The role of animation in Propaganda

COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA (Russia)
A case of brain wash propaganda

From 1924 to perestroika the USSR produced more than 4 dozen animated propaganda films. They weren't for export.
Their target was the new nation and their goal was to win over the hearts and minds of the Soviet people. Anti-American, Anti-British, Anti-German, Anti-Capitalist, Anti-Fascist, some of these films are as artistically beautiful as the great political posters made after the 1917 revolution which inspired Soviet animation.

http://video.aol.com/video-detail/animated-soviet-propaganda-american-imperialists/2930446298

AMERICAN PROPAGANDA
A case of propaganda as a tool of war

Between 1942 and 1945, during World War II, Walt Disney was involved in the production of propaganda for the US government. The widespread familiarity of Walt Disney's productions benefited the US government in producing pro-American war propaganda in an effort to increase support for the war.

During World War II, Disney made films for every branch of the US military and government. The government looked to Walt Disney more than any other studio chief as a builder of public morale providing instruction and training to the sailors and soldiers. "This was accomplished through the use of animated graphics by means of expediting the intelligent mobilization of servicemen and civilians for the cause of the war. Over 90% of Disney employees were devoted to the production of training and propaganda films for the government. Throughout the duration of the war, Disney produced over 400,000 feet of educational war films, most at cost, which is equal to 68 hours of continuous film.

In 1942, Disney was approached with requests from the US services. The Navy was the first, and other branches of the government, including, the Army, the Air Force, the Department of Agriculture, and the Treasury Department, rapidly caught on to Disney's creative approach to generating educational films, propaganda and insignias.
As requested by the US Government, Walt Disney created a number of anti-German and anti-Japanese films for both the soldiers and the US public. He wanted to portray these countries and their leaders as manipulative without morals. A few of the films he produced were "Der Fuehrer's Face" (1942), “Education for Death- The Making of a Nazi” (1943), and “Commando Duck” (1944).

In “Der Fuehrer’s Face,” Donald Duck breaks down after experiencing a nightmare where he has to make do with eating disgusting Nazi food rations and experiences a day at a Nazi artillery factory. “Education for Death- The Making of a Nazi” was a wartime propaganda film that takes on the perspective of Hans, a young German boy. As the movie progresses and Hans is exposed to Hitler youth and the Nazi culture, his value of human life decreases. In “Commando Duck”, Donald, by himself, destroys an entire Japanese airbase.

DONALD DUCK:  http://video.google.com/videosearch?client=safari&rls=en&q=Der%20Fuehrer's%20Face&oe=UTF-8&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&hl=en&tab=wv#
WALT DISNEY GOES TO WAR

Pictured below, with open collar and a day's growth of beard, is Walt Disney, whose studio in Burbank, Calif., is now going full blast to help win the war. Tacked up behind him are sketches for the film 'Walt Disney's The War,' a short cartoon film made for the Department of Agriculture. Disney drives home the immensity of U.S. food resources. Looking at random, you see that America produces enough rice to make enough spaghetti to be landed intact onto every corner of the world, or enough fats to produce a lot of lard which could supply Berlin.

Within a year Disney's studio has undergone a big change. He has just released 'Dumbo,' a pre-war project, which tells kindly the story of a baby. Now 90% of Disney's 250 employees are making films that bear directly on the war. At least six major branches of the Government have engaged Disney to reach the public, usually with the aid of Donald Duck or Pluto the dog. But an important majority of Disney's war films are for training purposes. The Army has ordered a few war films. The Navy is Disney's best customer, having ordered more than 50 films on every war subject from bombing and gunnery to pamphlet training.

Walt Disney is both a visionary and practical artist. That is why his new training films are successful today and perhaps extremely important in the future. Disney's artists are free thinkers because, primarily, they know how to hold your interest. By their highly perfected animated-cartoon technique, they can show you the trouble of something—say, an antiaircraft gun—where an average movie could not. They can take the gun apart, piece by piece, step by step. They can show a scientific process. They can show an aviator what to expect flying through thunderclouds or, in a film on malaria, they can make a germ-haunting mosquito so grim-looking that nobody could ever forget it.

