LINES OF COMMUNICATION:
AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

by

Jeffrey O’Connor Whyte

B.A., The University of King’s College, Halifax, 2007
M.A., Simon Fraser University, 2010

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES
(GEOGRAPHY)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Vancouver)

May 2019
© Jeffrey O’Connor Whyte, 2019
The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, the dissertation entitled:

Lines of Communication: American Psychological Warfare in the Twentieth Century

submitted by Jeffrey Whyte in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Geography

Examiing Committee:

Derek Gregory
Supervisor

Geraldine Pratt
Supervisory Committee Member

Trevor Barnes
Supervisory Committee Member

Jim Glassman
University Examiner

Heidi Tworek
University Examiner

Additional Supervisory Committee Members:

Supervisory Committee Member

Supervisory Committee Member
Abstract

This dissertation traces the construction and evolution of the concept of “psychological warfare” in the United States, from its beginnings in the early 1940s. It is argued that psychological warfare is an “ouroboric” concept: produced by propaganda campaigns about the power of propaganda campaigns, psychological warfare produced and continues to produce geographical imaginations of warfare in which individuals and populations are enlisted through their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. Chapters 1 and 2 provide introductory and historical context for the emergence of psychological warfare, while chapters 3 and 5 trace the rhetorical evolution of this geographical imaginary from the Second World War to the Cold War period. Chapters 4 and 6 show how, conversely, psychological warfare existed and evolved in American theatres of war. It is argued throughout that meanings of psychological warfare are largely determined by their two geographical contexts, split between domestic rhetorical strategy, and strategies for occupying and pacifying civilian populations abroad. Furthermore, it is shown that these contexts are often incommensurable, with domestic constructions leveraged to support narratives of ‘non-kinetic’ and humanitarian warfare, while actually existing American psychological warfare provides both rationale and justification for violence against foreign civilian populations. This dissertation concludes by considering the contemporary revival of domestic psychological war rhetoric in the United States.
Lay Summary

This dissertation seeks to challenge popular conceptions of psychological warfare as an effective strategy for waging war. By showing the rhetorical construction and evolution of the concept, this dissertation argues that psychological warfare rarely wins the “hearts and minds” of enemy populations at war. Instead, psychological warfare offers rationales and justifications for the intensification of military violence, at the same time that it claims to make warfare more humane and “less kinetic”.

Preface

This dissertation is original, independent work by the author, J. Whyte

Research for chapters 3, 5, and 6 was conducted in Washington, D.C. at the United States National Archives and the United States Library of Congress.


Table of Contents

Abstract........................................................................................................................................... iii
Lay Summary....................................................................................................................................... iv
Preface............................................................................................................................................... v
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................... vi
List of Figures ...................................................................................................................................... ix
List of Abbreviations ....................................................................................................................... xii
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................................ xiii
Dedication .......................................................................................................................................... xiv

Chapter 1: Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 1

Chapter 2: “The Ultimate Domain of Police” .................................................................................. 13
  2.1 Omnes et Singulatim..................................................................................................................... 15
  2.1.1 E Unibus Pluram ...................................................................................................................... 23
  2.1.2 In Search of Lost Time .......................................................................................................... 39
  2.2 Lines of Communication ........................................................................................................... 57
  2.2.1 Correspondence in Crimea .................................................................................................... 61
  2.2.2 The Interwar Origins of Psychological War ........................................................................... 69
  2.3 Conclusion ................................................................................................................................. 80

Chapter 3: A New Geography of Defense? The Birth of Psychological Warfare ......................... 84
  3.1 Fifth Column Lessons ............................................................................................................... 88
  3.2 Into the Front: Annihilating the Spaces of American Isolationism ........................................ 100
  3.3 Morale Panic: Securing Populations Through Psychological War ........................................... 119
3.4 Ewald Banse and The Psychological Geography of War ........................................ 133
3.5 American Geographers and the Psychological War ........................................... 143
3.6 Against Geopolitics: The Strategy of Truth ....................................................... 155
3.7 Conclusion ......................................................................................................... 167

Chapter 4: Truth, Territory, Terror ........................................................................ 170
4.1 Truth ................................................................................................................. 171
  4.1.1 The Cynicism of the Deadly Parallel ............................................................ 171
  4.1.2 When Did Critique Run Out of Steam? ....................................................... 175
  4.1.3 The Strategy of Candor .............................................................................. 183
4.2 Territory ............................................................................................................ 188
  4.2.1 North Africa’s Other Eisenhower ................................................................. 202
  4.2.2 The Mechanical Heart .............................................................................. 209
  4.2.3 “With a rifle, not a shotgun” ...................................................................... 218
4.3 Terror ............................................................................................................... 226
  4.3.1 Wo ist der Luftwaffe?: Operation Pointblank ........................................... 236
  4.3.2 For Support not Illumination .................................................................... 239

Chapter 5: Covert Crusade: Psychological Warfare at the CIA ............................. 256
5.1 Getting the Sheep to Speak .............................................................................. 256
5.2 Uncertainty and Caution ................................................................................. 257
5.3 CIA at the Reins ............................................................................................... 267
  5.3.1 The March of the Truth Dollars ................................................................. 281
  5.3.2 Tell me who you are .................................................................................. 288
  5.3.3 Parting the Iron Curtain ............................................................................ 299
### Chapter 5: The Mighty Wurlitzer

5.4 The Mighty Wurlitzer ................................................................. 310

5.5 Conclusion: Psywar is Dead, Long Live Psywar! .......................... 318

### Chapter 6: Psychological Warfare in Vietnam: Governmentality at the USIA

6.1 USIA and the Counterinsurgency Turn ............................................. 328

6.2 Establishing Government............................................................... 334

   6.2.1 The American War Pastoral.................................................. 338

   6.2.2 Psywar on the Ground.......................................................... 345

6.3 The JUSPAO Revolution............................................................... 352

   6.3.1 Mediating Violence............................................................... 361

   6.3.2 The Television War............................................................... 370

6.4 Evaluating Psychological War...................................................... 378

6.5 Conclusion .................................................................................. 387

### Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 “Switching Back to Good Old PSYOPs” ........................................... 392

7.2 Lines of Communication.................................................................. 401

### Bibliography

Bibliography .................................................................................... 423
List of Figures

Figure 1: Population accessibility c1790 ................................................................. 29
Figure 2: Population accessibility c1820 ................................................................. 30
Figure 3: "Free time" ............................................................................................... 52
Figure 4: Crimean telegraph ................................................................................. 64
Figure 5: Crimean panorama ................................................................................ 65
Figure 6: Enthusiasm of Paterfamilias ................................................................. 68
Figure 7: Publication of a Crimean war gazette ....................................................... 70
Figure 8: The fifth column menaces America .......................................................... 93
Figure 9: The fifth column menaces South America ............................................... 94
Figure 10: Advertisement for The Strategy of Terror .............................................. 112
Figure 11: Excerpt (a) from German Psychological Warfare ................................ 130
Figure 12: Excerpt (b) from German Psychological Warfare ................................ 131
Figure 13: Plan for a national morale service ....................................................... 132
Figure 14: Banse's invasion map ........................................................................... 137
Figure 15: Ewald Banse ......................................................................................... 142
Figure 16: Radio Propaganda in South America ................................................... 148
Figure 17: Geopolitical map of Venezuela ............................................................. 151
Figure 18: Roosevelt's secret map ......................................................................... 153
Figure 19: Divide & Conquer ................................................................................ 159
Figure 20: The Axis Grand Strategy ..................................................................... 162
Figure 21: On Assignment .................................................................................... 166
Figure 22: Fallen soldiers................................................................. 185
Figure 23: The Eisenhower declaration ............................................... 192
Figure 24: Leaflet drift.................................................................. 194
Figure 25: Artillery leaflet shell........................................................... 195
Figure 26: Safe conduct pass ............................................................... 196
Figure 27: Afrika Post..................................................................... 198
Figure 28: Feldpost ...................................................................... 199
Figure 29: Map of OWI outposts......................................................... 211
Figure 30: U.S. Army newsmap ............................................................ 212
Figure 31: "The News Fights for Us" ..................................................... 214
Figure 32: Victory magazine ................................................................. 220
Figure 33: Voir magazine ................................................................. 221
Figure 34: Fotorevy magazine ............................................................. 222
Figure 35: L’Amerique en Guerre ......................................................... 233
Figure 36: Fortress Europe has no roof............................................... 234
Figure 37: The heaviest bombing to date ............................................... 235
Figure 38: End of a Myth................................................................. 244
Figure 39: Hiroshima leaflet ............................................................... 250
Figure 40: Advertisement for the "Crusade for Freedom" ..................... 279
Figure 41: "You Mean I can Fight Communism?" .................................. 285
Figure 42: General Clay signs a freedom scroll ................................... 290
Figure 43: Crusade Catechism ............................................................ 295
Figure 44: Crusade statement contest ............................................... 296

x
Figure 45: If you Disagree with Mr. Khrushchev ................................................................. 297
Figure 46: Crusade for Freedom parade .................................................................................. 300
Figure 47: Freedom Bell tour of America ................................................................................. 301
Figure 48: Crusade for Freedom motorcade ........................................................................... 303
Figure 49: Winds of freedom .................................................................................................. 306
Figure 50: Project Revere postcard ......................................................................................... 308
Figure 51: General Mills survey leaflet .................................................................................... 309
Figure 52: C.D. Jackson ......................................................................................................... 313
Figure 53: USIA country plan: Guatemala ............................................................................. 332
Figure 54: Kluckhohn's "value profiles" .................................................................................. 343
Figure 55: JUSPAO field map ................................................................................................. 347
Figure 56: Rural Spirit magazine ............................................................................................. 349
Figure 57: USIA country plan: Vietnam .................................................................................. 355
Figure 58: Tet cliches .............................................................................................................. 358
Figure 59: Tet leaflet ............................................................................................................... 360
Figure 60: Television in Vietnam ............................................................................................ 373
Figure 61: JUSPAO television schedule .................................................................................. 375
Figure 62: "Russian interference" .......................................................................................... 395
Figure 63: Russia is winning .................................................................................................. 397
Figure 64: “election hacking” ............................................................................................... 400
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Intelligence Agency</th>
<th>CIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committee for National Morale</td>
<td>CNM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator of Information</td>
<td>CoI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Morale Analysis Division</td>
<td>FMAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint United States Public Affairs Office</td>
<td>JUSPAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Committee for a Free Europe</td>
<td>NCFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Facts and Figures</td>
<td>OFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Strategic Services</td>
<td>OSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of War Information</td>
<td>OWI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Information Agency</td>
<td>USIA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Derek Gregory and my supervisory committee for their guidance and encouragement, the UBC Geography staff for their patience and kindness, and my fellow graduate students for good cheer and support. Special thanks to comrades Matt Greaves, Graeme Webb, Scott Timcke, Cat Gold, Emily Rosenman, Breton Peterson, Craig Jones, Wes Attewell, Paige Patchin, Sage Ponder, Adam Mahoney, Sarah Przedpelska, Max Ritts, and Bob Neubauer. This dissertation was made possible through a Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Canada Graduate Scholarship.
Dedication

For my mom who got me here.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Accompanying the American-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003, narratives concerning the “psychological” dimension of warfare surfaced in ideas of “winning the hearts and minds” of both enemy fighters and occupied populations more broadly. An early *TIME* magazine article titled “Using Psywar Against the Taliban” (Waller 2001) reported that “while B-52s rain terror from the skies, an elaborate psychological operation is fighting for the hearts and minds of Afghans.” Reporting on “The US War of Minds,” the BBC (2001) similarly explained that “Taliban fighters are defecting as US-led air strikes continue” and that while “the scale of [defection] is unclear,” coalition psychological warfare was “doing its best to ensure that more desertions follow.” The BBC’s coverage concluded that “if an adversary's will to fight can be removed, it follows that lives will be saved.”

If the claim that lives could be saved through a program of aerial bombing appears incongruous, it nonetheless reflects a longer history of what Gregory (2017) has called “the moral economy of bombing” in which the practice of bombing civilian populations has been made both legally and socially permissible through its claim to hastening victory, shortening war, and ultimately preventing further casualties. The above emphasis on the relationship between bombing and psychological warfare, and their mutual collaboration to “save lives” by encouraging defections, similarly reflects a longer historical relationship that can be traced back to the Second World War. Furthermore, it suggests the humanitarian appeal as a hinge between Gregory’s moral economy of bombing and psychological warfare’s own moral economy. As one *Chicago Tribune* reporter wrote in the early days the 2003 Iraq war, “the goal [of psychological war] is to avoid
bloodshed by prompting the surrender of enemy troops” (Kilian 2003). According to retired rear Admiral Stephen Baker,

> It might save hundreds of thousands of lives on the Iraqi side and might save lives on the coalition side, and possibly not require us to hit a thousand targets on day four, five and six, just the first three days (in Kilian 2003).

This moral economy of psychological warfare is deeply connected to the claim that it offers “non-kinetic” (i.e. non-violent) strategies of communication as alternatives to violence in war. As I argue in this dissertation, however, psychological warfare has in practice facilitated rather than replaced military force. That is, the rhetorical force behind psychological warfare has been to make war more permissible by claiming to make it less violent and more humane. In this way, I suggest that psychological warfare has been central to the construction of what critical military scholars have called “liberal warfare” (Dillon & Reid 2009; Evans 2011; Reid 2010, 2011; Duffield 2011) and its attendant humanitarian logic (Fassin 2007, 2011; Reid-Henry, 2014, 2015; Weizman 2011).

In addition to the claim that psychological warfare is a humane alternative to military force, it is routinely depicted as an objective process, driven by technical and scientific expertise. As the above TIME article claimed, it was “an elaborate psychological operation” that accompanied the B-52’s “rain of terror from the skies.” Describing the psychological warriors who “dumped” more than 18 million leaflets onto Afghanistan in the invasion’s first two months, TIME suggested that the 4th Psychological Operation Group at Ft. Bragg was “an eclectic organization like no other in the U.S. Army, made up of 1,200 special ops soldiers, academics, linguists and
marketing experts, whose weapons are words and images” (Waller 2001). If counterinsurgency was increasingly understood as the “graduate level of war,” psychological warfare claimed for itself the expert credentials of the social sciences.

Finally, early depictions of the psychological wars in Iraq and Afghanistan stressed its “lawfulness,” not only in the strict sense of its legality, but its ability to impose order on lawless populations. This is another point of accord with the moral economy of bombing. In an article aptly titled “All’s Fair in Psychological War,” (Kilian 2003) the special relationship between bombing and psychological warfare was again made in the form of a recent leaflet dropped over Baghdad: "Do not fire at coalition aircraft,” the leaflet read. “If you choose to fire, you will be destroyed. Coalition forces will attack with overwhelming force. The choice is yours.” As I will argue, the curious emphasis on the “choice” of the leaflet’s reader, as well as the second-person address suggests a governmental attempt at what Foucault (2007) calls “the conduct of conduct”; an attempt to impose order on the Iraq population through psychological war. As Baker put it in March of 2003, “we are in a critical period in the campaign to prepare the hearts and minds of 25 million people in Iraq” (Killian 2003). Like its claim to humanitarianism, I argue that psychological warfare has been central to political imaginaries of “liberal war” in which the imposition of order accompanies attempts to construct its targets as individual and governable subjects.

Apart from their articulation of these tenets of psychological warfare’s broader moral economy, these early accounts of American psychological war in the greater Middle East made curious claims concerning the historicity of psychological war. TIME claimed that “American armies
have used psyops since the Revolutionary War,” referencing the distribution of handbills to British soldiers at the battle of Bunker Hill (Waller 2001). The Chicago Tribune went further, stating that “psyops is one of the oldest forms of warfare” and that “Alexander the Great used it when he left huge pieces of body armor behind his advancing army to convince would-be pursuers that his force was made up of giants” (Killian 2003). While deception, coercion, and persuasion may be as old as “war itself,” these accounts of the history of psychological warfare elide the fact that, far from having ancient origins, the term did not emerge until the early years of the Second World War.

Taken together, these accounts of psychological warfare served to illustrate its moral economy — its humanitarianism, its objectivity, and its lawfulness — while also suggesting its historical inextricability from “war itself.” This dissertation attempts to challenge the claims of this moral economy by showing that psychological warfare has, on the contrary, exacerbated and prolonged armed conflict; has dismissed social scientific evidence when convenient; and has largely failed to produce social order or win “hearts and minds.” Furthermore, I argue that the origins of psychological warfare in the early years of the Second World War were exceptionally duplicitous. In fact, prior to its adoption by the American military, it existed primarily as a popular political fiction designed to foment moral panic over Hitler’s supposed “frightful new weapon” (Taylor 1941).

In addition to this historiography, this dissertation outlines a political geography of psychological warfare. After an introductory Chapter 2 on the theory and history of communication as a liberal power, this dissertation proceeds in two symmetrical halves, dealing respectively with the
construction and prosecution of psychological warfare in the United States and abroad. Chapter 3 details the political construction of psychological warfare in the United States between 1940-41, while chapter 4 traces its prosecution by the United States in the theatres of the war. Correspondingly, chapter 5 analyses the significance of the psychological warfare to domestic constructions of the Cold War in the United States, while chapter 6 considers the formalization and expansion of psychological war as strategy of counterinsurgency in Vietnam.

I argue throughout that domestic constructions of psychological warfare within the United States are intimately linked to the prosecution of war abroad. Framings of psychological warfare to the America public have invariably accompanied the practice of American psychological warfare in the theatre. I illustrate the ways in which domestic framings of psychological warfare, like those above concerning Iraq and Afghanistan, have had the purpose of constructing and advancing the moral economy of psychological warfare in an effort to make war both necessary and permissible. Furthermore, I argue that domestic narrations of psychological warfare have the secondary effect of prefiguring psychological war not just as something that occurs in the various locales of American military intervention, but as a kind of collective political-military struggle occurring \textit{within} the United States to which ordinary Americans can contribute as assets or liabilities.

In Chapter 3, I show that the emergence of psychological warfare as a concept was tied to the contingent circumstances surrounding the question of American intervention in World War II. Simultaneously, I demonstrate how psychological warfare’s history must also be understood within the broader historical context of propaganda and communication as systems of political
power. In Chapter 2, therefore, I offer historical and theoretical considerations on communication as a system of liberal power in the West. I attempt to account for Foucault’s (2007) insistence that “communication is the ultimate domain of police” by considering the management of communication and public opinion as a kind of governmentality; as a strategy for governing populations. I argue that the Foucauldian sense of “communication as police” can furthermore be understood as form of proto-liberal “pastoral power,” in which power is administered at the simultaneous scales of the *individual* and the *population*.

I proceed to apply this analytic frame to a study of the rise of the liberal press in the nineteenth century United States. Drawing on the work of Allan Pred and Harold Innis, I outline the pastoral geographies of “communication as police” — both for the political economic administration of space at the scale of population, and the everyday administration of readers at the scale of the individual. As will be seen, this pastoral structure — attempts to tie the government of populations to the government of individuals — becomes a lasting and salient feature of psychological warfare in the twentieth century. I conclude the chapter with an examination of the way in which the press, as a system of “communication as police,” combines with the depiction of the first “telegraphic war” in the late nineteenth century Crimea. Finally, I suggest the ways in which the aftermath of the First World War set the stage for the emergence of “psychological warfare” twenty years later. Specifically, I show how public anger over the excesses of government propaganda created the imperative for governments both to eschew the term and to foment popular panic over the threat of foreign propaganda within their own country.
In chapter 3, I trace the emergence, between 1940-41, of “psychological warfare” in the United States to a concerted group of interventionists surrounding William “Wild Bill” Donovan’s Office of the Coordinator of Information. I argue that psychological warfare began as a kind of political fiction tied to what Heffernan (2000b) has called the “hysterical geographies” preceding the First World War. Evolving out of manufactured moral panics over so-called “fifth columns” within the United States, the construction of psychological warfare involved the articulation of a new and dramatic geopolitical imaginary which Nelson Rockefeller called “a new geography of defense.” This imaginary reflected a pastoral political project to govern both populations and individuals, with psychological warfare constructed as both a territorial and a personal struggle. I show how professionals in fields of psychology and geography both contributed to the popular construction of the “psychological attack” from abroad, and advocated for official government agencies to counter and meet Germany on the new “psychological terrain.” In the process, contemporary alarmism surrounding German geopolitics, particularly through the figure of Karl Haushofer, dovetailed with claims surrounding purported German psychological warfare. This culminated in the odd figure of German geographer Ewald Banse assuming in the American press the mantle of Germany’s “psychological war expert.” Through the dramas of its articulation in the American popular press, a moral economy of psychological warfare emerged in which the concept was rehabilitated from a German “strategy of terror” to what its advocates preferred to see as an American “strategy of truth.”

In Chapter 4, I outline the United States’ first forays into psychological warfare through the establishment and operation of the Office of War Information (OWI) in the theatres of the Second World War. Organized around the tripartite concepts of “truth, terror, territory,” this
chapter reveals the ways in which actually existing American psychological warfare contravened its purported moral economy. Contrary to its humanitarian claim to save lives, psychological warfare strengthened military rationales for the continuation and escalation of the Allied program of bombing civilian populations. Contrary to its claim to objectivity, the newly formed Office of War Information rejected social scientific findings when they did not support the military strategy of “morale bombing.” Contrary to its claim to lawfulness, little evidence exists that American psychological warfare was able to impose order on the enemy soldiers and populations. Furthermore, the Office of War Information’s commitment to the so-called “strategy of truth,” while outwardly maintained, was inwardly abandoned after American entry into the war was secured. I argue, therefore, that actually existing American psychological warfare proceed along the two main lines of territory and terror.

Behind advancing Allied lines in North Africa and Europe, the Office of War Information worked to open foreign markets to commercial American media products, and to establish permanent “information” outposts through which it could circulate materials and exercise influence over local and regional news and media production. Unlike many of the belligerents of the Second World War whose propaganda/psychological warfare was state-centralized, the Office of War Information preferred to empower private industry as its psychological avant-garde. In this way, American psychological warfare operated by attempting to establish liberal-capitalist hegemony in the field of news, entertainment and communication by controlling the production and circulation of media in occupied countries, before turning facilities over to friendly (anti-communist) liberal actors. I consider particularly the role of the London office as the OWI’s “mechanical heart” which circulated media products through the body politics of
Allied and neutral countries. I show, furthermore, that the OWI pursued a prototypically neoliberal strategy to project American political and economic power through the privatization of the cultural industries in the countries in which it operated. I conclude the chapter by considering the formative relationship between American psychological warfare and American aerial bombardment. While its architects insisted that it would oppose Hitler’s “strategy of terror,” American psychological warfare was everywhere connected to the United States’ program of “strategic bombing.” Though there is cause to doubt its effect, I argue that psychological warfare sought to exert a kind of biopolitical power; an extension and refinement of the colonial practice of air-policing which sought to exercise power, not just violence, over subjugated populations.

Chapter 5 begins with a consideration of the “crosscurrents of caution and uncertainty” that governed post-war debates between the Departments of Defense and State concerning where, how and if psychological warfare would be waged in times of peace. Despite eagerness in both camps, fear of exposure halted its development until the Central Intelligence Agency took responsibility for psychological war soon after its establishment in 1947. The body of this chapter focuses on what the CIA (2007) has called “one of the longest running and successful covert action campaigns ever mounted by the United States,” namely the cover of Radio Free Europe behind an ostensibly independent domestic organization called the National Committee for a Free Europe. Detailing the organization and execution of a so-called “Crusade for Freedom,” I show how the CIA work to produce a popular reimagination for the Cold War against communism. Through a massive domestic publicity campaign, the CIA entrenched the pastoral geopolitical imaginary advanced in the years before American entry into the Second World War. During the Cold War, the geopolitical connection between the territoriality of
psychological war abroad and the individuality of an increasingly “spiritual” war against communism at home became more overt. Americans were again primary targets of American psychological warfare.

After examining the ways in which the Crusade for Freedom mobilized liberal “technologies of the self” for psychological war, I show how the logic of psychological warfare was subsumed within the United States Information Agency’s (USIA) renewal of the OWI’s “strategy of truth” in 1953. While the creation of the USIA represented a massive expansion of its predecessor’s global psychological warfare apparatus, its establishment coincided, ironically, with a disavowal of the increasingly unpopular term “psychological warfare” to describe American propaganda activities abroad. Mirroring the way in which the language of psychological warfare replaced the unpopular language of propaganda, I show how the abandonment of terminology surrounding psychological warfare nonetheless involved an entrenchment of both its practice and the geopolitical imaginations cultivating it.

In chapter 6, I draw upon the archives of the United States Information Agency to construct a picture of American psychological warfare in Vietnam. The United States Information Agency (USIA) has received little sustained scrutiny from geographers, despite the major role it played in waging the Cold War. This chapter therefore outlines the USIA’s role in waging psychological war in support of the US mission in Vietnam, notably its establishment in 1965 of the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO). Through an analysis of USIA operations, I argue that psychological war in Vietnam attempted to graft on the Vietnamese people the pastoral structure of “communication as police.” I show, however, that while the United States was able
to increase avenues for the circulation of information in Vietnam, its ability to use psychological war to impose order was severely limited. Furthermore, psychological war in Vietnam furthered the gulf between its self-understanding as a humane alternative to violence and its actual existence refining the coercive legibility of military violence. I show that, contrary to its claim to be guided by expert knowledge, American psychological warriors in Vietnam remained deeply isolated from knowledge of the political motivations of the ordinary Vietnamese villagers on whom they understood the psychological war to turn. Despite their ability to construct ever larger apparatuses for the dissemination of psychological war materials, American psychological warriors in Vietnam failed to construct the governable subjects they sought to produce.

This dissertation argues that there is little evidence to support the thesis that nations are capable of appreciably influencing, persuading, or governing the populations of other countries at war. I seek therefore to explain and contextualize the continued reliance upon psychological warfare as a strategy of waging war, as illustrated by the supposed effort to win the “hearts and minds” of the Iraqi and Afghanistan peoples in the 21st century. Few will need to be persuaded that the United States did not achieve these objectives in these wars, however it remains to be understood how and why psychological warfare has persisted as both a political rhetoric and a strategy of war. Despite the failures to appreciably win ‘hearts and minds’ in Vietnam, the United States’ return to counterinsurgency theory in the 21st century revived dormant theories of psychological warfare. Perhaps more surprising, however, has been the conclusion of its relatively short stasis during the Obama presidency, and its subsequent return in force, now connected to a new political rhetoric of cybernetic arcana. This dissertation concludes by drawing upon its
constitutive parts to help explain the psychological war phoenix again reborn in the American political imaginary.
Chapter 2: “The Ultimate Domain of Police”

In this chapter I outline the theoretical approach of my dissertation through an analysis of the emergence of the American press in the nineteenth century. This chapter serves not only to introduce the theoretical tools which I shall employ to discuss the emergence and development of American psychological warfare in the twentieth century, but also to situate it with respect to the specific dynamics of the American liberal press. While in the next chapter, I discuss the construction of American psychological warfare during WWII, and the way it revolved around an ostensibly liberal “strategy of truth,” in this chapter I critique American press liberalism to examine the ways in which it both exercises and obscures the operation of power. To this end I employ both Foucauldian and Marxist perspectives to consider the ways in which the American liberal press developed as a form of “pastoral power,” operating at the simultaneous scales of the individual and population, and the ways in which these objects of pastoral government became increasingly commodified as the logic of capital was progressively asserted over the American press during the second half of the nineteenth century.¹ I argue that the history of the press takes pastoral form: the emergence of ever larger audiences is accompanied by greater refinements in audience measurement and segmentation, leading to the absolutely indispensable objects of analysis for the study of psychological warfare: the population and individual as targets — omnes et singulatim.

¹ While Marx and Foucault sometimes remain opposed as incommensurable thinkers, posthumous publications reveal more sympathies than antipathies. See Foucault (2015) The Punitive Society for Foucault’s class based thinking. Similarly, see Marx (1844) for a discussion of the limits of political economy. See p. 71.
Crucially, I attempt to spatialize Foucault's concept of pastoral power by attending to the
dynamics of time-space compression as they occur pursuant to the historical development of the
means of communication. Here I employ the press histories of Harold Innis, reframing his
critique of the liberal “free press” in terms of a Marxist analysis – which he largely eschewed –
and in terms of a Foucauldian analysis of liberalism’s longer genealogy, which he obviously
preceded. Drawing upon Allan Pred’s analysis of capitalism’s reorganization of the spatial
dynamics of both communication and everyday life in the nineteenth century, I analyze
nineteenth century time-space compression, not in terms of its ‘annihilation of space’, but in
terms of its production of new spaces of political administration. While liberal conceptions of
time-space compression imagine the production of homogenous space (Barry 1996), I argue that
the power of the press is rooted in its ability to administer pastoral spaces that connect the
operation of power between the scales of population and the individual. In spatializing pastoral
power through an analysis of the press, this chapter foregrounds the stakes of this dissertation’s
following chapters by framing these spaces’ relationality to what I identify as psychological
warfare’s pastoral targets, namely individuals and populations.

After a discussion of the historical development of these pastoral spaces of ‘communication as
police,’ I argue that toward the end of the nineteenth century these pastoral scales combine in the
commercial press’ production and commodification of audiences. Showing how the basis of
mass communication in capitalism revolves around the identification and production of “target
audiences” for sale to advertisers, I argue that demographic refinement can be understood as an
extension of what Foucault calls the pastoral “specification” of individuals. Finally, I show that,
in the wake of the large-scale propaganda operations by the belligerent nations of WWI, a new
liberal critique of democracy emerged which further articulated the pastoral prerogatives of American political elites to fabricate political order through the management public opinion. It is in this period that the issue of propaganda and public opinion as popular political issues foregrounds the emergence of the concept of “psychological warfare” that would emerge in the early years of the Second World War.

2.1 Omnes et Singulatim

In his lectures on the *Birth of Biopolitics*, delivered in 1978-79, Foucault (2008, 326) alludes to the larger project of tracing the history of liberal power which drives his research. “Only when we know what this governmental regime called liberalism was,” he suggested, “will we be able to grasp what biopolitics is.” Having thus suggested his object of study, it may puzzle readers that, in the following year’s lecture series, Foucault departs abruptly from the context of twentieth century neoliberalism to investigate the early centuries of the Christian church, particularly the evolution of the practice of *confession*. The move was guided, however, by Foucault’s conviction that liberal governmental power had its origins in the Christian pastorate and its emphasis on constructing both the individual (*singulatim*) and the flock (*omnes*) as objects of political administration. As Elden (2017) shows, however, the departure was in fact an effort to identify the historical origins of his primary research interests, most present in his *Security, Territory,*
Population lectures: modern governmentality as it emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the Christian pastorate on top of which he argues it was built.²

Foucault’s decision to study early Christian confession and its institution of the directed examination of conscience suggests the significance Foucault placed on the history of the western liberal individual as an object and scale of power. Foucault (2003, 30) sought to correct what he saw as the liberal misconception that the individual — the freedom of the individual — was “power’s opposite number,” arguing that the “free individual” was in fact one of power’s first effects.³ Challenging a liberal naturalism which took for granted the existence and social primacy of the individual, Foucault (2007, 183-4) argued that Western liberal notions of individuality are inherited from the Christian pastorate, in which he saw “the birth of an absolutely new form of power,” namely “the emergence of what could be called absolutely specific modes of individualization.”

This “specific” mode of individualization denotes specificity not only in the sense of the particular, but in the sense suggested by Foucault’s analysis of the “specification of individuals” in his History

² Though geographers have widely adopted the analytic of governmentality, theorization of pastoral power has been less developed, owing in part to the fact that Foucault himself only ever presents it as a sketch. For an account of Foucault’s incomplete history of the Christian pastorate, see Elden (2017). For geographers working with the concept of pastoral power see Reid-Henry (2014); Garmany (2014); Huxley (2008).
³ Similarly, Foucault argues that freedom is a precondition of power, not its opposite. For a discussion of the difference between power and violence, see Foucault’s (1979, 253) parable of the “chained and beaten man”:

A man who is chained up and beaten is subject to force being exerted over him. Not power. But if he can be induced to speak, when his ultimate recourse could have been to hold his tongue, preferring death, then he has been caused to behave in a certain way. His freedom has been subjected to power. He has been submitted to government. If an individual can remain free, however little his freedom may be, power can subject him to government. There is no power without potential refusal or revolt.
of Sexuality. Recalling his analysis of the human sciences in The Order of Things, Foucault identified sexuality as a critical terrain for the classification and administration of individuals, one deeply tied to the pastoral tradition. “The confessional was, and still remains,” argued Foucault (1978, 63) “the general standard governing the production of the true discourse on sex.” This was done, importantly, through *specification*; through the transformation of sexual practices into *species* of individuals.  

While the construction of the homosexual occupies much of Foucault’s attention in volume I of the History of Sexuality, he also notes the risible taxonomies of the nineteenth century psychiatrists who attempted, not to suppress peripheral sexualities, but to give them an “analytical, visible, and permanent reality” (ibid, 44); to “entomologize them by giving them strange baptismal names.” The allusion to baptism is intentional, again linking *scientia sexualis* and its confessional structure to the Christian pastorate, its direction of conscience, and its analytic classification of individuals. It is difficult on this account to overstate the significance of the pastorate in Foucault’s thinking and research. As he suggests (2007, 183),

> analytical identification, subjection, and subjectivation (*subjectivation*) are the characteristic procedures of individualization that will in fact be implemented by the Christian pastorate and its institutions. What the history of the pastorate involves, therefore, is the entire history of procedures of human individualization in the West.

If Foucault’s (2007, 227) *Security, Territory, Population* lectures appear sometimes incongruous, it is because they represent an attempt to synthesize his interests in pastoral and governmental power; “to show how pastorship happened to combine with its opposite, the state.” Indeed,

---

4 Cf. Foucault (1978, 43) argues that, contrary to prior juridical injunctions against the practice of sodomy, the new *scientia sexualis* invented the homosexual as a species.

5 Foucault (1978, 43) writes: “there were Kraft-Ebing’s zoophiles and zooerasts, Rohleder’s auto-monosexualists; and later, mixiscopophiles, gynecomasts, presbyophiles, sexoesthetic inverts, and dyspareunist women.”
Foucault (2007, 128) understood the emergence of the modern governmental state and its emphasis on population as an extension and development of “the paradox of pastoral power”:

On the one hand, the shepherd must keep his eye on all and on each, *omnes et singulatim*, which will be the great problem both of the techniques of power in Christian pastorship, and of the…modern techniques of power deployed in the technologies of population…*Omnes et singulatim.*”

In returning to the early church to study the emergence of confession as a mode of specifying individuals – of producing, classifying and directing their conscience – Foucault meant to develop an analysis of the way in which the “Western individual” emerged as an object of power, and how modes of specification were continued and refined with the emergence of the governmental state. As noted, the specification of sexuality was central to this process in the nineteenth century, but it was not the only arena in which individuals became specified. In this chapter I show that a more general and intense specification of individuals occurs in correspondence to the emergence of the daily press and the development of its economic prerogative to produce and refine specific and specified audiences. While it is often noted that “the public was something brought into existence by the printing press” (Carey 1989, 145), the public *qua* mass audience was also accompanied by a series of divisions, classifications, refinements and specifications. I argue, therefore, that the *history of the press takes pastoral form*: the emergence of ever larger audiences is accompanied by greater refinements in audience measurement and segmentation, leading to the indispensable objects of analysis for the study of psychological warfare: the audience and individual as *targets* — *omnes et singulatim*. 
While Foucault has regrettably little to say about the emergence of the press as a correlate of governmental power, glimpses are discernible in his analysis of Francis Bacon’s (c1625) writing on the problems of sedition. Highlighting a valuable historical precedent for the relationship between communication and security viz population, Foucault (2007, 272) traces the emergence of public opinion as an object of government to Bacon’s observation that, “the two major elements of reality that government will have to handle are economy and opinion.” Foucault argues that Bacon’s emphasis on public opinion broke with the Machiavellian paradigm in concerning “not how the Prince appears, but what is going on in the minds of the governed” (ibid). This observation corresponds broadly to Foucault’s discussion of the shift from sovereign power – in which the primary consideration for thinking about public opinion concerned the maintenance of a particular sovereign’s authority – to a governmental conception of public opinion which concerned not just fealty and obeisance but a more general economy of information, ideas, and wills. Foucault (2007, 272) notes that it is also at this time (c1625) that “the first great campaigns of opinion that are a feature of Richelieu’s government” appear in France. He continues:

Richelieu invented the political campaign by means of lampoons and pamphlets, and he invented those professional manipulators of opinion who were called at the time ‘publicistes.’ Birth of the économistes, birth of the publicistes. Economy and opinion are the two major aspects of the field of reality, the two correlative elements of the field of reality that is emerging as the correlate of government.

As Foucault’s analysis leads elsewhere, his identification of publicity and public opinion as primary correlates to governmental power has often been overlooked in the literature. Similarly,

---

6 See Bacon’s 1625 essay ‘On Seditions and Troubles’.
much otherwise sophisticated work developing Foucault’s analysis of police misses a crucial sense in which Foucault understands the connection between communication and police.\(^7\) Foucault (2007, 326) does not prevaricate, however: “the coexistence and communication of men with each other,” he argues, “is ultimately the domain that must be covered by the Polizeiwissenschaft and the institution of police that people of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were talking about.” Though both these senses of ‘communication’ and ‘police’ are antiquated, examining their connection helps to show how the historical development and privatization of the “means of communication” (Williams 1980) constituted a revolutionary development in liberal governmental power. This development, moreover, had a profound effect not only in the United States, but also in numerous other states where the structure of a commercial and private press obtained.

The pre-telegraphic sense of ‘communication’, tied to transportation and the friction of distance, has led Foucauldian scholars to examine the relationship between police and communication in terms of the circulation of goods, and therefore to Foucault’s broader project of examining the economic dimensions of the emergent liberal state (Cowen 2014; Crampton & Elden, 2007). This understanding of communication and police is indeed supported by a reading of Foucault (2007, 325), who argues that “the last object of police is circulation, the circulation of goods, of the products of men’s activity…The space of circulation is a privileged object for police.”\(^8\) However, Foucault insists that the stakes and object of administering spaces of circulation is tied to

\(^7\) Notable exceptions include Barry (1996), Holmqvist (2013; 2016), Herbert (1996), Garmany (2009)

\(^8\) Foucault’s (1979, 248) Tanner lecture continues: “the police’s other purpose is to foster working and trading relations between men, as well as aid and mutual help. There again, the word Turquet uses is important: the police must ensure ‘communication’ among men, in the broad sense of the word.”
communication: “the word,” writes Foucault (1979, 248) “is important: the police must ensure ‘communication’ among men, in the broad sense of the word.”

While studying the circulation of objects has been central to Foucauldian scholarship, Foucault was also at pains in his 1977-78 lectures to show how his project was tied to his analysis of the way in which the government of circulation grew out of antecedent pastoral regimes which point to a fuller sense of ‘communication’ as the totality of relationships between people (as he (1979, 248) insists, “the police includes everything”). To understand this antiquated sense of communication, and the importance that Foucault placed upon it, it is helpful to consider what James Carey (1989) calls the ‘ritual view’ of communication, best understood through its etymological roots in the words ‘common’, ‘community’, and significantly, communion. In this understanding, communication is not only the transportation of goods, or the transmission of information — as in its flattened, post-telegraphic sense — but the production of culture. Thinking together both senses of communication – as economic circulation and the production of culture – suggests a fuller sense of what Foucault meant by emphasizing communication as ‘the ultimate domain of police.’

Foucault (2007, 322) is explicit on this point, arguing that police was not only about making use of the products of labour, but also about “actively making use of [the public’s] attitudes, opinions, and ways of doing things.” Though most Foucauldian scholars have overlooked the importance of this broader definition of communication, and its relationship to public opinion as a primary correlate of government, it in fact forms a centrepiece of what unfortunately remains only a sketch and outline of governmentality. However, Foucault (2007, 278) is again explicit: “when theorists
of [pre-governmental] *raison d’État* lay stress on the public and the need for a public opinion, the analysis is conducted, as it were, in purely passive terms..., and not in the least of actively making use of their attitudes, opinions, and ways of doing things.” For Foucault (2007, 322), what is characteristic of a police state is, on the contrary, “its interest in what men do; it is interested in their activity, their ‘occupation.’ The objective of police is therefore control of and responsibility for men’s activity.”

This emphasis on “what men do” — their *activity* — will be crucial to my understanding of how the police concept was adapted to the daily press as a strategy of power over the activity of individuals and populations. Indeed, in the press we can understand an archetypal case of police power which revolves around the production of *circulation* — quite literally the primary metric of the effectiveness of newsprint — and the control over “what men do” in the form of readerly activity. Moreover, the structure of the press is uniquely pastoral insofar as mechanical reproduction of the newssheet standardized the experience of individuals at larger urban, regional and national population scales. I want to show that transformations in the structure of communication in the nineteenth century led to an intensification of the sense in which we can understand “communication as the ultimate domain of police.” Indeed, in the daily presses of the nineteenth century, we see a unique combination of a new kind of governmental political sovereignty which creates an “intensity of circulations: circulation of ideas, of wills, and of orders, and also commercial circulation” (Foucault 2007, 15).

In the next two sections, I discuss the ways in which the historical development of the means of communication contribute both to the compression of time and space, but also to the production
of new spaces of pastoral power that correspond to and combine the scales of population and individuals, respectively. In attending to what Raymond Williams (1980) calls “the means of communication as means of production,” the creation of what I call pastoral space can be observed in the dynamics of the power of the press to construct and administer political spaces both at the level of population and individuals. I argue therefore that the emergence of the press can be understood in terms of a kind of spatialized pastoral power wherein ‘communication as police’ follows from the government of circulation — of “ideas, wills and orders” — and the way in which this circulation produces modes of subjectification and individualization. Crucial here is an understanding of the ways in which the police function of communication in the 19th century combined with liberal-capitalism, a paradigmatic case of what Neocleous (2000, 41) calls “the disciplinary logic of police… being superseded by the disciplinary logic of the market.”

2.1.1 E Unibus Pluram

In this following two sections I analyze the historical development of the American press in terms of Foucault’s understanding of ‘communication as police’. In this section I argue that the expanding scale of information circulation, and increasing concentration of control over it, produced spaces of pastoral power aimed at the government of populations (omnes). In the next section, I go on show how this space combined with its pastoral counterpart to produce domestic spaces that contribute to the historical articulation of the liberal individual (singulatim). In both cases I endeavor to show how the production of these spaces rendered people accessible to
information, and how these scales of governmentality were capitalized as “the disciplinary logic of police… being superseded by the disciplinary logic of the market” (Neocleous 2000, 41).

As Pred (1973, 20) notes, in the nineteenth century newspaper circulation remained “the only regular pre-telegraphic communications medium through which news of distant origin could be made locally available in the form of public information.” When considering communication as police, and police as the management of the circulation of “ideas, wills and orders,” the circulation of newspapers appears as in indispensable object of analysis. In addition to the work of Pred, I consider here the press histories written by Harold Innis toward the end of his life. Though Innis is sometimes mistaken for a technological determinist, his history of the American press reveals, on the contrary, a careful consideration of the social and political processes which governed the emergence of new communication technologies and their deliberate integration into new and existing monopolies of knowledge.9 Nor was Innis’ history of the press a mere extension of his earlier staples thesis in which the nature of staple commodities dictated Canada’s economic development. On the contrary, Innis’ press histories concern the deliberate construction of monopolistic regimes of communication and the profound effect they had on the organization of political life in the nineteenth century (Innis 1935; 1943).

Though a staunch critic of capital’s domination of the American press, Innis eschewed direct Marxist analysis and terminology, identifying “monopolies of knowledge,” and not private

9 See Buxton (1998). The sense of technological determinism pervading the sketches and abstractions of Innis’ Empire and Communications, written under pressure of failing health, stand in contrast to specificity of analysis in his histories of the American press, written in the 1940s.
ownership of the means of production as such as the social ill in need of redress. This was perhaps due to the intellectual environment produced by the first anti-communist “red scare” when Innis graduated from the University of Chicago in 1920, but it was also likely due to the influence of the liberal social-democrats of the Chicago School of Sociology who, as James Carey (1989, 144) notes, “saw communication in the envelope of art, architecture, custom and ritual, and above all politics.”

Unlike Foucault – whose project was to interrogate the dynamics of power which underwrote the historical development of liberalism – Innis appears as fundamentally liberal, though deeply troubled by the illiberal tendencies which arose around the construction of monopolies of knowledge. Yet as Carey (1989, 146) argues, the originality of Innis’ thinking on communication cannot be discounted. Instead, it should be understood in contrast to the prevailing views of his peers, who understood communication through the paradigms of domination and therapy. While Innis wrote his critical histories of the American press, mainstream American communication scholarship developed along two interrelated paths that were “aided by the practical research demands of World War I”: the psychological behaviourism of John B. Watson, vice-president of the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, and the “therapeutic model” of communication based on the Hawthorne experiments in which workers at a Chicago Western Electric plant were “re-socialized to their grievances” (Carey 1989, 147).

As the twin paradigms of communication as domination and therapy would come to define what I will call the “moral economy of psychological warfare,” it is instructive to consider how and why Innis’ critique of the liberal press breaks with these traditions. Thus, while Innis’ eschews a
Marxist analysis of the press, he nonetheless offers a robust criticism of the way in which the therapeutic and dominance models of communication obscured the operation of power in the liberal press. Therefore, to James Carey’s (1989, 143) insistence that the work of Harold Innis be “assimilated into and contrasted with...developments in cultural geography, Marxism, critical theory and cultural anthropology,” I add Foucault’s critique of liberalism, his emphasis on time in the administration of discipline, and his broader framework for understanding the succession and maintenance of pastoral, police, and governmental power.

In this section, however, I am concerned with articulating a spatial analysis of Foucault’s concept of pastoral power as related to the emergence of the press. As a starting point for this analysis, Allan Pred’s (1973) study of pre-telegraphic information circulation in the United States retains much of Foucault’s sense of communication as the “circulation of goods and the product of men’s activity.” In addition to canals and the emerging American railroad system, Pred identifies newspaper circulation as a crucial medium for facilitating a shift from a mercantilist to a capitalist economy in the early nineteenth century United States. Specifically, Pred identifies three essential functions of the nineteenth century newspaper: advertising, shipping intelligence, and commercial statistics.

Pred (1973, 24) links the increase in newspaper advertising in the early nineteenth century United States to the growth of population and commerce in the Atlantic seaport towns, which produced a “cascade of advertisements in the early nineteenth-century mercantile dailies of the seaports [that] included importers’ announcements; listings of auctions, cargo-space availability, ship departures, and real estate sales; the offerings of commodity brokers; and the personal requests of lenders and
borrowers.” Similarly, as foreign trade increased after the 1790s, the shipping intelligence function of newspapers became less informal and sporadic. “Coverage became more reliable and thorough… in certain papers that increasingly specialized in such information, such as Boston’s New England Palladium, the Boston Gazette, and the New York Gazette” (ibid). Finally, commercial statistics, “closely related to the publishing of marine intelligence, … [listed] wholesale prices and other commercial statistics of potential use to the mercantile community” (p. 25).

These increases in advertisements, shipping intelligence, and commercial statistics illustrate the sense in which newspaper circulation constituted the Foucauldian (1979, 248) sense of communication as “foster[ing] working and trading relations between men.” Furthermore, the newspaper’s central role in the facilitation of trade can be understood as a quintessential police function “whereby the riches of the state may be increased” (as cited in Neocleous 2000, 14). It is difficult here to overstate the emphasis Foucault places on the emergence of statistics as a central tool of governmentality. Newspapers as facilitators of merchant trade concerned knowledge not of the law as in previous regimes of sovereign power, but knowledge as statistics; as “knowledge of the things that comprise the very reality of the state….; of the forces and resources that characterize a state at a given moment” (Foucault 2007, 274).

Newspapers, then, were crucial to the construction of economic space as a territorial strategy of police by organizing the social and economic activities of mercantilist commerce. Along with the requisite commercial statistics to facilitate the production of trade, newspapers also facilitated the Foucauldian circulation of “ideas, wills and orders.” Significantly, the growth of newspaper
circulation in the United States was far from an organic process, encouraged instead through
deliberate and robust state policy. Notably, the 1793 Postal Act would generalize and extend these
police functions of newspapers to an expanding western frontier through heavy subsidization of
newspaper transportation through the American post office. As Pred (1973, 61) notes,

the short- and long-distance movement by mail of large-city newspapers to inns, coffeehouses, and individual subscribers was encouraged by the preferential rates on newspapers that went into effect with the Postal Act of 1793, when Congress ‘avowedly undertook to encourage… [the growth of the press] as the most important disseminator of intelligence among the people.’

Before the invention of the telegraph, the main source of news and information upon which
newspaper publishers relied remained the columns of other newspapers and journals. The Postal
Act of 1793 therefore undertook to subsidize “newspaper exchanges” between editors, setting a
rate of one cent for any distance up to 100 miles, and one and one-half cents for all distances
beyond 100 miles, regardless of size or weight (ibid). It was an extraordinary subsidy, and
gathering scattered data, Pred (1973, 58) concludes that “there is little doubt that newspaper mails
accounted for a large proportion of all postal activities form the late eighteenth century onward.”

As Pred notes (ibid, 88), the liberal gloss of the Postal Act was rooted in “the executive and
congressional view that political unity depended on a well-informed populace.” However, the lines
of communication established by this policy of subsidizing newspaper exchanges involved more
than the production of the proverbial ‘well-informed democratic citizen’. The policy enabled the
spread of commerce into the American west, as per Pred’s analysis of newspaper advertising and
commercial statistics. In addition to becoming a vector for the spread of news and information,
newspapers helped produce westward American settler-colonialism and a broader American “imagined community” (Anderson 1983), while integrating the expanding American west into the economic life of the Atlantic corridor.

Figure 1: Population accessibility c1790.

Figure 2: Population accessibility c1820.

The Postal Act of 1793 facilitated the dominance of the Eastern Corridor over the American hinterlands, and enabled an unprecedented strategy for governing populations and enabling commerce through the production of spaces of standardized circulation. (Pred 1973).

Though the creation of a ‘well-informed populace’ remained a lofty ideal, newspaper exchanges produced profound spatial biases in favour of the Eastern Corridor cities, especially New York where much printing and shipping was centralized. By the 1830s, the major journals of the Eastern cities grew larger and bulkier, and “there was a great deal of complaint on the part of the publishers of interior newspapers that the postal laws already discriminated most unjustly in favor of the
metropolitan newspapers”” (Pred 1973, 61). Pred (1973) maps the development of these spatial biases through a series of time-lag and population-accessibility maps from the 1790s to the 1840s [figs. 1 & 2]. These maps reveal the extent to which the newspaper exchange program expanded the circulation and spatial reach of East coast newspapers, illustrating what Andrew Barry (1996, 128) has identified as communication technology’s production of a standardized space, “maximizing the density, intensity and spatial extension of interactions within the social body itself, while, at the same time, minimizing the direct demands made by the state on the people.”

While Figs. 1 & 2 can be understood in terms of time-space compression, or the annihilation of space by time, as Barry (ibid, 127) notes, the ostensibly ‘standardized’ space of information circulation obscures the uneven spatial biases in which the Eastern corridors cities remained centres for administrating the western peripheries. Far from ‘destroying space,’ the policy of newspaper exchanges subsidized the production of a new administrative and governmental space in which populations at increasingly large scales could be integrated into the social, political and economic body of the state through the circulation of newspapers. While in the next section, I am concerned with arguing how this strategy for the government of population combined at pastoral scales with the government of individuals, in the remainder of this section I argue that the policy newspaper exchange was a territorial strategy of ‘communication as police.’

Echoing Barry’s critique of the liberal gloss of ‘standardized space,’ Innis (1952, 102) suggested the paradoxical nature of the way in which the spatial extension and standardization of content represented an eclipse of public life and a co-optation of what he called the time-biased oral tradition:
Technological advance in communication implies a narrowing of the range from which material is distributed and a widening of the range of reception, so that large numbers receive, but are unable to make any direct response. Those on the receiving end of material from a mechanized central system are precluded from participation in healthy, vigorous, and vital discussion. Instability of public opinion which follows the introduction of new inventions in communication designed to reach large numbers of people is exploited by those in control of inventions.

While the United States’ motto *E Pluribus Unum* (from many, one) is meant to denote the country’s liberal democratic ideal of the sovereignty of the people — of the unified political will which emerges from the wills of the many — Innis identified in American press monopolies an inversion of this structure in which, on the contrary, mechanical reproduction allowed for the one to produce the many. As one American novelist put it, *E Unibus Pluram*: from one, many. Against liberal-therapeutic narratives in which communication is understood in terms of reciprocity and dialogue, Pred’s maps allow for a reconceptualization of the way in which monopolies of knowledge produce the spaces of information circulation. The goal of a ‘well informed populace’ appears in this light, not as an avenue for the acquisition of information for autonomous self-government, but as a territorial strategy of *police*; a strategy in which a ‘well informed populace’ is enrolled in its own government through its uneven access to information, and through information’s increasingly standardized access to it. In this sense, the Foucauldian sense of ‘communication as police’ can be most clearly discerned in the production of a national pastoral space in which people’s access to information doubles as a governmental strategy of *information’s access to people*.

---

While Innis saw this reversal as a contravention of American liberal-democratic ideals, a Foucauldian interpretation suggests that the extension of communication networks as a strategy to induce populations to self-government through the “conduct of conduct” is in fact central to the project of liberalism. Nevertheless, Innis remained a critic of liberal interpretations of American press history, emphasizing particularly the relations of power inherent in and ramp by the United States’ celebrated “freedom of the press.” Far from serving as the guarantor of democratic governance, Innis (1951, 187) argued that “freedom of the press had been an essential ingredient of the monopoly [of knowledge] for it obscured monopolistic characteristics.”

Though Innis is sometimes criticized as a technological determinist, his analysis of the importance of the newspaper exchange subsidy suggests his recognition of the social and political determination of the American ‘free press’ system, whose readership advances in printing technology would soon expand into the lower classes through the advent of the penny press. This is nowhere as clear as in Innis’ insistence that, though the newspaper industry had its origins in the “space-biased” medium of print, it was the political-economic processes inherent in the commercialization of the press which gave the newspaper industry its distinctive and deleterious characteristics.

Far from an organic coalescence of a free market, Innis demonstrates the extent to which the American “free press” was the careful construction of the post-revolution American government; a reward to the press for its active role against the British which was “crowned by a guarantee of freedom under the Bill of Rights” (Innis 1951, 156) Furthermore, Innis notes that the role of the
press and its relative freedom in relation to the restrictive Stamp Act of 1765 fueled the revolutionary conflict between Britain and the American bourgeoisie. After the revolution, policies like the 1793 Postal Act and the repeal of the 1798 Sedition Act were, according to Innis (1951, 157), “tributes to the power of the press and to the recognition by politicians of its possibilities as an instrument of strategy.” Though the idea of an “oppositional press” serving as a check and balance to the power of the state is another hallmark of the liberal imagination, after the American revolution a mutualistic relationship between the two inhered in, on the one hand, publishers’ reliance on lucrative government printing contracts and postal subsides; and on the other, politicians’ reliance on the ability of the press to access the publics they brought into existence. Journalists and editors became regular presidential cabinet appointments, and as John Adams wrote, an editor became “as essential an appendage to a candidate as in the days of chivalry a ‘squire’ was to a knight” (as cited in Innis, 1951, 164). With the outbreak of the American Civil War, the necessity increased, and as Innis writes, “Lincoln was compelled to work directly with newspaper editors and to elaborate devices for keeping them in control, including appointments to diplomatic posts” (ibid, 170).

11 ‘Innis cites two U.S. Postmaster Generals who use ‘freedom of the press’ and ‘public intelligence’ to obscure the monopoly of knowledge. Writing in 1848, the US Postmaster General proclaimed that, “newspapers have always been esteemed of so much importance to the public, as the best means of disseminating intelligence among the people, that the lowest rate has always been afforded for the purpose of encouraging their circulation” (as cited in Innis, 1951, 169). Similarly, Postmaster General Barry, in 1832, states that “the freedom of the press guaranteed by the Constitution, and the small share of postage with which these publications are charged, compared with the whole expense of their transportation, demonstrate the estimation in which they are held by government” (ibid, 165). A high estimation indeed.
This arrangement would, however, be challenged from two directions subsequent to the institution of the telegraph. First, the telegraph broke the “parochial monopoly” of New York newspapers over the American west by removing the need for subsidizing newspaper exchanges through the mails. Though the eastern corridor still maintained a privileged position as a center of political and economic power, the monopoly over news which the post office had facilitated was weakened, a competitive marketplace for news arose in the west, and “the regional daily press escaped from the dominance of the political and metropolitan press” (Innis 1951, 169).

More significant, however, was the ascendency of advertising as the primary source of revenue for the newspaper industry. Driven by the economic imperative to assemble the largest readerships possible — larger audiences commanded a higher price when sold to advertisers — newspapers, freed from the necessity of relying on subsidized newspaper exchanges, abandoned the party patronage model of the political press in an attempt to reach a mass and general audience. A commercial, advertising-based press therefore saw its advantage in a break with the short-lived era of muck-raking journalism in the late nineteenth century, and a move toward sensational and human-interest stories took place. The rise of large-scale political advertising was also accompanied by declining coverage of political activity, necessitating that candidates for office pay handsomely to advertise their campaigns. Thus, Innis (1951, 186) observes that “primaries in populous states were followed by a debauching contest of pocket books of wealthy contestants” and that the “disappearance of muck-raking in the financial field was accompanied by a decline of restrictions on speculative activity.” In a succinct passage, Innis (1951, 174) outlines how in the last quarter of the nineteenth century,
a press less subservient to the political control of the Republican party followed the introduction of new inventions, wider circulation, larger capital equipment, and corporate organization. Personal journalism began to decline and more important sources of revenue developed with advertising and department stores… The advertising manager began to absorb responsibility, operations were controlled by the business department, and the publisher became more important.

Both demand for news during the Civil War and the expansion of western newspapers precipitated the development of the Western Associated Press, challenging the emerging monopoly of the eastern-based Associated Press. The Associated Press responded by strengthening its connections with European news agencies and by exploiting its proximity to New York financial news. This conflict gave way to an eventual merger in 1867, and in 1877 Western Union absorbed the Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph Company, and later the National Union Telegraphy Company. Newspapers left outside this emerging monopoly formed the United Press, until the disclosure in 1892 that the Associated press, though ostensibly a competitor, had held a controlling interest in the company. This series of mergers and acquisitions prompted Innis to conclude that “the history of the Associated Press was to an important extent a history of the destruction of a parochial monopoly of New York newspapers by newspapers which had emerged in relation to the demand for news in the West, and of the growth of a monopoly in response to the demands of the telegraph” (Innis 1951, 178).

At the turn of the twentieth century, however, the monopoly of the Associated Press was again challenged by the emerging Hearst and Scripps-Howard newspaper empires. “In the struggle against the Associated Press” writes Innis (1951, 182), “the Hearst and Scripps interests were compelled to develop large-scale chain enterprises covering a vast area as a means of increasing outlets and news coverage and reducing the costs of an extensive news service, with disastrous
results to independent newspapers.” The disappearance of smaller newspapers drastically changed the character of the newspaper industry. It is perhaps indicative of the advertiser’s power that by 1921, Roy Howard of the Scripps-Howard press, stated that “we come simply as news merchants. We are here to sell advertising and sell it at a rate profitable to those who buy it. But first we must produce a newspaper with news appeal that will result in a circulation and make that advertising effective”’ (as cited in Innis 1951, 182). By the turn of the twentieth century, then, “a journalist became one who wrote on the backs of advertisements” (ibid, 186).

The history of the American press in the nineteenth century can therefore be understood as a transformation of the political economic base upon which the circulation of newspapers rested, one that began with what I have identified as a police strategy of the US Post Office to facilitate commerce and territorial expansion, before transforming to a market-based system in which larger circulations were subsidized by advertisers eager to access the publics this circulation brought into existence. This process corresponds to Neocleous’ (2000, 34) observation that the emergence of liberalism “involved a rethinking of the police concept in new, liberal terms.” Just as Innis insisted that “freedom of the press” was central to both creating and obscuring monopolies of knowledge, the privatization and commercialization of the press can be similarly understood to have obscured its enduring police function. As Neocleous (ibid, 41) puts it, “it was possible for liberalism to transform the police concept… because the exercise of power and domination was slowly being transferred from police to capital; the disciplinary logic of police was being superseded by the disciplinary logic of the market.”
In a lesser-known essay, on “means of communication as means of production,” Raymond Williams observes that much research and scholarship on communication assumes a liberal interpretation of the various means of communication as simple and straightforward “media” which act as conduits for the unproblematic transmission of information between senders and receivers. On the contrary, Williams (1980, 56) argues that,

as a matter of general theory it is useful to recognize that means of communication are themselves means of production. It is true that means of communication, from the simplest physical forms of language to the most advanced forms of communications technology, are themselves always socially and materially produced, and of course reproduced. Yet they are not only forms but means of production… Moreover the means of communication, both as produced and as means of production, are directly subject to historical development.

In this section, I have attempted to show that the historical development of ‘the means of communication as means of production’ involved the production of pastoral spaces of ‘communication as police.’ I have argued that these spaces of circulation are defined, not only by their ability to make information accessible to populations, but to make populations accessible to information as a strategy of government. Crucially, this police function was gradually subsumed by market relationships, as the primary subsidy to circulation changed from a state-run system of postal exchanges to one based on the commodification of audiences through advertising. I have argued that the production of the audience as an object of political strategy — as a strategy of policing populations — can be understood as a crucial form of social production attached to the historical development of the means of communication in the nineteenth century United States. This complicates what Williams identifies as the liberal analytical bias of privileging media consumption over other aspects of communication, especially those concerning the history of the audience. As Williams (1980, 60) writes,
another familiar kind of history is the social history of ‘audiences’ or ‘publics’: again containing indispensable detail but ordinarily undertaken within a perspective of ‘consumption’ which is unable to develop the always significant and sometimes decisive relations between these modes of consumption, which are commonly also forms of more general social organization, and the specific modes of production, which are at once technological and social.

In the next section I follow Williams to an exploration of the political economic basis of the audience in a capitalist system of communication. I argue that, in addition to the pastoral spaces of governing populations outlined in this section, the historical development of the means of communication produced spaces corresponding to pastoral power’s other primary object: the individual. In the next section I consider the production of the individual through the lens of time-geography to show how nineteenth century time-space discipline produced and standardized domestic spaces. I argue that these spaces helped put free time to work by transforming reading and listening into activities which could be commodified and sold to advertisers. I am concerned to spatialize an understanding of ‘communication as police’ as its relate to the commodification of individual and their activities in and the spaces everyday life. I aim to show how communication’s police function is articulated through the economic logic of audience commodification, and its “interest in what men do… in their activity and their occupation.”

2.1.2 In Search of Lost Time

Despite Innis’ insistence on an analysis of communication monopolies as monopolies on time, little has been done to follow James Carey’s injunction to rediscover Innis’ analysis of
communication in light of subsequent work on the political uses and abuses of time. In this section I consider the extent to which nineteenth century American monopolies on knowledge can be understood as an outgrowth of Foucault’s concept of pastoral power, paying particular attention to the dynamics of time-discipline and the production and exploitation of time.

Thinking through advertising’s post-telegraphic ascendency requires consideration of how this change in means of communication was also an historical development in the means of production. For Williams (1980, 53), thinking about means of communication as means of production opened avenues for “new approaches to [understanding] the history of the means of communication themselves.” While Innis points broadly to the significance of advertising as a decisive reorganization of the material basis upon which the circulation of newspapers rests, he stops short of situating this historical development of the means of communication within the framework of a Marxist critique of communication. Thus, while Innis laments what he calls the “eclipse of the public” and the growth of monopolies of knowledge, he does not grasp a crucial dimension of what Williams (1980, 60) calls the “social history of audiences and publics” in the “decisive relations between modes of consumption and modes of production.”

These decisive relations were, however, at the heart of questions occupying political economists of communication in the 1970s, notably Dallas Smythe (1977, 3) whose seminal essay on communication as a “blindspot of western Marxism” asked, “what is the commodity form of mass-produced, advertiser-supported communications under monopoly capitalism?” Like Williams, Smythe rejected what he called the “bourgeois idealist view” of communication that would provide answers like "messages", "information", "images", "meaning", "entertainment", "orientation", "

40
"education", or "manipulation" (ibid). In a bid to elide what Foucault (2007, 215) might call the “old conception of ideology,” Smythe (1977, 20) argued that the primary commodity produced by the mass media in a capitalist economy is the audience:

the mass media institutions in monopoly capitalism developed the equipment, workers and organization to produce audiences… between about 1875 and 1950. The prime purpose of the mass media complex is to produce people in audiences who work at learning the theory and practice of consumership for civilian goods and who support (with taxes and votes) the military demand management system.

Smythe’s theory of the “audience commodity” occasioned a lively, though still relatively obscure, discussion known as the ‘blindspot debate’ in the Political Economy of Communication (Smythe 1977; Murdock 1978; Smythe 1978; Livant 1979; Jhally 1982; Livant 1982). Though Smythe was productively challenged on several fronts, his central thesis – that audiences are produced in commodity form and sold to advertisers – remains a general maxim in the field.12 A main point of contention in the blindspot debate concerned Smythe’s adherence to the labour theory of value in concluding that the value of the audience commodity is produced by the labour of audiences. For Smythe (1977, 3), watching, reading, and listening were forms of work performed by audiences. Thus Smythe argues that

the materialist answer to the question – ‘what is the commodity form of mass-produced, advertiser-supported communications under monopoly capitalism?’ – is audiences and readerships… The material reality under monopoly capitalism is that all non-sleeping time of most of the population is work time. This work time is devoted to the production of commodities-in-general… and in the production and reproduction of labour power (the pay

12 Though the blindspot debate has not circulated widely outside the discipline of the Political Economy of Communication, several scholars have taken up and modified Smythe’s thesis for the digital age (Andrejevic, 2002; Artz, 2008; Bermejo, 2009; Caraway, 2011; Fuchs, 2012; Napoli, 2010).
for which is subsumed in their income). Of the off-the-job work time, the largest single block is time of the audiences which is sold to advertisers.

Smythe’s theory of the audience commodity and its work are sketches, and in some places the strokes are perhaps too broad. Even if all time is not strictly and evenly ‘work time’, Smythe nonetheless makes salient observations about both the activity of audiences (they work; are productive), and the role of this activity in processes of social reproduction (it re/produces labour power). As part of the work of social reproduction — of the work required to produce labour as a commodity — Smythe attempts to locate a material basis of power in the mass media’s ability to direct everyday forms of socially reproductive labour power. In this analysis, media content must be understood not as liquid information or transmitted content, but – taking Williams’ observation one step further – as a means of social reproduction with which audiences work, but from which they are alienated. “Marx assumed” writes Smythe (1977, 7), “that labour power is produced by the labourer and by his or her immediate family, i.e., under the conditions of handicraft production. In a word, labour power was ‘home-made’ in the absence of dominant brand-name commodities, mass advertising, and the mass media.” Insofar as, for Smythe, mass media become means of re/production, he concludes that

in Marx's period and in his analysis the principal aspect of capitalist production was the alienation of workers from the means of producing commodities-in-general. Now the principal aspect of capitalist production has become the alienation of workers from the means of producing and reproducing themselves (ibid).

If the audience commodity thesis contains a theory of mass mediated social reproduction, it also assumes categorically active audiences. While some thinking on “active audiences” centres the agency of viewers in reading, deconstructing, and subverting texts, thinking of audience
membership as a type of work suggests thinking of audiences’ relationship to texts as those of labour to means of (re)production: though reading texts requires work, audiences are largely excluded from their design and production. The significance of the “activity” of audiences lies not in the fact of activity, but the nature of the social relationships that structure the work of watching and reading texts. As spaces of “constructed in/visibility” (Gregory 2011), media texts can be understood as means of re/production with which audiences work, but not under circumstances of their own choosing.

Over-emphasis on the agency of audiences risks falling into the bourgeois trap identified by Raymond Williams, i.e. a liberal “transmission” view of communication as between autonomous receivers and senders. As Hillis (1998, 561) puts it, “it is impossible always to remain the totally active reader posited by reception theory. To theorize individuals as always succeeding in resisting the dominant readings intended by the makers of popular culture implies a denial of the limits of politics and suggests superhuman abilities, as if people never faltered or tired.” Thinking of audience activity as work suggests limits to textual “subversion” and reiterates the Foucauldian axiom that the agency of individuals is neither the opposite of, nor a bulwark against, the operation of power, but its very medium. Focusing on the activity of audiences further suggests the enduring importance of the police frame for thinking about communication, namely of the significance of public opinion – not in passive terms, but in governmental terms of “what men do.” Thinking together Foucault’s theorization of police as a kind of government of the self, with Smythe’s observation that social reproduction involves self-producing labour from which one is alienated, one can grasp the sense in which ‘communication as police’ involves more than the reception and
interpretation of media text, but the modes of production and work on the self; modes subject to increasing marketization.

