THE READY ONES: AMERICAN CHILDREN, WORLD WAR II, AND PROPAGANDA

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Faculty of Miami University
In partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of History
by
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Miami University
Oxford, Ohio
2015

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ABSTRACT

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by Katherine E. Wright

My exhibit is fundamentally different than a scholarly paper because I have created a physical learning environment where a wider audience actively moves and intellectually engages with the material. My primary concern is to address historical gaps and educate and engage an audience and answer their potential questions. The exhibit’s audience requires a different set of questions and choices I have to resolve than if I were writing an essay. At its core my project is a dialogic exhibit whose narrative builds around the memories of the people who lived it. It places the real memories in direct conversation with secondary historical research and a general audience. As a result, its argument and evidence depends upon the participation of individuals who are willing to share their memories and loan their private possessions. Based on my research, I argue that World War II war propaganda subconsciously influenced American children to take personal action and join the national war effort. The values and ideas reinforced by a steady stream of propaganda became central to American children’s moral perspective because the war came at an essential time in their development.
# Table of Contents

Chapter 1: An Unlikely Place .............................................. 1  
Interview Process, Community Influence, and Memory ................. 2  
Chapter 2: The Physical Exhibit ........................................ 5  
Artifacts and Space ......................................................... 6  
Captions and Audience .................................................... 7  
Living Sources as Audience .............................................. 8  
Chapter 3: Objects and Visual Culture .................................. 11  
The Power of Sight ............................................................ 12  
Schools at War ................................................................. 14  
War Bonds ...................................................................... 15  
“Voluntary” Labor ............................................................. 16  
Patriotic Support and the Education of Hate ............................ 18  
Chapter 4: Why the Ready Refuse ...................................... 21  
Conclusion ........................................................................ 23  
Bibliography ..................................................................... 25  
Primary Sources ................................................................ 26  
Appendix A: Museum Proposal .......................................... 31  
Appendix B: Oral History Consent forms and Loan of Gift Forms 35  
Appendix C: Tentative Exhibit Layout .................................. 39  
Appendix D: Exhibit Photographs ....................................... 40  
Appendix E: Exhibit Captions ............................................ 49  
Appendix F: Class Tour List .............................................. 54  
Appendix G: Exhibit Brochure .......................................... 62  
Appendix H Exhibit Blog Post ........................................... 69  
Appendix I: Exhibit Website ............................................. 70  
Appendix J: Opening Reception Speech ............................... 76  

An Unlikely Place

Carrying a box of donuts and a green notebook, I breathed in the familiar smell of Egg McMuffins™ and maple syrup. But this McDonald’s seemed unfamiliar. People chatted in booths while a “waitress” circled tables offering free refills of coffee and small talk. It was a scene out of a local diner, not a busy chain restaurant in a college town. Over the murmur of conversation, Ken and his “boys” gathered around a large table. The steam from their black coffee (no cream, no sugar, no frills) fogged their thick glasses. One man’s jovial belly laugh implied that someone just told a good joke. At the table Stephen Gordon (Steve), from the William Holmes McGuffey Museum, sat next to Dr. Kenneth Glass (Ken). Ken and his friends were all senior citizens and veterans; some were children during World War II. They met every morning at the usual spot, at the usual time (8 a.m. at the McDonald’s on South Locust Street). Today’s meeting was different. It transformed from casual conversation into a story circle with a goal of recording historical information and developing new historical accounts.

Jittery with excitement, I introduced myself to the coffee group and offered my gift for Ken—birthday donuts. The donuts acted as a gesture of kindness and an opportunity to build “rapport essential to good oral history.”¹ Small actions like this show “courtesy and regard,” which builds confidence between participants and the interviewer.² Ken and the group recognized the thought, which built a sense of trust and affirmed I was there to be the “perfect listener.”³

My informal interview process began with open-ended questions followed by probe questions, which made them elaborate on specific events. At McDonald’s, the men responded in serious tones and dictated facts about Pearl Harbor, the Sullivan brothers, and other events from the traditional narrative they thought I wanted to hear. As the conversation relaxed, personal stories surfaced and the “mundane” parts of life filled the conversation. One man collected bacon grease for his mother and turned the fat in to the local butcher. The bacon grease meant to make bullets, but no one was really certain if it did. Someone else talked about meatless Thursdays and putting honey on their cereal. He told me he still puts honey on his cereal because of the war. They reminisced about playing war games with their friends on the way to school and fighting

² Charlton, 23.
³ Charlton. A perfect listener is an active listener. Approving head nods and small comments encourage participants to share without interruption. 23.
over who had to play “the Japs.” They talked about their war jobs, volunteering, and morning war bond drives at school. Feeding off one another, the stories kept coming. Some even compared their experience with others. I furiously jotted down notes.

I saw many connections between their stories and current scholarship on World War II experiences, but there were contradictions as well. “Did you notice any propaganda?” I asked. Many of the men shook their heads, no. They said they did not see any propaganda other than in newsreels. What motivated them to help in the war effort? The resounding answer was their parents and friends encouraged them but it was also “what you did” at that time. “You did everything you could for the war effort,” they explained, “but it never felt like it was enough.” These contradictory responses confused me. They said they were not influenced by propaganda, yet they felt participating was something they had to do? It made me ask myself: did they realize what propaganda was? Could they recognize it now, or is it still unknown to them? Bubbling with enthusiasm and the desire to know more, I left McDonald’s with pages of notes and the realization that oral histories were going to be a major body of evidence for my project.

Interview Process, Community Influence, and Memory

I found more participants by presenting information about the project at community meetings such as the McGuffey Museum volunteers monthly meeting. I visited historical societies and archives and spoke with their volunteers who had been children during the war. While collecting items from historical societies and archives, I inquired about any information the objects and if the original owners were living. I spoke with the spouses, friends, and siblings of other participants. Through word of mouth, people approached me with their stories and referred me to others. I always made sure I had a listening ear and a notebook to jot down conversations. Most of my participants saw their stories as unimportant and their wartime actions as nothing special. They did not realize their own historical value. To them, history happens to “important” people, not through the accounts of ordinary people like themselves. Their memories revealed an understudied topic of history, which had the potential to change the perspective of children on the American homefront.

With every potential participant I started with broad, informal interviews that lasted upwards of two hours. I said as little as possible about my research. If asked, I told participants I was doing a project on children of World War II experiences. I went from broad questions about their war experience to specific questions about their involvement with war related activities that I believed were fueled by propaganda. In the closing, I asked them if propaganda affected their lives. It took participants longer to speak about their personal experience rather than “important events” when there were no personal artifacts present. When personal objects entered into the conversation informants began to speak outside of the traditional narrative and directly address their experience. To shorten the length of my official interviews, I decided to focus the questions on loaned objects and to highlight only six participants. Intensity of experience, geographic region, and found objects determined who was featured in the exhibit.

Where a person lived and how dependent their area was on the war industry affected the power of a participant’s war experience. Children in rural areas far from war industries experienced the war through newsreels and radio broadcasts, but did not emphasize the war as much. Mary Sue Kallander, Barbara Wright Reed, and Jim Blount lived in areas dominated by the war. Mary Sue and Barbra lived in rural college-towns where officers trained for the war. Mary Sue, however, lived in a rural area far from the war as well. When Mary Sue moved to Athens, Ohio, she noticed the war was barely talked about. When she told her teacher she was afraid about the war, her teacher said for her not to think about it. It was too far away to matter. Jim lived in an industrial city, Hamilton, Ohio. The majority of people living in his town worked for factories that produced items for the war. The war dominated their worlds and created very powerful war experience memories. Don, Dean, and Ruthie Kallander lived in a suburban area, Tacoma, Washington. Their West Coast experience differed from others because of its proximity to Japan. Yet, Tacoma’s urban and rural character allowed for a more neutral ground where people feared the war but it did not consume their lives. Participants who lived in urban areas not dependent on war industries had a much less intense experience. Major cities that had war industries but provided other employment opportunities reduced the overall pressure and influence of the war on children.

Gas rationing confined Americans to their towns and cities because it limited gas consumption and the ability to drive long distances. The Office of Price Administration (OPA) distributed gas-rationing books with three different classes: Class A, Class B, and Class C
coupons. Most Americans received Class A, Americans with jobs important for the war effort received Class B and C. Class A coupons allowed each car 150 miles for their jobs and 90 for family outings like running to the grocery store per month. It gave just enough gas to make it to work and for very few daily errands. Class B and C allotted more gas and allowed for some flexibility in travel. The OPA also limited the amount of gasoline fueling stations could hold. People put stickers on the windshields of cars so gas station attendants would know the classification of the driver. Serial numbers had to be added to Class B and C stickers because many people bought counterfeit ones on the black market. None of the classifications allowed anyone to travel long distances or take frequent weekend leisure drives. Before the war, Dean Kallander and his family visited his grandparents who lived just two hours away. They had to save up for a year in order to have enough gas to make the trip. Immediately after the war ended, Dean and his family packed their bags and drove to his grandparents.

Despite their range of experiences, participants usually responded first by framing the war in a pre-determined traditional narrative. John Bodnar explains in The Good War in American Memory that the diverse set of intense memories about the war “forced [Americans] to create three powerful narratives” to conceptualize it. He identifies the three narratives as traditional, critical, and humanitarian. The traditional view saw World War II as the time for American to become a global super power; critical views highlighted the war’s injustices and sought to disproved myths of the war like the myth of American exceptionalism. Critical views highlighted the war’s injustices and sought to disprove myths of the war such as the myth of American exceptionalism. Humanitarians believed that the war fought for “righteous and compassionate ends” that extended human rights to individuals. He concludes that traditional perceptions prevailed because the critical and humanitarian “weakened the project to valorize the nation and to enhance its sense of privilege.” Many of my participants remembered the war in Bodnar’s traditional narrative form because that is the prevailing memory of the war and aligns most closely with the messages that propaganda used to shape their view of the war. Barbra Wright Reed remembers the was as a time of “great patriotism.” Many others remembered that

6 Bodnar, 6.
7 Ibid, 7.
8 Barbra Wright Reed. Phone Interview by Katherine Wright, October 27, 2014. Oxford, OH.
people worked hard and sacrificed everything they could. But memories are fickle; because of this, I approached all my interviews with care and a healthy degree of skepticism.

Good interviewers should be able to determine if a participant’s memories are based on fact, personal invention, or the influence of time. Oral stories are recollections based on the present not reactions from the past. They “depend largely on how people have perceived life’s experiences and how well they have stored information.” 9 One person cannot remember their life perfectly but this does not lessen the importance of oral histories as a historical source. Scholars and students should apply the same methods as oral interviews as to written documents because both are subject to the same biases or errors. Historians can err because their analysis of primary documents interprets information without confirmation from the originator of the documents. Oral historians (and myself) must locate documentary evidence and compare them to their participants’ comments. I approached every interview with caution and verified my respondents’ accounts by comparing their answers to scholarship and their consistency in later interviews.

