

**NEW
URBAN
ARTS**

PRO

SUMMER ART INQUIRY 2018

a resource guide

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PROPAGANDA

a program resource guide

summer art inquiry
new urban arts 2018





ABOUT NEW URBAN ARTS

New Urban Arts is a nationally recognized interdisciplinary arts studio for high school students and artists in Providence, Rhode Island. Our mission is to build a vital community that empowers young people as artists and leaders, through developing creative practices they can sustain throughout their lives. We provide studio and exhibition space and mentoring for young artists who explore the visual, performing and literary arts. Founded in 1997, New Urban Arts is housed in a storefront art studio, located in the West End neighborhood of Providence. Our facilities include a gallery, darkroom, screen-printing studio, tabletop printing press, recording studio, resource library, administrative offices, computer lab and 6,000 square feet of open studio space. We serve over 500 high school students, 18 artists and over 2,000 visitors through free youth programs, professional development, artist residencies as well as public performances, workshops and exhibitions each year.

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

“Propaganda” is a program resource guide based on New Urban Arts’ Summer 2018 Art Inquiry Internship program. This interdisciplinary summer program brought together eight high school students with community scholars and artists for a critical and creative exploration of how the arts are used to spread ideas and beliefs. In the following pages, you will find activities, ideas, conversations, questions, and curriculum for arts workshops that guided our collective inquiry. You will also find additional resources that were used to generate and expand our understanding of propaganda.

We hope you find this resource guide useful as artists, educators, and young people in sparking new ideas for your own creative practice, individually, collaboratively, or even in the classroom. The publication’s format allows you to adapt, combine or alter the activities to your liking to best meet the needs of your specific environment.

This publication is one of a series produced annually. The Summer Art Inquiry Program Resource Guide series is available on our website at www.newurbanarts.org. Please send your feedback and correspondence to info@newurbanarts.org.





FOREWORD

"Any society contains propaganda, but it is important to distinguish this from art and to preserve the purity and independence of the practice of art. A good society contains many different artists doing many different things. A bad society coerces artists because it knows that they can reveal all kinds of truths."

—Iris Murdoch

Propaganda, art, and society have always been intertwined. That's why we dug deep and wide into the ways propaganda has been used historically, aiming to contribute our creative voices to a more just and liberated present by learning not to repeat the past. However, we were driven in our quest to explore and create in opposition to the idea that the masses are dumb, our intelligence small. Rather we set off together on our multi-tiered inquiry into propaganda grounded in the truth that as artists, and members of "the masses," we can build critical skills to decode messages and cultivate the power to produce our own. At a time when the airways and internet are thick with slogans that divide us from each other, red MAGA hats face off against Black Lives Matter T-shirts, and the country battles over building a wall to keep out our neighbors, we have a responsibility to support the development of propaganda literate youth. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to work alongside Art Inquiry Mentors Dana Heng and Dean Sudarsky and our intrepid crew of teenagers engaged in research, conversations, and creative experiments grappling with the dangers and possibilities of making art to deliver a message. I was bolstered by the care this group exhibited for each other's ideas, their commitment to building a multiplicitous world, and their hunger to making meaning and art. Together, we waded headfirst into the onslaught of images that fill our screens and streets and sharpened our ability to identify the propagandist's point of view, desired audience, and intended impact. We walked away from our sweaty days together, our eyes and ears more awake to ourselves and each other; spotting truth and beauty through the static, figuring out what we have to say to this bright loud world.

Onward,
Eli Nixon
NUA 2018 Summer Artist/ Scholar



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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS PROPAGANDA?!?

New Urban Arts' Art Inquiry Program dove into this question for five good weeks the summer of 2018. We looked at who calls what "propaganda," who makes propaganda, why, how, and when is it made, with the goal of influencing whom?! So much to chew on and no shortage of complexities—through inquiry we expanded our understanding together. We took field trips to the RISD Museum, Planned Parenthood, The George Wiley Center, Slater Mill, Providence Public Library's Special Collections, The Providence Dept. of Art, Culture and Tourism, and a local print studio. We hosted conversations with a city councilor, a toy marketer, public health workers, community activists and artists.

All of our explorations and discussions were made possible by taking the time at the beginning of each week and each session to check in with ourselves and re-commit to (or adjust) our group agreements we established on our first day.



To get comfortable approaching ideas from a place of INQUIRY we often started each day playing games like "2 Truths and a Lie" and "I Don't Know" (where pairs ask each other as many questions as possible in 2 minutes and then their partner needs to answer as many as they can, and then they switch.)

We also made "mood cards" at the start of each session to meet everybody where they were at through a contemplative art-making moment. As folks come in they take a card and draw, write, scribble, whatever they want to share with the group about how they are feeling that day. It can be as explicit or abstract as the artist desires. Do a go-round/check in to share.



We made propagandistic posters for and against all kinds of things, shared memes, watched ads, read and wrote manifestos, critiqued news clips, and examined billboards, stickers, and murals on our walks around town. We talked about power, manipulation, enemy making, movement building, identity and “truth.” We invented life-changing products and pitched them to a fake pharmaceutical company as we wrestled with the difference between advertising and propaganda.

We talked a lot about “fake news,” how propaganda is used to spread notions of patriotism and nationalism along with the associated wars, policies, and practices that support or refute our desire and ability to feel a part of a place. We discussed the American flag and all the ways that symbol is used in propaganda (from its invention to today). This inspired us to make our own flags—to wave in support of ideals we hold, neighborhoods we live in, families to which we belong, or an America we are interested in building. We then set off on individual and collaborative efforts to create our own propaganda-inspired projects, wrestling with what messages we need to amplify, and which ones we need to ignore or refute.

Keep It Simple... Or Not...

After weeks of investigating polarizing topics, participants may be thirsty for more nuance and complexity. They may feel resistant to having to state just one position or simplify hairy feelings into an easily packaged message. If this is the case, don’t force it, appreciate the artist’s desire to hold and express complexity and support them in the process of figuring out how to create an artwork that encompasses conflicting ideas or feelings.

WEEK ONE

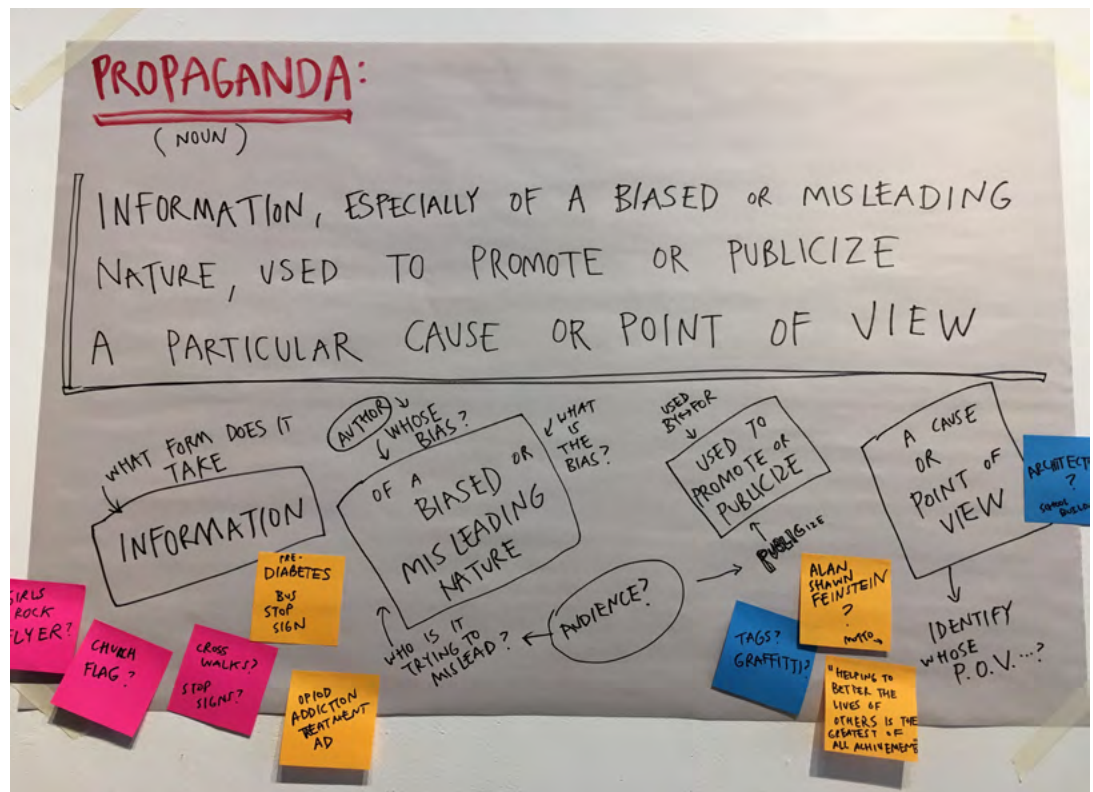
History and Definitions of Propaganda

Defining Propaganda

We started the program by defining the word "Propaganda." Write the definition down on a big piece of paper and hand out different color sticky notes. Break the definition down into chunks and give each section of the definition a color, i.e. information=pink, especially of a biased or misleading nature=blue, used to promote or publicize=green, a particular cause or p.o.v. = yellow.

