Persuading the Home Front: The Communication Surrounding the World War I Campaign to “Knit” Patriotism

Marcy Leasum Orwig

Assistant Professor
Business Communication

American propaganda is often associated with World War I. While research has focused on the patriotic posters and films of this era, other forms of media during this same time have been largely overlooked. This article, therefore, presents research on the communications surrounding the “Knit Your Bit” campaign, which the American Red Cross conducted with help from the U.S. government-sponsored Committee on Public Information. The campaign persuaded knitters on the home front to knit for the troops using content in the major women’s magazine of the day: Ladies’ Home Journal. This article considers how the overlooked campaign contributed to efforts to generate patriotism during World War I and how social, political, and economic factors affected the communications.