Interviewers must employ their discernment skills to decide whether or not an interview is valid after the participant learns about the project. People’s tendency is to please others. If a participant knows what the project is about, they can sometimes change their responses. Participants desire to “help” oral historians sometimes makes them respond in ways they think will strengthen the research. They do not realize it can diminish the validity of their historical account. This project was particularly difficult because it focused on a part of people’s lives they had not questioned before. To counteract any bias of my participants, I included notes from our initial interview as well as the recordings of the official interviews.

The Physical Exhibit

This project did not originate in the unexpectedly homey atmosphere of our local McDonald’s. The pages of a children’s book, Keedle (1940), and the Schools at War Poster (1942) at the Walter Havighurst Special Collections were the starting point of this project. Keedle, an obvious characterization of Hitler, is the story of a little boy who would “grow a mustache and become a dictator.” 10 Its politicized messages raised questions such as, why would

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9 Charlton, 35.
parents buy a book like this for their children? Why was this book published before United States involvement in the war? What does this say about the political climate at that time? What other ways did propagandists try to influence children about the war? The Schools at War poster’s vivid colors and idealistic children made me wonder what was life like for children during the war? How much did they see propaganda? Did boys and girls want to be like students in the poster? Did they do all the things this poster promoted? Both items demanded answers.

Compelled to find out, I searched the library and the Internet for some explanations. I discovered that there is very little scholarship on the role of children during the war, and almost nothing about the affect of propaganda on American children. Dumfounded, I said to myself, “this cannot be right. It is far too interesting a topic. How could this not been written about before?” I delved deeper and separated my research into three topical categories: American war propaganda, the American home front, and children. The six most important works included: David Welch’s *Power, Propaganda, and Persuasion*, Allan Winkler’s *The Politics of Propaganda*, Susan A. Brewer’s *Why America Fights*, William M. Tuttle’s *Daddy’s Gone to War*, Stephen Mintz *Huck’s Raft*, and Ross F. Collins’ *Children, War, and Propaganda*. Together, the books provided essential background knowledge as well as evidence but only one (Ross F. Collins’ *Children, War, and Propaganda*, which I did not find until later in the project) focused on how World War II propaganda influenced American children. This, I realized, is my thesis project.

Artifacts and Space

Diving through the archives and personal collections of people, I collected objects that contributed to the exhibit and would interest my audience. Books and magazines from the Special Collections and Southwest depository provided additional images and historical context. I picked through piles of boxes and hundreds of uncatalogued and unprocessed propaganda

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posters in the Butler County Historical Society. Archival boxes at the Smith Local Library of Regional History required careful investigation. Every visit to each institution resulted in new findings. Some items were selected with a specific idea in mind, and others were set aside because of their potential contribution to my argument. For example, I found an air raid warden’s helmet in the Butler County Historical Society. At first I grabbed it because it was interesting and, after I interviewed Don and Dean Kallander, who volunteered as air raid warden assistants, the helmet had its use in the exhibit. It represented the adult responsibilities children assumed during the war and allowed the audience to see what they wore.

Despite all my work at planning the exhibit, once I began mounting the materials the exhibit changed. I had fretted that I would not have enough material to fill the space but two carts full of items proved to be much more than I could ever fit. Limited space meant that I had to be very intentional about the objects and images. I agonized over some items. Deciding to not place them in the cases felt like I was breaking up with them. Artifacts from the Special Collections appear in almost every case. I continually eliminated items and captions from the exhibit. Captionless photographs allowed my audience to interpret their meaning and not be overwhelmed by the amount of text.

Captions and Audience

I faced an entirely different set of issues than a written research essay. The exhibit addressed a non-academic audience so I opted for fewer words in the captions and a less-formal tone in the writing. David Dean explains in Museum Exhibition: Theory and Practice that “the audience is the least understood and the most frustrating…because people themselves are complex and unpredictable.”

My core audience was undergraduates aged eighteen to twenty-two and my secondary audience included local community members aged forty to ninety. According to the Values and Lifestyles Segments Model, my primary audience is “experimental”: youthful individuals who seek a direct experience and are person-centered. Text from the interviews placed people at the center of my exhibit. My secondary group, “belongers,” are aging, intensely patriotic, and sentimental individuals, according to marketing studies.

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13 Dean, 21.
14 Ibid., 21.
War II is often viewed by this age group with nostalgia. Either they recall stories about their parents’ involvement or they appreciate the prosperity they experienced after the war. Two factors about my exhibit bind the two groups together. First, World War II appeals both groups. They enjoy the topic and have some prior knowledge before they enter. Second, both groups enter my exhibit to learn and engage with material. The exhibit is in a university library, which means that my audience was more educated than what is typically the average public. Capitalizing on this aspect, I used their education level to my advantage and made slightly longer captions with an average vocabulary.

I used an “interpretive approach” to my labels. Label content was aligned to the major interpretative arguments of my exhibit. Without a set path for visitors, labels had to both stand alone and build the arguments of the project. A central panel outlined the overall argument of the exhibit, and if visitors read that first all the captions then addressed that main point. This technique follows what Beverly Serrell has argued, that “when museum practitioners produce labels that are guided by clear goals, and contain accessible content and have words and visuals that work together, more visitors will understand, find meaning in, and enjoy museum exhibitions.”

Because the Walter Havighurst Special Collections Library serves an undergraduate population, Dr. Sheumaker and I conducted a captions workshop in her AMS/HST 435/545 Public History Practicum class in an early stage of the exhibit development. Caption drafts were posted around the room, without images, and students commented on the captions and discussed them as a class. The student responses helped me develop captions that would address students’ learning needs.

Living Sources as Audience

A key advantage of my research, the use of living sources, proved to be a slight challenge in developing my exhibit. My participants were a part of my audience, and I was concerned that my analysis of their stories might offend or anger some. Some of my conclusions contradicted what some had asserted to me about the lack of affect of propaganda on their war experiences. I was suggesting that many children were manipulated government messages. No one likes to hear they are being manipulated, especially when the commenter is a young woman who never lived

in the time period. I was careful about how I presented my argument especially about sensitive topics such as the inculcation of hatred of the Japanese.

Museums and historical societies often struggle to address controversial issues in their exhibits. Neil Harris explains that traditionally, society labeled museums as spaces dedicated to reflecting “accepted truth” rather than seeking the truth.\textsuperscript{16} Today, museums “create as well as reflect the historical values of their visitors” and play a more political role in the community.\textsuperscript{17} Scholars of museum studies have demonstrated that museums sometimes do avoid controversial topics or exhibits because of fears that donors will withdraw funds, board trustees will rebel, and public outrage will drown out any message museums attempt to project. Museums are, as Harris notes, unable to avoid controversial topics.\textsuperscript{18} It is a disservice when museums present only comfortable histories. The public needs to understand history in both positive and negative lights. By incorporating both sides, an audience can understand the gravity of events and effectively understand history.

In my exhibit, I discussed the negative feelings my participants held towards the Japanese during the war. I decided to make it very clear in the case why Americans justified racism toward the Japanese, not necessarily to excuse it but to contextualize it. Placing the narrative in a national context placed the blame outside of individual participants and towards American society at that time. Conveying that my participants no longer felt that way in the captions helped diffuse some of the negative assumptions my audience might develop based on participants’ responses. Including potentially controversial information, such as the success of the anti-Japanese propaganda in changing American children’s views of Japanese people, proved to be a strength of the exhibit. When I gave private tours, the Education of Hate case with Mary Sue’s notebook and Keedle produced more questions and evoked emotional reactions from visitors. The collage of offensive images also confronted the audience with an uncomfortable American past that encouraged racism against the Japanese people.

\textsuperscript{17} Harris, 1109.
\textsuperscript{18} Harris, 1102.
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For Information About This Program See Teachers at War, Published by the Education Division, War Savings Bureau, Washington, D.C.
Objects and Visual Culture

Material objects and visual culture were as important in the exhibit as the texts from the interviews. World War II propaganda attacked the senses: strong color, dramatic angles, overly-emphasized racial and ethnic characteristics have the same emotional, polarizing impact today as these images had during the war. The visual aggressiveness of the images threatened to overwhelm my interpretive argument. At the same time, the posters were, according to the interviewees and the scholarship, integral to motivating children, in part because of the visually aggressive appearance. Propaganda posters, personal artifacts from interviewees, children’s books, and other materials connected to the war that demonstrated the inescapable presence of propaganda’s messages and its successful outcomes were included in the cases. The staff of the Walter Havighurst Special Collections and I devised a new way to display the posters so they would “float” further out from the case and capture audience attention. I developed “quote boards,” that presented a key quote from an interview at the top of the visual space of each case. The quote boards highlighted the personal memories of participants and were supported by the artifacts included in the case. In *A Place not a Place*, David Carr explains that personal memory in an exhibit creates a more powerful experience for its audience. When the audience views individual memories they become “momentary mirrors of the invisible life now gone.”¹⁹ The quotes capture that “invisible life” and make its audience a part of that past by connecting them to real people. By incorporating real stories with physical objects, the audience can personally connect with the exhibit. Material objects made that “invisible life” more visible. The objects and the quote boards spoke to the major themes of the exhibit: war bonds, children’s adult responsibilities and voluntary labor, patriotism/active citizenry, and the education of hate. All symbols depicted in the *Schools at War Poster* (1942).

The Office of Education’s gripping propaganda poster *We Are Ready How About You? Join the Schools at War Program* (1942), features three idyllic children presumably marching towards victory. Each child represents a different action: war bond sales, voluntary labor, and

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patriotic support. The SaVe, SeRVe, and Con瑟Ve motto appears at the bottom of the poster.20 The blonde-haired girl saves her dimes for the war. The All-American teenage boy serves his country by contributing his time and body. The youngest boy conserves the American way of life by embodying the values of democracy for generations to come. The commanding images pointed towards home and celebrated the power of the individual. The goals of propaganda efforts such as these posters were to obligate children to the war effort in order to maintain “good morale.” “We have just as much responsibility in this war as any adult,” says The War-time Handbook for Young Americans. “Anybody who says otherwise doesn’t know what they’re talking about.”21 The poster’s sponsors reveal the integral role of schools in distributing propaganda to children.

The Power of Sight

In many ways, the war was an attack on the senses. “You could not escape it,” confirms Jim Blount. People smelled the war when they cooked rationed meals. They felt the war when they tore off gas ration coupons and broke yellow dye capsules into Oleo. They heard the war over the radio and in every day conversation. The most overpowering sense, however, was what Americans saw. Images generate visceral reactions. People animate them and let them have power over them.22 Images of the war dominated the movie screens, storefronts, and telephone polls and these images shaped how boys and girls visualized the war, how they understood their role in it, and ultimately, how they remembered it.