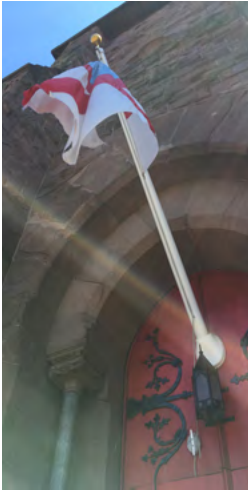
Clarify the meanings of each of those pieces, brainstorm examples and write them, as well as any questions/ ideas on the corresponding color post-it notes. For "Information" people might list newspapers, bill boards, or radio ads. Especially (but not only) of a biased or misleading nature—half truths, insulting depictions, prey on stereotypes and fears.

We continue to refer back to this definition and how we understand it throughout the summer and as we delve deeper into the nuances of propaganda.



Brainstorm first impressions—**What is propaganda?** "When your lip gloss has 'Use Me' written on it is that propaganda?" "What about shopping bags that tell you to 'Have a nice day!'" "What about every college catalogue?" "Or the National Anthem?"

Take a walk around your neighborhood on a **Propaganda Spotting Mission**. Discuss what you think is and isn't propaganda and why. Notice stickers, graffiti, billboards, and signs.



Visit a "Special Collection." Most city libraries or university archives or other repositories of information have some sort of 'special collections' or print and picture department that could host a field trip. Call ahead and ask a librarian to curate a collection of propaganda for your group to peruse. It's helpful to break from our screen-based and modern life propaganda exploration to go lay eyes on actual artifacts used as propaganda throughout history. Knowing there were efforts to get folks to ration food during WWI or encouraging white people to see freed Black people as lazy is one thing, however holding the actual poster or smelling the yellowed pages of the racist editorial cartoon drives home the impact of the long and complex history of how propaganda has been used throughout our country's history. What different art styles do different movements use? How have these styles changed over time or been co-opted by other movements or commercial enterprises? What made the librarian choose certain items and not others?





Shout out to Angela DiVeglia and Providence Public Library's Special Collections for sharing a powerful assortment of propaganda and helping us understand each piece in context. We left this trip sobered by the iconic/disturbing images and grappling with having handled such concrete and explicit proof of imperialism, white supremacy, and a lot of questions about how propaganda is used to manufacture "national identity."



"I felt like I had nostalgia but I wasn't even born, my parents weren't even born at that time, but I flashed back in a way, made me think about all the teenagers, like me, who were seeing this propaganda, with all these stereotypes and slogans. It was really intense."

—Christian Martinez, student



Make your own **Low-Stakes Propaganda**

- Choose a topic that is seemingly not controversial. For us it was the debate over cake or pie.
- Pass out starting image so all are working within the same structure (limiting work to the targeted messaging rather than format options)
- Pick a side and an angle: Are you Pro-Cake? Anti-Pie? Pro-Pie? Anti-Cake? (Side note: observe discomfort with binaries and how simplified messaging forces out complexity—what about ice cream?)
- Create a convincing poster
- Present the work!
- Look at it together and discuss what was compelling or off-putting, how it felt to be forced to take a side...

Identifying Bias

The part of the definition that points to propaganda as “information, especially of a biased or misleading nature” is a tricky one to peel apart. Start by talking about what bias is and how we all have biases, both conscious and unconscious; bias exists in both people and systems.

- What are you biased toward and against?
- How were those biases formed?
- Who are our courts and police biased toward?
- Who might a neighborhood restaurant or block party be biased toward?
- What if somebody makes a piece of art about Flint, Michigan needing clean water?
- How do different artists obscure or celebrate their biases (or the angle) they are coming from?



WEEK TWO

Art and Propaganda

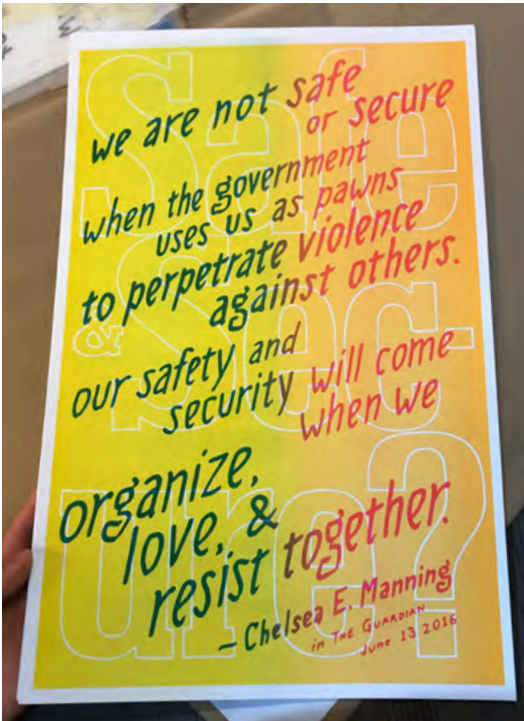
What issues get a lot of airtime in your community? How do the different sides of these issues use art to communicate their conflicting points of view? Who makes posters, fliers, or banners for protests, demonstrations, elections, and issues around your town? Talk to them! Demystifying the makers behind the messages is an important part of grabbing hold of the possibility that any of us can make propaganda!



"All art is propaganda. It is universally and inescapably propaganda; sometimes unconsciously, but often deliberately, propaganda."

—Upton Sinclair

Take a **Studio Visit** and hear about how local propagandists decide what causes to make their art around and how they decide the best medium for the message.

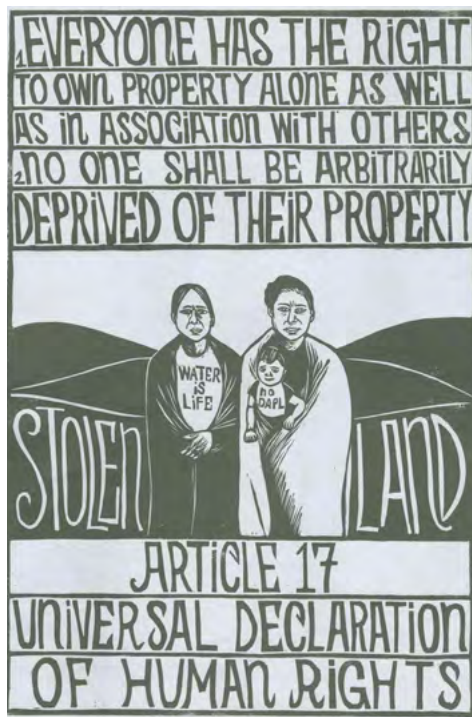


Shout out to local hero, activist, and artist, Ian Cozzens, for sharing his fabulous print work and meticulous process with us.





Invite artists from local media collectives or those who partner with activist groups to share their work. Gaze upon the vast expanse of aesthetics and issues! Discuss what pairings of image and content are most powerful to you. Why?



Shout out to Meredith Stern of the Justseeds Artists' Cooperative for presenting a slideshow of different radical/ political artwork from around the word as well as her "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" print series.

Public Spectacle!

Check out videos of Bread and Puppet Theater, Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Choir, the Yes Men, parades, pageants, flash mobs and other performance-based interventions. Discuss risks and benefits of these more ephemeral modes of getting ideas out into the public.

the WHY CHEAP ART? manifesto

PEOPLE have been THINKING too long that
ART is a PRIVILEGE of the MUSEUMS & the
RICH. ART IS NOT BUSINESS!
It does not belong to banks & fancy investors
ART IS FOOD. You cant EAT it BUT it FEEDS
you. ART has to be CHEAP & available to
EVERYBODY. It needs to be EVERYWHERE
because it is the INSIDE of the
WORLD.

ART SOOTHES PAIN!

Art wakes up sleepers!

ART FIGHTS AGAINST WAR & STUPIDITY!

ART SINGS HALLELUJA!

ART IS FOR KITCHENS!

ART IS LIKE GOOD BREAD!

Art is like green trees!

Art is like white clouds in blue sky!

ART IS CHEAP!

