Propaganda in children’s games

By

Lara Zell

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of the MA in Journalism & Public Relations is my own, based on my personal study and/or research, and that I have acknowledged all material and sources, used in its preparation. I also certify that I have not copied in part or whole or otherwise plagiarised the work of anyone else, including other students.

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Abstract

This dissertation identifies and analyses propaganda in games for children. A case study of games in the National Socialism context interprets examples of influential games and the development of manufacturers during the Second World War. An outlook on today’s toy market studies the ongoing influence of recent games regarding the increase of patriotism.

The research questions are answered through qualitative research, including case studies and content analysis.

Games are defined as propaganda if they have a political influence on the child, e.g. militarisation, nationalism or globalisation. The high effect of games on children is explained with several theories on how they play and learn. Games are an important part of their identity and help them to try out life plans and build their personalities. Play prepares them for reality. The ideas of play can be influenced by the material offered. Children are easy to influence and may adapt the views throughout their life. The disadvantage is that children cannot process as much information or understand political topics in their full complexity. The propaganda has to be specifically designed for the age group. Theories about propaganda and ideology are also applied. Tuch’s (1990) theory of white, grey and black propaganda is the key theory. Most games are identified as grey propaganda, as they have a manipulative effect without falsifying information or sources.

The toy market shows changes with the political situation, e.g. a militarisation in the product range before a war.

This dissertation offers ideas on research about the media handling of children.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Toys are a part of a child’s everyday life. Therefore, they are an important instrument in influencing children. Propaganda messages in toys and games can be found in many cases, whether it is during a war or political crisis as well as in a more balanced time. The overall goal of my dissertation is to determine how propaganda in games can be identified and how it works. This is a relevant research area for communications, as games can also be used as a tool for today’s public relations. The theory required to understand the propaganda in games is collected in the literature review in Chapter 2. This includes theories on propaganda and explains why and how it works in general. It also explains the term ideology, which is an important aspect of propaganda and exercised in many games. To understand why propaganda works in children’s games specifically, I also collected neurological and psychological theories of how children play and process information, which includes the factors that make a game influential.

To achieve my goal, I will undertake qualitative research and examine several examples through case studies and content analysis. Even though I will use examples from different countries and eras, the biggest focus will be on games during National Socialism in Germany, as the National Socialist party had an extraordinary propaganda machine. I will discuss and compare several examples of games and analyse their characteristics in substance and form. Propaganda theories, as well as psychological background on children, will be applied on the examples. The material will be selected for content rather than creating a representative overview. The detailed methodology is described in Chapter 3.

With the foundation of my literature review and the methodology, I will analyse the subject in Chapter 4. The study of games in National Socialism includes a collection
of games sorted into content categories as well as a case study of a toy manufacturer and the evolution of a popular German game. I will also cover games of today’s society and collect examples from popular online shops and manufacturers in content categories.

I expect to create an analysis that will form an outlook on propaganda games in different eras and countries and the strategies behind them.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview
The main attempt of my dissertation is to look at games in the context of propaganda. This means that the definition and understanding of propaganda forms the foundation of my work. Propaganda is a very wide field with a large amount of publications and experts. I will focus on literature that uses specific case studies and theories that can be applied to my dissertation. I will also list a few different theories in order to create a general outlook on the topic. Propaganda is linked to the term ideology. I will discuss literature that defines as well as explains ideologies and include a case study. One important theory is that of Edward Bernays, who is considered the inventor of public relations. He sees propaganda as a part of society and a form of communication. The definition and goals of propaganda are described by Jowett and O'Donnell (2012). Other theories also cover the strategies of propaganda. Since my dissertation focusses on the propaganda effect of games rather than games themselves, my key theory will be the propaganda theory of Tuch (1990) concerning white, grey and black propaganda.