Feminists writing on social reproduction have emphasized the uneven gendered nature of socially reproductive labour in the home, its porous temporal nature and its “invisibility” in traditional economic analysis. While the “work” of reading, listening, and watching inherent in leisure activity is further complicated by its uneven distribution along, for example, class (Veblen 1899), gender (Meehan & Riordan 2002) and racial (Gandy 2000) lines, understanding the way in which audience work underwrites the economic value of the advertising economy broadly corroborates the observation that, as Federici (2004, 7) argues, “the sphere of reproduction [is] a source of value-creation and exploitation.” Similarly, Cindi Katz (2001, 714) has made the observation that the “primarily cultural arenas of social reproduction include that broad category of cultural production categorized as the media.”

On this account it is necessary to understand the rise of advertising hegemony over the economics of communication as the rise of the commodification of the time of socially reproductive audience labour. Though uncredited, Smythe’s thinking on the commodity valuation of leisure time likely owed a debt to E.P. Thompson’s writing on the English working-class, specifically on the issue of work and time-discipline. Noting that during the industrial revolution, “the leisured classes began to discover the "problem" of the leisure of the masses,” Thompson (1967, 90) considers how emergent capitalists forms concerned themselves with the “efficient time-husbandry of the labour-force.” This involved a progressive commodification of leisure time and its enclosure as a source of exploitation and value production. Thompson (1967, 95) speculated that,
if we are to have enlarged leisure, in an automated future, the problem is not ‘how are men going to be able to consume all these additional time-units of leisure?’ but ‘what will be the capacity for experience of the men who have this undirected time to live?’ If we maintain a Puritan time-valuation, a commodity-valuation, then it is a question of how this time is put to use, or how it is exploited by the leisure industries.

As Elden (2015) has noted, Thompson’s work was also influential on Foucault, especially during the writing of *Discipline & Punish* and in his 1972-73 lecture series *The Punitive Society*, which reveals Foucault at his most Marxist in analyzing “the moralization of working class.” Neocleous’ work on *police*, heavily inspired by Foucault’s work during this period, makes similar observations concerning the congruity between Marxist and Foucauldian perspectives on this issue. For Foucault (2007, 322), *police* ensures “communication among men (sic)” and is interested “in what men do…in their activity and their occupation,” an interest that Neocleous (2000, 37) notes encompasses “the organization of labour both inside and outside production.”

Again echoing Thompson on ruling class concern for the management of working class leisure time, Neocleous (2000, 55) argues that for *police* theorists of the 18th century, “interest lay in the problem of idleness outside the factory,” and that “the task of police is to employ a whole panoply of measures and techniques to manage idleness, extending well beyond the administration of relief into the morality, profligacy and propriety of the working class.”

While Foucault’s interests in the *Punitive Society* and in *Discipline and Punish* are the factory and the army respectively, his emphasis on the economic parallels between these institutions and the

13 Foucault references Thompson in the typescript of his lecture notes; and Harcourt notes Foucault knew The Making of the English Working Class.
advent of capitalism’s valuation of time suggest further avenues for theorizing the ways in which capitalism altered and produced new structures of time in the administration of political and economic power. In his *Punitive Society* lectures, Foucault (2016, 73) is especially keen to observe “the organisation of worker time [in] the factory, the distribution and calculation of time [as] salary, the control of leisure, the life of the worker, savings, retirement, etc.” Suggesting what he calls “the global hold of power over time,” Foucault (ibid) notes the “species continuity between factory clock, the chronometry of the chain-gang and the prison calendar,” leading Elden (2015, 154) to suggest that Foucault’s “rethinking of temporality is one of the potential avenues for future work opened up by this set of lectures.”

Presaging a concept that will become indispensable to an analysis of psychological warfare, Foucault identifies *police* interest in the everyday lives of the lower and working classes as a process of *moralization*. As Elden (2015, 158) explains, “the state acts as an agent of morality, using the police to control everyday life” in a way that was linked to and supported the development of capitalism and the *reproduction* of the labour force. Disciplinary systems connected to emergence of capitalism therefore were meant to ensure that “bodies are available for work,” that “their force is applied in the right direction for the necessary task,” and crucially that “bodies are used for the *reproduction of the workforce*” (ibid). Though Foucault’s (1977, 149) thinking on police as a tool for the moralization of the working class predates his emphasis on

---

14 Elden (2015, 154) draws out the connection:

In prison—“an abstract, monotonous, rigid punitive system”—the only graduated variable is time. There is an economic parallel here: “Everyone is given a salary for labour time, and inversely, time at liberty is taken as the price for violation [infraction]. Time is the only property possessed, it is bought for work or it is taken for violation.”
pastoral power, it would corroborate it, notably in his analysis of the monastic origins of the time-
table as a tool of discipline.\footnote{This analysis likely owed something also to Lewis Mumford’s (1934) Technics and Civilization, notably Chapter 9, “The Monastery and the Clock”}

The \textit{time-table} is an old inheritance. The strict model was no doubt suggested by the monastic communities. It soon spread. Its three great methods — establish rhythms, impose particular occupations, regulate the cycles of repetition — were soon to be found in schools, workshops and hospitals. The new disciplines had no difficulty in taking up their place in the old forms; the schools and poor-houses extended the life and the regularity of the monastic communities to which they were often attached. The rigours of the industrial period long retained a religious air; in the seventeenth century, the regulations of the great manufactories laid down the exercises that would divide up the working day.

Though Foucault’s interests did not lead him to an examination of the press as a strategy of police, Innis’ work suggests further points of accord, notably concerning printing as an outgrowth of, and a challenge to, monastic order. For Innis (1950, 176), the printing press and the book undermined the "monopoly of monasticism" on knowledge, which in turn was challenged by the emergence of periodicals and newspapers, beginning roughly at the time of the American War of Independence. “The steadying influence of the book as a product of sustained intellectual effort,” Innis (1995, 370) argued, “was destroyed by new developments in periodicals and newspapers... The Western community was atomized by the pulverizing effects of the application of machine industry to communication.” These convictions lead Innis (1952, 108) to his most insightful observations concerning the “freedom of the press” and its role in producing “the great bulwark of monopolies of time.” “It should be clear” he insisted, “that that improvements in communication tend to divide mankind.” (ibid).
Where Innis saw rupture, however, Foucault attempted to trace continuity. For Foucault, though the explicitly sacred order of pastoral power became secularised in the governmental state, secular pastoral strategies of power “retained a religious air”. In the institution of the press in the nineteenth century we can identify, therefore, a Foucauldian mechanism of time-discipline and the “investment of duration with power.” If Foucault identified in the prison time-table the model for factory life, the observation can equally well be made of the modes of time-space standardization which are produced by the nineteenth century press. That is, the “establishment of rhythms” in the regular patterns of circulation and leisure time; of “imposing particular occupations” in the act of reading as well as what is to be read; and of “regulating cycles of repetition” in the punctuality of the daily press.\(^{16}\)

Though for divergent purposes, both Foucault and Innis were deeply interested in uncovering the contradictions at the bottom of liberal society. While I have argued that the “work” of audiences shares its origins with the factory and the prison in its partitioning and policing of time, it is necessary to address the decisive difference of the volitional nature of reading, listening and

\(^{16}\) Foucault’s emphasis on the “seriation” of activities, and the “investment of duration by power” suggests another staple of communication media: the serial and the series. The etymology of the radio/television “program” suggests a similar meaning, when considered against Foucault’s (1977, 151) thinking on time-discipline:

What the ordinance of 1766 defines is not a time-table - the general framework for an activity; it is rather a collective and obligatory rhythm, imposed from the outside; it is a ‘programme’; it assures the elaboration of the act itself; it controls its development and its stages from the inside. We have passed from a form of injunction that measured or punctuated gestures to a web that constrains them or sustains them throughout their entire succession. A sort of anatomo-chronological schema of behaviour is defined... Time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power.
watching, in comparison to the coercions of wage labour and incarceration. In the remainder of this section, I critique the notion that reading, listening and watching cannot be considered forms of audience labour, since they are 1) non-coerced as in penal or factory work and 2) that leisure or “free time” is voluntarily spent and cannot therefore be subject to disciplinary power. I argue therefore that nineteenth century mass industrialization and mass communication combine to effect transformations in the spaces of social reproduction that render them strategic objects of police.

Here Allan Pred’s application of Hägersträndian time-geography can augment Innis’ account of the shift in the economic geography of nineteenth century U.S. communications. Moreover, Pred’s emphasis on everyday life corroborates Smythe’s turn to social reproduction as a key site for an analysis of communication. Here the synthetic power of a time-geographic perspective appears among its primary virtues. As Pred (1981, 5) sees it, “one finds in Hägerstrand's time-geography a highly flexible language and evolving philosophical perspective [that]… when integrated with other frameworks, make possible a reinterpretation of many of the grand themes of social theory.” Influenced by Bourdieu’s concept of ‘habitus’, Pred locates the family, domestic space, and processes of social reproduction at the center of time-geographic analysis. Echoing Raymond Williams, Pred (1981, 12) includes media exposure as a crucial element in coordinating both path and project development at various spatial scales:

Insofar as individuals who live in the same area have a common class or socioeconomic background and belong to the same generation are apt to have amassed numerous similar or common path elements, the uniquely emerging consciousness of many or most of them may contain strong ideological resemblances and a shared "structure of feeling", or sense of belonging to the particular social formation in which they find themselves [Williams]. That is, through participation in some of the same types of projects, through media exposure to and discussion of some of the same political-historical occurrences, celebrities,
and popular culture events, and through project-based contact with or exposure to manufactured objects of the same brand, the symbolic systems belonging to the consciousness of such individuals may be capable of evoking many similar associations.

Like Smythe, Pred includes both media exposure and branded commodities as sites of ideological production linked to everyday processes of social reproduction. Significantly, Pred identifies the emergence of the *individual* and of its ‘*free time*’ in particular as a correlate of the emergence of liberal capitalist forms of life. Subsequent to the nineteenth century shift away from family-defined production projects of home or farm, Pred correlates employer- and organization-defined production projects with the emergence of *individualism* and a changing conception of the meaning of ‘*free time*’. In the artisanal mode of production, Pred (1981, 9) writes, “there was apt to be an absence of strict temporal fixedness in the day-to-day arrangement of activity bundles and breaks.” The shift from a self-defined task-oriented labour process to the synchronized processes of factory labour had the well-noted effect of separating the conception of labour from its execution, but it also had the effect of powerfully rearranging the time geographies of everyday life. The time-geographic decoupling of family, Pred argues, helped solidify the individual as an independent economic unit. “Under the wage system of industrial capitalism” writes Pred, “family members were hired and fired not as a group, but as separate persons. Thus, income was frequently regarded as personal and although the vast bulk of it was given over to the family kitty, *the seeds of economic individualism were planted*” (p. 15 emphasis mine).

Pred’s analysis of the specific dynamics of individualism in the nineteenth century contribute to Foucault’s interest in uncovering genealogies of liberalism, and development of the individual as a correlate of pastoral power. If liberal thought is usually inclined to conceive the individual as a
site of discovery, like Foucault, Pred identifies structures of power beneath the liberal gloss — not discovery, but loss:

Inasmuch as factory and large-scale shop workers were reduced to interchangeable role holders confined to the disciplined execution of specialized tasks, individuals began to develop the need to be valued for themselves since individual identity could no longer be realized through work or through the ownership of productive property... Ironically, this contention is consistent with the romantic assumption... that the individual could find meaning and satisfaction in his life at home and nowhere else (ibid).

Alienation from the means of production, then, did not confine itself to the shop floor. “The mere temporal fixedness of such production projects,” Pred continues, “dictated a sharply demarcated separation of work and ‘play’... With the social contacts and life content of industrial laborers fragmented in this manner, they were apt to acquire a new sense of time marked by a distinction between one’s own time, or ‘spare’ time, and one’s employer’s time” (p. 25).

It is useful here to consider this new conception of ‘free time’ in the ironized sense conveyed by ‘free labour’ subsequent to the enclosure movements of the 18th century, and the emerging factory system. This new concept of free time is important for thinking together communication and police as a process of enclosing time. Pred’s geography of this new ‘free time’ shows that, far from the positive connotation of ‘freedom,’ a worker’s ‘free time’ was subject to powerful time-space discipline [fig. 3]. A major consequence of this time-geographic rupture was the generalization of a time-space opportunity cost to participate in nonproductive, and, significantly, political projects. This is to say that the space-time opportunity cost of factory life constituted a novel form of power exerted over the worker. The constitution of ‘free time’ as a property of individuals given over to the time-space discipline of factory work can therefore be understood, not as an autonomous
antithesis to capitalist work-time, but the extension of its discipline into erstwhile private life; as an enclosure of time for intensified exploitation and value production.

Figure 3: "Free time"

*Pred's (1981) illustration of the constricted time-spaces attached the emergence of industrial “free time”.*
Here an affinity between Innis’ critique of the ‘free press’ and Pred’s critique of ‘free time’ allows for a thicker contextualization of the process of audience commodification in the nineteenth century. With ‘free time’ limited to the highly disciplined time-spaces afforded by industrial leisure time, the circulation of newspapers gains purchase on an increasingly standardized and normalized configuration of working class leisure. If in the previous section I argued that nineteenth century time-space compression produced new uneven spaces of pastoral power, the standardization of working-class leisure time-spaces identified in Fig. 3 represents its pastoral counterpart at the scale of the individual. Thinking through the pastoral structure of these connected spatial scales provides a fuller picture of my attempt to spatialize Foucault’s analysis of ‘communication as police’; of a pastoral power which constructs, intervenes upon, and strategizes both populations and individuals. The standardization of information’s access to working class leisure time can therefore be understood as a dislocation of the modern habitus effected by time-space compression (Harvey 1989). However, this dislocation can again be understood as producing new rounds of pastoral spatial convergence: the commodification of spatiotemporally standardized ‘free time’ only becomes possible in relation to the existence of spaces of circulation at the scale of population. Here the omnes et singulatim of ‘communication as police’ combine in the newspaper’s ability to intervene in the time-spaces of social reproduction to produce the new peculiar commodity of audience labour.

Here again Raymond Williams injunction to understand ‘means of communication as means of production’ requires thinking of the way in which newspaper circulation produces new spaces and new forms of social organization: the newspaper becomes a means of production producing standardized spaces of circulation which render populations accessible to information, but also a
means of social reproduction that allows for the commodification of increasingly standardized working-class leisure time. In this light, dislocation of the habitus can be better understood in terms of spatial convergence of the pastoral scales with which I have been concerned. The newspaper becomes a spatially complex medium of a peculiar primitive accumulation; an “alienation of workers from the means of producing and reproducing themselves.”

As I have argued, over the course of the nineteenth century the crucial transformation of the pastoral and police structures of communication reflects the ascendancy of capital as the primary producer of these spaces of production and reproduction. It is this permeability of time and space to capital, and the corollary pastoral structure of audience commodification that gives modern capitalist communication systems their distinctive character.17 As the chiaroscuro masses of audience commodities become the doppelgängers of public life (Warner 2002), “the public,” as James Carey (1989, 166) argues, “becomes a mere statistical artifact...[and] the public sphere goes into eclipse.”

This identification of the public’s ‘statistical artfactuality’ in a capitalist mass media system suggests further accord with a Foucauldian analysis of governmentality, particularly concerning the role of statistics as state knowledge, combined with an emphasis on managing the circulation of a contingent free press. Furthermore, the ‘statistical artfactualization’ of publics into audiences was accompanied by analytic refinements which can be understood as a mode of what I have

17 While Gibson-Graham (1996) has critiqued the Marxist rhetoric of capital’s ‘penetration’ of social life, in subsequent chapters (3 & 5) I show that popular narratives of psychological warfare often reproduce the same ‘rape script’ they identify.
identified as Foucault’s ‘specification of individuals’. As Innis notes, this process of specification was sped by the emergence of magazines in the early twentieth century, many of which sought to access the valuable female readerships to whom the tasks of household consumption fell. As Innis (1952, 7) writes,

the position of women as purchasers of goods led to concentration on women's magazines and on advertising…Through the national magazine, advertisers such as the manufacturers of pianos, high cost two-wheeled bicycles, and other commodities were able to reach a large market at less cost than through the daily newspaper and to concentrate on more attractive layouts appealing to people in higher income brackets. The national magazine made a systematic attack on older advertising media…The average circulations of magazines increased from 500,000 to 1,400,000 in the period from 1905 to 1915 and following the boom beginning in 1922 reached 3,000,000 by 1937. The Reader's Digest was started in 1922, Time in 1923, and the New Yorker in 1925...After the First World War, women's magazines, which had begun as pattern makers in the Delineator and other Butterick papers, gained conspicuously in circulation. Women's magazines reached the largest circulations, paid most highly for articles, and were the chief market for writers.

The competition between magazines and newspapers for access to specific populations demonstrates the way in which, at the turn of the twentieth century, the growth of audience commodification was intimately linked to ‘statistics’ in the Foucauldian sense. With the rise of television – the medium of audience commodification par excellence – the specification of individuals undergoes a round of intense refinement. In her contribution to the blindspot debate in the political economy of communication, Eileen Meehan (1984) identifies the ratings industry as a crucial intermediary in the process of audience commodification. Meehan pays particular attention to the way in which the ratings industry specifies, refines, and unevenly values audience
demographics along the lines of gender, race, age, income, subculture, etc. If Foucault is correct in identifying **scientia sexualis** as transforming the sexual ‘deviant’ into a *species*, the ratings industry, as a crucial intermediary in the production and refinement of audience commodities, similarly occasions the proliferation of new species; of audiences with specific social, economic and cultural contours.

In the first three sections of this chapter I have outlined Foucault’s theory of pastoral power as it relates to his project to understand modern liberal governmentality, and the sense in which communication can be understood as strategy of *police*. I have attempted to spatialize Foucault’s analysis by attending to the pastoral spaces produced by the historical development of ‘the means of communication as means of production’ in the nineteenth century United States. I have argued that Foucault’s identification of the ‘paradoxical’ scales of pastoral power — the population and the individual — combine in the newspaper’s ability to construct ‘population accessibility’ through governmental spaces of circulation, and in its ability to primitively accumulate commodified leisure time as a kind of circulating fixed capital, and a ‘means of social reproduction.’ I conclude by suggesting that the historical development of audience commodification can be understood as the continuation of the ‘specification of individuals’; as the “analytical identification, subjection, and subjectivation” that Foucault (2007, 183) understands as central to pastoral power and “the entire history of procedures of human individualization in the West.

---

18 More recently Oscar Gandy Jr. (2007) has written about the role of audience segmentation in ‘The Formation of A Racial Class’. Gandy, like Meehan, pays particular attention to the way in which different audiences command different prices on the audience commodity market.
Central to this chapter’s analytic focus has been an attempt to combine Foucauldian and Marxist analyses of communication. While Foucault may have been troubled by the rhetoric of some contemporaries’ ‘scientific’ Marxism, Foucault’s posthumous publications suggest the compatibility of his thinking to class analysis.\textsuperscript{19} Similarly, in his \textit{Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844}, Marx (1844) readily accepted the limits of political economic analysis, invoking a Foucauldian menagerie: “the cheat-thief, swindler, beggar, and unemployed,” wrote Marx, “the starving, the wretched and criminal workingman – these figures who do not exist for political economy but only for other eyes, those of the doctor, the judge, the grave digger, and bumbailiff, etc; such figures are specters outside its [political economy’s] domain.” In this chapter’s final section, I suggest ways of thinking together these analyses communication as they combine with the emergence of modern warfare.

\subsection*{2.2 Lines of Communication}

In book 5, chapter 15 of his treatise \textit{On War}, Karl von Clausewitz identifies the biopolitical and arterial nature of the military line of communication, emphasizing its relational nature to the whole of the military base’s extension in space:

\begin{quote}
 Although according to the present system of subsistence, an army is chiefly fed from the district in which it is operating, it must still be looked upon as forming a whole with its base. The lines of communication belong to this whole; they form the connection between the army and its base, and are to be considered as so many great vital arteries.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{19} See especially \textit{The Punitive Society} for Foucault (2015) at his most class conscious.
The chapters that follow in this dissertation attempt to map out the changing contours of the military line of communication in the 20th century, specifically as they concern the articulation and practice of ‘psychological warfare’ in and by the United States. While the transmission-transportation paradigm still dictates contemporary military definitions, this dissertation considers how pastoral spaces of ‘communication as police’ have constituted new lines of military communication as the civilian is increasingly subsumed within the logic of war. Modern rounds of time-space compression, however, have fundamentally altered lines of communication and the way in which “a whole is formed with an army’s base.” While in subsequent chapters I trace the changing political contours of these new lines of “ritualistic” communication (Carey 1989), in the final section of this chapter, I consider how the production of what I have above called the pastoral spaces of ‘communication as police’ fundamentally altered the military line of communication.

Central to the shift in the military line of communication in the nineteenth century was the new possibility of experiencing war at a distance (Favret 2009), particularly after the advent of the telegraph, which compressed the time-space of war reporting and allowed for the regular production and consumption of war reporting in metropolitan centers like London or Paris. While direct spectatorship of war remained impossible for most, Mieszkowski (2012, 2) theorizes what he calls the “Napoleonic war imaginary,” in which the mass reproduction and circulation of war reporting established dramatic tropes in the mediation of war spectatorship at a distance. In the popular mediation of warfare, then, Mieszkowski identified the production of a mass readership for war reporting as a kind of civilian counterpart to the French levée en masse:
‘Suddenly,’ as the Prussian soldier and military theorist Carl von Clausewitz wrote, war ‘became the business of the people.’ With the advantage of hindsight, Raymond Williams would echo this sentiment, arguing that the modern notion of the ‘mass’ was forged at the turn of the nineteenth century. He might have added that it was first and foremost a mass of spectators consuming war.

Spectatorship did not always mean distance, however, and for many the experience of war was all too immediate. While the popular mediation of war allowed it to become the “business of the people,” in the nineteenth century people also became the business of war. In addition to the radical transformations which have occurred in the mediation of modern warfare, it is also necessary to consider continuities between nineteenth and twentieth century lines of communication. As an extended passage from Clausewitz’s *On War* reveals, far from being matter of frictionless transportation, nineteenth century lines of communication reflected the deeply human contours of the spaces through which they ran. To the extent that lines of communication were a problem for military commanders, they were a political problem. I reproduce the passage here, with commentary below:

an army in an enemy's country… can as a rule only look upon those roads as lines of communication upon which it has advanced; and hence arises through small and almost invisible causes a great difference in operating. The army in the enemy's country takes under its protection the organisation which, as it advances, it necessarily introduces to form its lines of communication; and in general, inasmuch as terror, and the presence of an enemy's army in the country invests these measures in the eyes of the inhabitants with all the weight of unalterable necessity, the inhabitants may even be brought to regard them as an alleviation of the evils inseparable from war. Small garrisons left behind in different places support and maintain this system. But if these commissaries, commandants of stations, police, fieldposts, and the rest of the apparatus of administration, were sent to some distant road upon which the army had not been seen, the inhabitants then would look upon such measures as a burden which they would gladly get rid of, and if the most complete defeats and catastrophes had not previously spread terror throughout the land, the probability is that these functionaries would be treated as enemies, and driven away with very rough usage. Therefore, in the first place it would be necessary to establish garrisons to subjugate the new line, and these garrisons would require to be of more than ordinary
strength, and still there would always be a danger of the inhabitants rising and attempting to overpower them. In short, an army marching into an enemy's country is destitute of the mechanism through which obedience is rendered; it has to institute its officials into their places, which can only be done by a strong hand, and this cannot be effected thoroughly without sacrifices and difficulties, nor is it the work of a moment—From this it follows that a change of the system of communication is much less easy of accomplishment in an enemy's country than in our own, where it is at least possible; and it also follows that the army is more restricted in its movements, and must be much more sensitive about any demonstrations against its communications (all emphasis mine).

From this long passage can be observed several important themes which remain relevant for understanding modern lines of communication at war. First, the line of communication appears as a relational space, produced only through the subjugation of the civilian populations through which it runs. Apart from this subjugation, it remains only a road, and not yet the ‘vital arteries’ of the line of communication. A seemingly simple point, Clausewitz notes that the problems of subjugating lines of communication are largely geographical in their determination, that is, “a change of the system of communication is much less easy of accomplishment in an enemy's country than in our own.” As the subsequent chapters of this dissertation reveal, however, this lesson has been perennially ignored as both political and military leaders persist in the belief that domestic forms of pastoral power and ‘communication as police’ — what becomes ‘psychological warfare’ — can be frictionlessly exported to enemy countries. As I show, central to the construction of psychological warfare has been the claim that technocratic mastery over public opinion and the means of communication allows for the subjugation of lines of communication across undifferentiated space.

Second, Clausewitz is clear that lines of communication are subjugated, not only through the quotidian violence of war, but through the spectacular violence of terror, which he insists must be
“invested in the eyes of the inhabitants.”20 Only after this initial violence, he argues, can a system of political administration in enemy territory be achieved. While Foucault is often remembered for having reversed Clausewitz’s famous maxim that ‘war is an extension of politics by other means,’ in regard to the line of communication Clausewitz himself appears to reach a similar conclusion. Indeed, that ‘politics is an extension of war by other means’ has been observed by many psychological warriors before and without recourse to Foucault. Taken together, these points represent enduring aspects of the line of communication: its relationality with respect to the subjugation of civilian populations, the differential geographical prospects for subjugation at home and abroad, and the enduring role of terror as a tool for subjugating enemy populations. I emphasize these points as they run counter to what becomes the received theory and doctrine of psychological warfare, namely that psychological warfare is an alternative to violence, and that psychological warfare can be effectively waged in enemy countries.

2.2.1 Correspondence in Crimea

While these enduring structures remain, historical development of the means of communication have nonetheless profoundly altered the relational space of the line of communication. In the following chapters I consider how ‘psychological warfare’ emerges as a strategy to subjugate these changing relational contours, however in the remainder of this chapter I consider how telegraphic

20 While perhaps a jarring metaphor, as will be seen, the idea of violence as a form of productive political capital ‘invested’ in enemy civilians was foundational to the ideological articulation of psychological warfare as it emerged in the Second World War.
time-space compression produced new spaces of communication in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and how, as ‘the business of the people,’ the government of public opinion became necessary to warfighting. Just as the telegraph was an important actor in the reconfiguration of the political economy of the press, the telegraph’s compression of time and space produced a public that could consume increasingly regular dispatches and reports about foreign wars as they occurred. Specifically, the Crimean War — the first “international crisis” which prefigured world war — was the first to be mediated in the new telegraphic time-space.

While Clausewitz called for the “investment of terror in the eyes of inhabitants” to subjugate enemy lines of communication, Crimean war reporting in Britain sought to produce not terror, but a sense of exhilaration and excitement at the prospect of war spectatorship at a distance. Consider the following account from the *London Illustrated News* upon the completion of the telegraphic line of communication between Britain and Crimea:

In our journal of last week we detailed the operation of laying down the electric cable from near Varna to Balaclava, by which means we are now in daily receipt of intelligence from the Camp before Sebastopol... Our Correspondent writes from Balaclava, April 14th:— “We arrived here yesterday, having safely landed the telegraphic cable in the small bay called St. George’s, where the Monastery so often spoken of is situated. As we were cautiously and slowly approaching the coast, during the previous night, we could see the flashing of the guns around Sebastopol: and occasionally we heard the booming of the heavier pieces of artillery.” Of St. George’s Bay and Monastery we also annex a view.

**Fig. 4** offers a sketch of the laying of the Anglo-Crimean telegraph line from the perspective of an artist who, viewing from a ship on the harbor, reproduces — here “annexes a view” — an image of the British base of operations. The image is little more than a sketch, but is accompanied by a “live” account of the war, complete with “the flashing of guns” and the “booming of artillery” — a
correspondent’s ekphrasis of the war experience. Though the majority reporting on the Crimean war was textual, the above passage’s emphasis on simulating spectatorship corresponds to Mieszkowski’s identification of the “Napoleonic war imaginary,” and the way in which this imaginary was (mechanically) reproduced and textually circulated. This textual mediation of a first-hand spectatorship of war became central to its coverage, illustrating the extent to which a “mobilized and virtual gaze” (Friedberg 1993) defined late nineteenth century experiences of war at a distance.

As Friedberg notes, by the mid nineteenth century the panorama in particular had become a popular European attraction in which the walls of cylindrical buildings were painted to effect an illusion of perspective, reproducing famous landscapes of cities and historical events. Though in 1904 Russian artist Franz Roubaud would produce the famous Siege of Sevastopol panorama, during the war itself smaller panoramic depictions of the war populated the pages of the press, as in the London Illustrated News [Fig. 5]. The panoramic view situated the viewer at the centre of the war, producing a paradoxical sense of remove and intimacy in which war become something to be experienced and consumed by civilians at a distance.
Figure 4: Crimean telegraph

An “annexed view” of St. George’s Bay and Monastery, London Illustrated News, May 12, 1855. The “annexation” of visuality would become a crucial component of war’s spaces of constructed (in)visibility.

While the panorama installation allowed for a construction of a virtual mobility — of bringing an immersive visual representation of London or Venice to far flung locales — the newspaper panorama achieved an even more mobile virtual mobility paradoxically tied to the immobility of the spectator who, as discussed in the previous section, experienced the constricting time-space discipline of nineteenth century everyday industrial life. The mediated space of the home and private life became, then, places in which the constriction of everyday time-space (‘free time’) was accompanied by expansive spaces of constructed visibility, and of the mass consumption of war reporting specifically. Thus the dislocation of the habitus effected by telegraphic time-space
compression was again accompanied by a pastoral spatial convergence in which newspaper circulation standardized spaces of news consumption (omnes) while intervening in the dislocated space of the home (singulatim). The spatial fixity of the reader found its counterpart in the spatial expanse of telegraphic war reporting.

In her *The Crimean War and the British Imagination*, Stefanie Markovits details the way in which this war reporting, and the public’s demand for it, constituted a new literary genre in its own right. In a January 1855 letter, Arthur Hugh Clough claimed, “our literature, at present, is the war column in the newspaper.” William Makepeace Thackeray lamented that “literature is going on flaggingly in England just now, on account of nobody caring to read anything but telegraphic messages” (in Markovits 2009, 63). The press’s ability to construct new spaces of visibility and narrate war did not always, however, allow free dictation of the ways in which readers experienced it. Despite the ultimate victory, the Crimean War had been a publicity disaster for the British government. William Howard Russell, sometimes considered the first modern war correspondent (Knightley 1987), wrote dispatches to *The Times* that were highly critical of the aristocratic British officer class, who in comparison to their relatively professionalized French counterparts, were portrayed as ham-fisted and blundering.

In contrast to his portrayal of the British officer class, however, Russell’s dispatches lionized the rank and file British soldier, whose hardships and travails he presented to the British public as a kind of masculine stoic heroism. Combined with letters home, British war reporting of the Crimean War “gave the common soldier a voice on a hitherto unprecedented scale, revealing his daily life, treatment, and living conditions” (Dawson 2015). As Markovits argues, the Crimean War offered
new models of popular heroism that pushed back against the “feminized” domestic realism of the Victorian novel, rehabilitating the masculine and heroic epic, underwriting the articulation of what would become Charles Kingsley’s “muscular Christianity” and other forms of sensational fiction.21 A satirical cartoon in Punch from 26 November, 1854 [Fig. 6] lampoons one such British patriarch revelling in the excitement of a journalistic account of the famous “charge of the light brigade,” illustrating the extent to which telegraphic mediation enabled a paradoxical participation in, and distance from, the danger of war; a kind of readerly valour through vicarious excitation; a contradiction of war abroad in the safety of the home.

---

21 As discussed below (Ch 3), this turn was important for the emergence of the “invasion literature” genre, which remains significant to the history of psychological warfare.
Figure 6: Enthusiasm of Paterfamilias

Markovits (2008) deconstructs the cartoon’s rich symbolism, from the children’s exuberance, the mother’s tears, to the eldest daughter’s censure. While the female household consumer would become an important “target audience” for advertisers, the target male became important for supporting what Smythe calls “the military demand management system.”

As time-space compression dis- and re-located and the nineteenth century habitus, Punch’s satirical depiction of the “enthusiasm of paterfamilias” illustrated the changing relationality of the line of communication’s human contours. As British officers faced severe criticism from a war-reading public, managing public opinion became increasingly important to the prosecution of war itself. Thus, the way in which the public experienced war increasingly became part of war itself.
As I argue in the follow chapters, this relationality between war and its publics — the idea that war cannot be separated from how publics understand it — becomes the defining ideology of ‘psychological warfare’ as it emerges in the twentieth century. Significantly, the ideology of psychological warfare transforms the vicarious and risible muscular Christianity satirized by Punch into a kind of real war in which the spectator becomes participant by virtue of their pastoral relationship to public opinion. In a more literal sense than that identified by Foucault (2006, 48), the daily press is increasingly understood as part of a “day-to-day” and private war waged by individuals as constituents of a public in whom war has become interested.

2.2.2 The Interwar Origins of Psychological War

While the mass mediation of warfare produced various forms of vicarious readership, as Mieszkowski notes, it also produced “a mass of spectators consuming war.” As Kennedy Jones – Lord Northcliffe’s business manager at the Daily Mail – would write in 1920, the answer to the question “what sells a newspaper” was decisively war: “war not only creates a supply of news but a demand for it. So deep-rooted is the fascination in war and all things appertaining to it that…a paper has only to be able to put up on its placard ‘A Great Battle’ for its sales to mount up” (p. 198). Or, more succinctly per William Randolph Hearst, “you supply the pictures, I’ll supply the war.” If in the late nineteenth century, political leaders awakened to the power of public opinion, and the necessity of its management for making war, it was during the First World War that public opinion was subjected to intense programs of propaganda in the belligerent countries. Ironically and despite their role in propagating it, the ubiquity and intensity of propaganda during the First
World War intensified elite contempt for public opinion which began to take form in works like Le Bon’s (1895) *Psychologie des Foules*. The sense of contempt discernible in Jones’ above accounting for the popularity of war reporting is significant for reflecting the elite consensus that, in the wake of the First World War, mass audiences represented potentially unruly mobs whose lurid fascination with death and violence expressed the dangerous libidinal and antisocial forces often ascribed by the ruling class to the working [Fig. 7].

![Figure 7: Publication of a Crimean war gazette](image)

*Illustration from the London Illustrated News, emphasizing the public’s unruly hunger for news of the war.*

In contrast and response to elite framing of public opinion as a libidinal mob, First World War propaganda reproduced themes of muscular Christianity in which war and *war spectatorship* was understood to have ennobling effects upon the individual. Though it raised controversy for
depicting the deaths of soldiers, the 1916 British propaganda film *The Battle of the Somme* also provided a model for a muscular Christian interpretation of the war. While some, like the Dean of Durham University in a letter to the *Times*, protested against “an entertainment which wounds the hearts and violates the very sanctities of bereavement,” others, like the British journalist James Douglas, saw in the film a muscular Christian sublime:

> Is it right to let us see men dying? Yes. Is it a sacrilege? No. If our spirit be purged of curiosity and purified with awe the sight is hallowed. There is no sacrilege if we are fit for the seeing. And I think the seeing ennobled and exalted us. There was a religious reverence in the silence closing over the sobs … I say it is regenerative and resurrective for us to see war stripped bare. Heaven knows that we need the supreme katharsis, the ultimate cleansing. We grow indifferent too quickly … These are dreadful sights but their dreadfulness is as wholesome as Tolstoy’s ‘War and Peace’. It shakes the kaleidoscope of war into human reality… I say that these pictures are good for us (James Douglas, *The Star*, 25 Sept, 1916, cited in Gregory 2018)

Significantly, Douglas’ endorsement of the film subtly addresses the detracting position’s attribution of an unseemly “curiosity” to the libidinal masses, which in Douglas’ account is “purified with awe” at the hallowed sight of the war sublime. For Douglas, the decisive factor is not the film, but the watching. In suggesting a “fitness for the seeing,” Douglas reproduced muscular Christian tropes in which spiritual struggle — an individualized and individualizing power — transforms the individual from a passive viewer to an active participant in war.22 This participation, moreover, takes pastoral form: baptismal and “resurrective,” one constitutes oneself through the examination of and struggle over one’s own conscious (*singulatim*) to produce oneself

---

22 Despite being one of the film’s few fabricated scenes, the segment in which British soldiers are shown ‘going over the top’ of trench warfare was among the film’s emotional climaxes, recalling the above discussion of *Punch’s* paterfamilias’ enthusiasm for the charge of the light brigade. See Gregory (2018)
as part of the increasingly decisive public (*omnes*) whose consent becomes necessary for waging war. As I argue in the following chapters, this belief that the libidinal mob can be transformed into a governable pastorate and *made productive* through the spiritual struggle of its individual members becomes central to the political imaginary of psychological warfare in the 20th century.

After the First World War, however, the promised war sublime gave way to public revulsion not only toward the horrors of the war, but over the extent to which propaganda was used by governments to excite and innervate their own populations. Indeed, after the First World War, what Philip Taylor (1980, 486) calls a “propaganda boom” in publishing occurred in which several hundred books and articles appeared debunking the campaigns of agencies like the United States’ Committee on Public Information. At question was not only the emergent culture of de-bunking which eroded public trust in government, but also a reactionary stance from those governments concerning the purported problem of the gullibility — and soon *vulnerability* — of mass publics to propaganda. Among the boom was Harold Lasswell’s (1927) seminal *Propaganda Technique in World War*, which offered an uncharacteristically candid and sometimes irreverent account of the way in which elite consensus emerged in the United States concerning the dangers posed by propaganda to unmanaged democracy.

Unlike many interwar accounts of propaganda, however, Lasswell’s *Propaganda Technique* was not a memoir but a guide. Writing out of the University of Chicago, Lasswell outlined an early neoconservatism which understood democracy as dangerous, unstable, and in need of elite management. While American conservatives had been less reticent in their support of elite rule, it was the liberal democrat who turned against mass populism. Lasswell (1927, 5) is rather the ironist,
however, and his dramatization of the American liberal democratic establishment’s turn to elite technocratic rule is both mocking and instructive:

This whole discussion about the ways and means of controlling public opinion testifies to the collapse of the traditional species of democratic romanticism and to the rise of a dictatorial habit of mind. As long as the democrats were in opposition, they were free to belabour the fact of an infallible though almighty king with the fantasy of an all-wise public. Enthrone the public and dethrone the king! Pass the scepter to the wise […]

Familiarity with the ruling public has bred contempt. Modern reflections upon democracy boil down to the position, more or less contritely expressed, that the democrats were deceiving themselves. The public has not reigned with benignity and restraint. The good life is not in the mighty rushing wind of public sentiment. It is no organic secretion of the horde, but the tedious achievement of the few. The lover of the good life no longer consults Sir Oracle; he pulls the strings of Punch and Judy. Thus argues the despondent democrat. Let us, therefore, reason together, brethren, he sighs, and find the good, and when we have found it, let us find out how to make up the public mind to accept it. Inform, cajole, bamboozle and seduce in the name of the public good. Preserve the majority convention, but dictate to the majority!

Lasswell’s glibness over elite liberal pantomimes of concern for democracy is perhaps refreshing in relief to his contemporaries’ self-serious condescensions, such as those of Reinhold Neibuhr, toward the “stupidity of the average man” and his need for “necessary illusions.”23 Significantly, the conviction that the “somber, discouraged democrat” was compelled to tell the “noble lies” of the platonic philosopher king by the too credulous, too bloodthirsty, too irrational public was a direct response to the scale and intensity of propaganda during the Great War.

______________

23 Niebuhr (1932) continued: “Rationality belongs to the cool observer, but because of the stupidity of the average man, he follows not reason, but faith, and the naive faith requires necessary illusion and emotionally potent oversimplifications which are provided by the myth-maker to keep ordinary person on course.”
If democracy was “no organic secretion of the horde,” neither in reality was the public’s purported stupidity and intemperance. A circular logic prevailed in the interwar period which doubly victimized the credulous citizen who, according to Lasswell (1927, 3), “trusted so much and hated so passionately.” For Americans, credulity toward and trust in their government’s war rationale — from disgust at mass-publicized German atrocities, to belief in the “fight for democracy” — was precisely the evidence now held against them. The evils of democracy were thereby located not in the duplicity of government deception, but in the credulity of the masses toward it. Through a causal reversal, the “stupidity of the average man” was understood as necessitating organized duplicity, not the other way around. Thus did a technocratic elite charge itself with containing the very immoderation and irrationality it had so studiously unleashed during the war.

Lasswell’s caricature of the reticent liberal democrat propagandist corresponds particularly to Walter Lippman’s (1920) thesis in *Public Opinion* that

as a result of psychological research, coupled with the modern means of communication, the practice of democracy has turned a corner… It is no longer possible, for example, to believe in the original dogma of democracy; that the knowledge needed for the management of human affairs comes up spontaneously from the human heart.

It is no accident that, in its discovery of this “crisis of democracy,” the liberal elite of the interwar years invoked the spectre of *psychology* as a ward against popular rule. Moreover, this “crisis of democracy” corresponded to the first articulations of the idea that, through propaganda, benign manipulation, and control of public opinion, populations could be made secure. While the securitization of populations is linked to the history of pacification, the idea that mass industrial democracy could be made internally secure through elite management of public opinion was a
product of the interwar years. The logic of securing populations through propaganda, moreover, was based upon a projection of the war’s logic back onto civil society.

In his discussion of the War, Lasswell (1927, 12) identified the problem for propagandists in the war as having been that “peace [had] come to be regarded as the normal state of society, and not war.” On the contrary, however, Lasswell saw in military hierarchies a model for a “new” democratic ethos of elite management of public opinion, through propaganda, and based on a normalization of military organization for civilian life, namely the model of the drill. Noting that military life “approximates the aggregation of disciplined men in a dehumanizing environment,” Lasswell (ibid, 11) saw the drill as a technique to approximate military discipline for civilian life; a biopolitical imaginary to turn “mechanical organization into a living unity.” Though civilian life remained in some sense the opposite of military life — undisciplined men in a human environment — Lasswell argued that civilian life could be drilled, “not by the regimentation of muscles…, but the repetition of ideas. The Civilian mind is standardized by news and not by drills. Propaganda is the method by which this process is aided and abetted” (ibid).

Here the connection between time-discipline in the form of the military drill becomes most explicit with respect to its civilian counterpart, namely the “drilling of minds” through news. This again runs counter to the liberal imagination for which “news” and the journalistic convention represent propaganda’s opposite number. As will be seen, this articulation of the idea that news, as a container of truthful information and the opposite of propaganda, was central to the articulation of American psychological warfare in the form of the liberal “strategy of truth” as it emerged in the Second World War. Though many activities falling under a loose definition of “psychological
warfare” — especially those emerging from within the Office of Strategic Services and its successor Central Intelligence Agency — are associated with conservative traditions of deception, I argue that psychological warfare, in its attempts to carry out “operations in the domain of truth” (Foucault 2016) can more accurately be understood as an extension of the liberal governmentality with which this chapter has been concerned.

As suggested, central to this longer genealogy of liberal power is the historical articulation of the individual through pastoral processes of “analytic identification” and “specification” of individuals and populations. If the ascent of propaganda made the civilian the object of military interest, a corresponding logic applied military thinking to civilian life, and in these interwar years efforts to construct and identify ‘target audiences’ proliferated in the communication industries. While the first major American advertising agency is generally thought to belong to Volney B. Palmer in Philadelphia in the early 1840s, it was the J. Walter Thompson agency that was, as Matellart (1994, 25) notes, at “the forefront of the refinement of approaches to the consumer, and among the first to formalize the concept of the ‘target audience’..., a process that would become rationalized for Fordist production in the 1920s.”

Lasswell himself was at the forefront of these efforts, heading during the Second World War the Experimental Division for the Study of War Time Communications at the Library of Congress. There Lasswell analysed the propaganda strategies of German broadcasts and print media, producing research which would become foundational to the field of communication studies in the United States (Simpson 1994). Though also interpretive, Lasswell’s Library of Congress research emphasized quantitative metrics — especially concerning the specification of “biological,
psychological, and cultural variables” — as a reaction to what he saw as a preoccupation with the “contemplative approach to international attitudes” (xi). Presaging Barnes & Farish’s (2006) observation that World War Two research & analysis broke and reassembled older academic models in the humanities and social sciences, Lasswell saw the virtue of his wartime research as the delimitation of academic inquiry for the exigencies of war. In place of the “endless list of potentially significant factors and a near-infinity of hypothetical interdependencies,” Lasswell (1927, xi) understood the advantage of his “manipulative approach” to research in its ability to “set limits to inquiry by providing it with criteria.”

Though in the 1920’s Lasswell had not developed this methodology for the study of the “biological, psychological, and cultural variables” of populations, Propaganda Technique nonetheless set out to refine and specify several important target archetypes. Dividing the working classes between “primitives” for whom a Manichean narrative of good vs. evil must be constructed, and organised labour whose “economic interpretation of the war” posed the greatest danger to war planners, Lasswell (1927, 61) again placed crucial emphasis on the liberal subject as a prioritized target for war propaganda. In another sardonic profile of the “pacifistically inclined liberal whose support of the war came at the cost of inner struggle,” (p. 62) Lasswell singles out H.G Wells for particular derision, identifying him as among the class of liberals for whom war enthusiasm “depended upon an elaborately rationalized cluster of war aims.” It is worth noting that, though Lasswell does not necessarily demur the premise of the “irrational masses,” he by no means understood or offered a transcendental rationality to guide the technocratic management of

24 See H.N. Brailsford’s (1914) The War of Steel and Gold; Norman Angell’s (1913) The Great Illusion.
public opinion. On the contrary, ironist Lasswell identified the uses and abuses of rationality as attaching primarily to the sentimentality of the liberal upper and middle classes to which individuals like Wells belonged. In the London *Daily Chronicle* of 20 August, 1914, H.G. Wells lamented that “unless a body of definite ideas is formed and promulgated now,” Allied war aims would “merely beat Germany a little and restore the hateful tension of the last forty years.” To Lasswell, Wells represented on this account the perfect liberal mark:

> his attitude of mind is precisely the one to be striven for by the inventor of war aims; set up an ideal which will arouse enthusiasm of those elements in the nation whose support is desired, and make it clear to them that the main stumbling block is the military enemy. This permits the scrupulous to kill with a clean conscience; or, at least, to admonish the young to do so” (62).

Unlike the “labour ideology” whose “philosophies of economic determination wound the property sentiment of the possessing classes,” Lasswell saw in the liberal conscience a desire to reject material and class analyses of the war, and to replace them with “rationally” articulated war aims of a more abstract politico-juridical nature. With typical candour, Lasswell exposed the canard of elite liberal rationality as a class project to efface the class nature of the war: “if the problem of reconstructing the world is to be shorn of an apparent class bias,” Lasswell noted, “it must be conceived as a problem of a politico-juristic nature…So much for the war aims intended to appease the scruples of a Liberal conscience” (64/67).25

---

25 While Lasswell was obviously not a political Marxist, he believed that the sociology of class could help solve the technical problems of the propagandist. Indeed, in the preface to the 2nd edition of Propaganda Technique, Lasswell wrote that while the military problem of manipulation guided his research, it was emphatically “not a vacation from theory.” On the contrary, he saw the war as an opportunity to contemplate “which theoretical constructs could fruitfully relate to concrete circumstances…from Aristotle through Machiavelli and Hobbes to Marx” (p. xi). Though not particularly sympathetic to the working classes, Lasswell seems to enjoy deconstructing the conceits of liberal ideology and its hostility toward class analysis. Thus, wrote Lasswell, “a war to vindicate international law thus has
Connected to the liberal desire to shear class analysis from the articulation of war aims was the assignment of war guilt to official enemies. Though article 231 of the Versailles Treaty — colloquially the “war guilt clause” — has been the object of numerous historiographical inquiries, attribution of guilt to the enemy was a staple of every belligerent nation’s war propaganda. Thus, political and economic analyses of the causes of the war were obscured by the “geographical assignment” of guilt. Lasswell (1927, 47) sarcastically observed that

the war must not be due to a world system of conducting international affairs, nor to the stupidity or malevolence of all governing classes, but to the rapacity of the enemy. Guilt and guiltlessness must be assessed geographically, and all the guilt must be on the other side of the frontier. If the propagandist is to mobilize the hate of the people, he must see to it that everything is circulated which establishes the sole responsibility of the enemy.”

As Lasswell jeeringly discovered the geographical basis of war guilt, he similarly identified a “geography” to the politics of truth governing the production of information explaining the war to citizens. He notes “the curious fact that in such emergencies [as the lead up to WWI] the truth seekers find different truths, and that the differences are territorially segregated according to national boundaries,” as evidenced by the symmetries of German literature on war rationale when compared to those exemplified by the Oxford War Pamphlets or the Princeton symposium (Lasswell 1922, 53).

the sanction of bourgeois morality about it and avoids anything which tinges of a class issue” (65). By the Second World War, the issue of class had almost entirely been smuggled out of psychological warfare, even in its planning and internal discussions. Indeed, hostility toward class analysis, and a refusal to understand the class dimensions of warfare became serious obstacles to effective psychological warfare in the Cold War period and beyond.
2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to outline what I have called the pastoral spaces of ‘communication as police’. I have argued that the establishment of the press can be understood as form of pastoral power that links together, through spaces of circulation, the governmental scales of population and individual that Foucault argued has been central to the historical development of liberalism. In doing so I have attempted to spatialize Foucault’s theory of pastoral cum liberal power through an analysis of the material basis of the press. I have argued that the governmental structure of the American press continued the pastoral project of “directing the conscience of individuals” as the pastor the flock, but was able to diffuse direction in the form of the circulation of newspapers on one hand and the production and commodification of audiences on the other. From this perspective, the circulation of information must not be understood as the simple transmission of information, but as forms of production; as the circulation of fixed capital as a “means of social reproduction” with which commodified audiences work.

I have attempted to follow Raymond Williams in thinking past “a perspective of ‘consumption’ which is unable to develop the always significant and sometimes decisive relations between these modes of consumption, which are commonly also forms of more general social organization.” I have argued that audience commodification represents a continuation of historical processes of police, though subsumed by the logic of the market. Moreover, I have suggested that this process follows a “pastoral” form of social organization, one in which mechanical reproduction standardizes individual experiences across the scale of population. In addition to creating standardized liberal political-economic space, I have attempted to show how communication in
the nineteenth century combined to create space on smaller scales, notably the home and other spaces of readerly leisure — a combination that, as Deborah Cowen (2004) notes, persists as the “intimate” relationship between domestic life and national imaginaries; between “livingroom and lebensraum.”

In considering the first instances of war reporting in the telegraphic era, I have highlighted some of the enduring aspects of the mediation of war to commodified audiences, i.e. what Dallas Smythe has called the “military demand management system”. As a broader part of what Foucault calls the “moralization of the working class,” I have shown that a particular kind of “muscular Christianity” attained in the mediated experience of the Crimean War at a distance. Furthermore, I have suggested that the experience of a “virtual mobility” enabled by daily war reporting attached to the ascendant time-space discipline of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century. Paradoxically, this new sense of mobility – enabled by the mediated construction of spaces of (in)visibility – was predicated upon the relative spatial fixity of the individual whose progressive alienation from their labour drove them to seek new satisfactions in private life and a leisure time increasingly given over to exploitation through the economically productive activity of audience work.

Finally, I have argued that the experience of massive government propaganda efforts during the First World War helped to produce in the interwar years both public outrage and a reactionary push by liberal elites to frame public credulity as a kind of vulnerability and insecurity at the very root of modern democratic government. In the following chapters I trace forward the development of these pastoral lines of communication as they coalesce around the theory and practice of
“psychological warfare,” as it emerged in the early years of the Second World War. As an avatar for propaganda and the power of the press, however, I argue that the construction of “psychological warfare” has often reflected, not only the first-order techniques and power-knowledges of pastoral ‘communication as police’, but second-order ideas of how the power of propaganda operates. In this way, the involuted rhetoric of psychological warfare became a kind of ‘propaganda about propaganda’ with its own internal logic and political uses. While I attempt to trace the first-order history of American psychological warfare and its attempt to construct pastoral spaces of communication, this dissertation also traces the second-order history of psychological warfare as a rhetorical technique and a geopolitical imagination. Ironically, the second-order history of psychological warfare often attempts to obscure the first, offering ideological analyses of the power of the press in place of the material. Like Innis who argued that “freedom of the press” obscured the construction of monopolies of knowledge, this dissertation is interested in divining the ways in which liberal assumptions about communication have surrounded the construction of psychological warfare and continue to obscure the operation of power.

In this light, this dissertation can be understood as an attempt to trace the uneven geography of American psychological warfare’s lines of communication. As discussed above, I take seriously the Clausewitzean identification of the line of communication as a relational space defined by its human contours. In tracing the historical and geographical extension and development of American lines of communication, I also take seriously Clausewitz’s insistence that “a change of the system of communication is much less easy of accomplishment in an enemy's country than in our own.” Though a seemingly banal observation, it informs this dissertation’s structure and occupation with showing the uneven relational spatiality of American psychological warfare’s
lines of communication. In chapters 3 and 4 respectively, I discuss how the advent of “psychological warfare” altered lines American lines of communication, first within the United States and, then in the theatres of the Second World War. In chapter 3, I argue that psychological warfare first existed as a second-order geopolitical imagination irrigating and altering domestic lines of American communication. In chapter 4, conversely, I show how psychological warfare only later assumed its first-order meaning in strategies to target and administer foreign populations at war. In chapters 5 and 6, I reproduce this structure to trace the historical and geographical development of domestic and foreign lines of American communication during the Cold War. In both chapter couplets I argue that, while there is little reason to believe that American psychological warfare effected “a change of the system of communication” in enemy countries, second-order constructions of psychological warfare as both threat and weapon fortified monopolies of knowledge and domestic lines of communication.
Chapter 3: A New Geography of Defense? The Birth of Psychological Warfare

Propaganda was often talked about as though it were a magical force emancipated from the limitations of time, place, and figure... We know that propagandists are socialized in bodies politics whose specific contextual features set limits on potential perception, imagination, and behavior, and that propagandists seek to influence audiences whose socialization is similarly circumscribed.

— Harold Lasswell, Propaganda Technique in the Great War

In this chapter, I examine the emergence of “psychological warfare” in the United States in the years prior to American entry into the Second World War. I detail the work of a concerted group of American interventionists in government, media and the academy who framed German psychological warfare as a new and unprecedented threat purporting to alter the geography of war and challenge the viability of popular American isolationism. Drawing upon popular anxieties concerning the threat of domestic and foreign “fifth columns,” psychological warfare claimed to be a new and scientifically calibrated form of propaganda working on unsuspecting civilian targets. Though American psychologists worked to articulate the threat, the construction of psychological warfare was nevertheless most directly tied to the spectre of German geopolitics. In this chapter, I detail these connections to demonstrate that psychological warfare in the United States preceded itself: a propaganda campaign about German propaganda, “psychological warfare” gave birth to a new geopolitical imagination in which the security of populations became tied to the circulation of news and information. Connected to the corollary concept of “civilian morale,” psychological warfare claimed to make the thoughts, beliefs and opinions of populations the terrain of new and
Political geographers have considered psychological warfare primarily in two contexts: its place within the broader militarization of the Cold War social sciences (Farish 2007, 2010; Pinkerton et al 2011; Whyte 2017), and the revival of the Cold War “battle for hearts and minds” during the 21st century’s “war on terror” (Anderson 2011; Belcher 2012; Ek 2000; Gregory 2010). Outside geography, critical emphasis remains on the Cold War (Robin 2009; Solovey 2013), and students of both psychology (Herman 1995) and communication (Simpson 1994; Matellart 1994) have written accounts of their field’s involvement in psychological war research and practice. While it is generally accepted that “psychological warfare” coalesced around the Second World War as the formalization of wartime propaganda activities, little attention has been given to the specific ways in which the term emerged in the United States in the two years prior to American entry into the war.

After the war, formal theory and doctrine attempted to insert and naturalize “psychological warfare” into conventional military history. Written in partnership with Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Office of War Information (OWI) veteran Paul Linebarger’s (1948) *Psychological Warfare* became a foundational text, citing Gideon’s ruse against the Midianites in the *Old Testament* as its first known instance. The text

---

26 Given the vagaries of “psychological warfare,” many cultural and political geographers address cognate themes (Cowen 2004; Dittmer 2005; Sharp 2001). Similarly, psychological warfare is implicated in geographies of communication (Dittmer et al 2014) and what Pinkerton & Dodds (2009) have called “radio geopolitics.” Foucauldian and biopolitical research suggests psychological warfare’s “population-centric” focus (Coleman & Grove 2009; Elden 2007).
reimagined historical figures as “psychological warriors” including Athenian General Themistocles (480 BC), Chinese Emperor Wang Mang (1 AD), Genghis Kahn (c1200), and Thomas Paine (1776). Beginning in 1953, The US Army also contracted Johns Hopkins University’s Operations Research Office (ORO)\textsuperscript{27} to produce three definitive volumes, beginning with \textit{The Nature of Psychological Warfare} by Wilbur Schramm, another OWI veteran and a pioneer of Communication Studies. Schramm (1953, 5) reproduced Linebarger’s vignettes on psychological warfare’s ancient origins, claiming that “nations have been waging it since there have been nations.”

This chapter opposes this post-war “search for origins” (Foucault 1977) by accounting for the specific and contingent circumstances under which “psychological warfare” emerged in the United States between 1940-41.\textsuperscript{28} While deception, coercion, and persuasion may be “as old as nations,” the emergence of psychological warfare in these years was the result of a concerted effort stressing not the timelessness of psychological warfare, but its \textit{novelty} as “Hitler’s frightful weapon” (Taylor 1941). An episode on the eve of the Pearl Harbor attack illustrates the fevered pitch that pronouncements on psychological warfare had taken by the end of 1941. In a speech to a civics club in Madison, Wisconsin, Nelson Rockefeller warned his audience of the “new kind of psychological war” being waged by Germany in the western hemisphere. It was in his capacity as

\textsuperscript{27} Founded in 1948 at Johns Hopkins University under contract with the US Army, the Operations Research Office (ORO) was among the first instances centers to refine the field of operations research, which relied heavily on mathematical modeling of and applying principles of scientific management to military operations. See Farish (2010, 136).

\textsuperscript{28} Foucault (1977, 80) insists that “a genealogy of values, morality, asceticism, and knowledge will never confuse itself with a quest for their ‘origins,’ will never neglect as inaccessible the vicissitudes of history. On the contrary, it will cultivate the details and accidents that accompany every beginning; it will be scrupulously attentive to their petty malice.”
Roosevelt’s Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA), not to mention as a preeminent businessman with interests in the region, that Rockefeller issued the warning against German propaganda. Total war, he argued, affected not just armies, but “all people and nations in their entirety.” The “new reality” of psychological war, he claimed, demanded not only material, but also “spiritual, moral and mental forces.” The need was “unprecedented,” he claimed, due to Germany’s “perfection of the methods of psychological warfare” to which German victories in France, Norway, and Sweden had been credited. Psychological warfare, Rockefeller insisted, had created “a new geography of defense” (New York Times, Dec. 7, 1941, emphasis mine).

In this chapter, I attend to the strange beginnings of “psychological warfare” in the United States first by detailing the construction of its “new geography of defense” by journalists and academics within the remit of William “Wild Bill” Donovan’s nascent Office of the Coordinator of Information (CoI). Following recent work in political geography exploring the relationship between geographers and the early American intelligence community (Barnes 2006, 2008; Barnes & Crampton 2011; Barnes & Farish 2006; Crampton 2014; Crampton et al 2014), I map Donovan’s network, analyze its primary literatures in the popular and academic presses, and show how “a new geography of defense” was constructed around the spectre of psychological warfare. I reveal, moreover, that the construction of psychological warfare as a strategy to coax reticent Americans into the war represents an important and formative moment in US-UK intelligence relations, (Aldrich 2004; Dittmer 2015).

29 The CIAA was meant to strengthen economic and cultural ties between North and South American in the context of perceived German threats to Monroe doctrine prerogative. With the establishment of the OWI and OSS in 1942, Rockefeller’s office maintained its autonomy as the agency responsible for conducting the America propaganda effort in South America.
In this chapter’s second half, I detail the placement of the obscure German geographer Ewald Banse at the center of Anglo-American alarmism over German psychological warfare. I show the role played by American geographers not only in propagating the Banse narrative, but in linking psychological warfare to broader narratives surrounding German geopolitics (Crampton & Tuathail 1996; Murphy 2014; Tuathail 1996). Arguing that popular disavowals of German geopolitics were tightly tied to the portrayal of German psychological warfare as a “strategy of terror,” I conclude by showing how the articulation of American psychological warfare as a liberal “strategy of truth” which rhetorically positioned the United States above the vulgar geopolitical fray. Furthermore, I argue that by constructing psychological warfare as a ‘psychological’ phenomenon, the American intelligence community was able to spatially decontextualize it from the places in which it occurred.

3.1 Fifth Column Lessons

In the years following World War I there occurred in the belligerent nations what Philip Taylor (1980, 486) identifies as a “propaganda boom” in literature discussing and debunking the excesses of wartime propaganda. “Vexed at the unknown cunning which seems to have duped and degraded them,” as Harold Lasswell (1927, 2) put it, popular outrage was voiced against propaganda which “stood in relation to information as murder to killing” (Cull 2008, 9). When tasked with selling intervention to isolationist and war-weary Americans by President Roosevelt in the Summer of
1940, William Donovan’s emphasis on psychological warfare as Germany’s new “secret weapon” attempted to harness this popular anxiety over propaganda but was also confronted by public apprehension toward efforts to bring the United States into the war. In this chapter I argue that Donovan’s effort to construct popular fear concerning German psychological warfare in the Summer of 1940 was central to public justifications for the creation of his Office of the Coordinator of Information (OCI), which became in 1942 the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). In all these tasks Donovan was aided, however, by partnership with a secret branch of British intelligence called the British Security Coordination (BSC), led by William Stephenson (the storied spy “Intrepid”) and headquartered in New York at 30 Rockefeller Plaza (Mahl 1998; Conant 2009; Stevenson 2000). Together, Donovan and the BSC leveraged contacts in the academy, radio, and press in support of several well-connected interventionist organizations, including the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, the Council for Democracy, and the Fight for Freedom Committee.

Prefiguring psychological warfare, interventionists publicized the threat of a purported “fifth column”: subversives within the United States working on behalf of Germany. The Fifth Column had been the title of Ernest Hemingway’s only play in 1939, a political drama informed by his experience in the Spanish Civil War. The term gained currency in the United States, however, 

30 In the Summer of 1940, only 3% of Americans favored declaring war on Germany, though almost all desired British victory (Cantril 1940).
31 The OSS in turn laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) after the war, of which Donovan is often regarded as they first unofficial director. See Troy (1981) for an fuller account.
32 Key figures included Council for Democracy founder Henry Luce and his Fortune magazine protégé C.D. Jackson, who would go on to occupy top posts in the new field of psychological war first at the OSS and later in the Eisenhower administration (see below). Other agents of the BSC are thought to include Walter Lippman, Dorothy Thompson, Walter Winchell, and Arthur Hayes Sulzbeger (Mahl 1998). See also Trudel (2017).
primarily through the efforts of interventionists like *Chicago Daily News* reporter Leland Stowe, who in covering Germany’s invasion of Norway – and later in his *exposé*-style *No Other Road to Freedom* (1941) – claimed that Norway had been defeated by a “fifth column” that had sapped “national morale” through propaganda, rumour, and sabotage. Norway had not been captured by armed force, he claimed, but “by means of a gigantic conspiracy” and a “perfectly oiled political plot” (MacDonnell 1995, 113). The explanation soon gained currency in the European and North American press, advancing the idea that fifth columnism could conquer nations “first and foremost from the inside.”

Against popular isolationism, interventionists sought to imbue public opinion with a new and urgent political significance by framing it not as a reflection of democratic agency, but as a new kind of political-military front vulnerable to enemy attack. A full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* (June 10, 1940) by the Committee to Defend America was typical: under the large-type headline “STOP HITLER NOW,” the ad’s text instructed Americans to guard against the Nazi “fifth column” which was “well trained in the dissemination of poisonous propaganda,” and had as its objective “the destruction of national unity.” The ad’s copy, written by Roosevelt’s close friend and future Office of War Information (OWI) mainstay Robert Sherwood, encapsulated the interventionist strategy: emphasize the threat and sophistication of German propaganda, while framing American public opinion as a battleground surrendered by isolationists (Laurie 1996, 38).

Despite the *Sturm und Drang*, there was scarce evidence of a German fifth column in the United States. Knightly (2013) suggests it was a myth created by British spies to excuse their own intelligence failures, particularly around Germany’s preemption of Britain’s own invasion of
Norway. It was nonetheless a useful political expedient for branding isolationists as agents and dupes of German propaganda. As American historian and isolationist Harry Elmer Barnes noted in late 1940, “the fifth column nonsense has taken the place of the atrocity stories in the first World War.” Isolationism, he added, was increasingly branded as unpatriotic “fifth column activity” (p. 560).

Isolationists rallied around the America First committee, which was founded in 1940 and drew an incongruous constituency from anti-war activists and communists to nativist fascists and pro-business conservatives (MacDonald 1941). Celebrity aviator and white supremacist Charles Lindbergh (1939) was its highest profile spokesman, though other members included Gerald Ford and John F. Kennedy. Recriminations between isolationists and interventionists intensified in the wake of the March 1941 Lend-Lease debates, which drastically increased American material support to the Allies. One interventionist committee — Friends of Democracy, Inc. — accused America First of being a “Nazi transmission belt,” prompting Lindbergh to rejoin in an August 1941 radio address that

the one-fifth who are for war call the four-fifths who are against war the ‘fifth column.’ They know that the people of this country will not vote for war, and they therefore plan on involving us through subterfuge (cited in Cole 1953, 54).

It was not a baseless accusation. In addition to his work with the BSC, concern over fifth columnism had been the ostensible purpose of Bill Donovan’s fateful trip to London in the summer of 1940, where the groundwork for his Office of the Coordinator of Information was laid (Troy

\[\text{33 See, The America First Committee: The Nazi Transmission Belt (Cole 1953, 109).}\]
In London, Donovan was advised on the “problem” of fifth columnism by British intelligence, and though none existed, constructing the threat of an internal enemy linked to Germany was crucial to the establishment of his agency. As the Associated Press reported, Donovan was “slated for a big post” on the merits of his “investigations of the fifth column” (New York Times, July 6, 1941). The fabrication of a fifth column threat to countenance an official response to it can therefore be understood as among Donovan’s first and domestic intelligence operations as Coordinator of Information.

Central to the effort was the work of American journalist Edgar Ansel Mowrer, who accompanied Donovan to London at the request of Frank Knox. Knox was both Roosevelt’s Secretary of the Navy, and Mowrer’s boss as owner of the Chicago Daily News. Upon their return from England, Mowrer fanned the flames of fifth column alarmism in a series of widely-published editorials which were also republished as the pamphlet Fifth Column Lessons for America. At Roosevelt’s insistence, Donovan signed his name to the text, and Knox himself penned its foreword (Troy 1981, 33). Fifth Column Lessons (Donovan & Mowrer 1940, 6) formalized several tenets of what would soon become psychological warfare. “Since no country has ever been unanimous,” it argued, “a fifth column has existed potentially in every land in every war.” The logic of fifth columnism further presented American public opinion, not as a mechanism for political deliberation, but as a new front in modern war. Moreover, they argued that it was “in a democracy that the Fifth Column can function most freely and effectively.” The alarmism presaged the threat of German psychological warfare as a prototypical if as yet unrealized “everywhere war” (Gregory 2011): public opinion had become a war front, democracy on this front was a liability, and the front was everywhere.
Figure 8: The fifth column menaces America
Figure 9: The fifth column menaces South America
Tabloid exposés of fifth column plots followed Mowrer and Donavan’s intervention, bolstering and illustrating the geopolitical conspiracies that circulated in the press (Smith 2003; Tuathail 1996). A map [Fig. 8] published by the anti-labour Constitutional Education League (1941) purported to show an incredible concentration of fascist and communist fifth column organizations within the United States. The locations presumably corresponded to the hundreds of unions, organizations, and obscure clubs listed on the reverse side, many linked to Germany, Italy, and Eastern Europe, as well as to black American political organizations. The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was especially condemned. A note on Nazis called them “brown Bolsheviks” and “Stalin’s stooges,” implying socialist fraternity between Nazism and communism despite the looming eastern front. Furthermore, it invoked the geopolitical bogey, attributing to Karl Haushofer a quote boasting of the “strong committed army” that could be “recruited overnight in the United States.”