HURRAH

Bread & Puppet Glover, Vermont, 1984

FOOD is something everyone needs. But not something everyone enjoys. I may enjoy steak but not everyone will eat it; mainly if they're vegetarian. I thrive for food no matter how big the plate is, I always do my best to leave a clean plate. I crave and crave all sorts of food at random times; school is the main place where I would love to eat but then insulted with what they give me. **FOOD** is something I see everyone posting about in their Instagram and Snapchat stories. But it's always junk food. They don't understand the true value of a cooked meal, or maybe they do. I'm craving food **NOW** as I write this and can't do anything about it. Enjoy the food you have, or at least **TRY**. It's a tasteful experience that not everyone can get. I enjoy if someone doesn't finish their boneless wings and asks if anyone wants it I raise my hand as fast as lightning. Maybe faster. **FOOD**. I love food.

—student manifesto

10-Minute Manifestos

Read Bread & Puppet's Cheap Art, Rozz Tox and/ or Riot Grrrl manifestos. Talk about why propaganda movements use and share manifestos, how it helps people know what they are joining or allying themselves with if the values and commitments of a movement are spelled out clearly. What about defining our own values for our individual lives or our role as an artist in the world? Rather than get twisted up trying to write the perfect manifesto, set a timer and take a stab at writing your own personal/artistic 10 minute manifesto. What changes if you do this every couple of days? What values shift? How do you simplify without getting broad and vague? To reduce anxiety around sharing these hastily crafted manifestos, have participants type or print clearly, collect them, scramble in a pile and pass them back out to read aloud anonymously. If your crew is game you can play 'guess who wrote this' and try to match authors with words.

WEEK THREE

Propaganda and Marketing

As we dig deeper into different forms and uses of propaganda, rather than steer away from the murkiness and complexity that may be emerging in participant understanding, celebrate it! What makes an advertisement or a public service announcement different from propaganda? Compare and contrast what might sit alongside propaganda but are their own unique forms (or are they just different flavors of propaganda?) Is propaganda a kind of marketing but for ideas and movements instead of products? Is propaganda that is tied to the making of money called advertising? Discuss!

PSAs or Propaganda

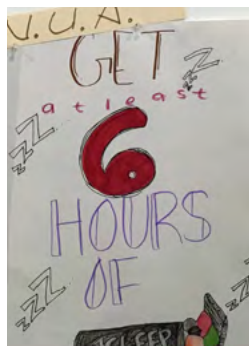
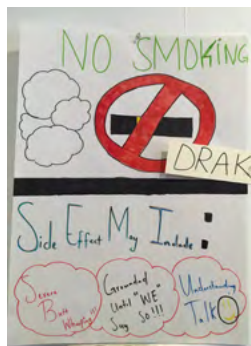
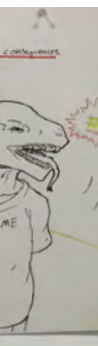
Watch videos of Public Service Announcements—there are great ones available online, in a variety of languages, encouraging people to wash their hands, use condoms, check for ticks, avoid playing with matches, vote in elections, pick up litter, and get vaccines.

Discuss how various public health campaigns and other PSAs direct their messaging to a targeted audience. How do they tailor the message using different aesthetic choices—voices, fonts, sound tracks, and actor demographics? Do they obscure the backer/author/promoter of this message or is it clear who is communicating (and funding) it? What are advantages and risks to the public if the entity producing and distributing the PSA or propaganda is obscured versus if it's clear?



Make a PSA

Split into pairs or small groups. Identify a clear, simple message that your team determines would contribute to the greater good (wash hands, get more sleep, don't pee in the pool). Identify your target audience. Set a timer for 10 minutes (or however long your group needs to encourage rapid fire risk taking rather than over-thinking and stage fright). Come up with a 1-minute PSA using techniques you observed in the videos and/ or other ways of compelling audiences such as scare tactics, catchy songs, or slow motion. When time's up, each team performs their PSA for the rest of the group. Discuss what was effective or what could make it more compelling.



Take a field trip to a community or activist group organizing campaigns or providing services for “the public good.” What kinds of propaganda have they used to promote their cause?



Shout out to Camilo Viveiros at The George Wiley Center who gave us a tour of their headquarters and spoke with us about their current campaign to fight utility shutoffs and expansion of power by National Grid. (He helped us examine some of National Grid’s promotional material and the opposing propaganda the GWC has used to fight National Grid for the rights of people living in poverty).

Marketing or Propaganda

Invite a marketer or advertising executive to come talk to your group about their work. How do they determine the target audiences for the products they promote? What kind of moral and ethical considerations do they (or do they not) take into account if their target is children, the elderly, or another disenfranchised group? (Also a good time to think about missionaries, self-help “gurus”, and others that proselytize with printed materials or spectacle—are these propagandists? Why or why not?)

Shout out to Ricky Katowicz, a toy and game designer with Hasbro, who came to chew on these questions and invent some commercials with us.



Make a Commercial

Split into pairs or small groups. Building on what you learned from performing your PSAs, invent a product for children (e.g. a toy, game, food, or place) Make a commercial using:

1. A jingle, rap, motto, or slogan (words)
2. A physical prop
3. A synchronized movement or dance-move

Perform commercials for each other and talk about whether or not you (as a kid or caretaker of a kid) would buy each item. What felt different about creating a PSA vs. creating a commercial?



Propaganda and “Place-Making”

Tied to history, development, tourism, and gentrification—who do we trust with packaging the identity of a place?

Take a field trip to a local historical site. What stories and images are used to give visitors a feel for this place? Who is the target audience for promotional materials about this site? What’s the narrative that a guide or historical markers are communicating? Who or what does this narrative benefit?



Shout out to Joey La Neve DeFrancesco and Slater Mill Historical Site for giving us both a version of the authorized run of the mill (ha!) tour about modernization and Samuel Slater's inventions as well lesser promoted truths about brutal working conditions, unfair hours and wages, child labor, lost cultural traditions, and workers organizing in resistance.

Take a field trip to a tourism bureau. Speak with the staff there about how the branding for this place is designed and distributed. Who is it trying to attract? Do they see it as propaganda? Why or why not? Does it feel representative of the place you know?



Shout out to Lizzie Araujo and The Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism for speaking with us about the branding of Providence as "The Creative Capital", the famed "Cooler/ Warmer" tourism campaign, and the complexities of shaping and sharing a city's identity.

WEEK FOUR

Propaganda and Power

"The point of public relations slogans like "Support our troops" is that they don't mean anything... That's the whole point of good propaganda. You want to create a slogan that nobody's going to be against, and everybody's going to be for. Nobody knows what it means, because it doesn't mean anything. Its crucial value is that it diverts your attention from a question that does mean something: Do you support our policy? That's the one you're not allowed to talk about."

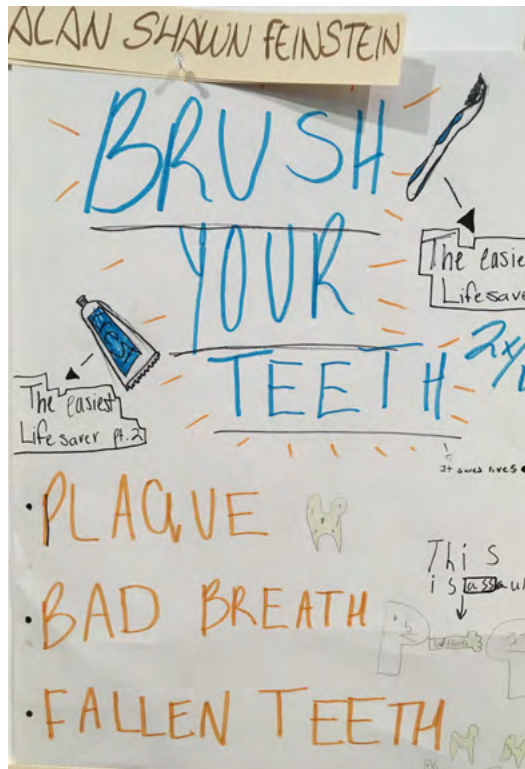
—Noam Chomsky



Once we start looking for propaganda it appears everywhere. As part of the continuing effort to identify the ways in which propaganda is used by different powers (the state, grassroots organizers, culture-makers, religious groups, politicians) we can sharpen our ability to sort through the onslaught of messaging we face daily by slowing down and zooming in.

The (Social) Medium is the Message

In a circle, everybody, independently (or in pairs if there's are limited phones or computer access) scroll through favorite social media accounts for 5 minutes. During this time, the goal is to identify one image, video or post that the participant sees as propaganda that they support (agree with or respond to favorably), one post of propaganda they object to or don't support and one propaganda post that is confusing or unclear what the message is. Go around the circle sharing what folks found compelling, then found objectionable, then found ambiguous. Discuss the messages and mediums. If access to technology allows, have each individual or pair create a meme of their own. If technology/ know how is not available, make a meme poster.



Identify Power Structure

Think about point of view, authorship, and authority. How does the meaning and impact of a message change depending on who it comes from—when a peer says it vs. a boss, a parent vs. the president? What about anonymous propaganda?

