

Propaganda

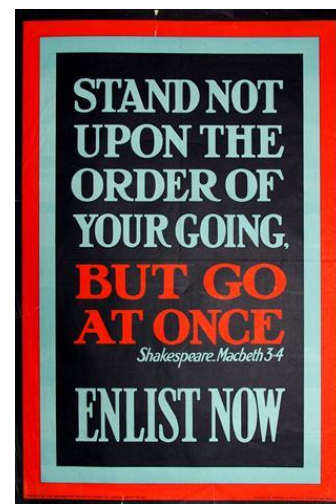
What is propaganda?

Propaganda is when you present information that promotes a political cause or point of view in a biased way.

What was it used for in war time Britain?

In war-time Britain there was an official body that produced national propaganda – the War Propaganda Bureau (WPB). But local governments and groups also produced propaganda that fell in line with the national messages. At the start of the war propaganda focussed on recruitment but there were many other uses.

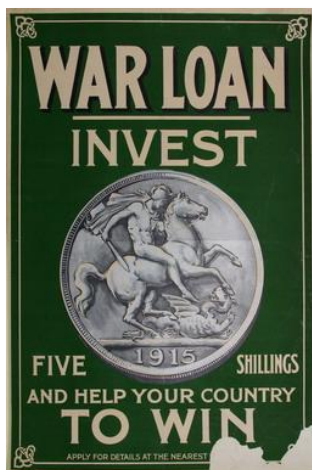
- To recruit men for the army
- To encourage public opinion that the enemy needs to be fought because it is evil.
- To persuade those on the Home Front to work to support the war effort.
- To persuade those on the Home Front to give money to the war effort.
- To give the government approved version of the war to the public.
- To lower the morale of enemy troops.
- To prevent information being published that could help the enemy.



Poster: 1999.529 © Horsham District Council's Horsham Museum & Art Gallery

National poster put up in Horsham encouraging volunteers for the army.

Methods of Propaganda



Poster: 1999.756 © Horsham District Council's Horsham Museum & Art Gallery

National poster encouraging people to put money into the war effort.

There were a variety of ways of producing propaganda in war-time Britain. But in those days there were also restrictions. TV, computers and the internet had not been invented and radio was not used yet by the public. So messages were put across through public meetings, newspaper articles, adverts, books, art work and posters.

In Horsham there was propaganda in many local sources. The West Sussex County Times and the Albery Posters collection (www.horshamposters.com) have some great examples.

Impact?

Whilst propaganda was intended to achieve all sorts of goals it is difficult to say specifically how effective propaganda was. Contemporary commentators seem convinced of its effectiveness on influencing public opinion. However giving facts and figures is difficult.



Glossary

Biased	- an unfair, one-sided, prejudiced point of view
Home Front	- What the work and activities to support the war effort at home was called.
Morale	- the spirit of a group
Contemporary	- living at the same time as the event

Find out more

- **BBC Iwonder**, 2014 'Was World War One propaganda the birth of spin?' <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zq8c7ty>
- **British Library**, 2014. *World War One Articles*. www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles
- **Horsham Museum**, *Albery Poster Collection* www.horshamposters.com

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- Extracts from the **West Sussex County Times** 1914-1918 accessed via Horsham Library

Images

- Posters are from the Horsham Museum, *Albery Poster Collection* www.horshamposters.com