We are viewing posters, objects, and images in a context different than that of the wartime years. It is impossible to capture the exact reactions of children, but we can attempt to recreate those experiences through individual memories and how individual interpret those experiences today. The main goal of World War II propagandists to insist the war was necessary and that citizens needed to do whatever they could to ensure victory. Propagandistic images like Schools at War children represented an ideal wartime child-citizen. Children looked at this poster

20 Victory was a word on the lips on every American and even on Mary Sue Kallander’s first grade spelling list. The parts, save; serve; conserve, supposedly all created victory on the home front. A popular slogan for the letter was “V for Victory.”
and wanted to be one of those marching children and be praised by their parents, peers, and country. Swelling with pride, active children might have thought: “I have done these things. I am just like them. I am an active part of this war. I am ready.”

In *Picturing Russia*, Valarie Kivelson and Joan Neuberger propose the theory *seeing into being*. Seeing is being is a “recurrent and powerfully effective idea that it is possible to depict what exists just out of reach.”

Exposing an individual to an image of an idea over a long period of time convinces the viewer that the image can be or already is a reality. Oftentimes, the viewer makes that image real through action. Kivelson and Neuberger propose that Russian government created their national identity through viewing a range of images and objects that symbolized what it meant to be Russian. American children of World War II were likewise subjected to such images. Children’s books, propaganda posters, newsreels, and other visuals showed children “correct demonstrations” of young citizens fulfilling their patriotic duty. These images, paired with pressure from parents and peers, spurred children to join in supporting the war. For Jim Blount, posters promoting carpooling and public transportation around Hamilton, Ohio made him aware of the importance of gas rationing and affected his ideas about car travel. He remembers the “If You Ride Alone, You Ride with Hitler! Join a Car Sharing Club Today,” (1942) poster more than any other poster at that time. “Every time I saw someone driving alone in their car or driving at all I always thought ‘is that necessary?’” Other posters such as the Office of Defense Transportation poster asked Americans the same question, “Is Your Trip Necessary? Needless Travel Interferes with the War Effort.” (1943) Propaganda made Jim judge others’ dedication to the war based on if they drove alone, in a carpool, or opted not to drive at all. The continuous reproduction and circulation of images such as gas rationing posters convinced children like Jim to make “necessary” sacrifices and pressure others to do the same.

Children willingly participated in the national war effort and asked others to join because propagandists created the illusion of choice. In *You, Your Children, and War* Dorothy W. Brauch writes that “a first essential [component] to democracy is free participation. Not the forced participation of the Nazis…People in a democracy must want to participate.” Americans believed that the nation was a free country, even during wartime. Propagandastic messages

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24 Jim Blount. Interviewed by Katherine Wright, February 26, 2014. Hamilton, OH.
argued that personal choice separated the United States from the enemy. The slogan of *The Schools at War* poster asks children to participate; it does not demand it. The “This is America Keep it Free” poster series likewise promoted the idea of free choice. One poster, displayed in the exhibit, shows a mystical father-son moment. The father says, “Yes, son, this is America…Where freedom to do…to think…to speak is your right and your heritage.”26 Children were encouraged to believe participation was an option, not a requirement. “It was not something [we] needed to do,” says Dean Kallander, “it was something [we] had to do.”27 Children saw their support of the war as their choice, not the result of outside factors. The images helped produce an overwhelming pressure to participate in the war effort, but their affect was hidden from its targets, children.

Schools at War

Children’s emotions, and judgments are developed in part at school. During the war, schools inserted the values of propaganda into curricula and activities. War-related activities and values at school created a social environment that equated children’s self-worth to how much they participated.28 Children’s books such as Lee J. Cronbach’s *The War-Time Handbook for Young Americans* (1942) explained that good citizens were patriotic. That meant helping the war effort by growing victory gardens, collecting scrap metal and rubber, eating all of their dinner, and behaving well for their parents. Schools and parents tried to involve children in the same ways. In *You, Your Children, and War*, Brauch writes that, “Children growing up in a democracy must learn that participation can be satisfying and good.”29 Small actions bolstered childrens’ confidence. “As a twelve or thirteen-year old kid it seemed like you were really doing something,” remembers Dean Kallander, “[even though] sometimes it did not feel like very much.”30

27 Dean Kallander. Interviewed by Katherine Wright. September 2, 2014. Hamilton, OH.
28 Tuttle, 112.
29 Brauch, 91.
30 Dean Kallander. Interviewed by Katherine Wright, September 2, 2014. Hamilton, OH.
War Bonds

*The first young person in the Schools at War poster is a beautiful blonde teenage girl who confidently grins as she waves a war bond in the air. Her wicker basket brims over with Victory Stamps and her sash reads, “Buy War Savings Bonds.” She personifies children’s financial contributions to the war effort.*

Children scraped for dimes to buy war bonds. “I would sit up at night and just worry about how I was going to get another dime,” recalls Mary Sue Kallander, “It always seemed like people filled their books before I did.”31 The center case of the exhibit has *The Victory March; The Mystery of the Treasure Chest* (1942), produced by the Walt Disney Corporation. The story is about Mickey and the gang’s combined effort to retrieve Donald’s stolen bond book from an Nazi-supporting Big Bad Wolf and his Japanese-loving sidekick. After the bond book is recaptured, Uncle Sam tells Mickey and his friends, “I’m proud of you…” (And when you see what stamps will buy, You’ll want to help out, too.)32 Children turned a wheel, which revealed that their bonds has helped purchase Jeeps, guns, and bombs. As a reward, children received their own bond book in a treasure chest to help purchase the same items for the war. *Think* magazine said that in

31 Mary Sue Kallander. Interviewed by Katherine Wright, July 23, 2014.
1944 children purchased approximately 1.3 billion dollars worth of materiel for the war effort.\textsuperscript{33} For my participants, every school held war bond drives and almost every student purchased at least one per week. Mary Sue’s school insisted its students buy war bonds through the “Buy a Jeep” program. She and her classmates loved jeeps because only soldiers used the vehicles. The first civilian model was not available until after the war in 1945. Mary Sue and her friends were avid gum chewers and penny-candy eaters. They vowed to stop spending their dimes on such luxuries and used the money instead for bonds. When a kid did give into temptation bought gum they scraped the tin off the wrappers and turn it in for scrap. Mary Sue’s school raised over a thousand dollars for the Jeep. As a reward, she and other members of the student council got a ride in the unusual automobile.

“Voluntary” Labor

\textit{Like Johnny Appleseed, the teenaged boy with a saucepan on his head stands tall and strong with a worn pair of rubber boots tucked under his arm and patched hoses slung over his shoulder. He symbolized teenagers who collected scrap, took on adult responsibilities, and volunteered their labor for the war effort.}

Propaganda posters encouraged children to collect rubber, metal, and paper, and that is just what they did. They were an integral part in scrap collections because they were a plentiful and available workforce. While their parents worked at wartime jobs, thirty million children collected tons of raw materials on their own and as members of youth groups such as the Boy Scouts of

\textsuperscript{33} Think Magazine’s Diary of U.S. Participation in World War II. (New York: International Business Machines Corp, 1950).
America, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, and 4-H clubs. Schools were drop-off locations for many scrap drives. Children scoured their parents’ and neighbors’ yards for old hoses and raided the waste bins for scarce metals. Summer afternoons were spent in junkyards sorting rusted junk parts. Cramming the scrap into their wagons, they tugged their hauls to waste collecting stations at their schools. The children’s’ labor helped gather the material needed to make bullets, bombs, tanks, jeeps, ships, and airplane—the same items that their war bonds purchased. “When you realize that most of the seventeen and eighteen year olds were going to war, the thirteen and fourteen year olds had to pick up the slack,” said Dean Kallander. In 1944, Dean participated in scrap drives and volunteered as an air raid warden assistant. He explains that, “[Volunteering and working] was something that you did, not that you needed to do, to help the war effort.” Children like Dean were encouraged by schools in multiple ways.

Schools were the major center of information of ways children could participate and the government’s largest supplier of young workers. In 1943, The Federal Security Agency and the United States Office of Education distributed the informational leaflet Training High-School Students for Wartime Service to Children: Suggestions for Administrators and Teachers. Teachers and staff were instructed about how they could start childcare programs using students as workers. It stressed “the energies of youth are a major community resource.” Some schools incorporated these programs into their curricula and encouraged students to engage in “civic partnership.” Shop classes were introduced and students built model airplanes for factories. Schools displayed posters such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Be a Victory Farm Volunteer in the U.S. Crop Corps See Your Principal (1943) that showed “real children” taking on adult roles. In this case, picking crops helped short-handed American farms. Children like Don Kallander saw these posters and applied for war jobs. Sixteen year-old Don felt a “sense of duty” to volunteer and work “to support the people who were fighting.” Don made screen doors at a factory after school and on weekends because “[it] was part of the job…doing whatever we could do or were asked to do in support of the war effort.” Teenagers’ participation filled empty factories and fields that enlisted men left behind.

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35 Ossian, 41.
37 Training, 3.
Patriotic Support and The Education of Hate

The youngest boy carries a model warplane in his hands. His nostalgic aviator cap from the “Great War,” World War I, links him to the earlier world war. The connection to the past highlights the war’s future. He is the next generation of young patriots continuing the legacy of democracy by supporting those who fight for his freedom and hating “the enemy.”

“The feeling I had at the time was great patriotism…” says Barbara Wright Reed.38 Children’s responsibility during the war was to maintain the American way of life. They were to embody democratic values (just as the children on The Ready Ones poster) through their support of the war. Fulfilling their civic duties included hating the enemy. Singing “patriotic” songs at school assemblies was one way children showed their support for the war. Mary Sue’s first-grade choir teacher assigned the children to learn the song, “Deep in the Heart of Tokyo.” The tune’s racist and violent lyrics included dead “Japs” who were “shot in the head” and described bombs dropping all over Tokyo. Such racism was justified by schools at the time for the sake of patriotic display and because the hatred towards the Japanese was legitimate, because Pearl Harbor was personal. American government propaganda inculcated and confirmed many Americans’ hatred of the Japanese.