Employing the genre’s pointed use of the second-person address, the map warned that “to be effective you must be informed.” It invoked a kind of “obligation to know” (Foucault 2014, 291) in which individual responsibility to understand the geopolitical contours of the war articulated a new sense of security against foreign plots. A tabloid newspaper Beware the Fifth Column (1940) similarly prescribed self-defence through geopolitical knowledge, reproducing a map from the New York Daily Mirror [Fig. 9] which illustrated “a frightening story” of German invasion from South America. The reader was instructed to note air bases and routes, invoking Roosevelt’s (1940) warning that German air raids could be launched from the south. As will be seen, the map foreshadowed the important discovery a year later of a similar “secret map” purporting to show Germany’s territorial ambition in South American.
Taken together, the maps recalled what Heffernan (2000b, 272) has identified as the “hysterical geography” of the early twentieth century in which controversy was fabricated over foreign spies, invasion, and geographical knowledge in war. As Heffernan argues,

spy stories reached a crescendo of collective hysteria after 1914, with the more popular newspapers cynically abusing public anxiety to boost circulation figures. Lord Northcliffe's *Daily Mail* carried dozens of articles… emphasising the weakness of Britain's defences against enemy agents who were apparently operating at will amongst an unsuspecting British public, sketching coastlines and fortifications, perusing Ordnance Survey maps, and secretly preparing for invasion.

Rooted within a geographical imagination established by the popular literary genres of espionage and invasion literature (Hughes & Wood 2014; Kirkwood 2013), early twentieth century invasion anxieties were harnessed to pursue domestic political agendas. Thus, as Heffernan notes, outlandish claims that “hundreds of thousands” of secret German agents operated in Britain proliferated alongside calls for both a massive re-armament of the British fleet and compulsory conscription across the Empire. Fifth column alarmism in the United States can therefore be understood to have produced its own “hysterical geography” in which South America became a “dagger at the back,” and a geopolitical imaginary of “encirclement” illustrated lurking and hidden domestic threats (Kirby 2000, 62).

Within this broader alarmist context, Mowrer and Donovan made what were among the first gestures toward the “psychological” dimension of fifth columnism through unsourced claims concerning the existence of a secret “psychological laboratory” in Berlin. The claim was similar to contemporary assertions that Karl Haushofer, Germany’s leading geopolitician, ran a secret “Institute for Geopolitics” in Munich (Tuathail 1996; Smith 2003; Murphy 2014). Though no such institute existed, the American press amplified both claims, portraying German geopolitics as a
science for waging war, and psychology as a new weaponized field for propagandists. A key authority cited for both claims was Herman Rauschning, whose 1939 *The Revolution of Nihilism* had introduced American readers to Haushofer as Germany’s “geopolitical mastermind.” A former Nazi party member, Rauschning fled Germany in 1936, writing several books denouncing the regime. One prominent example was his 1940 *Conversations with Hitler*, which is now widely believed to have been fabricated. Nonetheless, Mowrer and Donovan (1940, 6) drew heavily on the fabulated text to connect German propaganda to fifth columnism, emphasizing its “psychological” dimension. Via Rauschning’s forged text, they cite Hitler as having said that

> the place of artillery will in future be taken by revolutionary propaganda, to break down the enemy psychologically before the armies begin to function at all. The enemy people must be demoralized and ready to capitulate, before military action can even be thought of… Mental confusion, indecisiveness, panic, these are our weapons.

Though not yet “psychological warfare,” fifth column alarmism served to acclimatize the American public to the idea of “psychology” as a terrain upon which alien forces fomented internal threats. Significantly, Mowrer and Donovan framed the threat of fifth columnism as specific to democratic government. “Despotic or totalitarian countries ruthlessly suppress [the fifth column] at home while exploiting it elsewhere” they wrote, while it is “in a democracy that the Fifth Column can function most freely.” The logic again presented American public opinion not as a reflection of popular political will, but as a new front in modern war in which democracy itself was a liability. The fall of France was presented as a “masterpiece of the Fifth Column,” (p. 8)

---

34 See Manalowski (1985) and Janssen (1985). The US edition was ominously titled *Voices of Destruction.*
illustrating the need for an organized response to internal threats from abroad:

if France, with its highly centralized administration and all-seeing police, could not effectively deal with enemy propaganda, in time of war how much chance has the decentralized and pluralistic American democracy—unless it learned from the experience of Germany's European victims and took the necessary steps in time (p. 16).

The rhetorical force of framing American “democratic pluralism” as a vulnerability to psychological and fifth column attack presaged an enduring theme of American politics, namely the claim that publicizing domestic cleavages and antagonisms — specifically concerning race and class — served the interests of foreign powers and imperial rivals; now the Third Reich and soon the Soviet Union, who wished to “divide and conquer” the too-liberal, too-permissive political culture of the United States. Donovan and Mowrer painted France as a county defeated by class conflicts: a fearful ruling class seduced by the promise of totalitarian order, and a hostile working class reticent to pay the cost of war “in sweat and blood.”

For a conservative like Donovan, this must be understood as a suspension, not a resolution of these tensions. However, the logic was clear: race and class struggles supported German psychological warfare objectives and could therefore could be understood not in terms of civil democracy, but in terms of war. “Those personal privileges which in our democracy we value so highly” wrote Mowrer and Donovan, “make us particularly vulnerable to this new form of warfare” (p. 2). It was

35 “Jealousy and antagonism between different classes of society as well as between various political, racial, and religious groups” represented “an effective means of weakening a country, by disrupting its unity of purpose and action” (p. 1).
the articulation of a logic of political exception to suspend democratic government in order to
defend it. As Kenneth Burke keenly observed (1942, 405) in an essay on “War and Cultural Life,”

the present need to defend democracy rather than simply to use it (as we used it and abused it in times of peace) restores it as a motive to the role of purpose by placing it in jeopardy. This transformation of the democratic motive from connotations of problematical actuality to connotations of futurity also fits well with the logic of the military motive, which requires great modifications of democracy as an actuality but can retain democracy "substantially" by making these modifications in the name of democracy as a purpose. And the disfranchised, such as the natives of India or the Negroes of the South, can logically be asked to defend democracy as a purpose — even when they could not be asked to defend it as an actuality.

As a forerunner to the concept of psychological warfare, Mowrer and Donovan’s Fifth Column Lessons articulated the logic of democratic exceptionalism based on a new concept of warfare in which both foreign mass propaganda and clandestine infiltration combined to make a nation’s domestic civilian population — their thoughts, opinions, and beliefs — a “psychological” front of modern warfare. The logic was the culmination of the liberal panic over the vulnerability and manipulability of the public in the inter-war years (Ch. 2), and the beginning of a more expansive conception of population security tied its political opinions and ideologies. As yet, however, this emergent concept of population security — soon “national morale” — was crucially and consciously uncoupled from territory. Indeed, the geographical deracination of psychological warfare was fundamental to the threat that it could take hold anywhere. Again: “since no country has ever been unanimous, a fifth column has existed potentially in every land in every war.”

Fifth column alarmism served to acclimatize the American public to the idea of psychological war. It presaged Rockefeller’s “new geography of defense,” unsettling spatial and temporal conventions
of war by arguing that it took place at a distance, before formal declarations, and inside one’s own country. It was not, however, until proper articulation of the “new reality of psychological warfare” that this geopolitical imaginary took full expression. In the meantime, Donovan’s proposed course of action would become the interventionist standard, namely that the United States should spend massive amounts of money to “counter” the German effort. Citing an unsourced figure of $200 million, Donovan suggested the scale of spending he envisioned (for his own Office of the Coordinator of Information) to avoid the fate of France and the low countries:

How above all can foreigners living under relatively mild and civilized governments be induced voluntarily to betray their own countries for Hitler's Germany? It seems mysterious. The answer is $200,000,000 spent annually on organization and propaganda abroad. The immensity of this sum is the secret (p. 10).

3.2 Into the Front: Annihilating the Spaces of American Isolationism

“For in the war of nerves the French and British were not simply pitted against Germany, but against a geographical-ideological complex.”

– Edmond Taylor, The Strategy of Terror, 1940

The introduction of the idea of psychological warfare proper to the American public was made most directly by Edmond Taylor, a journalist working for the Chicago Tribune’s Paris office. After the fall of France in the Summer of 1940, Taylor wrote and rushed publication of The Strategy of Terror: Europe’s Inner Front, which built upon themes established by Stowe, Mowrer, and Donovan. Though Taylor is often omitted from histories of psychological warfare, his work predates the term’s commonly recognized origin — the Committee for National Morale’s (1941)
German Psychological Warfare — by a full year. In contrast to the latter’s academic tones, *The Strategy of Terror* (1940, 2) possessed what Dalby (2007) calls a “tabloid realism,” purporting to take readers “in to the front” for a view of “the havoc wrought by psychological war on the battlefield of the mind.” Though sensationalist, Taylor’s *Strategy of Terror* advanced important and enduring claims about the existence and nature of psychological warfare, namely that *civilians are its targets*, that it is *guided by scientific expertise*, and that it is *unbound by space and time*.

Though it is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the collaboration, Taylor was an asset of the British Security Coordination (Mahl 1996), which leveraged contacts in the American press — with the support of Donovan and President Roosevelt — to disseminate unattributed interventionist propaganda to the American public. Taylor was, moreover, one of the “remarkable foreign correspondents” personally recommended by Robert Sherwood to William Donovan for employment in his Office of the Coordinator of Information (CoI), even *before* its formal establishment in July of 1941 (Troy 1981, 85). Taylor would also go on to become a major figure at the OSS (Smith 1972) where he remained loyal to Donovan through several interagency disputes (notably with the OWI’s Robert Sherwood).

As one colleague of Taylor’s at the Office of the Coordinator of Information would later recall (Poynter 1944), the Office’s early efforts to recruit “topflight talent” among journalists had largely failed, since “before Pearl Harbor … the idea of working for government propaganda was repugnant.” The relatively unknown Taylor, however, “had a more cynical attitude than, say, Lowell Mellett [of *Why We Fight*]…, a philosophic difference.” Indeed, as a declassified secret memorandum dated 17 August 1942 from Donovan to Brigadier General W. B. Smith reveals, Edmond Taylor was employed at the OSS’s New York office, where he specifically served as
“cover for [the] circulation of information, true or misleading” (OSS 1942, 306). As Donovan noted, the secrecy surrounding these “misleading information” activities at the New York office was so acute that “much of the necessary background is unwritten and accessible only through oral conference.”

In *The Strategy of Terror*, Taylor recounted his first-hand experiences in France before and during the Nazi invasion. Though largely forgotten, more than any other individual Edmond Taylor advanced claims concerning the existence and nature of psychological warfare that supported the interventionist position that the United States was under attack from an unseen German plot to control the minds of the American people. In narrating Germany’s supposed defeat of France through “psychological warfare,” Taylor articulated the tenets of what I will call “the moral economy of psychological warfare.” Presaging the special relationship that would arise between the United States’ own version of psychological warfare and the practice of aerial bombing, I draw upon Gregory’s (2017) identification of “the moral economy of bombing” to illustrate the significant parallels. Like bombing, I argue that the moral economy of psychological warfare revolves around the claims that it is *objective*, that it is *manly*, that it *saves lives*, and that it is *lawful*. Like the practice of bombing civilians, which was vociferously denounced by American leaders when originally perpetrated by Germans, psychological warfare was soon rehabilitated for American use, and distinguished from German’s “strategy of terror” through recourse to this moral economy. Beyond and through the individual tenets of its moral economy, however, Taylor also suggests radical changes to the political geography of warfare pursuant to Germany’s purported invention of psychological war.

Central to the early construction of German psychological warfare was the claim that it was
objective — not only a new and intractable reality of modern war, but guided by scientific expertise. In *The Strategy of Terror*, Taylor reprised Mowrer and Donovan’s claim — via Rauschning’s apocryphal *Conversations With Hitler* — that German propaganda was calibrated in a secret “psychological laboratory,” contributing to the foundational myth that psychological warfare was a highly technical and scientific enterprise. Ironically, Taylor’s exposition of German psychological warfare also employed the World War I propaganda theme of decrying the “barbarism” of German *Kultur*, an Othering tactic to transpose racial and colonial narratives onto the nominally white and European German people. “In one sense,” wrote Taylor (1940, 70), drawing upon his purported first-hand experience of psychological warfare in France,

> it was like some magical war of witch-doctors in the jungle, primitive savages willing one another to destruction, and in fact the mentality of some of the arch-propagandists like Goebbels seemed to me very close to that of primitive witch-doctors… Yet the cold-blooded technical organization and the scientific knowledge back of this modern magic were very far from the jungle… German propaganda was scientifically controlled and checked in a special ‘psychological laboratory’ attached to the Ministry of Propaganda.

Though it invoked an incongruous sense of preternatural German scientism, *The Strategy of Terror*’s exposition of the “scientific knowledge back” of Germany’s psychological warfare was patently un-technical. While unsubstantiated, Taylor’s (1940, 69) emphasis on German military science dovetailed with emerging accounts of geopolitical “super-scientist” Karl Haushofer, again traceable to the enterprising if mendacious Hermann Rauschning. Taylor further advanced a social-science fiction in which Germany possessed “scientific knowledge of the inner forces which determine opinion and control nerves.”

36 Though perhaps a risible example of what would become

---

36 Here the parallels to the emergence of “Chinese brainwashing” in the 1950s are particularly stark. See Lemov (2011) and Melley (2011).
the “hypodermic needle” model of propaganda (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955) in which elite managers of public opinion were believed capable of frictionless manipulation of individuals and mass audiences, it nonetheless foreshadowed what Simpson (1994) calls the “push button” fantasies of post-war American communication studies.37

Taylor’s insistence that psychological warfare derived its power from advances in psychological science had several important rhetorical functions. First, it established the moral economic tenet of psychological warfare’s “objectivity” by grounding it in the authority of psychology as a social science. Second, it distanced psychological warfare from the propaganda of the First World War which two decades of inter-war debunking had shown to have been primarily a matter of duplicity and deception by the governing classes. Against my analysis of the rootedness of the power of the press in the pastoral time-spaces of information circulation and audience commodification, psychological warfare rhetorically dislocated power from these spaces, posing psychological warfare not as a material problem open to political redress, but as an esoteric and technical problem of the human mind. In their insistence upon the psychological and therefore the individuated, Taylor and his colleagues at the Office of the Coordinator of Information advanced an idealist theory of communication. If Lasswell was correct that “philosophies of economic determination wound the property sentiment of the possessing classes,” the construction of psychological warfare as a problem of the mind obscured the basis of the power of the press in the pastoral time-spaces of ‘communication as police’.

37 For a discussion of the way in which “push button fantasies” reflected what Sherry (1987) calls the rhetoric of technique, and the way in which psychological warfare more broadly combined with the logic of bombing as a population-centric strategy of police, see Chapter 4.
The elision of the material basis of communication power was helped in part by the invention and semi-popularization of shortwave radio during the 1920s. Through shortwave broadcast, radio signals could be carried across oceans, and in theory an American listenership for German programming could be developed. Much was made in the press of English-language German radio programming like that of American born announcers William Joyce (“Lord Haw Haw” in Britain) and Mildred Gillars (“Axis Sally”).³⁸ Studies conducted in the United States on German shortwave broadcasts between 1940-41 found them to be “friendly” in tone toward “ordinary” Americans, but singled out specific targets for censure, namely capitalists, Jews, newspapers, and politicians. A major theme was British duplicity, particularly the claim that Britain was conspiring to bring the United States into the war against the latter’s best interest. Broadcasts attempted to counter interventionist claims, and to assure Americans that Germany had no military designs on the United States. There was even an attempt to justify the invasion of Poland through recourse to early American imperialism, likening it to what German broadcasts called the “Texan Anschluss” of 1846 (Graves 1941).

It was perhaps for good reason, however, that alarmists like Taylor and Donovan eschewed material analysis of German psychological warfare. Though studies had been conducted in journals like Public Opinion Quarterly, soon to become the Cold War clearinghouse for American psychological warriors, knowledge of German psychological warfare’s scant purchase on American listeners remained subterranean during the decisive years of psychological war

³⁸ After the war, both were convicted of treason. Gillars served twelve years in the United States, while Joyce was hanged in England in 1946, making him the last person executed for treason in the United Kingdom.
alarmism. As noted by the director of the Princeton Listening Center, soon to become a key collaborator of the OSS/CIA, it remained a “curious fact” that despite the “generally recognized importance of propaganda by short wave, very few studies have been made to analyze its impact on American public opinion” (Childs 1941, 210). It was perhaps not so curious: Childs’ study found that in the course of a month only five to ten percent of Americans listened to at least one short-wave program from Europe, but that the number of people who listen seriously and regularly was not more than one percent. Another study by Schuler and Eubank (1941) showed that the virtual absence of a “serious” listenership for European short-wave was due simply to the fact that most listeners understood the broadcasts to be propaganda and tuned out. Evidence of the effective non-existence of German shortwave listenership also dampened official narratives surrounding German fifth columnism in the United States: Childs’ study found that German and “alien” Americans were not found to listen to foreign broadcasts more than citizens generally, which was almost not at all.

Greaves (1940, 601) concluded another study by claiming that “few attempts by a national government to influence popular opinion abroad have been made in a seemingly less fertile area than German short-wave broadcasts to the United States.” As Baudrillard (1995) might have observed, the psychological war did not take place: in shortwave radio, Germany had a road to the United States, but not a line of communication. What sympathies with Germany did exist in the United States adhered to extant American anti-Semitism and white supremacy, like that of America First luminary Charles Lindberg, or to the conservative business class, like Henry Ford, Prescott Bush, and other American industrialists who advocated for a right-wing military strongman in the United States (see Denton 2012). Despite these constituencies, most American
nativists still hoped for a British victory, their isolationism less a matter of supporting Germany, and more a desire to avoid what they believed was “Europe’s war” (Cantril 1940).

The rhetorical importance of short wave radio as the premiere medium of German psychological warfare was therefore belied by the actually existing constitution of its listenership. As a relational space of government and a line of communication, German shortwave radio in the United States was a failure. More successful, however, were the efforts of American interventionists to leverage their own well-established lines of communication to the American public to saturate the press with dire warnings concerning the corrosive effect of German psychological warfare on American minds. In this way, the early American intelligence community was able to construct a new geographical imagination surrounding psychological warfare, based on the perceived compression of time and space achieved by shortwave radio. If Harvey (1989, 240) has suggested that processes of time-space compression “so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves,” with respect to psychological warfare, changes in how the world was represented appears as a function, not of the objective qualities of time and space, but of their imaginative construction in the popular press.

Geography may have mattered in psychological war, but Taylor’s formative texts insisted on the inverse, namely that psychological warfare “knew no bounds in space and time.” While the annihilation of transoceanic space by shortwave radio was central to interventionist rhetoric on psychological warfare, it also relied on concurrent accounts of German geopolitics as a “super science” for waging war (Crampton & Tuathail 1996; Murphy 2014; Tuathail 1996). In a
remarkable three-page editorial appearing in the *New York Times*, Taylor (1 June, 1941) claimed that German psychological warfare’s ability to “determine opinion and control nerves” was informed by the country’s geopolitical expertise which gave it “exact knowledge of the population against whom [their] propaganda offensive is directed.” Advancing again a push button fantasy of frictionless control, Taylor claimed that German geopolitical expertise had “streamlined and perfected” its psychological warfare, identifying the Munich *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Geopolitik* as a key arm of the Nazi Propaganda Ministry. Echoing Mowrer and Donovan’s claims that fifth columnism could happen “in any land,” the claim reiterated Taylor’s insistence in *The Strategy of Terror’s* (1940, 4) that psychological warfare had “no limits in space since the front is everywhere.”

Like Mowrer and Donovan’s assertion that fifth columnism was an intractable vulnerability for democratic societies, Taylor’s claim that psychological warfare had “no limits in space” sought to obviate the possibility of popular American isolationism by contending that militarized geopolitical and psychological expertise enabled a new kind of war at a distance. Quoting the German officer Colonel Blau, Taylor (1941) exhaustively reiterated the claim that “this type of propaganda war is not bound by space or time.” Now quoting the curious figure of German geographer Ewald Banse, whose singular significance to the construction of psychological warfare I detail below, Taylor argued that “effective propaganda must begin in times of peace and must score its decisive successes prior to an actual declaration of war.” Again, the interventionist rhetoric made clear that in a psychological war isolation is *impossible*, since psychological war can be waged *anywhere* and *before* formal declarations of war. It was an implicit rejoinder to the
isolationist belief that, as Charles Lindbergh (1940) put it, the United States “need not fear a foreign invasion” on account of its geographical isolation by “two great oceans.”

If Roosevelt (1940, May 26) decried “the naiveté of…retiring within our continental boundaries,” the spectre of psychological warfare went further by threatening to obviate the very possibility of isolationism itself. “Unbound by space and time,” psychological warfare offered a new geographical imagination of war that challenged the presumption of the United States’ geographic isolation from Europe — it sought to annihilate the space of American isolation. Taken together, Taylor presented a narrative of psychological war as doubly objective weapon calibrated by technical advances in Germany’s psychological and geographical sciences. Furthermore, interventionist rhetoric sought to dislocate the power of propaganda from the uneven spaces of its circulation and reception to construct a geographical imagination of psychological warfare that operated across space rendered undifferentiated by geopolitical intelligence and expertise.

As I have suggested, this rhetorical construction sought to fabricate the experiential dislocation of time-space compression by constructing a geographical imaginary of invisible psychological invasion. Shortwave radio had formally collapsed the friction of distance, but its lack of an effective listenership belied the fact that it did not represent a revolution of the objective qualities of space and time. Fear of propaganda corresponded in fact more to the debunking culture of the interwar years, and public outrage against both war and war propaganda. Insofar as propaganda did represent an objective dislocation of the habitus, it was pursuant to what I have identified in the previous chapter as the historical development of the press as strategy of pastoral power, culminating in the mass propaganda campaigns of the First World War. As suggested, the
rhetorical scientism of psychological warfare *qua* psychology served to obscure the material basis of this power, distancing it from the non-technical problem of political duplicity, and locating it within the opaque esoterica of psychological science. The rhetoric of psychological warfare therefore exploited the real dislocations of pastoral press power, invoking a generalized spectre of what Adorno and Horkheimer (1947) would soon call “the dialectic of enlightenment.”

Thus did the orchestrators of psychological war alarmism in the United States emphasize what Harvey would identify as dislocations of the modern habitus and the experiential dimensions of time-space compression. As detailed below, central to the psychological war narrative was the erroneous belief that Allied propaganda in the First World War had produced a “collapse” of morale of the German homefront. Psychological war rhetoric therefore stressed “collapse” in ways that again mimicked what Harvey (1990, 426-7) would identify as experiential dislocation and the “sense of collapse” produced by time space compression. As Harvey suggests,

> the foreboding generated out of the sense of social space imploding in upon us (forcibly marked by everything from the daily news to random acts of international terror or global environmental problems) translates into a crisis of identity. Who are we and to what space/place do we belong?

If American interventionists sought to construct psychological warfare as the annihilation of the space of American isolationism, they also attempted to re-territorialize it in terms of an ideological “battlefield of the mind” where, as Taylor writes, “ideas and ideologies clash in ordered ranks, disciplined like soldiers.” Through the melodrama of “the war of nerves,” Taylor invited readers to imagine themselves as “nerve privates” of the new psychological war in which the individual become both the subjects and objects of military intrigue. Taylor’s strikingly territorial metaphors
can here be understood as prefigurations in the popular imagination of what Farish (2007) calls the Cold War “targeting of the inner landscape.” It must also be understood, however, in terms of a geographical deracination of the power of propaganda, and its abstract relocation, not in pastoral spaces of circulation, but in the minds of individuals.

Taylor’s titular identification of German psychological warfare as a “strategy of terror” on “war’s inner front” suggests the extent to which it was meant to connote the anxiety, fear, and uncertainty of the modern individual’s experiential dislocation. Dramatizing the crises of identity that Harvey understands to be foundational to the experience of time-space compression, The Strategy of Terror’s promotional copy [Fig. 10] emphasized not only the dislocation of the modern individual, but its radical convergence as a target of psychological warfare. “You are public opinion,” the ad exclaims, “therefore you are an enemy objective” (Houghton-Mifflin 1940). If fifth column alarmism articulated the idea of internal threats from abroad, psychological warfare went further still to pose its target as the individual as such.
Figure 10: Advertisement for The Strategy of Terror

A June 18, 1940 advertisement for The Strategy of Terror was among the first instance of the term "psychological warfare" in the New York Times (Houghton-Mifflin 1940).
Though this rhetorical construction sought to exacerbate the anxiety of time-space dislocation, it also advanced responses to German psychological warfare rooted in an expansion of domestic pastoral power over the American public. Again, the geographical elision is significant: while there was little threat of Germany’s establishment of governmental lines of communication to the American public, the construction and dramatization of this eventuality — of a German psychological war ‘unbound in space and time’ — justified the American intelligence communities’ fortification of their own domestic lines of communication. While I detail below the population-centric scale of psychological warfare, Taylor’s articulation of the individual as target was an attempt to enroll Americans in their own self-government; an attempt to target the pastoral scale of the individual as a strategy of police.

In Foucauldian (2014, 81) terms, Taylor framed American citizens as psychological warfare’s “double subjects”: both subject to, but also crucial actors in, the operation of power. What followed, as in the fifth column scare, was another “obligation to know” (ibid 291); a stalwart injunction to examine one’s own thoughts and feelings, and to understand them as, not as autonomous aspects of a coherent self, but as dislocated objects made accessible and vulnerable to foreign influence; as convergences of a new type of warfare in which the individual is both radically exposed to unseen forces, and liable for defeats on the new military terrain of the self. If debates surrounding The Battle of the Somme advanced a muscular Christianity in which audiences were encouraged to understanding their watching of the film as a kind of edifying spiritual struggle, Taylor’s articulation of psychological warfare involved more explicit injunctions for individuals to make themselves the object of their own struggle.
What was novel about Taylor’s construction of psychological warfare, however, was its explicit identification of the individual’s intimate thoughts, feelings, and opinions as a terrain of war. The rhetoric of defense against foreign psychological warfare as a kind struggle of the self over the self remains a stark illustration of its pastoral origins in what Foucault identifies as the confessional structure of “the guided examination of conscience” as a “technology of the self.” In this formulation, isolationism again became possible, since one’s constitution of one’s self — one’s thoughts, feelings, and opinions — became part of the war whether one liked it or not. Just like rhetorical narratives of shortwave radio’s time-space compression combined with those concerning German geopolitical expertise to challenge the very possibility of the United States’ geographic isolation from the war at the scale of population, psychological warfare’s articulation of “war’s inner front” suggested a pastoral counterpart at the scale of the individual. “The psychological barrage has reached you,” the book’s pitch claimed: “the only defense is understanding.”

The “understanding” in question was the interventionist axiom that isolationists, wittingly or not, sustained a German conspiracy to divide and conquer the United States. Though cynical, Taylor painted an artful picture in which German psychological warfare could only be resisted through pastoral self-government in which one’s own spiritual strength and struggle relationally constituted the moral strength of the nation — *omnes et singulatim*. Moreover, these religious and muscular Christian connotations were overt, and psychological warfare was often likened to a kind of “spiritual war.” In this light, the political imaginary underwriting the emergence of psychological warfare appears as an extension of Foucault’s (2014) larger project to examine the origins of liberal selfhood in the pastoral tradition of confession as directed self-examination. More immediately,
the formulation built upon what Harold Lasswell (1922, 77) identified as the “Satanism” of First World War propaganda, namely the insistence that the enemy is “inherently and incorrigibly wicked, monstrous, perverse, insolent, depraved, and perfidious.”

Despite psychological warfare’s hyperbolic scientism, therefore, it must also be understood to have sustained muscular Christian formulations which connected masculine selfhood to the war’s ennobling sublime. As will be seen, like Taylor’s incongruous “Teutonic witch-doctor scientists,” an imaginary of psychological warfare as a chimera of faith and science would become central to its positive articulation as an American “strategy of truth.” In the early days of seeding the psychological war scare in the public mind, however, it remained for the everyday American “nerve private” to invest the manly prerogatives of a muscular Christianity with a new urgency toward psychological defense; to examine one’s own conscience; to expel the weak, the feminine, the pacifistic; and to scale the “domestic intimacy” (Cowen 2004) of personal and spiritual struggle to the geopolitical terrain of world war.

Perhaps ironically, this central tenet of psychological warfare’s moral economy — that it is *manly* — can be understood as a response to what some feminist geographers have criticized as the masculinist bent of theorization on time-space compression. If the rhetoric of psychological warfare stressed the dislocation and vulnerability of what Deutsche (1991, 27) identifies as the “complete masculine subject,” Taylor’s narration of a drama in which this subject is transformed from a passive, emasculated spectator into an active participant offered a simulacrum of agential masculinity against the “cartographic anxieties” (Gregory 1994) of a psychological invasion heralded as both continental and individual in scope. If historical developments in the political
economy of communication did produce the “terrifying” time-space dislocations identified by Harvey, the political imaginary of psychological warfare offered the dislocated citizen a way to reassert a muscular Christian selfhood; a way for Markowitz’s *paterfamilias* to transsubstantiate mere spectatorship into active combat. German psychological warfare may have been a “strategy of terror,” but Taylor’s narration also made it a *thrilling* and *exhilarating* opportunity to participate in war at a distance, where “ideas and ideologies clash in ordered ranks, disciplined like soldiers.”

Crucially, psychological warfare as a masculine imperative to personal and national self-defense further disarticulated popular perceptions of propaganda from the political economy of communication, obscuring analysis of monopolies of knowledge, and *individualizing* responsibility to combat it. In this formulation of its moral economy, defense against psychological warfare became “a test and affirmation of manhood” (Gregory 2017), combatting what Gibson-Graham (1996) might identify as a geopolitical “rape script” in which American citizens are able to will resistance to “non-reciprocal penetration.” As will be seen in the United States’ own psychological war campaigns against the Soviet Union, it is difficult to overemphasize the imaginative framing of psychological warfare as a penetrative act; of enemy territory as “sites of potential invasion, envelopment, accumulation.”

Taken together, these major tenets of psychological warfare’s moral economy — that it is *objective* and that it is *manly* — combined to construct a new geographical imagination in which popular American isolation was obviated by psychological warfare’s new political geography. As I have argued, these geographical imaginations emphasized the vulnerability of both the American public and individuals to psychological invasion thereby attempting to obviate the very possibility of
isolationism in public discourse. While in the next section I consider the final major tenet of its moral economy — its *lawfulness* — Taylor’s articulation of psychological warfare also forwshadowed what only later would become a more important tenet, namely the claim that psychological warfare *saves lives*. This argument proceeded apace with the moral economy of bombing, which insisted that aerial bombardment could save lives by speeding Allied victory, shortening war, and preventing battle causalities that would otherwise have taken place. Correspondingly, Taylor argued that an American psychological war against Germany could “precipitate a total collapse which would require months or years of purely military effort.”

In addition to articulating the positive content of psychological warfare as a “humanitarian” concern, the claim sought to rehabilitate the idea of propaganda by retroactively crediting Allied victory in the First World War to the “ingeniousness” of propaganda directed against Germany. As discussed below, American interventionists played for full value the interwar German literature which, as a face-saving maneuver for a re-militarizing nation, blamed Allied propaganda for their military losses. These overblown claims were seized upon by interventionists to rehabilitate the public image of propaganda, not as sinister tool wielded by governments to “dupe and degrade” its citizens, but as a tool to be used to shorten war and save lives. Combining this “humanitarian” tenet of psychological war’s moral economy with its claim to objectivity, Taylor warned that “German thoroughness” had “streamlined and perfected – and turned against us – the 1918 American propaganda tactics which undermined Austria-Hungary and broke the morale of the Kaiser’s back” (Taylor 1941). Taylor’s argument had the added implication that psychological warfare was originally an *American* — and therefore permissible — invention twisted and distorted by German totalitarianism.
In addition to saving lives by “shortening the war,” psychological warfare’s pseudo-humanitarianism would soon gather around the claim that it represented a “non-kinetic” alternative to violence. In the summer of 1941, however, Taylor stopped short of the therapeutic “non-kinetic” narrative to emphasize that, when it came to Germany’s “strategy of terror,” propaganda reinforced violence instead of replacing it. “Psychology, as understood by the Nazis,” wrote Taylor, “is not an Ersatz for tanks, planes and battleships. It is the art of getting the most out of them without actually using them, prolonging their effects after they have been used, or anticipating their effects before they can be used” (Taylor 1941). This was a remarkable articulation of what would become and remain a central feature of contemporary military doctrine: that psychological warfare can refine the social effects of violence, what is now understood as “force multiplication”. Though in the years to follow, American psychological warriors would use the German “strategy of terror” as a foil to their own purported “strategy of truth,” Taylor assured American readers that a psychological war was one they could win, foreshadowing the work that American psychologists would perform to similarly refine the terror of violence:

since the growth of advertising has virtually converted America into a nation of commercial psychologists, we should be able to give the Nazis a good fight in this as in all other fields, once our psychology has been militarized and the concept of selling replaced by the concept of destroying.

These first three tenets of psychological warfare’s moral economy — that it is objective, manly, and saves lives — combined to articulate the fourth and most important: that psychological warfare is law-ful. As Gregory suggests, lawfulness here means not only legality but also a broader claim concerning the production of social order. In the next section I discuss how the concepts of “civilian” and “national” morale were constructed as an antidote to German psychological warfare, and how the idea of “morale” came to articulate the concept of making populations secure against psychological war. Like fifth column and psychological threats from abroad, Donovan’s Office of Strategic Services would be central to the organization of both the personnel and narratives surrounding national morale as a new and imperative kind of population security.

3.3 Morale Panic: Securing Populations Through Psychological War

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

— Margaret Mead

It was simply believed that psychologists were capable of doing this.

— Leonard Doob

The organization of the discipline of psychology prior to and for the purpose of fighting the Second World War has received little attention. Most existing accounts are internal critiques of the field interested in tracing the trajectory of psychology through and after the war (Hoffman 1992; Johnson 1998; Finison 1984, 1986; Neiburg 1998; Faye 2011), and do not account for the external political forces which propelled psychological warfare into existence. These accounts nonetheless
help situate and understand the way in which the field of psychology was drawn into the larger construction of psychological warfare, before and after 1942. Indeed, as Finison (1986, 30) argues, “it is clear from the available evidence that morale did not begin as an issue ‘within’ psychology. Rather, important forces and influential figures outside the profession dictated the formulation of the problem as a problem.”

Amid the crisis of the great depression, many young and newly graduated psychologists struggled to find employment, leading to a youth-led “expansionist” position in which psychologists organized to advanced “strategies for increasing their utilization” (Finison 1986, 23). In the mid 1930s, some psychologists rallied around the political organization “New America,” from which they attempted to put pressure on the American Psychological Association (APA) to address the problem of the unemployment of psychologists. These psychologists soon formed a national organizing committee, and in regional meetings during 1936 circulated petitions in support of the formation of an official body for the “promotion and protection of research on “controversial’ topics” (Finison 1979). At the national meeting of the APA in the same year, this organization was founded as the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI).

Concurrently, the Communist Party of America had also attracted many psychologists through its network of “Pen & Hammer” clubs for intellectuals. In 1933-34, a psychology committee of Pen & Hammer was formed, and as the Popular Front came into being, the clubs provided the nucleus of what would become the National Research League. From these groups, psychologists soon organized the Psychologists League which advocated for the employment of psychologists, especially by government. Though the SPSSI and the Psychologists League shared many goals
most prominently the employment of psychologists – differences consisted in the fact that Psychologists League members were, by and large, clinicians and communists, while the SPSSI were an academic coalition of social democrats and liberals primarily interested in influencing and improving their position within the APA. Even so, by 1938 the SPSSI remained a nominally left-liberal organization, arguing that “the economic protection of wage-earning psychologists can be accomplished only through affiliation with other wage-earners who face the same problems” (as cited in Finison, 1986, p. 7).

It was fitting, then, that the first major publication of the SPSSI was a 1939 yearbook on Industrial Conflict, which roused conflicting opinions among its membership on the proper place of social science in politics. The organization’s left wing argued that psychologists should demur artificial political neutrality, and employ social science to the cause of a socialist political agenda. Conversely, SPSSI’s centrist liberals argued that objective social science was politically neutral and could be put to different and even contradictory ends. The latter position was notably espoused by psychologist Arthur Kornhauser in his reaction to the Industrial Conflict yearbook: “psychologists” he argued, “can be and should be important technicians engaged in the vital battles of the day” (as cited in Finison, 1979, p. 34). It was an idea that would become dominant in the SPSSI after the war: namely, that psychologists could become social and political technicians; that “psychologists could use their scientific neutrality to become intermediaries between the citizen and the state” (p. 29).

It is in the context of these organizations and conflicts that the spectre of psychological warfare descended upon the American psychological community. Its members were not, however, totally
unprepared. In 1939, the APA formed an Emergency Committee to organize psychologists for the possibility of American entry into the war. The issues of propaganda and “morale” — soon to be the watchword of psychological war — were dealt with by the Emergency Committee, though they sat alongside a plurality of other areas of psychological expertise which mostly mirrored the role that psychologists played in World War I (i.e. the selection and classification of personnel, soldier fatigue, aviation training, shell shock, etc.). When morale was discussed, it was understood as soldier morale; as the psychological problems attached to the performance of soldiers in battle. The concept of civilian morale on the homefront had not yet become a problem for psychologists, and, indeed, “psychological warfare” did not yet exist as a concept in the field.

By 1940, however, the issue of civilian morale had become a topic of widespread public discussion. In a 26 May 1940 radio address – one of his famous “fireside chats” – President Roosevelt insisted that “our moral, our mental defenses must be raised up as never before” (Roosevelt, 1940). The psychological community, eager for the coming war work, organized another Emergency Committee in August of 1940 under the Division of Anthropology and Psychology of the National Research Council (Dallenbach, 1946). This Emergency Committee held a conference in November of the same year to determine ways in which psychologists could contribute to a new type of research on civilian morale, with Gordon Allport – soon to be its central figure – serving as both the conference chairman and the SPSSI’s representative to the committee.

Though the conference was held to discuss “at a technical level the contributions that professional psychologists might make to the problems of morale” (in Faye 2011, 16), very few technical plans were in fact made. “The majority of the discussion,” Faye writes, “centered on trying to define the
scope of morale work and the place that social scientists should occupy within it.” This odd combination of uncertainty concerning what psychologists might do, coupled with the certainty that they must do it, was an enduring feature of the field of psychology’s entry into work on civilian morale and psychological warfare. As Leonard Doob (1941, 227) – a prominent member of the SPSSI – wrote,

> It was felt that in this way the [SPSSI] could render a public service at a time of crisis. Nothing was said concerning how war and war propaganda could be analyzed; it was simply and enthusiastically believed that psychologists were capable of doing this.

One effort in this direction came from a June 1941 APA-sponsored issue of the *Psychological Bulletin*, a compendium to the November 1940 meeting of the National Research Council’s Emergency Committee in Psychology dedicated to the theme of “human engineering.” The compendium discussed usual topics like the selection of personnel, fatigue, and training, but also contained bibliographic reviews of both morale (Child 1941) and propaganda (Smith 1941). Smith’s bibliography on propaganda contained almost no sources from the field of psychology, recommending instead texts from across a number of other fields. Notable among these were political scientist Harold Lasswell’s (1927) *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, historian George Bruntz’s (1928) *Allied propaganda and the collapse of the German Empire in 1918*, sociologist Hans Spier’s *Class Structure and Total War* (1939), public relations counsel Edward Bernays’ *Speak up for Democracy* (1940), and the soon-to-be standard citation of Edmond Taylor’s *The Strategy of Terror*.40

40 Though Child (1941) does not cite The Strategy of Terror in his morale bibliography, he does cite an article on morale and the French collapse written by Edmond Taylor for Public Opinion Quarterly.
Child’s (1941, 399, 416) bibliography on morale was a scramble to make the concept psychologically actionable by suggesting that it might operate along the lines of the more established concept of “psychological adjustment.” He offered a number of uninspired insights such as “high morale is associated with economic security” before ultimately concluding that the psychological literature is most meager of findings with respect to the problems of civilian morale. It is to be hoped that psychologists will seize the opportunity to extend and apply our understanding of these and other problems that have been reviewed here.

Thus, as Finison (1986) suggests, the formulation of the “problem of morale” as a problem for psychologists was dictated by figures outside the profession. Nonetheless, it was in these years that the “virtuous cycle” (Johnson 1998, 70) of government work began for psychologists in which “social psychology developed the critical mass it needed for survival.” There were dissenters. As summated by the field communist and clinical wing in a 1941 Psychologists League Journal editorial,

Morale is a means to an end. What end? And will the methods employed gain morale only to lose its goal? Would psychologists persuade people to sacrifice and endure against their fundamental and ultimate interests? Would they seek to maintain self-defeating morale in which living standards are propelled downward, civil rights abrogated, labor coordinated, minorities persecuted? (as cited in Finison, 1979, 5)

As of June 1941, the fledgling efforts of the SPSSI were only preludes to a broader collaborative project among American interventionists to construct the threat of German psychological war. A month later, a book called German Psychological Warfare was published by the Committee for National Morale (CNM), an interventionist committee that was affiliated and shared membership
with Henry Luce’s interventionist Council for Democracy. Tied to wider discourses of “morale” as a kind of prefigured civilian resiliency in wartime (Grove & Adey 2015), the Committee’s advocacy brought the concept of psychological warfare into the American mainstream and supplied information and advisory services” to government on the “problem of morale” (CNM 1941, 1).

The Committee served as a recruiting ground for the nascent American intelligence community, with many of its members going on to work for the Office of Strategic Services and the Office of War Information. Both Edmond Taylor (COI, OSS) and Edgar Ansel Mowrer (OWI) were members, as was the OWI’s first director, CBS radio journalist Elmer Davis. Margaret Mead (OSS) and Gregory Bateson (OSS) were luminaries of the group. It was, however, in the field of psychology that the Committee’s recruitment was most prodigious. As Herman (1995, 43–54) shows, Harvard’s Gordon Allport (1941a, 1941b, 1942) was the discipline’s voice of mobilization for morale work, acting as a covert liaison between the profession and the OSS/OWI during the war. Psychologists on the Committee who went on to work at the OWI include Leonard Doob, Hadley Cantril, and Geoffrey Gorer (Reinisch 2103, 191). To the OSS went Kurt Lewin, Gardner Murphy, and Goodwin Watson (Cone 1997, 61; Schlesinger 2013, 350).41

41 Also on the committee was Frank Stanton, who would become a key player in American psychological warfare. Some of the hats he wore included President of CBS, Chairman of the board of the Rand Corporation, Advisor to the USIA, contributor to CIA-front Radio Free Europe. He was JFK’s first choice for director the USIA, and LBJ’s too, but he became chairman of the President’s Advisory Commission on Information instead. He was sent to Vietnam in this capacity to improve American public relations there, and advise on how the USIA could “reduce the high visibility of the American mission abroad” (Cull 2008). See also Schiller (1969).
German Psychological Warfare was meant to address the paucity of literature suggested by Smith (1941) and Child’s (1941) bibliographic reviews, but was primarily intended for popular consumption with a middlebrow tone. As the New York Times’ review of the book noted, it was more than a research guide for scholars, it was “an excellent survey for the general reader” (Davis 1941). Its editor Ladislas Farago was a journalist with a flair for sensationalism, hyperbole, and outright fabrication. Farago’s (1963, 1967) books Patton: Ordeal and Triumph and The Broken Seal were the basis for the popular 1970 films Patton and Tora! Tora! Tora!, respectively. In its internal classified journal Studies in Intelligence, however, the CIA’s reviewer (Fishel 1968, 76) of The Broken Seal lamented that “it was perhaps inevitable that Ladislas Farago, veteran spinner of espionage and other yarns, would sooner or later turn his attention to Pearl Harbor.” Similarly, the CIA’s reviewer (1961) of Farago’s 1961 Burn After Reading noted the latter’s “penchant for dressing up his stories,” and his “passions [which] sometimes lift him quite beyond the drab terrain of history.” In Farago’s (1974) Aftermath, he broke the tether, making the wild claim that he had met in South America not only Hitler’s presumed-dead secretary Martin Bormann, but also the Nazi doctor Josef Mengele (Dorril 2002, 95).

In July 1941, however, as editor of German Psychological Warfare, Farago had the full support of the nascent American intelligence community comprising the membership of the Committee for National Morale. Published a month after Taylor’s editorial in the New York Times, then the most robust articulation of the German “psychological threat,” the book consisted of a seventy-page annotated bibliography, mostly of interwar German military texts, prefaced by an eighty-page polemical exposition of German psychological warfare. The text was divided into three parts, though ironically only the latter third’s twenty pages dealt with psychological warfare as such, the
former outlining conventional aspects of military psychology. In his preface to the monograph (CNM 1941, 1), committee chairman Arthur Pope made the incredible claim that “the present war is in large measure ideological,” and that “ideas are being used for political and military purposes with greater skill and ruthlessness than ever before.”

Just as Heffernan (2000a, 31) notes that early geopolitics “masqueraded as a new, rational and scientific approach,” so too did psychologists on the Committee pull deep from the well of scientistic alarm, lending authority to the first wave of journalistic accounts like those of Taylor, Mowrer, and Stowe. The Committee leveraged its credentials more to issue warnings than to offer explanations, claiming that “Germany has mobilized and employed the resources of scientific psychology with an unprecedented audacity and thoroughness which, in our view, marks the latest advance in the art of war.” The exhaustive enumeration of German academic literature, though often tenuous and tangential to the issue of psychological warfare as international propaganda, was designed to support the established narrative that German psychological warfare was doubly objective, both in its scientific rigour and in its existence as a campaign against the United States.

Connected here to the theme of psychological warfare’s objectivity was the question of its lawfulness, of its ability to impose order on populations. Condemning the Nazi Party’s method for producing what it called “synthetic” morale through coercion and intimidation, the Committee praised the German Army which, by contrast, purported to raise morale through an individualist, character-building, and self-disciplinary approach. Called “intelligent obedience” by German Army psychologist Pinschovius, in his Die Seelische Widerstandskraft im Modernen Krieg (Spiritual Defense in Modern War), the committee commended the German Army morale for its
basis in the liberal values of intellect, voluntary participation, sacrifice, and rational approval of policy. The Committee (1941, 52) argued that “this system is implicitly democratic although its methods of indoctrination are totalitarian”:

The High Command, in reviews of Pinschovius's book, hints at the potential danger inherent in these two opposing policies. Before this contradiction can be regarded as a basic weakness and danger of the whole German morale policy, it must be remembered that the two approaches are applied in a parallel rather than conflicting manner, providing alternate solutions for solving specific problems.

The logic was pernicious: if democratic and totalitarian tactics could exist “in a parallel manner,” then the crucial variable became the ends to which these tactics were put. The passage reflected the Committee’s composition from the centrist wing of the SPSSI, and its “neutralist” position on the role of science in the 1939 Industrial Conflict debates. Moreover, the model of “intelligence obedience” sought to frame morale in terms of the liberal axioms of individualism, self-discipline, and voluntarism.

Aimed toward a more middlebrow audience than Taylor’s pulp Strategy of Terror, German Psychological Warfare tempered the former’s muscular Christianity with the cooler tones of scientific objectivity, though the pastoral injunction to order oneself remained at the core of the text’s rhetoric. Indeed, the main text of German Psychological Warfare was quite literally a catechism for the American public: ninety-one answers to ninety-one questions for the modern man about the “new realities” of psychological war. As one of the “new realities” the Committee

[...]

42 Like most psychologists during and after WWI, however, Pinschovius wrote primarily on solider morale. The work of translating this thinking into civilian morale was largely that of the Committee’s.
exhaustively emphasized that the *individual* was the ultimate target the psychological war, going so far as to claim that it had made “man himself, his attitudes and sentiments, rather than arms and supplies, the focal point for determining ultimate victory or defeat” (p. 63). In the book’s afterword, the Committee stressed that “there is clearly a psychological campaign under way against us,” and that the first step to countering it “is to understand the weak as well as the strong elements in our own strategy” (p. 86). It was again the catechumen’s “obligation to know” (Foucault 2014); its preparation for battle within and over its self against a foreign and evil power.

This emphasis on the individual, however, was mediated through the paradoxical scale of the pastorate to an idea of psychologically warring *populations*. Citing a cavalcade of German military theorists, the Committee wrote that “Blau, Foertsch, Pinschovius, Soldan, Metzsch, Hentig and Bircher were all mindful that total war is no longer a struggle between armed forces, but between entire populations” (p. 62). While the pastoral logic of psychological warfare claimed to target both the *omnes et singulatim* citizen and citizenry, it remained curiously aspatial, even as it attempted to construct a for itself a geographical imaginary. As [Figs. 11 & 12] show, the Committee (p. 66) attempted to construct a geographical imagination of psychological warfare as “conducted in the hinterland and on the military and home fronts,” yet the geography of psychological warfare in these figures remained curiously deracinated and abstract, suggesting again a sinister omnipresence beyond “the limitations of space or time.”
The dotted line indicates relative size of armies.
The unbroken line shows varying degrees of popular participation.

The chart shows the comparative participation of the population.

**Figure 11: Excerpt (a) from German Psychological Warfare**
Figure 12: Excerpt (b) from German Psychological Warfare

Fig. 11 & 12 — Excerpted from German Psychological Warfare (1941), the figures had been taken from Swiss psychologist F.C. Endres’ Vom Nächsten Krieg (On the Next War), which was in turn based partly on an article in the North American Review titled “War in the Third Dimensions,” written by General Sherman Miles (1926), who in 1941 was chief of American Military Intelligence. The article was again used to show that “German” psychological warfare was not entirely alien in its origins.
Figure 13: Plan for a national morale service

Plan for a National Morale Service (23.5” x 18”). The Committee planned and advocated tirelessly for a national morale service, and for their own employment in it. While it never came to be, most committee members joined the OSS or OWI. A memorandum attached to the chart’s archival record listed the first principle of the proposed service: “to center all questions of policy in a Board with maximum authority and prestige” (Committee for National Morale 1941b).

The book’s conclusion was a call to adapt German psychological warfare techniques to American ends. Citing a short 1924 book called *Military Intelligence* by Colonel (and by 1941 General) Walter Campbell Sweeney, the Committee argued that insight into war’s psychological dimension had been an *American* discovery cribbed and twisted by Germany, and that the United States should therefore not hesitate to engage in it. *German Psychological Warfare* finished with a
passage from Sweeney, pointing to the committee’s prized goals, namely the establishment and leadership of a centralized American morale agency [Fig. 13]: “a new method of attack has come into existence…and has brought us to the point where we must create a new agency and method of defense” (in CNM 1941, 80). The Committee’s construction of German psychological warfare doubled therefore as a wish list for its own designs: German psychological warfare, it argued, was fueled by “vast sums of money, full political power, and skillful co-ordination with military action.”

3.4 Ewald Banse and The Psychological Geography of War

Despite its emphasis on the scientific, the Committee’s exposé was, like its tabloid counterparts, patently untechnical. Though the psychologists of the Committee for National Morale were eager to support the effort, their ability to do so from within their own field was limited due to the fact that evidence for the existence of – as Taylor put it – the “scientific knowledge of the inner forces which determine opinion and control nerves” was entirely fictional. As a result, German Psychological Warfare ironically had little to say about the actual practice of psychological warfare, and drew mostly upon German geopolitical texts, especially from Karl Haushofer’s Zeitschrift für Geopolitik. When it came to supplying evidence of German psychological war, the Committee (1941, 61) listed a number of German geographical research institutes, which they identified as “smokescreens for German imperialism.”

The list included the Working Community of Geopolitics in Munich, Heidelberg and Berlin; the Institute of Political Geography at ap Krössinsee in present day Poland; the Geographical Institute
of Stuttgart; and the German Society of Geographical Research in Hanover. The research institutes were identified as “trouble seekers” seeking out “Störungskerne” (kernels of disturbance) in foreign nations, e.g. the political and demographic cleavages upon which a program of psychological warfare could be built. The Committee argued that effective psychological warfare required extensive intelligence on target populations in allied, neutral and enemy countries; that psychological warfare was impossible without knowledge of the peoples of the target countries. This insistence on the necessity of human intelligence partially belied the Committee’s interventionist rhetoric that psychological warfare “knows no limitations of space or time,” but was also meant to shore up the claim by embellishing the scope of power Germany’s “geopolitical” intelligence. Based upon what it called Germany’s study of “comparative national psychology” — “the search and appraisal of the psychological and sociological factors and phenomena of foreign nations”\textsuperscript{43} — the Committee claimed that Germany knew that

an exact and comprehensive knowledge of the people who inhabit neighbouring and enemy countries must be regarded as a pre-requisite of a successful foreign policy. The statesman as well as the soldier must know the peoples of foreign lands, their desires and aims, the strength of their faith and national pride, their characteristics, impulses and sensitivities, their domestic difficulties and cleavages (in CNM 1941, 71).

Previously, the Committee argued, primary sources of comparative national psychological intelligence were travel books, which no longer sufficed for waging total war. Intelligence for psychological warfare, it argued, must now be “pursued consciously in a planned and organized

\textsuperscript{43} Both Mead (1942) and Bateson (1942) wrote texts in the short-lived field of “comparative national psychology.” Mead’s...And Keep Your Powder Dry was used by the OWI to “educate” European countries about the United States and its people, while Bateson’s “Morale and National Character” was published in the first major collection on “civilian morale.”
effort, utilizing all the means which objective research can place at our disposal” (p. 75). This necessitated a combination of geographical research and espionage. “Geopoliticians, agents, and neutral informers are best qualified to supply the material required for such investigations," wrote the Committee, adding that "no sensible government should neglect the employment of such observers.” Citing one such geopolitical — the storied Ewald Banse — the Committee quoted him as writing that “the characterology of foreign nations is intended to be a complementary weapon of war,” (p. 70) and that “propaganda backed up by total intelligence is the most important weapon of psychological offensives” (p. 76).

Though a relatively marginal figure in German geography, by 1941 Banse would become in the American press Germany’s preeminent theorist of psychological warfare. Edmond Taylor’s New York Times editorial quoted him directly, while German Psychological Warfare (CNM 1941, 90) identified him as “Germany's foremost strategist of terror.” The claim was meant to further popular associations between German geopolitics and psychological warfare, with Banse serving as the latter’s analogue to geopolitical “super-scientist” and “mastermind” Karl Haushofer. German Psychological Warfare cited Banse extensively, and reproduced the passage that would come to define him in the American press:

Applied psychology as a weapon of war means propaganda intended to influence the mental attitudes of nations toward war..., to undermine and break down its resistance, and to convince it that it is being deceived, misled and brought to destruction by its own government...The enemy nation's originally solid, powerful and well-knit fabric must be gradually disintegrated, broken down, rotted, so that it falls apart like a fungus treaded upon in a forest.
The passage was from Banse’s 1932 Raum und Volk im Weltkrieg (Space and Nation in World War), which along with his 1933 Wehrwissenschaft (Military Science) constituted Banse’s troubled foray into geopolitics. In a bizarre political drama, both texts were banned in Germany by the end of 1933, ironically not for opposing the Third Reich, but for the international controversy they provoked by advocating German remilitarization. The scandal revolved around the newly formed Nazi government’s withdrawal from the League of Nations disarmament conference in October of 1933 over the terms of the Versailles treaty. The move raised concerns over Germany’s desire to remilitarize, and Banse’s texts were decried in the Anglo-American presses. Among others, New York Herald Tribune journalist Leland Stowe⁴⁴ (1933) used his dispatches and polemic monograph Nazi Germany Means War to decry Banse as the “intellectual leader” of German rearmament. Conceding to pressure, Germany banned publication of Wehrwissenschaft, and subsequently Raum und Volk, which former Times of Britain editor Sir Wickham Steed (1933) identified as “much more formidable work” than the former.

Steed levelled especial criticism at a map published in Raum und Volk detailing a theoretical German invasion of Britain [Fig. 14], which he took as evidence of Germany’s expansionist ambitions. His editorial served as the basis for continued pressure over Raum und Volk in the British and American presses, leading to the ban and Germany’s denunciation of the book as the “senseless and irresponsible babblings of a private theorist.”⁴⁵ By 1934, unauthorized exposé-style

---

⁴⁴ It was Stowe who in 1940 raised the most alarm concerning Nazi “fifth columnism” in Norway and the United States. See above.
English translations of *Raum und Volk* were published in London and New York under the title *Germany Prepares for War*. English publishers (Harcourt 1934, iii) justified breaking copyright for reasons they argued “would be clear upon reading it.” Ironically, in the years leading up to WWII, *Raum und Volk* was banned in Germany, but could be purchased in the United States, where it was claimed that Banse was a “leading exponent of German military aims” (ibid). As Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 74) note, it remained the only text widely available in English from the new school of German geopolitics until the early 1940s.

![Figure 14: Banse's invasion map](image)

The publication of Banse’s (1934, fig 8) map created a controversy in the Anglo-American press, leading to a ban on Raum und Volk in Germany.

---

Discussion of Banse as “mastermind” of propaganda or psychological warfare was entirely absent from this first Banse controversy, appearing only in its 1941 revival. The first controversy revolved instead around British fears of coastal invasion, replaying Heffernan’s (2000b) turn of the century “hysterical geography.” In this first controversy, Banse’s map served as a kind of non-fictional invasion literature for the British public. In 1941, however, the revival of the Banse controversy was animated by a new hysterical geography of psychological invasion. Significant on this account is the fact that these panics played out in the papers of press baron Lord Northcliffe. To the extent that Banse’s Raum und Volk did address issues of propaganda, it was to decry Northcliffe’s “war of lies” against Germany during the First World War, and to call for Germany to learn its lessons. Even before the 1918 Armistice, one Hamburg-based journal attributed German defeatism to the “long-advertised publicity offensive [of] that unprincipled, unscrupulous rascal Northcliffe” (in Bruntz 1938, 63). After the war, a 1924 issue of Süddeutsche Monatshefte made the incredible claim that Allied propagandists had “taken over the leadership of the German people” (ibid). It was a face-saving, if fantastic claim for a re-militarizing nation: Germany had not suffered a military defeat, but had been deceived by treacherous propagandists. Thus, as Philip Taylor (1980, 487) notes, when Hitler wrote Mein Kampf, “for propaganda reasons of his own, [he] was quite prepared to pay tribute to ‘the very real genius’ of British war propaganda.”

It was in this context that Banse wrote on “applied psychology as a weapon of war.” What American interventionists omitted, however, was that Banse (1932, 219) explicitly based this “new

46 Books like Sir Campbell Stuart’s (1921) Secrets of Crewe House helped create the legend of Lord Northcliffe’s enemy propaganda department, a myth which Northcliffe himself was happy to further in the pages of the Times (Balfour 1979). Its central conceit, shared in both Germany and Britain, was that Allied propaganda had caused a “collapse of morale” in Germany.
weapon of war” on the British model. “The English”, wrote Banse, “were the first people to adopt this new attitude”:

Henceforward war is no longer a crossing of swords with the enemy, as it used to be, but the military, economic, psychological and moral destruction of the enemy nation. It was England who instituted the war of starvation, the war of economic annihilation and the war of lies alongside of the war of armies—and scored a thumping success with them. One does not know whether to be horrified at the vileness, or to admire the clear-headed logic and unshakeable iron determination, which this reveals; the latter attitude will probably carry a nation with its eye on its future further.

Though Banse did emphasize the importance of propaganda in relation to “British success,” the basis on which he was identified in 1940-41 as Germany’s leading theorist of psychological warfare remains a fabrication. Nor did Banse write on “psychological warfare” per se. He wrote, rather, what he called Seelengeographie des Krieges — the spiritual geography of war — which only his sensationalist English translators rendered as “the psychological geography of war.” Far from the “psychological laboratories” invoked in the American press, Banse characterized his work as “aesthetic,” “expressionist,” or “spiritual” (seelische) geography: what Murphy (1992, 112) identifies as a mixture of “popular anthropology, psychology and impressionistic description of landscape and topography.”

These self-styled “expressionist” geographies were highly subjective – even lyrical – in seeking to “elevate geography from a science to an art” (Groening 1993, 22). His 1928 Landschaft und Seele (Landscape and Soul), for example, asked if “the means of science” sufficed to portray a region, or whether the “weapons of art” were required to “let a land come alive”? For Banse, it was for the geographer-artist to ruminate on a people and its landscape, “not so much to describe causally, but to suggest instinctively” (Murphy 1992, 119). He polemicized against the “old” geography
which he likened to an anatomist dissecting a cadaver. “The new geography” he argued, “works on the living body, it investigates not just the tissue, but also its activity and emotional life.”

Nor were Banse’s writings on the spiritual geography of war connected to the image of clinical psychology or “secret laboratories”. In practice, Banse’s *Seelengeographien* were racially reductive re-litigations of the First World War. An inveterate Aryan supremacist, Banse argued, for example, that Austria-Hungary had not been Germanic enough, and that France’s Nordic and Teutonic ancestries accounted for its “fighting spirit.” Banse’s *Seelengeographie* did therefore serve as a racialized analogue to the British, and later American, idea of “civilian morale,” but it was a concept decidedly unrooted in the kinds of “laboratory psychology” in which it would be couched by American interventionists from 1940-41.

Furthermore, outside his two explicitly geopolitical texts, Banse was not regarded as a geopolitical thinker. He earns only passing mention in Geoffrey Parker’s (1985) *Western Geopolitical Thought* and the German-language reviews of Rössler (1990) and Gerstenberger (1969). Hartshorne’s (1939) *The Nature of Geography* criticized Banse’s artistic methodology, but was silent on his geopolitics, though an earlier article on political geography (1935, 81) parenthetically noted that Banse’s work had become a matter of “some international concern.” Nevertheless, Banse did have important supporters at the *Zeitschrift fur Geopolitik*, among them Erich Obst and Karl Haushofer, as well as Haushofer’s mentor Erich von Drygalski. Though not explicitly a “geopolitical” writer, as Murphy (1992, 116) notes, his work satisfied a kind of “geopolitical minimum” by holding geodeterminist theories of race in which landscape produced the “spiritual climate” of a people.

---

47 While a significant concern in Britain during the First World War (Monger 2012), the idea and importance of “civilian morale” was not fully embraced until the Second (McLaine 1979)
While his work did not reflect the picture of psychological warfare as it was framed in the American press — as a kind of war at a distance against foreign countries — the “geopolitical minimum” of Banse’s writing did have political uses within Germany. His race-centric “expressionist geographies” were valued for their relative popularity and ability to reach quarters of Weimar society that academic geography did not. The title of Raum und Volk was itself a direct play on another popular book, Hans Grimm’s 1923 novel Volk ohne Raum (People Without Space), which had popularized the concept of Lebensraum to a non-academic audience through a telling of a German settler’s struggle against British imperialism in South Africa. He attempted furthermore to recuperate German racial superiority in the face of defeat in the First World War. Germany’s racial impurity, Banse (1934, 108) contended, had allowed “an alien hand” — British propaganda — to “set in motion the dark forces of the un-German blood in us.” Conversely, he argued that Germany’s best traits — its “creative and truth-seeking character” — were decisive if noble weaknesses: “a nation with its eyes so fixed on loyalty, truth and honesty easily falls into the enemy's traps… A straightforward nation imagines that it and its work do not need propaganda” (p. 113). 48 Ironically, Banse’s writing on the Seelengeographie des Krieges was less a programme for waging psychological warfare in foreign countries, and more an effort to spread alarmism over English propaganda in Germany.

48 This was a common meta-propagandistic claim. The Committee for National Morale’s Kimball Young made a nearly symmetrical claim about the United States, suggesting that Americans were averse to propaganda “because we feel it is unnecessary or fear we may fall prey to totalitarianism ourselves by so doing” (CNM 1941, 86).
Figure 15: Ewald Banse

*Portrait by Fritz Flebbe* (1925).
The narrative of Banse as a Haushoferian “super scientist” was therefore doubly wrong. Not only was Banse uninterested in the kinds of “laboratory psychology” invoked by Donovan’s network of interventionists, but Banse’s own influence in German geographical circles was tenuous, even before his censorship in 1933. Alfred Hettner was a vocal detractor, calling Banse an “enfant terrible” who imagined himself as “geography’s Schopenhauer” (Passi 2009, 21). Furthermore, Banse was not generally regarded as a geopolitical thinker, and before 1933 he had written nothing for Haushofer’s influential Zeitschrift für Geopolitik. It remains a deep irony that Banse — champion of non-scientific “aesthetic” geography, and the discipline’s “enfant terrible” — was invoked in the United States to construct the menace of a scientifically rigorous program of German psychological warfare.

3.5 American Geographers and the Psychological War

“The map has become a psychological weapon”

— Hans Weigert

Critical geographers (Tuathail 1996; Murphy 2014; Sloan 2017) have identified the major American excurses of German geopolitics in 1942 as overt propaganda efforts. Yet there has been less discussion of the way in which in these texts (Whittlesey & Hartshorne 1942; Weigert 1942; Dorpalen 1942; Strausz-Hupe 1942) explored the formative relationship between geographers and

49 As Michel (2016) shows, German geography’s “self de-Nazification” after the war further contributed to Banse’s contemporary obscurity, with Troll and Fischer (1949, 111) noting that Banse’s “direct homage to racial theory and militarism” had come into “fairly sharp opposition to German geography” after the war.
the construction of psychological warfare. As Barnes (2006, 2008) and Barnes & Farish (2006) have shown, Richard Hartshorne’s directorship of the Research & Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Services had profound effects on both the war and the discipline of geography. Before the United States entered the war, however, as co-author with Derwent Whittlesey of The German Strategy of World Conquest (1942, 28), Hartshorne contributed to interventionist narratives concerning Germany’s purported geopolitical expertise, the geography of war propaganda, and the “contribution of psychology to practical statecraft.”

The book bore the clarion call of psychological war in the form of the stamp of the National Planning Association which had (via the Carnegie Corporation) funded it: “books are weapons in the war of ideas” (Sloan 2017, 137). The book was, as Koelsch (2006, 146) notes, “propaganda masquerading as objective scholarship.” Though the book was published after American entry into the war, its planning and writing occurred in 1941 before the question was settled, and can therefore be read as an interventionist text. On this account, Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, xi) reproduced the tropes of geopolitical alarmism, laying stress upon the technical sophistication of German geopolitics as a “carefully devised scheme of world conquest, worked out with ruthless precision.” Like the Committee for National Morale, Whittlesey and Hartshorne identified geographical research as the lynchpin of German imperialism, and wrote authoritatively on Karl Haushofer’s apparent Munich Institute:

50 The geopolitical organizations they list include The Association of Workers in Geopolitics; The German Peoples’ Map Service (“discounts maps to people”); The Institute for Politics in Berlin (“Albrecht Haushofer head of Geopolitical Seminar”); The Association of Germans abroad; The National Bureau of Spatial Organization (the Reichsbüro); German-Iberian-American Institute, the Institute for Research on German National Groups of the South and Southeast, and the Iranian Publicity House; and finally Haushofer’s German Academy (p. 109).
The oldest of these organizations is the Institute of Geopolitics at the University of Munich. It is the outgrowth of Karl Haushofer’s seminar and remains under his direction. Its research staff has more than eighty specialists trained in geography, political science, economics, demography, and perhaps other fields… Agents abroad, probably several hundreds of them, contribute to its store of facts about the non-German earth (p. 108).

Like the Royal Geographical Society before the First World War, *The German Strategy of World Conquest* fomented panic concerning the political role of German geography, and emphasized the decisive importance of geographical knowledge at war. While the book itself can therefore be understood as a “weapon in the war of ideas,” it also suggested the broader role and significance of geography as it related to the constellation of ideas surrounding the emergent concept of psychological warfare. In addition to emphasizing the necessity of collecting and disseminating geographical knowledge for military use — what would become Hartshorne’s job as head of OSS Research & Analysis — Whittlesey and Hartshorne also emphasized the decisive importance of geography as a tool of *propaganda*.

Painting a picture of German schools having “replaced humanistic education with political education,” Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 111, 116, 115) claimed that Germany had “[made] geography a political weapon” concerned with “bringing up German racial comrades, in whom the German souls burns as an inextinguishable fire.” Geographical *qua* political indoctrination occurred, they claimed, “not only in youth education, but higher education through the study of defense geography…, the sort of study outlined in the work of Banse.” Though they eschewed direct mention of “psychological warfare,” the invocation of Banse as propagandist would be identifiable to contemporary readers as a reference to this role as – in the words of the Committee
for National Morale – “Germany’s foremost strategist of terror.” Moreover, Whittlesey and Hartshorne did not hesitate elsewhere to connect German propaganda to German psychology, arguing that “the contribution of psychology to practical statecraft” in Germany had been the “awakening in the German mass mind [to] a strong sense of the unique mission of Germany as a world leader” (p. 28).

For Whittlesey and Hartshorne, the “psychological” stakes of geographical education as propaganda buckled around the awakening of popular space consciousness in the so-called “German mass mind.” Claiming that a generation of Germans had been “taught to read maps, not merely to look at them,” Whittlesey and Hartshorne further invoked the spectre of the “German public mind” which had been “trained to think in terms of space” (p. 29) Again, though it eschews direct mention of the term, *The German Strategy of World Conquest* was saturated in the emergent logic of psychological warfare, constructing an image of German national morale rooted in popular space consciousness. This construction of popular geographical consciousness as a “psychological” and political weapon, was therefore deeply consonant with concurrent accounts connecting German geopolitics to psychological war.