However, it is important to understand how games work. The first approach to do so is to take a closer look at the way children play. I want to identify the importance of rules and supervision as well as the advantages of free play. Ultimately, I want to understand why children might enjoy a certain game. One important argument is James’ (1890) theory of games being part of a child’s identity. Propaganda games are not simply about enjoyment, they also have a goal of teaching and influencing children. I want to study how this works by analysing the way children process information and form opinions.
My literature review will be in a logical order. I will start out with the general topic of propaganda which leads to my second section, the ideology. Ideology is important for the purpose of my study as it is directly linked to propaganda. Subsequently, I will list theories on how children play and finally how they can be influenced as the ultimate goal.
2.2 Propaganda

Propaganda can be widely defined as the promotion of an idea. It usually is a strategy to get the audience to form a certain opinion. The goal is to transport an ideology and persuade the audience. This can, for example, be to use discrimination against other countries in terms of a national ideology. It is a type of communication and includes informative content as well as persuasive elements. It is used to achieve political, religious or social goals. The difference between propaganda and persuasion is that propaganda wants to achieve a response, while persuasion simply communicates to satisfy the needs of the audience and the persuader. The term propaganda has a very negative perception in today's society and the concept is often conducted under a different name. Jowett and O'Donnell (2012) list news management as one example, which is the attempt to influence the media to achieve a certain outcome or perception on a topic that is part of propaganda. This already implies that the media is an important part of propaganda. Mass media informs the public and helps forming an opinion. It can therefore easily influence public opinion, which is the goal of propaganda (Jowett and O'Donnell 2012).

Parry-Gilles (2002) argues that messages are strategically transported to the public by an institution that has a purpose behind this propaganda. However, Ellul (1965) considers propaganda as a phenomenon rather than a conscious attempt. He argues that all messages that are transported influence the receiver in some way.

Pratkanis and Aronson (2001) have a worse perception on the topic. They consider it manipulative and define propaganda as an abuse of sources.

Propaganda is used to achieve different goals. Diplomatic propaganda for example has the goal of improving the relationships of a state. It uses tactics like trade agreements to influence other politicians. The type of goal I will be discussing is
political. Political propaganda oftentimes aims to increase patriotism. It usually uses typical symbols like flags or anthems (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland 2004).

A nation can profit from the patriotism of its citizens. Citizens that identify with the country are more likely to join the military or work harder for the economic outcome and the common good. That is why many countries create programmes in order to increase patriotism. In 1996, the ‘National Museum of Patriotism’ was opened in Atlanta, United States. The museum offers a curriculum for students that is supposed to support patriotism by offering interactive education opportunities. These include ringing the ‘Liberty Bell’ or learning about war heroes. Other countries like Russia or Poland have similar strategies. They influence educators as well as media stations and offer a wide range of information material. The goals are to preserve a nation’s history, form and identity in order to create and improve patriotism. These programmes show that patriotism is an educational matter (Hirschi 2011).

Symbols are an important part of the strategies. Le Bon (1895) mentioned them as a powerful tool of persuasion.

The ‘International Journal of Public Opinion Research’ made an attempt to measure patriotism in 2006. They created a study in order to rank the national pride of different countries. Citizens were asked questions like whether they would prefer living in a different country. The nation with the most patriotism was the USA, while Germany was at the end of the list. The research explained this outcome with Germany’s war history that still creates a feeling of guilt among many Germans. The study used criteria in order to define national pride. Important criteria were political influence, military forces, success in sports, economy and technical innovation. This not only explains why the USA is top of the list, it also forms a good approach to what patriotism is based on.
The term patriotism is not to be confused with nationalism. Patriotism describes a person’s love of their country, while nationalism wants the country to be seen as a supreme force. Nationalism not only includes working for the own country, but also working against others (Orwell 1945).

Propaganda can be separated into different forms. When the source of the propaganda is clear and the information true, it is called white propaganda. Grey propaganda is when source and truthfulness are not completely clear, while black propaganda means that source or content have been faked on purpose (Tuch 1990). This theory forms a good basis to separate and analyse games. That is why it will be used as a key theory.

Propaganda research began in the twentieth century and included the first overviews and an attempt to analyse the psychological aspect. One of the defining times for propaganda was the First World War (Laswell 1927). Since then, many propaganda theories have been developed.