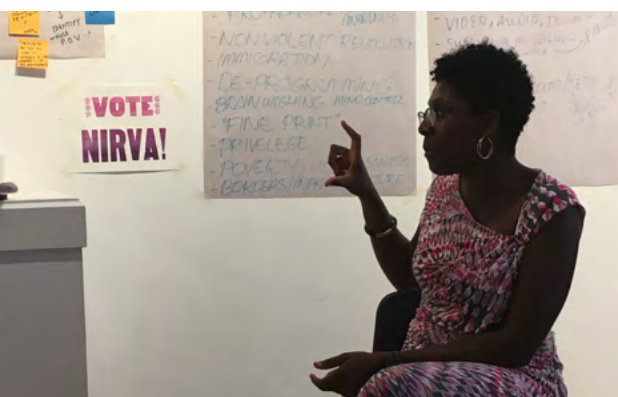
Consider Context

Think about actual space versus cyberspace. How does the message change depending on where one encounters the propaganda—i.e. If a poster about getting eight hours of sleep is at a doctor's office vs. at a mattress store.



Dig into power and propaganda by discussing messaging around **American Identity**. What is this notion of “boot straps”? Who manufactures the propaganda about who and what is an “American” and toward what ends? What are the costs, both psychological and material, when propaganda we encounter runs counter to our lived experience? How do artists refute narrow claims of what’s “American” to include their diverse identities and experiences?

Create your own flag—what do you want to wave a banner in support of? Can be a flag of your family, your neighborhood, a cause you support or a feeling you want. Start by sketching on scrap paper move on to sewing or painting on canvas.



Invite a local politician or other public official and interview them about how their election campaign used propaganda.



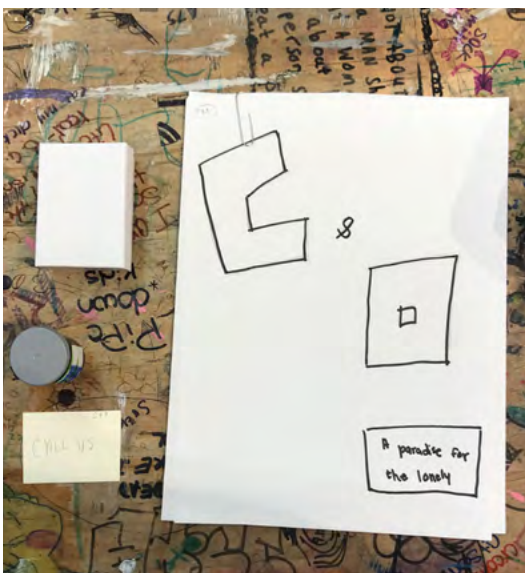
Shout out to Nirva LaFortune, Providence City Councilor for Ward 3, who came to speak with us about being a politician and needing to use propaganda to boost name recognition and get her ideas out to the public. She shared her struggle designing representative campaign materials and how she was advised not to include pictures of her kids on her signs since some voters stereotype single-moms as being unable to also hold public office. She shared her experiences as an immigrant growing up in Providence, moving away and coming home again to serve her community, learning to decode and resist propaganda about who she was and what she could do, eventually creating her own propaganda (with a design team) to become the first Haitian American on City Council.

Big Pharma and Propaganda

Watch pharmaceutical commercials together. Identify the media tools they use to try to persuade audiences and downplay risks. How do they obscure the commercial intent of selling the product and play up the public health or social/emotional benefits of their product? How do they angle toward targeted audiences? What vulnerabilities do these ads prey on?

Split into pairs or small groups and invent a malady our society (or individuals in it) are suffering from. Give this malady a name and at least three symptoms and three causes. Then invent a product to treat this condition. Name the product; describe how it works and the benefits to users. Include small print/ possible side effects. Make a 3-D representation or prototype of this product and it's brand ID. Then have each group pitch their product to a panel of Pharmaceutical Company Professionals (groups can take turns being this panel or program staff can hold it down.) Who's product compels the panel to invest in its roll out to the public? Discuss!





How did this pitch feel similar to or different from making a PSA or the commercial for kids? Where their different ethical and moral questions you wrestled with? Do these same quandaries (or different ones) come up as participants hone their individual propaganda project ideas?

WEEK FIVE

Propaganda and Abstraction, Ambiguity, and Nuance

If we return again to our definition of Propaganda as: “information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view” what do we do with the material that feels like propaganda but isn’t quite “information” or that promotes or publicizes an unclear or undefined cause or obscures its point of view?

Check out examples of Dada, Situationist, and Fluxus work. Look up Pizza Rat, Eric Andre at the RNC 2016, Naked Trump, and Dumb Starbucks—are these propaganda? If so, for what? If not, why not? How do you feel as a viewer/consumer of propaganda when you aren’t clear what position or idea is being promoted or critiqued? How does the context in which you are viewing it affect your experience?



How is **humor** used in propaganda? Homework—everybody find a piece of propaganda that you find funny. Bring it in (link, object, screen shot, photo, etc.) and share. What tickles you about this? When does humor make you more receptive to a message and when does it give the message less legitimacy?

Propaganda and Simplicity

Along with understandable resistance to being misled, one of the reasons some people tend to think negatively about propaganda is because it’s often a simplistic, boiled-down version of complicated things, with no room for nuance, context, or variability in most propaganda. That’s sort of the point—stripping away all the details and stating a demand or position. ‘Black Lives Matter’ doesn’t need a bunch of clauses after it justifying when, why and how they matter. Oftentimes when people eschew what they call ‘simplistic messaging,’ they actually just don’t understand or support the meaning or movement behind the messages. ‘Water is Life’, ‘My Body My Choice’, ‘Abolish ICE’—these are simple phrases that stand for complex, multifaceted movements, rich with histories, legislations, and current contentions. Often, propaganda is cultural shorthand. A swastika? A confederate flag? A rainbow flag? Talk about propaganda’s role in combating ‘moral ambiguity.’

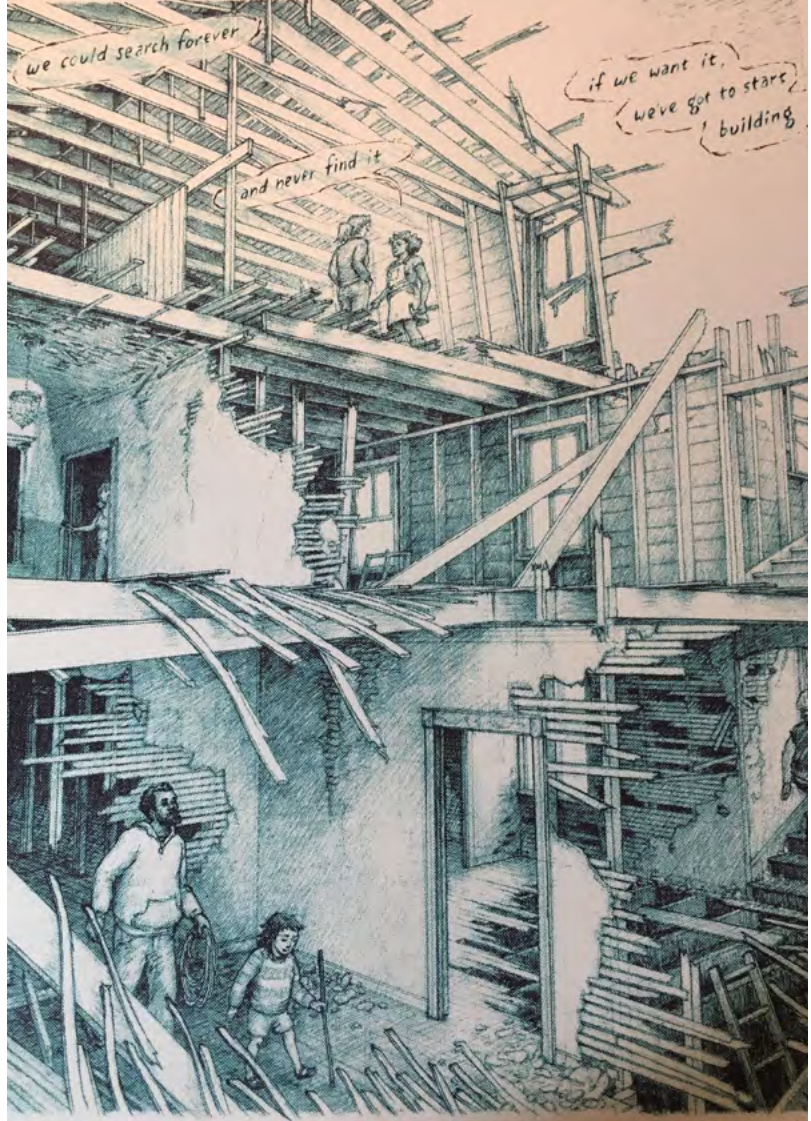


Busting the Binary

Often times propaganda proposes only two choices—you can be right or wrong, democrat or republican, rich or poor—when we know there's usually at least three ways to think or be and usually far more. How do we not get swept into the constant either/or making of propagandists 'you are either with us or against us' mentality? How can we identify which messages to swallow whole and which ones need complicating? Where can propaganda propose these 3rd, 4th, and 5th routes or positions? How can it open a conversation, expose a spectrum, or widen our understanding?

