

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:

LINE: The line is sketchy and makes the people appear worn and haggard.

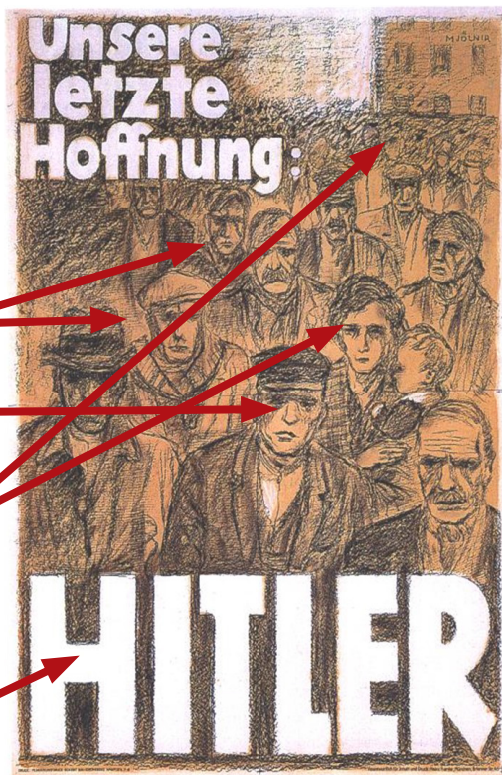
COLOR: The muddy colors evoke a somber mood. The shadows on the peoples' faces emphasize their despair.

PEOPLE: The masses of people include men, women, and children. Broad swaths of society are represented. They march toward Hitler and gaze directly at the viewer, appealing for their vote.

WORDS: "Hitler" is the most prominent word on the poster. It is bright white and boldly written

What is the message?

Masses of people are behind Hitler. You can change things by voting for him. Hitler is the last hope to bring economic stability to a suffering nation.



"Our Last Hope: Hitler." Artist: Hans Schweitzer, 1932. USHMM Collection

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 a severe economic crisis. Faith in government eroded due to dysfunction. The nation was demoralized by the loss of World War I.

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.

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

Public fears over economic woes and political uncertainty made the Nazis' solutions to the nation's problems appealing. The Nazis downplayed more extreme aspects of their agenda.

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 audience is the German population, struggling financially due to economic conditions brought by the Great Depression. Germany was a democracy and there were opportunities for open debate and choice among political parties.

4. CREATOR

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

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: That the government failed the German people and that Hitler was the solution; that the Nazis were political outsiders.

FEEL: To believe in Hitler and place their hopes for the future in the Nazi Party.

DO: The Nazis wanted people to vote for Hitler and the Nazi Party.

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

Democracy in Germany virtually collapsed when the Great Depression struck in 1929. Disagreements over economic policies rapidly polarized politics between left and right. The inability of Germany's numerous parties to work together brought the country to a standstill. Promises of stability and economic advancement led many to abandon their previous political allegiances to vote for the Nazi Party. Many citizens were willing to overlook the party's anti-Jewish ideology and racism. Nazi support surged. In 1928 the Nazi party won a mere 12 seats in parliament, but in 1932 the Nazi Party won 230 seats in German parliamentary elections, becoming the largest party represented.

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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: The punching arm is flesh toned, but the figure being hit is a bright red. Red was associated with communism, which antisemitism linked with Jews.

WORDS: "Vote Slate 10" calls for Germans to vote for the Nazi Party on the ballot. "This Blow Must Hit Home" calls for a direct strike against the Jewish population of Germany.

PEOPLE: The crudely caricatured red male Jewish figure appears subhuman and monstrous. It contrasts with the Nazi arm which is strong, masculine, and flesh toned.

SYMBOLS: The Swastika represents the Nazi Party and the figure being punched represents Jews.

What is the message?

Voting for the Nazi party can stop the Communist and Jewish threat, both seen as dangers to the German nation.



"Vote Slate 10. This Blow Must Hit Home!"
National Socialist German Workers' Party
(Hitler Movement) Fips (Philipp Rupprecht),
artist; 1928. Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt

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 Germany's parliament no party was able to win a clear majority. Dysfunction brought public distrust and frustration.

ECONOMIC: Economic hardship strained social and political interactions and further strengthened the climate of distrust and frustration.

SOCIAL: Germany was an inclusive society but antisemitism lurked beneath the surface in many German communities.

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

Promises of stability and economic advancement led many to support the Nazis. The Nazis only promoted antisemitic messages where there was existing antisemitism and audiences receptive to these ideas.

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 targeting non-Jewish voters who harbored antisemitic sentiment. Germans were looking for decisive action after years of deadlock. There were free elections and opportunities for open debate and choice among political parties and leaders.

4. CREATOR

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

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: The Nazi Party is going to take decisive action that will bring order and stability.

FEEL: Jews (associated with Communists) are a threat to the nation and the Nazi Party is the future of Germany.

DO: Vote the Nazis into power and give them the majority in parliament.