Bernays (1928) made the thesis that the deliberate influence of people’s opinions is a normal element of mass society. He saw it as an everyday issue rather than an element that is only relevant during a crisis or war. Propaganda was part of modern society and essential for the economy, as it influenced actions like buying new items. Bernays believed that society could be controlled by using the right techniques. He also wrote that it is a means of communication between masses and companies. His theory was that the intelligent minority could use propaganda to influence the masses. He defined it as ‘the executive arm of the invisible government’ (Bernays 1961, p. 19) and believed in an immense effect of the psychology of the masses.

Media theorists like the sociologist Robert Ezra Park agreed with his impression of the importance of mass psychology. Park also believed that the masses could be influenced and opinions could be formed by a small group with intelligent techniques.
(Wenzel 2001). Thaler and Sunstein (2008) even went as far as saying the reaction of an audience can be influenced beforehand, for example by providing a certain amount of information. This strategy is called a nudge. Nudges can be used in several fields including communication.

The theory of a mass psychology was analysed by psychologist Sigmund Freud (1921). He argued that a person acts as an individual in a mass situation. This means that decisions are not necessarily adopted by others, but the general public opinion has an effect of the opinions of individuals.

Modern technologies have influenced propaganda strategies. Lippmann (1992) found that cinemas and other outlets can be used as a tool to spread messages among the public and have the advantage of not being an obvious influence on the masses.
2.3 Ideology

The term ideology has a variety of meanings with multiple definitions and interpretations. Eagleton (1991) lists several definitions. One of them is that of intentionally distorted communication. He also defines ideology as an identity-orientated way of thinking or a way of thinking that motivates society. The most important definition in the context of my dissertation is to see ideology as a collection of ideas that legitimate a ruling political force. However, all of Eagleton’s definitions have something in common; they all describe a phenomenon among a society. A society is a group of people united by relations or behaviour (Ginsberg 1920). Durkheim (1965) goes even further and defines society as a ‘Reality in its own right’. A society is often under the power of a government. The legitimation of this government is therefore one of the basic concepts of ideology.

Shils (1968) adds that ideologies are plausible in themselves and immune to change. They require a high amount of work and work towards a long-term following from society. Gouldner (1976) sees a direct link between ideologies and extremism. Thompson (1984) argues that in order to analyse ideology, one needs to analyse the strategies it contains to legitimize the government’s power. He summarizes the different strategies as the propaganda of values and beliefs, making these beliefs seem natural and universal to society, but also as a negative representation of different beliefs or even an exclusion of them. Influencing society’s perception of reality is also a strategy as well. This shows that in order to create or keep up an ideology, classic propaganda strategies are used. Ideology would not be possible without propaganda, there is a direct link between the two terms (Manning 1980). Marx and Engels (1932) define ideology as the production of ideas or concepts in all areas, for example politics, religion or morality. Gramsci (1925) sees ideology as more effective than other measures like violence. He believes in the idea of an
hegemony, which means that the society isn’t forced, but persuaded to follow the government. Outlets like school or mass media create the believe that they live in the best possible reality. According to Althusser (1970), every single human being is a subject of ideology and can be willingly or unwillingly influenced.

Other ideas of strategies are the use of paroles and clichés (Görner), creating a perception of the world that feels better than reality (Deutsch), a subjective presentation of a matter (Kelsen) or the denial of change (Link). Pfennig (2012) collects these ideas in his book of definitions of modern political science. They also support the link to propaganda.

Minouge (1985) does not completely agree with the given definitions. He argues that an ideology is not always linked to a ruling political force and that beliefs like feminism could also be called an ideology. He concludes with a very wide definition of ideology as an opposite idea to the common thinking. However, since my dissertation is about political propaganda, I will focus on the former definitions in the context of political forces.

Seliger (1976) combines the different definitions by saying that an ideology is an idea followed by a society, especially, but nor only, in a political context with goals of retaining or changing the society.

The creation of an ideology has changed with technology. While earlier societies had no informative sources or could not even read, today’s societies receive a wide range of communication and can access a large amount of media sources. With this new access to almost any information, individuals in society can often keep their autonomic views and are not easily influenced (Abercrombie et al. 1980). However, the new communication methods also offer an easier way to spread a message and can therefore support the creation of an ideology as well. However, is ideology even important for a ruling political force or can they keep their position unconditionally?
The authors agree that it does strengthen the feeling of belonging to a society, while they believe it currently rarely changes the minds of individuals.

