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Individuals in the Calisthenics Club meet up at Hawley Armory for their weekly workout. There are endless club opportunities to seek out at UConn.
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ANIME GIRLS PLUS POLITICAL SYMBOLS EQUALS HOLY POLITICS

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One might look at a TikTok or Instagram edit of an anime girl photoshopped in Union blue and Rosie the Riveter and think that they are nothing alike. I beg to differ. I believe that TikTok and Instagram edits are carrying on the historic tradition of political propaganda. Both Rosie and the edits attempt to convey a message about their selected topic. They highlight triumphs while pushing past the hardships. One is just a modernized version of it.

History has a long list of propaganda, from songs dating back to the Civil War to the propaganda posters of the Second World War. Though we are long removed from these historical events, the same emotions and driving factors still persist. This leads to what we have now, where anime girls take the position in modern propaganda. Modern TikTok edits still carry on a long historical legacy.

To start, we will take a look at the song "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." The song touts the victories of the Union over the Confederate States of America, from Lincoln ending slavery to the CSA surrender. The song is one of boastfulness, celebrating the Union's victory over southern traitors and the end of slavery. In modern times we still celebrate the Union but since we are so removed from the event and attitudes have shifted, we must make it modern. Hence, we photoshop an anime girl in Union blue. The song and the edit both celebrate and boast of the Union in the civil war. They invoke the same feelings of patriotism. The internet doesn't want to sit through a song (personally one of my favorites); people want short form videos.

It is not just music where we can find similarities. Posters and leaflets sharing information and ideals in the general public are also a way to see that the modern edit carries the core values. Take for example a World War 1 poster featuring Joan of Arc. Joan of Arc is a well-known historical figure who, as the poster states, saved France. The common ground is that to many Gen Z people, these anime girls are also well known. They, like Joan of Arc, carry facial and name recognition that draws attention to the poster. Then smaller text promotes whatever the poster is trying to convey. Whether it be to buy war stamps or another political movement, the idea stays the same. The edit once again takes inspiration from the past to influence present thinking.

Another way the edit connects to propaganda of the past is that it contains what has captured the current American culture. Like the aforementioned Joan of Arc poster feeding off her popularity of the time, anime has enthralled modern America. From JoJo's Bizarre Adventure, Umamusume: Cinderella Grey and Pokémon, anime has become tied to what's "in" for America. So, these edits use that, just like the poster.

Now, it should be said that not every post is good natured. The internet is full of people from all political factions. Some anime and mangas attract certain groups and factions to them. When they make an edit, it might be one of the anime girls promoting an extreme ideology. It is not uncommon to see a fascist or anarchist in these edits. One must be cautious, as some posts are jokes to mock said groups while others seek to promote them. On the internet, it is key to do background research and understand the content that one consumes. Most of these edits are harmless fun to enjoy. They don't usually seek to completely turn one's politics upside down, but you should be on the lookout for those that try.

From Rosie the Riveter to Natsuki in Union blue, propaganda must continue to be modern. It must continue finding the "in" in regards to America or else it fails to be anything. Like the Homefront attitudes of the world wars, modern propaganda must be relatable. Thus, Spinning Symbols plus Anime Girls equals Modern Propaganda. Next time you see an edit about Constantinople, Karl Marx or any other political topic, remember there is a good chance that an anime girl was used to promote it.



The iconic 1943 poster, "Rosie the Riveter" painted by Norman Rockwell. The poster was used to encourage women to enter the industrial workforce.
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