The construction brought into relief, by contrast, the weakness of American isolationism as a kind of “space ignorance.” Beyond articulating the threat, however, Whittlesey and Hartshorne insisted upon a countervailing geographical education to “set up and keep in running order a world imbued with a mutual will to peaceful neighbourliness.” (p. 262). If popular geographical consciousness meant psychological war, the geographers prescribed a programme for imposing *order* through the
dissemination of all the facts needed to give every member of the body politic the best available understanding of the earth… A great deal can be done in the schools, where organized information may be presented and discussed objectively and systematically. Persons beyond school age can be kept in touch with new knowledge through the press and the radio (p. 266)

For Whittlesey and Hartshorne, then, the tools of mass mediation could disseminate a geographical consciousness which would at once educate, order, and secure populations. It was, moreover, a pastoral vision of populations secured through the obligation of individuals to know: “a long-term program of learning about the earth in which everybody will participate” (p. 262, emphasis mine). It was a remarkable articulation of psychological warfare’s moral economy of lawfulness; of the premise that “every member of the body politic” could be ordered and made secure through the mass mediation of popular geographical consciousness as a tool of biopolitical government. To cultivate for oneself a geographical consciousness was therefore to contribute, as an individual, to a pastoral securitization of the nation through personal and political knowledge.

In addition to articulation geographical consciousness as a terrain of psychological struggle, Whittlesey and Hartshorne also framed international propaganda as a new kind of territorial struggle between nations. Exploiting the recent invention of short-wave radio, capable of broadcasting signals across oceans, Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 252) reproduced a map from Haushofer’s _Zeitschrift für Geopolitik_ depicting “the intensity of propaganda that can be broadcast” to South American by the belligerent nations of the war [Fig. 16]. Here again, emphasis on South America as a potential “dagger at the back” of the United States dovetailed with existing fifth column alarmism, further articulating the logic of psychological warfare as a territorial contest over the minds of foreign populations. Narrating the map, Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 262,
chose the rhetorically appropriate ballistic metaphor, claiming that “European broadcasts bombard Latin American countries,” and that “all short-wave [radio] propaganda is intimately linked with German businesses in these countries.” Though they did not call it “psychological war”, Whittlesey and Hartshorne made clear that propaganda had created a new and decisive geography of defense.

Figure 16: Radio Propaganda in South America

Excerpted from Zeitschrift für Geopolitik in Whittlesey & Hartshorne (1942, 252). Admitting that the radio map was one the few sources concerning South America that could be mustered from the pages of the Zeitschrift, Whittlesey and Hartshorne cited Roosevelt’s “secret Nazi map” (see below) as proof only that there existed “lag between planning and publicity regarding this continent.”

Others were less taciturn. Perhaps the most candid treatment of geopolitics-as-propaganda appeared a year before the major texts of 1942 – and just a few months after the publication of German Psychological Warfare – in the form of Hans Weigert’s short article “Maps as Weapons.”
The impetus for Weigert’s (1941, 528) article was his “astounding observation” that maps in the popular press were “being taken as stable and indisputable factors”; as “mere tools which do not themselves reflect the aims and opinions of their creators.” Weigert argued that emerging American space consciousness made maps weapons on a new “psychological” terrain. He argued that

naive confidence in the truthfulness of the map indicates that many of us are not aware… that maps are weapons… [T]he map has become a psychological weapon in a warring world where the souls of men are as strongly attacked as their lives.

Arguing that maps were a “strong weapon in spiritual warfare,” Weigert (1941, 529) insisted that “the geopolitical map is characterized by its psychological consequence…, not its material content but its propagandistic effect.” To “meet this weapon and to use it ourselves,” Weigert continued, “the American public, must learn how to read, how to digest a map.” The new language of psychological warfare fit the geopolitical narrative, and Weigert adapted for an American audience the premise that “thinking geopolitically” could “build character and promote the formation of will” (Murphy 1992, 243). It was another Foucauldian obligation to know for the new and muscular double subjects of psychological war: “space consciousness” became a terrain of psychological war for the “souls of men.” By the time Weigert (1942, 110) published Generals and Geographers, he had fully adopted the interventionist narrative, going so far as to “discover” psychological warfare into the German geopolitical tradition, suggesting that “Ratzel himself was not blind to [the] psychological factors that bring about a firm and stable symbiosis of the body politic and its spatial groundwork.” Haushofer, too, he argued, “knew perfectly well that the geopolitical strategist must also be an expert in psychological warfare.”
As Weigert (1942, 251) noted, the task of constructing a geopolitical consciousness in the United States was well underway. While in the pages of *Life*, Henry Luce may have demurred articulation of war aims “in terms of vastly distant geography” (see Smith 2003, 18-20), in the offices of *Fortune* his Vice-President C.D. Jackson had begun what Weigert called the “marvellous job” of teaching the United States “its own geopolitics.” Jackson was another friend of William Donovan, and went on to hold the top psychological warfare post at the Office of War Information. At *Fortune*, Jackson had amplified Donovan’s fifth column alarmism (Oct 1940), and gave Edmond Taylor ten pages on how the United States could “take the offensive on the psychological front” (May 1941). It was the artistic maps of *Fortune* magazine’s Richard Edes Harrison, however, that most impressively illustrated a new American space consciousness (Schulten 1998; Barney 2012). As Crampton (2014) reveals, on several occasions Harrison liaised with the OSS at the request of Arthur Robinson, head of the OSS Map Division. Harrison’s maps were aesthetically engaging illustrations of American geopolitical interests: what Weigert (1942, 251) identified as archetypal “suggestive maps” that depicted a growing American geopolitical consciousness. Thus while the popular *Life* magazine sought to abstract and geographically deracinate American empire, the middlebrow *Fortune* sought to construct a geopolitical imaginary for an American century (Smith 2003, xviii, 8) in depicting. Among others, American interests in Peru (1938), Chile (1938), Venezuela (1939) and Columbia (1940). [Fig. 17].
Figure 17: Geopolitical map of Venezuela

A Harrison (c1939) map of Venezuela for Fortune is highly stylized and depicts the country’s natural resources, including the important war commodities oil and iron. In another “Atlas for the Citizen” Harrison (1940) presented military “approaches to the United States,” suggesting a geographical imagination of invasion. The Atlas was presented “for the citizen wishing to review his (sic) ideas of foreign policy in terms of geography.”

While celebrating Fortune as geopolitical educator, Weigert (1942, 251) insisted that “it can be objectively stated that we have in the United States refrained from abusing and falsifying maps as weapons of propaganda.” It wasn’t true. A year earlier, in the very same month that Weigert published “Maps as Weapons” (Oct 1941), a scandal was manufactured around the discovery of a so-called “secret map” of South America that purported to detail German plans for partitioning the continent into vassal states. Though details remain unclear, the map is now widely understood to have been a forgery perpetrated by the agents of the British Security Coordination, likely in concert
with William Donovan and his Office of the Coordinator of Information (Bratzel and Rout 1985; Mahl 1998; Troy 1981, 83)

The map was meant to manufacture scandal over Germany’s challenge to American Monroe doctrine prerogative in South America. Though it is unclear whether President Roosevelt knew the map to be a forgery or not, it nevertheless formed the centrepiece of his Oct 27, 1941 Navy Day address in which he decried Germany’s imperial ambition. “I have in my possession,” Roosevelt (1941) addressed the nation, “a secret map made in Germany by Hitler's government”:

> It is a map of South America and a part of Central America, as Hitler proposes to reorganize it…The geographical experts of Berlin have ruthlessly obliterated all existing boundary lines; and have divided South America into five vassal states…That is his plan. It will never go into effect. This map makes clear the Nazi design not only against South America but against the United States itself.

The context of Navy Day was significant. As it was Roosevelt's policy to wage war without declaring it (Bratzel and Rout 1985), American warships had provoked controversy by engaging German U-Boats while escorting British ships across the Atlantic. The “secret map” [Fig. 18] was in this light a convenient foil for the Atlantic skirmishes, rooted in popular accounts of Germany’s sinister geopolitical expertise, and the Monroe doctrine prerogative of “hemispheric defense”. Like

51 In a letter dated 23 October, 1941 — four days before Roosevelt’s speech — geographer James Preston of the Col discussed the analysis of intelligence on South America with James P. Baxter, then head of the Col Research & Analysis branch. Preston confided to Baxter that “much of this information which must be utilized by the COI is too secret to be shared with other agencies.” It remains unclear what if any role American geographers had in forging the “secret map”. RG 263: Records of the Central Intelligence Agency. Entry A1 8: Background Papers for "Donovan and the CIA: A History of the Establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency," Container 1.
[Fig. 9], the forged map depicted a planned German Luftverkehrsnetz (air traffic network), bolstering Roosevelt’s prior warnings that South America could serve as a base for German air attacks on the United States.

Figure 18: Roosevelt's secret map

*In Bratzel & Rout (1985). The larger, redesigned vassal states were meant to suggest Haushofer’s fingerprints, and his theory that larger states produced fewer conflicts.*
Citing the “violent reactions” of German propagandists to Roosevelt’s speech, Committee for National Morale member Leonard Cronkhite (1941) made the curious argument in a *New York Times* editorial that the discovery of the secret map had been primarily a *propaganda* victory. “To Nazi propagandists,” wrote Cronkhite, “the infuriating and unforgivable thing is that the President resorted to that superlatively potent thing, the truth. In so doing,” he continued, Roosevelt “touched the main problem in American propaganda – namely, how to make truth more powerful than the momentary counterfeiting of truth.” It was an ironic claim, given that the forged map was quite literally a “counterfeit of truth.” However, it supported interventionist rhetoric by purporting to reveal the dissimulations of, as Whittlesey and Hartshorne put it, Germany’s “strategy of world conquest.” Furthermore, it was a propaganda victory in that it also accelerated the construction of the geopolitical imaginaries orbiting South America, fifth columnism, and the psychological war between nations.

Though the map itself had nothing to do with “psychological war,” Cronkhite cited it as proof of the need to consolidate “hemispheric defense” through the establishment of an American “psychological strategy board.” Indicative of the extent to which geopolitical and psychological war alarmism had combined, Cronkhite quoted Banse to remind readers that “the coming war will ultimately be fought out in the souls of the belligerent nations.” Significantly, Cronkhite’s identification of the map as a reflection of the “power of truth” against German psychological warfare presaged the so-called “strategy of truth” which would come to define the political rhetoric of American psychological warfare. In the meantime, the secret map affair sustained interventionist rhetoric in the intervening weeks before Pearl Harbor, on the eve of which Nelson
Rockefeller announced that psychological warfare had created “a new geography of defense.” It was the culmination of a two-year effort by British and American intelligence agencies to construct the idea of a psychological war, to manufacture and uncover evidence of it, and to wage one of their own.

### 3.6 Against Geopolitics: The Strategy of Truth

Within the context of psychological warfare as a new contest both for territories and for the “hearts and minds” of the populations within, on 24 October, 1941 — three days before his “secret map” speech — Roosevelt issued an executive order creating the Office of Facts and Figures (OFF), predecessor to the Office of War Information, which would be established less than a year later. Appointed by Roosevelt, the OFF was headed by the American poet Archibald McLeish, “for the purpose of facilitating the dissemination of factual information to the citizens of the country” (Roosevelt 1941) without so-called “ballyhoo methods.” McLeish was a committed interventionist and New Dealer who called fascism “capitalism’s revenge upon itself” and a “revolution of the defeated…, of the dispossessed” (Winkler 1978, 11). McLeish was, however, a reformer, not a revolutionary. In French literary circles during the 1920s, he clashed with marxists who in his estimation had subordinated art to politics (“the artist had to be independent”). The conviction did not prevent him, however, from serving as editor of *Fortune* magazine from 1930-1938. Here, he would work alongside C.D. Jackson, soon to be the country’s top psychological warrior (Winkler 1978, p. 10).
The establishment of the OFF was met with some incredulity in the press. As the *New York Herald Tribune* sardonically put it, the OFF is just going to superimpose its own ‘well organized facts’ upon the splendid confusion, interpret the interpreters, re-digest those who now digest the digesters, explain what those who explain what the explainers of the explanations means, and coordinate the coordinators of those appointed to coordinate the coordinations of the coordinated (Koppes & Black 1990, p. 56).

Per interventionist water carriers like the *New York Times*’ James Reston, however, the OFF did not go far enough in matching the centralization, authority, and funding of the purported German psychological warfare machine. In a pseudo-*exposé* of the American “defense information services,” Reston (Oct 27, 1941) calculated that the United States spent over $10 million annually between eight agencies.\(^52\) Emphasizing clerical and administrative redundancies, Reston framed the terms of debate between those pushing for a centralized and streamlined service, and those who believed that “such a system would lead to censorship at the source and thus infringe the freedom of the press.”

In his columns, Reston did not follow up on this latter concern. However, when the Office of War Information became such a centralized agency in the summer of 1942, he took a sabbatical from the paper of record to head the OWI’s influential London office.\(^53\) In the meantime, Reston lauded

---

\(^{52}\) The Departments of State, War, the Navy, the Treasury, the Office of Emergency Management, and the two newcomers, the Office of Facts and Figures, and the Office of the Coordinator of Information.

\(^{53}\) Reston’s contribution to psychological war alarmism is emblematic not only of the paper’s relationship to American psychological warriors at the OSS/OWI, but of its position as the paper of record for the American liberal elite. The *New York Herald Tribune*’s criticism of the OFF reflected the perspectives of eastern Republicans as they coincided with popular currents of isolationism. On the significance of liberalism to psychological warfare, see Ch. 2, p. 86-93.
Roosevelt for “attempting to steer a middle course,” outlining for readers the emergent geography of the United States’ official entry into the psychological fray with

Colonel Donovan running the broadcasting and psychological warfare everywhere except in the Western Hemisphere; with Nelson Rockefeller directing the widespread dissemination of news and only news in Latin America; and with Mr. MacLeish “correlating” the defense information that is put out by the main defense agencies at home.54

Reston’s framing was consistent with what would become the durable, if cynical, geographic taxonomy first identified by Lasswell in the 1920s: propaganda (now “psychological war”) in enemy countries, “news and only news” in neutral ones, and objective “information” at home.

As head of the OFF, McLeish lobbied press organizations to toe official lines concerning the continued need for psychological defense and the securitization of the American population qua civilian morale. Addressing the American Society of Newspaper Editors in April of 1942, McLeish appeared to acknowledge the fantastic proportions of psychological war alarmism, admitting that “fraud as an instrument of conquest is something we have read about but have not seen” and that, “the power of words to overthrow nations and enslave their people is a power which we do not altogether or literally believe” (New York Times, April 21, 1942). Whether or not McLeish or his audience did “altogether or literally” believe in the power of German psychological war, he nonetheless urged the gathered newspaper editors to “police the minority of its own members who are engaged in defeatist propaganda.” (ibid)

54 Scare quotes inexplicably in original.
Many did. In March of 1942, for example, the *New York Times* profiled a planned OFF pamphlet called *Divide and Conquer*. The pamphlet condensed the themes of the previous two years’ fifth column and psychological war panics, citing its central texts: Edmond Taylor’s *The Strategy of Terror*, Donovan & Mowrer’s *Fifth Column Lessons*, Herman Rauschning’s fabricated *Voices of Destruction [Conversations with Hitler]* and Leland Stowe’s *No Other Road to Freedom*. The pamphlet was a testament to the role played by these texts in constructing and sustaining the concept of psychological war. Like them, *Divide and Conquer* dramatized German victories in Europe and asserted that psychological war had secured them. “The United States is still intact,” the *New York Times* profile read, “but Hitler hopes to destroy that unity, physically and mentally. All his tricks are now being directed against us. Our job today is one of individual awareness, in order to avoid falling into the Hitler trap” (“Propaganda Aims” 1942, emphasis mine) [Fig. 19].
In addition to refreshing the morale panic of 1940-41, *Divide and Conquer* was an important contribution to the emerging construction of the “strategy of truth” as a weapon against Germany’s so-called “strategy of terror.” Responding to the “lie” that British naval circles were encouraged by the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the pamphlet’s opening paragraph argued that

this Nazi lie, like all Nazi lies, was part of a vast strategy of terror. Hitler knows that in order to conquer the world he must first enslave the mind of man, and toward that end he is carrying out a program of propaganda, blackmail, and death. Because he fears truth, he has tried every means of wiping it off the face of the earth (Office of Facts and Figures 1942, 3).
The passage offered a geopolitical imagination of psychological warfare as a territorialized battle in which Germany “feared truth” and attempted to “wipe it off the face of the earth.” In this and subsequent constructions, “truth” was framed as a near-magical force capable of dispelling Germany’s “lies” and “terror,” a talisman not unlike the hyperbolic accounts of the power of Germany’s psychological “witch doctor scientists.”

This construction of “the power of truth” further articulated the muscular Christian tones of psychological war. Invoking John’s (8:32) gospel that “the truth shall set you free,” the pamphlet concluded that

we know that Hitler, who acts like a terror, is really the most frightened man on earth. The upraised arm, the shouting voice, the mighty bluster, all mask a mortal dread of the weapon that makes men free: the truth. We are armed with the truth, and we will crush the tyrant (OFF 1942, 14).

In the “strategy of truth,” the OFF articulated a vision of American psychological warfare, still tied to the muscular Christian injunction to wage spiritual battle within and over oneself — “our job today is one of individual awareness” — but crucially extended to the territorial logic of war. In this positive articulation of American offensive, as psychological cold warrior Edward Barrett (1953) would put it, “truth is our weapon.” As Cronkhite (1941) had foreshadowed, truth became in the American press “that superlatively potent thing” at the root of muscular American psychological war. Continuing the ballistic metaphor, Cronkhite reclaimed the tones of Edmond Taylor’s masculine “nerve privates,” emphasizing the “blasts” and “counters” of psychological war. “To merely inform is insufficient”, the Committee for the National Morale member wrote:
To inform at the right time, with the right emphasis, on the sufficient scale, with the particular truth that counters the blasts of the enemy thought-machine — these problems need to be met by an over-all strategy... The research necessary, the knowledge essential, and the application of counter-action, requires detachment, scientific independence and freedom of movement. Much of the research preparation has been undertaken under private and educational auspices. Much of the basic work cannot possibly be done by any existing department. Great potentials remain unused to affect here and elsewhere the result in this mortal conflict.

It was an impressive condensation of psychological warfare’s morale economy, a picture of psychological warfare as objective (“scientific independence”); manly (“blasts” and “counter-actions”); lifesaving (“potential in this mortal conflict”); and lawful (“truth” as ordering). Moreover, the call for a psychological “grand strategy” suggested an implicit territoriality, framing the places of the world — “here and elsewhere” — as the battlespaces of a new kind of Manichean war of truth against terror. [Fig. 20]. The rhetorical construction of American psychological war therefore created a geopolitical imaginary in which the territorial advance of truth imposed order upon places and people of a world at war, its lawfulness qua truth a self-ordained manifestation of proselytizing Christian morality.
Figure 20: The Axis Grand Strategy

“It remains to be seen whether we have a grand strategy or a Grand Psychological Strategy Board of the kind made essential by the unified, powerful and aggressive Nazi plan” (Cronkhite 1941). The theme of “grand strategy” was connected both to the narrative of geopolitics as a science for imperial conquest, and to psychological warfare as a tool for its realization. As part of the push to advocate for the establishment of the OWI and OSS later that summer, the Committee for National Morale, again with Ladislas Farago as editor, published a follow up to German Psychological Warfare called The Axis Grand Strategy: Blueprints for the Total War. Promotional copy in New York Times (1942, March 27) led with a quote from Ewald Banse.
While this and other accounts suggest the presumed global scale of the new psychological war, they betray what Neil Smith (2003, 20) calls the “rhetorical spacelessness” of American empire. Against the foil of “German terror,” the construction of “truth as a weapon” served as a geographically deracinated signifier of American empire. As Smith notes, when Henry Luce demurred the articulation of American war aims “in terms of vastly distant geography,” he sought to couch the “American century” in terms of the rhetoric of “freedom” and “democracy” rather than the in territorial terms of empire or the economic terms of capitalism. The “strategy of truth” did not suggest, for example, the maintenance of press blacklists in South America, or the negotiation of access to foreign film markets. Thus, when Cronkhite advocated a centralized psychological strategy board whose “power would reside in timed and emphasized truth, with money to spread it,” he invoked an abstract territoriality. Just as German psychological warfare was constructed as an omnipresent threat that “knew no bounds in space and time,” the American strategy of truth was both everywhere and nowhere.55

It was not, however, until the establishment of the Office of War Information in June of 1942 that the “strategy of truth” became the official policy of American psychological warriors. The organizational history of the Office of War Information has been treated elsewhere (Winkler 1978, Weinberg 1968), but essentially consolidated the Office of Facts and Figures, the Office of

55 The rhetoric of the “strategy of truth” helped suspend extant contradictions between American imperialism and popular isolationism, providing an abstract liberal gloss to actually existing American colonial administration. What appeared in American constructions as “German psychological warfare’s” drive to collect data on foreign populations in fact reflected the United States own innovations in colonial policing at the turn of the 20th century (See McCoy 2009).
Government Reports, and the Foreign Information Service, the latter of which had previously been under the control of Donovan’s Office of the Coordinator of Information. OWI’s first director was drawn from the ranks of the Committee for National Morale in the person of the widely respected CBS radio journalist Elmer Davis. Like McLeish, Davis was a New Deal liberal who had been a member of the American labor party “until communist elements gained the upper hand” (Winkler 1978, 31). The selection of Davis was in part a response to criticisms of the propagandistic tones of McLeish’s Office of Facts and Figures. “Elmer Davis,” wrote journalist Arthur Krock (1942) supportively, just days after the formation of OWI, “continued today to stress news as the product expected of him by the public and the press… That is where the accent belongs and where it has NOT been placed by the OFF.” Krock went so far as to accuse McLeish’s office of resorting to psychological warfare against the American public, a rare break from the term’s normative assignment to enemy countries, meant to signal the significance of the regime change:

They [the OFF] have functioned more as the people's psychiatrists than as reporters, and there have been instances when they have glossed over or twisted facts in the apparent belief that national "morale" would be better served by so doing… Many have expressed confidence that no releases over which Mr. Davis and OWI have control will contain or reflect any of these flaws, that they will be honest contributions to the news and not to "psychological" warfare or mass treatment in the fields of national morale and partisan politics.

While the emphasis on news was meant to stress the OWI’s objectivity, in practice its proselytizing tones remained. In a speech titled “The Power of Truth,” given at a dedication of a new General Electric shortwave radio transmitter in September of 1942, Robert Sherwood argued that “we have one form of strength” he said “which our enemies do not possess—and that is the power of truth.
That is the purpose to which the transmitter is today dedicated—to tell to the world—to friend and foe alike—the essential truth about this war.” He continued:

The Nazi masters of Europe—the Japanese masters of East Asia—make it a capital offense for anyone to listen to the truth. They fear the truth, because it is the weapon of destruction for them who have thrived on lies. To all victims of oppression who may hear us… we Americans express the substance of our democratic faith—that the truth is mighty and shall prevail—the truth shall set you free.

The speech reflected Roosevelt’s (1942) curious claim in establishing the OWI that the office would fulfill a supposed “right to truth” — “the right of the American people and of all other peoples opposing the Axis aggressors to be truthfully informed about the common war effort.”

The suggestion that the General Electric shortwave transmitter — an embodiment of American psychological warfare as a joint project between capital and the state — could secure the “right to truth” of global citizens presaged the expansionary and market-driven doctrine of the “free flow of information” during the Cold War (Schiller 1976; Peters 2004; Nordenstreng 2011). Arthur Harrison’s “On Assignment” [Fig. 21] similarly depicted the American media industry and its advertisement of factual, objective news as guarantor of truth. Luce’s media empire was therefore not only a projection of American economic lebensraum (Smith 2003), but a custodian of national morale on which psychological defense was presumed to rest. In the next chapter, I consider how this marriage of American media industry to the “strategy of truth” became central to American psychological warfare’s “new geography of defense.”

56 These supposed “rights” would come to appear similar to the rights” of American capital under the guise of the to “free flow” doctrine of information.
Arthur Edes Harrison’s (1942) “On Assignment” was a celebratory depiction of the geographical reach of Time-Life-Fortune’s wartime reporting. Emphasizing news and objectivity, the map also advertised its dissemination of geopolitical consciousness through “first-hand knowledge of the broad pattern of world strategy.” The map suggested both the curious “right to truth” and “obligation to know” in psychological war.
If geographers have widely considered Foucault’s writing on governmentality as a strategy for the management of populations, these considerations here combine with his later project of “writing the history of the force of truth” (Foucault 2014, 101; see Elden 2016; Legg 2016). In the next chapter, I argue that the development of American psychological warfare during the Second World War can be understood as an important moment for the history of the “manifestation of truth” in war. While it is tempting to dismiss the obvious duplicity of wartime propaganda and its secondary role relative to armed force, consideration of the development of American psychological warfare can aid understanding of how the politics and rhetoric of truth suffused war, and how attempts were made to mediate military force and make it both legible and productive. As Foucault (2014, 17) suggests,

> it is often said that, in the final analysis, there is something like a kernel of violence behind all relations of power and that if one were to strip power of its showy garb one would find the naked game of life and death. Maybe. But can there be power without showy garb? In other words, can there really be a power that would do without the play of light and shadow, truth and error, true and false, hidden and manifest, visible and invisible? In other words, can there be an exercise of power without a ring of truth?

### 3.7 Conclusion

Thus did psychological warfare give itself a strange ouroboric birth in the United States as a propaganda campaign about the new and unprecedented dangers of propaganda. While William Donovan and his network of interventionists sought to leverage the social scientific authority of psychologists to construct the new menace of psychological war, its fictional nature and lack of positive content lead American psychologists to offer as proof, not psychological, but geopolitical
texts. Before its incorporation of extant strategies of combat and consolidation propaganda, outlined in the next chapter, psychological warfare existed first as a *geopolitical imaginary* of invasion at the pastoral scales of population and individual. Drawing upon the similarly phantasmal threat of fifth columnism, psychological war narratives in the United States attempted to construct popular perceptions of what Nelson Rockefeller insisted was a “new geography of defense” obviating the possibility of American isolationism.

Central to the project were concerted efforts to construct Ewald Banse in the American press as the “mastermind” of German psychological warfare. Though a marginal figure in Germany, the Banse narrative drew upon and furthered extant constructions of Karl Haushofer and geopolitics as a highly technical and scientific method for waging war. As I have shown, American geographers too — notably those within the remit of William Donovan’s nascent Office of Strategic Services — lent their authority to both narratives, tying the emergent narratives of psychological warfare to a geopolitical imaginary of invasion and the securitization of populations through civilian morale. Leveraging and exacerbating public perceptions about the social dislocation produced by time-space compression, psychological war narratives in fact obscured the political and economic bases of the power of the press and actually existing social dislocation, offering in their place individualized and individualizing muscular Christian fantasies of spiritual battle in which spectators of war were transmuted into active “nerve privates” on the “battlefield of the mind.”

Despite Germany’s ability to reach the American public through new communication technologies like shortwave radio, it had not succeeded in establishing a line of communication to the American
public. I have concluded by showing that, despite the absence of a real threat, the construction of a psychological war scare allowed the United States’ political elites to consolidate power over their own domestic lines of communication, first through the establishment of the Office of Facts and Figures, and finally through the Office of War Information. These offices’ conceit of meeting Germany’s strategy of terror with a “strategy of truth” was meant to connote the United States’ ostensible rejection of vulgar European geopolitics, a rhetorical concession to the popular isolationist sentiment Donovan and his colleagues worked so hard to combat. However, emphasis on truth-content, and on content more generally, also obscured the political economic monopoly of knowledge on which it was the strategy of truth was based. As I detail in the next chapter, the actual conduct of American psychological warfare during the Second World War contravened virtually every tenet of its emerging moral economy: in place of saving lives, psychological war provided rationale for taking them; in place of objectivity, social scientists tailored reports to suit military commanders; in place of a manly warrior-ethos, psychological warriors terrorized defenceless civilian target; and in place of its geographically deracinated “strategy of truth,” psychological warriors sought to govern territory and police populations.
Chapter 4: Truth, Territory, Terror

With entry into the war came the creation of the United States’ own psychological warfare agencies in the form of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the Office of War Information (OWI). While never strict, the dividing line between these organizations ostensibly corresponded to “black” and “white” operations, with the OSS conducting secret and covert “black” operations, and the OWI conducting the United States’ overt “strategy of truth.” Though William Donovan had been so central to the lexical establishment of psychological warfare in the United States, after bitter disputes between the offices, President Roosevelt ultimately gave greater authority over psychological war to his more liberal friends, like Robert Sherwood and Archibald McLeish at the OWI (Winkler 1978). While the history of covert psychological warfare at the OSS remains a story only piecemeal told, owing in part to the challenges of research on clandestine activity, this chapter concerns the activities of the OWI and its “strategy of truth” during the Second World War. As concerns this dissertation’s interest in the place of psychological warfare within the history of liberal governmentality, I begin with a fuller account of the politics of truth as they emerged around the United States’ roll out of its own practices of psychological war. I show how, despite the anti-geopolitical rhetoric of the strategy of truth, in the theatres of Europe and North Africa, psychological warfare became a territorial strategy for governing populations. While I argue that little evidence exists to suggest that psychological warfare had appreciable effects on enemy troops, I show that behind advancing Allied lines American psychological war was tightly tied to expanding markets for the circulation of American cultural commodities and their corollary depictions of American lifestyle. Finally, I argue that, absent governmental techniques beyond the
circulation of products like film and newspaper, aerial bombing became the guiding principle of American psychological warfare, providing it with pseudo-scientific justifications and political rationales.

4.1 Truth

In this section I consider the public discussions that took place in the United States over the politics of truth as they concerned the new concept of psychological warfare. I argue that American psychological warfare’s claim to a “strategy of truth” was the most important tenet of its moral economy, given public resentment and distrust over propaganda. As suggested in the previous chapter, while psychologists may not have contributed greatly to “psychological war” efforts in the months prior to American entry into the war, they did work tirelessly to create public awareness of the “German threat,” and to articulate “national morale” as a response to it. In this section I outline the political contours of this discussion to show how psychologists constructed a liberal political imaginary of “democratic morale” as an attempt to square the circle of public apprehension over propaganda.

4.1.1 The Cynicism of the Deadly Parallel

In an undated memorandum titled “A Means of Recommending the Morale Service to the Public,” the Committee for National Morale (n.d.) understood the problem of establishing a domestic morale agency as follows:
It is very difficult to set up a service of this sort in peace time without arousing widespread opposition from the public. Propaganda bureaus, Censorship bureaus, Ministries of Information, etc. all carry the stigma that they are imposed from the top, are dictatorial and undemocratic. Yet if the findings of the Morale Service are to be put into effect, the Morale Service will have to exercise some of the functions associated with these unpopular intuitions. It is therefore vitally important to set up the Morale Service in a way which will differentiate it in the public mind from these unpopular institutions and which will make the Public feel that the Service is friendly to them.57

For the psychologists of the Committee, who envisioned for themselves a central place in the proposed Morale Service, the problem of what they could do to improve national morale was mooted until they could make the idea of such a service palatable to government and a weary public. As a result, between 1941-42 psychologists associated with the committee worked to foment psychological war panic (Ch 2) and present “national morale” as its cure. Harvard psychologist Gordon Allport (1941b, 236) urged all psychologists, regardless of their specialization, to prepare at least one lecture on the topic of civilian morale, noting that, “a fortunate by-product” of the war would be the immersion of psychologists in political affairs — there would be “plenty of work for all.”

The problem as Allport (1941a, 89) saw it was what he called “the cynicism of the deadly parallel,” that is the fact of widespread public incredulity toward propaganda efforts. “Smarting with humiliation,” wrote Allport, “young people have been taught to distrust the toxins of propaganda, the hypocrisies of Versailles, and the mischief of war hysteria… It is an irony of fate that those slogans most appropriate to the present need were used in 1917-18 and cannot possibly be

57 Margaret Mead Papers, Library of Congress Manuscripts Collection, Box F1.
employed again.” The depression made things worse. “I suppose” Allport recounted one reliefer to have said, “they'll be asking us now to make the world safe for unemployment.” It was a further irony that incredulity toward foreign and domestic propaganda alike presented a problem for a committee trying to establish a morale service. As Lasswell (Ch. 2) wryly noted, the liberal propagandist quite needed the “stupidity of the average man” (Niebuhr 1932) to justify a technocratic program for the management of public opinion. Indiscriminate incredulity was bad for business.

Cynicism and its “deadly parallel” when applied equally to American and German propaganda thus became a “problem” for Committee psychologists: how could they produce citizens critical of enemy psychological warfare, but credulous toward American “morale” efforts? To square the circle, Committee psychologists advanced the concept of “democratic morale” as the basis for constructing a liberal biopolitical political imaginary for the proposed agency. Contributing the moral economy of psychological warfare as the lawful ordering of public opinion, Allport (1941a, 91) rooted “democratic morale” in a biopolitical imaginary of population health:

it is difficult to define the positive ingredients of morale for the same reason that it is difficult to specify the ingredients of sanity, health, and well-being. Painful conditions and mental conflicts have a way of becoming focal in consciousness. They stand out as etched figures on a ground of marginal awareness; while good morale, like health, is a ground condition, embedded in the matrix of personality.

58 It might have been Monty’s Python’s Graham Chapman (1969) speaking on “joke warfare”: “All through the winter of ’43 we had translators working, in joke-proof conditions, to try and produce a German version of the joke. They worked on one word each for greater safety. One of them saw two words of the joke and spent several weeks in hospital. But apart from that things went pretty quickly, and we soon had the joke by January, in a form which our troops couldn’t understand but which the Germans could.”
The theme of “national morale” as the securitization of populations had its pastoral counterpart in the figure of the “healthy individual” as the double subject of psychological war. In what he called the “integrated personality,” Allport posited the ultimate governable subject of liberal power, in whom guided self-government formed the basis of national morale qua population security. Against the liberal “integrated personality, Allport (1941a, 91) posed the “segmented personality” of the totalitarian regime, a condition of obedience won through coercion, intimidation, and above all emotional appeals. He wrote that

The Nazi identifies himself with his leader, yields up his own responsibility, his own conscience, and a large portion of his intelligence. An almost trance-like state results which must be sustained by the trappings, the myths, and the hocus-pocus appropriate to hypnotism. In the exercise of democratic morale, all of one's sentiments, values, and knowledge can be employed.

Allport veered close to the social-science fictionalism of Edmond Taylor’s “Teutonic witch doctors” in suggesting the “hocus-pocus hypnotism” of German propaganda, but it offered a foil for his vision of the democratic morale of the “integrated personality” as “realistic” and problem-solving.” It did not need “incessant stimulants,” as it “carries along doggedly, as do healthy individuals in their daily lives when faced with serious tasks.” In other words, the integrated personality presented a liberal vision of morale, not as machinations “imposed form the top,” but as volitions cultivated voluntarily from below.

Allport’s brother Floyd Henry Allport (1941, 258), another influential social psychologist, made a similar pronouncement, arguing that morale consistent with “democratic principles” should “spring up (energies enlisted) by virtue of clear statements and universal acceptance of the end-
event (carry-through purpose)” Though more vernacular, Floyd Allport’s sentiment was the same: democratic morale was a kind of liberal self-government based on “universality, respect for the individual, and voluntary, wholehearted participation” (Allport 1942, 8). The brothers collaborated to present a vision of democratic morale that distanced itself from “emotional appeals,” externalizing the negative connotations of propaganda, and rehabilitating morale “if it utilizes the full intellectual equipment of each individual, so that his morale may involve the whole man” (Allport 1942, 14). “Oddly enough” Allport concluded (1941a, 92), “democratic morale is more total than totalitarian morale.”

4.1.2 When Did Critique Run Out of Steam?

When the Office of War Information (OWI) was established in the Summer of 1942, the rhetoric of its strategy of truth dovetailed with the psychologists’ construction of democratic morale as the condition of well-informed — if not “propagandized” — citizens. Allport (1941b, 91) cited the absence of atrocity stories, war songs, and “epithets of opprobrium for the Huns” as sign of American democratic maturity, though the fact likely reflected only official fear of the public’s “deadly cynicism.” Central to Allport’s support for democratic morale was his commitment to advertising the strategy of truth. “Unacceptable” he wrote (1942, 15), “is Nietzsche’s assertion that ‘the criterion of truth lies in the enhancement of the feeling of power.’ Such irrationalism is not the foundation for a democratic morale, and programs of action cannot be based upon it.” The invocation of Nietzsche, whether in good faith or not, posed the issue of the relation of power to truth and opened an interesting moment of public debate over the politics of truth in psychological warfare.
In the second yearbook of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), fittingly on Civilian Morale, Allport (1942, 5) took aim at political opponents who believed that the goal of democratic morale was “intolerable sentimentalism” and a “futile gesture of sweetness in the face of grisly reality.” In a “life and death struggle,” these interlocutors held, “the bestial and least democratic of tactics is likely to win.” One such antagonist to the strategy of truth was Sherman Dryer, director of the University of Chicago’s radio program. Calling the strategy of truth as burden which “must be overcome,” Dryer advanced an exceptionalist wartime logic to argue for the use of expedient “relevant duplicity.” His 1942 Radio in Wartime remains an early advocate of the neoconservative “noble lie” from the University of Chicago, even before Leo Strauss’ arrival in 1949. Dryer (1942, 36-37) deflated several canards that had dominated psychological war alarmism, sardonically noting that

radio is a secret weapon. The secret is how to use it as a weapon. We still have not discovered that secret, nor has any other country. For all the ballyhoo about the power of radio on the psychological front, there is virtually no evidence to substantiate the claims that the microphone is as effective or important a weapon as a bombing plane or a panzer division.

Dryer (1942, 38) took aim at the contrivances of alarmists like Mowrer, Stowe, and Taylor, arguing that the “formula” for wartime broadcasting had not yet been discovered, “despite the claims of reporters washed back to our shores by the wave of war in Europe who have told us that ‘Hitler broke French courage with his broadcasts,’ that ‘Radio Berlin softened up the resistance of Europe,’ and that the battle of words raging between European belligerents is ‘cracking enemy morale.’” He also dampened the liberal narrative that “straight news” as such was propaganda’s
opposite number, noting Deutsche Rundfunk’s attempts to “sow confusion and apprehension among enemy populations” almost exclusively took the form of “straight news.”

Though Dryer was keen for shortwave radio to be used offensively against Germany, it was on the homefront that Dryer saw the greatest potential for radio at war:

Instead of expending great effort on shortwave broadcasts to the enemy, it would be vastly more profitable to concentrate on the home front. Broadcasts to the enemy have a negative purpose to bewilder, to confuse, and to frighten. On the home front, however, the great creative potential of radio may be used to inspire, influence, and emotionalize public response. Creative radio can exploit "plus symbols" to significant advantage. The audience of entertainment and dramatic programs is ready-made, receptive to interpretation and directives. We know our own people better than we can ever know our enemy. We can communicate with the home front on the standard waveband, and exploit listeners' loyalties to radio and to specific programs (p. 40).

Contrary to the claim that psychological warfare knew “no limits in time and space,” Dryer understood that effective propaganda took place primarily on the homefront. It was a twentieth century amendment to the Clausewitzian principle that “a change of the system of communication is much less easy of accomplishment in an enemy's country than in our own”; an acknowledgement that the geography of psychological warfare favoured domestic over foreign exploitation.

Dryer (1942, 83) correctly identified the impetus for the strategy of truth in its proponents’ “fearfulness that they will be called propagandists,” deriding what he saw as liberal fecklessness. While he advanced the moral tenet that psychological warfare was a technical and objective enterprise, he located the “control box of mass action,” not in the intellect, but in the emotions of fear, hate, jealousy, love, and ambition. Accepting the liberal saw that “man's ability to reason,
properly exploited, is the technician's ally,” Dryer nonetheless held that this was so only to the extent it created the illusion for the individual that “his concurrence with his fellows is the result of personal decision.” It was a direct attack on the liberal premise that “democratic morale” was an alternative to propaganda, and not simply one of many avenues for it. Like Lasswell, who had insisted that the liberal conscience was merely one target audience requiring the construction of appeals specific to it, Dryer argued that it was “a mistake to suppose that the intellectual approach in itself assures any propaganda being effective” (p. 84). In an epistemic coup, Dryer advanced a premise that would remain at the heart of psychological war theory:

In the execution of this task [the propagandist] can respect no single fact, no truth, so much that he will refuse to alter it, if it does fit into the total emotional pattern he is designing. This is less Machiavellian than practical. It is probably the only tactic that will make effective a strategy of democratic propaganda. For what is needed is propaganda for the truth, not a strategy of the truth (p. 87).

It was a reprise of Mowrer and Donovan’s exceptionalist logic, and Kenneth Burke’s (1942, 405) paradoxical observation that the United States could save democracy by temporarily suspending it. More than democratic exceptionalism, however, Dryer’s articulation of “propaganda for truth” presaged the neoconservative conceit that truth was a transcendental possession of political elites, capable of realization through the controlled and noble lie. Dryer’s case for “relevant duplicity” turned on the premise that wartime exceptionalism transmuted the American public into a mass which “emergency mores made act and respond as a unit” (p. 80). Thus the public — “composed of groups with differing prejudices and backgrounds” — became in psychological war the chiaroscuro masses whose “morale” had become a matter of military security.
Though a largely forgotten book, Dryer’s metaphysics of propaganda advanced an arch-relativistic epistemology that would become a staple of psychological war theory and practice into the 21st century. Prior to American entry into the war, interventionists held fast to a rhetorical demarcation between truth and propaganda. After Pearl Harbor, however, an epistemological perspectivalism emerged in public debates on propaganda and psychological warfare to claim that such demarcations, when they were not simply dangerous to the war effort, were philosophically impossible. The formulation consisted of the premise that since all information is capable of influence, then all information is potentially propaganda. Ipso facto, the idea of objective or neutral information — information that couldn’t politically influence its receiver — was said to be impossible. “We live in a propaganda age,” Dryer claimed, and since propaganda is “a method utilized for influencing the conduct of others on behalf of predetermined ends, …every articulate person with a purpose is a propagandist.” (p. 88) Everything, it followed, was permitted.

The line of reasoning plainly obscured the massive apparatuses and organization required to conduct large scale propaganda campaigns. Through a rhetorical sleight of hand, Dryer traded an epistemological appraisal of propaganda for a material one. If Latour (2004) has argued that contemporary critique has “run out of steam,” the politics of truth surrounding psychological warfare in the early 1940s represent a remarkable early case study in the exploitation of critique by the ruling elite. It gave a new and bitter meaning to the OWI’s refrain that “the truth shall set you free”: while an outward rhetoric of “truth” could be levied to assuage public hostility toward propaganda, psychological warriors cultivated an inward epistemological perspectivalism to untether themselves from its constraint.
Though rarely voiced, the duplicitist “strategy for truth” ironically allowed for recapitulations of the strategy of truth in the popular press. In a commentary on *Radio In Wartime* in the *New York Times*, columnist John Hutchens (1943) made the understated observation that “it would appear [Dryer] is advocating the use of the controlled lie.” Protesting perhaps too little, Hutchens objected by asking what would happen when “a people’s army fighting a people’s war inevitably learns it cannot trust its government?” Consummately practical, Hutchens warned that “the answer is in American’s revulsion against propaganda after World War I, and quite apart from the moral aspect, the chance is not worth taking again.” Protesting perhaps too much, Hutchens’ answer suggested that the danger of the noble lie was not the jeopardization of, for example, the functioning of democracy, but the jeopardization of propaganda’s rehabilitation under the banner of the OWI’s strategy of truth.

The pantomime of debate pitted abstract liberal truth against abstract conservative expediency, and had the effect of enshrining bipartisan consensus supporting a large-scale information program, presenting for debate only questions concerning the abstractions of its moral economy. The debate was in fact an excellent illustration of public relations pioneer Edward Bernays’ (1943, 77) vision of an American psychological “grand strategy”: “a balance of entertainment and escapism, of war information and, of course, criticism.” So much for the strategy of truth. Cracks in the facade of the strategy of truth also emerged from the psychological community. In the SPSSI’s second on *Civilian Morale*, Gordon Allport walked back his previous insistence against

---

59 It was perhaps a political corollary to Ian Hacking’s (1983, 5) observation that, “whenever we find two philosophers who line up exactly opposite on a series of half a dozen points, we know that in fact they agree about almost everything...if two people genuinely disagreed about great issues, they would not find enough common ground to dispute the specifics one by one.”
Nietzsche’s “unacceptable assertion” of the primacy of power over truth. While he still held fast to his construction of “democratic” against “totalitarian” morale, Allport (1942, 7) now saw its importance in “enabl[ing] us to keep our moral purposes straight, so that after the period of confusion and unavoidable lapses, the nation may return (as thus far it always has) to its own guiding ethic” (emphasis mine).

In the same SPSSI yearbook, Columbia University psychologist S.S. Sargent (1942, 168) went further to cross once sacrosanct lines. “Though distinctions can be made between propaganda and education,” he argued, “these tend to become unimportant in wartime.” Employing the relativist critique, Sargent defined propaganda as “the attempt to bring about desired attitudes by means of suggestion,” from which followed the corollary principle that all information was propaganda:

> when a writer does an article on the significance to Americans of Japanese conquest of Singapore, he is putting out propaganda; in each case an attempt is made to produce a desired effect upon public opinion. Propaganda may be used to aid American morale by stating and interpreting war aims, by fostering good will toward allies and hatred toward enemies—in fact by any appeal to reason or emotion which may evoke confidence, enthusiasm, and determined effort (p. 169).

With the war enjoined, American psychologists’ concern with squaring the circle of democratic morale waned. “Democratic dogma is a safe principle in ordinary times,” wrote Rudolf Ekstein (1942, 377) in The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, “but in times of emergency it might become dangerous…Every grown-up should want and should be allowed to run his own life, but an emergency operation needs experts and does not allow for democratic discussion with the patient.” An infantilizing paternalism here combined with a biopolitical imaginary in which the body politic of the “patient” required securitization through expert technicians on national
morale. Moreover, Ekstein revived the psychological war theme of the liability of democracy, arguing that “great weakness” in democratic ideology was that “the intellect does not reach the main parts of the Nazi ideology” while on the contrary fascism could “arouse old latent infantile attitudes always ready to overpower the defense system of the intellect” (p. 378). Ekstein’s framing of psychological warfare within the Freudian terms of the fascist id battling democratic super-ego again scaled war between nations to an individual battle within and over oneself. It presented psychological war in pastoral terms of the direction of conscience, of individuals’ internal struggle against foreign evil, and of the responsibility of American leaders to fulfill the role of pastoral guidance.

What Allport had expended so much effort to construct — the idea that the strength of democratic morale was based upon liberal ideas of reasoned consent — was swept away. Gone were saccharine calls for democratic morale, however earnest or cynical. Thus, concluded Ekstein (1943, 383), “propaganda should not be considered from the moral point of view but from the point of view of effect…The actual device used might not fit into our moral code, [but] the tools and materials used to build and safeguard a Democracy do not always mirror the ideology of Democracy.” A year into the war Allport (1943, 190) himself was remarkably taciturn about his once cherished ideal of democratic morale. “Gone,” he wrote a 1943 Bulletin for the SPSSI, “are the subtle distinctions established during the 20's and 30's to mark off propaganda from education.”

He continued:

Wartime brooks no such distinction, and indeed, earlier distinctions seem untenable in retrospect…A soldier impressed by [Frank Capra’s] documentary film A Prelude to War,
sponsored by the U. S. Army, remarked "it's all propaganda, but I guess it's true." And so it is.

4.1.3 The Strategy of Candor

If a key dimension of the OWI’s strategy of truth was to adopt the tenor of objective news production, it pursued this strategy by loosening censorship on the press within the bounds of military operational security — “not to suppress, but to reveal” was Davis’ mandate. Controversially, Davis convinced Roosevelt to lift the publication ban on images of dead American soldiers under the pretense that the public “had a right to be truthfully informed” (Miller 2008, 121). It was a reprise of the OWI’s supposed mandate to fulfill the “rights” of the peoples of the world to be truthfully informed about the war. This led to controversy when in 1943 Henry Luce’s Life magazine published a photograph of three dead American soldiers, laying face down on a beach in Buna [Fig. 22]. Critics argued that lifting the ban had given some Americans “more of the war than they can take” (ibid), but the images nevertheless contributed to OWI’s credibility as having loosened government censorship — “showing the good and the bad” — to the end of truthful and factual reporting of the war.

While the decision to loosen some censorship was framed as part of OWI’s strategy of truth, and the “right” of the American people to be informed, Davis’ push to lift the publication ban on dead Americans followed fellow Committee for National member Gordon Allport’s insistence that, contrary to prevailing ideas, negative headlines could help build domestic morale. Correspondence between Gordon and Floyd Allport reveals that as early as 1941 the brothers had planned a
collaborative study to determine the morale effects of “positive” newspaper headlines against “negative” ones (Johnson 1998, p. 62). Floyd Allport’s preliminary study of subjects’ reactions to 60 headlines sought to determine which ones made Americans “feel like taking a more active part in the war” (as cited in Johnson 1998). The results suggested that negative headlines were more likely to elicit anger than fear, and that anger correlated to “positive morale” in the form of support for the war. Floyd Allport soon repeated the experiment, expanding the study to 126 headlines. Concurrently, Gordon Allport conducted a survey of 3,226 headlines and found that the majority of newspapers favoured optimistic headlines when reporting the war. The study also suggested that the tone of headlines had little effect on daily circulation, which removed the presumed editorial profit motive for framing war news positively (Winship & Allport, 1943).

Floyd Allport used these studies as the basis to publish an article in the trade journal Editor & Publisher, urging editors to employ negative news frames to exploit anger for morale value. Reminding editors that “words are weapons,” Floyd Allport exhorted them to “use the phraseology of the headline, and the legitimate emotions it arouses in the reader, to cure the evil of complacency and help us on toward victory” (Allport et al 1943, 11). Floyd Allport followed up the article by writing an astounding 200 letters to the editors of American newspapers with circulations in excess of 50,000, attaching a re-print of his Editor & Publisher article. Though it is difficult to ascertain the effect of the Allport’s campaign, they had sent their findings to the OWI, and at least one government official cited it as the direct cause of the Navy’s revision of its policy concerning publicity about its casualties (Johnson 1998, 64).
The beach became a space of constructed visibility, designed to elicit anger and the kinds of “grassfire excitement” the Allport brothers had previously consigned to, and condemned as, a morale technique for the “segmented personality” (Strock 1943).
The decision to publish American war dead, then, was motivated by a desire to harness the anger of American viewers, and a desire for the OWI to be seen as presenting an objective account of the war. It was what psychological cold warrior Ralph White (1952) would go on to call a “strategy of candor”; an acknowledgement of the public’s incredulity and hostility toward too-obvious propaganda, and an effort to “counteract the idea of ‘propaganda’ in the sense of calculated distortion.” Just as Gordon Allport’s conception of “democratic morale” obsessed over the problem of the public’s “deadly cynicism” toward morale building efforts, the decision to loosen censorship appeared motivated more by the impetus to dissimulate the artifice that overly saccharine news would betray. As White (1952, 539) would note after the war,

> the world is more and more tired of “propaganda.” This is the fundamental, all-embracing fact which every propagandist must face, and the implications of which he must recognize…The psychological resistances of a skeptical, propaganda-weary world must be respected and intelligently taken into account; they cannot be simply battered down.

This strategy of candor, however, relied on, and traded off against, “selectivity” in choosing what to publish. Strategic candor emphatically did not mean the unregulated release of news. Rather, it entailed selectively constructing spaces of visibility through the management of a “contingent freedom of circulation” (Dillon & Lobo-Guerrero 2008). The problem facing the psychological warrior was therefore a matter of judgement concerning what and how much negative news to circulate in order to simulate candor and dissimulate artifice.60

60 On certain topics, only silence was to be observed. As White (1952, 547) writes,

> the Negro in America, slums in America, unemployment, corruption, our attitude toward British socialism, shifts in our policy toward Germany and Japan, MacArthur’s advance to the Yalu, Franco, Chiang Kai-shek,
In the months before the African landings, the American press narrated the establishment of American psychological warfare at the OSS and OWI. The spectre of German psychological war expertise remained looming, and Rauschning’s fake *Conversations with Hitler*, which Donovan & Mowrer had pushed in the preceding years, were invoked to justify the new agencies. The press gave assurances that the American program would eschew Goebbels’ strategy of “terror, division, frightfulness and falsehood,” and would be “rooted in the truth that is our greatest asset” (Hutchens 1942). The press painted psychological warfare as a necessary evil which Germany had compelled the United States to meet: since Americans “cherish the dignity of the individual,” we have, Hutchens wrote, “resented the propaganda technique.” Debates over the politics of truth at war had the effect of effacing the material scale of propaganda, shifting attention away from its materiality to its ideological content, with the latter providing justification for the former.

After American entry into the war, however, commitment to both the ideal of “democratic morale” and the “strategy of truth” wavered, and public debate emerged over the politics of truth and the permissibility of so-called “relevant duplicity” and the “controlled lie.” I have argued that liberal repudiations of the duplicitist position served to shore up official rhetoric surrounding the strategy of truth, while also entering into public debate a logic of wartime exceptionalism in support of the former. While still outwardly committed to presenting American morale and psychological war

Indochina, North Africa, the Arab refugees, our disarmament in 1945, American “imperialism” in Latin America, the perils of the arms race…. One hesitates even to broach such topics, knowing that any really honest treatment would involve certain “admissions,” and knowing that every “admission” carries a certain danger.”
efforts as a strategy of truth, I have shown that, after entry into the war, officials and academics began to hedge against foreseen “unavoidable lapses.” In practice, the OWI enacted a “strategy of candor” by selectively releasing negative news to simulate a tone of editorial balance and objectivity. I argue that, in practice, American psychological warfare at the OWI attempted to secure populations, both at home and abroad, through a liberal strategy of managing the contingent freedom of news circulation. What in fact emerged was a strategy of territory.

4.2 Territory

Though the United States Air Force would become the service most involved in the study and prosecution of psychological warfare in the twentieth century, in the early years of World War II Allied air forces were not only sceptical of psychological warfare’s effectiveness, but often resentful of the risk involved in flying sorties to test the unproven strategy of propaganda leafleting. Many pilots still preferred “steel over paper” (Hall 1945). After the war, the British Royal Air Force’s (RAF) “Bomber” Harris (1947, 36) remarked that, "the only thing achieved [by dropping leaflets] was largely to supply the Continent's requirements of toilet paper for the five long years of war." The RAF in fact often ignored orders to fly dangerous sorties to drop leaflets. A well-designed and illustrated pamphlet titled RAF Against Goebbels (1941) attempted to convince the British pilots of the usefulness of political/psychological warfare efforts. Incredibly, the pamphlet quoted both Herman Rauschning’s fabulated Conversations With Hitler, and Edmond Taylor
(though not straightforwardly), suggesting the extent to which British and American intelligence were collaborating to propaganda the mythology of psychological warfare.

The British historian A.J.P. Taylor quipped, the primary purpose of leaflet production was to occupy intellectuals, and to keep them “out of the hair” of military commanders (in Oakland 2012). Others were more optimistic, however, and field reports on early propaganda efforts, like those of British journalist turned soldier George Steer, were influential in establishing ad hoc principles for psychological/political warfare. Writing from Khartoum in 1941 on his experience having overseen British propaganda operations in Eritrea and Ethiopia, George Steer’s (1941) report on the organization of field propaganda outlines its biopolitical geography. It was essential, he argued, for propaganda efforts to be demarcated by the front, with haft of the spear operations — or “consolidation propaganda” — issuing directives and orders to civilian populations in the rear, while tip of the spear operations hailed enemy combatants and civilians with leaflets, loudspeakers, and whisper campaigns.

Steer urged the production of extensive statistical surveys of the Balkans, Turkey, Italy, France, Spain and North Africa, with a view to those regions’ populations and communication infrastructure. Advocating for the production of the quintessentially biopolitical statistic (Elden 2013), Steer saw knowledge of the population and its “means of communication” (Williams 1980)

61 The final page of RAF Against Goebbels cites a “statement by Hitler, quoted by Edmond Taylor.” At the time of publication, Taylor would have been one of William Donovan’s “cover[s] for circulation of information, true or misleading” (OSS 1942, 306). The quote, however, belonged not Hitler, but to Ewald Banse in Raum und Volk. It was the same passage quoted above (p. 55) about breaking down “psychological defenses.” It is unclear if the misattribution was deliberate, or a mistake in keeping the psychological war narrative straight.
as paramount, arguing that Allied forces must understand the communication landscape of the territories it wished to occupy. It would be necessary to know how many printing presses existed in a given territory, along with the political tendencies of their proprietors and editors. The same went for radio: where and how many broadcasting stations existed, what was the incidence and type per area of receiver sets, and what was the “prevailing political complexion of listeners?” (Steer 1941; see Pinkerton & Dodds 2009). Here human intelligence was paramount, and Steer insisted upon the interrogation of all deserters and POWs “without exception” to acquire this crucial information (emphasis in original).

Preliminary American psychological warfare efforts attempted to construct such geographical profiles of communication infrastructure and audience composition in advance of Operation Torch’s North Africa landings. In the summer of 1942, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) made an extensive report on existing propaganda efforts already underway in North Africa, outlining the various groups and factions among the populations. The American psychologist Hadley Cantril, a key architect of the 1940-41 “psychological war scare” in the United States, also conducted surveys in North Africa in advance of the Allied landings. His most significant finding was that a landing composed solely of American soldiers would “without doubt” meet less resistance than one that involved British troops, due to apparent French scepticism concerning British imperial aims, as well as “lingering memories of past wars with England” (Cantril 1965, 402).

In radio, psychological warfare operations preceded the African landings with the British Political Warfare Executive arriving in Gibraltar as early as May 1942 to monitor neutral and enemy radio
broadcasts. However, it was in support of Operation Torch in October 1942 that the first major psychological war campaigns were organized under the newly created pan-allied Psychological Warfare Branch of Allied Forces Headquarters (PWB/AFHQ). Psychological warfare at Operation Torch’s several fronts aimed to convince Vichy French troops not to resist the American landings. Over five million leaflets had been prepared by the British Political Intelligence Division in London, and approved by Allied Headquarters. The leaflet cache consisted largely of the “Eisenhower declaration” [Fig. 23], and was distributed in advance of the landings by Wellington aircrafts at Algiers, Oran, Casablanca and Blida. The leaflets asked French forces and the local population to welcome American troops as liberators:

We come to you to liberate you from your conquerors, whose only desire is to deprive you of your sovereign right to worship freely and your right to live your way of life in peace…We come to you solely to defeat your enemies – we wish you no harm. We come to you with the assurance that we will leave as soon as the menace of Germany and Italy is dissipated. Help us and the day of universal peace will arrive.

While the Second World War would become foundational to the mythology that American military forces act as “liberators” around the globe, in the early years of the war the formative narrative was supported by Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” publicity campaign, which attempted to tie the American war effort to liberal-democratic ideals, here the invocation of “universal peace” and freedom of religion (Laurie 1996).
Figure 23: The Eisenhower declaration

Among the first leaflets used in North Africa (OWI 1942).
In addition to the leaflets, Eisenhower arranged for French General Henri Giraud to address French troops by radio broadcast, repeating the appeal to lay down arms. Giraud had been living in Algiers after a high-profile escape from a German POW prison near Dresden, and Eisenhower believed that his word might hold sway over the French troops (Langer 1947). In his broadcast, Giraud announced to the French soldiers that he was assuming their command. However, he was largely ignored, and Vichy troops offered stiff resistance to the landings. Despite efforts to assay the population and “shape” the battlefield psychological warfare paid few tangible dividends on the battlefields of North Africa (Eisenhower 1948, 104).

Other setbacks plagued the North African psychological war campaign, from personnel and paper shortages to interagency conflicts and “steel over paper” pilots refusing to fly with leaflets. What leaflets were dropped often drifted out to sea, or were lost in the desert (Hall 1945). Nonetheless, aerial leaflet drops were refined through trial and error [Fig. 24], and psychological war practices were innovated, including the leaflet artillery shell [Fig. 25], and the ubiquitous “safe conduct pass” to encourage enemy desertion and surrender [Fig. 26].
How are Leaflets dropped?

1. A free-floating single-sheet, standard 5" × 8" uncalendared, paper falls at the rate of 5 minutes per 1000 feet.

The most usual size is 5" × 8. The wind will obviously carry sheets of paper a considerable distance before they land. This "DRIFT" can easily be calculated by the following formula:

\[
\frac{H \times W}{12} = \text{Mil of drift}
\]

\[(H = \text{Height in thousands. } W = \text{Miles per hour wind}).\]

Thus, in a 10 M.P.H. wind at 18,000 feet, to drift is:

\[
\frac{18 \times 10}{12} = 15 \text{ miles.}
\]

For a doubled sheet, or 5" × 8" four folded aerial newspaper, the formula is:

\[
\frac{H \times W}{18} = \text{Miles of drift.}
\]

Figure 24: Leaflet drift

Excerpt from a 1943 Allied Forces Headquarters Psychological Warfare Branch (1943) pamphlet Paper Bullets, instructing pilots how to estimate leaflet drift. Like their steel counterparts, leaflet bombs often missed their targets by wide margins.
Instructions for loading a 105mm artillery shell with psychological war leaflets. (Freidman n.d.e).
Figure 26: Safe conduct pass

A safe conduct pass leaflet for German soldiers. The design was meant to mimic the aesthetic of official passports (ibid).
Perhaps most important, however, was the front-line newspaper, which purported to bring “factual news” to troops behind enemy lines. Though it is doubtful the targets of front-line newspapers would receive them as “objective” sources of news, the papers nevertheless followed the “strategy of truth” by attempting to simulate the tone and format of journalistic war reporting. As the OWI would later make clear, this editorial policy sought to “select stories for their informational value to the reader and keep the propaganda content present only by implication” (OWI 1944, 17). The *Afrika-Post* [Fig. 27] was among the first such single-sheet front-line newspapers published in German, succeeded by the later *Feldpost* [Fig. 28] which has heavily used by the Allies in Italy, France, and Germany (US 12th Army Group 1945; SHAEF 1944; Oakland 2012).
Figure 27: Afrika Post

A “weekly paper for German troops in Tunisia”, from Feb 1943 advertised German losses in Russia, while also making emotional appealing to Germany’s “sons and mothers” (OWI 1943e)
An American newspaper leaflet to Germany from March 1, 1945 shows “Bombs Raining Over Germany,” illustrating the connection between truth, terror, and territory in psychological war (OWI 1945b).
Unlike printed materials, however, radio as a tool of psychological warfare did not move with the front, and seizing control over North Africa’s radio transmitters became a primary objective for Allied psychological warriors entering Rabat, Oran, Algiers and Constantine. Having taken control of those cities’ radio stations, the Allies began broadcasts in English, French, German, Italian and Arabic, reproducing the standard Western format of music and entertainment punctuated with news, commentary, and directives to populations now behind Allied lines. Additionally, occupying territory in North Africa allowed the Allies to build a reception and monitoring station in Bouzarea, near Algiers, where news from British and American stations in Europe could be received and repurposed for local circulation, creating a vital line of communication from OWI offices in London and New York to the North African theatre (Hall 1945). In Algiers, the Allies also constructed their first major broadcast station of the war. A massive 50 kilowatt radio transmitter that had been decommissioned by the American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) was shipped intact directly from New York City on the deck of an American warship. Despite significant damage caused by the journey, repair and installation of the transmitter was underway in early March of 1943, with the first broadcast from the station — dubbed “Hippo” — appearing on June 14, “United Nations Day.”

While General Giraud’s appeal to French soldiers had failed, taking Algiers provided the Allies with another opportunity to end hostilities with Vichy forces. Vichy Admiral François Darlan had arrived in Algiers on 7 November, 1942, the day before the city fell to the Allies. Unlike Giraud, Darlan had real authority over Vichy troops, and after his capture Eisenhower secured his collaboration, effectively ending Vichy French resistance. However, the infamous “Darlan deal”
drew widespread criticism in Britain and the United States, prompting Edward R. Murrow, who had narrated the London Blitz to American listeners to ask “what the hell is that all about? Are we fighting Nazis or sleeping with them” (Seib 2006). The OWI’s Robert Sherwood (1948, 655) remarked that the deal “inspired plenty of gleeful quips by Goebbels and his satellite broadcasters in Rome and Paris.”

Collaboration with Vichy France also created schisms within the OWI. To deal with the controversy, C.D. Jackson was flown in to North Africa to defend Eisenhower’s policy against the OWI’s journalists and writers who, as Jackson wrote, only wanted “to spit in Eisenhower’s eye” (Cook, 1948, 46). The left-liberal writers of the OWI would eventually resign (Weinberg 1968), but as of the Darlan affair, Jackson complained that OWI writers had “enough long hair to stuff he mattresses for an entire invasion force” (Cook, 1948, 46). Efforts to spin the Darlan deal attempted to leverage the rhetoric of the “four freedoms”: “No one will go hungry…in any territory occupied by the United Nations, if it is humanely within our power to make the necessary supplies available to them,” insisted Roosevelt in a press statement. The New York Times (1942, Nov 14) toed the line that “in informed circles” the move was considered “as both a humane action and an important weapon in the psychological war,” though neither claim was elaborated upon. The paper of record went to the incredible length of suggesting that the Darlan deal could encourage the raising of “peoples’ armies” in North Africa, which could “throw out Axis conquerors.” It was perhaps a cynical claim, given that a central provision of the Darlan deal provided that after the war, French colonialism in North Africa would be allowed a free hand, “however repressive” (Winkler 1978, 85). OWI attempts to present the Darlan deal as the “liberation” of North Africa were therefore
strained. As another top OWI official recounts, “[the words] sounded thin and unreal and brought no comfort. Oh, for one little act to give meaning to those words!” (Carroll 1948, 72).

Contrasting claims concerning the humanitarian liberation of North Africa, Darlan’s short-lived command there continued repressive Vichy policies, including the jailing of political opponents, holding Jews in internment camps, and keeping anti-Jewish laws in force. In the United States, OWI director Elmer Davis issued a statement concerning an FFC report which had discovered anti-Semitic content while monitoring broadcasts out of Radio Marco in Morocco. Davis downplayed the broadcast as representative of only a “small reactionary youth movement,” going on to note that “cooperation is improving,” and that thirteen of twenty-one news items used by Radio Marco that day had been supplied by the OWI. “Occasionally” he said, “they put over something like this on us.” (Jewish Telegraphic Agency 1942) Davis assured the press that Milton Eisenhower, Dwight’s brother and the associate director of OWI, had arrived in Algiers and was working to foster cooperation between the OWI and the radio stations controlled by Darlan.  

4.2.1 North Africa’s Other Eisenhower

Milton Eisenhower’s arrival in North Africa was significant, and he played a key role in shaping the development of OWI operations behind Allied lines, while brokering deals between the OWI

---

62 Speculation ties Darlan’s assassination on Christmas Eve of 1942 to the Allies. Regardless, Darlan’s assassination appeased Anglo-American anti-Vichy sentiment, while allowing the Casablanca conference to move forward a month later, securing the cooperation of Vichy-loyal French troops.
and his brother Dwight in the field (Winkler 1978, 29,88). Though he would be remembered for his career as president of three major American universities, during WWII Milton Eisenhower was a crucial intermediary between the Allied psychological warfare effort and private American media companies. As noted, though most countries fighting the war favoured state-centralized propaganda/information programs, the United States often made its private media industries the front line of its psychological warfare effort. This public-private partnership was portrayed in the United States as productively antagonistic, one providing a check and balance upon the other. Indeed, the claim that a private press underwrote objective news was central to American claims that its psychological warfare agencies, by working with private media instead of taking them over, could be relied upon to execute a “strategy of truth”. Thus, the American press celebrated its collaboration with American psychological warfare agencies “on a voluntary basis and in a private capacity” (NYT 1942, Sept 5).

For Milton Eisenhower, however, the war was an opportunity, not to oppose public and private prerogatives, but to unite them. He saw the war as an opportunity both to open global markets to commercial American media, and to establish permanent outposts for American information programs after the war. Though heavy government involvement would be initially required, Eisenhower envisioned a global post-war communication system dominated by American capital, a strategy of public-private partnership to expand the remit of American commercial media activity, and to make private media the avant-garde of American psychological warfare. As an executive of the Office of War Information, Milton Eisenhower was a key figure in setting up a capitalist biopolitical economy behind Allied lines, making audiences and populations accessible to American research and information programs.
As early as Spring 1943, Milton Eisenhower argued for the maintenance of a “world communications system” after the war, on the model of the OWI’s “success in communicating ‘factual information’ about the United States.” Speaking before the Kansas Bankers Association, Eisenhower argued that, “a constant world-wide interchange of information can help us achieve an enduring peace as surely as it is now helping us to win this war” (NYT 1943, May 23). The idea that a “world-wide interchange of information” could guarantee peace presaged a liberal-therapeutic model of communication, attributing conflict to a lack of or breakdown of communication between parties. More importantly, however, it presaged the United States’ Cold War rhetoric that the international “free flow of information,” based on private ownership of the press, served as the guarantor of press freedom and the opposite number of “totalitarian” state-controlled media (Schiller 1976; Peters 2004; Nordenstreng 2011). As John Foster Dulles would go on to say, “if I were to be granted one point in foreign policy and no other, I would make it the free flow of information” (Schiller 1976, 30).