A well-known example of ideologies is the race ideology of National Socialism, which was the foundation of Hitler’s politics and summarises the beliefs of both him and his supporters. The key theories were that there are different races, the Arian super race and other races like Jews, that had no worth. Democracy was seen as a weakness and society was supposed to show unconditional support to the ‘Führer’ (leader). Hitler’s idea of the ideology could first be read in his book ‘Mein Kampf’, which was published in 1925 and was later transmitted through all media outlets like cinemas, papers, radio or posters. Independent media was forbidden, which meant that society had no more access to sources with different beliefs. This made it easier to create and spread the ideology (Heiden 2010). Fromm (1941) believes that individuals can be willing to be influenced and in fact, prefer authority over complete freedom and their own thinking.
2.4 How children play

Objects like games and toys play an important role in the lives of children. They often form a strong bond with their favourite objects. These are very personal and can lead to conclusions about the child’s personality and its outlook on life. William James (1890) has the theory that the objects are part of a child’s identity. Next to the people they are close to and their direct surroundings, he sees physical objects as a factor in forming an identity. They symbolise aspects like culture and lifestyle. This can be turned around and lead to the assumption that physical objects can be specifically placed to influence a child’s identity development. This would mean that games with propaganda messages can have a great and permanent impact on a child.

Children play games in order to free energy, relax and learn new skills. Sutton-Smith (1997) also sees games as a way to practice useful tasks for daily life in a pretend situation. In comparison to the real-life situation, children enjoy more control and can experiment in order to find their identity.

Rogers and Sawyers (1988) argue that children prefer playing under their own control over structured activities by parents and other supervisors. This means that games should leave space for children’s own creativity. Only that way can they create their own reality.

Next to different variations of their personality, secret wishes or fears, children also use games to try out some specific life plans. They play nurse, parents or criminals. This gives them the unique chance to explore themselves and start to understand grown-up behaviour. Play also has a therapeutic role. Oftentimes, children recreate situations they found difficult in the past. A child that is afraid of going to the doctor might, for example, recreate the scene of a doctor’s visit. The recreation only has one spin; the child is in charge. In this case, the child plays the role of the doctor and therefore has no reason to be afraid. This kind of play can help the child to get over
traumatic experiences. Therefore, children prefer games and toys that are similar to reality (Freud 1920).

These theories show that games are a way for children to try themselves out and practice their behaviour for reality. This means that they are an essential part of building a personality. The fact that play cannot only be observed among humans, but also in the animal world, proves this assumption. Animals like chimpanzees or birds play catching, running or hiding and form skills that help them survive in the future. Play is a tool of ensuring the survival of a species (Pellegrini and Smith 2007).

Oerter (1999) defines three different characteristics of a child’s game playing. First of all, the child has no deeper intention when playing a game. It simply wants to play. Secondly, the actions are oftentimes repeated and a ritual is created. This does not make the game boring to the child, it makes it feel secure and gives the chance to improve. The last characteristic is that the child can create its own reality. It gives space for the child to make its own rules and use its fantasy. This is the perfect foundation for the child to try out new actions.

Newborns do not play in this way at all. They explore their surroundings in the ways they can. The symbolic meaning of objects starts to develop in the second year (Sutton-Smith 1986).

Elkonin (1980) studied the play behaviour of children between the ages of three and seven years. He made an interesting observation when he asked the children to take the role of themselves in a game. They refused to do so. He came to the conclusion that games are not about who the children actually are, but who they want to be in the future and therefore can be seen as a tool to achieve this goal. They can act out secret wishes and test themselves without any real consequences. If this aspect is taken away, they do not enjoy playing anymore.
Piaget (1969) defines three types of play. The practising type, which is very similar to animals, involves motoric tasks like running or throwing. The second type is the symbolic type. Objects are symbolic for something else in the child’s fantasy, a box could, for example, be a car. It also involves the imitation of different persons or characters. The child can fulfil its wishes in symbolic play. The third type is following rules. The games can be the same as for the other types, but the difference is that there are rules that have to be kept. Rules only work if a group of people decides them.

