

STATE OF DECEPTION

I. MESSAGE

Draw arrows to the visual elements that communicate the message. Think about how line, color, graphics, depictions of people, words, and symbols are used.

Visual cues:

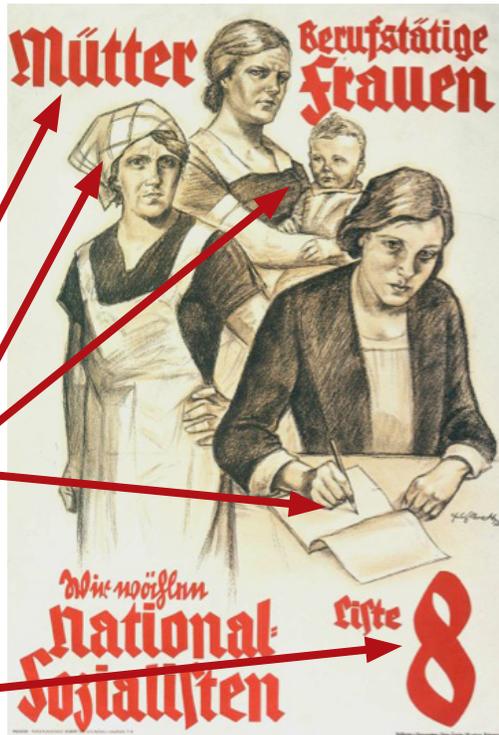
COLOR: Red, white, and black were the signature colors of the Nazi Party. The bold red text contrasts with softer colors in the graphic.

GRAPHIC/SYMBOLS: Three diverse examples of women are depicted: a mother/housewife, a working-class woman, and a white-collar woman. Their eyes are downcast, almost skeptical. They are listening closely to political promises.

WORDS: The use of the first person in the statement “We are voting National Socialists” implies that all women are voting for the National Socialists and that the viewer of the poster should as well. The “8” is eye-catching and tells the viewer exactly how to vote.

What is the message?

Women are empowered to change things by voting for the National Socialists.



“Mothers—Working Women; We are voting National Socialists, Slate 8.” Felix Albrecht (artist), 1932. Bundesarchiv, Koblenz. Plak 002-040-011

2. CONTEXT

What are the hopes, fears, and grievances present in society at this time? Think about the political, social, and economic climate.

POLITICAL: In 1932, Germany was a fledgling democracy facing severe economic crises.

ECONOMIC: With the stock market crash of 1929 and the world economic crisis that accompanied it, German banks closed and unemployment skyrocketed. Germans were frustrated and afraid for the future.

SOCIAL: During this period, sexual norms were in flux. For the first time, women were working outside the home in large numbers. The new constitution gave women the right to vote.

Given that, why might this message have had power?

The poster appeals to traditional and working women. It is meant to win over women who may be fearful for their families and the future of the nation.

3. AUDIENCE

Who is the target audience? What about this message would be appealing to this group? What reactions might different audiences have had? Could people access and express alternate viewpoints?

Nazi propagandists appealed to newly enfranchised women voters by portraying the party as the defender of traditional German womanhood and the family. Eligible women voters outnumbered male voters in the Weimar Republic by three million. In 1932, Germany was a democracy and people could express alternate viewpoints.

4. CREATOR

Who is the propagandist?: **The Nazi Party**

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: The Nazi Party will be the defender of traditional German womanhood and the family.

FEEL: Empowered that their vote for the Nazi (National Socialist) Party can bring change and a better future.

DO: Vote for the Nazi party.

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

The Nazi propagandists carefully tailored their themes, messages, and language to appeal to certain groups of voters, including newly enfranchised women. The Nazis succeeded in broadening their constituency and siphoning off support from other competing political parties. By 1930, the Nazis were making greater gains among women than men. In some polling, there was a dramatic upswing in the number of female voters supporting the Nazi Party and this continued into 1932, helping the Nazis become the largest party represented in the German parliament.

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Visual cues:

WORDS: The words at the top of the poster, "Youth Serves the Führer," blend with the graphic and are in harmony with the image.

LINE: The boy appears in shadow, almost as if Hitler's softly glowing face is reflecting down on him.

COLOR: Yellow light is cast by Hitler onto the boy. This makes them look like part of an important cause.

GRAPHIC/SYMBOL: The faces of the two males are aligned with each other. Hitler's head in the background is much bigger, as if he is guiding the boy. Both look with determination into the future. The boy wears the military style uniform of the Hitler Youth.

What is the message?

Boys ages 10-18 should follow Hitler and be proud to join the Hitler Youth.