Real vs. Fake vs. ?

In our media saturated world it's hard to parse out what's true. Different sides claim the others are spouting off lies, "fake news", or twisted versions of reality. How can we use the propaganda-decoding tools we've acquired over the last few weeks to help us determine what sources we trust, what propaganda we want to propagate further and what needs problematizing?



Everybody independently choose a "hot-button" topic that is important to or affects you, e.g. immigration, abortion, or transgender bathroom access. Identify two pieces of propaganda that represent different sides of this issue (e.g. an article from "Democracy Now" about families from Central America seeking refuge in the US and a clip from "Fox News" describing a caravan of terrorists rushing the border).



Identify who wrote, published, and funded the different pieces. Examine the vocabulary used in each. Who is the target audience? Who or what info is left out? What's the action that each piece of propaganda may be encouraging the audience to take? Now create a original piece of propaganda that addresses (or invents?) a third position on this issue. Share and discuss!



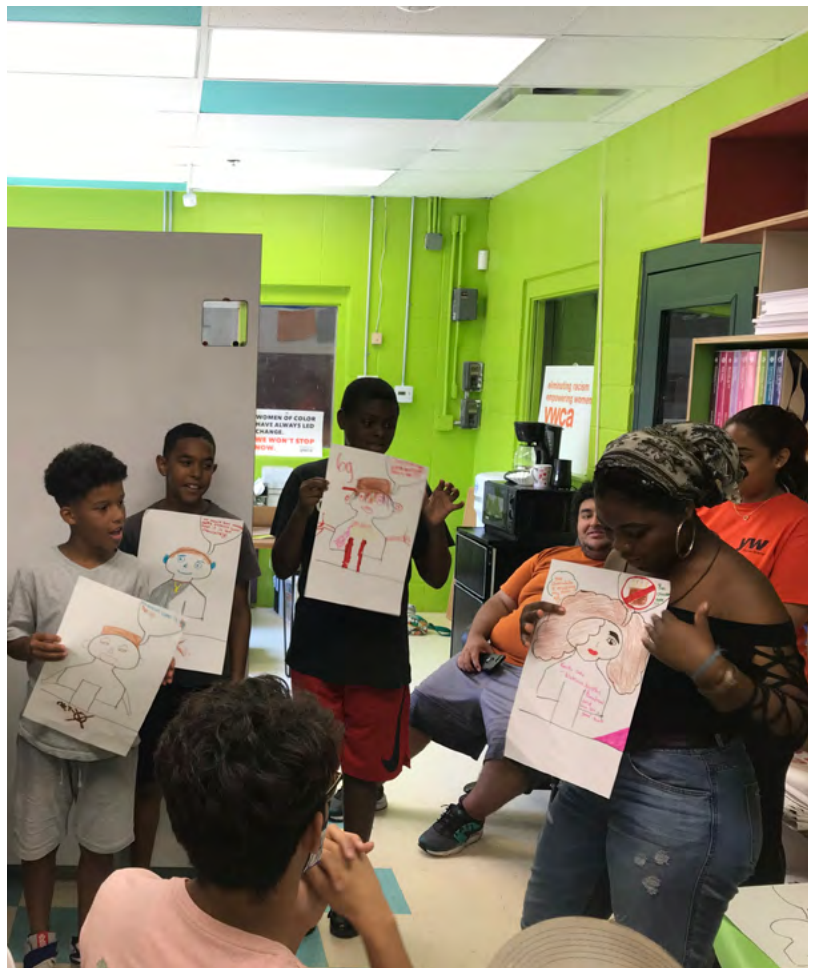
As a close-out to this deep and varied exploration of propaganda, leading a **Teach Back** is a fun and meaningful way to distill some ideas and experiences and get participants to share what they've learned with a new group. It could be a group of younger kids from a summer camp, seniors at a community center, or parents and friends of the participants. See who your group wants to connect with; who do they think would benefit from learning more about propaganda?

Prior to the teach back build a plan with the group. Designate people who will lead each of the activities.

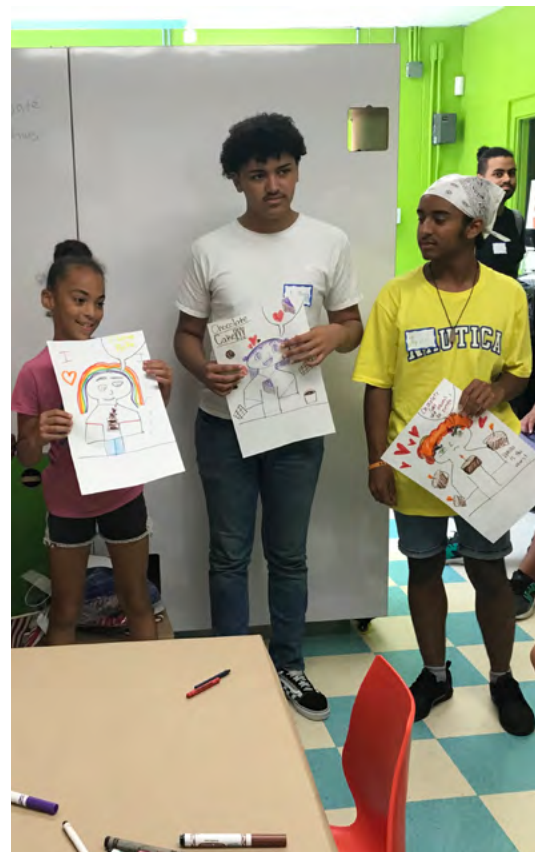
- ➡ Choose some favorite ice-breakers and warm-ups to get everyone acquainted and feeling part of the group. Decide on a way to share names and pronouns.
- ➡ Short introduction to propaganda, define and review any other important vocabulary.
- ➡ Provide instructions and materials for hands-on art activity about propaganda (such as poster making for cake vs. pie).
- ➡ Art making time—talk about ways participants can support the members of the new group if questions come up or individuals are struggling.
- ➡ Clean up.
- ➡ New propagandists present their work to the group. Discuss.
- ➡ Close out with games, appreciations, etc.



Shout out to the YWCA of RI who welcomed Art Inquiry students to work with a lively crew of their summer campers to explore the art of propaganda.



Build in time for the teaching group to reflect on what worked and what could have gone differently. Any surprises? How did it feel to be the ones teaching others?





Collaborative Group Project

Students participating in the program worked collaboratively to create a large scale installation. The group met throughout the weeks to come to consensus about what their collaborative project message and method would be. Week five found them putting the pieces together to finalize and finish their collaborative work.

What Are You Watching?

Art Inquiry Group Project Statement

"An installation in which a depiction of the mass of propaganda in the world is displayed. The TV is the means by which the propaganda is displayed. The objects spilling out from the TV are examples of the various types of propaganda that surround us. The mime is a representation of how easily people can be dragged into the word of propaganda. The curtains create a scene similar to that of a theater, which create a staged like effect. This piece was inspired by group discussion on words that we relate to and can also tie into propaganda. Shepard Fairey's "OBEY" campaign and our field trips also inspired this piece. This work and playing with mixed-media and the dada movement ideals was new to us. We had a hard time deciding what our final group project would be. Shout outs to all the artists and guests we got to meet this summer and great thanks to our mentors Dana and Dean."



PERSONAL TRANS- FORMATION PROJECTS



Students are required to make an independent project based off the theme of Propaganda, and explore an area of inquiry that is important to them. Time is built in each week for students to reflect on and journal about various themes of Propaganda. These are places for them to jump off of to create a work of art that is in response or reaction to the theme of Propaganda. Students met with mentors throughout the summer to refine and help them focus their projects.





R.I.P. Cartoons

Oluseyi Adebayo

"I painted a bunch of cartoon foods on a panel. I was inspired by the youtuber Vexx and this piece is talking about propaganda. I want to show that cartoons need to teach kids more skills, like how to be healthy. I tried a lot of new things, like drawing a bunch of characters. I also started to use paint and something that is not paper. This piece was difficult because the paint smudged a lot. Shout out to Vexx!"