Play is not always adjusted to real-life rules and situations. It gives the child the possibility to create its own rules and its own little world. This is the reason why play has such a relaxing effect on children (Piaget 1969).

Wygotski (1993) argued that the child’s fantasy and thought processes behind a game are more important to the child than the actual material. He refers to the example of a little girl he was observing. She had to draw faces and stopped after a while because her hands were hurting and she wanted to do something else. Wygotski told her that she needed to keep on drawing so that she could teach another girl how to do so. The girl immediately started drawing again and enjoyed her role as a teacher. The material did not change, only the background of the play.

The way children play outside has taken a turn during recent decades. The Living Streets study (2009) showed that half of children today are not allowed to play outside, while only 12 per cent of 65-year-olds were not allowed to do so as children. This development is due to public crime cases concerning murder or abduction of children. Beunderman (2010) believes that it is important to still give the opportunity for free play outside with a supervisor.
2.5 How children process information and learn

The membership of a group influences a person’s preferences. The more a person identifies with a group, the more change can be monitored in his preferences (Charness et al. 2007).

An identification with a group can, for example, develop though a similar goal. In many cases, this goal cannot be achieved individually. Bierhoff (2002) uses the example of shared accommodation. The individuals cannot afford an apartment by themselves, but they can afford it as a group. The identification with a group can be improved by a common enemy (Baron and Greenberg 1989). In this case, that could be the landlord who wants to increase the rent. The exclusiveness of a group also increases the grade of identification and solidarity (Brewer 1999).

Neuroscientist Manfred Spitzer et al. (2007) support this assumption. He sees the positive experience as the most important factor of learning something. The experience is usually the most positive if it happens in a social surrounding. Social activities are enjoyed the most and have the greatest learning effect.

Information can be provided though several methods like text or pictures. Children at the age of ten years are the most effective at processing information if they have multi-visual impressions (Bensur and Eliot 1993). This means that games that provide information through text and pictures have the greatest effect on children of this age group.

However, younger children have trouble processing this much information at once. A study by Francois Guercin (2001) showed that children up to the age of about eight years are better at processing pictures without text or verbal information.

Verbal information and text is processed through the left hemisphere, while visual information is processed by the right one. With growing development, a child learns
to connect the two hemisphere and becomes better at processing information (Springer and Deutsch 1998).

The human brain is not only provided with two hemispheres but is also differentiated into three areas: the brain stem, the limbic system and the cerebrum. Methods that affect all these three areas are the most effective to learn new things. The brain stem responds to rituals and well-known situations. This could be an adjusted version of a famous board game. The limbic system responds to emotions like happiness, excitement or fear. Emotions in a game can be provided through a background story or the thrill of winning and losing. All information is first perceived in the limbic system, before it gets permanently saved in a person’s memory. This makes the limbic system and therefore, the emotional aspect of a game, especially important to achieve a teaching value. The cerebrum is where basic information and facts get processed and analysed. It also compares new information to what a person already knows. To create a teaching effect though a game, it must therefore include a traditional, an emotional and an informative component (Beebe 1980).

Educational activities can influence a child’s attitude. A positive attitude towards the country is the foundation of patriotism. An attitude is built from three different components. The emotional component simply defines whether a person likes or dislikes a matter. The cognitive component includes opinions the person links to the matter. The intentions are the third component and define the outcome of the attitude in thinking and acting. In order to form a certain attitude, positive emotions and linked opinions have to be created (Katz and Stotland 1959).

The change of an attitude is called persuasion. In order to start a persuasion, certain aspects have to be ensured. The person has to give attention to the matter, understand the content and think about the given information in order to permanently change the attitude. These aspects are difficult to ensure when persuading children.
They have a shorter attention span, need the content to be well provided and easy to understand and most importantly need motivation to think about it (McGuire 1985). The biggest educational effect is created when a variety of teaching methods is used. Children, in particular, cannot focus on a long lecture or text. It is helpful to be creative in the process of sharing knowledge. Games are an interactive way that can be used to transmit a message. For the children that play the game, the teaching effect is not as important as the fun. Therefore, the information should be transferred subconsciously throughout playing the game (Rogers and Sawyers 1988).