While Siebert, Schramm et al’s (1956, 70) seminal *Four Theories of the Press* soon attempted to root a “libertarian theory” of press freedom in the tradition of John Milton and J.S. Mill, Peters (2004) has shown that the idea of the “self-righting ship of the free market place of ideas” emerged only in the mid twentieth century, and most vividly during the Cold War. The OWI, however,

---

63 Peters (2004) traces the origins of the phrase “free marketplace of ideas” to the 1930s, but notes that the only time it appears in the New York Times in the 1940s was in the American Communist Party platform for the 1948 election, which mocked the beginnings of the second red scare: “We Communists seek only the opportunity to compete fairly in a free marketplace of ideas” (quoted in Peters 2004, 73)
was vital not only in articulating a vision of a market-based international American media hegemony, but for possessing the territorial reach to implement policy and empower American media enterprises behind Allied lines. As Milton Eisenhower insisted in 1943, any proposed peace treaty should provide for a “free press” throughout the world. For him, this meant leaving press control to the “private press associations of all countries” as the guarantors of the “fullest possible interchange of information between the free press of all countries.”

Behind Allied lines in North Africa, film became OWI’s preferred medium for consolidation propaganda. After an initial phase of biopolitical intervention in which the undesirable circulation of German and Vichy French films had been curtailed, OWI began to circulate commercial American films which had been stockpiled in advance of the landings. By the Summer of 1943, however, the OWI model of conducting psychological warfare by opening occupied markets to American exports was taking form, with Hollywood firms sending representatives to conduct business along “more normal commercial lines” (Pryor 1944). By fall, Robert Riskin – director of the Allied Psychological Warfare Branch’s Overseas Motion Picture Bureau – boasted that “practically all of the American [film] companies now have their own representatives in North Africa,” and that “the OWI bureau there functions primarily in an advisory capacity” (Pryor 1943b). If Gregory (2008, 34) has noted that the “martialization of culture marches in lockstep with its commodification,” the New York Times confirmed that “films accompanying our invading armies have become part and parcel of military operations” (Pryor 1943a).

When the Allies took Sicily in the summer of 1943, stockpiled Hollywood films entered Italy through supply lines in North Africa, and desirable film circulation was set up as Axis films were
confiscated (OWI 1944, 12). In rural areas without cinemas, OWI mobile picture units ran
generators at makeshift facilities, sometimes churches, following closely behind advancing Allied
armies, presaging what would become the ubiquitous “Mobile Information Teams” deployed to
the largely rural areas of Vietnam. In both cases, films were seen as a territorial strategy of
pacification, and were shown for the “express purpose of aiding the Allied Military Government
in restoring order in liberated areas.” (Pryor 1943b).

The OWI favoured “straight entertainment” in their spot selection of films for screening in Sicily
(Pryor 1943a), though entertainment features were accompanied by OWI newsreels which
“graphically depicted American industrial might and the striking power of the British-American
Armies in Tunisia.” While the significance of depicting “American industrial might” is considered
below, the format of American psychological warfare in the Mediterranean theatres was significant
for mirroring the standard American commercial format in which entertainment features
assembled audiences which could be sold to advertisers. Though in the early stages of pacification
the place of commercial advertising was taken by Allied newsreels and features, the OWI set up
the private model it wished to export: namely, the private commercial media system it understood
as the guarantor of both “press freedom” and American hegemony. Here, OWI proudly stated its
mission “to protect the rights of [the films’] various owners” (OWI 1944, 12).

Returning damaged cinemas to working order was a top priority for the OWI as Allied forces
advanced through Italy. It was OWI policy to repair facilities and return theatres to commercial
operation after “careful consideration” of their previous owners. In practice, this meant an ad hoc
licensing system whereby theatre owners were given custodian operation of their theatres on the
basis that film selection would remain in the hands of the OWI. The licensing system gave the impression of liberal contractual reciprocity, when in reality owners had little choice but to comply with OWI directives. When occupied Italian territory was secure enough for commercial cinema operation to resume, OWI coordinated liaison between Hollywood representatives and local cinemas to arrange the continued distribution of American films, largely repeating the process pioneered in the North African theatre. Again, OWI’s explicit mission was to “protect the rights of film owners” and to open film markets to American exports. Again, OWI produced short films to precede entertainment features to give Italian audiences “a factual account of the United States, its people, industries, culture and military might.”

OWI’s handling of the Italian press was similar to that of the film industry, with the distinction that the news, unlike the primarily entertainment function of the cinema, was explicitly political terrain. In the newspaper industry, a licensing system similar to that of the film industry was established, and papers which deviated from Allied messaging were censured and threatened with suspension (NYT 1944, Feb 14). More illustrative, however, is the method by which psychological warriors set to re-establishing the Italian press. Six months after American forces captured Rome in June of 1944, OWI sponsored the establishment of a news gathering agency that became the Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata (ANSA) — the Associated Press National Agency — which operated with OWI plant and financial support. The agency drew criticism, however, not least from Luigi Barzini Jr., a graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism and distinguished journalist in Italy.
Barzini Jr. had been arrested in 1940 for criticizing Mussolini, and had only been freed upon the Allied occupation of Rome. In attempting to establish his own press service — the *Servicio Informazioni* (SI) — Barzini decried the Allied sponsored ANSA for commanding a monopoly on news gathering, and for its “artificial hatching conditions” (Bracker 1945). Consistent with OWI’s policy of turning over operations to locals, in January of 1945 ANSA had been set to return to Italian control, though as Barzini noted, it continued to operate “on PWB [Psychological Warfare Branch] premises with personnel trained by that bureau and light, heat, typewriter and mimeograph facilities of the PWB, all of which are now prohibitively costly to an independent trying to compete with ANSA” (ibid). In a letter of protest to the Allied Commission, Barzini argued that competition with ANSA would be impossible, and that he would need to recruit funding from “special interests” to stay in operation. “It would be immoral,” he protested, “to give the world the impression that there is now freedom of competition in the news agency field in Italy.”

Captain Orville Anderson of PWB, who had designed ANSA, conceded the criticism, noting that it would indeed be difficult for an independent news outlet to “buck competition” from ANSA, but justified his organization as necessary to guarantee “a free anti-Fascist agency the widest possible scope and no secret financial support.” Ironically, then, Allied psychological warriors insisted upon a temporary press monopoly to ensure “freedom of the press” in Italy. Orville nonetheless defended his organization by arguing that, as of February 1945, ANSA would be “on its own” financially — a paradigm of fabricated commercial independence built upon public investment and transferred to private hands.
4.2.2 The Mechanical Heart

In 1944, the experiments and improvisations of psychological warriors in North Africa and Italy were transformed into fledgling standard practices for the European theatre in advance of the D-Day landings in Normandy. By the time of the landings, the OWI’s London office had become the agency’s “centre of calculation,” (Barnes 2006) processing and circulating news to and from the war’s far-flung theatres. The Office was headed by New York Times journalist James Reston, who had done so much to sell Americans on the threat of German psychological warfare and the United States’ need for a psychological warfare program of its own (Ch. 3). What had begun as a relatively small operation in the Summer of 1942 had by 1944 grown into a massive, near-global information program. Confident of Allied victory, the OWI’s European operations increasingly transitioned to consolidation propaganda aimed at “winning the peace” after the war.

OWI London oversaw a number of divisions under its command. Its Radio Division produced over 8,000 fifteen-minute radio programs in 1944, reaching the continent over the OWI’s American Broadcasting Station in Europe (ABSIE). Its Film Division produced weekly United Newsreels of “the world at war,” distributed to twenty-one countries in over a dozen languages. Its Picture Division distributed 1,400 news photographs each month by plane and the new “radio photo” technology, and its Publications Division printed hundreds of thousands of glossy photo-journal magazines monthly for France, Belgium, and Holland. Finally, OWI London produced over fifteen tons of leaflets every day, most of which were dropped from aircraft over enemy territory.
It was in news production and distribution, however, that the OWI was most prodigious, with its London newsroom serving as its aptly-named biopolitical “mechanical heart” (OWI 1944, 24). [Fig. 29] illustrates the geographical reach of OWI outposts in early 1943, and by 1944 the depicted planned outposts had become operational, with over 25 major outposts on five continents. By the time the Allies opened the Western European front in 1944, the OWI’s outpost network had created a centralized world news service based in its London office that would orchestrate as far as possible the global mediation of the European theatre. Begun as a collaborative effort between the OWI and the British Ministry of Information, a “global news file” was produced for use on the BBC and ABSIE, as well as for use in local presses and radio where the OWI operated.
Figure 29: Map of OWI outposts

Existing and planned OWI outposts, circa Mach 1943 (Whyte 2018).
Figure 30: U.S. Army newsmap

An early “newsmap” (US Army 1942) produced by the US Army illustrated the new global import of news in world war, prefiguring OWI’s “global news file”. The map also illustrates American psychological warfare’s emphasis on bombing and “target Europe”.
The “global news file” was an attempt to standardize and assert hegemony over war reporting.64 Within a month of the Normandy landings, a wireless Morse news file was beamed to Normandy, Algiers and Italy, to be picked up by trained PWD monitoring teams for use in re-establishing press and radio facilities, establishing key lines of communication between centralized planners at OWI London and local presses and radio stations in the field. By mid-August 1944, news was going out seventeen hours each day, and by September, the Morse transmitters were sending an 18,000-word English news file daily for the Mediterranean and a 7,000-word file in French for France” (OWI 1944, 25).

64 In preparation for the D-Day landings, psychological warfare teams in England trained for service in the field by practicing long hand transcription of slowed down radio broadcasts of a vocal news file, which they repeated in the field, establishing a fast method for the London Office to quite literally dictate the content of news outlets behind advancing allied lines.
The News Fights For Us

The oppressed people of Europe know by now that the news fed to them via the loudspeakers and press of Dr. Goebbels is neither true nor sometimes even new, so that one of our best propaganda weapons is plain, simple news—the news which we freemen sometimes forget is not available to everyone.

Here are three newspapers in three languages which are dropped over Europe, but they are a little more than newspapers, in the American sense of the word. Sternenbanner, the German one (its name means, literally, “Star-Spangled Banner”) goes beyond the fact of Italy’s capitulation and explains the significance. This is because German home propaganda says that Italy’s surrender to us is of no importance. We explain that it is, and why...

The French paper (its title means “Fighting America”) stresses the fact that Italy surrendered—unconditionally—the only kind of surrender the United Nations accept. The picture of a disgruntled Hitler tells the news, too, as does the simple map with the caption—“And one less!”

Letter from America is the small-size Norwegian paper (small for easier smuggling) which gives the Norwegians the background of news from America. The lead story tells the epic of American production, and how this will affect the people of Norway. The picture of bombs from a Fort flooding on Nazi installations at Trondheim, Norway, is captioned simply: “America Has Come.”

Figure 31: "The News Fights for Us"

Excerpted from a restricted OWI booklet titled White Bombs, illustrating OWI’s “strategy of truth” and the simulation of objective journalistic reporting (OWI c1943).
In its own estimation, OWI approximated the functions of private press services like the Associated Press, film distributors, magazine publishers and still picture syndicates. After tip of the spear operations, OWI generally turned over these functions to private hands, though under the conditional licensing system discussed above. OWI (1944, 7) insisted that in France it “merely supervised” while French editors “wrote the headlines, French compositors set the type, and French printers made the presses roll.” However, by vetting and recruiting liberal-capitalist editors and radio station managers, OWI’s “voluntarist” model merely simulated a “free” private press by subsidizing and licensing its preferred organs, ensuring that they carried OWI news, exercised self-censorship, and published supportive editorial content. In France, as elsewhere, OWI left in its wake “information embassies,” a kind of permanent psychological war base in the form of United States Information Service centres which would later be organized under the direction of the United States Information Agency.

As part of its effort to manage and supply news copy concerning the war around the globe, the OWI also attempted to manage the war’s visuality by collecting and distributing its preferred visual constructions of the war. This was made possible by the recent invention of the “radiophoto,” which for the first time allowed photographs to be transmitted wirelessly. As Milton Eisenhower boasted, “along with the news goes a daily flow of American radio photos which speak a universal language…The United States has driven the Axis photo agencies from the top rank in most the world’s picture markets” (NYT 1943, May 23). OWI photographs even subsidized Britain’s Fleet Street papers. Between June and December of 1944, for example, OWI’s Picture Division sent
over 18,000 photographs to Fleet Street papers, of which London dailies and magazines used nearly 3,000.

The radiophoto enabled a round of visual time-space compression, allowing OWI’s London Office to centralize the collection, selection and distribution of war photography, asserting hegemonic visuality wherever it could reach its outposts by radiophoto. What the world could see of the war was now administrable from one site. Not only could OWI London assert visual hegemony through the distribution of standardized images of the war, it could act as a collection centre, receiving images from around the world and depicting the war’s Pacific fronts. As one OWI (1944, 14) report noted, the radio photo allowed for the

[distribution of] pictures originating in this (pacific) theatre direct to 65 OWI outposts and State Department missions throughout the world, thus enabling them to tell in each area the picture story of the U.S. war effort, co-operation with its Allies, and steps to restore and rehabilitate liberated countries.

It was a preview of psychological cold war, both in the saccharine “picture story of the war” and the assertion that American psychological warfare could have an edifying and rehabilitative effect for those outside its liberal-capitalist remit. If the imposition of law on the lawless was a central tenet of the moral economy of bombing, psychological warfare’s own moral economy involved, at least in theory, the rehabilitation and assimilation of individuals and populations into a western liberal-capitalist order.

Editors at OWI London’s Picture Division selected roughly 3,000 photos with “present or potential value” out of roughly 15,000 which the London office received monthly, and selected them to
serve as that months’ visual representation of the war around the globe. OWI pictures accompanied
advancing Allied forces, and OWI photographs were “displayed in store windows in almost every
town and village” through which Allied armies advanced (OWI 1944, 15). The radiophoto allowed
for rapid visual coverage and framing of events in territories behind advancing Allied lines. When
the French Second Armoured Division returned to the continent in Normandy, the Picture Division
sent out eight radiophotos as flash coverage, and within 24 hours it had sent over 10,000 prints and
400 negatives to all parts of the world. By 1944, no OWI outpost with a radio receiver was more
than seven minutes away from OWI spot news pictures.

By 1944 the OWI had negotiated over 7,600 contracts for the distribution of American films
around the globe, managing even to turn a profit for its Hollywood representatives to the tune of
$222,000 USD. Again, the OWI’s Film Division “attacked the problem” of “safeguarding the
rights of the American film industry in the distribution of commercial films on the continent”
(OWI 1944, 12), seizing control over film circulation in the period of adjustment between
liberation and “the return of normal times.” The OWI also expanded its output of United
Newsreels, which usually accompanied feature films in Allied-controlled cinemas, or were shown
to rural audiences by mobile information teams at makeshift facilities. The goal of the United
Newsreels was again to standardize American news hegemony, by translating newsreels into more
than twelve languages, including “Arabic, Chinese (sic), Turkish, Czech and Afrikaans.” Films
continued to play an important double role, on the one hand as American commercial products in
overseas markets, but on the other, as the State Department put it, “an international builder of
public opinion” (Segrave 1997, 131-133).
4.2.3 “With a rifle, not a shotgun”

In addition to its “global news file” with which the OWI attempted to create a standardized global narrative for the war, it created regional commands and assigned to them “specialists familiar with the territory” (NYT 23 Feb 1943; see Fig. 29). Regional commands and the outposts under their jurisdiction were meant to, in the OWI’s own words, “aim its propaganda with a rifle rather than a shotgun,” a kind of target refinement that I have identified as a biopolitical “specification of individuals” (See Ch 1). Indeed, outposts and regional commands were meant not only to circulate images and words more effectively, but also to “receive in turn the reactions of world areas more completely.” While psychological warriors often couch this formula of exporting news and importing research and intelligence in terms of reciprocity and “the free flow of ideas,” the process belied the uneven development of American media hegemony during the war, its ability to circulate its products, and to extract knowledge on the people and places in which it operated.

The OWI’s Publications Division went furthest in specifying and refining the targets of its psychological war. It was also among the divisions in which the OWI’s project to create an “American century” in which the United States led an international consumer society was most apparent (Roholl 2012, 15). Visuality was at the heart of the Publications Division’s more targeted efforts, where its major publications were photo-journal magazines and digests for liberated, neutral, and even enemy-occupied territories. Victory magazine was the OWI’s flagship publication, translated issues of which were published and circulated across Europe [Fig. 32]. Based on the American magazine Look, the photo-journals’ emphasis on visuality was clear from
their titles: in France, the OWI published *Voir* (Look); in Holland and Belgium *Kijk* (Look); and in Norway *Fotorevy* (Photo Review) [Figs. 33 & 34]. At the end of 1944, press runs for *Voir* stood at 425,000, for *Kijk* 100,000, and for *Fotorevy* 20,000. The former were sold through regular commercial agencies, while *Fotorevy* was smuggled into Norway and was clandestinely distributed free of charge.

As Sharp (2000) has shown, the American journal *Reader’s Digest* was an important medium for narrating the Cold War to American audiences, but the OWI’s use of the digest format presaged its Cold War use, in France as *Choix* (Choice), and in Italy as *Il Mese* (The Month). The digests in particular were part of a larger Anglo-American effort which related to one another as a joint project — the International Review Digest (Koutsopanagou 2017) — which had originated with a British editorial unit working with OWI’s Publication Division. The digests were edited jointly by Americans, British and in most cases representatives of the target nation. In the OWI’s own estimation, the value of these publications was in “impressing their readers with the global nature of the war, stressing the harmony of the United Nations toward victory, and acquainting the European peoples to the customs, culture and basic democratic principles of the United States” (OWI 1944, 16). This sanguine litany was remarkable not only as preview of Cold War public diplomacy, but also for what it obscured – namely, race and class conflict in the United States – and the longstanding Cold War presentation of American culture as a cipher for liberal-capital order contra the Soviet Union.
Figure 32: Victory magazine

“Eisenhower” (OWI 1944b).
Figure 33: Voir magazine

(OWI 1945)
Figure 34: Fotorevy magazine

(OWI 1944c).
Here the Cold War emphasis on American lifestyle was most succinctly previewed. As Roholl (2012) notes, most studies of American cultural diplomacy trace its origins to the years following the Second World War, and to the establishment of the USIA. However, American psychological warfare during World War II often prefigured Cold War public diplomacy, and in many cases, as I have shown, created the political and economic infrastructure for it. In publishing especially, the OWI attempted to reach *specific* audiences. For example, as part of its “long range operational plan for Holland,” the OWI attempted to reach middlebrow audiences with a magazine called *An American Review*, which it described as imparting the dramatic if puzzling sense that “America does not only fight or work or eat or amuse itself, but America *thinks*.”

The subject of women and their role in the post-war world was a special subject of OWI publications. In the Netherlands, for example, OWI published an eighty-page single-issue glossy magazine titled “The American Woman” (*De Amerikaansche Vrouw*) which attempted to illustrate the United States’ attitude toward women during and after the war. “American attitudes toward women” in this instance was a reflection of anthropological research conducted for the OWI by Ruth Benedict and other social scientists, who had identified the Netherlands, along with Spain, Portugal and Italy as holding “conservative values toward women.” While the more liberal *Kijk* presented photo essays of American women at work in the mould of *Rosie the Riveter*, the conservative *Amerikaansche Vrouw* turned its focus toward the post-war world, emphasizing the exceptionality and temporary nature of women’s war work. In place of heavy industry, *Amerikaansche Vrouw* portrayed women workers with manicured nails and lipstick operating smaller machines comparable to the home appliance consumer goods which underwrote the OWI’s
representation of the “American way of life”. These portrayals of re-feminized American women were meant to assuage conservative fears, identified by Ruth Benedict and others, that the American way of life presented a threat to traditional gender roles, and presented instead a middle-class, small-town idyll in which women had been returned to their “natural” place in the home as domestic workers and consumers of a new suite of household consumer goods and appliance, which OWI publications advertised prodigiously.

Conversely, when it suited the target audience, the OWI portrayed the United States as liberal and progressive on the issue of race. As would remain the case into the Cold War, race relations in the United States had been a target of anti-American propaganda during World War II, with the continued oppression of black Americans undermining the United States’ rhetoric about the “freedom and dignity” of all people. Even in the US Army, black Americans largely served in segregated units, and representations of black Americans were almost entirely absent from general OWI publications like Victory magazine, and especially in publications aimed to conservative audiences, like De Amerikaansche Vrouw. In the Netherlands, Kijk did attempt to address race relations in the United States, though coverage was relegated to the magazine’s “cultural” pages, which focused mostly on jazz and theatre, setting up the exploitation of Black American cultural forms as a staple of American Cold War public diplomacy (Davenport 2009). One issue of Kijk’s two-page profile of Paul Robeson is emblematic of the effort, celebrating Robeson’s rise to fame as an embodiment of the “American dream” of social mobility, and folding Robeson’s political advocacy for “freedom for all” — a clear precursor to the American civil rights movement — into larger OWI narratives on “The Four Freedoms” (Amana 2004). It is no small irony, then, that
during the Cold War Robeson would become blacklisted in the United States for his support of the American communist party.

Finally, the United States’ “arsenal for democracy” was an important theme of the OWI’s Publication Division in Europe. Though popularized by Roosevelt’s “fireside chats” in 1940, and originally meant to denote the United States industrial capacity for armament, the OWI abstracted American industrial power, and while never relinquishing the military frame, presented commercial industrial production as a cipher for American democracy. This emphasis on mass industrial production, however, again unsettled quarters of European conservatism, whose naturalistic worldview chafed at the image of American wartime industry in which towering machines dwarfed the human. Against the malaise of a dialectic of enlightenment, OWI publications in Europe attempted to frame the coming American century as a “people’s capitalism,” a phrase coined by the USIA in the 1950s, but pre-figured by the OWI’s rhetorical construction of the United States’ “arsenal for democracy” in which “production once used to save democracy [will] serve the democracy of consumption”; a democracy in which “the machine no longer dominates, rather the consumer takes centre stage” (Roholl 2012, 11).

As Victoria de Grazia (2005, 11) observes, “the OWI composed a picture of America that systematically underrepresented city life and boomtowns, minorities and more, while over representing small-town America and all it stands for.” But above all, she continues, OWI

---

65 Modernization theorists of the 1950s, many of whom were the psychological warriors in WWII, also placed a near ontological significance to consumer goods as weapons of psychological war. Consider for example, Daniel Lerner’s (1958) “parable of the grocer” in which the vision of a “real grocery” store becomes, in his estimation, a vector of “psychic modernization”. For Lerner, the commodity itself is a powerful talisman for the psychological warrior.
publications “offered the world the keys to a consumer’s society based on mass production, mass
marketing, and labour saving devices.” American psychological warfare during WWII, then,
pursued a policy of setting up American-led liberal capitalism by opening international markets to
American media products, and by further advertising a liberal-capitalist consumer lifestyle in the
media products circulated thereby. Significantly, it was the OWI’s territorial access through
occupation, and its ongoing presence through OWI and USIA outposts, that allowed for its
assertion of political-economic and cultural power in the theatres of the Second World War.

4.3 Terror

When Edmond Taylor’s The Strategy of Terror introduced the concept of “psychological warfare”
to the American public in 1940, the connection between terror and psychological warfare was not
incidental, but instead drew upon the increasing public awareness of terror as a strategy of war. As
Michael Sherry (1987, 57) notes, terror bombing in American military thought can be traced back
at least to Air Corps doctrine in 1926, which defined air attack as a “method of imposing will by
terrorizing the whole population while preserving life and property to the greatest extent.”66 While
early accounts of psychological warfare were often framed in the context of the “war of nerves,”
the phrase had previously connoted less the propaganda campaigns that would come to define
psychological warfare’s political imaginary, and more the public’s fear of civilian bombing

66 Though the military logic of terror is of course much older. See Gregory (2012) for a discussion of General Order 100 during the American Civil war.
campaigns, especially as they had been illustrated by the Spanish Civil War. Generally credited as the first American verse radio play, Archibald McLeish’s *The Fall of the City* (1937) dramatized the rise of fascism and the role of terror and mass panic as a fascist strategy. The following year, McLeish wrote *Air Raid*, another radio play on the theme of terror bombing, and its presumed uniqueness to fascism.

Again like psychological warfare, knowledge from experience that terror bombing did *not* succeed in demoralizing civilian populations was obscured by its popular construction in the press as effective strategy for producing mass panic and social disintegration. Though it had been understood that bombing civilians galvanized morale, popular narrations of efficacious terror bombing, like those of McLeish, were used as rhetorical strategies in the United States to awaken Americans to threat of European fascism. In Britain, author and journalist John Langdon Davies (1938, 82) painted a stunning picture of terror bombing’s biopolitical logic and effect. Civilian populations, he wrote, “can best be immobilized — that is irrationalized — by suspense. There is no need to smash them physically; instead they must be dislocated psychologically, and then they become more useful to the enemy alive than dead.”

Unlike the accounts that saw terror as straightforwardly disintegrative of social cohesion and civilian morale, Davies’ political imaginary terror bombing saw it as something *productive*; as a way to transform populations into a resource; as a way to use terror as a strategy of government.

---

67 Though outside the scope of this dissertation, psychological warfare’s special relationship to bombing can be traced back to British strategies of colonial ‘air policing’. See Sleeper (1952), Neocleous (2013), Gregory (2017).
When Taylor’s *The Strategy of Terror* arrived on the scene, then, it was to a social context in which the psychological effects of terror bombing had already been dramatized in stark terms. Tragically, again as with psychological warfare, the second-order context of terror bombing as a *rhetorical* strategy without content was lost. Taking seriously the claim that terror bombing, as part of psychological warfare more broadly, could effect civilian “collapses” of nerves or morale, American psychologists leant their authority to emerging practice of American strategic bombing. Despite denunciations of the German “strategy of terror” in the American press, in the May 1942 issue of the *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, J.G. Watkins (1942, 119) urged that “clinical psychologists and psychiatrists could combine their knowledge of human instabilities to increase the harmful effects on the more unstable enemy worker. Habits of sleep,” he continued, “could be so consistently disturbed as to increase fatigue and irritability. This means *psychological* as well as military planning of air raids” (emphasis mine).

Psychologists perhaps had good reason to desire consultation from American war planners. As discussed in the previous chapter, psychologists eager for war work accepted and advanced the premise that psychological expertise could become integral to technocratic forms of government in which their services would be required and valued. Thus the idea that psychological warfare and bombing — and crucially the intersection of both — could be used as tools for governing populations became central to what Sherry calls the governmental “rhetoric of technique” through which psychologist contributed to the articulation of American bombing strategy. When Allied commanders began their campaign of round-the-clock bombing in Europe, therefore, they found in “civilian morale” not only a ready-made concept, but one increasingly backed up by the authority of the social sciences.
Again led by Gordon Allport, psychologists contributed to the crystallization of the idea of effective “morale bombing.” As Hoffman (1992, 270) shows, the US Strategic Bombing Survey, though generally making little use of consultants, asked Gordon Allport in late 1944 to “assemble ‘a priori analysis' from psychologists on the probable effects of strategic bombing upon civilian morale in enemy countries.” Allport contacted colleagues from his 1940-41 Harvard morale seminars, enclosing a list of questions about bombing on which they could speculate. Allport told them that he was willing to accept the results of “an evening's discussion with a seminar group” or “a more informal chat with colleagues” (as cited in Hoffman 1992). It was a grim, if typical, example of the speculation and conjecture tendered as scientific authority around the Allied program of urban destruction.

Worse, though retrospective accounts generally agree that German “morale” was if anything strengthened by the Allied bombing campaign, this had been well understood by contemporary American and British psychologists at the time. Just as public opinion researchers during the psychological war scare sat on the knowledge that German shortwave broadcasts had virtually no listenership in the United States, in the SPSSI’s Civilian Morale, S.S. Sargent (1942, 168) had understood that bombing raids and the threat of invasion did wonders for British morale, which had been only lukewarm during the ‘Sitzkrieg.’ Invasion of her (sic) frontiers and the German approach to Moscow raised Russian morale to unexpected heights. American morale, confused and divided at the time, was welded and galvanized into action by the attack on Pearl Harbor.
Nevertheless, in a follow-up article in *The Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Watkins (1943, 135, 138) insisted that psychologists “must now comb all literature available to us with the object in mind of determining the factors which are ‘destructive’ of human well-being and efficiency.” What psychologists had condemned at the outset of the war, namely the German strategy of terror combining propaganda and military force, they now endorsed by supporting the Allied round-the-clock bombing campaign. Though Watkins equivocated that “we hesitate to use the strategy of terror on our enemies,” like psychologists’ abonnement of the strategy of truth, he concluded that yes, psychological warfare can multiply the damage wrecked on the enemy war effort over that accomplished by bombs alone…The greatest total damage, psychological as well as physical, must be the objective in all air raids, and our military leaders should be urged to consider psychological damage in the same serious light as physical damage.

While behind Allied lines the OWI served the prerogatives of American liberal capitalism, beyond the front American psychological warriors sought to reach and influence enemy populations in new and often terrifying ways. Still, American psychological warriors remained invested in portraying the United States’ in terms of Roosevelt’s “four freedoms,” and often sought to square the circle of “morale bombing” with the liberal ideals they professed in OWI materials across Europe. A typical radio broadcast to German civilians on September 12, 1944 illustrates the tightrope that the OWI (1944, 8) walked to construct the humanitarian tenet of bombing and psychological war’s moral economies:

> The areas in which you live are already today in the rear area of military operations. Very soon they may become a theater of war. In view of these facts I am giving you the following warning: the rear communications of the remnants of the German Army retreating into Germany will be subjected to bombing as devastating as that which preceded and accompanied the Allied campaign in Normandy. Civilians are hereby warned that everyone...
who lives or works in the vicinity of road, railroad and canal communications; of military
depots, camps and installations; or factories working for the Nazi war machine, must from
now on reckon that they will not be saved from high level or low-level air attack at any
hour of the day or night.

Though ostensibly a “warning” to German civilians, the directive was curiously broadcast not only
in German but in a number of other languages to audiences within the reach of the powerful ABSIE
radio station. The “warnings” to German civilians, therefore, doubled as psychological war efforts
to both Allied and neutral countries, to whom the United States could make the helplessness of
German civilians plain to see. Thus the “warning appeal” as a strategy of psychological war must
be understood, not only as a direct message to those in danger of attack, but as an attempt to make
American military power socially legible to multiple audiences, including allies in Europe, but
especially to the Soviet Union.

In addition to the fundamental psychological war theme of illustrating both the United States’
military strength and its willingness to use it, the format of the “warning appeal” also suggested,
however incredibly, a concern for the loss of civilian life. Though there was little chance of
Germans civilians abandoning their locations as directed — an act tantamount to open rebellion
against the Nazi regime — the warning appeals satisfied the conceive that civilian casualties were
incidental, rather than central to, aerial bombing. Furthermore, warning appeals allowed for the
United States to displaced a degree of responsibility for bombing casualties onto the victims
themselves. Thus, American psychological warriors simultaneously pursued seemingly
contradictory strategies, both a “propaganda of the deed” through airpower, and a pantomime of
concern for civilian causalities.
In her *Contingent Foundations*, Judith Butler (1995) observed that, during the First Iraq War, American bombing took on the appearance of “acts of law” by substituting “ordnance for ordinance.” Similarly, in his book on technowar in Vietnam, James Gibson (1986) argues that the American bombing campaigns there were a form of “communication” to the Vietnamese leadership in Hanoi. Since the appearance of “psychological warfare” in 1940, however, the reverse has also been true: communication as psychological warfare has been understood as a form of *bombardment*; its ordinances often delivered by literal ordnance. While a ballistic metaphor was central to the popular constructions of psychological warfare outlined in the previous chapter, it was the experience of the Second World War that solidified this strange connection between ordinance and ordnance. As Wilbur Schramm (1953, 8) argued after the war,

the reason for speaking of [psychological warfare] as an application of science you will grasp at once form what it has in common with another area of military study, namely, ballistics. Ballistics is the specialized study of those physical laws that relate to the firing of weapons…and just as ballistics depends on the physical sciences, psywar depends on what we may call the “human sciences.”

During the war, as Wallace Carroll (1948, 374) noted, the connection between bombing and psychological warfare seemed intuitive to OWI personnel for whom “the function of propaganda was roughly comparable to the function of the Allied air forces — to soften up the Germans before the American and British troops moved across the Channel.” While much of the psychological warfare discussed in this chapter details behind-the-lines consolidation propaganda, bombing gave Allied psychological warriors access to populations beyond the front in new ways. Psychological “white bombs” often pursued the OWI’s strategy of truth by dropping “straight” newspapers on enemy soldiers and civilians. France especially was a psychological war zone, and by the end of
1942 the first American news-sheet — a 5 ¼ x 8 ½ paper called *L'Amerique en Guerre* — was dropped at a rate of roughly 300,000 copies per week over the Paris, Lyons, and Rouen regions.

Figure 35: L’Amerique en Guerre

American newspaper dropped over occupied France, May 1943. The image depicts the famous “dambuster” raid on the Ruhr (OWI 1943b)
Even American “straight news” accentuated the link between bombing and psychological warfare. 

**Fig. 35** shows a dramatic top-sighted view of the famous “dambuster” raid on the Ruhr, in which the RAF’s destruction of a damn at Mohne caused massive flooding of the industrial (and civilian) areas of the Ruhr. Though Allied bombing raids were often justified as “attacking the morale” of Germany, the OWI was at pains to advertise its bombing raids on Germany in neutral and enemy-occupied territory, especially France [Figs. 36 & 37]. As with the above “waning appeals” a key function of American psychological warfare was to make clear to the world the United States capacity for and willingness to bomb the civilian populations of its enemies.

![Image of a chart titled "Die Festung Europa hat kein Dach" showing the destruction of cities in World War II. The chart shows symbols of cities such as London, Mannheim, and Berlin, each with different bomb sizes and dates.](image)

*Figure 36: Fortress Europe has no roof*
British and American leaflets advertised the scale of Allied bombing in Germany, to both Germany and France. During its zenith in 1944 monthly leaflet production reached 300,000,000 and leafleting drops mirrored the Allied program of “round the clock bombing”. Fig. 36 (OWI 1943c) reads “Fortress Europe has no roof,” while Fig. 37 (OWI 1943d) advertises “the heaviest bombing to date.”

The OWI’s role in advertising the destructive capacity and intent of Allied airpower against civilian targets, though sometimes couched in terms of “industrial targets” and preceded by “warning appeals,” illustrates the extent to which Allied psychological warfare had become the “strategy of terror” that it had so emphatically disavowed in the weeks before the North African landings. Moreover, psychological warfare was meant to make terror bombing not only socially legible to its victims, but politically legible to allies and potential enemies. For many at the OWI, bombing had become a “propaganda of the deed,” a demonstration of the so-called arsenal for
democracy “in ways beyond the force of words” (Carroll, 1948, 374). In this way, the OWI understood that bombing was communication, and they attempted to ensure that bombs communicated the right message.

4.3.1 Wo ist der Luftwaffe?: Operation Pointblank

In advance of the Normandy landings, Allied commanders feared that a strong Luftwaffe would make a European invasion impossible, and had therefore undertaken to weaken the Luftwaffe through long range bombing sorties into German territory. While Allied bombers had taken heavy losses to German fighters and air defences in late 1943, between January 1944 and the D-Day landings in June, long range fighters escorted Allied bombers to Germany, resulting in fewer losses for Allied aircraft and more for the Luftwaffe. It was, then, not only by destroying German industrial facilities, but by engaging in air skirmishes on favourable terms that the Allied air forces managed to weaken by attrition the Luftwaffe’s fighter reserves in advance of the Normandy landings.

While Allied bombing raids were intended to have the effect of, as RAF commander Arthur Harris insisted, “the destruction of German cities, the killing of German workers, and the disruption of civilized life,” (in Garrett 1993, 33), Allied air commanders also believed that bomber sorties could goad Luftwaffe fighters into unfavourable air battles. By the spring of 1944, however, the Luftwaffe often declined to fly intercept sorties, electing to conserve fighters instead of sending them to likely
destruction. The “problem” of the Luftwaffe’s unwillingness to fly fighters became as a result a new object of OWI psychological warfare.

The question of “where is the Luftwaffe” had already been asked by American psychological warriors in leaflets dropped on German troops during the Italian campaign. Indeed, the very fact of leaflet drops communicated to enemy soldiers with special clarity their vulnerability to air attacks (Pinkerton et al 2011), and the sardonic question of “where is the Luftwaffe” was meant to “play on resentments and anxieties” of Italian and German soldiers for whom no air support was available. Under Wallace Carroll’s direction in the spring of 1944, the OWI reprised the theme, and both leaflet drops and radio broadcasts to Germany conveyed the Allies’ mock surprise that the Luftwaffe would “allow” Allied bombing raids to advance deep into German territory largely unopposed.

Though psychological warriors often exaggerate the effectiveness of their efforts, OWI monitoring reports of German communications claimed that “the mystery of the whereabouts of the Luftwaffe is one of the most burning questions among the soldiers,” and that, “the subject of home-front bombardment is the most vulnerable point in the soldiers’ morale” (Carroll 1948, 375-77). Instead of attempting directly to manipulate German war planners into air combat, the OWI strategy was to escalate and exploit the bombing of German civilians to “stimulate public anxiety and criticism to such an extent that the German leaders would have to send the Luftwaffe into battle.” “In the language of the track” wrote Carroll,
we were betting across the board – win, show, or place – What we wanted most of all was to make the Luftwaffe come up and fight, so that the Allied air forces could destroy it in the air. But what if it declined to come up and fight? Then we would still get return on our stake, because we would make the German civilians and soldiers on the ground even more anxious and resentful than before over its failure to defend them.”

The OWI strategy was to treat the news in a neutral manner. “No obvious taunting or irony at the start. ‘Strictly deadpan’ was the directive’s final injunction.” On a day when American bombers met little or no opposition from the Luftwaffe, the OWI would simply report the fact, suggest they were pleased, but also rather puzzled. A sample OWI news story read:

It looks like the Luftwaffe has decided that the Germans on the ground must bear the brunt of the air war. If this is actually the Luftwaffe’s policy, it means that the Luftwaffe is balancing planes against factories and has decided to save its planes and let Germany’s factories go. But this seems to be a very strange policy — if it is a policy.

Variations on this theme were reiterated regardless of the amount of opposition faced. Feigned perplexity became a theme to convince German civilians that its government was allowing it to “bear the brunt” of the war. A studied sympathetic naiveté prevailed even if the Luftwaffe defended. “Although the Luftwaffe attacked fiercely, it did not put up sufficient strength to keep our planes from reaching the target or from bombing their objectives…We are still rather puzzled by the Luftwaffe’s apparent policy of letting the Germans on the ground take the brunt of the war” (Carroll 1948, 377). The second phase of the campaign consisted of a similar strategy, but against oil refineries and lines of communication in Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. The strategy was to lure Luftwaffe planes away from the western front to defend Allied bombing in the Balkans. This strategy had the added benefit of attempting to undermine Balkan support for the German effort. Again, the strategy was to kill civilians and blame the Luftwaffe, either for cowardice or ineptitude.
Operation Pointblank articulated an important tenet of American psychological warfare, namely that populations could be coerced into actions dictated by military planners and psychological warriors. As the name “pointblank” suggests, American bombers believed they could hold the proverbial gun to the head of the German people. Though there is little to actually recommend this conclusion, it has nonetheless formed a central pillar of American warfighting. Though psychological warfare is often framed as a form of “humanitarian war” — a way to win victories without bloodshed — what emerged from the Second World War was, on the contrary, a vision of a psychological warfare that could refine the desired social effects of violence; to exacerbate panic and suffering; and to leverage mass murder against political leaders. By the end of the war, the sibling relationship between communication and bombing in war saw psychological warfare not only supplementing bombing raids, but in many cases supplying its very rationale.

4.3.2 For Support not Illumination

Around the same time that “Operation Pointblank” was launching its “where is the Luftwaffe” campaign in the spring of 1944, the OWI was preparing to support the planned air and ground assault of Japan. As in Germany, allied commanders believed that through bombing they could create and subjugate a line of communication to the people of Japan. While bombing in Germany appeared as kind of governmentality — a strategy to influence and coerce essentially rational actors — different assumptions prevailed when it came to bombing the Japanese people, whose “enigmatic” nature reflected deep currents of American prejudice. Central to racist constructions
of the Japanese people was the conviction that they were, unlike the European belligerents, irrational. If Germany people had been “corrupted” by fascism, they remained fundamentally what Allied war planners understood as western “Judeo-Christian” subjects capable of rational thought.

While many in American government hewed to this line about Japanese irrationality, some also demurred, acknowledging that toward the end of the war there existed in Japan debates concerning what was understood as the country’s impending defeat. Eugene Dooman, one of the drafters of the Potsdam Proclamation, challenged the racial stereotyping of the Japanese, arguing that “many Japanese have a fairly rational point of view concerning the origin of the Japanese people and the Imperial family.” Against conventional wisdom, Dooman complain that many in the American government were “clothing the problem of Japanese mass psychology in mysticism” (in Sherry 1987, 247).

Ironically, the mysticism and prejudice prevalent in official understandings of Japanese culture often came from supposed experts, like psychological war luminary Ellis Zacharias, who held that Japan’s was a highly rigid and disciplined society that would never surrender. These beliefs were in part conditioned by Japan’s own propaganda, which sought to convince its enemies and citizens alike that Japanese morale was “invincible,” illustrated most powerfully to American audiences in their observance of the banzai attack. The perception of Japanese fanaticism persisted even against dissenting Army intelligence reports which observed that during the Russo-Japanese war Japanese troops had surrendered when faced with impossible odds. Again despite knowledge to the contrary, the picture of the Japanese individual as fundamentally irrational served an important rhetorical function in the planning and execution of the bombing campaigns against Japan. Though in reality
a miscarriage of intelligence, Zacharias’ commitment to the myth of Japanese irrationality earned him the position of deputy director of Naval Intelligence after the war.

In his account of the rise of American airpower, Michael Sherry suggests that American acknowledgements of Japanese humanity fell into a “bureaucratic void,” however in many cases it was not simply banal indifference, but vehement opposition that met attempts to challenge prevailing prejudice. The case of the Office of War Information’s Foreign Morale Analysis Division (FMAD) in Japan is instruction. In advance of the American invasions of the Japanese homeland, FMAD had been organized to discover what psychological war problems could be “illuminated by the application of social science methods and procedures” (Daugherty & Janowitz 1958, 214, 215). One question which Morale Analysis set out to answer in Japan was whether or not the “picture of uniformly high and impregnable morale was a true one.” It was hoped that answering the question would produce insights concerning “the Japanese character” and “Japanese cultural patterns” which “appeared so baffling and incomprehensible to the Western mind.”

In charge of the OWI’s Morale Analysis was Alexander Leighton, a sociologist whose 1949 Human Relations in a Changing World reflected on his experience with the OWI in the Pacific. Leighton’s qualification for the job rested primarily on his work directing a social research program on Japanese Americans interned at so-called “relocation centers” in the United States, illustrating the budding relationship between the United States’ social sciences and its carceral-military institutions. Despite and perhaps because of his involvement in the internment program, Leighton published an article in TIME magazine titled “Japs are Human,” in which he recounted his experience that, “many Americans simply fail[ed] to remember that the Japanese are human
beings” — a lamentable iconoclasm against the grain of popular constructions of Japanese sub-humanity.

As Leighton (1949, 58) recalls, among American policymakers, the opinion prevailed that Japanese civilian morale was “for all practical purposes indestructible,” and “the stereotype of fanatical and suicidal resistance hung like a spectre over planning and discussion.” However, through Morale Analysis’ various sources which included radio monitoring, captured documents, personal diaries and prisoner interrogation, a picture emerged over the course of 1944 that Japanese civilians were in fact worn down by the war’s privations, “physical discomfort” and news of Allied victories. Under Leighton, FMAD had discovered that factions of the Japanese population — particularly students, factory workers, and Christians — were being scapegoated for the failing war effort, and that turnover had increased in top political posts. By January 1945, Leighton (1949, 59) prepared a report to senior OWI officials detailing his findings, and questioning the axiom of “invincible” Japanese morale. In abridged form, Morale Analysis concluded that

1. A significant number of Japanese think the Allies will win and are consequently disposed to pay attention to what we tell them.
2. There is widespread apathy toward the war effort
3. There is a great fear of what Americans will do when they land. It is therefore important to reassure the Japanese and try to prevent them fighting vigorously from terror.

In contrast to the “fanatical and suicidal” resolve which policymakers assumed Japanese civilians to possess, Morale Analysis suggested that war-skepticism was prevalent in Japan, and that conditions were ripe for surrender, though fear of punitive action might actually protract the war. These findings, however, were met with hostility from top OWI officials who were committed to
the myth of invincible Japanese morale. The report had “little effect except to anger some of those responsible for planning the OWI directives.” Subsequent reports detailing still worsening morale were met with similarly hostile receptions, and by the end of March 1945, Leighton believed that the “OWI and other policy makers were working in terms of a largely false picture of the [Japanese] home front.” In May of 1945, the director of the OWI’s Japan Section became enraged at Leighton’s reports, demanding that further morale analysis be “toned down” in its assessment of flagging Japanese morale.

The OWI’s rejection of Morale Analysis research belied its commitment not to the lofty principles of proto-humanitarian war strategy, but of using psychological warfare to refine and exert its military strength. While research suggested that the Japanese might be receptive to a political resolution, the OWI rejected the findings and tailored its output to support the planned large-scale bombing of Japanese cities which Leighton’s research suggested would likely prolong the war by worsening Japanese apprehension concerning punitive American occupation. With the capture of Saipan in May of 1945, however, American commanders committed to a strategy of aerial bombing that control over the island enabled. From the affair Leighton bitterly concluded that “the administrator uses social science the way a drunk uses a lamppost, for support rather than illumination.”
Among the social scientists willing to lend support to military planners was Leighton’s OWI colleague Clyde Kluckhohn, an anthropologist whose conclusions about “Japanese character” offered full-throated support for the strategy of bombing. Though Kluckhohn’s 1949 *Mirror for Man* elaborated his “values orientation theory” which would be used to questionable avail by American researchers during the Vietnam War (Ch. 6), in World War II’s Pacific theatre, he provided military planners with a justification for bombing based on the presumed “non-rationality” of the Japanese individual. Kluckhohn (1949, 115) argued that in Japan, the
anthropologist could “prevent his (sic) colleagues from casting both enemies and allies in the American image, and [remind] intellectuals of the significance of the non-rational.” Kluckhohn clothed orientalism in the mantle of progressive social science, arguing that the United States could not wage war based “on a cultural imperialism that insists upon the substitution of our institutions for theirs.”

In practice, this amounted to the presumption that “rational behavior” was the sole possession of the western subject. Elaborating a theory of Japanese quasi-humanity, Kluckhohn (1949, 116) wrote that

An American prisoner of war still felt himself to be an American and looked forward to resuming his normal place in American society after the war. A Japanese prisoner, however, conceived of himself as socially dead. He regarded his relations with his family, his friends, and his country as finished. But since he was still physically alive he wished to affiliate himself with a new society. To the astonishment of their American captors, many Japanese prisoners wished to join the American Army (emphasis mine).

Articulating a kind of ‘de-anthropology’ in which the Japanese homo sacer (Agamben 1998) undergoes a social death in which the body lives, Kluckhohn constructed a picture of Japanese civilians as less-than-human. Though a remarkable conceit, Kluckhohn’s belief in the ability of American foreign policy to de- and re-construct the quasi-subjects which lay outside of “western civilization” would form a centerpiece of 1950s modernization theory, many leading figures of which worked as psychological warriors in WWII. Kluckhohn concludes the anecdote:

68 Daniel Lerner’s (1958) The Passing of Traditional Society is the archetypal text of the psychological warrior turned modernization theorist. See Chapter 5.
The behavior before and after capture was utterly incongruous. The incongruity, however, rests on a cultural point. The Judaic-Christian tradition is that of absolute morality... To anthropologists who had steeped themselves in Japanese literature it was clear that Japanese morality was a situational one. As long as one was in situation A, one publicly observed the rules of the game with a fervor that impressed Americans as ‘fanaticism’. Yet, the minute one was in situation B, the rules of situation A no longer applied.

Again, the dream of human malleability which would become central to American psychological warfare in Vietnam pervaded Kluckhohn’s account of Japanese POW cooperation, and the invocation of the “Judaic-Christian” tradition worked to place the Japanese individual outside of Western rationality. Having established that the United States could not rely upon Japanese civilians and politicians to act “rationally,” Kluckhohn (1949, 117) advanced a pseudo-iconoclasm against the assumption that Japanese morale “was or could be absolutely impregnable.” It was up to anthropologists, he argued, to find “the right means for widening the cracks and fissures” in Japanese morale, a barely concealed endorsement of American morale bombing. While framed in the language of social scientific theorization, Kluckhohn’s meditations did little more than corroborate the theories of “collapse” which framed and justified bombing.

In addition to their presumed nonrationality, popular American culture often depicted the Japanese as cruel and treacherous, as in films like The Sands of Iwo Jima or Walt Disney’s Victory Through Airpower. Here too American social scientists lent support and authority. In this regard Committee for National Morale member Geoffrey Gorer was particularly risible in attributing presumed nonrationality

69 It seems prudent to question the extent to which Japanese POWs really were as fervently pro-American, as Kluckhohn suggests. As Belcher (2016) and Whyte (2017) note, American researchers in Vietnam would routinely neglect the effect of captivity on prisoners’ responses to questioning, electing to interpret the desire to appease superiors and captors as an “oriental trait”.

246
Japanese cruelty and sadism to aspects of Japanese childrearing. Though now widely discredited, Gorer advanced the theory that early and severe toilet training accounted for the “brutality” of the Japanese character, a theory which even Clyde Kluckhohn mocked as the “Scott Tissue interpretation of history” (Moberg 174). Like the above discussed psychologists who argued that in psychological warfare there was no time to “confer with the patient,” pathologization served to infantilize the Japanese and position the social scientists as adults — a strategy to justify authority, not to understand a people.

Kluckhohn’s emphasis on Japanese culture as an Other to the “Judaic-Christian tradition” was therefore a significant factor in constructing bombing, not only as an object lesson in the consequences of defying American military power, but as an act of imposing law on the lawless. Again, what Gregory (2017) identities as a pillar of the moral economy of bombing — imposing law on the lawless — played out in the administration of psychological warfare. Though writing on the Trump administration’s decision to use the so-called “Mother of All Bombs” in Afghanistan, Michael Weinman (2017) illustrates the significance of the American model of “ordnance as ordinance,” arguing that “the deliverance of ordnance is the way ‘we’ publicly declare the ordinance that those who defy international law will be vanquished by the synthesis of law and force executed by the United States military.” Furthermore, Weinman’s analysis contextualizes the significance of Kluckhohn’s invocation of the “Judaic-Christian tradition” in which the American model of ordnance as ordinance is grounded. “This vision” he argues, remains the reigning principle behind the self-image of the United States as an actor on the international scene. And this is so because, deeply steeped in an “Old Testament morality,” this vision justifies a view of America as the model exemplar of a “Judeo-Christian”
civilization. A civilization that is — as it ever was — waging a war, engaging in a “clash of civilizations.”

Thus, a bitterly dark irony presided over OWI operations in Japan: evidence of all-too-rational Japanese war weariness was rejected out of hand in favour of theoretical conjecture about the “non-rational Japanese character” whose “invincible morale” offered both a target and justification for massive aerial bombardment. It was a monstrous formula in which, against all evidence to the contrary, the Japanese people were cast as non-rational fanatics whose collective morale could be “cracked and fissured” through sustained bombardment, a process of imposing lawfulness; of producing “rational” obeisance through violent stimulus. Despite the refrain that psychological warfare could save lives, shorten the war, and reject Hitler’s long-forgotten “strategy of terror,” American psychological warfare in Japan was employed to test and refine the administration of American military violence, contributing to the broader colonial genealogy that saw the global South as a laboratory for weapons testing and demonstration (Beauchamp 2017).

It is perhaps no surprise, then, that the OWI’s most vehement rejection of Leighton’s reports on distressed Japanese morale came in May 1945, concurrent to the Allied occupation of the island of Saipan, from which the United States would base its bombing raids. Before the capture of Saipan, American psychological war leaflets were infrequently dropped on Japan due to the distance and difficulty of getting them there. With the capture of Saipan, and soon Okinawa, the OWI initiated a new psychological war strategy to test drop leaflets in advance of bombing raids instead of concurrently with them. The OWI strategy attempted to maximize the terror of bombing raids by distributing leaflets which informed civilians that their city had been marked for destruction by the US Airforce. By distributing leaflets in advance, OWI psychological warriors
helped the process of translating “ordnance to ordinance” in the form of “directive leaflets” which issued commands to its target audiences.

Among the first “directive leaflets” used in support of the US Air Forces’ firebombing campaigns in late July of 1945 was the following leaflet, which instructed Japanese civilians to undertake the unlikely task of “overthrowing their military government”. The leaflet, however, was meant to contextualize the coming bombing raids, and imbue them with social meaning beyond the simple and unlikely directive of revolt:

These leaflets are being dropped to notify you that your city has been listed for destruction by our powerful air force. The bombing will begin in 72 hours. The advance notice will give your military authorities ample time to take necessary defensive measures to protect you from our inevitable attack. Watch and see how powerless they are to protect you. We give the military clique this notification because we know there is nothing they can do to stop our overwhelming power and our iron determination. We want you to see how powerless the military is to protect you. Systematic destruction of city after city will continue as long as you blindly follow your military leaders whose blunders have placed you on the very brink of oblivion. It is your responsibility to overthrow the military government now and save what is left of your beautiful country (Friedman n.d.f).

Like the “shock and awe” bombing campaigns that would become an horrific feature of American airpower, OWI psychological warriors worked to ensure that bombing communicated not only the terrifying awesomeness of American airpower — as Weinman notes, in the literal sense of “utter sublimity” — but also the United States’ willingness to use it to annihilate its enemies. As American Lt. Colonel J. W. Greene put it, “the new warning program is part of the truth campaign started by the branch some time ago…Furthermore, the appearance of the leaflets, followed by a raid in force, in each case in clock-like regularity will demonstrate to the people of Japan that their
army and navy air forces are impotent to stop us, even when they know exactly when and where we are coming” (ibid).

Figure 39: Hiroshima leaflet

*An OWI leaflets depicting the United States’ “god's eye view” and its ability to annihilate space (Hiroshima). The leaflet illustrates the United States commitment to a psychological “strategy of terror”* (Friedman n.d.f).

The leaflet’s maniacal injunction to *witness* one’s own destruction is overshadowed perhaps only by the implication that the Japanese civilian bore responsibility for bombing raids by “continuing to blindly follow [its] military leaders.” Nonetheless, a leaflet dropped over twelve Japanese cities on 27 July, 1945 continued the terror campaign by listing each of the twelve cities, and warning that four of them would be destroyed the following day. The following night, *six* cities were in fact destroyed by firebombs: Tsu, Aomori, Ichinomiya, Ogaki, and Uwajima. Two days later, on 30 July 1945, a second leaflet naming twelve additional cities was dropped, followed by another still
on 3 August 1945. Though the leaflets upheld what would become a staple of American psychological war strategy — that resistance to American military power ultimately made its bombing victims responsible for their own deaths and injuries — they also displaced moral accountability by articulating the related theme of American military humanitarianism. As another pillar of the “moral economy of bombing” — that bombing saves lives — American psychological warfare followed suit, making “humanitarianism,” however incredibly, a central theme of psychological warfare at the height of its bombing of Japan. The 3 August 1945 leaflet directed its targets to:

read this carefully as it may save your life or the life of a relative or friend. In the next few days the military installations of some or all of the cities named on the reverse side will be destroyed by American bombs. These cities contain military installations and workshops or factories which produce military goods. We are determined to destroy all of the tools of the military clique which they are using to prolong this useless war. But, unfortunately, bombs have no eyes. So, in accordance with America’s well-known humanitarian policies, the American Air Force which does not wish to injure innocent people, now gives you a warning to evacuate the cities named and save your lives (Daugherty 1958b, 360).

Three days later Hiroshima was bombed. In planning for the bomb’s drop an explicit goal was, as Secretary of War Henry Stimson put it, “to make a profound psychological impression on as many of the inhabitants as possible” (in Sherry 1987, 319). Similarly, the committee responsible for the selection of targets agreed that “psychological factors in the target selection were of great importance.” Like the warning appeals discussed above, the ‘psychological’ audience for the atomic bomb was not contained to the Japanese, but extended to a global audience. Its initial use was intended to be “sufficiently spectacular for the importance of the weapon to be internationally recognized when publicity on it is released.” As with the previous selection of cities for firebombing, targeting often belied contradictory or inconsistent justification, as when cities with
little industrial capacity were framed as ‘industrial targets’. In ‘civilian morale’ and its presumed psychological corollaries, however, military planners wielded an unfalsifiable rationale in which, “intangible criteria invited unlimited destruction” (Sherry 1987, 251).

**Conclusion**

By the end of the war, American psychological warfare had become everything it claimed it would not. In place of a promised “strategy of truth” which promised to eschew vulgar European geopolitics were territorial strategies for projecting political economic power. Replacing condemnations of Germany’s strategy of terror were popular and scientific rationales bolstering the increasingly intertwined moral economies of bombing and psychological war.

In this chapter, I have shown that the construction of the so-called American strategy of truth was accompanied by an increasing inward consensus among its practitioners that wartime exceptionalism required its contravention. Outlining debates between liberal “strategists of truth” and those advocating “relevant duplicity,” I have argued that disagreements over the specifics of how propaganda should be conducted had the overall effect of enshrining a bi-partisan consensus that a massive government information agency was necessary in the United States. I suggest that debates over the “politics of truth” in the early 1940 reveal the enduring ideological structure of American psychological warfare, namely an outward insistence on an objective “strategy of truth” accompanied by an inward epistemological relativism. I argue that emphasis on the
“philosophical” evaluation of propaganda tends to obscure and distract from its material reality and reach.

Central to these constructions of wartime exceptionalism was the increasing application of a pathologizing rhetoric to publics qua polities. I have argued that this pathologizing rhetoric attempted to transform public perceptions of the public-as-polity into perceptions of public-as-population in need of securitization. While the strategy of truth remained the outward face of American psychological warfare, its inward face subscribed to an ethos, not of truth but of health defined as the security of morale. Foreshadowing and combining with what Sherry (1987) has called American airpower’s “rhetoric of technique,” I have argued that the rhetoric of pathologization sought to depoliticize the public-as-polity and transform them into abstract objects of administration and authority. In this formulation, health and security — not politics — were vital to the government of populations.

To secure the morale of populations, psychological warriors pursued not a strategy of truth, but a strategy of selective circulation of information that sought to undermine public perceptions of government censorship which had dominated the propaganda strategies of the First World War. In place of concealing, psychological warfare was based on an ethos of revelation, however partial and contingent, and the belief that propaganda could secure and productively harness populations. Though the mechanics of censorship still operated in American psychological warfare, the ethos of revelation and the strategic circulation of ‘negative’ news — exemplified by images of dead soldiers on the sands of Buna — constituted what can be understood as an ersatz truth and a strategy of candor.
While many of the tactical staples of psychological warfare’s combat propaganda were innovated in the North African theatre of World War Two, as I have argued, there is little evidence to suggest that leaflet drops, artillery shells, and loudspeaker addresses had an appreciable effect on Vichy morale or rates of defection. Behind, advancing Allied lines, however, American psychological warfare worked tirelessly to irrigate the territory it occupied with American cultural commodities, especially film. Contrary to the anti-geopolitical imaginary of the strategy of truth, I have outlined the territorial strategy of American psychological warfare which sought not only to pacify populations behind its advancing lines, but also to open markets to American cultural products, and to establish permanent bases as part of a global information program which would eventually become the United States Information Agency (USIA). I show that OWI in particular pursued a strategy to project American political and economic power through the privatization of the cultural industries in the countries in which it operated.

In addition to its articulation of truth and territory, I show that American psychological warfare was intimately involved in the United States’ own terrifying strategy of air power. Though psychological warfare claimed to be a gentler, more humane form of warfighting, its primary function beyond the front was to make bombing socially legible, not only to its real and potential victims, but to allies, neutrals and future enemies alike. Though there are reasons to doubt its effect, I argue that psychological warfare sought to exert a kind of governmental power, an extension and refinement of the colonial practice of air-policing which sought to administer military violence with the purpose of exerting power over subjugated populations.
Beyond steeling the self for spiritual battle, this new form of American psychological warfare understood itself as a new kind of pastoral power over populations and individuals. It was a proselytizing force which attempted to forge in fire the subjects and populations it believed it could govern. If psychological warfare entered the American lexicon in the terms of spiritual defense against foreign invasion, the experience of the Second World War solidified in the American political establishment the belief that it could wage its own spiritual war and expand the remit of its liberal pastoralism. In the next chapter I show how this belief became in the early Cold War a “Crusade for Freedom” in which the crystallization of American psychological war against communism had its counterpart in a domestic propaganda campaign to once again convince American citizens that they could participate in war through a guided examination of conscience.
Chapter 5: Covert Crusade: Psychological Warfare at the CIA

The engineers at the Voice of America loved to tell a story from the later Truman years. It arose from the U.S. effort to establish a network of high-powered transmitters around the Soviet sphere. When the French gave the VOA the use of transmitters at Tangier, VOA managers decided to allow local farmers to graze their sheep in the antenna field. Sometimes animals rubbed against the supporting structure. One unfortunate animal’s curiosity or itch coincided with a “hot spot” of accumulated power in the transmitter’s guy wires. To the astonishment of watching shepherd, the sheep attracted a sudden arc of energy. It was neither the flash nor the speed of the animal’s demise that impressed the audience but the fact that at the moment of its death the sheep was clearly heard to utter the words “Harry Truman.”

5.1 Getting the Sheep to Speak

The conclusion of the Second World War left the United States with a massive global infrastructure for waging psychological warfare, both in its occupying forces, and its numerous Office of War Information (OWI) outposts. However, competition and conflict both within and between the Departments of State and the Army produced what Army historian Alfred Paddock (1973) has called “crosscurrents of uncertainty and caution” over the future of where and how the United States would wage psychological cold war. Though the Office Strategic Services (OSS) and the OWI were officially dissolved in September of 1945, key personnel from these organizations would continue to advocate for psychological warfare until the establishment of their respective successor agencies: the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947, and the United States Information

70 In Cull (2008, 22).
Agency (USIA) in 1953. In the interim, struggles over psychological warfare between State and Army revolved around the related questions of waging psychological warfare in times of peace, and whether psychological warfare was a properly military or civilian responsibility.

In this chapter, I show how these “crosscurrents of uncertainty and caution” led to the assumption of responsibility for psychological warfare by the CIA in years before the establishment of the USIA. I focus on the so-called “Crusade for Freedom” in which the CIA covertly organized and funded an ostensibly private group of American citizens called the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE), which in turn waged a proxy psychological war against the Soviet Union through the operation of Radio Free Europe, a radio station based in Western Germany broadcasting to the Soviet satellites. I draw particular attention to the way in which Radio Free Europe’s psychological war was predicated upon the Crusade for Freedom’s appearance as an independent, citizen-run body. Central to the ruse was constructing the public perception that the Crusade was financed by and through the efforts of private and ordinary American citizens devoted to “fighting for freedom” abroad. In examining the CIA’s covert Crusade for Freedom within the United States, I argue that the geopolitical imaginary of psychological warfare that began in the Summer of 1940 was increasingly tied to the personal responsibility of American individuals to wage it.

5.2 Uncertainty and Caution

Central to the post-1945 psychological war landscape was the Allied occupation of Germany, Austria, Japan, and Korea. In charge of consolidation propaganda in occupied Germany was Major
General Robert McClure, the “forgotten father” of Army special and psychological warfare. Appointed by Eisenhower as head of the Psychological Warfare Division of the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces (PWD/SHAEF) in Europe in 1944, McClure’s Psychological Warfare Division became the Information Control Division (ICD) in 1945, and was responsible for the “de-nazification” of Germany by assuming total control over media production and distribution.

In what had become “the biggest newspaper enterprise in the world,” McClure described the scale of ICD’s control over Germany’s communication systems in a 1946 letter to his friend and former psychological war deputy C.D. Jackson:

> We now control 37 newspapers, 6 radio stations, 314 theatres, 642 movies, 101 magazines, 237 book publishers, 7,384 book dealers and printers, and conduct about 15 public opinion surveys a month, as well as publish one newspaper with 1,500,000 circulation, 3 magazines, run the Associated Press of Germany (DANA), and operate 20 library centers ... The job is tremendous. (Paddock 2018)

The system of control was similar to that employed in Italy, beginning with a complete halt to domestic media production, a reestablishment of circulation under military control, and a gradual return of media production and circulation to German citizens under a strict and restrictive licensing system subsequent to extensive political and psychiatric vetting of editors (Levy 1947). As Daugherty & Janowtiz (1958, 363) note, the “re-establishment of a democratic press” in Germany involved what can be understood as the institution of a state of political exception: “in a basic sense,” they write, “it was a paradoxical objective since arbitrary and authoritarian means had to be employed in pursuit of democratic objectives.”
A working agreement between Elmer Davis at OWI and McClure at PWD/SHAЕF, now the Information Control Directorate, ensured that policy for the German press was coordinated across the occupying authority. As Albert Norman (1951, 20) recounts, the ICD proceeded in what can be understood as the three biopolitical phases of curtailing, restoring, and managing the contingent circulation of news in Germany:

The first phase [of the reorientation policy] called for the total prohibition of German public education and cultural media; the second for the employment of official (“overt,” as it was then called) American educational services and the simultaneous searching out of anti-Nazi Germans who could be trusted to re-establish indigenous media under Military Government supervision; and the third phase, for the gradual transition to complete control of the cultural media by the Germans themselves, under the supervision of the Military Government authorities.

The final stage’s “supervision” entailed not only a discerning selection of editors, but the creation of a punitive monitoring system which exerted control over the breadth of allowable debate. One measure of overt censorship involved a ban on criticism of the occupying authorities: “such attacks were indeed contrary to directives, which stipulated that no attacks on settled military government policy would be printed.” In one case, an offending newspaper was ordered to reduce its issues from six to four pages for a month’s time, while in another, editors were reprimanded and advised to stay within official guidelines. The punitive system of arm’s length control over the German press earned Norman’s (1951, 41) happy appraisal that “all in all the German press could fairly be said to be moving toward becoming a free democratic organ.”
Editors selected by American occupying forces underwent thorough vetting, often more rigorous than that required for other fields of public life, indicating the esteem in which the power of press was held. In order to qualify for a publishing license, editors were required to undergo exhaustive field investigation, often with weeks-long psychiatric interviews to establish the candidates’ political orientation and loyalty. Particular emphasis was placed upon prospective editors’ willingness to comply with American requirements that a reconstructed German press follow the strictures of a “non-political press”. Unlike the British and Soviet occupied zones, editors selected in the American zone curtailed the establishment of the party presses that had dominated the German news landscape before the war. While some critics saw the denial of the right of political parties’ to publish newspapers as a denial of the democratic process, Norman flatly asserted that “most Germans approved of the non-party press and credited their newspapers with having remained impartial in discussing political problems” (Norman 40). Presaging the USIA’s liberal model of advancing American narratives through “straightforward news reporting,” Norman explained that

the type of newspaper the American military government authorities wished to see the Germans introduce was one that emphasized straightforward news reporting, with emphasis on international rather than on provincial news. This would mean less editorializing and more factual news reporting of events. In pre-Hitler days it was the political editorial, not the current news, which received the major emphasis in German newspapers (p. 32).

It was under these conditions that the press re-emerged in Germany. The first German-language newspaper published in the US zone of occupation was the Frankfurter Rundschau, appearing on 31 July, 1945 with an initial circulation of 500,000. More newspapers were soon established in Heidelberg, Marburg, Stuttgart, Bremen, Wiesbaden, Munich, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and
Nuremburg, as well as in Hof, Augsburg, Darmstadt, and Regensberg. By late 1946, thirty-eight newspapers were licensed in the American zone, with a circulation of roughly four million. In June 1945, a German News Service (*Deutsche Allgemeine Nachrichten Agentur: DANA*) was established on the model of the American Associated Press (AP). Like the newspapers themselves, DANA was first operated under complete military control, and gradually handed over to publishers licensed by the American occupying force. By 1946, “the news service was completely in German hands, free to conduct its own affairs, subject only to the few restrictions then applied to the indigenous press as a whole” (p. 43).

The appraisal of the German press under the Information Control Directorate as *free, democratic*, and “*non-political*” brings into stark relief the *police* function of the press under occupation. Having curtailed all media circulation in the American Zone, the ICD went about re-establishing circulation contingent upon a restrictive licensing system and a punitive regime to encourage the production of a self-censoring German press system. It was a miniature of what Neocleous (2000) has identified as the transformation of the disciplinary logic of *police* to the disciplinary logic of the market, here in the form of a highly contingent liberal “free press.” It resembled what in another context would serve as a model for American power through the establishment and financing of a liberal press which “may rightfully be regarded as autonomous; but in the exercise of its autonomy it will naturally have due regard for the source of its funds” (“Understanding” 1949).71 What resulted was a system not of free competition, but one in which a nominally liberal press acquired the appearance of editorial independence from party rule as such, while authority was exercised

71 The quotation refers to the establishment by the CIA of the National Committee for a Free Europe, see below.
through the gradual transition to path-dependent monopolies set up by editors loyal to American occupying officials.