Christian Dorato
The City Over the Ville

This is a picture of a monster shooting from its back silhouettes of skyscrapers filled with ruin. I sketched the monster on paper, and then scanned it and added the skyscraper silhouettes and the town in Adobe Photoshop. I think of the fear of loss, especially loss of something as important as one's home, to be akin to a monster. So I thought, why not portray something as incoherent as fear as a literal monster? Gentrification has always been something that has stricken me as incredibly unfair, so it was relatively clear to me what I should base my project on. And in this project, I made the bringer of gentrification a huge, overbearing pig monster as a metaphor of sorts. I've always been a fan of monsters. There was no real formula for how this had to be made so I could let my imagination run free. Making symbolism that provoked thought without being too vague was something that required a lot of thought and experimentation. I'd like to thank my family for helping me along. They challenged me and helped me to improve, and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the future. Thanks paisanos."

The City Over the Ville

Christian Dorato

"A monster with skyscrapers filled with ruin shooting from its back looms over a small rural town. First I sketched the monster on paper. I then scanned it and added the skyscraper silhouettes and the town in Adobe Photoshop. I think of the fear of loss, especially loss of something as important as one's home, to be akin to a monster. So I thought, why not portray something as incoherent as fear as a literal monster? Gentrification has always been something that has stricken me as incredibly unfair, so it was relatively clear to me what I should base my project on. And in this project, I made the bringer of gentrification a huge, overbearing pig monster as a metaphor of sorts. I've always been a fan of monsters. There was no real formula for how this had to be made so I could let my imagination run free. Making symbolism that provoked thought without being too vague was something that required a lot of thought and experimentation. I'd like to thank my family for helping me along. They challenged me and helped me to improve, and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the future. Thanks paisanos."



Safe and Sound

Joseph Grajales

"This piece shows a self-portrait with pieces of broken mirrors. I used canvas, acrylic paint, and mirrors to represent a broken self-image. I am portraying a time when my self worth was at a low. This piece relates to propaganda about how you should act and be as a child. Working with mixed media was new for me. I found it challenging that the small details affected the overall portrait. I'd like to thank my mentors Dean, Dana, Pamela and Eli for helping me execute my ideas for this painting."

Titles Don't Matter

Liam Lountalasouk



"It is a zine that is really cool and contains a lot of wild content. The idea came from Dean and my excitement to try out new things. It relates to propaganda as there are messages, themes, and pictures that will change someone's opinion. I tried something new by making this zine and figuring out what to put in my piece was insanely hard. Shout out to Dean helping me with this piece."

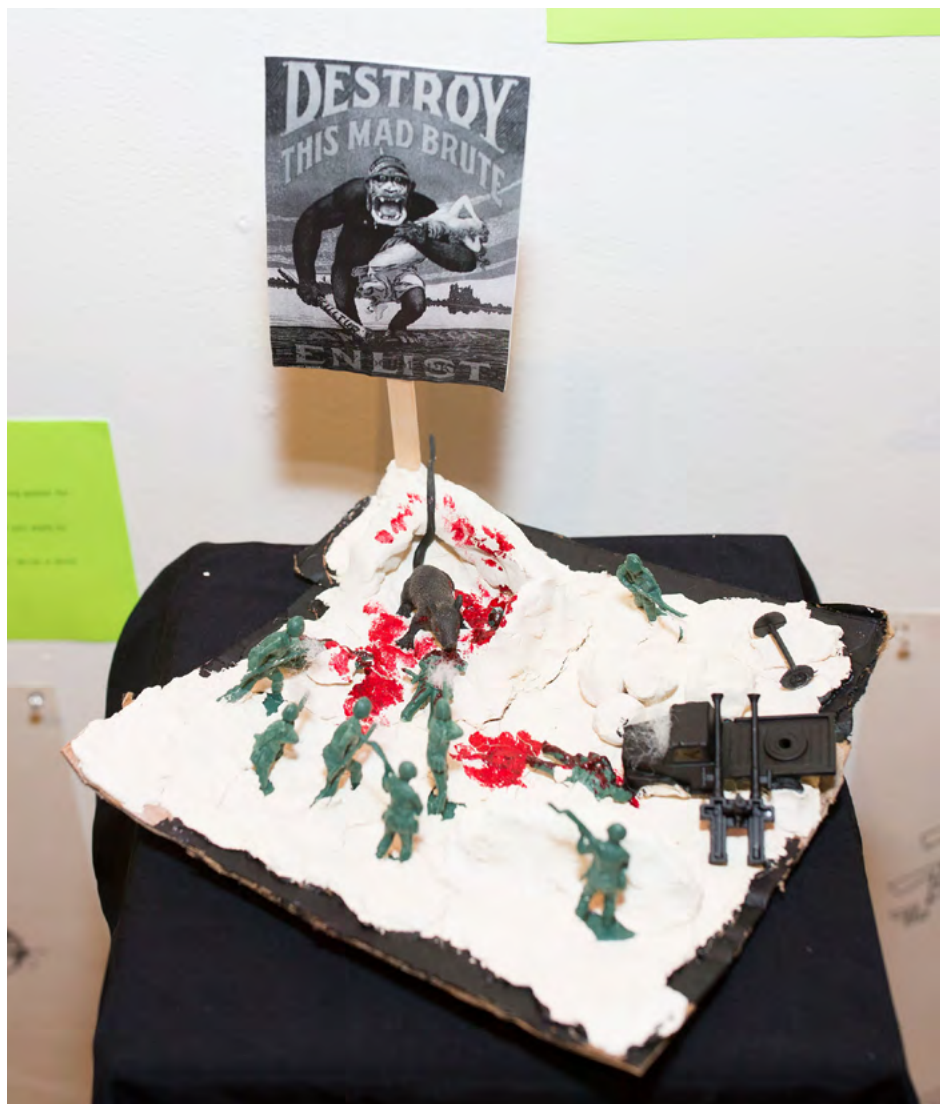




Under the Mask

Christian Martinez

"This piece shows the reality of many people hiding under masks they don't want to take off. But those who remove their "false face" may feel pain showing their real self. The materials used were photography, masks, and fake blood. This idea has been done multiple times, but I feel if it comes from a younger mind, it'll appeal that anyone can see their fake persona. Some people may tell the individual lies to hide their real selves. I tried something new. I think finding people who were available to help me was challenging. In the end, only one of my friends were able to accompany me. Shout out to my friend Jordan who was open for the shoot!"



Cheezy War

Christian Martinez

"This battleground is being taken out by soldiers trying to kill the vermin. The piece is a three-dimensional diorama and the materials I used are clay, plastic soldiers, and paints. After being inspired by the WWI and WWII posters we viewed earlier in the program, I created this diorama to illustrate any nation overpowering their enemy. Every nation sees themselves as the hero."

THEY ARE THUGS

They have to work **TWICE** as hard
as their white, nonhispanic counterparts

The face longer sentences than that
of others for the **SAME CRIME**

They have to teach their children
"HANDS UP, DONT SHOOT"

**ARE THEY THE
THUGS?**

THEY ARE CRIMINALS

They are **LESS** crime prone than native
born Americans

They help **FUEL** U.S farms and therefore
allow for affordable produce

They are being seperated from their
FAMILIES at the border

**ARE THEY THE
CRIMINALS?**

THEY ARE TERRORISTS

They are persistantly depicted
INACCURATELY by those with no real
experience with Islam

They have launched a massive **RELIEF**
effort to deliver food to people in more
than **100** countries

They are not the ones responsible for
the **MAJORITY (74%)** of domestic
terrorist attacks in the U.S