All of these are related to war. With no sacrifice of humor or variety, these films will remain for the kind of world where a free popular art, using man's unlimited imagination, can flourish—where everyone has some chance to laugh and learn.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
RULES OF THE NAUTICAL ROAD

Aside for Navy officers and men of the Merchant Marine is Lt. Commander Raymond Farrell's "The Rules of the Nautical Road." This is a rule book for navigating all kinds of ships under all kinds of conditions. Disney's biggest single job for the Navy was to make a movie of the book, to be shown at naval training bases so that all important rules can be studied in action.

In an object lesson, Disney begins his movie with a review of the terrible Ha 19 1 dis disaster in 1917 (see opposite page). He shows how the French ship, Nord Prince, loaded with TNT, approached the town, a freighter with water-tight supplies for Belgium. The Nord Prince signaled the town to surrender, and turned its bows. The explosion demolished Ha 19 1 dis harbor and cost 2,000 lives.

Then the movie goes into a detailed discussion of individual rules, using clear-cut animated diagrams, some of which are reproduced below.

Disney's device of using historical events to point up otherwise dull factual material will be developed further in a series of movies recently ordered by the Army. These will teach military strategy by showing how battles in the present war have been won and lost, and will be designed both for training and as spectacular historical documents. Advising on this project is Military Expert Lieutenant Colonel Paul W. Thompson. Movies planned so far are "Battleship in France," "The Defense of France," "Invasion of Greece," and "The campaign in the East." Campaigns will be seen from all angles, sometimes from high above, so that interlocking scenes and effects can be studied, giving the beholder a "real" view of history.
NAZI PROPAGANDA
the case of Hans Fischerkoesen
A case that is "anti-propagandic" in its propaganda

After World War II started, the trickle of cartoons produced by German studios was not enough to cover the loss of Disney and other American product. To rectify the situation, in 1941 the Nazi government called for the establishment of a strong German animation industry capable of producing both color cartoons and animated features. Thus, all able animators were commanded to step up production and focus on theatrically viable cartoons. Among the filmmakers called into action was Hans Fischerkoesen, who was among the most distinguished animators remaining in Germany between 1933 and 1945, and whose work during the war years included a trio of remarkable films: Verwitterte Melodie (Weather-beaten Melody, 1942), Der Schneemann (The Snowman, 1943) and Das dumme Gänsllein (The Silly Goose, 1944).

Weather-beaten Melody

video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dKQLUqgB-0

Precisely because of its technical brilliance, Weather-beaten Melody could get away with quite a bit of forbidden information. He delineates her personality with unexpected
complexities. For example, is she jealous of the hedgehog who takes over her place as "phonograph needle" when she is away sharpening her stinger--or is she merely exasperated at the confusing quality of his multi-needle pickup? The very idea of ambiguity was anathema to the Nazis, who could only hope to maintain their fascist program by enforcing strict, unbending codes of behavior, and absolute, inviolable "ideals and truths."Ironically, inherent in the "stereo" animation techniques, as Fischerkoesen uses them, lies the most subversive metaphor: a sense of freedom of movement, an affirmation of the multi-layered nature of reality--of ambiguity and change--which demands (even subconsciously) that the viewer think for herself and consider other things as valid as the subjective self--something truly forbidden by Nazi doctrine as the most dangerous action of all. To fully appreciate Fischerkoesen's daring, one must remember that the Nazis had forbidden jazz and swing as an Afro-Judaic plot to undermine traditional German culture.

In this context, the discovery of an abandoned phonograph takes on new meaning, especially when the record on the turntable is a swing number with lyrics that say, "The week wouldn't be worthwhile without a weekend when we can get away to enjoy nature." Near the phonograph lies an "abandoned" clasp from a woman's garter belt (with a lucky four-leafed clover growing out of it!), which suggests that the interrupted picnic that left behind the musical instrument had also involved erotic play--something also strictly forbidden by the puritanical Nazi codes. So from beneath the charming surface of this cartoon emerges a subversive message: women, far from the unnatural Nazi-designated stereotype of "children, church and kitchen," can escape into Nature to be self-reliant and adventurous, erotic and free--they can rediscover or revitalize a suppressed world of forbidden joy in music and friendship between diverse creatures who may be brown or white, frog or caterpillar--or even a pair of ladybug beetles who may be a same-sex couple.

Source: http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.7/articles/moritz1.7.html