As head of this vast psychological war apparatus, McClure attempted to leverage the path dependency of his organization’s control over actually existing psychological warfare to influence domestic debates over the nature and place of psychological warfare in peacetime. As an advocate for keeping psychological warfare as a standing Army capacity, McClure was joined by General Eisenhower. Along with C.D. Jackson, the two had become friends during the 1942 Darlan affair in North Africa, where Jackson and McClure defended Eisenhower’s controversial decision to work with Vichy France (Cook 1984, 46). As debates over the future of psychological warfare proceeded between 1946-1947 in State-War-Navy Coordinating Committees (SWNCC), Eisenhower reached out to his former psychological war chief to insist that they must “keep psywar alive” within the Army (Paddock 1973, 74).

Despite the advocacy of major figures like Eisenhower and McClure, many Army officers believed that the military should not be “selling democracy” in times of peace. As a correspondence between Generals Wyman and Norstad reveals, even among advocates of psychological warfare within the Army there was fear of public outcry over its continued use in peacetime. As was often the case, apprehension surrounded culpability, not ethics. In a letter to Norstad, Wyman wrote that there was “a great need for a synonym which could be used in peacetime that would not shock the sensibilities of a citizen of democracy.” In another letter from Norstad to Major General Eddy, the former warned of “huge opposition” from the public and press if plans to continue psychological warfare were not presented “very carefully.” Though it was perhaps an underestimation of the
presses’ willingness to cooperate, General Eddy agreed, and suggested that psychological warfare should continue “under the aegis of an agency not directly connected with the armed forces” (in Paddock 1973, 77-8).

In a meeting in November 1947, the secretaries of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff determined that, as matters of state policy, both overt and covert propaganda operations should belong to the State Department. On 24 November, 1947, President Truman assigned psychological warfare coordination to Secretary of State George Marshall. Indicative again of the “uncertainty and caution” surrounding psychological warfare, the decision was reversed in only three weeks, with Marshall objecting to the State Department’s involvement in covert operations (the revelation of which could embarrass the Department and discredit American diplomatic efforts). Like General Wyman, however, Marshall’s opposition was not to psychological warfare as such, but to State Department culpability. Marshall’s recommendation was that psychological warfare be waged with guidance from the Department of State, but at a plausibly deniable distance. In the immediate post-war years, then, both the American military and diplomatic communities were eager to expand the use of psychological warfare, but feared accountability should covert programs be exposed. The situation was ripe, therefore, for the passage of National Security Council directive (NSC-4A) on 14 December, 1947, which placed psychological warfare within the newly-established Central Intelligence Agency in only its third month of existence (National Security Council, 1947).

In response to NSC-4A, those in the Department of the Army who wished for psychological warfare to remain an Army job moved to “get their house in order” by pushing the narrative that,
as a kind of “warfare,” psychological war belonged within a military, not a civilian, structure. A study initiated by the Army in January 1948 discussed “insidious and destructive” communist propaganda, claiming that it “directly threatened” American national security. The Army argued that “inasmuch as the use of propaganda as a weapon of either war or peace is of fundamental concern to the Department of the Army, it is believed imperative that Army efforts in this field be coordinated and directed” (emphasis in original, in Paddock 1973, 83). The identification of propaganda as a “weapon” – recalling the interventionist campaigns of 1940-41 – was used here to argue that psychological warfare was in fact war. To the question of “public sensitivity” to psychological warfare, the Army study took an “assertive posture”:

the fact that the American people and Congress do not like and/or are afraid of domestic propaganda, is no excuse for us to sidestep our responsibility. The responsibility of accepting the consequence of doing nothing is far greater. The American people have proved [sic] too many times that they can “take it” if they are told why (ibid).

The study had been produced by the Army’s Department of Planning and Operations – with which McClure had established a close relationship – consulting on the study and endorsing its findings. As revealed in a letter to General Wedemeyer on 8 July 1948, McClure was at odds with Omar Bradley, the first chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who held that psychological warfare was appropriate in times of war, but that in times of peace the Army should confine itself to planning and coordination. Foremost among McClure’s objections was the fact that, as things stood, “the Department of the Army is the foremost U.S. propaganda agency of our government,” again referring to the ongoing occupations of Austria, Germany, Japan, and Korea. The State Department, McClure continued, had not “taken over its responsibilities in this field for a number
of reasons,” but foremost among them was that, relative to the new Department of Defense, it lacked the appropriations to do so (Paddock 1973, 89).

The issue of appropriations would come up again. In the interim, however, McClure illustrated his point in a letter to Wedemeyer, reproducing the litany of extant Army psychological warfare operations. Concluding what Paddock calls “one of the most comprehensive communications on the subject of psywar written by an Army officer during the interwar years,” McClure urged recognition of psychological warfare as an Army responsibility; the setup of an organization within the National Defenses to carry on operations, planning and research; and the recruitment of “willing, experienced civilians” like his wartime deputy C.D. Jackson. In Wedemeyer’s delayed response to McClure, he explained that the decision to implement a psychological warfare capability was essentially out of the Army’s hands, and dependent upon the National Security Council. However, he relayed to McClure the interest of Frank Wisner, head of the CIA’s new Office of Special Projects, in McClure’s “joining up with the team” in recognition of McClure as “the most knowledgeable and experienced officer in the game.”

McClure declined to join Wisner at the CIA, and many in the Army had justifiable concerns that Wisner would become “another Donovan” who would “run away with the ball” (Corson 1977, 304). The beginning of the Korean War in 1950 brought the question of the Army’s capacity to wage psychological warfare back to the fore, leading to struggles between McClure and Wisner over control of guerilla and covert operations in the field. Having declined recruitment by Wisner, McClure became on 15 January 1951 head of the Army’s Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare (OCPW) which sought to combine psychological warfare with the “unconventional
warfare activities,” of subterfuge, sabotage and guerilla activities behind enemy lines. With the support of Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, who had an “intense personal interest” in psychological warfare, the Korean War became a new testing ground for psychological warfare in combat. American forces produced a mixture of tactical and strategic leaflets combining for 13 million per week. Tactical leaflets included claims of good treatment for POWs and appeals for defection, as well as the perennial theme of American “material superiority” and the subsequent “body count” figures it produced.72

Just as the Army sought to “get its house in order” after NSC-4 assigned covert psychological warfare operations to the CIA, so too did the Department of State, where George Kennan judged that “we are ill-equipped to engage in political and psychological conflict with the Soviet world” (in Lucas 1996, 284). Kennan’s advocacy in 1948 was decisive in pushing the Department to take an aggressive stance toward the Soviet Union, with his policy planning staff training and employing refugees from the Soviet bloc in psychological warfare. Like psychological warfare advocates in the Army, Kennan’s policy planning staff was aided by the establishment of Frank Wisner’s Office of Special Projects, with which both State and the military could coordinate and advise on psychological warfare operations while also maintaining arm’s-length deniability should details of programs come to light.

It was in the context of these cross-currents of reticence and enthusiasm at the Departments of the Army and State that responsibility for psychological warfare ultimately landed with the CIA.

Having been established precisely for the conduct of such covert operations, the creation of the CIA allowed for the reproduction of the wartime division between the “black” operations of the OSS, which used deceit, subterfuge, and misattribution, and the “white” operations of the OWI, whose “strategy of truth” advertised objective and factual war reporting. As William Donovan noted during World War II, though the OWI and OSS often clashed over jurisdiction, both black and white operations in fact worked in tandem: to maintain the façade of a “strategy of truth,” covert operations needed to be externalized from overt operations. Through participation in demurely-named coordinating committees like Frank Wisner’s Office of Special Projects (later renamed the Office of Policy Coordination) and President Truman’s Psychological Strategy Board, the State Department could shield itself from diplomatic exposure, while the Army could avoid apparent encroachment on matters of policymaking.

5.3 CIA at the Reins

One of the first major psychological warfare operations organized by the CIA within the new coordinating milieu was the establishment of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty in Eastern Europe (Johnson 2010; Mickleson 1983; Cummings 2010). While the purpose of the Radios was to broadcast pro-Western, anti-communist propaganda “behind the Iron Curtain,” like the construction of psychological warfare between 1940-41, the establishment of the Radios involved a massive publicity campaign within the United States: this time, to create the illusion that the Radios were fully funded through the voluntary donations of ordinary American citizens. Once again, the establishment of a large-scale psychological warfare apparatus abroad was intimately
linked to the construction of a domestic geopolitical imaginary of psychological warfare and the role of the ordinary American citizen within it. However, while the 1940-41 campaign revolved around the theme of “psychological defense” against Hitler’s “strategy of terror,” a new campaign beginning in 1950 articulated a geopolitical imaginary in which the United States would take the offensive in a new international war of ideas.

In its own public retrospective, the CIA (2007) called Radio Free Europe “one of the longest running and successful covert action campaigns ever mounted by the United States,” having maintained successful cover until the late 1960s behind a domestic front group called the National Committee for a Free Europe (later renamed the Free Europe Committee). The Committee boasted a line-up of OSS veterans surrounded by prominent American businessmen and politicians. Notable members included William Donovan, Allen Dulles, Dwight Eisenhower, Lucius Clay, Henry Luce, and Dewitt Wallace, owner of *Reader’s Digest* magazine (cf. Sharp 2001). Though it is unclear whether all of its membership was aware of the CIA’s covert backing, it is likely that the agency role remained an open secret, especially for those directly connected to the American intelligence community. For their part, the Committee propped up the CIA’s cover by creating the illusion that it was an organization spontaneously formed by concerned citizens to “fight communism” in the war of ideas.

The origins of the program can be traced back to a 30 April, 1948 planning paper written by George Kennan for the National Security Council in which he discusses the creation of such a private committee working undercover, but in close relation to the US government, to sponsor the activities of political exiles from Soviet-aligned countries. Whereas the post-war Fulbright program act sought to expand global American influence through the coordination of exchange programs, Kennan’s envisioned program would foster political exiles in the United States to leverage their voices against the Soviet Union both domestically and abroad. The guiding philosophy, like the Information Control Division’s German licensing system, was that psychological warfare featuring “indigenous” voices would be received as more authentic in their respective countries than official American efforts, an early articulation of what Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) would famously call the “two-step” propaganda technique.

While much of the uncertainty and caution surrounding psychological warfare in the post-war years revolved around the question of its use in times of peace, Kennan believed that psychological warfare annihilated the distinction between war and peace altogether. In the opening line of the planning paper in which he outlines what would become the Committee for a Free Europe, Kennan (“George F. Kennan” 1948) presaged Foucault’s observation thirty years hence, arguing that “political warfare is the logical application of Clausewitz’s doctrine in time of peace.” While the logic of “total war” had done much to effect a breakdown between military and civilian life, Kennan lamented that the United States remained nevertheless “handicapped by a popular attachment to the concept of a basic difference between peace and war.”
Like George Marshall before him, Kennan believed that the State Department should coordinate both overt and covert forms of political/psychological warfare while maintaining optical distance and deniability. Kennan had been “deeply impressed by the results achieved in Italy” in 1948, where the CIA had funded Christian democrats against communists. Kennan’s intention was to expand on the tactics used in Italy, and to “create a mechanism for direct intervention in the electoral processes of foreign governments” (Mickleson 1983, 14). Kennan specifically advised the creation of “liberation committees” to produce “liberation movements” in the Soviet World.

Kennan advised that the work of these committees should appear in principle overt and led by “trusted private American citizens,” but “receive covert guidance and possibly assistance from the Government.” Again, plausible deniability for State was paramount: “while covert political warfare must be controlled by the [State] Department, the direction should not be physically in the Department of State.” More so, Kennan argued, since the funds necessary to arrange such an operation could not be concealed within the State Department’s budget. Recalling McClure’s point that the State Department would have trouble funding psychological warfare that the Army would not, Kennan wrote that “the NSC Secretariat would seem to provide the best possible cover for such a directorate” (“George F. Kennan” 1948).

A year later, on 19 April, 1949, plans for what would become the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE) were ready to be implemented. Two OSS veterans — the CIA’s Frank Wisner and the NCFE’s first president DeWitt Poole — met with FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in his Washington DC office to discuss plans for the operation, and to the secure the latter’s blessing concerning the use of foreign émigrés in the program. Hoover was enthusiastic, believing that
“communism could be withstood only by education,” and insisted that the pair recruit a “quality” executive membership for the proposed committee. He suggested furthermore that Wisner’s Office should consult the FBI’s files when vetting émigré agents and informants for use in the program. This suggestion was happily taken up, with the caveat that the Committee be allowed to liaise with the FBI’s New York office, since it was “desirable for this committee to keep out of Washington as much as possible” (“Office of Policy Coordination” 1949). It was an extraordinary meeting.

While the importance of Hoover as director of the FBI is well-noted, Wisner and Poole remain more obscure figures: the first approaching the pinnacle of his power and influence, the latter at the end of a long and distinguished career.

Before the Second World War, Frank Wisner was, like his friend William Donovan, a Wall Street lawyer who the latter recruited for service in the OSS. At the OSS, Wisner took various assignments: first in Cairo, then in Istanbul, before eventually being driven from Budapest in 1944 by the advancing Red Army (Dorchester 2015; Jeffreys-Jones 2000). After the war, Wisner returned to Wall Street, becoming a senior partner at the law firm Carter Ledyard before being recruited by the State Department in 1947. There, he worked fast to become director of its Office of Special Projects, soon renamed to the secretive Office of Policy Coordination. In 1951 Wisner succeeded Allen Dulles as the CIA’s second Deputy Director of Plans, controlling major portions of the CIA’s budget and personnel. As Deputy Director, Wisner oversaw major covert operations, including the overthrow of Iran’s Mossadegh in 1953 and Guatemala’s Jacobo Arbenz in 1954 (Cullather 1994).
Wisner was involved in many other significant intelligence operations, from the “stay behind” networks in post-war Europe (Wala 2016) to supporting the failed Hungarian uprising of 1956. However, it was during this decisive period in the late 1940s and early 1950s that Wisner set up his most infamous operation, Project Mockingbird. Though details remain unclear, Mockingbird was carried out under Wisner’s Office of Policy Coordination and is generally agreed to have involved recruiting foreign and domestic journalists to gather intelligence and manipulate media coverage of the Cold War (Flynn 2015, 432). Public knowledge of Mockingbird was only partially revealed by the Church Committee of 1975. Even then, as Carl Bernstein (1977) reported, “while more sensationalist revelations concerning assassination programs grabbed headlines, information on the CIA’s journalist program was among the most guarded.”\textsuperscript{74}

It remains that “questions abound” (Maret 2018) concerning Operation Mockingbird and Frank Wisner’s role in developing contacts in the American news media, and some estimates suggest that by the mid 1950s almost 600 journalists globally – including many prominent and “brand name” journalists at CBS, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Newsweek – were involved in the program (Flynn 2015; Bernstein 1977; Davis 1979; Loory 1974). As described by Loory (1974, 12) in the Columbia Journalism Review,

\begin{quote}
Wisner built an organization that he laughingly but lovingly called “my mighty Wurlitzer.” It was a wondrous machine that used many instruments—charitable foundations, labor unions, book publishers, the student movement—to play variations on a theme: the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{74} As Bernstein recounts a source’s account: “Church and some of the other members were much more interested in making headlines than in doing serious, tough investigating. The Agency pretended to be giving up a lot whenever it was asked about the flashy stuff—assassinations and secret weapons and James Bond operations. Then, when it came to things that they didn’t want to give away, that were much more important to the Agency, Colby in particular called in his chits. And the committee bought it.”
discrediting of communism, the shaming of the Soviet Union, the promotion of the Christian Democratic movement in Western Europe and the building of a positive image for the United States abroad.

The other man in the room with Hoover and Wisner was DeWitt Poole, another OSS veteran who unlike Wisner was at the end of a long career that began with Foreign Service posts in Paris and Berlin before the First World War. After assignment to Russia during the 1917 revolution, he became chief of the State Department’s Russian division in 1919. He later resigned from this position, protesting that the United States had not been critical enough of the “complete immorality of the Bolshevik leaders” and what he understood as Lenin’s “world policy” of communist expansion (Lees 2000, 90). In 1930, Poole became the head of Princeton’s School of Public and International Affairs, where he “developed his views on the vital role to be played in democracy by the active citizen” (Scott-Smith 2014, 96). In 1937, he co-founded *Public Opinion Quarterly*, which after the Second World War became the academic clearinghouse for psychological warfare research and debate (Simpson 1994).

In a 1940 Princeton address, Poole had insisted that the role of government was to create in its citizens a “belligerent loyalty” toward the United States and the “liberal-democratic” way of life. A year later he joined William Donovan on the ground floor of the Office of the Coordinator of Information (Col) and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), heading the Foreign Nationalities Branches (FNB) of both. At the FNB, Poole coordinated the exploitation of recent immigrants, political exiles and refugees as both sources of intelligence and psychological warfare assets, particularly as concerned their home countries and their respective diasporas within the United States. The selection of Poole as president of the Committee for a Free Europe was thus a natural
choice, given its reproduction of the tactics and themes of his Foreign Nationalities Branches at the CoI and OSS.

During his time as head of the FNB, Poole employed the emergent tropes of spiritual and psychological warfare to foreshadow the crusade against communism he envisioned after the end of WWII. In a speech on 3 July, 1942, he insisted that

Democracy must turn militant again…To reconquer the key positions of the world, democracy must not only put forth armies of the sword but send after them, as rapidly as the fighting lets up, equally equipped armies of the spirit — convinced and trained missionaries, propagandists. Without this sequel the present war becomes only a gesture of defense offering at best but negative and short-term gains. The surest, perhaps the only, insurance against another world-wide civil cataclysm soon again is to win a preponderance of the strong peoples of the world to some single general faith and purpose… My proposal is that two systems of scholarships be at once set up with a view to training a good number of carefully selected young women and men citizens, chiefly those of recent foreign extraction, to become working missionaries of democracy in the post-armistice world (in Scott-Smith 2014, 96).

Mirroring his conviction that the Soviet Union meant to embark upon a mission of world revolution, Poole saw the expansion of American liberal-capitalist hegemony as an article of missionary faith for the post-war world. After the war, Poole was heavily involved in the European aftermath, serving as chief of the State Department’s interrogation program in Germany, which collected intelligence and vetted Germans leadership for the task of rebuilding a liberal-capitalist German state. It was as president of the National Committee for a Free Europe, however, that Poole would most forcefully pursue his vision of liberal-capitalist evangelism at the forefront of the anti-communist state-private networks of the Cold War.
It was planning the establishment of the Free Europe Committee that brought Poole and Wisner to J. Edgar Hoover’s office on 19 April, 1949. With Hoover’s blessing to recruit a “quality” executive, Wisner and Poole set about finding suitable membership for the Committee. Its first chairman Joseph Grew, a career diplomat, played the role of the concerned private citizen in his recruitment of other influential and connected Americans. In a 27 May 1949 recruitment letter to one Committee member, Charles P. Taft, son of the former president, Grew (1949) declaimed that the Committee would “fit the American habit that private citizens should take the initiative” to “combat the mounting threat of communism.” Citing NATO and the Marshall Plan as respective military and economic challenges to the Soviet Union, Grew wrote that the Committee would fight in was the “sector of ideas” that was “more important perhaps than any other.”

Much like Poole’s Foreign Nationalities Branch at the OSS, the Free Europe Committee intended to groom and leverage political refugees from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for use in psychological war, particularly in radio appeals to their respective home countries. As Grew put it, Radio Free Europe would “put the voices of refugee political leaders on the air so that they will be heard by their own peoples in Europe, in their own languages, in the old familiar tones.” However, like Poole’s FNB, which took plays “out of the Creel book” as well as its own “store of stratagems and tricks,” leveraging foreign political exiles was also an opportunity to intervene on American political life (Lees 2000, 85). To this end, foreign recruits of the new Committee, “qualified by personality and mastery of English” were put at the disposal of “trade unions, farm organizations, colleges and universities, churches, civic organizations, women’s clubs and other organizations” to educate their various memberships on the purported evils of communism (Grew 1949).
In the summer of 1949, an official press release heralding the establishment of the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE) cited an apparent American commitment to “opposing despotism” (NCFE 1949) at its raison d’être. The committee did not parse words in insisting that “Communist oppressors have replaced Nazi oppressors.” Invoking the charge that the Soviet Union was a “slave society,” the Committee’s motto, appearing on all its promotional material, paraphrased and globalized Abraham Lincoln’s anti-slavery Gettysburg address, promising “that this world, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom” (emphasis in original, NCFE 1950).

In this geopolitical imagination, American liberal-capitalism’s fight against communism was recast not only as abolitionism, but as a holy and righteous crusade. Reviving the religious undertones of spiritual self-defense surrounding psychological warfare, the committee cast the Cold War as a “struggle for the souls of men.”

Soon after the Committee’s official debut, its evangelical undertones were made overt via the announcement of a “Crusade for Freedom” on Labour Day, 1950. Led by General Lucius Clay, the charismatic figure at the center of the previous year’s “Berlin air lift,” the Crusade was launched in a national radio address by then president of Columbia University, Dwight Eisenhower. The context of Labor Day was significant, as Eisenhower again stressed that under Communism “one third of the human race works in virtual bondage.” (NYT Sept 5, 1950a). On its surface, the Crusade for Freedom was a campaign to publicize the National Committee for a Free Europe and its effort to fund and operate Radio Free Europe in Eastern Europe. Within the

__________________________

75 The original read that “this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.”
framework of funding Radio Free Europe, however, the Committee advanced a geopolitical imaginary in which Americans themselves could participate in a kind of “spiritual warfare” against the Soviet Union, which the American press overwhelmingly cooperated in framing as a “worldwide battle for men’s minds” (NYT July 4, 1950). The New York Times barely altered Committee press releases in framing the Crusade as filling “the need for a large-scale democratic truth offensive… in the most important battle of all, the battle of ideas” (NYT July 28, 1950). This so-called “battle of ideas” revived the spectre of fifth columnism and the Nazi “strategy of terror,” both recast as clandestine communist plots in Western Europe. The people of Western Europe were, the Committee claimed, struggling to “guard their freedom against a fifth column attack which is without precedent for its lack of principle, its intensity and its range of action” (NCFE 1949).

While pre-war fifth column alarmism in the United States primarily concerned convincing Americans that they were under attack by German subversives, the Crusade for Freedom repurpose the narrative to construct an image of American psychological warfare in which the United States could similarly wage war at a distance against an enemy ideology. Playing again on the stage set by the Office of War Information’s “strategy of truth” and its biblical refrain that “the truth shall set you free,” the Crusade advanced a kind of Christian-liberal revolutionary idealism. As Eisenhower argued in his Labor Day speech, “the communist leaders believe that, unless they destroy our system, their own subjects, gradually gaining an understanding of the blessings and opportunities of liberty, will repudiate communism and tear its dictators from their positions of power” (NYT Sept 5, 1950a).
The Crusade exhaustively advanced the narrative, also begun during the Second World War, that individual citizens *qua* individuals could wage psychological war. While Edmond Taylor’s “nerve privates” took primarily defensive positions against the presumptive barrage of German psychological war, the Crusade promised to give the American citizen the psychological initiative by transforming them into a kind of private liberator-warrior [Fig. 40]. Against the “devilish libel” of Soviet propaganda, Eisenhower promised “every American the chance to *participate directly* to counter this propaganda assault.” (emphasis mine, NYT 1950b, Sept 5) The theme of “participation” was significant. However, like Dewitt Poole’s emphasis on the importance of the “active citizen” in securing democratic morale, “participation” in the psychological war against communism took strange, often risible forms. While the liberal rhetoric of participation and political activity were foregrounded as ciphers for the freedom of individual in a capitalist society, closer analysis suggests that Crusade for Freedom can be understood not as the exercise of autonomous or collective political agency, but as an archetypal exercise in governmental power.

76 In the 1950s, the concept of “participation” gained currency among liberal modernization theorists as a cipher for liberal-capitalist governance. See Daniel Lerner (1958) *The Passing of Traditional Society*. Emerging from MIT’s Center for International Studies (CENIS), *The Passing of Traditional Society*, based on the Voice of America studies in the Middle East, is held up as a defining text of the development school of communication studies, but was in fact “conceived and carried out for the specific purpose of advancing U.S. propaganda programs in the Middle East” (Simpson 1994, 10). Central to Lerner’s (1958, 46) theory was the belief that mass communication could produce a “rapid spread of new desires” that would encourage “participation” in modern society. “We stress,” Lerner wrote, “that the transition to participant society hinged upon the desire among individuals to participate. It grows as more and more individuals take leave of the constrictive traditional universe and nudge their psyche toward the expansive new land of heart’s desire.” For Lerner, “participation” was primarily economic and restricted to waged labour, and secondarily political, and restricted to voting: “increasing media exposure has “gone with” wider economic participation (per capita income) and political participation (voting).”
A second person address exhorts readers to play a “personal part” in the fight against communism. Like the “nerve privates” of WWII psychological warfare, the Crusade suggested that individuals could wage psychological war: “you can be an individual participant.” (NYT 1950, Oct 10).
The operation of governmental power can especially be discerned in the Crusade’s efforts to harness the agency of American citizens for two major domestic psychological war efforts: the solicitation of “truth dollars” to fund Radio Free Europe, and the signing of “freedom scrolls” each of which was a means for Americans to pledge themselves in “the fight against communism.” Like the 1940-41 effort to construct psychological warfare as such, these efforts had the ouroboric effect of doing propaganda for propaganda; of constructing a geopolitical imaginary of psychological warfare. These efforts can be understood in the liberal terms of avowal and investment, which a 1951 Crusade pamphlet (NCFE 1950) describes as

a. Securing millions of signatures on the Freedom Scroll, to demonstrate American unity under our traditional banner of freedom. This will answer the Big Lie of Communist aggressors by the Big Truth that Americans want peace and freedom for all men

b. Securing millions of contributions to the Crusade for Freedom, to expand the assault of Radio Free Europe on the weak links of the Communist Empire: namely, its enslaved millions in whose hearts the hope of freedom still burns fiercely.

The following sections investigate the significance of the Crusade for Freedom’s psychological warfare within the United States. I argue that its domestic propaganda operated by constructing a liberal geopolitical imaginary of psychological warfare based on the participation of citizens through acts of avowal and investment. Examination of the Crusade’s efforts to solicit “truth dollar” and “freedom scroll” signatures reveals a farrago of themes surrounding the private individual, capital, speech, and freedom, illustrating the larger meaning and role of “psychological warfare” in the years after World War II.
5.3.1 The March of the Truth Dollars

We swing along and sing a song of “freedom for all”
We are the Truth Dollars
Like little drops of water we can crumble a wall
We are the Truth Dollars
Behind the Iron Curtain we are giving them the truth
On Radio Free Europe we are speaking up for you
Freedom’s indivisible, so get on the ball
Send in your Truth Dollars.

— *March of the Truth Dollars*, Hy Zaret
Song for the Crusade for Freedom 1958 national radio campaign

Though the operating costs of Radio Free Europe and its parent Committee for a Free Europe were fully covered by the CIA, the illusion that both were the spontaneous expressions of private American citizens was imperative to their operation. A ubiquitous feature of the Crusade for Freedom was therefore the solicitation of so-called “truth dollars” from American citizens. Calls for donations appeared in magazines, radio advertisements, workplace pledge drives, and not infrequently fell from the sky. Donors were encouraged to give as much as they could, but the requested donation of a single “truth dollar” was a strategy to bring the widest possible constituency into the Crusade’s fold. Paid return postage and envelopes for donations were often provided by the Crusade, but regularly cost *more* than the dollar collected. The fact that the collection of the average truth dollar constituted a financial loss for the Crusade attests to the fact

---

77 See Cummings (2010a).
that funding the Crusade was secondary to the goal of eliciting a symbolic investment from Americans in the “fight against communism.”

The Crusade for Freedom was also remarkably candid in insisting that, as a private organization, Radio Free Europe could act in ways that the United States government could not. Lauding the Voice of America, but lamenting its regular jamming by Soviet frequencies, Eisenhower’s Labor Day speech stated the need for “powerful radio stations abroad, without Government restrictions,” which a *New York Times* special covering the speech defined as the “diplomatic considerations” that prevented the State Department from “speaking too bluntly” to foreign peoples and governments (*NYT* Sept 5, 1950b). The Crusade’s appearance as a private, citizen-led organization advanced the Cold War rhetoric that a system of “free enterprise”—the Crusade never used the word ‘capitalism’—could achieve what a large and centralized government program could not. The rhetoric pushed the narrative of capitalism’s efficiency over the bureaucracy and red-tape of “big government,” notwithstanding the irony that it was precisely the *unprofitability* of broadcasting behind the Iron Curtain that made the operation all but impossible other than by its actually existing public, but covert, funding.

The purported voluntarism of the Crusade also satisfied American ruling class conceits, as when General Lucius Clay spoke to a room of business and civic leaders at the Yale Club shortly after the Crusade’s launch. “It’s not our way of life to depend on government,” Clay insisted. “It’s up to every citizen to augment the Voice of America” (*NYT* 1950, Sept 20). Clay’s words echoed Joseph Grew’s recruitment letters to the Committee’s membership which claimed that the Committee “fit the American habit that private citizens should take the initiative.” It was of course
exceedingly disingenuous, since the Crusade and RFE were wholly sponsored by the most clandestine and least democratic corners of the American government. It reflected, perhaps, the durability of ruling-class fantasies concerning their independence and self-sufficiency.

Beyond creating cover for the CIA, the solicitation of truth dollars dovetailed with the emergent geo-economic imaginary of the “free flow of information,” which – as Herbert Schiller (1975; 1969) has demonstrated – emerged as the rhetorical frame of post-war American communication imperialism. Couched in the cosmopolitan language of the “free and open” exchange of culture and information, the free flow doctrine disguised the economic geography of the Cold War battle over the political economies of the press in Europe and the developing world. As Schiller (1986, 57) notes, the pernicious logic of the “free flow” doctrine, though formulated in the post-war era, was laid bare in the 1981 Talloires Declaration in which Western media corporations fought UNESCO efforts to limit the power of capital in news production. As Schiller (1986, 57) explains, “free flow” cannot exist, according to media owners and editors, without a “free press.” And a “free press,” still according to the wisdom of this group, depends on the financial support of advertising. “We acknowledge,” the Talloires Declaration states, “the importance of advertising as a consumer service and in providing financial support for a strong and self-sustaining press. Without financial independence, the press cannot be independent.”

Though in the early 1950s American economic hegemony was far from its 1981 reach, the logic equating the freedom of information with its privatization and commodification had already materialized in the new international reach of American media industries. Much of this had been achieved during WWII by the Office of War Information’s facilitation of the circulation of American media capital abroad (Ch. 4). The Crusade advanced this logic in its press and
promotional materials, claiming that “the communists are afraid to allow a free exchange of information” and that “the time to spread the propaganda of truth and freedom” is now.  

In this formulation, barriers to American capital and investment in the field of news, media, and cultural production became curbs on the so-called “freedom of ideas” and “freedom of speech.” The truth dollar therefore functioned as a kind of rhetorical sleight of hand, conflating this freedom of capital with the freedom of speech.

78 The comment was gathered from Roscoe Drummond, director of information for the Economic Cooperation Administration in Europe on the occasion of the Crusade’s launch of 1000 balloons from the Empire State Building, to which were attached Crusade pamphlets and envelopes soliciting freedom dollars (NYT 1950, Oct 11).
Crusade advertising campaigns constantly employed declarative second-person addresses and rhetorical first-person interlocutions, stressing the idea that psychological warfare could be waged by private citizens though the donation of truth dollars, collapsing political agency into acts of consumption and investment. (Crusade for Freedom Advertising Council 1954).
The illusion that Radio Free Europe was sustained through the donation of “truth dollars” further invoked a geo-economic imaginary of voluntary private investment – a simulacrum of a private press – and the neoliberal germ that the guarantor of truth in news was its status as a commodity circulating in an unfettered free market. There was no chance of Radio Free Europe’s self-sufficiency through advertising revenue, but the crusade went so far as to contrive a price equivalence for “truth behind the iron curtain,” claiming that “every dollar buys 100 words of truth” [Fig. 41]. In a pantomime of a price mechanism for “truth,” the rhetoric that individuals could wage their own private psychological war combined with the neoliberal ideology that Foucault (2008, 31) calls the belief in “the market as a site of veridiction,” in which the market appeared as something that obeyed and had to obey “natural,” that is to say, spontaneous mechanisms. Even if it is not possible to grasp these mechanisms in their complexity, their spontaneity is such that attempts to modify them will only impair and distort them… [W]hen you allow these natural mechanisms to function, they permit the formation of a certain price… which will adequately express the relationship, a definite, adequate relationship between the cost of production and the extent of demand

Like the rhetorical sleight of hand through which it conflated the freedom of capital with the freedom of speech, the Crusade contrived a price mechanism through which American citizens could participate in psychological warfare, crucially in the form of economic exchange and the exertion of political agency through the market. The rhetoric of the truth dollar not only positioned the market as a site of the truth – as in simulating the price of 100 words as one dollar – but further positioned the market as the proper arena for the expression of political truths. In the geo-economic imaginary of Crusade for Freedom, the existence of Radio Free Europe was a medium for broadcasting truth behind the Iron Curtain, but it also represented the deeper neoliberal truth of
market veridiction; of the legitimacy tied to its purported existence as a product of a spontaneous and self-organized market of American political agency.

In reality, the CIA’s organization and funding of the Crusade contradicted every tenet it claimed: it lost money on every truth dollar collected, the ostensible spontaneity of its private actors was high orchestrated, and overt bureaucratic timidity was only the counterpart to its covert aggression. However, the fantasy of a spontaneous organization of private actors achieving what government could not exemplified the idea that the market could act as a site of veridictive truth. This was most powerfully illustrated in the condensation of free and true speech into the symbol of the dollar as investment and consumption; as the engine of truth. While Radio Free Europe attempted to “fight communism” in Eastern Europe, the Crusade for Freedom domestically advanced a profoundly neoliberal rhetoric in which the American dollar, as the symbol of personal agency in a capitalist system, became a cipher for an evangelizing ideal of truth and freedom.
5.3.2 Tell me who you are

I believe in the sacredness and dignity of the individual.
I believe that all men derive the right of freedom equally from God.
I pledge to resist aggression and tyranny wherever they appear on earth.
I am proud to enlist in the Crusade for Freedom.

I am proud to help make the Freedom Bell possible, to be a signer of this Declaration of Freedom, to have my name included as a permanent part of the Freedom Shrine in Berlin, and to join with the millions of men and women throughout the world who hold the cause of freedom sacred.

— Crusade for Freedom “Freedom Scroll”

Foucault’s identification of the market as a site of veridiction for neoliberal ideology came at a crossroads in his intellectual trajectory. Developed in his Birth of Biopolitics lecture series, Foucault’s critique of neoliberalism was among his few substantive investigations of the twentieth century, appearing after his Security, Territory, Population lectures, which focused mostly on the emergence of 17th and 18th century governmentality, and before his sudden and subsequent turn to the origins of Christianity. It was, however, the thematic of “veridiction” — of investigating procedures of the manifestation of truth through speech — that carried his interest both forward to an investigation of its significance to the history of the liberal present, and backwards to its Christian origins in the practices of confession and avowal of the self. While Foucault (2014a, 19, 17; 2014b, 80) has only hinted at the political significance of avowal of the self in the twentieth century, the Crusade for Freedom is an extraordinary study in the way in which avowal — “a verbal act through which the subject affirms who he is, and binds himself to this truth” — created an “obligation for individuals to become themselves essential actors in the procedures of manifestation of the truth.”
If “truth dollars” attempted a rhetorically productive conflation of free speech with the freedom of capital, the Crusade’s insistence upon the individual symbolic act of signing so-called “freedom scrolls” attempted a similar conflation. The scrolls mimicked in appearance the American Declaration of Independence, while also invoking the ancient and biblical connotations of the scroll [Fig. 42]. Framed quite literally as a Christian crusade against communism, the Committee for a Free Europe’s psychological war was saturated with Christian imagery to portray the Cold War as a Manichean battle between Christianity and atheism. Eisenhower’s speech announcing the Crusade condemned the Soviet Union’s “devilish libel,” its “evil broadcasts,” its “political wickedness,” and the serpentine features of its “hissing tirades” and “communist venom.” While the framing of the Cold War as a Christian crusade against communist atheism leveraged Christian majorities both in the United States and abroad — Italy in 1948 being the archetype — the Crusade can also be understood to have exploited Christian techniques of asserting pastoral forms of power over the American public.

79 The invocation of the “scroll” would have been most directly connected to the ongoing discovery of the Dread Sea Scrolls (1946-56) at the time of the Crusade for Freedom.
Crusade for Freedom Chairman General Lucius Clay (right) watches Harry A. Bulis, Board Chairman of General Mills (left), sign a “freedom scroll.” General Mills was a major sponsor of and contractor for the Crusade, supplying balloons and conducting research for its “winds of freedom” campaign (see below). The scroll and its large-type header “Declaration of Freedom” were meant to invoke an admixture of American independence and muscular Christianity (NCFE 1951a).

Figure 42: General Clay signs a freedom scroll

Foucault’s later work on confession and avowal are often overlooked. Nevertheless, scholars such as Legg (2016, 19) have argued that interrogating “how procedures of truth have existed and developed alongside other genealogies and institutions of liberal power” can “expand the current analytical toolkit to interrogate deeper and broader governmentalities, and their geographies.” Indeed, what becomes clear upon inspection of the Crusade for Freedom’s drive to collect
signatures on “freedom scrolls” is an intense concern with the creation of an individual obligation to manifest truth, not only abroad through the investment of “truth dollars” in Radio Free Europe, but also about oneself. The New York Times’ front-page coverage of Eisenhower’s first Crusade speech, for example, described it as “a call upon all Americans to re-dedicate themselves to the cause of freedom,” emphasizing the significance of the signature drive as a reflexive act to “affirm the signer’s belief in world freedom” (NYT 1950a, Sept 5). As Eisenhower himself put it:

In this Battle for Truth, you and I have a definite part to play. During the Crusade, each of us will have the opportunity to sign the Freedom Scroll. It bears a declaration of our faith in freedom, and of our belief in the dignity of the individual, who derives the right of freedom from God. Each of us, by signing the Scroll, pledges to resist aggression and tyranny wherever they appear on Earth. Its words express what is in all our hearts. Your signature on it will be a blow for liberty (NYT 1950b, Sept 5).

In a letter to Abbot Washburn dated 17 August 1950, Pete Carroll – Eisenhower’s friend and speechwriter – demurred the rhetorical value of the so-called “freedom scrolls.” “What good will signing a scroll do?” asked Carroll. “Don’t they want some money? Why not say so?... Aren’t we aping the commies with this scroll business?” (in Medhurst 1997, 653). Indeed, the collection of “truth dollars” was only a later addition to the Crusade. As Washburn later recalled of its planning stages, “if we can get something that will raise money too, that [was] great.” However, “it was clear that [the Committee’s] first desire was involvement by the public to make this a volunteer thing.” While solicitation of funds for Radio Free Europe was central to the Committee’s cover as a private venture, the campaign’s real value was seen as its ability to secure the symbolic participation and moral sanction of the American public in waging a “spiritual war” against communism. In this way too, the donation of truth dollars was “a question of this strange truth that the individual must produce about himself” (Foucault 2014a, 19). In the symbolic acts
of signing freedom scrolls and investing “truth dollars” can therefore be understood what Foucault identifies as the liberal imperative to “tie the individual to his truth, by his truth, and by his own enunciation of his own truth.”

Discussion of the freedom scroll program in official Crusade literature and statements bears out the analysis that it attempted to create a sense of obligation over individuals who were directed to articulate avowals of self through the signing of freedom scrolls. In a 6 September 1950 speech, Crusade leader General Lucius Clay insisted that “those who contribute are doing more than to help the cause because in signing the pledge they are rededicating themselves to the principles of freedom in which we believe” (NCFE 1951a). A 1951 pamphlet for the Committee for a Free Europe similarly described the Crusade’s mission to “rededicate Americans to their heritage of freedom” (NCFE 1951c). Concluding his 1950 Labor Day speech, Eisenhower also emphasized the obligation of individuals to examine and govern themselves, insisting that “each must make it his responsibility to see that we remain strong morally, intellectually, materially… Ladies and Gentlemen, we must get tough — tough with ourselves” (NYT Sept 5, 1950a).

In the same speech in which he framed the Crusade as an abolitionist movement against Soviet slavery, Eisenhower suggested a contrasting liberal model for obedience to government. Echoing Donovan and Mowrer (1940), whose introduction of psychological warfare to the American public carried with it a call for wartime exceptionalism, Eisenhower claimed that “success in such national crises always requires some temporary and partial surrender of individual freedom. But the surrender must be by our specific decision, and it must only be partial and only temporary.” If it was a strange call for the voluntary surrender of freedom, it further illustrated the Foucauldian
(2007) premise that liberal forms of government have been built upon “the paradox of pastoral power” and voluntary obedience to the pastor as one who guides the examination of conscience. While the figure of the individual pastor recedes in the complexity of the modern world, the Crusade for Freedom illustrates what Foucault (2014a, 18) identifies as

[the tendency] to tie the individual more and more to his truth (I mean, to the obligation to tell the truth about oneself), to make this truth-telling function in one’s relationships to others, and to commit oneself through this truth which is told. I do not mean that the modern individual ceases to be bound to the will of the other who commands him; but more and more, this connection overlaps and is tied to a discourse of truth that the subject is led to maintain about himself.

In the Crusade for Freedom can be seen precisely this effort to – as Legg (2016, 12) explains – “obligate individuals to become essential actors in the manifestation of truth… both [as] operator, spectator and the object of truth acts.” In insisting that individuals could wage their own private spiritual war against communism, American psychological warfare adopted not only the symbolism of the Christian crusade, but the logic of pastoral power. If the pastoral obligation to “the will of the other who commands” became dispersed in the imagined community of the nation, it was precisely as a citizen of the United States that the Crusade obligated individuals to formulate truths about themselves. In the Crusade, the obligation of the American citizen to manifest truth abroad in psychological warfare against the Soviet Union became inextricably tied to the obligation to manifest a binding truth about oneself — what Deborah Cowen (2004) has identified as the domestic intimacy of “scaling the nation.” If the responsibility to examine and manifest truths about oneself represents a foundational practice of Christianity, in the Crusade for Freedom the obligation became central to the American geopolitical imagination of psychological cum spiritual warfare.
A remarkable advertisement in the New York Times two weeks after Eisenhower’s speech, taken out by the president of an American furniture making company, illustrated the stark pastoral logic of the Crusade [Fig. 43]. In an “open letter” to Eisenhower, the signatory produced a litany of self-avowals constructed around an examination and confession of conscience. “I KNOW,” one avowal read, “the Kremlin hates us for fear that the ideals of our FREEDOM might penetrate the minds of those they have oppressed.” “I KNOW,” read another, “I shall give my effort and all I can afford for this cause” (NYT Sept 17, 1950). Quite literally a catechism for Cold War, the advertisement was an archetypal first-person “discourse of truth on the self, formed through the examination of conscience” that “binds one to the person who directs one’s conscience,” in this case the figure of Eisenhower as pastor and spiritual guide (Foucault 2007, 183).
Figure 43: Crusade Catechism

A half page personal ad taken out in the Sunday New York Times by the president of an American furniture company illustrated the confessional and increasingly “spiritual” structure of psychological war. A catechistic enumeration of self-knowledge, the advertisement also suggested muscular Christian fantasies, projecting onto Soviet leaders fear of American spiritual potency and its ability to “penetrate the minds of those they have suppressed” (NYT Sept 17, 1950).
Figure 44: Crusade statement contest

Fig. 44 — A 1959 Advertising Council comic strip explaining the Crusade statement contest illustrated the effort to elicit avowals from American citizens; to tie psychological warfare to the imperative of “making Americans speak.”
An advertisement in Reader’s Digest for the Crusade statement contest taking aim at First Secretary Khrushchev. DeWitt Wallace, owner of Reader’s Digest, was another corporate partner and member of the National Committee for a Free Europe. The advertisement again emphasizes individual American agency to wage psychological war through the articulation of truths about the self.

Figure 45: If you Disagree with Mr. Khrushchev...
Mirroring this confessional discourse, a staple of the Crusade for Freedom was the organization of “statement contests” in which winners were promised a trip to Radio Free Europe headquarters in Munich to read their personal message to “the millions of people trapped behind the Iron Curtain.” Though begun in the early days of the Crusade, statement contests reached their height in the late 1950s, appearing in numerous advertisements, notably in Reader’s Digest whose owner Dewitt Wallace was an executive member of the Committee for a Free Europe. In an advertisement for the Crusade’s 1959 statement contest, the Advertising Council distributed a press kit including a three-panel cartoon strip [Fig. 44] which was recommended for use in conjunction with advertising or editorial features on the contest (Cummings 2010b). Typical contest prompts included “as an American, I support Radio Free Europe because…”; “Why I want to participate in the Crusade for Freedom…”; or, as a Reader’s Digest advertisement directed against Khrushchev read [Fig. 45], “I believe the most important thing people behind the Iron Curtain should know is…” The targets of such ads were often schoolchildren, who were encouraged to examine their conscience and “speak with [their] hearts and heads.” Again, it was a confessional logic at the heart of what Foucault identifies as the obligation of the individual to answer the command “tell me who you are” and to bind themselves to avowals of self against communism.
5.3.3 Parting the Iron Curtain

Ask me how do I feel
Ask me now that we're cosy and clingin'
Well, sir, all I can say
Is if I were a bell, I'd be ringin'
From the moment we kissed tonight
That's the way I've just gotta behave

— “If I Were a Bell,” Guys & Dolls

“Quite a thrill to proceed under police escort!... Dignitaries [in Chicago] rang me... Had to break up [a] contest between Windy City policeman trying to prove who could ring me loudest and hardest... [In Phoenix], a series of rallies all day with [a] giant climaxing parade at night. Rang so much they wore me out!”

— “If a Bell Could Speak,” Story of the World Freedom Bell

While “truth dollars” and “freedom scrolls” were the major levers of domestic organization for the Crusade, its most recognizable symbol was the “Freedom Bell” which appeared on almost all of its promotional material. If the truth dollar and freedom scroll combined elements of American history with Christian imagery, the Freedom Bell followed suit. Modelled after the Philadelphia Liberty Bell, the bell also enrolled the evangelizing symbolism of the ringing of church bells. The original Crusade for Freedom of 1950 centred around the bell’s arrival in and tour of the United States before its journey to Germany, where it was installed in the tower of Berlin’s City Hall. In an incredibly well-organized publicity campaign, the bell was shipped to the United States from a foundry in Croydon, England, arriving in New York on 6 September 1950 to a ticker tape parade two days after Eisenhower’s radio address announced the Crusade [Fig. 46]. Measuring over twelve feet high, and weighing over ten tons, the bell depicted five men holding outstretched hands, representing the apparent “five major races of man” (NYT Sept 7, 1950). The bell’s brim carried
the globalized adaptation of Lincoln’s Gettysburg address and the Crusade’s official motto: “that
this world, under God, shall have a new birth of Freedom.”

Figure 46: Crusade for Freedom parade

A scene of the Freedom Bell parade on Broadway in New York (NCFE 1951a).
Figure 47: Freedom Bell tour of America

A map produced by the Crusade for Freedom of the Freedom Bell’s tour of the United States, illustrating the extent to which the operation of Radio Free Europe was translated into a domestic arm of the CIA psychological warfare program (NCFE 1951a).
As the major attraction in the first Crusade campaign, a rapid publicity tour across the United States followed its New York landing, with stops in twenty-six major cities [Fig. 47]. A motorcade truck was fitted to carry the bell, and stops on the tour solicited truth dollars and scroll signatures. The latter of these were enshrined into the base of the bell in its final destination of Berlin, where it remains today. As the conclusion of the first Crusade, the Bell in Berlin would be fitted with recording equipment to “carry its peal over the world” (NYT Sept 7, 1950) on United Nations Day, the 24th of October. The Bell’s ringing would go on to announce regular segments on Radio Free Europe, serving as the symbolic herald for the United States’ Crusade over the airwaves in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

What were often described as the “penetrating” tones of the Bell’s ringing symbolized the Crusade’s broader geopolitical imaginary of “penetrating” the Iron Curtain with the potency of American “truth.” Much as Cohn’s (1987) study of defense intellectuals revealed a barely concealed sexual logic underwriting discourses of nuclear deterrence, a similar sexual logic pervaded the Crusade’s obsession with discourses of penetration and Christian muscularity. While emphasizing the sanctity of its cause, the Crusade also stressed its own aggression and desire (though couched in a therapeutic rhetoric of abolitionism) to impose order and see victory in battle. As General Lucius Clay described it in 1951, Radio Free Europe was a “tough slugging weapon in the struggle for freedom” (NCFE 1951b). If themes of muscular Christianity have served to construct geopolitical imaginations of psychological warfare as a kind of inner struggle and spiritual battle against the forces of an insidious and foreign enemy — an approximation of the baptismal battle with Satan — the Freedom Bell tied psychological warfare’s muscular Christian
themes to the symbol of Radio Free Europe as the unilateral imposition of a “penetrating truth.” It condensed all the major themes of psychological warfare’s moral economy: it was manly, it was true, it imposed order, and more than saving lives it offered *salvation*.

Figure 48: Crusade for Freedom motorcade

*A pantomime scene of Radio Free Europe waging psychological war behind the Iron Curtain* (Friedman n.d.a).

In the years following the second Crusade in 1951, Henry Ford II replaced General Clay as chairman of the Crusade, the former concerned that the Crusade had become “big business” and strayed from its original purpose. In 1951, however, in place of the Freedom Bell’s tour of the United States, the Ford Motor Company donated a fleet of model flatbed trucks for use in a tour of the continental states. Each truck’s flatbed depicted an identical pageant scene dramatizing the
Freedom Bell’s “penetration” of the Iron Curtain with “truth” carried over the airwaves of a Radio Free Europe transmitter [Fig. 48]. What became known as the “Crusade for Freedom Motorcade” presented a pantomime of psychological warfare and a geopolitical imaginary of “truth as a weapon” in contested and enemy territories. The motorcade provided, moreover, an “excellent backdrop for newspaper publicity photos for the Crusade campaign and local citizens” (Friedman n.d.a).

Radio Free Europe was not the only method the crusaders had contrived to penetrate the Iron Curtain. Since Soviet transmitters regularly jammed the broadcasts of Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, a program to float balloons carrying printed material into Eastern Europe was launched by the Crusade in 1951. The balloons were made by General Mills, sponsors of the Crusade connected most directly through OSS veteran Abbot Washburn. One estimate suggests that over half a million balloons were floated to Eastern Europe and beyond between 1951-1956, carrying over 300 million leaflets and other printed materials (Cummings 2010c). At the campaign’s beginning in 1951, Czechoslovakia was a primary target for the Crusade’s psychological war, due to the assumption of power there by communists in 1948.

Present for the launch of the first balloons into Czechoslovakia was C.D. Jackson, who in an 8 Oct 1951 *Time* magazine article (“Winds” 1951) lionized himself and the efforts of his “private international organization” in “tearing a hole in the iron curtain.” The article described Jackson on location at the balloon launch with Harold Stassen, the 1951 chairman of the Crusade and a perennial failed presidential nominee for the Republican party; and Drew Pearson, whose syndicated column “Washington Merry-go-Round” was one the best known of the day. Personally
releasing the first balloons, *Time* described the men “looking like three Statues of Liberty, held high above their heads big rubber balloons”. The balloons carried the standard second-person platitudes of the Crusade in hailing their Czech targets:

A new wind is blowing. New hope is stirring. Friends of freedom in other lands have found a new way to reach you. They know that you also want freedom. Millions of free men and women have joined together and are sending you this message of friendship over the winds of freedom… There is no dungeon deep enough to hide truth, no wall high enough to keep out the message of freedom. Tyranny cannot control the winds, cannot enslave your hearts. Freedom will rise again (Freidman n.d.a).

On the backs of the leaflets were listed the frequencies and schedules of Radio Free Europe, which in turn alerted listeners to the balloon leaflets and encouraged Czechoslovakians to collect and share them. “What might the balloon barrage accomplish” a *Time* magazine article asked? “So far,” it responded, “Crusade for Freedom is not suggesting revolt… for revolt can be premature and disastrous. Instead, the balloons are an imaginative experiment in contact, bearing a message of hope until the time might be ripe for other words.” Though the article suggested that “so far” the intent of balloon launches was not to foment revolt, it intimated that a kind of “people’s uprising” directed by the Crusade was a matter not of “if” but “when.” The idea of a people-led grassroots capitalist revolution again dovetailed with the emergent Cold War propaganda theme, used both within the United States and abroad, of a “people’s capitalism” and an imaginary vision of the United States as a classless society with a prosperous working class (Roholl 2012; Hixon 1998; Castillo 2010). C.D. Jackson himself was bullish on encouraging Eastern Europeans to revolt against the Soviet Union, as when he wrote to Allen Dulles on 16 November, 1953, urging that the United States exploit the fact of projected food shortages in Czechoslovakia and Poland to
encourage strikes and protests in what he called a “winter of discontent” (“Fomenting Unrest” 1953).

Figure 49: Winds of freedom

*A map depicting the geographical imagination of psychological balloon war into Eastern Europe. The “free” countries of Western Europe are depicted in white, while the “enslaved territories” of Eastern Europe are depicted in black* (Cummings 2010c).

After the launches, Stassen made the incredible claim that, “if the free world can send enough messages by radio and balloon, Soviet Russia will have to give up its present world policy, and the prospects for avoiding World War III will be considerably brighter” (“Freedom Crusade” 1951). Though hardly credible, the claim illustrates the extent to which psychological warriors wished for American audiences to believe in the “power of truth” *qua* psychological warfare.
Pearson was more taciturn, though he still emphasized in his nationally syndicated column on 17 August, 1951 that the balloon campaign was a symbol of the “free-enterprise system,” illustrating the double function of the Crusade as propaganda for both itself and for a muscular capitalism willing to do what reticent government would not:

the current experiment in penetrating the iron curtain by balloons may be a great success or it may fail. It is too early yet to say. But the important thing is that it’s an attempt by private individuals under the free-enterprise system to try out certain methods of psychological propaganda—or call it psychological warfare if you will—which governments will not—and perhaps cannot tackle (in Cummings 2010c).

Targeting of Americans by the “Winds of Freedom” campaign was not limited to coverage of the Eastern European launches. As Pinkerton et al (2011) note in their study of Project Revere – a collaborative research project between the University of Washington and the U.S. Air Force – efforts to use American citizens as test subjects for researching the dissemination of psychological warfare leaflets often carried with them their own implicit psychological warfare messages. In the case of Project Revere, use of American citizens in research on leaflet dispersal often doubled as illustrations for those citizens of their own vulnerability to aerial attack, compounding the Cold War climate of fear [Fig. 50].
Figure 50: Project Revere postcard

Project Revere’s research on leaflet dissemination served the double function of both researching and waging psychological warfare on American citizens by emphasizing their vulnerability to air attack (Friedman n.d.b)
Reverse side of a General Mills leaflet instructing its finder to mail in details of the circumstances under which it was found. As well as producing balloons for the “winds of freedom” campaign, General Mills conducted research on their spread and dissemination within the United States. General Mills Chairman Harry Bulis was a member of the National Committee for A Free Europe (Friedman n.d.a).
The use of balloons to spread domestic propaganda for the Crusade dates back to its earliest days, when a thousand balloons were launched from the Empire State building to coincide with the Freedom Bell’s departure from New York to Berlin in October of 1950 (NYT 50/10/11). The balloons carried freedom scrolls and “freedom dollar” envelopes, but later balloons (such as the ones launched by General Mills from Sioux Falls, South Dakota [Fig. 51] carried information about the “wind of freedom” campaign and instructed readers to fill out a short questionnaire on the location, time, and nature of their discovery of the leaflets. Like Project Revere, Crusade balloons transformed American citizens into participant subjects of Cold War research on balloon propaganda dissemination, with the double function of acclimating the American public to geopolitical imaginary of a global psychological war in which they played an active part. The leaflets again stressed participation: “to millions in Soviet captivity, leaflets like this mean hope and encouragement…to make this test a success, your cooperation is vital.”

5.4 The Mighty Wurlitzer

In one of its promotional hardcover “blue books,” the Crusade for Freedom claimed that “the best evidence of the Freedom Bell’s effectiveness as a psychological weapon were the angry denunciations and lies evoked from Moscow” which had called the Crusade’s signature drive “a parody of a public movement” (NCFE 1951a). Since comprehensive public opinion polling in enemy territories was often impossible to conduct, psychological warriors regularly contented themselves with pointing to denunciations of their efforts by enemy leaders as proof of their
efficacy. While the Crusade booklet relished what it presented as Soviet outrage over the “ludicrous masquerade” of the Crusade, and the “false peals” of the Freedom Bell, what the Crusade did not reveal about Soviet denunciations was that they correctly identified Radio Free Europe as a front for the CIA (Panfilov 1981).

By contrast, the fact of the Committee for a Free Europe’s full organization and funding by the CIA was not revealed to the American public until 1967, after the small San Francisco-based left-wing publication Ramparts published a story on CIA infiltration of the National Students Association. The surprising revelation from the fringe publication prompted larger papers to pursue the story, and the New York Times eventually published reporting linking the CIA to Radio Free Europe (Cone 1998, 152), a full seventeen years after the Committee for a Free Europe was formed. Ironically, the listening audiences of Radio Free Europe in the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc would have known, or at least been told, that the broadcasts were the work of the CIA, meaning the constituency most deceived about the Radio’s true origins were American citizens, many of whom donated money to the cause of “telling the truth” to the “enslaved peoples” of Eastern Europe.

As Cone (1999, 148) notes, “the unmasking of RFE and RL [Radio Liberty] is significant partly because it took so long, but more so because the press and broadcast media were, in many cases, well aware of the connection between the CIA and the stations, and simply chose not to report the link.” As recounted by Sig Mickleson (1983, 125), former President of CBS and subsequently of Radio Free Europe itself, many American journalists and editors were aware that RFE and the Committee for a Free Europe were covers for the CIA but “kept their lips and typewriters sealed.”
When it came to supporting the Crusade, however, the American media were effusive. Cone’s (1999, 149) study suggests that advertising and public service announcement space donated to the Crusade by the American press was between 9 and 17 million dollars. In 1955 a Crusade newsletter boasted that more than 450 newspapers carried 700 Crusade ads, and that 75% of major American newspapers ran supportive articles or editorials during the 1955 campaign.

Additionally, many journalists and media executives sat on boards and worked in the newsrooms of Radio Free Europe (Cone, 1950), including future USIA director Edward R. Murrow, television personality Ed Sullivan, and prominent journalist Walter Cronkite.80 Leland Stowe, the fifth column alarmist reporter who helped foment the Ewald Banse affairs of 1933 and 1941, was the head of Radio Free Europe’s News and Information department during the 1950s, and actively recruited journalists to the station. Working his niche warning Americans of clandestine foreign plots conspiring to victimize them, Stowe published several books after the Second World War, employing the second-person trope for his Target: You (1949), as well as Conquest by Terror: The Story of Satellite Europe (1952).

It was, however, Henry Luce’s media empire that was most influential in advertising the Crusade and valorizing the geopolitical imaginary of waging global psychological war. This was perhaps unsurprising given C.D. Jackson’s central role in the Crusade, in Radio Free Europe, and later in

80 Cronkite volunteered to narrate a 1957 film advertising the Crusade and Radio Freedom called Towers of Truth, approved by CBS president Frank Stanton, a long-time psychological warrior who was instrumental in constructing psychological warfare as a member of the Committee for National Morale in 1941, Chairman of the Board of the RAND corporation from 1961-1967, and an advisor to the USIA who was sent to Vietnam to advise on how it could “reduce the high visibility of the American mission abroad” (Schiller 1969, 269). See Crusade for Freedom (1957).
the Eisenhower administration. In a seminal report to President Eisenhower in 1953, Jackson stressed that the value of keeping Radio Free Europe’s CIA connection secret lay in the radio station’s ability to “take positions for which the United States would not desire to accept responsibility” (President’s Committee on International Information Activities 1953). Again, the virtue of Radio Free Europe was its ability to leverage government to subvert overt government norms and channels. Though other Time-Life-Fortune executives were involved with Radio Free Europe, Jackson was by far the most influential and active. His departures from the company to work with government and the CIA were so frequent that a playfully-named “Fun and Games Committee of the C.D. Jackson Hello & Goodbye Society” was established to celebrate the occasions (Cook 1984, 43).

Figure 52: C.D. Jackson

C.D. Jackson, standing by a plaque mounted on Radio Free Europe’s new high-powered Munich transmitter. Jackson replaced Dewitt Poole as President of the National Committee for a Free Europe in 1951, when the latter took over as president of the Free Europe University in Exile (FEUE) in Strasbourg, another CIA backed project (NCFE 1951a).
One of Jackson’s major forays into government work was his membership on President Truman’s Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), a short-lived agency coordinating psychological war policy and planning across government agencies. In May of 1952, Jackson organized members of the board to convene at Princeton University, inviting representatives from the CIA, State Department, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Princeton University. Present for the articulation of what became the “Princeton Agenda” were Allen Dulles and Walter Rostow, who joined in consensus that the United States should engage in a more aggressive program of psychological warfare against the Soviet Union (“Princeton Statement” 1952). Though at the end of his presidency Truman did not take up the Princeton Agenda, in 1952 Jackson briefed candidate Eisenhower on the meeting. Both Jackson and Eisenhower had a “shared belief that psychological warfare was essentially to military strategy” (Stern 2012, 12) dating back to the winter of 1952 when Jackson was flown to North Africa to manage the public relations disaster of Eisenhower’s collaboration with Vichy General Darlan. The Darlan affair began a “long and close association” between the two men, continued in their collaboration on the Crusade for Freedom and solidified early in Eisenhower’s presidency.

Building upon his advocacy for the Crusade, candidate Eisenhower invoked the moral economy of psychological warfare, posing it as an alternative to armed conflict. In an 8 Oct 1952 campaign speech, he spoke on the importance of the “struggle for the minds and wills of men”:

We must adapt our foreign policy to a ‘cold war’ strategy that is unified and coherent… In spirit and resolve, we should see in this ‘cold war’ a chance to gain a victory without casualties, to win a contest that can quite literally save the peace (NYT 1952, Oct 9).
A week after his election in November of 1952, Eisenhower gave his third Crusade for Freedom radio speech in an event hosted by new Crusade chairman Henry Ford II. In the same broadcast his defeated opponent Adlai Stevenson made clear that support for the Crusade was a bipartisan affair, warning Democrats not to “sit back and lose the war of ideas by default.” Hewing close to Crusade talking points, Stevenson praised Radio Free Europe for going beyond the restrictions of what a government agency could do. “Imagine yourself, “he said, “behind the Iron Curtain. Bombarded constantly and from all sides by official propaganda, how could you fail to be more impressed by the one voice in the chorus that is voluntary?” (NYT 1952, Nov 12) Reproducing the Crusade logic that contrasted private voluntarism to the “tyranny of government,” Stevenson joined Eisenhower in praising the Crusade for “penetrating the Iron Curtain.”

Early in Eisenhower’s presidency, he convened a Committee on International Information Activities to review and plan the United States’ psychological warfare policy. Colloquially known as the Jackson Committee for its chair William Harding Jackson, who was a New York attorney and Deputy Director of the CIA, the Committee was also attended by C.D. Jackson, arguably the more influential of the two, serving as Eisenhower’s new Special Assistant to the President on psychological warfare. The Jackson Committee’s classified report to the president on 30 June 1953 urged among other things the maintenance of the CIA’s cover as Radio Free Europe’s benefactor. Perhaps most lastingly, the Committee recommended the consolidation of American psychological warfare efforts, leading to the establishment of the United States Information Agency (USIA) the next month. Despite the massive expansion of American psychological warfare represented by the establishment of the USIA, the Jackson Committee recommended the wholesale abandonment of
the term “psychological warfare.” A White House press release on the report called it an “unfortunate term” that did “not describe the efforts of our nation to build a world of peace and freedom.” The term, the release continued, should be discarded “in favor of others that describe our true goal” (NYT 1953, July 9). As C.D. Jackson would complain years later to William Harding Jackson,

over and over again thousands of characters—mostly military characters—have got to have explained to them that psychological warfare is not an occult science practiced on a couch, but just one of many clubs in the bag of the Foreign Minister or the military commander…We sure have been ruined by that word ‘psychological’ (in Granville 2005, 811).

Through the committee, C.D. Jackson dismantled the Psychological Strategy Board on which he had served under Truman, and attempted to banish use of the term which he had done so much to construct in the years before American entry into World War II. While the report is said to have “dropped like a bombshell” (Perusse 1958, 25) on the characters — the mostly military characters — who had begun to institutionalize psychological warfare at places like Johns Hopkins University’s Operations Research Office, the Jackson Report in fact called for massive expansion of psychological warfare, and an acknowledgement of its intractability from all policy formation. The Jackson report read that

the directive which created the Psychological Strategy Board assumes that in addition to national objectives formulated by the National Security Council, there are such things as “over-all national psychological objectives” … The PSB directive also speaks of “psychological policies” and the Board has been working to develop “a strategic concept for psychological operations.” We believe these phrases indicate a basic misconception, for we find that the “psychological” aspect of policy is not separable from policy, but is inherent in every diplomatic, economic or military action (“President’s Committee” 1953).
The term “psychological warfare” sat uneasily with the American public, perhaps unsurprisingly given the lengths to which figures like C.D. Jackson and William Donovan had gone to portray German psychological warfare in the 1940s as a kind of “witch doctor” mind control. In consolidating the OWI’s infrastructure of information outposts around the world, the new USIA would abandon the bogey of psychological warfare and instead take up the mantle of its predecessor’s “strategy of truth,” a rhetorical strategy already heavily evidenced by the CIA’s Crusade for Freedom. As with the OWI, the USIA’s strategy of truth was premised on the dissimulation of propaganda in the tones and format of “objective and factual news reporting.” In an attempt to avoid the dissemination of outright fabrications, the USIA’s strategy of truth would seek to assert governmental power through the control of *circulation* through the “particular selection and treatment of news designed to present a full exposition of US actions and policies, especially as they affect the particular country addressed” (ibid).

The production and selection of news for the “particular country addressed” was an important recommendation of the Jackson report. Again, while the Jackson committee purported to dismantle American psychological warfare, it in fact signalled not only its massive expansion, but a concurrent refinement and specification of its targets. In place of expensive American staffers producing general news stories about the United States, the USIA would now employ local producers in its various countries of operation to “adapt all broadcasting and information activities to the needs of each target country.” In place of generic broadcasts by the Voice of America, the new USIA would signal a revolution in erstwhile American psychological warfare that would scale down efforts to the individual country addressed, mirroring the larger Cold War movement toward more localized an applied area studies (Barnes & Farish 2006).
In another watershed recommendation, the Jackson Committee suggested a new policy of non-attribution that, “as a general rule, information and propaganda should only be attributed to the United States when such attribution is an asset. A much greater percentage of the information program should be unattributed” (President’s Committee 1953). Though some argued that unattributed materials, so long as they remained “true,” could be considered “white” propaganda operations, misattribution was generally understood as a “black” propaganda tactic, by convention the province of covert agencies like the Office of Strategic Services and the CIA. Despite its advertisement of a “strategy of truth,” the USIA was from its conception envisioned as at best a quasi-covert agency. It was perhaps appropriate, then, that C.D. Jackson chose April 1st of 1954 as the day he resigned as advisor to the President on psychological warfare, having played an instrumental role in crystallizing a global expansion of unattributed American propaganda under the banner of “dismantling American psychological warfare.”

5.5 Conclusion: Psywar is Dead, Long Live Psywar!

Reports of psychological warfare’s death were greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, a chorus renunciating the fallen art sought to assuage the fears of weary Americans. Former Secretary of the Department of the Air Force Thomas K. Finletter (1954, 126), for example, assured Americans that the Jackson committee had “put to rest” concerns over the United States’ use of psychological warfare:
Psychological Warfare is a bad term because the word ‘warfare’ implies that deceit is justifiable if it serves our purpose. Deceit is standard practice in the tactics of war. It is not correct practice in peacetime, whether it be directed toward our own people, to our friends, to those who have not taken sides, or to the people enslaved by Russia and China. It is neither consistent with our principles nor is it good business. Psychological warfare had its extravagances a while but they have been put to rest by the definitive report of a committee headed by William H. Jackson which recommended that the US give up psychological warfare.

