



“Enlist”, a poster issued shortly after the sinking of the *Lusitania*

All the participants in World War I used posters to mold public opinion. The best of these had certain traits in common -- simplicity of message and the ability to stir the emotions. Their immediate goals were varied -- to raise money, to conserve food or resources, to promote enlistment or to instill patriotic fervor, to name a few. Placed at railway stations, bus stops, theaters, schools or any place that people may gather, their message could not be ignored.

The poster campaign in the United States actually began before America entered the war. Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare and the sinking of the *Lusitania* brought pressure on Congress and President Wilson to increase America's "preparedness" for war. Evoking memories of the *Lusitania* tragedy and challenging young men to "prepare" for their country, the campaign was successful.