38 Barbra Wright Reed. Phone Interview by Katherine Wright, October 27, 2014. Oxford, OH.
In the propaganda, the Japanese people became sharp-toothed, cockeyed monsters who preyed on the innocent and terrified children. “My biggest fear was that the Japanese would bomb Oxford,” says Barbara. When a plane passed Barbara’s house, she would run inside to hide in her closet. In fact, children rarely saw planes in the skies because so many commercial airlines halted domestic flights to reserve resources for the war. Nevertheless, the Office of War Information produced plane-spotting books to help Americans identify enemy and friendly planes. The government conducted air raid drills to prepare civilians for an enemy attack. Plane-spotting books and air raid drills were intended to help Americans plan for bombings, but the drills often created more panic than preparation. Jackie Blount was just three years old at the war’s start but the attack on Pearl Harbor gave her nightmares that lasted years after. “At night, swinging in the corner of my room, I would see a tiny Japanese man with a large palm leaf.” Terrified, she pulled the covers over her head and pleaded for him to go away. “I would not put my arm out or leg out because I was afraid that if I did he would cut it off with his sword.”

Jackie had never seen a Japanese person before; propaganda posters created her tormentor through their caricature of him on the posters.

Propaganda against Germans was quite different. “We were taught there were good Germans, bad Nazis, but no good Japanese,” said Mary Sue. Germans were categorized as “good Germans” who were innocent victims of Hitler and “bad Nazis,” the products of Hitler’s brainwashing. Keedle (1940), a children’s book, made this distinction. Keedle, a mini-Hitler in appearance and action, “takes off his halo” and gains control of Germany because “people were like sheep.”

Walt Disney Studio’s cartoon short, Education for Death: The Making of the Nazi (1943), demonstrated the same examples as Keedle for Hitler and Germans. According to the cartoon, the Nazi state even modified fairy tales such as Sleeping Beauty in order to teach young children that democracy is evil and make Hitler seem the hero. In the exhibit, I show how Americans created children's books that made democracy the hero and Hitler the enemy. In the more serious parts of the clips, the short follows the life and development of Hans, a Nazi. His school and German society molds Hans, a peace-loving boy, into a "mindless German soldier" who “sees no more than the party wants him to, says nothing but what the party wants him to

say, and does nothing but what the party wants him to do.” In closing, Hans marches towards his own death, orchestrated by the Fuehrer.

Newsreels, cartoon shorts, and feature films shaped how children pictured the war and the enemy. “We had never seen a bomb,” said Mary Sue Kallander. “I did not even know what one looked like until I saw one in a newsreel.” Mary Sue’s family entertained two German prisoners of war (POWs) for a Sunday dinner. Her mother felt unsure about “feeding the enemy,” but did it because their pastor had suggested it. The young men confused Mary Sue because they were nothing like she imagined. "Here I was suppose to hate them and the enemy wasn't all that bad," says Mary Sue, "They were really quite charming." Jim Blount also encountered German POWs. After D-Day several trains with German POWs rode through Hamilton, Ohio. He went expecting to see "inhuman creatures," but saw "subdued men...beaten mentally, not physically. It was a real shock.”

Many Americans blamed Germans for the First World War. During World War I, The Committee on Public Information (CPI) attempted to create a similar caricature, the German Hun. It did not convince Americans because they discovered the CPI made up stories about the “barbarism” of the Hun. It also failed because many Americans were of German descent, which complicated relationships with German-Americans. But in the Midwest, hating the Japanese was easier for the simple fact that most children had never met a Japanese person. “There were no Japanese people around us so we could hate all of them,” says Mary Sue.

For children on the West Coast, however, hatred of Japanese did not come as easily. Dean Kallander lived in Tacoma, Washington during the war. “There were rumors about the Japanese,” says Dean. A large population of Japanese people lived in Seattle and the surrounding valleys. He and his father bought vegetables from them. “My father observed that the internment of the Japanese had nothing to do with disloyalty. It was just a land grab for their productive farms.” After the U.S. government interned Japanese Americans, their farms were ruined and many communities never recovered from their absence. Don’s father’s observations shaped

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42 Jim Blount. Interviewed by Katherine Wright. February 26, 2014. Hamilton, OH.
Don’s view of the Japanese far more than his information picked up at school. Still, for many American children Hitler and the Japanese were a threat to their country and “to their very lives.”

“You have to teach to hate before you can teach to kill,” observed Mary Sue. Many surviving children now recognize that the negative representations were wrong and no longer hate Japanese people. Yet for some tensions linger about Japan and its citizens. Some respondents have traveled the world but “have no desire” to visit Japan. Others cannot bring themselves to buy Japanese cars. Many remain shocked that the United States has close ties to Japan today. “We were not perfect. We were all victims of propaganda,” concludes Barabra Wright Reed.

Why the Ready Refuse

Many people do not understand what propaganda is and what its influence can be, and that includes many of the participants of this study. Propaganda is any message distributed by the government for political gain. Its purposes are to persuade the public to think or believe new things, reaffirm thoughts and feelings its audience already holds, and encourages them to act on their impulses.44 Propaganda filters into society in two different ways: overt propaganda and covert propaganda. Overt propaganda is a deliberate form of propaganda that comes “from a known source and understood to be based on facts.”45 Covert propaganda is less deliberate and comes from “hidden sources” that typically comprised of false information. Participants identified newsreels as propaganda because it was overt propaganda. The Office of War Information (OWI) delivered the reports in newsreels and its political purpose was identified by that office. Americans trusted overt propaganda because the OWI followed a “strategy of truth.” Participants in my study, however, were not aware of “covert propaganda” that embedded itself into the homefront and daily life. For children, covert propaganda came from many sources including their parents and peers.

Most parents urged their children to participate in the war effort because the propaganda industry assured them that involvement benefitted their sons and daughters. Self-help books such as You, Your Children, and War (1942) urged concerned mothers that “children growing up

in a democracy must learn that participation can be satisfying and good.\footnote{Brauch, 91.} Parents incorporated propaganda’s messages into the home through children’s literature and by employing children to help with war-supported activities. Parents bought children’s books because their simple language and illustrations were tailored to a specific market of children that also appealed to adults. The books entertained children while educating them about moral values connected to the war and informing them of ways to participate.

Children absorbed propaganda’s messages in part because such information came at a very important time in their development. "Any child who went through that period it is a part of their personality," says Barbara Wright Reed, "the hard work, the chores, and feeling part of a larger thing; a part of the country." They remained unaware of propaganda’s influence because they were at an age where they did not question their actions or adults. The time period did not encourage them to question either. “I thought everything they told me was the truth,” says Barbara Wright Reed. “I did not realize until much later was not.”

Today, there is the assumption that propaganda is necessarily damaging to its audience. Propaganda’s negative connotation stems from World War I. Before that, propaganda was a neutral term. The public exposed World War I propaganda manipulative campaigns based on lies and sensationalized stories, which created skepticism about its use and a sinister reputation. But propaganda can have positive results. In \textit{Propaganda, Power, and Persuasion}, David Welch argues that propaganda can be good because it can form order out of pandemonium. He believes that society can avoid bad propaganda by exposing its falsehoods. For children, World War II propaganda calmed some of their fears and gave them a sense of purpose. Barbara Wright Reed remembers that war-related activities “made them feel a part of something bigger than themselves—a part of the country.” For Barbara, her actions gave her a sense of purpose that calmed her fears about the war and made her feel that her contributions allowed her to have some control over the outcome.

Participants struggle to define the role of propaganda in their childhoods. Embarrassed by its negative connotations, many participants do not want to admit that they succumbed to propaganda as children. “There was not a need for [propaganda], because all [the government] had to do was ask.” says Dean Kallander. Many view the propagandistic messages of their World War II childhood as more neutral “government information.” At the exhibit reception Dean told
me that he “took issue” with my exhibit. Barbara Reed Wright’s comment about believing “everything” the government said was true was especially irksome to Dean He insisted that I did not understand the difference between propaganda and government information. Dean was unwilling to think of propaganda as government information. Participants like Dean refuse to accept the idea they were motivated by propaganda to act in specific ways, but that does not mean they escaped propaganda’s influence. Dean volunteered as an air raid warden’s assistant and made sure that all six houses on his block had their blackout shades down and their lights off during a drill. Was his action due to the positive effects of propaganda? In our first interview, Dean told me that he and other children participated in the war not because they “needed to” but because they “had to.”47 Another participant, Fred Holl, volunteered to pass out gas rationing books and “doubled up on coupons” so he could double date with his friends. He also joined the ROTC program at his high school and he later fought in the Korean War.48 One man from the coffee group assured me that he “wasn’t affected” despite the fact that he took on a war job as a farmhand. All deny that their actions had anything to do with the government. The actions suggest that, despite their denials, propaganda did effect their behavior, encouraging certain actions and discouraging others.

Ruthie Kallander admitted that at the time they “did not recall any of the information as being propaganda” but today she says it was.49 Mary Sue Kallander said in her first interview that propaganda did not have a significant effect on her childhood. It shocked me when I pressed the record button for our second and more formal interview and Mary Sue insisted that she “was propagandized.” As a living source, she has the power to change the narrative of her experience. These shifts in narration do not diminish the historical value of her evidence. Her initial response was a reaction to her feelings in the past. She did not recognize the propaganda in her childhood, because as a child she did not understand what it was. Mary Sue re-evaluated her past actions and aspects of her childhood experience after I asked her specific questions about her life. Mary Sue began research her own past. She attended a class reunion and asked classmates about their war experiences. She re-read her school notebook and revisited all of the things she

47 Dean Kallander. Interviewed by Katherine Wright. September 2, 2014. Hamilton, OH.
kept from the war. Recalling her past allowed Mary Sue recognize how propaganda permeated her childhood and influenced her actions and ideas well into adulthood.

Conclusion

Historians develop intense relationships with the people and the places we research; this is not a weakness in a scholar. Working with living sources, I was lucky enough to develop real friendships with many of the people I interviewed and studied. My participants shared their memories and loaned their precious possessions that were connected to their childhoods, their pasts, and our nation’s history. After viewing the exhibit, Mary Sue Kallander said to me, “You took a part of my life I had almost forgotten and made it something important.” Her words made me realize the significance of this project to my participants and to myself. The project helped them recognize their important role in history, and understand that ordinary people can be important historical actors.

The public engagement in this exhibit, its arguments, and its evidence demonstrates that when, after meeting the men at the McDonalds in Oxford, I decided to include interviews I made the right decision. The words of those who lived through the childhood experience of war animated the artifacts, enlivened the narrative, and most importantly suggested the ways that memory and history both combine and collide. My obligation as a historian was to ask participants to consider the influence of wartime propaganda. Even though most participants in my study denied the effects of propaganda, my obligation to the visitors of the exhibit was to suggest that my interpretation of their memories conflicts with their interpretations of the past.