Exemplifying the period’s Janus-faced discourse, Finletter went on to write that, “this is not to say,” however, “that psychological warfare should not continue as a military tactic nor that the US should stop explaining its policies to its Allies, to the neutrals, and to the enslaved peoples, providing the explanations are meticulously truthful” (p. 16). Finletter’s comments reflected the private consensus in the American military and diplomatic communities that, despite the abandonment of the terminology surrounding psychological warfare, it would continue apace under the rhetorical aegis of the USIA’s “strategy of truth.”

In a private essay published only in the Johns Hopkins University Operations Research Office’s 1958 *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*, a first generation USIA officer was remarkably candid in his assessment of the Jackson Committee’s significance. Writing in 1954, Roland Perusse (1958, 32) argued that “the principle lesson to be derived from the reappraisal of psychological warfare… is that the term itself had best be avoided in any characterization of either our informational output or our foreign relations generally.” Noting that Americans were understandably weary about the prospect of “psychological war,” and that the peoples of foreign countries appreciated even less being its targets, Perusse wrote that
we have not always had the opportunity to explain that by “warfare” we have meant “peacefare” and we have necessarily assumed a ridiculous posture (something akin to the Communist corruption of word meanings) every time that we have made the attempt. In brief, those in the business of explaining US policies abroad through a judicious choice of word symbols had failed to choose an appropriate word symbol [“psychological warfare”] to characterize their operations.

Though Perusse had clarity enough to admit the risibility of terms like “peacefare” to describe psychological war, their emergence and the obsession with finding a word to obscure the nature of psychological warfare dovetailed with the emerging consensus (as outlined by the Jackson Committee) that psychological warfare had become a necessary and intractable dimension of permanent total war. Like George Kennan, who saw psychological warfare as the natural extension of Clausewitz’s principle in times of peace, propaganda turned psychological war theorists like Harold Lasswell (1951) now claimed that “peacefare and warfare [were] the two patterns which are assumed in the instruments of total policy at all times.”

Like Gordon Allport, who laboured to theorize the “democratic” nature of “democratic morale” in the early 1940s, in the early 1950s efforts were made to rehabilitate psychological warfare’s moral economy not only through recourse to objectivity qua the strategy of truth, but to lawfulness as its ability to impose order. Suggesting the term “political communications,” which reflected the liberal tones of flattened objectivity, the social psychologist Leonard Cottrell (1958, 20) offered a breathless defense of erstwhile psychological warfare which collapsed into it both the principles of democratic government and a proto-neoliberal “free flow of ideas.” Cottrell’s implication was that not only could psychological warfare act as a mechanism of democratic deliberation, it could combine it with the order and lawfulness of free market capitalism:
a large proportion of what we label psychological warfare falls well within what democratic cultures guarantee as an inalienable right — namely to convince other people that you are right and that they are wrong. Indeed, we are committed to the technique of the free-for-all competition of ideas as a way of crystallizing our opinions on public issues. The kind of reciprocity implied in this concept might well make the Politburo nervous.

While no one term came to denote the former practice of psychological warfare until the mid 1960s, when “public diplomacy” offered an “alternative to the anodyne term information [and the] malignant term propaganda” (Cull 2006), consensus within the family of psychological warriors held that psychological warfare would continue by any other name. As Perusse put it, “abandonment of the term should by no means result in the abandonment of any of the processes involved in what has been known professionally as ‘psychological warfare.’” Insisting that there would always be a need for “psychological intelligence” provided by anthropologists, sociologists and area specialist, Perusse (1958, 34) recommended a purely chauvinist solution to the terminological problem:

It is better to let the term [propaganda] ride as a proper definition for totalitarianism efforts and to characterize the activities of democratic societies as “information.” From a strictly academic point of view, the distinction is not valid; but from a practical and public relations point of view, the entire task of dealing with foreign peoples will be made easier if we go along with the tide of public opinion… From a strictly professional viewpoint, [the USIA] is ‘psychological warfare’, pure and simple, as everyone who has engaged in any aspect of such activity will recognize, but for the better chances of its success, it would appear wise not to call it that, but rather, as recommended by the President’s Committee, to concentrate on finding other terms that describe our true goals.

This chapter has considered the arc of psychological warfare’s evolution from the immediate post war context of Allied occupation, to the “caution and uncertainty” of the post-war years, to its eventual adoption by the CIA. Like the original construction of psychological warfare a decade earlier by actors surrounding William Donovan’s OSS, the construction of the psychological cold
war in the early 1950s was an ouroboric project — propaganda about propaganda, this time to cultivate and strengthen the ideology of liberal capitalism within the United States. The façade of private American investment and participation in psychological warfare had the effect of hailing Soviet and Eastern European individuals as recipients of communications not from the United States government, but from concerned American citizens. However, it had the double function of compelling the same American citizens to reflect upon and posit themselves as actors in the still-young arena of psychological warfare.

In tracing the contours of the Crusade for Freedom’s various efforts to mobilize the American public, this chapter has shown that American psychological warfare attempted to employ a confessional strategy to “make speak,” and to obligate Americans to articulate and conform to truths about themselves. I argue that these avowals of American liberal-capitalist selfhood were understood by the Crusade’s architects as crucial hinges between waging psychological warfare abroad and mobilizing Americans for a “spiritual war” against communism in which Americans again found themselves to be both objects and subjects. Central to these “technologies of the self” were injunctions for Americans to conceive and posit their political agency in the symbolic terms of economic exchange and speech, namely the truth dollar and the freedom scroll. Once again, psychological warfare sought to obscure domestic monopolies of knowledge through recourse to a liberal political imaginary, with the dollar and scroll becoming new ciphers for the freedom of industry and speech. These were accompanied by the muscular Christian themes in which communication media like Radio Free Europe became weapons for the “penetration” of the minds and boarders of communist Eastern Europe.
While the creation of the USIA in 1953 represented a massive expansion of its predecessor’s global psychological warfare apparatus, its establishment coincided, ironically, with a disavowal of the increasingly unpopular term “psychological warfare” to describe American propaganda activities abroad. Mirroring the way in which the language of psychological warfare replaced the unpopular language of propaganda, I have shown how the abandonment of terminology surrounding psychological warfare nonetheless involved an entrenchment of both its practice and the geopolitical imaginations cultivating it. I have emphasized throughout the continued role of *Time-Life-Fortune* Vice-President C.D. Jackson and other OSS veterans in subsuming psychological cold war within a superseding geopolitical imagination of a proselytizing “strategy of truth.” In the next chapter I trace the re-emergence of psychological warfare at the USIA within the context of President Kennedy’s articulation of the United States’ global counterinsurgency strategy, and prosecution in Vietnam in the offices of the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO).
Chapter 6: Psychological Warfare in Vietnam: Governmentality at the USIA

After the Second World War, veterans of the OSS and OWI began to formalize the theory and practice of psychological warfare. Books like Daniel Lerner’s (1949) *The Sykewar Campaign* and Paul Linebarger’s (1948) *Psychological Warfare* became foundational texts. Quite unlike writing prior to American entry into the Second World War, where the novelty and unprecedentedness of psychological warfare was emphasized as “Hitler’s frightful weapon” (see Ch. 3), these post-war texts endeavoured to insert and naturalize “psychological warfare” into conventional military history. Writing in partnership with Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Linebarger cited Gideon’s ruse against the Midianites in the *Old Testament* as the first recorded instance of “psychological war.” The text further reimagined historical military figures as great “psychological warriors,” including Athenian General Themistocles (480 BC), Chinese Emperor Wang Mang (1 AD), Genghis Kahn (c1200), and Thomas Paine (1776).

The connection to Johns Hopkins University was significant. Beginning in 1953, the first three comprehensive volumes on psychological warfare were published by the University’s Operations Research Office (ORO). This office was established at Ft. McNair in Washington, DC in 1948...

---

81 Research for this chapter was conducted at the United States National Archives through reference to the Records of the United States Information Agency. As a stipulation of the 1953 Smith-Mundt act, materials produced by the USIA were barred from dissemination within the United States, creating an ostensible “domestic ban” on USIA propaganda. Though the impetus for the “ban” is contested (see Metzgar 2012), the records of the USIA remained unavailable to researchers until the early 2000s.
before being moved to Chevy Chase, Maryland in 1952. At this second location, the ORO began a contract with Johns Hopkins University to “provide an atmosphere that would attract the best minds to ORO”; “create an atmosphere of intellectual independence”; and “create a university atmosphere conducive to good scientific research” (Office of Technology Assessment 1995, 17, 20). When the Korean War began in 1950, it was seen as an opportunity to “provide ORO with a laboratory for their work.” Field representatives were sent by ORO to Korea to study various aspects of operations research, including extensive evaluations of “close air support,” the utilization of “indigenous manpower,” and the effectiveness of leaflets and other forms of combat propaganda now called psychological warfare.

Though C.D. Jackson’s attempt to abolish the term “psychological warfare” in the wider diplomatic community had “dropped like a bombshell” on those attempting to formalize its theory and practice, the Korean War renewed military interest in it. However, debates over whether or not psychological warfare should be a military or a civilian responsibility (Ch. 5) slowed the formalization of psychological war doctrine in the military, and led to a “lack of organization of knowledge and theory of psychological warfare” (Schramm 1953, v). While the Department of the Army was initially hesitant to assume responsibility for psychological warfare, in 1951 the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base held a conference on the topic. Arranged by the Air University’s Human Resources Research Institute, the conference led to the commission of the three Operations Research Office volumes from Johns Hopkins.

The result of the contract was the publication of the first three major volumes on psychological warfare for the Army, beginning with The Nature of Psychological Warfare by OWI veteran and
Communication Studies pioneer Wilbur Schramm (1953), followed by *Target Analysis and Media in Propaganda to Audiences Abroad* by Alfred de Grazia (1954), a pioneer of computer-based network analysis and a WWII Army psychological warfare veteran, and finally by *A Psychological Warfare Casebook* (Daugherty & Janowitz 1958), a comprehensive collection with contributions from nearly every major figure in the young field of psychological war. These texts largely followed Linebarger’s historiography of psychological warfare, representing a sharp turn away from the American intelligence community’s insistence in the early 1940s that psychological warfare had produced a “new reality” and indeed a “new geography of defense” (Ch. 3).

In place of the alarmism surrounding psychological warfare’s purported novelty, a new consensus emerged that psychological warfare had *always* existed, though imperfectly recognized. Schramm’s (1953, 5) *The Nature of Psychological Warfare* reproduced Linebarger’s vignettes on psychological warfare’s ancient origins, and stressed the titular sense of its *natural* existence:

> psychological warfare is one of the means nations use to promote their policies and objectives vis-à-vis the outside world. Nations have been waging it ever since there have been nations (although psychological warfare does happen to be a new name for it), but it has only recently come to be regarded as a distinct government activity that ought to be performed by specially trained professionals.

While deception, coercion, and persuasion may be “as old as nations,” this new construction of “psychological warfare” as something that had always already existed was an attempt to efface the contingency of its construction in the early 1940s, an effort made by many of the same actors who constructed it as “Hitler’s frightening new weapon.” It was what Foucault (1977) calls a “search for origins,” that is an attempt to prefigure the reality and existence of the object under
investigation. Illustrating the point, Foucault (2014, 79) contrasted his genealogical study of madness to an “ideological” approach that assumed its a priori existence. “An analysis in terms of ideology,” argued Foucault, “would have consisted in asking: given the reality of madness… what are the grounds and conditions governing the system of representation that has led to a practice of confinement.” By contrast, Foucault emphasized the value of genealogical analysis in “taking the practice of confinement in its historical singularity, that is to say in its contingency, in the sense of its fragility, its essential non-necessity.” What the post-war body of literature on psychological warfare offered, then, was a kind of political historiography of psychological warfare which sought to efface the contingency of its recent construction through the invention of an ancient past. The imperative to discover an historical “nature” of psychological warfare also provided ballast to claims that it was an obligatory military function in need of research and appropriations.

In addition to naturalizing psychological warfare as an eternal aspect of “war itself,” Schramm (1953, 11) sought to collapse the definitional parameters of psychological warfare into matters of intent. “Almost any military action may have a psywar aspect,” he wrote. “A bomb on a gun emplacement may help persuade another gun crew to run or surrender…If these things happen incidentally, without being intended by the attackers, they probably should not be called psywar. But if they are intended to be understood as conveying such and such a message, they are psywar.” The virtue of the such a definition of psychological warfare was that it could be simultaneously everything and nothing, a point about which Schramm was, among psychological warriors, uncharacteristically candid:
the reader will already have guessed the general shape of the definition to which we have been leading up: psychological warfare is the whole range of functions performed by psychological warriors, whether inside or outside duly constituted psywar agencies (The pilot of a plane flying a psywar mission is engaged in psywar and is, for the moment at least, a psychological warrior). It is, admittedly, a “circular” definition, but it has the advantage of excluding nothing that the psychological warrior ought to think of as part of the over-all enterprise in which he is engaged.”

For the fledgling field of psychological warfare, it provided both an infinite mandate and a frictionless exculpability, since its very existence was relegated to the subjectivity of the operator. If, in the early years of the Second World War, epistemological critique was exploited to simultaneously preserve, destroy, and supercede the “strategy of truth” (Ch. 4), here again a rhetorical sleight of hand defined the ontology of psychological warfare, not in its material practice, but in the terms of philosophical idealism. As the co-editor of the third volume of the ORO texts quipped, “most people who write or talk about psychological warfare use the term as Humpty Dumpty did in his discussion with Alice concerning ‘glory.’ He told her, “When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more or less” (Daugherty 1958, 11).

6.1 USIA and the Counterinsurgency Turn

Under Eisenhower, psychological warfare expanded in its new dualistic structure between the CIA’s covert operations, and the newly established USIA’s grey “strategy of truth” (Ch. 5). Upon taking the presidency in 1961, John F. Kennedy appointed the famed journalist Edward R. Murrow as the new director of the USIA. Though Murrow is often remembered as the face of anti-
McCarthyism in the 1950s, as director of the USIA he in fact held the top post in the United States’ “war of ideas” against communism. While many in the intelligence community were dismayed over the extremism of the McCarthy hearings — C.D. Jackson, for instance, agonized over the damage McCarthyism had done to the United States’ international image (Stern 2012, 87) — opposition to McCarthy in no way suggested opposition to anti-communism as such, and many were concerned that McCarthy was in fact harming the respectability of the anti-communist movement.\footnote{Allen Dulles also “stood up” to McCarthy when the latter attacked the CIA, especially over the issue of CIA agent Cord Meyer Jr.’s activity in left-wing politics in the 1930s (Stern 2010, 89), while others feared that McCarthy would blow Radio Free Europe’s CIA cover. See Thomas (1996); Saunders (1999); Miller (1973).}

As director of the USIA, Murrow oversaw a sea-change in the organization’s approach to fighting communism, increasingly tied to the emergent policy of Kennedy’s “global counterinsurgency” against communist revolution. A secret directive from Kennedy to Murrow in January 1963 made explicit the USIA’s new role as a direct arm of this counterinsurgency policy. A transcript of a 22 August 1963 meeting between Murrow and the ‘Special Group on Counterinsurgency’ (CI), declassified only in 2007, offers a glimpse of the directive’s content. Noting that the meeting was “the first time much of this has been even reduced to writing,” Murrow (1963b) conveyed to the Special Group the secret directive’s “unprecedented” nature. “It is an unprecedented document,” said Murrow, “not only for what it says, but for what it does NOT say as well”:

Our mission is, ‘….to help achieve United States foreign policy objectives…’ It does NOT say we are to make friends for the United States. It does not say publicize our activities, create a climate of opinion, wage a campaign of truth, tell the story of America abroad, tell the full and fair picture, or any of the other vague generalities that have described our
actives in by-gone years. It makes us a distinctly foreign policy oriented agency (emphasis in original).

While the language of the secret directive may seem banal, it signaled an important shift in the mission and focus of the USIA from platitudinous “story-telling” to the pursuit and support of specific policy goals in specific target countries.83 These policy goals revolved primarily around the maintenance and support of allied governments in so-called “counterinsurgency countries” where the United States wished to prop up political leaders against popular left-wing insurgencies, both political and military. In these countries, Murrow noted, USIA programs would now be “designed for internal information and propaganda needs rather than being primarily concerned with American policy positions.” In other words, the USIA’s mission shifted from one concerned with advertising and “winning friends” for the United States, to one concerned with the maintenance of friendly political regimes as bulwarks against communist revolutions.

The Special Group on Counterinsurgency was itself a recent creation of the Kennedy administration, pursuant to the issuance of National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) No. 124 on 18 January, 1962. Heading the group was Kennedy’s brother, US Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and General Maxwell Taylor, a major figure in the escalating war in Vietnam. The Group was formed as an interagency committee to discuss, research, and coordinate plans for combating communist insurgencies around the globe, though its primary areas of emphasis were South America and East Asia (notably Laos, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam). Other members of the

83 Non-critical histories of the USIA often repeat the claim that it was an overt and truthful information agency that existed to tell the platitudinous ‘American story’ during the Cold War. Laudatory accounts of the USIA have tended to reproduce these tropes. See Wang (2007); Cull (2007); Arndt (2005).
Special Group on Counterinsurgency included representatives from the Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). NSAM 124 further ordered civilian and military officials to attend a five-week National Interdepartmental Seminar (NIS) on “Problems of Development and Internal Defense,” to which Murrow (1963a) contributed a paper on “The Role of the USIA in Modernization and Internal Defence” on 31 July, 1963.
Figure 53: USIA country plan: Guatemala

Excerpt of a USIA country plan for Guatemala, 1954, outlining the specification of audiences and their locations within the country. The plan was written less than two months after the 1954 CIA-backed coup of socialist leader Jacobo Árbenz (USIA 1954a).
As McGeorge Bundy (1964) wrote to the heads of the major American foreign policy agencies, “internal defense” — that is, assisting allied leaders in suppressing popular political movements — was an increasingly “interdepartmental foreign policy problem.” Tasked to the Special Group on Counterinsurgency, organization of the National Interdepartmental Seminars was meant to facilitate the development and coordination of counterinsurgency policy among officials in “key positions,” especially on the “concept and operation of the Country Team.” As the “country plan” increasingly became the unit of analysis in the political geography of the Cold War, Murrow’s (1963b) role as USIA representative to the Special Group was to “spell out our policy role in individual countries” and to coordinate on the design of programs “tailored for the special needs of a single country”. As part of these broader inter-departmental country plans, USIA country plans typically consisted of five parts: a statement of U.S. country objectives, a list of USIA capabilities, a list of U.S. psychological objectives, identification of target audiences, and an overview of program activities. Emphasizing again the USIA’s break with its previous advertorial approach, and the “more general considerations that tend to vagueness and diffusion,” the country plan now became the basic unit of American psychological war strategy, and a “means of zeroing in on what is important in each locale.”

---

84 As Bundy (1964) wrote, “the National Interdepartmental Seminar will be the interagency training center for those officers assigned to “key positions”. In performing this function, the Seminar will undertake research, develop case studies, and offer instruction on the manifold problems of development and internal defense...The Seminar will serve as the focal point of the U.S. overseas internal defense training effort. Accordingly, it will undertake to assist other more specialized U.S. Government institutions engaged in in related training activities by developing instructional materials on the non-technical aspects of internal defense and counterinsurgency.”
6.2 Establishing Government

In its new advisory capacity to the Special Group, the USIA became an agency dedicated to the counterinsurgency project of creating relationships of government between the peoples of its target countries and the regimes which the United States sought to support. As Murrow (1963a) put it, “what we seek is POLITICAL COMMUNICATION FOR ACTION EFFECT — that action being the support of governments.” Though a decade earlier the Jackson Committee had attempted to expunge the terminology of “psychological warfare” from American foreign policy, the term “psychology” continued to connote and soften discussion of propaganda and communication policy. Both embracing and demurring his agency’s function, Murrow admitted that “we are, it is true, in the business of propaganda, but a better term might be that of ‘political-psychological communications.’” Regardless of the phraseology, Murrow made clear that role of the USIA was to assist in the establishment of government in the so-called “counterinsurgency countries”; to take “those actions… which modernizing leadership takes to establish confidence between itself and the people.”

Murrow illustrated examples of the USIA’s new approach, noting the diplomatic trend toward “public diplomacy” — targeting populations, not officials, as objects of intervention. Speaking to the Special Group’s Interdepartmental Seminar, Murrow (1963a) offered the example of Iran whose “leaders and elite used to be our targets.” Now, he continued, “our audience is the peasantry and the plain people.” Similarly, in the Congo the USIA produced a weekly newsreel in French, Lingala and Swahili that emphasized the “significance” of Prime Minister and CIA-client Cyrille Adoula. “The effort,” Murrow insisted, “has nothing to do with winning friends for the United
States, or exploiting the American way of life.” Rather, it was “an effort to support Adoula and his government.”

A key dimension of Kennedy’s secret USIA directive was the further relaxation of rules governing the attribution of USIA efforts to the United States. As another aspect of the “unprecedented document,” the directive states that “where considered advisable…, the United States Information Agency is authorized to communicate with other peoples without attribution to the United States Government on matters for which attribution could be assumed by the Government if necessary.” Under Murrow (1963b) the USIA would adopt a grey policy of ensuring that material was, if not attributed, then at least “attributable”. This elision of attribution had been suggested to the USIA by colleagues of then-CIA director John McCone, and made good on C.D. Jackson’s recommendation to Eisenhower in 1953 (Ch. 5). “Attributability” involved circulating unattributed materials that could be attributed to the United States if necessary, but had a greater chance of succeeding if they were mis- or unattributed. This ensured that USIA materials were “not unattributable,” meaning that if they were discovered as American they would not need to be denied. In this way USIA materials remained at least in name “overt”. By 1963, through the practice of “attributability”, between 65 and 70 percent of total USIA output was not attributed. Citing an example, Murrow (1963a) boasted to the Special Group that in the Dominican Republic, we produced a complete program for citizen education in the election. We emphasized the citizen’s rights and his obligations in a free society. This was all unattributed. All the mobile film units, all the print was done under the label of the provisional administration. This included cartoon books, television, radio — the whole gamut of political education.
Along with Vietnam, Laos, and Indonesia, Thailand was one of the Asian “counterinsurgency countries” where the USIA and Special Group were especially active. A proverbial “domino country,” USIA activities in Thailand “filled a vacuum” created by the Thai government’s lack of “the capability of developing and conducting effective information programs without guidance and support” (Murrow 1963b). In the tradition of American psychological warfare, the USIA in Thailand served as a placeholder for the establishment of an “autonomous” Thai effort, and sought “every opportunity to pass responsibility to the host government.” It was again the police function of American psychological warfare to set up the political machinery of governmental communication before transferring it to allied proxies whose advantage in a ‘free’ market would assure the maintenance of power for friendly political regimes.

In Thailand, USIA policy attempted to foster communication qua government with and over the rural population. USIA policy focused on the “positive” in the production of films, posters, school materials, etc. and hoped to “enhance loyalty [to the Thai monarchy] rather than attack those who oppose it.” Escalating its operations in 1963, USIA increased unattributed radio broadcasts to Thailand’s Northeast, and placed a remarkable 180 hours of weekly programming on various Thai radio stations. In publications for the Northeast, USIA concentrated on tabloid pictorials depicting “the Thai Government’s efforts to better the welfare of the people.” As will be seen on a larger scale in Vietnam, the combination of the Foucauldian (2007, 327) concept of “communication as police” (Ch. 2) combined at the UISA with the related police strategy of felicity; of “linking together the state’s strength and individual felicity…: making men’s (sic) happiness the state’s utility.”
As would also be the case in Vietnam, however, territoriality remained a significant obstacle, with much of Thailand’s population in rural and remote regions of the country. To implement its “program of counter-subversion” at the village level, USIA established in Thailand a cadre of Mobile Information Teams in 1962. Stationed at branch posts around the country, in 1963 the program was expanded and USIA Thailand was supplied with 21 mobile units to distribute literature and to screen its semi-weekly “newsreel magazines” in remote areas. Developed jointly between US and Thai governments, the purpose of the Mobile Teams was to “establish a bridge of understanding and a two-way flow of information between the Government and the people living in remote areas of the country” (Murrow 1963b). Though spun as ‘bridges of understanding’ to rural populations, its efforts were in fact an attempt to construct a relation of government, and to paint a structure of hierarchy in the colours of dialogue and reciprocity. This was pursuant to the USIA’s imperative to assay the population as part of its “diagnostic task” to gain a “fuller understanding of village conditions and needs, village attitudes and opinions, and of the sources of village information.”

Mobile Teams generally consisted of a captain, a government overseer, a representative from a government public relations department, a USIA representative, and a USIA driver and projectionist. In addition to the dual tasks of irrigating rural areas with pro-government media and collecting statistical and survey data on the population, Mobile Information Teams also carried out more corporeal forms of biopolitical intervention. Teams often included a medical doctor from the Ministry of Health, who was equipped with a stock of medicine suitable for treating people in remote areas. If the USIA was intent on providing an image of modernization as a cipher for regime loyalty, medical treatment doubled as a front in the psychological war against communism,
carrying out the felicitous *police* function of “supplying extra life” to rural populations (Foucault 2003a). As of 1963, MITs in Thailand had reached nearly 300 villages in the field, mostly located in the country’s remote North and Northeastern regions.

Though failing health meant that Murrow’s tenure as director of the USIA was brief, “the man who invented truth” (Cull 2003) is rarely if ever remembered as having presided over America’s global psychological war against communism, and the institution of a duplicitous international policy of “attributability.” When queried about censorship from the USIA, Murrow (1963a) stated that he is frequently asked by former colleagues “how it feels now that [he] has, in essence, become a whore,” to which he responded that “in the course of the last two and a half years I have encountered no more stops or censorship than I would have had I still been working for CBS” — “what I am trying to say in answer to your question is that I believe it is becoming increasingly a professional organization and has the mission of telling the truth so far as we can determine it.”

### 6.2.1 The American War Pastoral

Scholars of war rightly emphasize the importance of populations as objects of strategy. Detailing the importance of body counts for American perceptions of progress, Tyner (2009, 74) suggests that “the Vietnam war became a war of population geography.” Gibson (1986), on the other hand, explains how the Vietnamese population was framed as an object of coercion, with bombing a form of “communication” to the leadership in Hanoi. I argue, however, that in terms of the psychological war, the USIA’s effort to establish a relationship of government targeted the
Vietnamese population as an object of pastoral power, attempting what Foucault identifies as the paradoxical administration of both whole populations and individuals *qua* individuals — *omnes et singulatim*.

Central to the USIA’s narration of psychological war against communism was a liberal emphasis on the individual as such. “The Communist ‘wars of liberation,’” stressed Murrow (1963b), “have made of the peasant, the worker, the youth, the student a political actor in a major drama. Just as the Communists focus on the *individual*, so must we.” The emphasis on the individual, and the individual’s *participation*, further reflected the liberal ideological underpinnings of American psychological warfare as a kind of governmental “conduct of conduct” (Foucault 2007); as the ability to exert influence over voluntary and individualized behavior. Illustrating the pastoral theme of all and each — *omnes et singulatim* — Murrow (1963b) reflected the American establishment’s belief that psychological warfare could be waged not against complex societies, cultures, and communities; but against a “concert of individuals.” While the Murrow stressed the population as the center of gravity for revolutionary war, the “concert of individuals” belied the USIA’s liberal hubris concerning the isolability of individuals as such: “if the *concert of individuals* in a land is not sold on its own leadership,” Murrow insisted, “that leadership will fail.”

Under the aegis of the USIA’s new counterinsurgency mandate, psychological warfare in Vietnam was dramatically expanded over the course of 1962–64. A key architect of this escalation was Douglas Pike, who worked in Vietnam as a Foreign Service Officer before returning to the United States in 1963 to attend graduate school at MIT’s CIA-funded Center for International Studies (CENIS). Upon arriving in Vietnam in 1961, Pike found the state of psychological warfare in
extreme disarray. The Diem government was widely distrusted, and the National Liberation Front (NLF) – often derisively called ‘Viet Cong’ by US forces – had been active for over a year (Long 1998). In a memorandum dated 24 Nov 1961, Pike aired grievances to a Special Projects Working Committee and outlined a course of action for the American psychological war. Written just three months before Kennedy convened the Special Group on Counterinsurgency, Pike’s memorandum argued that in addition to destroying the NLF’s military capacity, the United States must also destroy the “psychological will to resist.” He insisted, moreover, that it was the ordinary Vietnamese villager — the individual — who must be won over. In a remarkable passage, Pike (1961) outlined his philosophy of psychological warfare as

the marriage of propaganda to social movements... so as to develop a reinforced appeal both to enlightened self-interest and to emotion. The purpose is to arouse and energize group members, to establish an élan... First, a claim to truth is established. This need not be a full-blown ideology, but it must involve converting ideas into actions, transforming abstract concepts into social levers; at any rate the claim to truth deals with such matters as the drive to economic modernization, the search for national status and power, etc. Secondly, emotions are tapped. The measure of success in establishing the claim to truth is the degree that passion is developed. Propaganda of a social movement must involve both the ideological approach, i.e. transformation of society through politics, and a mystical appeal, i.e. transformation of the individual.

In Pike’s appraisal, harnessing Vietnamese social movements had been a particularly lost opportunity, owing to what he identified as “GVN [Government of Vietnam] mismanagement and innate Vietnamese cynicism.” As will be seen, failure to win the psychological war in Vietnam would often be attributed to a nebulous sense of the defectiveness of the Vietnamese people and their “oriental traits” in responding to the various stimuli of American psychological warfare. In 1961, however, Pike remained optimistic that American psychological warriors could transmute
the Vietnamese peasant into a modern individual on whom the levers of American psychological war could churn.

Pike’s words revealed, moreover, a stark pastoral logic: American psychological warfare must simultaneously mobilize the Vietnamese population (*omnes*), and enact a ‘mystical’ transformation of the individual as such (*singulatim*). Emphasis on the individual as such appears indebted to Pike’s connection to MIT’s CENIS, particularly the World War II psychological warrior turned modernization theorist Daniel Lerner (1958, 49), whose 1958 *The Passing of Traditional Society* asserted that “it has been the work of the twentieth century to diffuse widely a mobile sensibility so adaptive to change that rearrangement of the self-system is its distinctive mode.” This deeply liberal theme connecting the administration of governmental power to guidance over “practices of the self” of subject individuals (Foucault 2014) was indeed a common cause of both psychological warriors and modernization theorists of the time. It was believed that “traditional persons” were inherently malleable, and that “modern individuals” could be created through exposure to the proper stimulus. As Farish (2010, 137) has argued, hinting at the pastoral paradox, psychological warriors were interested not only in “molding humans en masse;” they also “sought to create new, modern persons in an alien space.” The individual, it was hoped, would be “one of power’s first effects” (Foucault 2003b, 30).

On this account, one of Pike’s (1961) central concerns was that specific psychological war projects should proceed from specific research. “It cannot be stressed too strongly,” he wrote, “that the planning must follow, must stem from, the research; only with the facts in hand is it possible to work out realistic projects.” Though he argued for extensive research on both the Government of
Vietnam (GVN) and the NLF, it was the common villager and the “psychological facets of the Vietnamese climate of opinion” that Pike saw as decisive. Research, he argued, must “isolate and delineate key sociological factors” of Vietnamese society to determine the “relevant mores, customs, and stereotypes” that could establish a “value profile or value constellation” of Vietnamese society upon which psychological warfare campaigns could be built.

These “isolations and delineations” can be understood as further attempts to ground the American psychological war within a broader structure of pastoral power. In addition to individualization as such, Foucault (2007, 184) suggests that the development of pastoral power involved “absolutely specific modes of individualization” and the “analytical identification” of individuals. Though this line of inquiry was not developed further in his 1977–1978 lecture series, it called back to his *History of Sexuality*, published the previous year, in which Foucault (1978, 43) detailed how the analytic “specification of individuals” transformed deviant sexualities, such as ‘the homosexual’, into discreet species of humans. I want to suggest, then, that the specification of individuals for psychological war – the refinement of “target audiences” – represents an historical development of governmental power/knowledge; of the quintessentially governmental “statistic” that forms the basis of modern biopower (Foucault 2007, 101).

Not only did the development of pastoral power involve attempts to constitute the individual as such as an object of government, it involved the mediation of the individual at the scale of population through their statisticization and specification as “species.” American efforts to classify life in Vietnam, however, were fraught and often inconclusive. Moreover, they came remarkably late in the psychological war’s course. In 1966, five years after Pike’s initial report, a senior foreign
service officer of the USIA reported that, in the arena of research, “we fly by the seat of our pants.” Despite Pike’s insistence on it, there was a basic lack of research, and existing studies remained superficial, tending to “emphasize deeds and [dissemination] statistics, and not attitude, opinion, and behavior” (cited in Katz et al 1996, 129).

![Table III-2. VARIATIONS IN VALUES BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS](image)

**Figure 54: Kluckhohn’s "value profiles"**

“Value profiles” of Vietnamese villagers. The blank matrices indicate that American psychological warriors were largely unable to correlate villagers with the schematic of Kluckhohn’s “values orientations.” (Havron et al 1972, 30)

One of the first major efforts to conduct systematic research for the psychological war was the Advanced Research Projects Agency’s (ARPA) Values Project, completed between 1968 and 1971. The so-called Values Project consisted of a quartet of studies commissioned by ARPA to
the Virginia-based Human Sciences Research Inc. The second of these studies, *The Use of Cultural Data in Psychological Operations Programs in Vietnam*, was based upon a full census of three villages. The study correlated demographic and biographic details with extensive interview questioning. Questions were based upon the then-current “values orientation theory” of the husband and wife team of Clyde and Florence Kluckhohn, the former a leading anthropologist for the US Office of War Information during World War II (Ch. 4). The framework sought to determine the extent to which specific demographics – sex, age, education, occupation – could be correlated to “values” concerning “man’s [sic] relation to nature,” to time, to work, to others, and to oneself. Though the framework attempted to parse “modern vs. traditional” values, the study’s results were wildly inconclusive. As shown in *Fig. 54* matrices were left blank in most instances, indicating the discovery of no meaningful correlation. Indeed, on the question of “human nature,” results were so inconclusive they were left out of the report entirely.

Though attempts were made to map and refine the targets of psychological war, American operators nevertheless struggled to understand them. As will be seen again, territoriality represented a problem not only for the administration of psychological war, but also for understanding its targets. Forms of what Foucault (2007) called “counter conduct” confounded American efforts to assay the population, as research conducted in “secured” territory was affected by the very dynamics that made it secure. As will be seen, whether through non-cooperation, misdirection, or simply telling interviewers what they wanted to hear, the specificity of the psychological war’s targets remained elusive to American psychological warriors.

85 Sternin et al (1972); Havron et al (1972); Parsons et al (1972); Bairdine et al (1972).
6.2.2 Psywar on the Ground

As discussed in Chapter 2, that the problem of governing public opinion emerged around the prototypically counterinsurgent problems of sedition and revolt suggests an affinity for an analysis of psychological warfare as a governmental *police* strategy. It is perhaps dangerous, however, to attempt an analysis of American military strategy in Vietnam in terms of Foucault’s concept of governmentality. Indeed, Foucault’s history of power is generally confined to Europe, and often to France alone (Foucault 1980). His periodization of pastoral–police–governmental power in the West is fraught with complexity on its own terms, and in Vietnam it simply did not take place.

While the staggering scale of violence in the Vietnam War is clear, the extent to which the United States succeeded in establishing power is less so. As Henry Kissinger (1969, 230) lamented, “our military strength had no political corollary.” I want to argue that, though there are good reasons to doubt the extent to which psychological warfare succeeding in establishing relationships of power in Vietnam, its theory and practice were nevertheless deeply governmental efforts, a whole genealogy of power stacked upon itself, however clumsily. While a Foucauldian analysis of communication as police may not correspond to the historical articulation of political power in Vietnam, it is useful for understanding the way in which the United States attempted to establish its own strategies of political power in the country. As Murrow (1963b) made clear, the USIA meant to replicate strategies of power based on western media models. “Our delivery system,” he
remarked, “involves a massive apparatus that covers the functions overseas served here at home by broadcasting, publishing, newspaper, magazine, film, wire service, design, and education industries.”

While the pastoral imperative to interrogate the population and individuals of Vietnam ran aground on the reticence and dissimulations of the Vietnamese people toward American surveying techniques, efforts to build and expand the territorial remit of the psychological war continued apace. Quantitative questions of production and circulation were simpler, and could be tabulated to show progress, or at least the appearance thereof. Early research showed that only meagre mass communication infrastructure existed outside the Saigon area. In 1964 USIA found that Saigon was home to all 45 of Vietnam’s daily newspapers, over 100 of its 170 movie houses, and two-thirds of its 420,000 personal radio receivers. Additionally, the Saigon area accounted for roughly two-thirds of the country’s total daily radio broadcast hours (USIA 1964a). Though reaching the Saigon area was important to psychological warriors, it did little to establish the governmental communication with villages and villagers that was increasingly understood as the key to the psychological war.

To establish a territorial presence for its psychological war, the USIA began by employing 27 American personnel who in turn directed 226 local employees. As part of its counterinsurgency turn, the USIA policy of non-attribution was in effect: almost all US psychological warfare materials were distributed through the GVN’s official organ, the Vietnam Information Service (VIS), and bore no attribution to the United States. Operating three major branches in Hue, Dalat, and Can Tho, and 21 sub-posts throughout the provinces, the USIA’s American and Vietnamese
staff produced magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, films and radio programmes through the VIS and under the guise of the GVN [Fig. 55].

Figure 55: JUSPAO field map

Map of JUSPAO field representatives’ areas of responsibility (USIA 1965).

Through its field posts, the USIA was able to connect provincial and regional chains of command to a network producing and distributing two major magazines, three weekly newspapers,
airdropped leaflets, pamphlets, posters, photo exhibits, a semi-monthly film magazine, bi-monthly film documentaries, and the necessary fuel and supplies to keep the program going. By 1963, urban audiences for locally produced USIA films were estimated at 800,000 monthly. It was perhaps an indication of the importance placed on villages as targets of psychological war that rural audiences for film, without the subsidy of commercial circulation, were estimated at over one million per month. The USIA even produced 21 of its films with soundtracks in minority dialects. In radio, USIA Saigon produced 15 hours of radio programs every week, broadcast on eight stations, totaling over 60 hours of airtime weekly. Again in 1963, the USIA was in the process of producing a quarter million “classroom copybooks” to distribute to rural schoolchildren. With attribution to neither the United States nor the GVN, the book was interspersed with text and picture stories of Vietnam, its geography, its history, and its “war to remain free” (Murrow 1963a, 1963b).

The USIA considered its most effective publication for rural audiences to be a monthly magazine called Rural Spirit (Huong Que) [Fig. 56]. Begun in 1962, and indicative of the escalation of the American psychological war in Vietnam, Rural Spirit’s circulation quadrupled to 200,000 copies per month by 1963, plateauing at a rate of 565,000 copies per month in 1968 (Bairdain et al 1972). Unattributed to the United States, and aimed at the population of strategic hamlets, the content was explicitly apolitical, designed to showcase the felicitous “better lives” that could be found in US/GVN-controlled strategic hamlets (Belcher 2012). The magazine was popular among peasants for its sophisticated production values, but most of all for instructional articles on agriculture and animal husbandry. Much of the technical information was laid out visually so that low literacy readers could benefit from the instruction. Growing the strength of Vietnamese agriculture, it was hoped, would grow the strength of the state.
The USIA also published a small weekly unattributed newspaper called *The Good Life*, designed to support specific clear-and-hold operations of the armed forces. Though circulated in support of
the strategic hamlet program, *The Good Life* was, like its cousin publication *Rural Spirit*, largely apolitical in content. It emphasized the kind of modern “enlightened self-interest” that the US understood to be central to producing governable subjects. *The Good Life* was frequently air-dropped into otherwise-inaccessible areas in an attempt to persuade readers to voluntarily relocate, and was printed in three separate editions with a circulation of 30,000 each. The only major attributed effort was the Vietnamese edition of the USIA’s general *Free World* magazine, distributed for free with a circulation of roughly 160,000.

In this light, *Rural Spirit* and *The Good Life* can be understood as what Foucault (2007, 327) calls paradigmatic *police* strategies of felicity; of ensuring that Vietnamese life went “beyond pure and simple subsistence.” As Foucault argues, central to the development of *police* power was the linking together of the power of the state with the productive power of the population, a process which cohered in the production of and appeal to the “felicity” of individuals. As Foucault suggests, *police*

must succeed in linking together the state’s strength and individual felicity. This felicity, as the individual’s better than just living, must in some way be drawn on and constituted into state utility: making men’s happiness the state’s utility, making men’s happiness the very strength of the state.

In attempting to increase the productivity of agricultural labour, the USIA sought through *Rural Spirit* to establish the links of government grounded in the production of felicity. Like the efforts of the USIA in Thailand to bolster the Thai government’s efforts to “better the welfare of the people” through programs of medical treatment, entertainment, and contingent economic
development, the USIA in Vietnam attempted to produce ostensibly apolitical forms of development which it believed could serve a counterinsurgency function (Attewell 2015).

As the need for airdropping newspapers suggests, however, territoriality remained a problem for the American psychological war. As early as 1962, the USIA assembled Mobile Information Teams (MITs) at field posts to bring the psychological war to remote villages and hamlets. The institution of MITs shared a common history with USIA Thailand, as noted above. Again an unattributed effort, it was important for the USIA that mobile teams appeared to be a project of the GVN, and as such usually consisted of GVN and/or VIS employees, though often they were accompanied by a USIA driver and projectionist. A typical MIT trip consisted of up to four hours of film shown to an evening audience in one village. Often more than 5,000 pieces of printed material would be distributed during a trip, including colour photos and various posters on religious and patriotic subjects.

Like the USIA Thailand Mobile Information Teams, efforts to reach rural populations in Vietnam were spun as “bridges of understanding” for a “two-way flow of information.” However, the suggestion of reciprocity was again belied by the hierarchical imperative to pursue the USIA’s “diagnostic task” of mapping and assaying rural populations to provide a fuller understanding of village conditions, attitudes and opinions. Taken together, through its extensive network of field posts and sub-field posts, the USIA attempted to circulate newspapers, films, posters, pamphlets, and radio broadcast hours like blood through the Vietnamese body politic. It was an effort to police, in the Foucauldian sense; to produce and manage communication as both media for transmission of information, and for the ritualistic production of a modern, governable society.
6.3 The JUSPAO Revolution

In 1964, the continued difficulty of asserting territorial control over the rural areas of Vietnam prompted President Johnson to send new USIA director Carl Rowan to personally assess and report on the progress of the psychological war. As previous USIA field reports had emphasized, it was the rural population of Vietnam that was the country’s “most seriously neglected group” in the psychological war. As one USIA field report stressed, “it is the rural population which holds the key to tactical success in the war” (USIA 1964b). Rowan’s trip to Vietnam brought him to the same conclusion, and upon his return he reported to President Johnson that, despite near unanimous agreement on its importance, the psychological war was being given too little attention and direction. In return, Johnson mandated a massive expansion of the psychological war, and tasked the USIA with the creation of “an organization that reached right down to the village level” (USIA 1965b).

Despite the expansion of USIA field posts since 1961, most local psychological warfare efforts were designed and carried out on an ad hoc basis, either by the US Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) or the VIS. The proposed organization – the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) – would “establish an actual chain of command” that would make it a “joint operation with US Military personnel.” Coinciding with the larger escalation of American involvement in 1965, JUSPAO gathered under the umbrella of the USIA the psychological warfare
activities of MACV, USAID and VIS, coordinating the psychological war at national, provincial and local scales. More field representatives meant greater need for equipment to customize materials in order to “remain responsive to local needs.” Supporting a vast increase in both output and turnover, in 1965 Rowan asked Congress for an additional $8m and fifty-six American personnel on top of existing budgets. In 1966, the agency spent over $145 million and employed over 5,000 Americans in addition to its 5,000 local employees. In its own estimation, JUSPAO was “the most revolutionary development in US overseas psychological action since the establishment of the USIA itself” (USIA 1969). This revolutionary character lay not only in the unprecedented volume of psychological warfare materials produced and circulated, but also in the scope of its responsibility for combining civilian and military operations both across agency lines (USIA, MACV, State Department, and USAID) and between the government of the United States and South Vietnam. The USIA also highlighted the “worldwide implications” of JUSPAO as a model and laboratory for exporting American psychological warfare to other countries “threatened by insurgency or subversion.”

Governing American psychological war strategy at JUSPAO was a deeply held conviction that the content of psychological war messaging could be decisive despite and detached from the material political realities it represented. Analyzing National Liberation Front (NLF) strategy in 1966, Douglas Pike went so far as to claim that its victories and defeats were the direct results of its “communication efforts.” While Pike broadened the definition of the “act of communication,” his claim illustrated with special clarity the belief that the “psychological war” could take place on a terrain separate from the broader political stakes of conflict. Pike (1966, 120) claimed that,
almost every act of the NLF was conceived as an act of communication...Its communication system not only communicated information, explained it in meaningful terms, and provided it with a value judgment based on *individual relevancy* — the more or less traditional communication function — but it also shaped a communication weapon and used it to strike at the vitals of the GVN. Its victories and defeats were essentially the results of successful or unsuccessful communication efforts (emphasis mine).

The belief that NLF victories could be reduced to successful “communication efforts” belied the deeply held American conviction that “communication” represented a terrain of warfare that could be dis-embedded from the political structure of the conflict as a war of liberation against foreign and occupying forces. The elision of the political was further reflected in Pike’s insistence upon “individual relevancy” as the supposed lever of the NLF’s popular support. While Vietnamese peoples may indeed have understood their individual advantages in the NLF’s project of popular revolution, Pike’s analysis reflected a studied reluctance to understand the NLF’s popular support as collective political project. On the contrary, Pike’s construction and understanding of the NLF’s strength projected a pastoral governmentality onto the Vietnamese people in which the individual — and the construction of its self-interestedness — remained the crucial pivot mediating a broader strategy of governing population. While American psychological warriors may have understood the conflict as a “political-psychological war,” more often than not they failed to understand its political nature outside the liberal, individualizing structures they sought to impose.

JUSPAO’s first director, Barry Zorthian, wore several hats within American civilian and military structures, serving also as the State Department’s Minister-Counselor for Information at the American Embassy in Saigon. In this capacity, Zorthian oversaw the US Mission Press Center, which managed relations with foreign correspondents covering the war — the so-called “five o’clock follies.” Also in this capacity, Zorthian provided policy for MACV’s Office of
Information. In sum, as director of JUSPAO, Zorthian attempted to be the valve through which all information in Vietnam ran (USIA 1969). [Fig. 57]

An early USIA country plan (1954) for Vietnam outlines a geographic demarcation for psychological war themes and messaging between those intended for Vietnamese consumption and those for international audiences. Ironically, the theme of “independence” was stressed more internationally than in Vietnam itself (USIA 1954b).

Speaking to an early conference of JUSPAO field reps, Zorthian (1965) boasted that JUSPAO could be “more productive than the military.” “We can,” he claimed, “remove personnel from the
enemy ranks without killing them or taking friendly losses.” Not only did Zorthian indulge a therapeutic imaginary of psychological war’s moral economy of bloodlessness, he also shared the modernizationist conceit that “traditional persons” were inherently malleable. “We can reconstruct these people,” he continued, “and we can turn them into an asset for their countries’ welfare.” The claim that Vietnamese civilians could be “reconstructed” and “turned into an asset for their country’s welfare” echoed Douglas Pike’s argument that psychological warfare necessitated a “mystical transformation” of the individual as such. It combined the deeply pastoral strategy of producing the individual as an object of government with the police strategy of felicity; of “integrating men’s activities into the state in a way that the state can draw strength from it” (Foucault 2007, 323). While in hindsight these boasts may appear as the power fantasies of Cold War social scientists, they suggest the extent to which the United States had committed to a political imaginary in which it could create “new life,” not only in the eponymous “new life” hamlets, but in the construction of the modern, governable individuals.

With the establishment of JUSPAO, the construction of the individual as the goal and target of the psychological war became enshrined in country-wide interagency policy. As the U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam’s (MACV) 1966 National Psychological Operations Plan defined it, the goal of the psychological war was to convince them [the people] that the fledgling Republic of Vietnam reflects the natural and naturally imperfect process of historical change and development toward a distinctly Vietnamese but modern revolutionary society, [and] offers to each Vietnamese opportunity to advance within it... [T]his represents the only true and realistic hope for the advancement of national and personal aspirations (US MACV 1966, 9).
The plan reflected American psychological warfare’s commitment first to the broader strategy of global counterinsurgency which sought to support and extend the governmental power of friendly regimes, and second to circumscribing the political horizons of counterinsurgency countries to individualized forms of personal aspiration and opportunity within a broader context of apolitical nationalism. Again, however, American psychological warriors presumed the reality they attempted to create. Assuming the historical teleology of ascendant liberal capitalism that underwrote Cold War theories of modernization, American psychological warriors ascribed to Vietnamese insurgents a *misrecognition* of the “enlightened self-interest” which they sought to impose. Appearing reluctant to believe that opposition to the United States constituted a qualified political position, psychological warriors often understood such opposition in the *personal* and *psychological* terms which they believed to be the psychological war’s center of gravity. As Rhode (2011, 239) details,

> if communism was [as American strategists saw it] a psychological disease of a transitioning society, it must speak to some unfulfilled psychological need; it must serve some therapeutic purpose. According to [Lucian] Pye, peasants joined communist guerrilla movements in a desperate attempt to participate in a modern, stable society…. They accomplished a critical step in the transition from tradition to modernity through neither economic nor political development, but through psychology.

While American psychological warriors advanced the conceit that their opponents misrecognized their own purported self-interest, their desire to evacuate the Vietnamese insurgency of its inherently political character was itself a misrecognition of the latter’s goals and motivations.\(^8^6\) 

---

\(^8^6\) As McCoy (2012, 366) notes in the context of counterinsurgency in the Philippines, American leaders often failed to understand, or perhaps accept, the political basis of resistance to American rule, instead identifying opposition with “race envy, hatred, and blood lust.” As a “recurring problem within the US [military] information system,” McCoy suggests that, “the lack of an appropriate [political] paradigm neutralized prodigious data gathering.”
The misrecognition allowed, however, for American psychological warriors to elide the political nature of the conflict, and advance a strategy for winning the isolable and malleable hearts and minds upon which they presumed the war to hinge.

Figure 58: Tet cliches

*JUSPAO supplies content for provincial newspapers* (USIA 1967).
One of JUSPAO’s first major campaigns after its establishment in 1965 was to exploit the coming Tet festival celebrations. An important Vietnamese holiday celebrating the Lunar New Year, Tet was traditionally a time of return to the family, and was seen as an opportunity to induce defections from NLF ranks. The JUSPAO campaign emphasized the ominous theme of contrasting the United States’ military superiority with the NLF’s relative material weakness, and posed the “Open Arms” (Chieu Hoi) defector program as the personal recourse of individuals wishing to abstain or escape from the conflict (Whittaker 1997). Provincial newspapers reinforced the campaign by making “clichés” – copy prepared by JUSPAO – available for insertion into newspapers across the country [Fig. 58]. JUSPAO itself published a fortnightly tabloid-style newspaper for NLF areas, and produced a special issue for the Tet campaign containing an illustrated full page story on a Chieu Hoi Hamlet which was presented as a “remarkable example of ingenuity, cooperation, and self-help among families” (USIA 1967). Nearly two million copies of the newspaper were dropped by air and hand carried into semi-secure areas both by troops on search and clear operations, and by armed propaganda teams.
Figure 59: Tet leaflet

(USIA 1967).
“Self-help” was an enduring theme of the psychological war, part of the American mission to encourage governable “enlightened self-interest,” and to encourage the “participation” which JUSPAO operators believed to be central to defeating the NLF and supporting the GVN (USIA 1969).87 Pursuing these goals, JUSPAO’s Tet campaign stressed themes of felicity, and of happiness in private family life. [Fig. 59] shows one JUSPAO poster in support of its Tet campaign which advertised the “happiness” to be found through participation in the life of strategic hamlets, and in rejection of the NLF. The poster foregrounded two Vietnamese women and presented a pastoral theme with children, emphasizing personal and apolitical forms of happiness in family life. As JUSPAO attempted to create liberal forms of governable individuality, it recalled Pred’s (1981, 15) identification of the liberal-capitalist assumption that, divorced from collective political projects and ownership of productive property, “the individual [can] find meaning and satisfaction in his life at home and nowhere else.” It was again an illustration of the police strategy of felicity; of “linking together the state’s strength and individual felicity” (Foucault 2007, 323).

6.3.1 Mediating Violence

It must be stressed, however, that the strategy of felicity was often pursued not despite, but paradoxically through the administration of military force. Though the coercive power of

87 JUSPAO’s stated goals were to “increase the Vietnamese people’s participation with their government in the war against communist subversion and aggression,” and to “increase the Vietnamese people’s participation with their government in Vietnam’s priority program for Revolutionary Development of social and economic progress” (USIA 1969).
American military violence was a regular theme of the psychological war. JUSPAO attempted to square the circle of its punitive violence by rhetorically positioning the United States as ally and aide to its victims, ultimately placing blame for all violence on the NLF. Though the NLF certainly administered its own forms of political violence, the United States attempted to portray itself as both destroyers of, and saviours to, the Vietnamese people. “We step up our efforts,” read one early JUSPAO (1965) guidance,

to increase the villagers’ disillusionment with imposters who, while flying the flag of freedom and progress, terrorize the people to whom they promise paradise; who abduct and conscript the villagers’ sons to serve as cannon fodder; who do not take proper care of them because they lack the requisite medical facilities; who expose innocent people to great danger by hiding among them and using them as shields. Whenever it can be done convincingly, we contrast the burdens which the Viet Cong impose upon the people with Vietnamese and American efforts to aid them now — not in the distant future to which mendacious communist promises point.

In advertising its ability “to aid them now,” JUSPAO sought to diminish the horizons of Vietnamese self-determination to capitulation and dependency upon the United States for relief and medical treatment. It was a pernicious logic in which the United States sought to leverage its ability to alleviate and cease the suffering it caused the Vietnamese people when the NLF “used them as shields.” It was furthermore an effort to collapse the temporal frame of the strategy of felicity to the immediacy of the crises that American bombing campaigns produced and exacerbated. Against a “distant future of communist promises” — of collective political Vietnamese self-determination — American psychological warfare posed individualized opportunities for relief via surrender or defection. It was an attempt to produce Douglas Pike’s vision of an individually circumscribed political agency; to produce the “enlightened” and “self-interested” individuals psychological warriors sought to govern. Through the Chieu Hoi program
especially, JUSPAO (1965) emphasized “that there is an escape hatch for the Viet Cong rank and file.”

The pursuit of the strategy of felicity further illustrated the paradoxical moral economy of psychological warfare and its claim to “save lives.” If the United States made medical treatment part of its psychological warfare through, for example, the employment of medics in its Mobil Information Teams, this therapeutic function was the Janus face of its coercive strategy in which bombing was understood as a form of communication (Gibson 1986). In addition to the ways in which, as Gregory (2017) identifies, bombing itself was framed through a moral economy which purported to save lives by shortening war, American psychological warfare in Vietnam attempted to make bombing socially and politically legible to its victims and witnesses. In an effort to ensure that bombing did not remain an “unexplained ultimatum” (Sleeper 1952), JUSPAO emphasized the inevitability of the NLF’s defeat as the premise for the conclusion that prolonged resistance by the NLF only exacerbated the suffering which the United States promise would be brought to bear, and that the ultimate causality of American bombing deaths lay with the NLF and those who sheltered them. As a medium for communicating the coercive strategy of bombing, the moral economies of bombing and psychological warfare overlapped as the latter scripted the former by inverting the causality of bombing casualties, and describing the NLF’s responsibility for them as “ruthless,” “vain,” and “inexcusable” (JUSPAO 1969).

It was JUSPAO’s hope that, by laying blame for the brutality of the American bombing campaign at the feet of the NLF, it could construct a picture of the NLF as callous invaders indifferent to the suffering of the South Vietnamese population. While it may seem an incredible conceit that
described more in fact the United States’ own role in the war, it constituted one of the war’s many aporias: JUSPAO (1965b) attempted to “link [the war’s] brutality to the system the VC (sic) seeks to impose upon the Vietnamese people, i.e. the communist system.” This attempt to frame the war’s brutality in terms of the “communist system,” moreover, sat oddly alongside JUSPAO’s own efforts to emphasize the “inexhaustibility” of American capitalism’s military industrial complex. Indeed, early JUSPAO guidance on the exploitation of “VC vulnerabilities” advised emphasis on the military capacities which the United States can and will bring to bear; the fact that these capabilities are virtually inexhaustible; and the certainty that the Viet Cong can never hope to match them – neither in quantity nor in quality. U.S. air power and the unlimited industrial capabilities of the United States on which it is based, merit particular stress (JUSPAO 1965).

While JUSPAO’s first director boasted that psychological warriors could “remove personnel from the enemy ranks without killing them” (Zorthian 1965), the therapeutic discourse obscured the fact that “defection appeals” appeared most commonly in the form of leaflets preceding and following bombing raids. A psychological war circuit, therefore, ran a course through American bombing campaigns in an effort to “explain” bombing, and to induce desired behaviours, namely defection and surrender. In a 1 June, 1965 field report to JUSPAO’s central office in Saigon, JUSPAO field representative Philip Mayhew (1965) outlined the process, noting that Vinh Binh province had been selected for bombing and artillery interdiction programs. Like in World War II (Ch. 4), in advance of bombing raids JUSPAO prepared “explanatory and warning leaflets” for the civilian population in an attempt to exculpate the United States from moral responsibility, and to externalize it onto both the NLF and the civilians who supported them. One “warning leaflet” to
North Vietnam civilians depicts a bombed oil storage area with the accompanying text, “STAY AWAY FROM TARGETS LIKE THIS.” The leaflet’s back text read,

to the civilian population of North Vietnam: WARNING. The bombing is not directed toward you. Don’t risk your life. Stay away from all military targets such as: Oil Tanks and other petroleum storage areas. Bridges, highways, railroads, and waterways used to carry military supplies and troops (Freidman n.d.c)

While it is unclear what recourse civilian populations would have against foreknowledge of bombing raids, as retired US Sergeant Major Herb Friedman claims, “these warnings were calculated to gain the good will of the people to the extent this was possible under the circumstances, to serve a humanitarian purpose” (Friedman). Following bombing raids, as JUSPAO field rep Mayhew continued, leaflets were airdropped instructing the bombing victims to defect or surrender to GVN or American forces, thus completing the warning-bombing-surrender circuit in which bombing raids reproduced the extortionate logic of colonial air policing (Neocleous 2013), and attempted to “conduct the conduct” of Vietnamese civilians and combatants alike. It was therefore a strange form of humanitarian discourse, rooted in an ostensible effort to induce surrenders and defections, that gathered around the United States’ advertisement of the fearsomeness of its bombing campaigns. As Freidman (n.d.c) blackly joked, “talk about sending a mixed message.”

If the “humanitarian” appeal of American bombing was not entirely artifice, its content emphasized relief and aid on strictly personal terms — the proverbial “escape hatch” from the violence which the United State promised to visit. The moral economy of psychological warfare’s claim to life-saving humanitarianism here overlapped with another of its key tenets, namely the
claim to “impose order on the lawless” (Gregory 2017). Again illustrating the special relationship between bombing and psychological warfare, JUSPAO used the broader American bombing campaign in an attempt to construct the kind of isolated, rational, and self-interested individuals it believed it could produce and govern. Again, it was hoped the individual would be “one of power’s first effects” (Foucault 2003b, 30).

While JUSPAO had no control over decisions concerning if, when, and where to bomb, it attempted to exploit American the bombing campaign both to constrict and mobilize the political agency of Vietnamese individuals. To constrict political agency, JUSPAO (1965) saw its advantage in the scale and severity of bombing to “play as heavily as possible upon the natural human fears and emotions.” JUSPAO advanced a torturous logic of applying unbearable pain to the Vietnamese body politic to produce in individuals “the kind of weariness against which even courage and faith are often helpless.” Furthermore, JUSPAO made sure to communicate the scale of bombing in the North to NLF fighters embedded in the South. “We inform the Viet Cong,” one JUSPAO directive read, “about every detail of the bombing of North Vietnam and, especially, about its reason: the destruction of the North Vietnamese capability to support the Viet Cong.” It was again an attempt to place causal finality for bombing with the NLF, and to communicate to NLF fighters the destruction of their homes and families. JUSPAO even sought to exploit the spirituality of the Vietnamese people. “We do not hesitate,” a directive on “VC psychological vulnerabilities” read,

to appeal to beliefs in the supernatural which are widely held and that, within this framework, we emphasize the indignity and ignominy which awaits the man whose dead
body is left on the battlefield; buried in an unmarked grave without the requisite ritual, his errant soul may never find peace.”

The constriction of Vietnamese political agency within the political environment of American bombing culminated in a concomitant mobilization of this agency for the “choice” between life and death. The injunction to “choose life or death” was a motif of the larger American strategy in Vietnam which attempted to produce and contrast its constructed deathworlds (Mbembe & Meintjes 2003) with its sanctioned project to build “new life” in the country. Psychological warriors therefore emphasized the choice, on personal terms, between life and death. As one 1964 leaflet depicting an Iroquois “Huey” helicopter firing a rocket put it:

if you attack the Army of the Republic of Vietnam or if you attack the New Life Hamlets, you will die horrible deaths as the result of the fire of the weapons that are carried by this helicopter. It will appear whenever and wherever you launch an attack. In order to avoid a pointless, needless death, you should leave the rank of the Viet Cong and bring your weapons with you to return to the arms of the Republic of Vietnam. The government will give you a reward and will ensure your safety and the safety of your families. The people, your relatives, your families, and your wives and children are waiting for you (Friedman n.d.d).

To “choose life” within the confines of the political agency which American psychological warriors sought to construct for the Vietnamese individual was to choose defection or surrender as the only alternatives to the death worlds of American bombing. As JUSPAO field representative Mayhew approvingly assumed, the preponderance of bombing in his field area of Vinh Binh province accounted for the province’s having among highest number of surrenders/defections in the country.
Though American psychological warriors sought to isolate, demoralize, and constrict the political agency of the NLF and their civilian supporters, credibility remained a perhaps unsurprising obstacle. The question of when, for example, JUSPAO could “convincingly” contrast the burdens imposed by the NLF with American efforts to “aid them now” was often a difficult one. Even before JUSPAO’s establishment, a 1964 USIA report revealed that the credibility of atrocity propaganda depicting the NLF “terrorizing the people” was limited due to the fact that “the experience of most rural people is that the VC concentrate their fire on GVN troops and officials, rarely committing overt acts against uninvolved citizens.” (USIA 1964b). The report noted that many Vietnamese villagers in fact felt that the NLF have done more to help them than the GVN, and that “the people will not be tricked by crude, spiteful broadsides from a government which itself is hardly lily-white.”

Though JUSPAO was meant to consolidate and professionalize the various psychological war efforts in Vietnam prior to 1965, it is ironic that, subsequent to its establishment, JUSPAO directives suggest that American belief in its own psychological war messaging eclipsed this prior knowledge that depicting the NLF as “fiends” would appear incredible to the people of Vietnam. It was perhaps indicative of the hubris of American psychological warriors who believed, like JUSPAO director Barry Zorthian, that they were capable of “reconstructing” the Vietnamese people as modern, governable individuals.

In addition to the problem of credibility, exploiting atrocity propaganda against the NLF had the further consequence of advancing the latter’s so-called “terror objectives.” While JUSPAO was eager to reveal, dramatize, and exploit NLF violence, there was a political geography to its
mediation of violence. To a global audience, JUSPAO sought to portray the “Viet Cong” as ruthless and maniacal; however, it was also important for JUSPAO to manage global representations of the conflict and its violence, and to minimize depictions of the NLF’s political and military strength. As an early JUSPAO (1965b) paper on the “exploitation of communist atrocities” noted,

we must try to assure that our output on atrocities to foreign audiences does not unnecessarily convey exaggerated impressions of Viet Cong power and GVN inability to provide security for its people. For example, the photo of an injured mother and child depicts VC brutality without implying VC power. But a photo of a district chief’s head ceremoniously impaled on a pike and flanked by the hanging bodies of his deputies in a town square tells quite another story – it tells of VC power deliberately applied to “fair game targets” and impudently exercised in the face of GVN authority.

The guidance advised therefore that JUSPAO only publicize violence perpetrated against victims “who could not have under any circumstances avoided their fate” through attempts to appease the NLF. Furthermore, JUSPAO advised that atrocity propaganda only be used when victims could be identified as “unmistakably common folk,” and never when targets could be identified as “GVN officials, Americans, landlords, etc.” The purpose of the American psychological warrior was therefore to provide social context for the mediation of political violence to ensure that “enemy atrocities generate more hostility than fear.”

American psychological warfare remained therefore an incongruous amalgam of strategies attempting to paint over the contradictions of the American presence in Vietnam. While it internally acknowledged the NLF’s relative judiciousness in selecting legitimate targets, JUSPAO nonetheless attempted to tie political violence in Vietnam to the “communist system” while
simultaneously emphasizing the United States’ own capacity and willingness to leverage its industrial power to wage a brutal, punitive, and endless air war.

6.3.2 The Television War

Though Vietnam is often remembered as the first “television war” to be broadcast nightly into American homes (Hallin 1989; Hoskins 2004), it was also the first war in which the medium would become a major part of the psychological offensive. A lesser known aspect of the war’s history, JUSPAO’s television project was a culmination of the pastoral, police and territorial strategies of the psychological war. It built upon the strategy of felicity, and had the potential to “reach down to the village level” while simultaneously constructing the potential for a truly national audience. Between 1952 and 1964, the United States financed the purchase of low and medium-power radio transmitters to assist the GVN in setting up and bolstering the signals of radio stations in an attempt to construct a national listening audience. With the establishment of JUSPAO in 1965, however, work began on the construction of a national television network which would become one of its marquee projects.

As JUSPAO’s second director Edward Nickel (n.d.) recounted late in the war, the construction of radio and television networks stemmed from “an increased understanding of the importance of developing better lines of communication with the people, especially those in rural areas.” As Nickel made clear, the goal of the networks was to establish communication as \textit{police}; to “make
an important contribution to successful communication between the Government and the governed.” Television network construction and expansion, however, involved a lesser known chapter in the history of American airpower: namely, the use of U.S. Navy aircraft equipped to broadcast television signals from the air. The Navy’s Oceanographic Development Squadron Eight (VXN-8) Detachment WESTPAC – nicknamed the “Blue Eagles” – began one-hour daily television broadcasts over the Saigon area in February 1966 until temporary ground facilities were operational in October of the same year (JUSPAO 1971).

With the completion of ground facilities in Saigon, Blue Eagle aircraft were moved south to the Mekong Delta area in October 1966 to provide broadcast coverage until ground facilities in Can Tho were completed in November of 1968. In the interim, temporary ground facilities were constructed in the north at Hue in September 1967, and the acquisition of additional Blue Eagle aircrafts allowed for aerial coverage of Qui Nhon in January of 1968. In addition to the classical aerial strategies of surveillance and bombardment, then, air power in Vietnam was also used as a strategy of police and a tool of psychological warfare. Air power provided a kind of “flexible response” for psychological war in Vietnam, with Blue Eagles able to provide soft coverage until permanent facilities were built in a given area. When ground facilities were complete, Blue Eagles would move to the next interim site, and thereby cascade broadcasts over the territory of Southern Vietnam. [Fig. 60] shows the state of broadcast facilities in 1969, with the Blue Eagles covering the Qui Nhon area in the Northeast.

There were, however, complications in the construction of the network. During the Tet Offensive of 1968, the temporary ground station in Hue was destroyed, which diverted Blue Eagles from Qui
Nhon, leaving the latter region without broadcast capability until May of 1968 when ground facilities at Hue were repaired, and the Blue Eagles were returned to the Qui Nhon. Ground broadcast from Saigon continued in temporary facilities until large permanent facilities that would serve as the network’s administrative core were completed in March of 1968. The completed Saigon complex served as the headquarters for the network’s news, programming, production, entertainment, supply, engineering, and logistical support to the other stations.

Permanent facilities in Saigon were completed in March 1968 and served as the network’s administrative core, producing news, entertainment, and political programming for the country’s peripheries. According to a 1971 project report, the television viewing audience in Vietnam was estimated at about 5.5 million viewers watching about 450,000 sets with a potential audience within the effective network signal area of approximately 14 million. With roughly 10 million US dollars invested, a JUSPAO (1971b) project completion report boasted that “the GVN now finds it possible to communicate visually with an audience which they had virtually no chance of reaching a bare five years ago.”
Figure 60: Television in Vietnam

As the key corporate partner providing expertise, logistics and training on the project, an NBC-International (1967, 35) report summarized the project’s strategic goals:

A principal reason for USG wanting to help GVN develop a Television capability is to try to create among the Vietnamese a sense of nationalism. They must identify themselves as part of a nation that has a history, as well as a future. They must understand what the war is all about, and what their part as an individual is in helping their government be victorious. They should also identify themselves as part of the growing group of free nations of Asia.