**ARE THEY THE
TERRORISTS?**

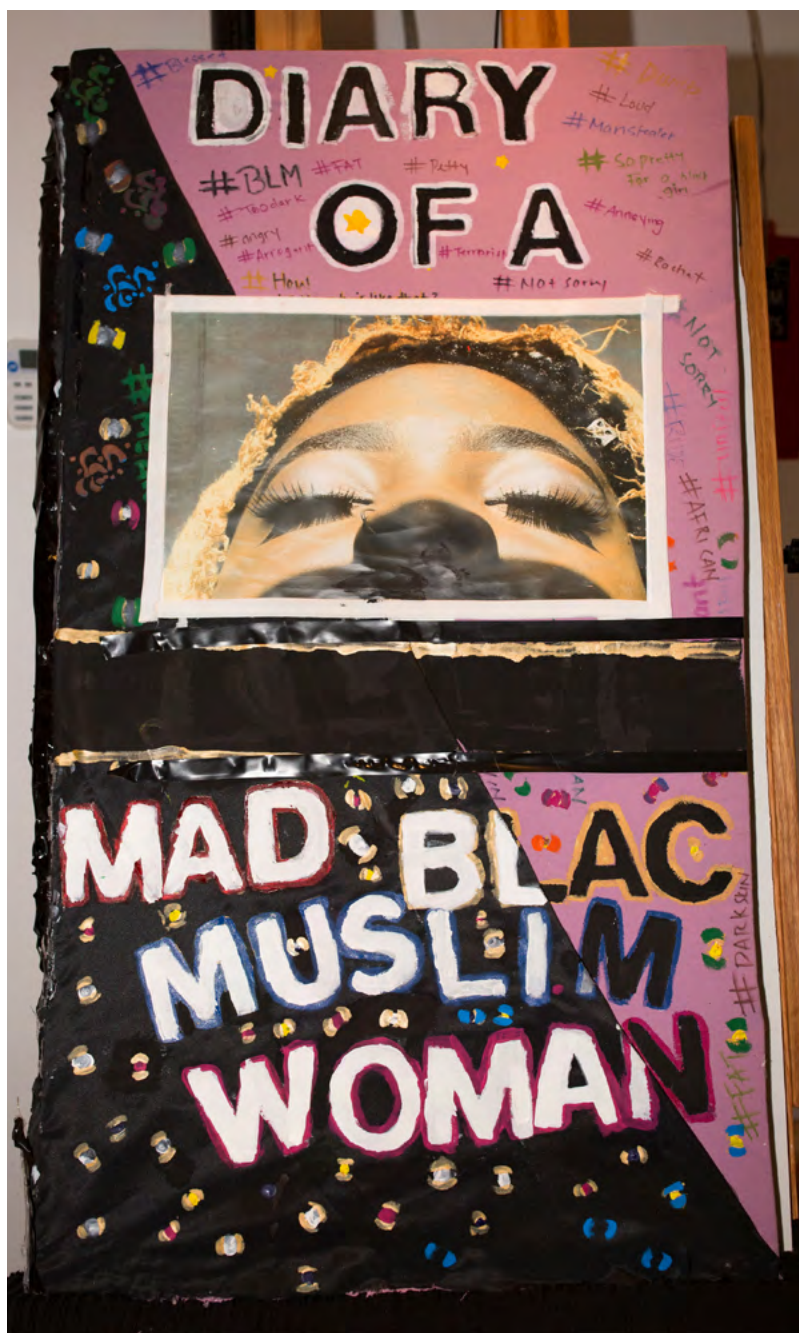
Deprogramming

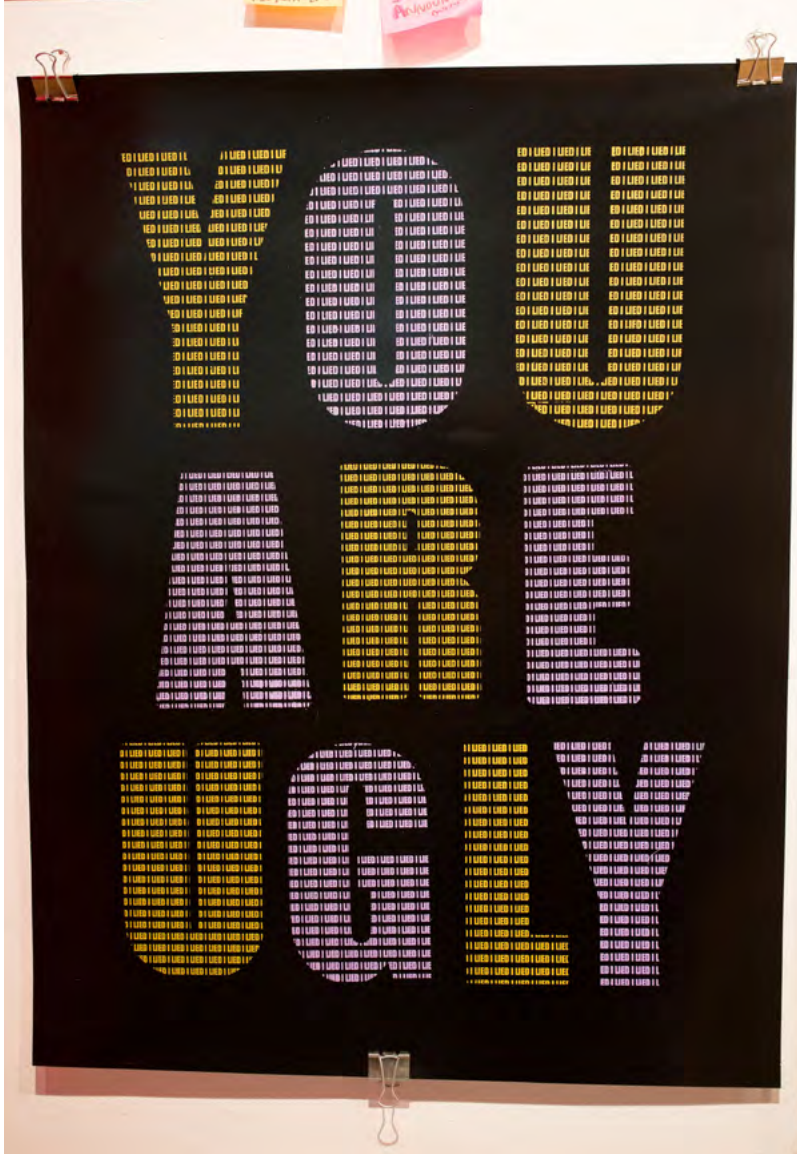
Atiyyah Mayaleeke

"Deprogramming is a series of screen prints which take three stereotypes, presents them, lists the statements which seem to question/counter the original statement, leading to a new question—are they really who we think they are? In our discussions we mainly discussed/viewed pieces of propaganda and then we glanced at some ways they are countered which I found interesting, so I decided to create my own. I've never done screenprinting before so it was something new and exciting to try. It was challenging to get the prints to come out neatly, having to work with positioning, pressure and inks. Thank you to Dana for the help which made it a whole lot easier."

Diary of a Mad, Black, Muslim Woman Maryam Odewale

"In my art piece the main theme has to do with society dehumanizing Muslim/African American women. The materials I used include paint, stencil and personal photos. The idea came from personal experiences. This is a new piece and doesn't relate to any of my other work. Shout out to all of the NUA individuals."

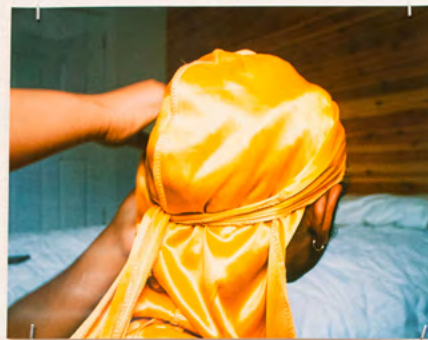




You Are Ugly

Jayson Rodriguez

"The screenprint in front of you is a poster that says "You Are Ugly" and I hope it offended you, but if you're here now and up close you'll see that it says "I Lied" so hopefully you feel better (unless you're conceited, you deserved that). On this poster I used the screen printing materials to create multiple copies. My intention with this piece was to grab people's attention and make them believe something untrue without further observation. With most propaganda, industries/companies will feed you biased information and make it seem presentable as possible and persuade you into creating a certain perception about something. If you are not gullible you'll look into the source and see that everything is not what it seems. This piece encourages you to have a free thought process and see all the truths behind the one. Relating to my other pieces this one is similar because it also represents my personality, specifically my fake mean humor. This was my first time screen printing and the photoshop aspect and misprints really got me but overall it was extremely fun. Shoutout to Dana, Dean, Jojo and Pamela for helping throughout the whole process."



Pretty In His Rag

Jayson Rodriguez

"The photo series in front of you depicts so many issues that lay beneath a piece of silk such as hypermasculinity, criminalization, and perception of black boys. In this piece I used a dslr, tripod and a durag from a corner store in New York. I was inspired by the men that surround me everyday and the media that continues to misrepresent us. The durag is such a symbolic figure of black culture and our hair and it's so misrepresented. The first aspect of it's misrepresentation is when we only see cis, straight, black men wear them and this creates its hypermasculinization. So many bodies and gender expressions can exist in a durag and black boys can be pretty, gorgeous and beautiful wearing them. The second aspect of its misrepresentation is its criminalization in school dress codes and everyday media. DURAGS does not equal CRIMINAL. We just need more dismantling of historical racism and it's "presentable" beauty standards and stereotypes. No matter what space I am in I should be able to feel welcomed and not alienized. These pieces were just to counter the propaganda put against your "typical" black boy and to show who we really are behind all the pressure and media. Let black boys exist. Let black boys be pretty."

ART INQUIRY MENTORS



Dana Heng is a visual artist, organizer, and educator from Providence. She often collaborates on community projects that work to create space for people with marginalized identities. She co-organizes the Queer/Trans Zine Fest, co-founded a cooperative art studio called Binch Press, and also co-founded a housing collective in the South Side of Providence. She is currently in her second year as a Resident Artist Mentor in painting and drawing at New Urban Arts.