The arguments and contradictions are a reason this project succeeded in engaging audiences in the past. I still believe that a steady stream of propaganda reinforced the values and ideas that became central to American children’s moral perspective because the war came at an essential time in their development. American children became “the ready ones” in the wartime effort in part because of the advertising, television promos, and radio broadcasts of the day encouraged them to do. Their experiences embodied the belief that victory in a total war required total participation and the values the media served up to the American public was quickly embraced by a huge majority of the public. For many children, the moral values of the wartime propaganda followed them into adulthood. “We were not perfect,” says Barbara Wright Reed, “we were all victims of propaganda.” Propaganda created in them distinct character traits such
as their intense patriotism and the seemingly innate desire to serve one’s country. The onslaught that propaganda enforced was so successful that its relationship to Americans at that time is still uncertain with many of my participants. The complex relationship between propagandists and memories of the children of World War II cannot be resolved through my exhibit at the Walter Havighurst Special Collection. This project is not over. While the complex relationship remains problematic with my participants, further research into this area can help to bring similar issues for other World War II children to light. For now, the exhibit opened that conversation and brought it to the public attention.
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Reed, Barabra Wright. Interviewed by Katherine Wright, October 27, 2014. Oxford, OH.


Appendix A: Museum Proposal

Submitted to Elizabeth Brice, Assistant Librarian, Assistant Dean of Technical Services, and Special Collection Staff. Submitted on March 28, 2014 for request to house exhibit in the Special Collections Library

Project Description

During World War II, propaganda was inescapable for American children. It infiltrated radio programs, comic books, children’s stories, lampposts and store windows, school programs, daily lessons, in play, and every day conversation. Propaganda employed outside actors, such as schools and parents, in combination with saturated media to compel children to participate willfully in the war effort. Children participated in a variety of ways, but propaganda specifically asked that they contribute to war bond sales, scrap collection, and rationing. Beyond physical action, it also called children to sacrifice and be brave. My thesis project utilizes a wide variety of Special Collections materials that compellingly argues in a visually appealing exhibit the importance of children’s participation and propaganda’s influence on their lives and war efforts.

Museum Audience

The exhibit would take place in either the Spring or Summer of 2015. The central audience will be Miami undergraduates, graduate students, faculty and staff, local Oxford residence, and local school’s history classes. I have already spoken with Dr. Thomas Misco, a distinguished professor of Social Studies Methods here at Miami. He has expressed that he would bring his class and encourage other instructors to bring their students to view the exhibit. I also plan to contact local history teachers and schools and encourage them to bring their classes to explore the exhibit. Local students will be able to connect to the material because the exhibit revolves around children their age.

To encourage more students and faculty the exhibit, I plan to compose an oral history project as a promotional event in the Fall or Spring of 2015. I would advertize the event on campus and conduct it in either King Library or the local Smith Library. I have already made close connections with the local community by speaking to several local citizens who
experienced the war. Many are extremely interested in the project and expressed that they would be happy to participate. The oral history project would allow the Miami University community an introduction to the exhibit and encourage them to explore it more deeply.

**Preliminary Exhibit Format**

The exhibit will center on Irving Nurick’s 1942 poster entitled *We are Ready how About You? Join the Schools at War Program*. The poster features a patriotic color pallet of red, white, and blue with three idyllic children walking towards victory. It enlists the support of children on three fronts: war bond sales, scrap collecting, and sacrifice; the three major themes of the exhibit. Several of the museum cases will capture children’s involvement in scrap collecting, war bond sales, war jobs, and rationing. Three other cases will feature parents, schools, and the government all influences that reinforced propaganda’s objectives. Lastly, I will incorporate technology by utilizing footage from the oral history project. The interactive audio guides will enhance various portions of the museum exhibit and allow visitors to engaged themselves with the material.

**Exhibit Materials**

I will display several of the Special Collections materials, which include but are not limited to: the fascinating children’s books *Keedle, Listen Hitler! The Gremlins are Coming*, and *A Wartime Handbook for Young Americans*. The books will demonstrate the various expectations children had in participation and how children’s literature was used to persuade children that the American cause for war was noble. Several propaganda posters like the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s poster entitled *Be a Victory Farm Volunteer in the U.S. Crop Corps See Your Principal* and Irving Nurick’s Schools at War Program Poster, *We Are Ready How About You? Join the Schools at War Program* will show how advertizing and visually appealing media persuaded children to enthusiastically partake. I also plan to utilize several informational materials such as the *Think* Magazine’s article on children’s involvement, because it includes statistical analysis and empirical data on children’s efforts in a national context. Special Collections also has a book entitled *Kangaroo Xerxes*, a personally published book that contains copies of a father’s war letters to his children. He playfully illustrates his war experience to his
young children and encourages them to buy war bonds. This book is a wonderful example of how father’s still attempted to parent from the front and encourage their children to help the war effort. All the items listed and several more for the Special Collections Library will be the main focus in the cases and of the exhibit.

I plan to include forgotten artifacts from the South West Depository like the captivating guidebook for American Mother’s You, Your Children, and War and Alice B. Winn-Smith’s intriguing cookbook Thrifty Cooking for Wartime. You, Your Children, and War provides thought provoking imagery and exemplifies mother’s debates on if children should be involved and at what age. The cookbook is a fanciful example of how rationing effected children’s daily lives and their diets.

I also have arranged to use local Oxford residence’s personal artifacts. The personal artifacts may include an old can used to collect bacon grease, a plane spotting book, an air raid warden’s arm badge, ration coupons, and a collection of old toy soldiers.

**Conclusion**

In my teaching experience at Miami, I have discovered that World War II and propaganda fascinates many undergraduates. It is my firm belief that the exhibit’s unique historical perspective and appealing subject matter will encourage a large, diverse student audience as well as faculty members and the local community. My undergraduate in Social Studies Education will greatly help me to create a museum that provides thought provoking imagery, stimulates student curiosity, engages an audience, cultivates complex questions, and teaches the audience about children’s war experience and participation. My passion for art and electronic media will help me design an interesting exhibit that will draw people in and incorporate new technologies. I heartily believe that the exhibit will highlight materials from the Special Collections and draw a wide audience. It is my sincere hope that the exhibit not only inform the public of childrens efforts, but also reflect the incredible resources the Special Collections Library has.
Appendix B: Oral History Consent Form and Loan Agreement

Submitted to participants for official interviews and for loaned objects.

2014 Katherine Wills-Wright Master’s Thesis Project
Oral History Informed Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in an interview in connection with Katie Wills-Wright’s Oral History portion of her thesis project with the Walter Havighurst Special Collections because of your experience as a child during World War II.

1. You will be interviewed by one person about your memories and experiences in connection to the war and with specific artifacts.
   - It is possible that sensitive issues may be discussed concerning events during the war. You understand that you have the right not to discuss those issues if you wish.
   - A list of potential topics will be provided, but the interviewer may add additional topic in the course of the interview and/or ask for a follow-up interview as needed.
   - Prior notes made in previous meetings can be used for the exhibit unless you decide to withdraw from the project.

2. Most interviews will take approximately one to twenty minutes. There are no anticipated risks to participation in this interview. However, you acknowledge that your name will be used in the interview and that you will not be anonymous. Other risks include the length of the interview.
   - During the interview you may request to stop the recording at any time to discuss or clarify how you wish to respond to a question or topic before proceeding. You can withdraw from the interview at any time without prejudice prior to the execution.
   - You will also have the opportunity to make special provisions or restrictions in the last portion of this form.
   - In the event that you choose to withdraw during the interview, any recording(s) made of the interview will be either given to you or destroyed, and no transcript will be made of the interview.
   - With your permission, a photograph of you will be taken or borrowed for duplication. If you withdraw from the project, all copies of the photograph will be given to you. Any negative or digital image will be destroyed.

3. The interview will be audiotaped and/or videotaped, transcribed, and made available for public and scholarly use. Subject to the provisions of paragraphs below, upon completion of the
interview, the recording(s) and content of your interviews and the biographical information belongs to Miami University and can be used by the Havighurst Special Collections in any manner it will determine, including, but not limited to, future use by researchers in presentations, productions, public radio, the World Wide Web or other digitization projects, and publications. This includes, but is not limited to, all rights, title, and interest in the interview and photograph, including the literary rights and copyright.

- You have the option to allow your interview to be used by the Walter Havighurst Collections and or Miami University. Any member of the general public will have access to this interview and your words may be quoted in scholarly and popular publications.

5. The Walter Havighurst Special Collections and Katherine Wright agree that:
   
   A. It will not use or exercise any of its rights to the information in this interview for the exhibit prior to the signing this form.
   
   B. Restrictions on the use of this interview can be placed by you and will be accepted as amending the rights to the content of the interviews.

6. Any restrictions as to use of portions of the interview indicated by you will be handled by editing those portions out of the final copy of the transcript. The original recording will not be edited.

7. Upon signing the consent form, the recording(s), photograph, biographical information, and one copy of the transcript will be kept in the Walter Havighurst Special Collections.

8. If you have questions about the research project or procedures, or your rights as a participant in research you can contact Katie Wright, (513) 277-9725, willske@miamioh.edu or Elizabeth Brice, Assistant Dean for Technical Services & Special Collections, (513) 529-4140, bricee@MiamiOH.edu
I agree to participate in this interview.

______________________________  ______________
Signature of Participant Consent  Date

______________________________  ________________________________
Phone Number  Email

I permit my interview be audio taped and/or videotaped, and transcribed material can be used for

____  for Katherine Wills-Wright’s Thesis Exhibit

____  for the Walter Havighurst Collection’s Archives

____  for the WHSC’s online archive

____  All of the Above

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting the participant to sign it.

______________________________  ______________
Signature of Investigator  Date
Loan Agreement

Description of materials:

Restrictions on the use of and/or access to these materials:

Legal Conditions of the Loan Agreement

1. The conditions set forth in this form apply to all objects lent Miami University and the Walter Havighurst Special Collections and cannot be altered, changed, waived, or otherwise amended, except as agreed upon in writing.

2. The Walter Havighurst Special Collections will exercise the same care with respect to the item referred to as it does in the safekeeping of comparable property of its own.

3. The item shall remain in the possession of Walter Havighurst Special Collections and Miami University for which it has been borrowed for the time specified, but may be withdrawn from such exhibition at any time by the Borrower and/or any of the participating institutions.

4. The work will be returned only to the Lender at the address stated unless the Borrower is notified by the Lender in writing to the contrary. If the legal ownership of the work shall change during the duration of the loan, whether by reason of death, sale, insolvency, gift or otherwise, the new owner or agent may, prior to its return, be required to establish this legal right to receive the item by proof satisfactory to the Borrower. It is incumbent upon the Lender to notify the Borrower of any change of address.
5. Unless otherwise indicated, the cost of transportation and packing will be borne by the Lender. The method of shipment shall be agreed upon by both parties. The Lender certifies that the property is in such condition as to withstand the ordinary strains of packing, transportation, and handling. The Lender shall assure the property is adequately and securely packed for the type of shipment agreed upon, including transmitting to the Borrower any special instructions for unpacking and repacking.

