Abstract

At the start of World War I, Britain needed to raise an army. The government established the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee (PRC) to sponsor a campaign to convince men to join the military. A major part of the PRC's recruitment effort was the creation of a series of recruitment posters. Many of these posters appealed directly to contemporary notions of masculinity. The analysis of these ideas and how they were developed in young British men makes it easy to understand how the themes were used in recruitment posters and why they were effective in getting men to enlist. This thesis seeks to identify the contemporary ideals of masculinity; describe how they were presented to boys and young men via popular media, youth groups, and games; and discuss how they were used in recruitment posters to encourage British men to join the army.

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