"Youth Serves the Führer. All 10 year olds into the Hitler Youth!" Unknown artist, 1939.
Bundesarchiv Koblenz Plak 003-011-018

2. CONTEXT

What are the hopes, fears, and grievances present in society at this time? Think about the political, social, and economic climate.

POLITICAL: In 1939, World War II officially began when Germany invaded Poland.

ECONOMIC: Rearmament and the reclaiming of territories stimulated the economy, renewing national pride.

SOCIAL: Independent youth organizations were prohibited or dissolved in the 1930s, and membership in the Hitler Youth was made mandatory for all "Aryan" Germans between the ages of 10 and 18 in 1939.

Given that, why might this message have had power?

The poster appeals to a youth's desire to belong to a community and to be dutiful, serving Hitler and the fatherland.

3. AUDIENCE

Who is the target audience? What about this message would be appealing to this group? What reactions might different audiences have had? Could people access and express alternate viewpoints?

This poster is meant to appeal to "Aryan" youth by showing a cause they can join. If a non-"Aryan" youth saw this poster he might feel excluded. Under the dictatorship, almost all sectors had to swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler. There were few opportunities to openly challenge the stereotypes and myths and were penalties for seeking other viewpoints.

4. CREATOR

Who is the propagandist?: The Nazi Party

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: Hitler is someone to follow.

FEEL: Part of a "national community."

DO: Join the Hitler youth.

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

Millions of German children were indoctrinated to Nazism in the classroom and through extracurricular activities. In January 1933, the Hitler Youth had only 50,000 members; by the end of the year membership rose to more than 2 million, then reached 5.4 million in 1936. In 1939, membership in the Hitler Youth was made mandatory for all "Aryan" Germans between the ages of 10 and 18. Youth were especially important audiences for propaganda messages, emphasizing that the party was a dynamic, disciplined, forward-looking, and hopeful movement.

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Visual cues:

LINE: The line is sketchy and thick, with a dark overlay over each patch of color. The white words are bold, grabbing the viewer's attention.

PEOPLE: The male figure is an exaggerated Jewish stereotype. Well dressed, he represents the "Jewish financier." He cowers while an imposing finger points from above. His hand in his coat appears to hide something.

COLOR: The colors are hazy, black, and red. The man is darkly dressed with shadowy dark skin. The yellow Jewish star badge stands out.

WORDS: An emphatic "He is to blame for the war!"

What is the message?

Nazi propagandists blamed the Jews for instigating the war, victimizing Germany, and implied they had plans to enslave or destroy the German people. The guilty must be punished.



"He is to blame for the war!" Hans Schweitzer (artist), 1943. Library of Congress

2. CONTEXT

What are the hopes, fears, and grievances present in society at this time? Think about the political, social, and economic climate.

POLITICAL: War took a dramatic toll across Europe. Cities were bombed, soldiers were killed, and millions of civilians suffered.

ECONOMIC: Many faced starvation, lost their homes, and even their loved ones.

SOCIAL: Hardships occurred at home and brutalities against those in occupied territories increased.

Given that context, why might this message have had power?

Through the use of propaganda, Nazi authorities were able to focus fears and frustrations onto the Jews by blaming them for the war. The poster serves to transform Jewish neighbors into enemies.

3. AUDIENCE

Who is the target audience? What about this message would be appealing to this group? What reactions might different audiences have had? Could people access and express alternate viewpoints?

The target audiences are German citizens and people living in occupied territories. Messages became more radical and played on deep-seated fears in a chaotic wartime context. Nazi propagandists demonized and dehumanized Jews. There were few opportunities for Jews, or for anyone, to challenge these racist stereotypes.

4. CREATOR

Who is the propagandist?: **The Nazi Party**

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: That Jews are to blame for the war and the hardships the nation faced.

FEEL: Hatred for or indifference toward Jews.

DO: Stay strong and do not interfere while the state carried out measures to protect the nation from the "Jewish enemy."

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

During this period Europe descended into chaos, war, and genocide. The Nazis sought to provoke hatred of Germany's Jews by transforming the popular perception of them from ordinary neighbor into internal enemy. Nazi propagandists did not dictate anti-Jewish policy, but they helped to create the climate of indifference, hate, and fear that made mass murder possible. Official and underground reports on public opinion indicated that the German public's reactions to Nazi antisemitic propaganda campaigns, even during wartime, often varied and shifted unexpectedly. Still, ordinary people were swayed by propaganda and became indifferent as Jews were dehumanized and persecuted.