6. It is understood that the Borrower will not unframe, clean, restore, repair, rehouse, or otherwise alter the work without the express consent of the Lender. Evidence of damage to works while in custody will be reported immediately to the Lender.

7. Unless the Borrower is notified in writing to the contrary, it is understood that the objects lent may be photographed, videotaped, telecast, and reproduced for publicity purposes of the exhibit by the general public.

8. The Borrower’s right to return the work shall accrue absolutely at the termination of the loan. If the Borrower, after making all reasonable efforts and through no fault of its own, shall be unable to return the work within 1 year after such termination, then the Borrower shall have the absolute right to place the work in storage, to charge regular storage fees and the cost of the insurance therefore, and to have and enforce a lien for such fees and cost. If, after five years, the work shall not have been reclaimed, then, and in consideration for its storage, insurance, and safeguarding during such period, the work shall be deemed an unrestricted gift to the Borrower.

9. The Borrower accepts this agreement on the understanding that the Lender has full authority to enter into such an agreement as the legal owner of the work or authorized agent of the owner.

This agreement may be revised or amended by mutual consent of the parties undersigned.

Accepted by:

________________________________________ Date __________________

Borrower—Walter Havighurst Special Collections and Katherine Wills-Wright

________________________________________ Date __________________

Lender signature

________________________________________

Lender address and telephone number
Appendix C: Tentative Exhibit Layout

Submitted to Elizabeth Brice, Assistant Librarian, Assistant Dean of Technical Services, and Special Collection Staff. Submitted on October 23, 2014 to show the tentative layout for exhibit cases.
Appendix D: Exhibit Photographs

These are photographs of the final set up of the exhibition.
Unlike Anti-Japanese propaganda, Anti-Nazi propaganda blamed Hitler more than the German people. Children’s books such as Keedle explained how Keedle (Hitler) rose to power and taught children to hate him. Mary Sue Kallander explains that “you have to teach to hate before you can teach to kill.”
Walt Disney Studios created hundreds of cartoons & shorts in support of the war. Tap on each child to see an example of these films.

Don't Let That Shadow Touch Them
Buy WAR BONDS
Appendix E: Exhibit Captions

This is a copy of all of the captions in the physical exhibit as well as the quotes for the “quote boards.”

Introduction:

World War II propaganda influenced American children to take action and join the national war effort. Propagandists made the war a battle between good and evil, democracy and fascism. In response, children sacrificed whatever they could to support the war effort. They became the ready ones and did as President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked, “that every man, woman, and child…share together the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories—the changing fortunes of war.”

Stories from people who were children during World War II and the objects in this exhibit animate the past and inform us of a time when war took over daily life. Children’s memories and their wartime actions show the power of propaganda’s messages and its affect on their lives. The steady stream of it came at an essential time in many American children’s developments. “Any child who went through that period it is a part of their personality,” says Barbara Reed Wright, “the hard work, the chores, and feeling part of a larger thing; a part of the country.”

Fear: (Don’t let the shadow touch them poster)

Main Case Caption:
Shaken by the attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, children feared the Japanese would bomb their homes or attack them. Jackie Blount was just three years old at the war’s start, but the attack on Pearl Harbor gave her nightmares that lasted years after. “At night, swinging in the corner of my room, I would see a tiny Japanese man with a large palm leaf.” Terrified, she pulled the covers over her head and pleaded for him to go away. “I would not put my arm out or leg out because I was afraid that if I did he would cut it off with his sword.”
Other children watched the skies for the enemy. Mary Sue Kallander explains, “We were told that if we ever saw an enemy plane on the playground that we should run to the principal’s office as fast as we could and tell him exactly what we saw.”

Caption 2: (Plane Spotting Book)
Children rarely saw planes because many commercial airlines temporarily stopped domestic flights for the war. The Office of War Information produced plane-spotting books to children and adults to help them identify enemy and friendly planes. The United States government also conducted air raid drills to prepare Americans for an enemy attack. Plane spotting books and air raid drills tried to help Americans plan for bombings, but air raid drills created more panic than a sense of being prepared.

Patriotism:
“When the war started the feeling I had was great patriotism…” –Barbara Wright Reed
Bottom Case: (Handbook for Young Americans and photograph of children participating)
The propaganda industry used parents to repeat its messages to children. Books such as The Handbook for Young Americans explained that good citizens were patriotic. That meant helping the war effort by growing victory gardens, collecting scrap metal and rubber, eating all of their dinner, and behaving well for their parents. Parents tried to involve their sons and daughters in the same ways. Barbara Wright Reed says these activities “made them feel a part of something bigger than themselves—a part of the country.”

Education of Hate:
“We were taught there were good Germans, bad Nazis, but no good Japanese…” Mary Sue Kallander.
Top Case: (Mary Sue notebook and photo)
Mary Sue Kallander sang “Deep in the Heart of Tokyo” in her elementary school choir class at The Murray State Teacher’s College Training School in Murray, Kentucky. “When I took something like this home my parents did not approve of it… but they made it very clear to me that I should hate [the Japanese] temporarily while we were at war.”
The American public justified racism and hatred towards the Japanese because Pearl Harbor “was personal.” Many surviving children now recognize that the negative representations were wrong and no longer hate Japanese people. Yet, many still harbor lingering tensions towards the nation of Japan.

Bottom Case: (Keedle)
Unlike Anti-Japanese propaganda, Anti-Nazi propaganda blamed Hitler more than the German people. Children’s books such as Keedle explained how Keedle (Hitler) rose to power and taught children to hate him. Mary Sue Kallander explains that, “you have to learn to hate before you learn to kill.”

Gas Rationing:
“Every time I saw someone driving alone in their car or driving at all I always thought ‘is that necessary?’…. ” –Jim Blount

Top Case:
For nine-year-old Jim Blount, gas rationing made him aware of the importance of fuel. He recalls not feeling guilty about going to the movies because it was an activity that did not use a lot of gas and entertained him and his friends all day. For Fred Holl, it affected his teenage social life. “My friends and I would double date so we could double up on gas rationing coupons,” said Fred. Gas rationing promoted the idea of self-sacrifice for the war effort and acted as a daily reminder that America was at war.

Bottom Case:
The Office of Price Control gave out two classes of gas rationing coupon books to each adult per household. Americans with jobs deemed important to the war effort received Class A coupons, which awarded a few extra gallons. Average Americans had Class B coupons. Gas rationing mandated a speed limit of 35 miles per hour, and allowed no one to frequently travel long distances or take weekend drives.
War Bonds:

Top Case:
American civilians funded over half of the $300 billion dollar war through war bonds. According to Think magazine, in 1944 children purchased approximately 1.3 billion dollars worth. Every school held war bond drives, almost every child purchased at least one per week. Mary Sue bought them not also to support but also “because [she] was terrified that if [she] did not, we would lose the war.” Bonds came in several different values, but most children bought ten-cent war bond stamps. Children collected war stamps in booklets worth $18.75. After ten years they exchanged the full booklets for $25 dollars.

Bottom Case:
Mary Sue’s school encouraged children to buy more war bonds through the “Buy a Jeep” program. She memorized and sang several songs in class about war bonds and the “marvelous Jeep.” In 1941, the military designed them for government use. Children loved jeeps because only soldiers used the exciting vehicles. The first civilian model was not available until after the war in 1945.

Volunteering and War Jobs:
“When you realize that most of the seventeen and eighteen year olds were going to war the thirteen and fourteen year olds had to pick up the slack.” - Dean Kallander

Bottom Case:
Don and Dean Kallander, as well as other children, took on adult jobs and responsibilities during the war. Some teenagers, aged thirteen to sixteen, attended school part time and worked in either a war industry or on a farm. Sixteen-year-old Don Kallander felt a “sense of duty” to volunteer and work “to support the people who were fighting.” Don made screen doors at a factory after school and on weekends because, “[it] was part of the job…doing whatever we could do or were asked to do in support of the war effort.” Teenagers’ participation filled empty factories and fields enlisted men left behind. Other children also offered their time by volunteering at daycare centers, passing out ration books, selling war bonds, or through other activities. Dean Kallander explains that, “[Volunteering and working] was something that you did, not that you needed to do, to help the war effort.” In 1944, fourteen-year-old Dean volunteered as an air raid warden in
Tacoma, Washington. While Dean was in charge during an air raid, all six of his houses had their lights off and their black out shades down. Dean explains that, “as a twelve or thirteen year old kid it seemed like you were really doing something, [even though] sometimes it did not feel like very much.”

Interactive Touch-Screen Video Short Captions:

Der Fuehrer’s Face:
The Academy Award winning short, *Der Fuhrer's Face* (1943), which makes fun of the Hitler-worshipping Nazis and Axis powers. In the beginning, the marching band members are caricatures of Hirohito, Mussolini, the helmeted "German Hun," and other important Axis leaders. Donald Duck represents the average German citizen who salutes the dictator whenever his image appears. Donald works in a munitions factory and works so hard he experiences a mental breakdown. At the end of the short he wakes up from his nightmare in the United States. With a sigh of relief, he breathes, "Boy am I glad to be a citizen of the United States of America." Donald's work environment differs little from many Americans working the same job, for the same cause, but on the opposite side during the war. The short implies that all Americans should be grateful they live in a "free" country and laugh at the silliness of the Nazi state.

Education for Death 1:
*Education for Death: The Making of the Nazi*, produced by Walt Disney Productions in 1943, follows the life and development of Hans, a Nazi. The film shows how school and German society makes Hans, a peace-loving boy, into a "mindless German soldier." Mary Sue Kallander's family entertained two German prisoners of war (POWs) for a Sunday dinner. Her mother felt unsure about "feeding the enemy," but did it because their pastor suggested it. The young men confused Mary Sue because they were nothing like she imagined. "Here I was suppose to hate them and the enemy wasn't all that bad," says Mary Sue, "they were really quite charming." Jim Blount also encountered German POWs. After D-Day several trains with German POWs rode through Hamilton, Ohio. He went expecting to see "inhuman creatures," but saw "subdued men...beaten mentally, not physically."
Education for Death 2:
This short in *Education for Death* (1943) explains how the Nazi state changed classic fairy tales, such as Sleeping Beauty, in order to teach young children that democracy is evil and make Hitler the hero. As seen in the exhibit, Americans also created children’s books that made democracy the hero and Hitler the enemy. Movies were another important way propagandists reached children. Boys and girls watched movies over and over in dark theaters. Newsreels, cartoon shorts, and feature films shaped how children pictured the war.

