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Walton Rawls

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Walton Rawls : WAKE UP, AMERICA! WORLD WAR I AND THE AMERICAN POSTER before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised WAKE UP, AMERICA! WORLD WAR I AND THE AMERICAN POSTER:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful, Well Reproduced, and Interesting Group of Posters and the History They TellBy Randy StaffordA beautiful, big coffee table book not only full of well-reproduced posters but also a brief history of the American war effort as touched upon by the subjects of those posters.Rawls starts out with a brief history of the lithographic poster, an art form still in its golden age during the war. The art poster, not only advertising a product but also aesthetically interesting to collectors, started in France. He also talks about some of the famed European poster artists and their American counterparts on the eve of the war.The poster was an ideal form of communication in the days before radio and tv, a form that yanked eyes to it and imparted a message even to the illiterate or those not speaking the language of the land they found themselves in. Every nation in the war used them. A German artist who later achieved some political prominence said that American and British posters were the best of the war, uncluttered and effectively conveying their demands to the viewer, conveying and persuading.The book has a number of non-American posters illustrating events in the pre- and early war years or those few that inspired American imitators.Americans were producing posters concerned with the war even before the country joined the conflict. Most begged for money to relieve suffering in France and Belgium, an effort very efficiently managed by future President Herbert Hoover. Others were affiliated with the 1915 preparedness efforts of groups like the private National Security

League to get ready for a war they thought inevitable. On April 17, 1917, a mere 11 days after America entered the war, the president of the Society of Illustrators, Charles Dana Gibson, the man who created the famous pictures of Gibson girls, was asked by illustrator George Creel to let the latter form a committee to produce whatever artwork the government needed. On April 22nd, Gibson met with Creel and the Division of Pictorial Publicity of the Committee on Public Information was born. By the end of the war, they had produced 700 poster designs to the U.S. government as well as hundreds of other advertisements, cartoons, banners, seals, and buttons. The subjects were multiple: recruiting for the military, food and fuel conservation, war bond, war films, counterespionage and security awareness, book drives, the Veterinary Corps, the Y.W.C.A and Y.M.C.A, women in factories, war gardens, and admonitions to immigrants (often in foreign languages) to prove their loyalty. The book talks about America at war through the context of these posters with some mostly forgotten stories like the largely unsuccessful attempt to produce a purely American fighter plane, the Liberty Plane (proclaimed by American ace Eddie Rickenbacker as Flaming Coffins) or the specifics of the Liberty Loan drives or a call by the U.S. Navy for citizens to loan them binoculars and spy-glasses. There are a few post-war posters about hiring veterans, getting other veterans to re-enlist, and the Watch on the Rhine overseeing defeated Germany. Of definite interest for those interested in poster art and World War One. With 279 pages of text and at least one poster on almost every page, there are hundreds of things to look at here.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wake Up, Readers! By untamed cynic I couldn't let this listing pass without posting a better ranking than appears so far. I believe this to be an outstanding book. It is an excellent presentation of the poster art of the era, and how the artists/illustrators fit into and advanced the war effort. It also provides a concise, understandable, and essential summary of World War I. More "history books" should be like this.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A patriotic exploration of the WWI poster's contemporary context By Ryan C While Rawls takes a somewhat naive approach to the motives and methods behind America's actions leading up to and during the First World War, his book incorporates the history of the propaganda poster into a readable, highly useful examination of WWI phenomena including the Committee on Public Information, the Liberty Loans and the US Food Administration. Essential reading for students of American military poster propaganda and the circumstances on the home front during the Great War, though I'd recommend getting your political interpretation of this period from other sources (for instance, "The Politics of War" by Walter Karp -- quite a different take on the same period, particularly on Wilson's motives).