Though it was questionable how often and how many Vietnamese citizens would be able to watch the new service, it was hoped that an imagined national (and nationalistic) community might follow the construction of a national audience (Anderson1983). For this reason, the project was preoccupied with achieving national coverage and constructing a governmental technology that could potentially reach the entire population. The project was an example of what Rhodes (2011, 239) argues was American psychological warfare’s attempt to “design a psychologically appropriate political infrastructure for the emerging nation—a structure through which peasants would develop the appropriate psychological ties to the state.” It was also an attempt to combine government at the scale of population with the government of the isolated individual viewer, the quintessential structure of pastoral power — *omnes et singulatim*.

It was, furthermore, a strategy of *felicity*; an attempt to exchange participation in communal political projects for the satisfactions of entertainment in private life. Though there is scarce archival record of the television project, a programming schedule survived from which information can be gleaned. As shown in [Fig. 61], television programming reproduced the standard Western
format, with pro-government news, announcements and commentary replacing commercial advertisements. Programs concerning national police, criminal reduction, the army, mobilization and *Chieu Hoi* interleaved sports, opera, music and variety programming. Additionally, a third category of program concerned the quotidian police practices of making life live beyond subsistence, namely agriculture, fishing and public health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHƯƠNG TRÌNH PHÁT HÌNH HÀNG TUẦN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THỨ Hai</strong> (MONDAY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 61: JUSPAO television schedule

*Vietnamese television schedule circa 1969 (JUSPAO 1971b).*

In addition to the dissemination of pro-government messaging and the modern sensibility of televisual entertainment, the TV project can be understood as a strategy of *policing* the time of
Vietnamese individuals. As one JUSPAO study of the project revealed, central to the concerns of American psychological warriors was the “use of time in the evening” (USIA 1968) and the way in which television viewing affected Vietnamese individuals’ “constructive and destructive uses of time.”

In terms of governmentality, the television timetable can be understood in connection to Foucault’s (1977b, 157, 60) analysis of the prison timetable as a kind of “machinery for adding up and capitalizing time,” a “seriation of successive activities [that] makes possible a whole investment of duration by power.” Outside the strictures of penal confinement, however, the television timetable as a technology of police can be understood as a quintessentially liberal apparatus of power relying on the voluntary participation of viewers. The counterinsurgent question of “constructive and destructive uses of time” can further be understood in connection to what E.P. Thompson identifies as the discovery by the leisure classes of the “problem” of working class leisure time. As Thompson (1967, 95) wrote in his essay *Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism*,

if we are to have enlarged leisure… the problem is not “how are men going to be able to consume all these additional time-units of leisure?” but “what will be the capacity for experience of the men who have this undirected time to live?” If we maintain a Puritan time-valuation, a commodity-valuation, then it is a question of how this time is put to use, or how it is exploited by the leisure industries.

---

88 As discussed in Chapter 2, it is likely that Foucault was indebted to Thompson for his thinking on the “moralization of the working class” and the question of time-discipline more broadly.
Though television in Vietnam was far from operating on a self-sustaining model of commodifying time through the sale of advertisement, JUSPAO’s effort to set up an apparatus for producing a commodity-valuation of time — the “free lunch” of entertainment programming for the “work of watching” pro-government programming (Smythe 1977) — can be understood as an attempt to police; as the creation of path dependent conditions for the transfer of power from the state to capital (Neocleous 2000, 41).

The effort to “capitalize time” as a strategy of counterinsurgency can moreover be understood as an intervention in what Federici (2004, 7) identifies as the “sphere of reproduction as a source of value-creation and exploitation.” As Cindi Katz (2001, 714) notes, “primarily cultural arenas of social reproduction include that broad category of cultural production categorized as the media.” Though often neglected in this connection, television infrastructure can be productively theorized as means of social reproduction. In this light JUSPAO’s television project can be seen as an effort to intervene in processes of social reproduction, and to construct a television network as a strategy to create and enclose a new means of social reproduction for the Vietnamese population. If, as E.P. Thompson (1967, 78) suggests, “enclosure and agricultural improvement were both, in some sense, concerned with the efficient husbandry of the time of the labour-force,” the television project was an attempt to enclose and capitalize Vietnamese leisure time, to “invest duration with power,” and to parse and securitize “constructive” from “destructive” uses of time.

Though it occurred in a variety of venues – schools, village viewing kiosks run from gasoline generators, or for some, in individual homes – television as psychological warfare was an attempt to structure spaces of leisure time, scaling these miniatures of consumption to the nation. It was an
attempt to structure the intimate spaces of domestic life and to offer an apolitical vision of private and personal felicity (Cowen 2004). It attempted what Neocleous (2000, 55) identifies as the police function of addressing the “problem of idleness outside the factory,” and administering the “morality, profligacy and propriety of the working class.” It was the quintessential police interest “in what men do” (Foucault 2007, 322) and perhaps also what they do not do. As Garmany (2009, 733) notes, “television keeps bodies in private spaces, anchoring them to sofas, chairs, and hammocks. Instead of occupying public space, bodies are pinned down, kept off the streets, and exploited themselves as spaces of compliance and docility.”

Seen in this way, JUSPAO’s television project was what Herbert (1996, 579) identifies as an attempt to exercise authority over space, to “control and administer subject populations,” and to “secure compliance to the state’s legal and moral order.” As territoriality remained a problem for American psychological warriors, television offered a promise of overcoming the friction of distance. It offered the possibility of asserting a strategy of governance in spaces where the state has limited material presence; what Garmany (2009, 722) calls a kind of “governance without government.”

6.4 Evaluating Psychological War

As revealed by a 1968 JUSPAO-commissioned Simulmatics Corporation proposal for a study on sixty so-called “TV Hamlets,” there was an effort to “ascertain the effects of the recent introduction
of TV into Vietnam in reducing political dissidence and turbulence” (USIA 1968). In other words, there was an effort to determine the extent to which television could be used as a tool for counterinsurgency. Excitement for the project was palpable, with Defense officials noting that the study had a chance to

monitor the behavioural impact of a new communications medium on a relatively untouched audience. Television is just now coming into Vietnam and it affords the opportunity for social research in a controlled situation, the results of which may be of use to our psychological operators in Vietnam as well as those who may be called upon to implement similar innovations in other developing countries.

Again, the war in Vietnam was understood as a laboratory for military social science with an eye to future military actions in the region and elsewhere. “Even beyond Vietnam,” the report read, “the study could possibly arrive at valuable conclusions concerning the speed and degree of change brought to the village in an underdeveloped country through the advent of television.” TV research was to focus on the felicitous; on “satisfaction with life in the village” as well as classic governmental questions of “constructive and destructive uses of time; information level about national, local and world affairs; and attitudes towards national goals and policies.”

______________

89 Itheil De Sola Poole, the TV study’s program coordinator & research director, was a leading figure in post-World War II administrative communications research. Poole was another alumnus of MIT’s Center for International Studies. His company – the Simulmatics Corporation – was an early contractor with ARPA, DARPA’s predecessor, which was particularly interested with uses of communication for counterinsurgency warfare. Noting a paucity of research on the effects of television on villages, the initial research design program cites Wilbur Schramm’s UNESCO sponsored work on village radio as model for the program. Schramm, like De Sola Poole, was a leading scholar of administrative communication studies in the post-war period whose research was largely bankrolled by the U.S. Department of Defense. Schramm had also written the first of the Johns Hopkins ORO studies on psychological warfare 1953.
It is uncertain from the archival record whether the aforementioned studies on the effect of television took place. Evaluating the successes and failures of psychological war campaigns, however, was a persistent and seemingly intractable problem. As noted by the editors of a massive two-volume study of psychological warfare contracted to the American Institutes for Research in 1972 by the US Department of the Army, “dissatisfaction with the analysis of PSYOP [Psychological Operations] is widespread” (McLaurin et al 1976, 777). There was general agreement that the causality of defection and surrender, for example, was overdetermined, and that isolating discreet variables was nearly impossible (McLaurin et al 1976, 777).

One crucial source of data on the effectiveness of psychological warfare came from prisoners of war and defectors in the Chieu Hoi program who were regularly subject to interview and interrogation for the collection of both tactical and psychological intelligence. Though little critical work has examined the role of prisoner of war interrogation for shaping American approaches to psychological warfare, archival sources suggest that interrogation represented a further circuit of psychological warfare in which interrogation data was reincorporated into psychological war strategy.

In an early memorandum for MACV HQ on the interrogation of POWs, JUSPAO (1965c) officials wrote that psychological field operations had been greatly enhanced through the use of NLF prisoner reports supplied by the Collections Division of MACV Intelligence (J-2). Though interrogation data became central to psywar design, much of the information that JUSPAO received was, by the time they received it, out of date, and interrogation reports “[could not] keep abreast of the rapidly changing attitudinal patterns regarding key issues like recruitment, surrender,
victory, defeat, etc.” Furthermore, Army Intelligence interrogations rarely produced data on “VC [Viet Cong] psychological vulnerabilities,” and as such JUSPAO began to issue its own guidance on prisoner interrogation in an attempt to refine its strategies of coercion and persuasion.

The objective of the interrogator’s guide was to help “elicit information that may be of use by both US and GVN agencies in psychological operations.” For JUSPAO this particularly involved learning about the doubts, fears, and “psychological weaknesses” of the individual NLF soldier. It was hoped that if data could be properly exploited JUSPAO could increase the number of defections and surrenders from the ranks of the NLF. Again, the emphasis on the individual soldier was significant to JUSPAO’s governmental strategy of creating and appealing to “enlightened self-interest.” Of paramount interest to JUSPAO interrogators on this account were the dynamics of “social isolation” among NLF soldiers and paramilitaries. JUSPAO guidance therefore instructed interrogators specifically to probe defectors on the causes of anxiety during recruitment, training, the course of camp life, and in combat (JUSPAO 1965c).

There were, however, reasons to doubt the reliability of interrogation data. A 1969 review of division level psychological operations for the US Army noted that Vietnamese prisoners of war (POWs) often told interrogators what the former imagined the latter wanted to hear, a phenomenon the Army strangely attributed to a supposed “inherent desire to please” among the “oriental races” (Morris 1976, 953). As Belcher (2015) notes in his analysis of the nationwide Hamlet Evaluation System (HES), the push for data accumulation often obscured analysis, and the failure of American analysts to understand Vietnamese desires and motivations were often externalized onto the presumed inscrutability of the “oriental character.” In the eyes of many American analysts it was
the Vietnamese who were defective, not the American mission and strategy. Ironically, for the psychological warriors who believed so intensely in their ability to access and isolate the Vietnamese individual, they ultimately remained far more isolated from the real desires, motivations, and “self-interests” they believed to be the levers of their psychological war.

Neither the Army nor JUSPAO appeared overly interested in the structural role of occupation and imprisonment on the integrity of their research, opting rather to displace these contradictions onto an orientalist and racial imaginary. Despite their unreliability, POW interrogations remained the primary indicator used by the Army to evaluate its psychological war efforts, followed closely by rates of enemy defection (Morris 1976, 951). Though privileged for their easy quantifiability, defection rates were also a compromised metric due to the difficulty of determining accurate numbers without duplication across agencies and corps. Furthermore, American officers often exhibited the purportedly “oriental trait” of seeking to please superior officers, and pressure to meet or exceed previous quotas led many US staff officers either to accept uncritically or actively inflate defection figures to paint a picture of progress.

JUSPAO research on Vietnamese villages and villagers encountered many of the same territorial obstacles as did their operational counterparts. In 1967, JUSPAO conducted a Nationwide Hamlet Survey of 125 Hamlets in 15 provinces spread throughout all four corps regions. A total of 1313 individuals were interviewed in privacy and given a questionnaire. An attempt was made to use random sampling methods to account for population spread, however, the survey was restricted to locations which were “reasonably secure and accessible” (JUSPAO 1967). Though the survey provided quantitative data on rates of media consumption and other quantifiable metrics, there is
a reason to believe that conducting research in these “secure and accessible” territories compromised the reliability of the data.

Whereas the survey’s banal and less political questions produced a plurality of answers, on political questions there was a suspicious and overwhelming consensus. For example, 81% of respondents expressed “satisfaction” with the military forces providing for their “protection” against the NLF, with only 6% expressing dissatisfaction. More than half of the respondents claimed they “did not know” when asked who was responsible for the prolongation of the war, with 28% blaming the “Viet Cong,” 5% blaming the United States, and a mere 2% the GVN. When surveyed about attitudes towards the Viet Cong, one third of respondents gave the puzzling response that they were “merely Vietnamese,” while well over half were effusive in their condemnation, rendering the NLF variously as tyrannical, brutal, inhuman, terrorist, totalitarian, enemies of the people, traitors to the nation, and so on (JUSPAO 1967, 5-6). These vocal denouncements of the NLF echoed official US-GVN lines, perhaps unsurprisingly given that respondents might well be fearful of being seen as NLF sympathizers by American and GVN officials.

The massive Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) begun in 1966 was also taken as an indicator of the psychological war’s progress, though here again problems concerning the translation of qualitative into quantitative data were rife (Barnes 2015; Belcher 2015). One of the final large-scale analyses of the psychological war was the fourth of the ARPA-funded Human Sciences Research Inc. studies. Taking place between September 1969 and June 1971, it was among the first systematic attempts to survey the audiences of JUSPAO projects and determine attitudes toward them. The
project was coordinated with other surveying agencies, notably the country-wide Pacification Attitude Analysis System (PAAS), and Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) Local Survey Detachment (LSD) teams.

A final 1972 report on the ARPA study opened with the grand claim that “the detached observer can view his subjects as a biologist observes an insect under the microscope” (Havron et al 1972, 1). In its own estimation the ARPA study grew out of a growing recognition, remarkably late in the war’s course, that lack of cultural knowledge had stymied the psychological war. On the other hand, the emphasis on “cultural information” remained imbedded in a theory of psychological warfare as “acts of communication, the effectiveness of which depends largely upon the compatibility of certain tacit assumptions of the communication with those of its intended recipient.” While cultural knowledge was doubtless an important factor for psychological warriors, the study nonetheless reinscribed the working assumption that modification and mastery of strategies of communication could be “psychologically” effective irrespective of their material relation to the war’s political contours.

The ARPA study first sought quantifiable data on the biographic and demographic characteristics of interviewees. Specific and specifying questions concerning age, sex, religion, occupation, income, housing, and children sought to understand the socio-economic contours of the individuals in the village. Then, the study attempted to map patterns and structures of communication within each village, collecting data on rates of consumption for various media including radio, television, newspapers, books and magazines, loudspeakers, movies, posters, and leaflets. In addition to formal media, the study queried informal, word-of-mouth, and face-to-face communication,
notably about the individuals to whom respondents turned for information and advice, such as village and hamlet officials, religious leaders, teachers, etc.

In an attempt to supplement this quantitative data, the study sought to “assess the ways in which [the interviewee] looked at the world about him” (Havron et al 1972, 19-21). Here again the so-called “values orientations” theory of Florence and Clyde Kluckhohn attempted to map the qualitative contours of the villages’ human geography through the grid of human nature (good, evil, mixture), the “man-nature relationship” (submission, harmony, dominance), time (traditional, situational, goal-oriented), activity (achievement, expressive, inner-development), and “relational” (formalistic, peer-oriented, individualistic). As noted above, however, the findings of the study were wildly inconclusive [Fig. 54]: the study failed to find meaningful correlations to nearly all of the supposed “values orientations,” and in the case of “human nature” omitted results altogether.

In contrast to the study’s initial claims to “observe subjects as a biologist observes an insect,” its findings were bathetic and illustrated American psychological warfare’s continued isolation from its would-be subjects. The study found, for example, both noteworthy and surprising that few interviewees felt the behaviour of their fellow man stemmed from “inherently evil” motives. Equally surprising for the psychological warriors was the finding that ostensibly “traditional” interviewees felt human beings should be “dominant” over nature — a supposedly “modern value orientation.” In a footnote to the study, the authors explained away the “rather surprising finding” as an aspect of the idiosyncratic nature of the “scaled response.” “Suffice it to say” the authors protested, “that Americans were far more dominant than Vietnamese” (ibid, 27).
What data could be conclusively analyzed challenged the hubris of erstwhile American assumptions on the malleability of Vietnamese subjects, and the presumed prestige of new media like television in its ability to build relationships of government. The study found that formal means of communication, such as radio and newspapers, were considered by respondents as less credible than informal word-of-mouth channels, with village leaders, teachers, and religious figures remaining the most credible. The study found, moreover, that when respondents did consume formal media, they strongly favoured entertainment programming — especially music and drama — over American and GVN political programming. While these felicitous pursuits may indeed have represented “constructive uses of time” from the counterinsurgent perspective, it remains doubtful that JUSPAO’s psychological warfare in Vietnam approached its sought after “reconstruction of individuals as assets of government.”

Like most of its predecessors, the ARPA study was able to present quantitative data concerning, for example, the production and circulation of literature, or rates of enemy defection, but offered few conclusions concerning the effectiveness of psychological war programs. Despite a two-year timeline and a budget well over half a million dollars, the project concluded that “it has not been possible to measure the effectiveness of psyop programs with any degree of accuracy” (Bairdain 1972, 23). Other reports were equally bleak. A report prepared for ARPA’s Office of Defense Research in 1967 noted that there were few, if any, technically acceptable criteria for the evaluation of psychological warfare (Robinson 1967, 778, 784). Moreover, the report foreboded that “it is probably impossible to develop a criterion to evaluate the success of a total psywar effort because of the extreme complexity of the subject.” Ironically, however, pronouncements on the
impossibility of effective evaluation often carried with them the implication that because psychological warfare couldn’t prove its worth, it needn’t do so.

6.5 Conclusion

The establishment in 1953 of the United States Information Agency at the recommendation of C.D. Jackson and his Committee on International Information Activities was meant to expunge the increasingly pejorative language of “psychological warfare” from overt American foreign policy. As I show in the previous chapter, American psychological warfare during this period was largely carried out by the CIA, as in its ersatz grassroots “Crusade for Freedom” at home and abroad. As the overt arm of American international public diplomacy, the early USIA attempted to continue the OWI’s “strategy of truth” by advertising and circulating cultural commodities depicting American liberal capitalist lifestyles. In response to global anticolonial and independence movements, however, during the Kennedy administration American foreign policy became increasingly concerned with counterinsurgency theory and strategy, especially in the global south.

In this chapter I have traced the arc of the USIA’s “counterinsurgency turn” under the directorship of Edward R. Murrow and the Kennedy administration. Drawing upon recently declassified archival materials, I have shown that the USIA played a key role in the Kennedy administration’s increasingly interdepartmental “whole of government” approach to global counterinsurgency. I detail the way in which the USIA’s membership in Robert Kennedy’s interdepartmental Special
Group on Counterinsurgency transformed the USIA into what Murrow identified as an “arm of foreign policy.” In contrast to previous, vaguer commitments to “tell America’s story to the world,” the counterinsurgency turn at Murrow’s USIA involved, not the advertisement of American lifestyle, but direct efforts to support allied governments — often repressive and authoritarian — against popular left wing political movements. Often couched in the language of “political education,” Murrow’s USIA attempted to set up governmental circulation to establish lines of ‘communication as police’, not between the United States and the populations of foreign countries, but between those people and their own governments. This problem of establishing government, more than the vaguely defied ideological projects, quickly emerged as a territorial problem.

The territorial problem of establishing government through communication was exacerbated in many of the USIA’s so-called “counterinsurgency countries” by those countries’ limited economic development, largely rural populations, and lack of existing communication infrastructure. In countries with limited active political and military opposition to American-allied governments, the territorial problem of instituting communication as police appeared as matter of establishing pastoral power, that is of producing circulation as bridge between government and governed at the scales of both the individual and population. Through a close reading of the correspondences and reports of American psychological warriors, especially in East Asia, I show that American psychological warriors were deeply committed to psychological warfare’s pastoral political imaginary. The belief that the United States could produce “mystical transformations”; could de- and re-construct both whole societies and individuals as such, was a central conceit of many American psychological warrior turned modernization theorist, like MIT Center for International
Studies alumni Daniel Lerner and Douglas Pike. Ironically, American faith in their ability to transmute foreign populations into resources of government often reproduced the hyperbolic tropes of the psychological war scares that proliferated in the American press, as in the early 1940s, and again in the 1950s with the threat of “Chinese brainwashing” (Lemov 2011). In this sense the ouroboros of psychological warfare again turned in upon itself, and American foreign policy believed it was capable of visiting upon others what it imaged others had tried to visit upon them.

Central to American belief in the power of its psychological warfare was faith in the social sciences and their ability to construct grids of intelligibility through which foreign populations and societies could be reconstructed, policed, or at least prevented from establishing communist governments. I have shown that in Vietnam the “values orientation theory” of Clyde Kluckhohn became a dominant lens through which American social societies attempted to assay Vietnamese individuals and populations. As I argue in Chapter 4, while Kluckhon’s construction of Japanese quasi-humanity during the Second World War provided American military commanders with a scientistic veneer to their strategy of annihilating Japanese cities, it did little to illuminate the actual human contours of Japanese society. Similarly and by their own admission, social scientists working with Kluckhon’s values orientation theory in Vietnam largely failed in “isolating and delineating” the “key sociological factors” they believed would constitute the power-knowledge necessary for establishing pastoral power and its “mystical transformations.”

Thus the “common villager” on whom the psychological war was thought to turn remained perpetually elusive as efforts to interview and interrogate ran aground on the reticence and dissimulations of actual villagers towards American surveying techniques. Though American
military power gave it access to prisoners of war and captive subjects in occupied villages, it could not establish the confessional discourse on which pastoral power rests — it could neither make speak nor establish the lines of communication necessary to govern the territory it occupied. Furthermore, American efforts to reproduce the communist confessional technique of self-criticism were frustrated by American psychological warriors’ own ideological blocks, namely their inability to understand Vietnamese resistance in political and material terms. Like the modernization theorist Lucian Pye, many American psychological warriors believed that communism’s appeal was indeed “psychological,” and could therefore be met on the “battlefield of the mind.” Thus again did the map precede the territory, and the tropes of psychological warfare obscure the material bases of communism’s ideological appeal in Vietnam. As Walter Benjamin (1936) observed in another context, the Vietnamese masses were offered by American psychological warriors, “not their right, but instead a chance to express themselves.”

For all their insistence on transforming the Vietnamese people into a resource of government, American psychological warriors demonstrated a studied ignorance of the political agency on which pastoral power rests. Through its economic and technological resources, the United States could establish modes of formal information circulation connecting the population and government of Vietnam, however their inability and seeming unwillingness to understand the political contours of Vietnamese resistance to government meant that they established few real lines of communication. With the escalation of the war and the establishment of JUSPAO in 1965, the circulation of newspapers, films, posters, pamphlets, radio broadcasts and television programs drastically increased as American psychological warriors attempted to establish a pastoral power over Vietnamese territory. In Foucauldian (2007, 278) terms, it was a police project to “actively
make use of [the public’s] attitudes, opinions, and ways of doing things.” In reality, however, there was little evidence to suggest that psychological war efforts had an appreciable effect on Vietnamese public opinion. Attempts to quantify psychological warfare’s effects were by American admission inconclusive, and the qualitative indicator of the NLF’s continued strength painted a similarly bleak picture.

Failure to establish meaningful lines of communication to the Vietnamese people was exacerbated by the gruesome violence and brutality of the American war on Vietnam. Indeed, as my archival excavation of American psychological war in Vietnam reveals, reports and correspondences between psychological warriors often betrayed a seemingly bizarre distance from, and refusal to quarrel with, the war’s violence. Despite the emphasis on the productivity of psychological warfare, its constructive nature, the strategy of felicity and élan, American psychological warfare was never divorced from its destructive role in justifying and advertising American military violence. Eventually tethered to Nixon’s aptly named “madman theory,” American psychological warfare was both farcical and tragic, its schizophrenic incoherence reflected in its attempt to emphasize the “brutality of the communist system” while also stressing and demonstrating American capitalism’s “unlimited industrial capacity” for destruction. While psychological warfare in Vietnam may have failed to produce quantified or even quantifiable results, it remained a useful concept in which “intangible criteria invited unlimited destruction” (Sherry 1987, 251).
Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 “Switching Back to Good Old PSYOPs”

Psychological warfare is back. After a brief hiatus in which the Obama administration re-branded “PYSOPs” (psychological operations) to the circumlocuitous Military Information Support Operations (MISO) in a “kinder, gentler update to the PSYOP mission,” “psychological operations” have returned as the official term for American military communication activities (Ernst 2017). As this dissertation has shown, however, this move away from PSYOPs was only the latest in a long history of euphemism and terminological prevarication attempting to “ease of the suspicion PSYOP seemed to generate” (Myers 2017). As an internal Pentagon email concerning the change to “MISO” made clear, “this is just a terminological change, not a substantive change. The term PSYOP was anachronistic and misleading. Military Information Support is a more accurate description of the activities and programs at issue” (Ambinder 2010).90 The statement recalled USIA employee Roland Perusse’s (1958, 34) internal admission that “from a strictly professional viewpoint, [the USIA] is ‘psychological warfare,’ pure and simple, as everyone… will recognize, but for the better chances of its success, it would appear wise not to call it that.”

90 Obtained by the Atlantic magazine. The email was from Rosa Brooks, Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Rule of Law and International Humanitarian Policy. Ironically, the liberal Atlantic magazine seemed supportive of the Obama administration’s move. “Window dressing”? the Atlantic’s Marc Ambinder (2010) asked. “Yes. But it’s a start.”
Like in 1953, however, the death of psychological warfare was short-lived and greatly exaggerated. Having lost political currency alongside the American military’s overall retreat from counterinsurgency strategy, the spectre of psychological warfare has been raised in the aftermath of the 2016 U.S. presidential election in the form of “fake news,” “election hacking,” and the looming threat of “Russian interference.” In a 2017 Army Times article, Army reporter Meghann Myers (2017) reported that the “100-year-old Defense Department psychological operations community” would be “switching back to good old PSYOP.” While neither the Department of Defense nor psychological warfare are one hundred years old, the decision to revive the language of psychological warfare was directly linked to the military’s understanding of the public perceptions concerning the threat of Russian psychological war. As Lt. Col. Brad Carr, director of information operations at U.S. Army Special Operations Command, told the Army Times,

> given Russian disinformation, given this new world where the information fight is becoming more complex and nuanced, there’s a level of pride when I can say, I’m a PSYOP soldier in a PSYOP unit that has this lineage and did these kinds of things.

Carr’s emphasis on the “new world” of nuance and complexity in psychological warfare accords with the broader tone of reporting on the issue’s renewed political salience. As in 1940-41, the re-emergence of a foreign propaganda threat has articulated a geographical imagination of psychological warfare, stressing the grave novelty of the foreign threat. As TIME magazine reports (Calabresi 2017), officials at the FBI, at the CIA and in Congress have raised alarms that “the 2016 Russian operation was just the most visible battle in an ongoing information war against global democracy.” The spectre of a “new world” of “information war against global democracy” suggests the re-emergence of a geographical imagination of psychological warfare as a grave and
novel threat from abroad; of a modern amendment to Rockefeller’s original “new geography of defense.” In an interview with the liberal online media outlet *Vox*, Yale historian and Council on Foreign Relations member Timothy Snyder narrates this “new world” of Russian psychological war:

Russia lost the Cold War because the Cold War was decided by economics and technology; it was a material competition. But after the Cold War, we moved into a different world, a world defined by the internet, and that’s a much more psychological world. The techniques they’ve been honing for decades are much more powerful in this new digital world, where emotion dominates and everyone is connected and there is so much information floating around. This is a world of information warfare, and that suits Russia’s strengths (Illing 2018).

Snyder’s emphasis on Russia’s “decades” of “honed techniques” advances a familiar tenet of psychological warfare’s moral economy, namely its objectivity and basis in science and/or technical mastery. While “psychological intelligence” served as an authoritative and scientistic black-box in the 1940 psychological war scare, the role of the “psychological war expert” has migrated to the computer scientist, and to new depictions of the talismanic algorithm. In an imaginative replay of fifth column industrial espionage, *TIME* magazine reports that “one particularly talented Russian programmer” who had worked with social media researchers in the United States for ten years had, “returned to Moscow and brought with him a trove of algorithms that could be used in influence operations” (Calabresi 2017).91 Similarly, claims *TIME*, Russian president Vladimir Putin “dispatched his newly installed head of military intelligence to begin

---

91 *TIME* quotes a senior American intelligence official having said that, “the engineer who built the algorithms is U.S.-trained.” The narrative is remarkably consistent with the Committee for National Morale’s (1941) claim that German psychological warfare was an American invention stolen and twisted to Nazi ends. I have argued that, in the latter case, the claim’s political goal was to rehabilitate the concept of psychological warfare for American use. See Ch. 3.
repurposing cyberweapons previously used for psychological operations in war zones for use in
electioneering.”

![Time Magazine Cover](image)

**Figure 62: "Russian interference"

The cover of Time magazine’s May 2017 expose employs a geopolitical imagination of invasion (Calabresi 2017).

While some have demurred the claims of firms like Cambridge Analytica’s as calculated embellishments designed to advertise the firm’s services (Lapowsky 2016), credulity has
dominated reporting of its purported ability to wage “psychological warfare” by creating “psychological profiles of 230 million Americans” (Cadwalladr 2018) and “target[ing] individuals based on a uniquely detailed database of psychographic information” (Lapowsky 2017). The liberal outlet Politico (McKew 2017) was direct in an alarmist article titled “Russia is Already Winning,” arguing that the much-discussed hacks and leaks represent, in fact, “the least sophisticated aspect, psychologically and technologically, of the campaign.” On the contrary, Politico claimed that

the Kremlin, along with its agents and proxies, constructed and deployed an elaborate information architecture to use against the American public. While this architecture did, at times, amplify disinformation, its primary purposes were larger: active measures, reflexive control and psychological warfare… These are complicated concepts that military and intelligence experts spend careers trying to learn and identify. This is not “fake news,” although our increasing tolerance of disinformation gives them power. This is an elaborate, sophisticated operation constructed within American society and media that we still do not see clearly. It is designed to inject ideas into our information environment in ways we can’t control, and to undermine the idea that there is objective truth.

Politico’s declination to identify or describe the “active measures” was perhaps related their purported technicality and complexity — the “elaborate architecture” of the “sophisticated operations” whose “complicated concepts” experts “spend careers trying to learn.” Nevertheless, and despite the seemingly impossible task, Politico insisted that “understanding how the Kremlin has tried to achieve this is absolutely essential.” [Fig. 63]
The injunction to understand, if not the technical esoterica of algorithmic warfare, then the reality and severity of the threat constitutes a familiar “obligation to know” for the double subject of psychological warfare: “If you understand what the Kremlin is up to, the news is grim,” reads the Politico subtitle, “but it also gives us a clear path to fight back.” While the American intelligence community undergoes a rehabilitation in the liberal political imagination, the intelligence community has used the opportunity to re-establish narratives of psychological warfare and its moral economy. Using the genre’s long-established second-person address, one of a dozen unnamed senior intelligence sources speaking to TIME magazine suggested that “the Russians target you and see what you like, what you click on, and see if you’re sympathetic or not sympathetic.” In testimony before Congress, former Director of National Intelligence James
Clapper (2017) insisted that, “if there has ever been a clarion call for vigilance and action against a threat to the very foundation of our democratic political system, this episode is it.” Recalling the original *Strategy of Terror’s* promotional copy that “the only defense is understanding” (Houghton-Mifflin 1940), *TIME* magazine narrated the crisis, suggesting that if Clapper’s testimony “sounds alarming, it helps to understand the battlespace of this new information war” (emphasis mine, Calabresi 2017).

Replaying Cold War narratives, reporting on Russian psychological warfare has posited a kind of “psychological war gap.” According to Chris Inglis, former deputy director of the National Security Agency and current managing director of the investment firm Paladin Capital Group, “the Russians are 10 years ahead of us in being willing to make use of social media to influence public opinion” (Calabresi 2017). Projecting onto Russia the hubris of American psychological warfare’s belief in its ability to de- and re-construct individuals (Zorthian 1965), the Council on Foreign Relations’ Timothy Snyder claimed that “Russia was always better than us when it came to penetrating their enemies and breaking them down from within.” In an incredible elision of the American Federal Bureau of Investigation’s history of infiltration and counterintelligence, Snyder insists that, “rather than smashing things overtly,” Russia would “work from behind the scenes to cast doubt on things. They’d insert their people into enemy organizations and slowly create chaos from inside” (Illing 2018). Drawing on the orientalist theme of a “timeless” society (Said 1978), Snyder claims that

Russia doesn’t really change; the world changes around Russia in a way that helps Russia. We tend to think that the key to power is economic and technological strength, but that’s not the whole picture. Russia’s economy is not big and they don’t really innovate
technologically, but they’ve always led the world in understanding the psychology of power. Psychological warfare is what they’ve done best going all the way back to the Bolsheviks.

For its part, the *Washington Post* enlisted the services of the Marine Corp University’s “Chair of Armed Politics” (Valeriano et al 2017) to provide more historical nuance to the Russian hacking scandal. Citing a 6 January, 2017 interagency report from the CIA, FBI and National Security Agency (NSA) on “Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections,” Valeriano argued that “on Friday, we learned that we are witnessing new versions of what U.S. statesman George Kennan, in a then-classified 1948 memo, called political warfare: coercion short of war, involving a mix of overt propaganda and covert psychological warfare efforts.” What Valeriano omitted in his emphasis on the Russian attack was that the Kennan document was in fact an outline for an expansive program of *American* psychological war, written less than two weeks after the 18 April, 1948 Italian elections in which the CIA intensively intervened against communist candidates. As I have argued in chapter 5, Kennan’s memo and the model of the Italian election would each serve as the basis for the CIA’s massive psychological warfare operations surrounding Radio Free Europe, both within the United States and abroad.

Against the backdrop of concerted alarmism surrounding the threat of Russian psychological warfare, reports of actually existing Russian operations belie the bathetic facts. As Facebook disclosed, Russian operatives spent roughly $100,000 on 3,000 advertisements [Fig. 64], a paltry sum compared to the estimated $6.5 billion spent on the election (Shane & Goel 2017; Ingraham 2017). Despite the relatively small effort, the affair has fomented crisis and concern over the so-called “post-truth” media landscape. As I have argued, however, the politics of truth have been
central to the construction and prosecution of American psychological warfare since its earliest
days. *TIME*’s most extensive coverage of the scandal concluded by asking “what message is
powerful enough to take on the firehose of falsehoods that Russia is deploying in targeted, effective
ways across a range of new media? One good place to start: telling the truth” (Calabresi 2017).
Given the hands of Henry Luce and C.D. Jackson both in constructing the threat of, and response
to, psychological warfare, it seems only fitting that *TIME* magazine renew the call for an American
“strategy of truth.”

![Figure 64: “election hacking”](image)

*A Facebook advertisement purchased by a Russian agent. Advertisements attempted to sow
divisions in the American electorate around issues like gun control and race relations. Some
advertisements supported the Bernie Sanders campaign, in what has been interpreted as an effort
to destabilize the Democratic Party (Shane 2017).*
The re-emergence of the rhetoric of the “strategy of truth” appears amid calls for private media firms like Facebook and Twitter to assess and regulate the “truth content” of their platforms (Levin 2017; Nyhan 2017; Vanian 2018). As a purported antidote to threats of foreign psychological war against the United States, how will a 21st century “strategy of truth” materialize between the agencies of government and the halls of industry? As I have argued, the history of American psychological warfare abroad is intimately tied to its domestic construction. During both the Second World War and broader Cold War, geopolitical imaginaries of psychological warfare advanced American political agendas by prefiguring and framing war as both an individual “spiritual battle” against enemy propaganda, and an issue of “population security” tied to the circulation of “truthful” news and information. As the issue of the security of the American population coalesces around a new threat of psychological war, to what ends will a new “strategy of truth” be put?

7.2 Lines of Communication

The narrative of Russian psychological warfare interfering in the 2016 American election has attempted to frame the Trump presidency as the result of traditional media’s diminishing ability to act as benevolent gatekeepers of American political discourse. Social media’s ability to produce alternative political narratives, combined with geographical imaginations of cyber-psychological attack have combined to exacerbate political climates of distrust and produce the so-called ‘post truth’ political landscape. This decentralizing effect of social media on political narratives can be
productively theorized as a new round of time-space compression in which the prevalence of online, socially-mediated political discourses dislocate traditional monopolies of knowledge from the twenty-first century habitus.

But this is only a partial story. Like the first psychological war scare in the early 1940s, public perceptions concerning social ruptures surrounding new communication technologies have been shaped by existing monopolies of knowledge. Shortwave radio’s compression of time and space may have allowed German radio broadcasts to reach American shores, but the sense of panic and terror this produced was constructed and managed by the nascent American intelligence community through its ties to domestic academic and media institutions. Then, as now, the “foreboding sense of social space imploding in upon us” (Harvey 1990) has been stage managed to follow scripts that occlude the material basis of power in mass mediated systems of communication.

As much as new media and foreign meddling have been implicated in producing the ‘post-truth’ landscape that is believed to have secured Donald Trump’s victories in the primary and general elections, it is perhaps more accurate to understand the Trump presidency as a creature of the old media, not the new. According to the New York Times, by March of 2016 the Trump campaign, still in its primary season, had earned over two billion dollars of free, or “earned,” publicity via news stories and unpaid coverage (Confessore & Yourish 2016), dwarfing other candidates in both parties’ primary fields. Trump’s controversial style and transgression of discursive norms translated into lucrative ratings for television news networks struggling to respond to decreasing viewerships. As more viewers choose to “cut the cord” and migrate online for news and
entertainment, competition for dwindling viewships increasingly defines the 21st century cable news era (Mullin 2018; Matsa 2018; Maheshwari & Koblin 2018; Morris 2018). For Donald Trump, the ratings game was familiar territory: in his fourteen-year tenure as a reality television game show host on NBC’s *The Apprentice*, he obsessed publically and often about his ability to attract ratings — a habit that has followed him into his presidency (Bradley 2017). While figures like MSNBC’s Rachel Maddow have led the charge in amplifying so-called ‘Russiagate’ narratives, it remains a fact that the news network’s parent company NBC is largely responsible for reviving Trump’s media career and manufacturing the narrative of his canny business acumen (Nussbaum, 2017).

It is similarly difficult to understand contemporary ‘post truth’ narratives through the lens of a Trump presidency alone. Recent attempts to rehabilitate the image of George W. Bush in liberal media outlets, for example, suggest the exculpatory opportunities that the Trump presidency has offered them (see Williams 2018). In placing blame for the ‘post truth’ political landscape on Trump and Russian psychological warfare, television and print monopolies of knowledge have avoided accountability for their own abuses of public trust, as when they carried water for the Bush administration’s claims concerning Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. While miscarriages of journalism surrounding the Iraq war were largely a bi-partisan affair, the recent exacerbation of the “paranoid style” of right-wing American politics (Hofstadter 1964) also predated Trump, and was largely mediated through cable news. Right-wing social media may have amplified these messages, but they were created and popularized primarily through cable news programming. Trump-era conspiracies like “pizzagate” and “Qanon” appear extreme in their details (Kang &
Goldman 2016; Cillizza 2018), but they reflect a conspiratorial political aesthetic mainstreamed in the Obama era on programs like Fox News’ *The Glen Beck Show.*

Television and print monopolies of knowledge have thus attempted to exculpate their role in the production of widespread public distrust through recourse to foreign threats and lamentations concerning their loosening grip on political discourse. In this narrative, foreign agents and social media have produced the terrifying social dislocations that enabled a Trump presidency. Consequently, it is the traditional media monopolies that offer themselves as benevolent gatekeepers promising a return to normalcy. Like the original scare of 1940, contemporary invocations of psychological warfare advance the premise that benevolent monopolies of knowledge constitute the basis of a population’s *security* against foreign psychological invasion and home-grown radicalism.

As American monopolies of knowledge attempt to distance themselves from their creations, social media *has* produced new forms of social dislocation that end run traditional media gatekeeping of political narratives, illustrated most powerfully in the United States by the continued popularity of Bernie Sanders during and after his challenge to Hillary Clinton in the 2016 primary race. While liberal media outlets aligned with the Democratic party have attempted to discredit Sanders and his supporters as variously idealistic, sexist, or racist — the so-called ‘Bernie bro’ — his socially mediated primary campaign gave voice to widely popular if modest social democratic policies like single-payer healthcare. More recently, liberal media outlets have struggled to apply the same

---

92 As of this writing, Bernie Sanders remains the most popular senator in the United States (Kelly 2018).
identitarian critiques to socialist newcomers like Alexandria Occasio-Cortez, whose socially mediated popularity has similarly centred on social democratic policies long proscribed by monopolistic media gatekeepers. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these left-wing challengers to the bi-partisan neoliberal status-quo have been branded in the popular press as the ‘useful idiots’ of Vladimir Putin’s psychological war campaign against the United States (Michel 2017).

As this dissertation has attempted to show, domestic invocations of psychological warfare in the United States have in perennial form collapsed geopolitical imaginaries of foreign invasion into nascent formations of class consciousness at home. Indeed, central to William Donovan’s original construction of psychological warfare and fifth column alarmism in 1940 was an emphasis on class struggle as a vector of national vulnerability. “Those personal privileges which in our democracy we value so highly,” he insisted, “make us particularly vulnerable to this new form of warfare” (p. 2). In addition to democracy generally, however, it was class struggle specifically that opened a country to psychological attack: “jealousy and antagonism between different classes of society as well as between various political, racial, and religious groups” Donovan argued, represented “an effective means of weakening a country, by disrupting its unity of purpose and action” (Mowrer & Donovan 1940, 1-2).

Central to the original psychological war narrative was the premise that class struggle had weakened France, and that blame for its fall lay not with Vichy collaborators, but with the communists and workers whose class struggle pushed French elites into the arms of Europe’s fascists. The return of psychological warfare as a liberal rhetorical strategy thus appears as a bracing replay of the political landscape of the interwar years; as a strategy for the maintenance of
liberal ruling-class power in the face of rising right-wing ethno-nationalism on one hand, and left-wing redistributive projects on the other. As ruling-class American liberals decry upstart socialists as the ‘useful idiots’ of Russian psychological warriors, calls for ‘democratic party unity’ (Seitz-Wald 2018) in liberal press monopolies obscure the deep unpopularity of the party’s third-way neoliberal policy commitments.

As I have argued, however, pathologization of class struggle as inherently regressive or reactionary has been a central feature of American liberal political consensus since at least the years following the First World War. Moreover, this consensus was aided by elite interpretations of the Great War’s mass propaganda campaigns. Motivated in part by the perception of mass credulity toward wartime propaganda, post-war liberals like Walter Lippman (1920) found it “no longer possible to believe in the original dogma of democracy.” For these new elite managers of “guided democracy,” it was necessary to constrain and channel the political agency of the mass public who during the war had “trusted so much and hated so passionately” (Lasswell 1927, 3-5). Ironically, the narrative of the public as a dangerous libidinal force susceptible to manipulation led to elite repudiation not of propaganda, but of the public and democracy itself. Thus what surfaced in texts like Le Bon’s 1895 Psychologie des Foules, crystallized after the war into a new liberal consensus against “the traditional species of democratic romanticism” (ibid).

While the vulnerability of the public to propaganda suggested to liberal elites the untenability of democracy generally, it was again in class struggle specifically that the masses became most dangerous. In his idiom, Lasswell satirized the American liberal for whom the problem of war and war aims “must be shorn of an apparent class bias,” since “philosophies of economic determination
wound [his] property sentiment” (p. 64-7). For Laswell, the liberal’s aversion to class-based political analysis — the ignoble “secretion of the mob” — meant that the issue of war and war aims “must be conceived as a problem of a politico-juristic nature.” It is perhaps unsurprising on this account that contemporary American liberals have looked to unseat the Trump presidency not through recourse to class consciousness and electoral victory, but by appealing to the law-and-order authority of its intelligence community, embodied in the Muller investigation on Russian interference. For the liberal elite whose task is to navigate straits between supressing left-wing redistributive projects while nominally opposing conservative ethno-nationalism, constructing the threat of psychological warfare offers both exculpation and a further opportunity to foreclose class analysis in official opposition to right-wing movements.

In “psychological warfare” the liberal elite finds not only justification for political rule and monopolies of knowledge, but also a strategy for shearing political discourse of materialist analysis. If Innis (1951, 187) noted that in the late nineteenth century freedom of the press was essential for obscuring the existence of monopolies of knowledge, constructions of psychological warfare have perennially posed the power of propaganda as something unmoored form the monopolistic geographies of communication that enable it. Thus the belief that psychological warfare could be waged anywhere and anytime came to occlude the necessarily relational nature of what I have called lines of communication. Without the trust and credulity of an audience-public — generally impossible in enemy territory — mediated relationships to individuals and populations remain merely informational roads, not lines of communication through which power can exercised.
The fantasy of the pushbutton propagandist capable of parachuting effective propaganda into enemy territory can be traced back at least to myth of Lord Northcliffe “collapsing” German morale in the First World War. The Northcliffe myth was predictably disseminated in the pages of his own press monopolies in Britain, but perhaps more surprising was its popularity in Germany after the war, where a re-militarizing nation adopted it as both a face-saving explanation of defeat, and evidence of its enemies’ perfidy. Ironically, these German reiterations of the Northcliffe myth were precisely the ones translated and circulated in the United States as evidence of a new German program of ‘scientific propaganda’, embodied in the strange figure of geographer Ewald Banse.

In addition to positing a de-territorialized, frictionless view of propaganda power, the Northcliffe myth also suggested that domestic press monopolies were assets of national military power — not the hoardings of robber barons, but guarantors of ‘national morale’ and psychological defense. As idealistic constructions attaching to a pastoral of individuals and population, both ‘national morale’ and ‘psychological warfare’ further served to obscure the material basis of press power in monopolies of knowledge while simultaneously presenting those monopolies — shorn of their class features — as the benevolent defenders of national unity and spiritual strength. As I have shown, in the United States it was Henry Luce and C.D. Jackson who most powerfully constructed the threat of German psychological warfare on the one hand, and the power of Time-Life-Fortune’s ability to combat it on the other (see Fig. 21) Thus did the first constructions of psychological warfare achieve the twofold ruling-class project of collapsing domestic working-class struggle into a geopolitical imaginary of foreign attack, while simultaneously positioning ruling-class monopolies of knowledge as the basis of a new kind of national defense.
As I have suggested, interwar pathologization of the public as ‘libidinal mass’ — of democratic politics generally, and class struggle specifically — was embedded into early constructions of psychological warfare between 1940 and 1941. With American entry into the war, the pathologic narrative crystallized, and a biopolitical imaginary of population health positioned the liberal manager of society as the ‘good doctor’ (see Arendt, 1972) whose pastoral care ensured the security of national morale. Thus did imaginaries of health and security combine to combat the virulent pathogen of psychological war in the democratic body. As one psychologist wrote in *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, “democratic dogma is a safe principle in ordinary times, but in times of emergency it might become dangerous… An emergency operation needs experts and does not allow for democratic discussion with the patient” (Ekstein 1942, 377).

This narrative of health as security — the effort to locate psychological warfare in the ‘bodies’ of individuals and populations — further obscured the material basis of communication in monopolies of knowledge, positing instead a philosophical idealism in which propaganda and psychological warfare were abstracted from their material conditions and constructed as ‘battles for hearts and minds’. I have suggested that an impetus for identifying ‘psychological warfare’ *qua* psychology was due in part to the rhetorical value of positing the individual *as such* as the site of ideological struggle, abstracted from the lines of communication through which monopolies of knowledge control the circulation of information. While the ‘psychological’ narrative also drew on the rising public profile of psychology as a social science, it remains a deep irony that psychologists had little to say about psychological warfare from within the paradigms of their own discipline, contributing directly to interventionist causes primarily through appeal to their own authority, and indirectly through German geopolitical texts.
While the construction of German psychological warfare in the American press was tightly tied to scientistic abstractions of psychology and geography, never quite explained, I have argued that the biopolitical imaginaries of health and vitality tied to ‘national morale’ and self-defense against psychological war were more rooted in extant narratives of muscular Christianity and the war sublime. German psychological warfare may have been constructed in the American press as a symbol of what Adorno and Horkheimer would call the dialectic of enlightenment, but against this image of cold and mechanical German rationality was posed an enchanted world of spiritual battle in which a catechism of morale prepared the American “nerve private” for baptismal war on the terrain of the self. In the concept of ‘psychological warfare’, muscular Christian styles of mediated war spectatorship were transformed from passive excitation into paradoxical political imaginaries of activity and even adventure. If Tennyson’s Charge of the Light Brigade celebrated British muscular Christianity at arms while “all the world wondered” (see Vance 1985), the rhetorical construction of psychological warfare promised to materialize in deadly seriousness the once risible enthusiasm of Punch’s paterfamilias (see Fig. 6).

If telegraphic correspondence transformed Crimean war reporting into a kind of lurid serial non-fiction, during the First World War cinematic depictions of war produced their own dislocations and crises of identity. Public debates on The Battle of the Somme’s depiction of the war’s dead oscillated between condemnations of the public’s morbidity and enthusiasm for the new medium’s ability to transform and ennoble its viewing audience. If Cinematic time-space compression produced experiential dislocations, a new kind of spiritual struggle was seen to converge within the viewer whose “hallowed sight” was “purified by awe” in witness of the war sublime. The
British journalist James Douglas put the baptismal allegory in no uncertain terms: “the seeing ennobled and exalted us. There was a religious reverence,” he wrote. “I say it is regenerative and resurrective for us…Heaven knows that we need the supreme katharsis, the ultimate cleansing” (James Douglas, *The Star*, 25 Sept, 1916, cited in Gregory 2018). If, as Innis (1951, 89) has suggested, “shifts to new media of communication have been characterized by profound disturbances,” the muscular Christianity of cinematic war spectatorship supported his fear that “appeal [will be] made to organized force as an instrument of continuity.”

In the rhetoric of psychological warfare, themes of the muscular Christian sublime combined with the philosophical idealism of liberal discourse to produce political fictions of abstracted human malleability. Positioned as a new kind of governmental pastor, the liberal political elite in the interwar years increasingly understood its role as the management of democracy through the manipulation of malleable public opinion. Elite moral panics over the mass publics’ intemperance and credulity were mirrored in the public’s own distrust and debunking of wartime propaganda. In the face of this social dislocation and a new looming World War, psychological warfare appealed per Innis to organized force as an instrument of continuity. However, the strange rhetoric of spiritual war also suggested the reverse: in psychological warfare an appeal to *continuity* — the obligation to know; to bound oneself; to steel and make oneself *immalette* — was constructed as an instrument of *organized force*. In this new geopolitical imaginary of psychological war, to order oneself, to become in one’s thoughts and beliefs a medium of national morale was to participate not just symbolically, but directly in a purportedly new kind of warfare.
It was, moreover, these same political fictions of spiritual defense that were mobilized in the early years of the Cold War to construct the United States’ geopolitical imaginary of its own psychological war against the Soviet Union. As I have shown, the overarching narrative of the Soviet Union as a satanic force constructed the Central Intelligence Agency’s “Crusade for Freedom” not as a material or even geopolitical contest, but as a kind of spiritual battle which continued to advance a geographically deracinated American imperial imaginary (Smith 2003). Furthermore, the Crusade embodied this dissertation’s assertion that geographical imaginations of psychological warfare obscure the material basis of press power in monopolies of knowledge. Orchestrated by the still-opaque Operation Mockingbird, the Crusade for Freedom’s cover as volunteer front for the CIA was sustained as an open secret in the newsrooms and editorial boards of the American press. Ironically, since official Soviet broadcasts informed Soviet citizens that Radio Free Europe was a CIA front, the preponderance of those unaware of the connection were the American citizens who donated to the cause in earnest.

In this light, the Crusade for Freedom is another illustration of this dissertation’s claim that the meaning of psychological warfare within American political discourse is primarily rhetorical. Unlike its administration in theatres of war, where it acts as a justification and medium of military violence, the meaning of psychological warfare in American discourse has been tightly tied to paranoiac narratives of defence against foreign invasion, even and especially as the United States became the world’s foremost international propagandist. Psychological warfare in the United States is thus an ouroboric construction: propaganda about propaganda that serves to abstract its own materiality while collapsing domestic class struggle into geopolitical imaginations of psychological invasion. Even more so than its original construction in 1940, the Crusade for
Freedom drew heavily upon muscular Christian narratives of ‘spiritual battle’ as transubstantiated war.

I argue that through its “freedom scroll” signature drive and its “freedom dollar” fund raisers, the Crusade for Freedom produced in American citizens pastoral avowals of self tied to a geopolitical psychological war imaginary. Not only were Americans encouraged to believe that their avowals of self were constitutive of national morale against communism — the personal is geopolitical — they were encouraged in the (false) belief that their “freedom dollar” donations materially constituted Radio Free Europe’s psychological war program in the Soviet satellites. Furthermore, the rhetoric of the “freedom dollar” interpellated the American psychological warrior-citizen as an economic actor whose political agency was expressed as a market relation. Not only, then, did American psychological cold war occlude domestic monopolies of knowledge — as in the CIA’s control and funding of the program — it offered in its place an image of the Crusade as the kind of “people’s capitalism” that came to define the United States Information Agency’s international publicity efforts.

Thus in the Crusade, the muscular Christian psychological war sublime combined not only with a liberal occlusion of the materiality of propaganda, it constructed an inverted image of actually existing monopolies of knowledge as a reflection of “people’s capitalism”. The Crusade’s psychological war sublime drew upon early narratives of human malleability to encourage Americans to partake in self-ordering against communist ideology, but it was also a powerful articulation of the premise that through psychological warfare the Other could ordered. A strange amalgam of ideologies — colonial, futurist, Christian — combined in the principle that a
transformative spiritual war could be waged over radio waves in Eastern Europe. The premise of human malleability combined with a penetrative masculine prerogative, writ large in the Crusade, that psychological warfare could “part the iron curtain” and remake its subjects from the inside out. As the Cold War progressed, the claims of American psychological warriors increasingly came to reflect the social science fictions which marked the hyperbolic threat of German psychological warfare in the early 1940s. While William Donovan and his network of interventionists then encouraged Americans to tilt at the windmills of German fifth columnism and psychological war, that image of frictionless propaganda increasingly came to define the pushbutton fantasies of America’s own psychological warriors during the Cold War.

Reaching its zenith in the Vietnam war, where JUSPAO director Barry Zorthian believed that American psychological warfare could “reconstruct” the Vietnamese individual as such, the conceit that psychological warriors could exert power over inherently malleable humans was first illustrated in the theatres of the Second World War. After the war, the idea of mass mediated human malleability crystallized in the so-called ‘hypodermic needle’ model of communication, in which audiences were believed to be passive recipients of texts and ideologies (Simpson 1994). Long-discredited for ignoring audience agency and interpretation, the hypodermic needle model nonetheless embodied the premise of mass mediated human malleability that governed not only popular, but increasingly professional, early and mid-century understandings of psychological warfare. As I have argued, this belief in human malleability, and in elite capacity to manipulate it, was central to the prosecution of American psychological warfare in World War II.
While the hypodermic needle model has fallen from favour in media and communication studies, I have argued that in American military and strategic circles the belief in human malleability central to psychological warfare has been remarkably durable. I have suggested that in this political imaginary, psychological warfare has been understood primarily through a *ballistic* metaphor. James Gibson has observed that during the Vietnam war bombing became a form of communication to the political leaders and civilians of North Vietnam. However, since its earliest days, psychological warfare has also been understood as a form of *bombardment*, and often quite literally. I have shown that through the ‘leaflet bomb’ of the Second World War, the ‘ordinance’ of American psychological warfare quite often took the form of actual ordnance. More directly, American strategic bombing itself was often framed as a kind of psychological war against the morale of German and Japanese civilians. Though early American accounts of German psychological warfare stressed and condemned it as a “strategy of terror,” American psychological warfare soon provided rationales, or at least excuses for, civilian bombing when the rhetoric of ‘reprisal’ was found wanting.

As I have shown, the bombardment of civilian populations was soon understood as a form of ransom over political leaders, as seen most clearly in the extortionate logic of the Allied Operation Pointblank. Again the premise of human malleability folded into emergent concepts of technocratic rule to construct the premise that through bombing, incentives could be constructed to channel rational human agency into desired behaviours. Failing this governmental strategy, bombing remained a strategy that was believed to ‘destroy morale’ and create panic. As I have shown, however, the effects of bombing had been well observed to *strengthen* morale, increase resentment of the enemy, and reduce the desire to surrender. Nevertheless, belief in human
malleability marked the emergent relationship between the bomber and the psychological warrior in the theatres of World War II. As I have shown, however, this relationship soon became one of enablement: war planners rejected out of hand OWI reports which indicated that continued bombing would likely delay Japanese surrender. Instead, American war planners accepted and cultivated social scientists whose theorizations of Japanese culture supported their bombing strategy.

A formative moment in the relationship between bombing and psychological warfare, the decision to reject morale analysis data in favour of theoretical abstractions on the nature of Japanese society turned American psychological warfare into an instrument of terror underwritten by muscular Christian chauvinism. While it was well understood that Japanese civilian morale was low and lowering, war planners demanded the myth of “impenetrable” and “invincible” Japanese morale to justify their continued bombing of civilian centers. Indeed, it was the belief that the Japanese individual, bereft of the full humanity of the “Judaic-Christian tradition,” could be made rational through the incentive of overwhelming force that embodied the convergence of bombing as psychological war. It was, then, from the beginning that psychological warfare in enemy territories was conceived as form of bombardment, and a baptism by fire through which an American war machine could construct the subjects it wished to govern.

While after the war the premise of abstract human malleability may have receded in some academic quarters, in the American military it lived on, not as a needle but a bomb. The failures of American psychological warriors in Vietnam even to understand, let alone manipulate, the war’s human terrain led again to an American strategy of bombing and terror. The “values orientation
theory” of Clyde Kluckhohn, the American anthropologist who offered the “Judaic-Christian tradition” as justification for Japanese urbicide, was found useless in the Vietnamese countryside. Through massive investment in communication technology, culminating in the construction of a national television network, the United States again found that it could construct information highways in Vietnam, but not lines of communication. Douglas Pike may have mused on the “mystical transformations” that modernization could work on Vietnamese individuals and populations. Barry Zorthian may have boasted that his psychological warriors could “reconstruct” the Vietnamese individual, but belief in the inherent malleability of human beings, and of American ability to manipulate it, was constantly belied by continued and increasing opposition of the Vietnamese people. As ever, in place of the therapeutic promise of psychological war, ordinance turned to ordnance.

This has been misremembered. Four years into the most recent Iraq War, American General and former NATO supreme commander Wesley Clark (2007) lamented that, “in an age when losing hearts and minds can mean losing a war”

we find ourselves struggling in Iraq and Afghanistan to impart the sort of cultural sensitivities that were second nature to an earlier generation of troops trained to eat nuoc mam with everything and sit on the floor during their tours in Vietnam.

It had not been second nature, though Clark’s revisionism corresponded broadly to what Barkawi (2008) has identified as a mediated remembering of the Vietnam War as a betrayal of the United States’ best intentions. While the rhetoric of ‘hearts and minds’ spurred an American military ‘cultural turn’ (Gregory 2008) in Iraq, American psychological warfare efforts in Iraq failed to
return observable dividends. According to a joint University of Maryland / Zogby International poll, the United States’ major media effort in the Middle East, the *Al Hurra* (“the free one”) television station, commanded only 0.5% of audience preference across the Arab world’s largest and most influential countries. According to one University of Maryland analyst, Al Hurra’s ratings were so low that, for the first time, they fell below the poll’s margin of error (Linzer 2009). Though the United States had spent more than $600 million on the station between 2004-2009 alone, it could not construct a line of communication to the Iraqi people.

The failure of American psychological warriors to exert governmental power over Iraqis, however, did not obstruct its usefulness in framing American intervention as a humane and humanizing effort. On this account, the use of ‘psychological warfare’ during the second Battle of Fallujah encapsulates the cynical logic of psychological war. In western media outlets, American psychological warfare was touted as a humanitarian effort to avoid civilian casualties in the November 2004 assault on the city. Largely a response to international publicity garnered by mass civilian causalities during the first assault on Fallujah in April of 2004 — what American strategists called ‘enemy information operations’ — in the lead up to the second Battle of Fallujah, American forces established a tight perimeter of checkpoints around the city and instructed women and children to evacuate through leaflet drops and loudspeaker address.
In much western media coverage, the move was hailed as an attempt to isolate insurgents and ensure that ‘innocent civilians’ were given opportunity to flee the assault. The coverage of the psychological war strategy bolstered the conceits that the United States could and was ‘winning hearts and minds’, and that through psychological warfare war could be made more humane. On the ground in Fallujah another picture emerged. While the checkpoint perimeter of Fallujah allowed women and children to leave (at least those who could) it had been designed to keep in “men of fighting age” who were categorically turned back at the perimeter’s edge. While “of fighting age” remains a discretionary term, it generally separated only elderly men from the young, often with no fast lower limit. In practice, the ostensibly humane psychological war policy of allowing partial evacuation of Fallujah’s women and children allowed _ipso facto_ for American soldiers to consider _all_ remaining inhabitants of Fallujah as insurgent combatants. _Guardian_ reporters estimated that between 30,000 and 50,000 civilians remained, contradicting immensely lower official figures (Monbiot 2005). It was psychological warfare at its most predictable: a strategy of state terror and collective punishment presented to American audiences as evidence of its own benevolence and good intentions.

Psychological warfare fails forward. Its stated goal of asserting a kind of governmentality over the hearts and minds of foreign populations remains by the admission of its own practitioners impossible to measure or evaluate. This dissertation has attempted to trace the historical contours

---

of psychological warfare’s emergence and proliferation in American military and foreign policy circles. I have argued that the emergence of psychological warfare was tightly tied to the contradictions of democratic government and elite rule through propaganda, as it emerged in the 19th century and reached its critical mass in the First World War. I have argued that ‘psychological warfare’ cannot be understood simply as a euphemism or synonym for propaganda, and that unlike the latter’s relatively simple identification of duplicity and the political-economic power of the mass media, the essence of psychological warfare is not to reveal, but to conceal and mystify monopolies of knowledge. As I have suggested, before its instantiation in the theatres of the Second World War, psychological warfare originally existed as a rhetorical device, a social science fiction, and a geopolitical imagination.

I have argued that psychological war has therefore had a strange and ouroboric existence, preceding and giving birth to itself. As psychological warfare was made real and crystallized in various departments of the American military, State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, and finally at the United States Information Agency, its double role as strategy of war and geopolitical rhetoric also crystallized. This dissertation has attempted to trace the double life of American psychological warfare by attending to important moments in life-paths of both. The geography of these life paths corresponds most directly to the divergent meaning and practice of psychological warfare as it exists within the United States, and as it exists in the theatres of American imperial warfare. While meanings sometimes converge — as in the assumption of general human malleability — I have argued that the double lives of American psychological warfare have been largely divergent.
I have sought on the one hand to show what psychological warfare has *attempted* to be: a governmental strategy for exerting pastoral power over foreign individuals and populations, especially at war. I have argued that in the United States’ major military engagements of the latter twentieth century — World War II and Vietnam — psychological warfare cannot be understood to have achieved this goal. However, I have suggested that despite psychological warfare’s failure to achieve its maximal goals — the government of enemy populations — it must nevertheless be understood to have contributed to major aims of American military strategy, especially in the construction and evolution of bombing as a strategy of punitive terror.

On the other hand, I have sought to show the rhetorical uses and abuses of psychological warfare’s domestic construction within the United States as a social science fiction and a geopolitical imagination. In tracing the evolution of the concept within American public discourse, I have shown that, starting in the Second World War, the rhetoric of psychological warfare assisted in rationalizing and making palatable increasing scales of military violence in the name of attacking ‘enemy morale’. Furthermore, the rhetoric of psychological warfare produced a new geopolitical imagination which posed American public opinion and its constitutive individuals as targets on a new military terrain. I have argued that the rhetorical effect of these psychological war discourses has been to foreclose avenues of political activity, crucially those linked to class-based analysis and organization, by constructing them as the machinations of foreign powers and internal enemies.

This dissertation has been of necessity a partial account of American psychological warfare. The clandestine nature of much psychological war activity, beginning with William Donovan’s Office
of Strategic Services, and continuing at the Central Intelligence Agency, makes the scope and scale of covert psychological warfare difficult to ascertain. In analyzing the overt activities of American psychological warfare this dissertation has been able to, on the other hand, approach the American ‘strategy of truth’ on its own terms, placing it within a broader genealogy of liberal power. Even in this project, however, this dissertation remains only a sketch and an outline of the massive scale of American psychological warfare in the twentieth century. Critical work remains to be done to unpack the sprawling historical geographies of American psychological warfare around the world, a project that would necessitate extensive and coordinated archival research in dozens of languages. Nevertheless, this dissertation offers a critical framework for challenging the viability of psychological warfare as a strategy for governing foreign populations. Similarly, it offers caution concerning the role that ideas of psychological warfare play in producing domestic discourses of foreign ‘psychological invasion’.

Between the United States’ increasing reliance on drone warfare, and the drawdown of its counterinsurgent boots-on-the-ground strategy in the middle east, psychological warfare seemed poised for hiatus in American political and military circles. Unexpectedly, however, it is back, again in the form of a shadowy foreign plot that threatens to exploit the supposedly intrinsic vulnerabilities of the American democratic system. The hypodermic needle has returned. Can the centre hold? Will the war of words again turn ballistic?
Bibliography


Flebbe, F. Portrait of Ewald Banse. Retrieved from:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flebbe,_Fritz,_Ewald_Banse.jpg


“Fomenting Unrest in the Communist World” (16 November, 1953). History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive. Retrieved from:
http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114476


https://geographicalimaginations.com/2012/10/11/the-code-breakers/


https://geographicalimaginations.com/tag/battle-of-the-somme/


Krock, A. (1942). The accent is, as it should be, on news. *The New York Times,* June 18, p. 20.


https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/nov/13/way-too-little-way-too-late-facebooks-fact-checkers-say-effort-is-failing


https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-putin-played-the-far-left


Monbiot, G (2005). Behind the phosphorous clouds are war crimes within war crimes. The Guardian, Nov 22. Retrieved from:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/nov/22/usa.iraq1


New York Times (1940, June 10). Stop Hitler now [advertisement].


New York Times (1941, June 28). Entry in war now urged by Kingdom.


New York Times (1942, March 27). Have we sense enough to learn from the enemy?


New York Times (1942, Sept 5). Radio is mobilized for offensive war under lead of OWI.


New York Times (1950b, Sept 5). Eisenhower opens war on the “big lie”.


http://www.ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/RS-32.CV01.pdf

“Office of Policy Coordination and Free Europe Committee Officials Brief J. Edgar Hoover.”
(1949, April 19). History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive. Retrieved from:
http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114324

United States National Archives. RG 226: Records of the Office of Strategic Services,
https://catalog.archives.gov/id/24459683

http://ota.fas.org/reports/9501.pdf

http://www.nww2m.com/2012/11/featured-artifact-operation-torch-propaganda-leaflet/

[OWI] Office of War Information. (c1943). White bombs. Retrieved from:
https://www.psywar.org/psywar/reproductions/WhiteBombs.pdf

https://www.psywar.org/product_1943USF041.php


[OWI] Office of War Information. (1943d). Le plus lourds bombardements de 1940 a ce jour.
Retrieved from: https://www.psywar.org/content/aSurveyOfLeafletPropaganda

457
[OWI] Office of War Information. (1943e, Feb 8). Afrika Post. Retrieved from:
https://www.psywar.org/product_PWBAFHQG004.php


https://www.rubylane.com/item/160319-6400/VICTORY-Magazine-Volume-2-Number-1

[OWI] Office of War Information. (1944c). Fotorevy. Retrieved from:
http://www.illegalpresse.dk/references/show/article/52/reference/28

http://museevirtuelmilitaire.centerblog.net/6.html


President’s Committee on International Information Activities [“Jackson Committee”] (1953). Retrieved from: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v02p2/d370


Smith, B. L. (1941). Literature on propaganda technique and public opinion. Psychological Bulletin, 38(6), 469.


https://digital.library.unt.edu/explore/collections/NMAP/


[USIA] United States Information Agency (1965b). Suggested talking paper to be used by
director in discussions with Mr. Rooney. United States National Archive. RG 306: Records
of the United States Information Agency, Entry A1 30: Vietnamese Public Opinion
Surveys; 1965-1972, Container 11.

[USIA] United States Information Agency (1967). JUSPAO briefing on psy/ops Tet campaign
for 1967. United States National Archive. RG 306: Records of the United States
Information Agency, Entry 31: General Records Relating to the Joint United States Public

States National Archive. RG 306: Records of the United States Information Agency, Entry

Archive. RG 306: Records of the United States Information Agency, Entry 31: General
Records Relating to the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO), 1966-1975,
Container 5.

Approximate coverage, Republic of Vietnam national TV network. United States National
Archives. RG 472: Records of the United States Forces in Southeast Asia, Entry HM 1992:

data in psychological operations programs in Vietnam*. McLean: Human Sciences
Research, Inc.


*Journal of Consulting Psychology, 7*(3), 135.


http://www.publicseminar.org/2017/05/ordnance-as-ordinance/


New York: Verso.


Briefings, Speeches, and Memorandums for Correspondents, Container 1.