Exiting Quote and image:
“We were not perfect. We were all victims of propaganda. I thought that everything they told us was the truth. I did not realize until much later it was not.” –Barabra Wright Reed
Appendix F: Class Tour List

List of private tours for classes at Miami University

Eric Jensen HST 472 29th of January 11:30 am.
Steve Norris HST 670 Images and History, February 3rd 1:00 pm.
Aaron Cavin HST 369 U.S. History in the Modern Era, February 4th 10:00 am.
Helen Shemaker AMS/HST 304 History, Memory, and Tradition February 9th, 4 pm.
Nashani Fraizer HST 433/533 Oral Traditions February 16th, 4 pm. March 31st at 1 pm.
Appendix G: Exhibit Brochure

Written and designed by myself for the exhibit with the assistance of Heather Bennett, Program Assistant at the Miami University Oxford Library. Created January 28, 2015.
THE READY ONES
American Children, World War II, and Propaganda

Walter Havighurst Special Collections
Miami University Libraries
January 26 – May 15, 2015
Two days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on Japan, Italy, and Hitler. President Roosevelt determined that he needed to “win the war” and “win the peace.” To fulfill his goals, he personalized propaganda and told Americans it was their duty to fight for world peace and that victory would bring a better life for all.

Six months after his speech, President Roosevelt created the Office of War Information (OWI). The OWI produced or regulated the majority of propaganda with its own goals and strategies. It believed that propaganda should follow a “strategy of truth,” which delivered a simple messages based on “facts.” Roosevelt “hindered the development” of the OWI, however, by creating other government organizations like the Office of Facts and Figures (OFF). The OFF censored calculations given to the OWI. When the public discovered this it almost ruined the OWI. To recover its reputation, the OWI redirected its goals towards home to programs “aimed at generating support for the war.” Its new approach advocated the sale of war bonds, encouraged participation, and sustained morale.

Even though President Roosevelt and the OWI had different goals the dual approach succeeded because many Americans supported the war. Children especially approved of it because they did not question it. “I thought that everything they told us was the truth,” says Barbra Wright Reed. “I did not realize until much later it was not.” The values and ideas reinforced by a steady stream of propaganda became central to American children’s moral perspective because the war came at an essential time in their development. “Any child who went through that period it is a part of their personality,” says Barbra, “the hard work, the chores, and feeling part of a larger thing; a part of the country.”
An Inescapable Reality

In the morning, boys and girls ate sugarless cereal and margarine on their toast. In the afternoon, their schools taught them to be democratic citizens. In the evening, children like Jim Blount dug trenches with friends and played war. At night, some sat around the radio to hear where “Killroy” was on the map. “It affected every part of your life,” confirms Jim. He saw propaganda posters for gas rationing that made him question, “Is that necessary?” for every car that passed. For Fred Holl, it affected his teenage dating habits. “My friends and I would double date so we could double up on gas ration coupons,” said Fred. The war dominated life; few could escape its influence.
Some surviving children believe that propaganda did not influence them. They think their parents motivated them, but what motivated their parents? The propaganda industry used parents to repeat its messages to children. Books such as The Handbook for Young Americans explained that good citizens were patriotic. That meant helping the war effort by growing victory gardens, collecting scrap metal and rubber, eating all of their dinner, and behaving well for their parents. Parents tried to involve their sons and daughters in the same ways. Propagandists recognized parents’ important role and used that relationship to involve both parent and child.
Duty Calls

By making children “a partner” in the war, President Roosevelt obligated them to the cause. Jim Blount’s grandfather worked up to seven days a week as a molder in Hamilton, Ohio. When he came home after an 8 or 11-hour day he worked his .25-mile victory garden in an old canal bed. Jim’s grandfather “felt like anything he did for the war wasn’t enough.” Jim followed his grandfather’s example and gave whatever he could.

Jim acted much like the children on the Office of Education’s Schools at War Program poster, We Are Ready How About You? Join the Schools at War Program (1942), which shows “correct demonstrations” of “good citizenry.” The Office of Education’s poster displays several idealistic children participating in the three major fronts: scrap metal collecting, war bond sales, and patriotic support. Jim gathered paper, collected tin foil for school scrap drives, and saved his mother’s cooking grease for bullets and homemade soap. He also took all the left over produce from the Victory Garden and gave it to anyone who passed by—all behaviors of an ideal child and citizen.

Propaganda such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Be a Victory Farm Volunteer in the U.S. Crop Corps See Your Principal (1943) poster shows “real children” taking adult roles by actively picking crops to help short-handed American farms. Some schools displayed posters and added shop classes. In those classes students built model airplanes for factories and taught them the necessary skills for war jobs. Don and Dean Kallander took on adult jobs and responsibilities during the war. Sixteen-year-old Don felt a “sense of duty” to work at a screen door factory in Tacoma, Washington after school and on weekends. Dean volunteered as an assistant air raid warden in Tacoma, Washington. While Dean was in charge during an air raid, all six of his houses had their lights off and their black out shades down. Dean explains that, “as a twelve or thirteen year old kid it seemed like you were really doing something, [even though] sometimes it did not feel like very much.”
"I would sit up at night and just worry about how I was going to get another dime," recalls Mary Sue. She and her friends were avid gum chewers and penny candy eaters. They vowed to stop spending their dimes on it and used them for bonds. When someone caved and bought gum they scraped the tin off the wrappers and turn it in for scrap.

Many boys and girls felt bound to the war effort and sacrificed beyond their means. Mary Sue lived in a relatively poor area of Kentucky but her school insisted its students buy more war bonds. It encouraged children to buy more through the “Buy a Jeep” program. She and her classmates loved jeeps because only soldiers used the exciting vehicles. The first civilian model was not available until after the war in 1945. Mary Sue’s school raised over a thousand dollars for the Jeep. As a reward, she and other members of the student council rode in the rare automobile.
Shaken by the attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, children feared the Japanese would bomb their homes or attack them. Jackie Blount was just three years old at the war’s start but the attack on Pearl Harbor gave her nightmares that lasted years after. “At night, swinging in the corner of my room, I would see a tiny Japanese man with a large palm leaf.” Terrified, she pulled the covers over her head and pleaded for him to go away. “I would not put my arm out or leg out because I was afraid that if I did he would cut it off with his sword.”

Other children watched the skies for the enemy. When a plane passed Barbra Wright Reid’s house in Oxford, she immediately ran inside to hide in her closet. “My biggest fear was that the Japanese would bomb Oxford,” she says. Children rarely saw planes because many commercial airlines temporarily stopped domestic flights for the war. The OWI produced plane-spotting books for children and adults to help them identify enemy and friendly planes. The government also conducted air raid drills to prepare civilians for an enemy attack. Plane spotting books and air raid drills tried to help Americans plan for bombings, but air raid drills created more panic than a sense of being prepared.
Education of Hate

The American public justified racism and hatred towards the Japanese because Pearl Harbor "was personal." Propagandists confirmed many Americans’ hatred of the Japanese and created a sense of "otherness" because they did not look like the average American at that time. Japanese became sharp-toothed, cockeyed monsters who preyed on the innocent.

World War II propagandists did not create the same type of propaganda against Germans they classified "good Germans" as innocent victims and "bad Nazis" as products of Hitler’s brainwashing. Many Americans already blamed Germans for the First World War. During World War I, The Committee on Public Information (CPI) attempted to create a similar caricature, the German Hun. It did not convince Americans because they discovered the CPI made up stories about the "barbarism" of the Hun. It also failed because many Americans were of German descent, which complicated relationships with German-Americans. "There were no Japanese people around us so we could hate all of them," says Mary Sue.

For children on the West Coast, hatred of Japanese did not come as easily. Dean Kallander lived in Tacoma, Washington during the war. "There were rumors about the Japanese," says Dean. A large population of Japanese people lived in Seattle and the surrounding valleys. He and his father bought vegetables from them. "My father observed that the internment of the Japanese had nothing to do with disloyalty. It was just a land grab for their productive farms." After President Roosevelt interned them, their farms ruined and never recovered from their absence.

Many surviving children now recognize that the negative representations were wrong and no longer hate Japanese people. For some, lingering tensions towards the nation of Japan remain. Some traveled the world, yet “have no desire” to visit Japan. Others admit they cannot bring themselves to buy Japanese cars.
“Retrospect is very interesting,” says Ruthie Kallander. “At the time I don’t recall any of the information we got as being propaganda. There wasn’t a question about the fact that it was necessary whatever that was...” Children’s recollections and their war-related participation show the power of propaganda’s messages and its affect on them. When asked why they participated almost all said they felt like they could never do enough for the war effort. Dean explains, “It was not something [we] needed to do—it was something [we] had to do.” Propagandists obligated children to the cause by constantly asking them to “be ready” and to do whatever was “necessary” for it.

Children became an integral part of the war effort, but it also became an important part of their identity. “[Propaganda] has a permanent effect,” says Mary Sue Kallander, “you can’t deny it.” For many children what they did for the war determined their self worth. Barbra Wright Reed says war-related activities “made them feel a part of something bigger than themselves—a part of the country.” Children’s labor filled the desperate need for ammunition, bombs, and military vehicles. They volunteered thousands of hours and collected tons of material. Their pains and endurance embodied the belief that victory required their involvement. “We were not perfect,” says Barbra, “we were all victims of propaganda.”
End Notes


3. Winkler, 54

4. Killroy was a popular drawing of a large-nosed man. He represented American G-I troops. Radio stations gave out Killroy buttons that some children placed them on world maps in their home to track where American troops were that day.


Exhibited Books


Images.


- The Sheldon Claire Co. This is America Keep it Free, No. 8. Print. Chicago: The Sheldon and Claire Co., 1942


Acknowledgements

This exhibit is curated by Katherine Wills-Wright with assistance from Elizabeth Brice, Kimberly Tully, Bill Modrow, Marcus Ladd, Ashley Jones, Jim Bricker, and the Center for Digital Scholarship. This exhibit is a part of Katherine’s masters’ thesis project. She conducted all of the interviews from surviving children in the Oxford, Hamilton, and Tacoma area. The participation of community members and the cooperation of several other organizations were integral to this project. Special thanks belongs to:

The Walter Havighurst Special Collections
for its staff, archives, support, and exhibit space

The Butler County Historical Society
for its loan of several artifacts and posters

The Smith Library of Regional History
for its loan of several artifacts and poster

Lee Hendley at the Tacoma Washington Historical Society
for his efforts to scan and send photographs of the Kallander brothers

The Florida Memory Blog
for its permission to use a photograph for the exhibit

Stephen Gordon at the MucGuffey Museum
for his support and information

To featured participants Jim and Jackie Blount, Fred Holl, Dean and Mary Sue Kallander, Don and Ruthie Kallander, and Barbara Wright Reed, and all other participants of this thesis project,
Thank you for sharing your memories and your personal items for this special project.
Appendix H: Blog Post

Authored by me on February 18, 2015 for the purpose of promoting the exhibit
like Don Kallander. "As a twelve or thirteen-year old kid it seemed like you were really doing something, [even though] sometimes it did not feel like very much," remembers Don. Thousands of children like Don did their patriotic duty by collecting scrap metal, saving their dimes to buy war bonds, and doing whatever was "necessary" for the war effort.