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

The Nazi Party used positive propaganda that focused on the economic and political renewal of Germany in order to build broad support and divert attention away from the Party's extreme antisemitism. The Nazi Party's antisemitism appealed to right-wing radicals, but not to all of Hitler's supporters. Regional Nazi groups gauged local public interest in the "Jewish Question" and tailored their propaganda accordingly. The Nazis' antisemitic platform may not have gained the party mass support, but neither did it frighten off large numbers of voters either. They were willing to overlook its anti-Jewish ideology and racism. Voters abandoned mainstream parties to support Adolf Hitler and helped to pave the way for the end of German democracy.

STATE OF DECEPTION

1. 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: The colors are bright and bold. Red, white, and black were the colors of the Nazi Party.

SYMBOLS: The swastika is the symbol of the Nazi Party. Like a saw, it cuts through chains which represent enslavement under the treaty. The chains represent the limits placed on Germany and are each named for a region lost in the Versailles Treaty.

WORDS: "Victory over" hovers above a flat "Versailles" that is about to be cut in half.

What is the message?

In the eyes of many Germans, Germany needed to overcome the terms of the Versailles Treaty. The Nazi Party promised that if people supported the party, Germany would be returned to its former glory. This poster shows they are delivering on that promise.



"Victory over Versailles." 1939. *Wolfsonian*

2. CONTEXT

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

POLITICAL: The Versailles Treaty was reviled and many believed it to be a betrayal and humiliation. In the 1930s, the Nazis violated its terms and achieved foreign policy successes, capturing lost territory and increasing the nation's size. They sought to unite ethnic Germans.

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

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

Many Germans were shocked and angered over the terms of the treaty which deprived Germany of any significant military power. The Nazi Party began to defy its terms and renew Germans' sense of national pride.

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 German citizens by playing on their long-standing frustrations with the Versailles Treaty and a diminished national pride. By 1939, civil liberties and debate had been eliminated. The Nazis' use of terror intimidated the population and rooted out public resistance.

4. CREATOR

Who is the propagandist?: The Nazi Party

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: That the Nazis were bringing restoration to Germany and repairing the damage done by the Treaty of Versailles.

FEEL: A sense of hope and national pride, which had diminished greatly following World War I and the Versailles Treaty.

DO: Focus on the positive changes taking place and ignore the extreme elements of the Nazi agenda, including negative measures targeting Jews.

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

German triumphs in foreign policy during the 1930s and economic recovery after the Great Depression helped fuel Nazi popularity. Government and party propagandists repeatedly reminded Germans that their lives had dramatically improved under Hitler. People focused on the positive change taking place and overlooked the negative measures affecting the Jews. Praise of the regime's achievements could not prevent public discontent over the reality of life under the dictatorship, but such unhappiness remained at the level of grumbling rather than outright opposition.

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I. MESSAGE

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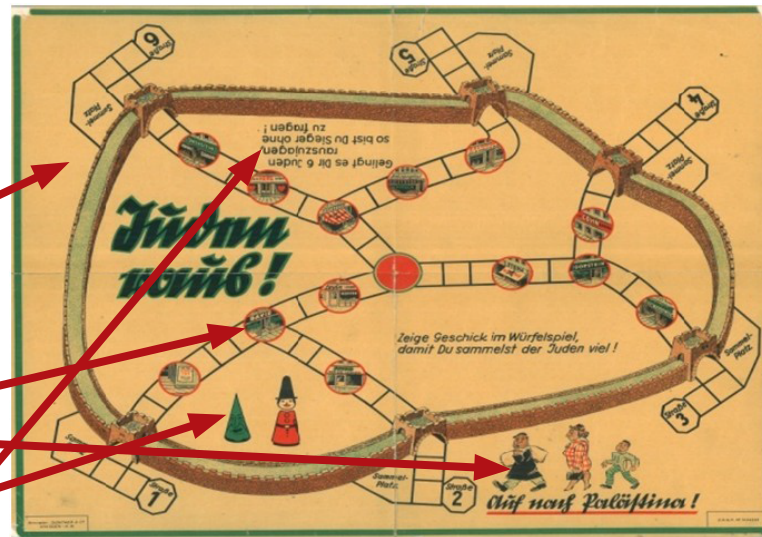
COLOR: The colors are bright and meant to be appealing to children.

GRAPHICS/PEOPLE: Stops on the board depict Jewish store fronts and businesses. The people are stereotypical characterizations of a Jewish man, woman, and child.

SYMBOLS: The cone like red man is meant to represent the German police. The green cone cap next to him is a derogatory image of a Jew.

WORDS: The rules describe the Nazis' policy toward Jews, that they should leave the country. "Judens Raus" was a popular slogan of the Nazi Party.

What is the message?
The object of this antisemitic game is to force Germany's Jews to leave the country.



"Jews Out! Show skill in the dice game, so that you collect many Jews! If you succeed in chasing out six Jews, you will be the victor without question! Off to Palestine!" 1938. Leo Baeck Institute

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 alternative viewpoints?

