, since most people, regardless of nationality and/or political affiliations, engage in many of these same activities in their everyday lives. This combined with joyous music and the narrator's reassurance of Poland's innocence and its people's desire for a peaceful future, further reinforces the originally created feelings of empathy. Peaceful intentions, welfare of the common man, and innocence are all utilized by the Nazis in *Feuertaufe* for the same purpose, just with Germans as the good guys instead of Poles, as is the case in *This is Poland*. These same feelings of empathy are then skillfully morphed into feelings of disdain and anger towards the invading Germans starting in minute ten, when the background music suddenly becomes somber and the voice of the narrator conveniently takes on a worried, nervous, slightly hysteric tone. As the answer to the German problem in the form of Polish-British military cooperation is proposed in minute 16, and hope for the innocent Poles is reignited, it becomes difficult not to notice that this film takes its viewer on an almost identical emotional journey to the one that audiences of *Feuertaufe* were intentionally led on.

Repetition

This motion picture, like the German film *Feuertaufe* centers around a handful of clearly defined tenets which are reiterated throughout the production (Poland is good, Germany is bad and presents a problem, England's assistance is the answer). The first ten minutes of *This is Poland* are little more than a systematically repetitive montage of scenes highlighting positive qualities of Poles through visual images, narration, and including appeal to emotion (as described in the sections above). The dedication of half of this production's runtime to praising Poland (and virtually nothing else) seems not only excessive, but also obviously premeditated and intentional. Overstating and repeating the positive message about Poland is virtually identical to the use of overstatement and repetition in *Feuertaufe* to portray Poland as the enemy and a problem.

Once the German invasion starts in minute ten, repetition is again used in the form of an uninterrupted montage featuring German planes, tanks, bombs, and soldiers in a smoldering Poland. This lasts from minute ten through minute 15 (25% of the film's total runtime) and is used to unambiguously drive home the point that innocent Poles have suffered and are suffering at the hands of the violent Germans under Hitler's control.

As in the case of *Feuertaufe* repetition is used in this film to continuously remind the audience of the preconceived politically charged messages intentionally included by the producers, and like in the German film, it exerts an amplificatory effect on the messages by multiplying the number of times that the audience is exposed to the message.

CONCLUSION

“Even entertainment can be politically of special value, because the moment a person is conscious of propaganda, propaganda becomes ineffective. However, as soon as propaganda as tendency, as a characteristic, as an attitude, remains in the background and becomes apparent through human beings, then propaganda becomes effective in every aspect” (Welch, 2001).

My intention and main reason for this project is to bring awareness of some of the main time tested propaganda techniques existing around people today, hoping that they may be better able to become conscious of its existence, so that they can, in turn, render it ineffective as described in the quote above. With the growing saturation of new technologies such as computers, tablets, and smart phones combined with platforms capable of disseminating targeted, predetermined messages to the public at virtually no cost, and without much effort (like Twitter, Facebook, and the internet as a whole), mass communication, and with it propaganda, is rapidly taking on a new incarnations. However, the techniques described in this paper that were heavily utilized for propagandistic purposes in the 20th century (oversimplification, power of the visual image, visual effects, propaganda in entertainment, appeal to emotion, and repetition) are easily transferrable to the new emerging media platforms, and it is therefore crucial to be aware of their existence. in order to avoid falling victim to intentional manipulation brought about by groups or individuals pushing a predetermined, self-serving agenda.

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