Motivated by propaganda, boys and girls also contributed thousands of hours and tons of material for ammunition, bombs, and military vehicles. "There wasn't a question at that time about the fact that it was necessary, whatever that was," says Ruthie Kallander. Propaganda flickered across movie screens and hummed over the radio. Schools adopted its values and taught their students that good citizens did whatever they could for the war effort. Parents read books that told their sons and daughters to buy war bonds and hate the enemy. Children absorbed it, but remained unaware of its influence. "Any child who went through that period it is a part of their personality," says Barbra Wright Reed, "the hard work, the chores, and feeling part of a larger thing; a part of the country." Children's memories and their wartime actions show the power of propaganda's messages and its affect on their lives. "We were not perfect," says Barbra, "we were all victims of propaganda."

Katherine Wills-Wright
Graduate Student

Mark your calendars! Spring Exhibit Reception Tuesday, March 17, 4-6 p.m., King Library. Free and open to the public.

Our 2015 Spring Exhibit The Ready Ones: American Children, World War II, and Propaganda is now open!
Appendix I: Exhibit Website

Authored by me but the webpage was created and designed by Marcus Ladd, Special Collection Digital Librarian and Assistant Librarian for the Miami University Library.
World War II propaganda influenced American children to take action and join the national war effort. Propaganda made the war a battle between good and evil, drew empathy and fear. In response, children sacrificed whatever they could to support the war effort. They became the ready ones and did as President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked, "that every man, woman, and child, share together the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories—the changing fortunes of war."

Stories from people who were children during World War II and the objects in this exhibit animate the past and inform us of a time when war took over daily life. Children's memories and their wartime actions show the power of propaganda's messages and its effect on their lives. The steady stream of it came at an essential time in many American children's development. "Any child who went through that period it is a part of their personality," says Barbara Wright Reed, "the hard work, the chores, and feeling part of a larger thing; a part of the country."

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**War Bonds**

She and her friends were not just clever and dependency study sisters. They vowed to stop spending their money on it and used it for bonds. When someone saved and bought a bond they stapled the list of the names and isn't it. In her words:

Mary Sue and her friends band together to sell war bonds and sacrifices beyond their means. Mary Sue's mother in Kentucky, missed the student days more than the other students. She encouraged her students to buy more through the "war bonds" program. She and her classmates loved war bonds because they were used in the selling process. The first cologne was not available until after the war in 1945. Mary Sue's school passed over to a thousand dollars for the Jeep. She reveals, she and other members of the student bond made in the spa automatics.

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Clip from the Academy Award-winning short, Der Futterwurm (1943), which不开出the(interpreting) Nazi and Axis powers. In the beginning, the meeting band members are at the factory, Mussolini, the famous "German raw" and other important Axis leaders. Bismarck runs represents the average German citizen who resides wherever he is. At the end of the short he reveals as from his nightmare in the United States. With a song of war's horrors, "We are going to be a citizen of the United States of America." Oswald's work environment offers life in many Americans working the same, et. for the same cause, but on the opposite side during the war. The short makes us all Americans to be grateful they live in a "free" country andought the sickness of the last state.
Fear

Shocked by the attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, children feared the Japanese would bomb their homes or attack them.

Jasika Bitum was just three years old at the war's start but the attack on Pearl Harbor gave her nightmares that lasted for years after. "It's like an image in my mind that I can't shake. It was like a nightmare, a large, dark void." She would often wake up in the middle of the night and cry out in fear. "I would picture the Japanese invading America, and it would haunt me for years." 

One child described the fear of the war: "When I was small, I would see planes flying over my house, and I would wonder if they were friendly or not." This was a common fear among children during the war, as they were often told to be vigilant for enemy planes. "I would watch the planes fly over and wonder if they were friends or not," one child recalled. "I remember being scared of the war and the possibility of it happening again." 

The Ready Ones

Education of Ills

Propaganda was a powerful tool used by the government to prepare Americans for the war effort. "We were not perfect. We were all victims of propaganda. I thought that everything they told us was the truth," said Barbara Wright. "I did not realize until much later that it was not." 

The government used propaganda to create a sense of fear and准备 for the war effort. "I remember the fear that was created around the war," said another child. "I remember being told to be careful and to stay away from enemy territory." 

The government used propaganda to create a sense of fear and prepare for the war effort. "I remember the fear that was created around the war," said another child. "I remember being told to be careful and to stay away from enemy territory."
Clip from Education for Death: The Making of the Nazi, produced by Walt Disney Productions in 1943. The short follows the life and development of Hans, a Nazi. The film shows how school and German society made Hans, a peace-loving boy, into a “inhuman German soldier.” Mary Sue Kalender’s family entertained two German prisoners of war (POWs) for a Sunday dinner. Her mother felt unsure about “feeding the enemy,” but did it because their pastor suggested it. The young men confounded Mary Sue because they were nothing like she imagined. “Here I was supposed to hate them and the enemy wasn’t all that bad,” says Mary Sue. “They were really quite charming.” Jim Buehler also encountered German POWs. After 3-day several trains with German POWs rode through Hamilton, Ohio. He went expecting to see “inhuman creatures,” but saw “subdued men, beaten mentally, not physically.”

Conclusion

Children’s reactions and their war-related participation where the power of propaganda messages and, perhaps, even more. When even very little participated in some way they felt like they could never do enough for the country. “The children that were in the school, they were doing something for the country,” said one teacher. “They were not doing much, but they were doing something.” Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts. Children often described their feelings about the war as “exciting” or “frightening.” Some felt a sense of responsibility for the country’s war efforts.

This article is part of a campaign by the National WWII Museum to bring the story of World War II to life through the voices of those who lived it. The Museum’s Website (www.nationalww2museum.org) offers an extensive collection of primary sources, including photographs, documents, and oral histories, as well as interactive exhibits and multimedia presentations. The Museum’s mission is to preserve the courage, sacrifice, and endurance of the American people during World War II and to inspire future generations to make positive contributions to society. The Museum’s programs and exhibitions are supported by a variety of organizations, including individual donors, corporate partners, and foundations. The Museum is committed to providing high-quality educational experiences for visitors of all ages and backgrounds.
Appendix J: Opening Reception Speech

Speech given on March 17, 2015 at the Walter Havighurst Special Collection. The opening reception is a public exhibition and an official opening of the exhibit. The main purpose is for the curator of the exhibit to explain it and possibly give private tours or answer any audience questions. For my reception, students from the History Club acted as greeters for the exhibit. Food was served and I answered any questions from invited guests such as other faculty, staff, librarians, and participants.

As many historians know, we develop an intense relationship with the people and the places we research. For many of us, the relationships develop in our minds and stay between pages. I was lucky enough to develop real and honest friendships with many of the people I interviewed and studied. I wanted to thank each and every one of the many participants for sharing your memories with me and loaning your precious possessions that are deeply connected to your childhoods, your pasts, and our nation’s history.

This project began in two very distinct places: right here in the Special Collections and in an oddly homey McDonald’s on South Locust Street. The idea came to me when I opened the children’s book Keedle and saw the Schools at War poster for the first time. At that moment, I knew this was my thesis. In the spring of 2013, Steven Gordon graciously spoke to Dr. Kenneth Glass on my behalf and asked if I could join him and his friends at their McDonald’s coffee group. I came in carrying a box of donuts for Ken’s birthday and came out with a green journal full notes and an idea about the oral history aspect. This exhibit is the product of those paths. It has been a labor of love. Even though it began in my head this exhibit does not belong to me. It belongs to the children who put a face to the facts and gave this exhibit a voice. It belongs to the Smith Library of Regional History and the Butler County Historical Society for opening their archives and graciously loaning me some items. Finally, it belongs to Walter Havighurst Special Collections, who provided me the space, their staff, and some of the objects in this exhibit. Without their encouragement and support this exhibit would only exist as an idea.

World War II propaganda influenced American children to take personal action and join the national war effort. Propaganda flickered across movie screens and hummed over the radio. Schools adopted its values and taught their students that good citizens did whatever they could for the war effort. Parents read books that told their sons and daughters to buy war bonds and
hate the enemy. It instilled in them an obligation towards the war effort, and a feeling that whatever they sacrificed was never enough. “It affected every part of your life,” confirms Jim Blount. He saw propaganda everywhere including posters for gas rationing that made him question: “Is that necessary?” for every car that passed. Children absorbed propaganda’s messages, but remained unaware of its influence. But, the values and ideas reinforced by a steady stream of propaganda became central to American children’s moral perspective because the war came at an essential time in their development. “Any child who went through that period it is a part of their personality,” says Barbara Wright Reed, “the hard work, the chores, and feeling part of a larger thing; a part of the country.”

On December 9, 1941 President Franklin Roosevelt somberly addressed the nation. To Americans leaning into their radios he expressed to them, “We are now in this war. We are all in it—all the way. Every single man, woman, and child is a partner in the most tremendous undertaking of our American history.” By making every child “a partner,” President Roosevelt obligated them to the cause. Children approved propaganda’s messages and did not question them. “I thought everything they told us was the truth,” said Barbara, “I did not realize until much later it was not.”

Motivated by the propaganda children donated thousands of hours, tons of materials and billions of dollars for the war. Their small efforts made a large impact on the American homefront. "It was not something [we] needed to do, it was something [we] had to do," explains Dean Kallander. Children’s memories and their wartime actions show the power of propaganda’s messages and its impact on their lives. "[Propaganda] has a permanent effect," says Mary Sue Kallander, "you can't deny it." For many children, what they did for the war determined their self worth and propaganda’s values followed them into adulthood. In Walter George Bruhl Jr.’s self-authored obituary he said that he “chose [his] path,” to enlist in the Marines during the Korean War, “because of Hollywood propaganda, to which he succumbed as a child during World War II.” (legacy.com)

There is a complex relationship between propagandists and the children of World War II. Most of my participants denied their efforts were a product of propaganda, while others recognized it. Ruthie Kallander explained that, "Retrospect is very interesting. At the time I don't recall any of the information we got as being propaganda." Whether or not they recognize its influence during the war or today, American children became the ready ones and did what their
country asked them to do, and “shared together the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories—the changing fortunes of war.” Their pains and endurances embodied the circulated belief that victory in total war required total participation and the values propaganda delivered to the American public. “We were not perfect,” says Barbara, “we were all victims of propaganda.”