Non-Jewish children and families were the target audience. A game was an effective way to spread propaganda messages. German children were indoctrinated to Nazism in the classroom, extracurricular activities, and games. They did not have access to alternative viewpoints or grasp the devastating impact this game would have on their Jewish classmates.

4. CREATOR

Who is the propagandist?
A private German toy company hoping to profit off Nazi popularity and spread party doctrine.

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: Jews should leave the country.

FEEL: That Jews are outsiders and there is no place for them in Germany.

DO: Play the game and believe Nazi ideology.

2. CONTENT

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

POLITICAL: In September 1935, the the Nuremberg race laws were introduced. By 1938, laws systematically isolated and segregated Jews. Laws aimed to remove Jews' rights and speed up their emigration.

ECONOMIC: Anti-Jewish measures aimed to impoverish Jews and eliminate them from most professions. Economic conditions in Germany improved for the non-Jewish population under the Nazis.

SOCIAL: Students were taught "racial science" in school. Independent youth organizations were prohibited or dissolved in the 1930s and membership in the Hitler Youth became mandatory.

Given that context, why might this message have had power?
A board game targeting children was an effective way to spread racial and political propaganda to German youth.

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

From 1933 to 1939 German Jews were transformed from German citizens into outcasts, violently targeted, isolated, and deemed inferior and subhuman. During this period, the Nazis went to great lengths to indoctrinate German youth. This game reinforced Nazi anti-Jewish policy in Germany at the time and spread the message that there was no place in Germany for Jews to even the youngest audiences.

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: The words are bright red which makes them eye-catching. They stand out from the rest of the poster.

WORDS: The words are underlined and exclamation points reinforce the message. The Nazis are fighting to protect the future of “our children.”

GRAPHIC/SYMBOLS: The baby carriages represent a new generation and hope for the future.

PEOPLE: Many innocent and happy children of differing ages are depicted. Most have happy expressions. All represent the ideal “Aryan” type.

What is the message?

We are fighting this war in order to protect our children's future. Germany must protect itself from foreign aggression.



“Why We Fight—For Our Children’s Bread! March 11, 1940.

USHMM Collection

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 alternative viewpoints?

The target audience is German parents concerned about providing their children with a safe and stable future. Others may have been skeptical, remembering the toll of World War I. However, under the Nazi regime there were no opportunities to speak out against such a message. Listening to foreign broadcasts was a crime punishable by death.

4. CREATOR

Who is the propagandist? The Nazi Party
What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: The war is being fought as an effort to protect German families who are victims of Allied aggression; Germany is the “good guy.”

FEEL: Worry about what will happen to their children if they do not support the war; Germany must defend itself.

DO: Support the war effort.

2. CONTENT

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

POLITICAL: In September 1939 Germany invaded Poland, beginning World War II. The Nazis needed justification for why Germany was fighting another war and sought to build public support.

SOCIAL: Families hoped to secure stable futures for their children after years of economic and political turmoil. “Aryan” families were encouraged to have multiple children to ensure the future of the nation.

ECONOMIC: Rearmament and the reclaiming of territories created new jobs, stimulating the German economy. People feared a second economic crisis if Germany were to lose the war.

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

The Nazis masked their territorial aggression by presented Germany as the victim. It emphasizes a higher morality over the enemy.

5. CONSEQUENCES

What effects did this message have on society?

This poster concealed the Nazis' aggressive foreign policy and war behind an emotional assertion that the German regime justly stands to protect and defend the survival of the nation's future. Such appeals made support for the war more palatable for audiences.

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I. MESSAGE

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Visual cues:

COLOR: The flags are bright, but the figure is mainly dressed in black and is in shadow.

SYMBOLS: The British, American, and Soviet Flags represent the Allied forces who were fighting Germany in World War II. The figure wears a Star of David which indicates he is a Jew. The Nazi propagandist pulls back the curtain to expose the Jewish culprit.

PEOPLE: The male figure is made to look sinister and is an exaggerated stereotype of the "typical Jew." He has dark features and is dressed as a "Jewish financier." The Jew is demonized. What is the message? Nazi Propagandists blame the Jews for the war and claim they are manipulating the Allied Forces to betray Germany.



"Behind the Enemy Powers: The Jew." 1942.
USHMM Collection

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 on Europe. Cities were bombed out, soldiers were dying, and the nation suffered.

ECONOMIC: Food and supplies were dwindling and many people faced starvation, losing their homes, and their families.

SOCIAL: Popular perceptions of Jews shifted from ordinary neighbor to internal enemy. At the least, citizens became indifferent to their plight.

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

Through the use of propaganda, German authorities were able to focus citizens' fears and frustrations onto the Jewish communities, blaming them for the war.

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 those living in the occupied territories. In a climate of world war, messages become radical and play on deep-seated fears. There were no opportunities to openly challenge the stereotypes and myths. There were penalties for seeking other viewpoints.

4. CREATOR

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

What do they hope the audience will:

THINK: The Jews are to blame for the war and are manipulating the Allied forces.

FEEL: Suspicion of or indifference toward the plight of 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 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 indicate 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.