Dean Sudarsky is a cartoonist, designer and educator living in Providence. He has worked with the Creative Independent, New York Review Books, and The George Wiley Center, and has taught classes in comic-making, desktop publishing, and typography. When he's not drawing his own comics, he can be found tutoring high school students at New Urban Arts.





Eli Nixon builds portals and gives guided tours to places that don't yet exist. They are a settler-descended genderqueer clown, a cardboard constructionist, and a maker of plays, puppets, parades, pageants, suitcase theaters, and low-tech spectacular—on their own, and in collaboration with artists, dancers, and musicians of all ages, abilities, and persuasions. Eli also creates theater with schools, senior centers, and addiction recovery and mental health programs. Eli's current creative efforts include identifying opportunities to dismantle Manifest Destiny, foster intra and interspecies kinship, and co-parent a 10 year old human. They enjoyed an Arts Mentoring Fellowship at NUA from 2013-2015.

SUMMER ARTIST SCHOLAR

GUEST ARTISTS

Lizzie Araujo is a Providence native by way of Co-op City in the Bronx. She has traveled many roads and done many jobs around the country and now in Providence. All of her work has been in the service, entertainment, and events management field. She loves herself operations and logistics. In her current position she has been thinking bigger about what events mean to communities. Why do we throw parties? Through her work she has found that creating opportunities for people to experience joy together in a common public space is a part of a holistic approach to human and community resiliency. Because, as we all know, achieving true peace is going to require a safe, powerful, and nimble creative community.



Ian J. G. Cozzens is an artist and educator living in Providence. He's been making posters and prints since 2001 in DIY and community spaces, including AS220 and the New Orleans Community Printshop, but mostly in the attic studio he's maintained for over 10 years. He's excited about the political potential of hand-printed imagery, and enthralled by the quirky logistics of screenprinting itself. Besides making screenprints, installations, scrap fabric quilts and hand-printed wallpaper, Ian is the Resident Artist Mentor in Printmaking at New Urban Arts. He loves bike riding and sorting things out.

Joey La Neve DeFrancesco is a historian, musician, and organizer in Providence. He created Slater Mill Museum's labor history program, which he has run for the past five years, and curated the museum's exhibition, "The Mother of All Strikes: the 1824 Textile Worker Turnout." He has recently launched a new program of radical 18th century Rhode Island history at the John Brown House Museum, and has written widely about the state's past. He also performs in with Providence-based music groups Downtown Boys and La Neve.



Angela DiVeglia is the Curatorial Assistant in Providence Public Library's Special Collections, a part of the library which has historic letters and journals, rare books, old magazines, posters and maps, and artifacts like whaling harpoons. She works closely with artists who use Special Collections materials for inspiration, information, and new ideas. She loves working with anyone who wants to spend time with cool, old stuff!





Ricky Katowicz is the creator and host of 'The Rainbow Beard Show', a monthly live production at the AS220 Black Box, it is equal parts spectacle and classroom. Audience participation is encouraged and each 'Show' features special guests, recurring characters, minute-long dance parties, and a celebration of authentic feelings. He also produces music as Domestique, designs toys and games for Hasbro, and leads workshops to teach people of all ages how to make nothing out of something.



Nirva R. LaFortune is a Providence City Council Member representing the city's third ward, and is the first Haitian American to hold elective office in the state of Rhode Island. She is the Assistant Director of Scholars Programs and Diversity Initiatives at Brown University Office of the Dean of the College. Councilwoman LaFortune is dedicated to equity and increasing educational opportunity. She holds a B.A. in Communications from Temple University and is completing an M.A in Urban Education Policy at Brown University this spring. She is the mother of two incredible young people and is an avid runner.



Meredith Stern is a printmaker, ceramic artist, and gardener living in Providence. She's a member of the Justseeds Artists' Cooperative. She also bangs drums with friends. She lives with a couple cats, a kid, and a sweetheart.

Camilo Viveiros is a trainer and organizer for racial, economic, and environmental justice. He has over 30 years of direct experience leading hundreds of organizing campaigns, with tenants, youth, labor unions, students, immigrants, environmental justice activists, LGBTQ+ groups, seniors, and welfare rights organizations, including currently with the George Wiley Center. Camilo assists groups across the country by sharing organizing tools and effective social movement building strategies. He offers trainings and workshops on community organizing, direct action, participatory action research, campaign development, community-based art, and theater of the oppressed. For more information go to: activism2organizing.org



RESOURCES



There's a wealth of modes and messages to explore together. Here's a few to start with:

"Faces of The Enemy" is a documentary available online that "follows social psychologist Sam Keen as he unmasks how individuals and nations dehumanize their enemies to justify the inhumanity of war."

Hyperallergic Article: How to Tell The Difference Between Art and Propaganda
<https://hyperallergic.com/314989/how-to-tell-the-difference-between-propaganda-and-art/>

Check out images and techniques by/about the following:

- Mary Richardson/The Rokeby Venus/women's suffrage movement
- Tiananmen Square Protests
- American Civil Rights movement
- Socialist Realism
- Brecht & the Red Rockets
- Black Panther movement (such as their free breakfast program)
- Lonely vs. Shepard Fairey vs. Banksy
- The Occupy Movement
- Act Up/Silence = Death actions
- Guerilla Girls museum demands
- Hollywood movies as imperialist/military propaganda
- 2016 presidential campaigns on twitter
- Gulf War Live on TV
- Philip Morris and The Truth Initiative
- Pink Ribbon and breast cancer awareness,
- Video games as propaganda ('America's Army'),
- The Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood.

WRITE YOUR NAME:

TITLE OF WORK:

DESCRIBE THE ART WORK YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT NOW:

WHAT MATERIALS DID YOU USE IN MAKING THE WORK?

WHY DID YOU PICK THESE MATERIALS?

WHERE DID THE IDEA COME FROM? WHAT INSPIRED YOU?

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO OUR THEME of *Propaganda*?

**HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO ARTWORK YOU HAVE ALREADY
MADE? OR, DID YOU TRY SOMETHING NEW?**

What challenged you most?

**SHOUT OUTS to who you'd like to thank, acknowledge or dedicate this
piece to:**

Please use complete sentences. Thank you!

YOUR NAME:

NAME 2 NEW THINGS YOU DID THIS SUMMER AS PART OF THE ART INQUIRY SUMMER PROGRAM:

WHAT DIDN'T YOU DO THAT YOU HOPED TO DO?

WHAT ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SUMMER PROGRAM?

WHO WERE YOUR **FAVORITE** VISITING ARTIST WORKSHOPS AND WHY?

WHAT WERE YOUR **FAVORITE** FIELDTRIPS AND WHY?

WHAT CHALLENGED YOU MOST?

WHAT DID YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOURSELF DURING THIS ART INQUIRY?

HOW HAS IT CHANGED HOW YOU THINK ABOUT THE WORLD AROUND YOU?

These values guide how we operate in our work place at NUA:

We participate—We do things here! We make, try, build and create things we never dreamed or imagined possible.

We take risks—We try new art forms, and explore unfamiliar ideas. As we step outside our comfort zone, we politely and respectfully encourage others to do the same with us.

We take care of ourselves and each other—We expect to be treated compassionately and we treat our colleagues in the same way. We seek help when it is needed. We are honest about challenges and limitations we face, without fear of negative judgment.

We are flexible and adapt to change—We recognize that despite our best efforts, plans change and we are at our best when we balance intentionality with flexibility. We are all open to new ideas and opportunities.

We embrace a spirit of inquiry and curiosity—In all interactions, we seek deeper understanding, ask clarifying questions and place ourselves in another person's shoes to appreciate other frames as well as our own.

We are inclusive—We know that this studio attracts people from many neighborhoods, countries, religions, cultures, experiences and beliefs. In order for us all to feel included at New Urban Arts, we balance voicing our thoughts and ideas while not acting in a way that might silence others. We avoid hateful, disrespectful language even in jest or any actions that may make other people feel or be unsafe. We avoid mean spirited talk - anything that someone might think, experience or perceive as teasing/bullying.

We are professional, reliable and responsible—By professionalism, we don't mean stifling bureaucratic rules. Rather, we strive to conduct ourselves in a way that honors and respects the hard work of our colleagues. Some examples are that we show up when we're expected, we meet our commitments or seek help and communicate when we can't, we double check our work for errors, and respond to inquiries promptly, professionally and enthusiastically.

We work together—We must work together to achieve our shared goals. We recognize that our community work is most effective when it is grounded in close, honest and authentic connections with each other. In order to create a supportive work environment together, ask yourself each week:
Did you support someone this week or did someone support you?

We keep it fun—This work is rewarding and hard. In order to stay the course we have to keep a positive attitude, celebrate the big and small victories along the way, celebrate each other, our community, and be giving and receptive to recognition.