Since games are such an important part of a child’s life, they can possibly be used to influence them. Games that have the goal of educating a child are referred to as smart toys. A smart toy fulfils three criteria: teaching effect, engagement of the child and a fun approach to learning. This means they always have a deeper purpose. Purposes can, for example, be the development of social skills or the improvement of language. A toy’s impact depends on factors like use, interaction, language and how it works as a pretend play (Goldstein 2012).

One common example of toys with an educating effect are talking toys. The vocabulary and speech skills of preschool children has been proven to increase when children play with talking toys (Goldstein 2004). However, the teaching effect does not influence the play behaviour. Bergen (2004) states that whether a toy can talk or not does not influence the way children between three and five years of age played with it.

Games can show a child how to behave in its community, as they teach rules and symbols. That is why they are an important part of a culture. Culture does not only include traditions, but also values of the community and therefore, an influence of a culture can have a propaganda background. Since games are often linked to a culture, some of them do not work in different cultures. Symbols and values vary in
communities. Else (2009) explains this with the colour white. In countries with a
Christian culture, white is the traditional colour for a wedding dress and is linked to
marriage, while Indian people use the colour white for funerals. This means that
children from these two cultures have a completely different perception of a colour or
a symbol. Games that support culture can usually not have the same effect in other
cultures.
Furthermore, children from different cultures have a similar way of playing at similar
age groups. A study of immigrants living in the United States showed that even
though the children were raised with different cultures, they were playing very
similarly (Cote and Bornstein 2009). This means that the content of a game has to
vary depending on the community that is supposed to use it, while the strategy and
use can be applied in all cultures.
Almost every country recognises children’s right to play. However, some countries
see a greater value in games as a learning tool than others. That is why the amount
of play in schools varies in different countries (Ashiabi 2007).
Since play is usually offered by adults, children receive different approaches to
playing. One source of games are educational establishments like preschools and
schools. Synodi (2010) analysed the curricula of different countries from Europe, Asia
and Oceania. He found that there were three ways of playing in school: teacher-led,
child-led and mutually led, which means that teachers are part of the children’s free
play. This can be applied to play at home as well, since parents are in charge of
young children’s play when they are at home.
Worpole and Knox (2007) made an interesting proposition. They agreed that play
could improve a child’s sense of community but added that it also creates a
community for their parents. Whether they watch over the children at a playdate or
simply accompany them to a meeting point, it allows them get in touch with other parents and build new relationships in the community.
2.6 Conclusion

This literature review creates a good outlook on the topic and is the foundation for my work. However, it also creates many questions that I want to answer during the process of my dissertation and some research approaches.

Tuch’s (1990) theory of black, grey and white propaganda creates a good basis to separate or compare different games. The theory does not only apply to the games themselves, but also the sources of the games. Therefore, it covers a large part of my studies and works as my key theory to analyse different games.

Some games have quite an obvious propaganda background, while others can barely be identified as propaganda. I want to determine how to measure the effects as well as the advantages and disadvantages of different strategies.

The propaganda I will look at is created by different political forces. I want to answer why they choose children as their target audience and the benefits that creates.

I name different factors that make a game an influence and teach the children something. I want to see which games they apply to, as well as finding out if and why the goal of a game works. In order to do so, I will use a scientific approach and look at the reaction of the brain as well as the psychological effects.

Children from different cultures have a similar use of games, but the content must vary. I want to find similarities as well as differences in both aspects.

Not only the factor of culture, the era of the game also changes the outcome. I want to compare different eras as well.

Guardians like parents and teachers are usually the ones that offer resources for children to play. I want to evaluate the impact they have on a child’s perception of a game and find out whether propaganda messages can even be spread without the guardian’s will. I will also consider whether the games have an effect on the parents.
Overall, I hope to create an understanding of the significance of games in political propaganda and describe how and under which circumstances different strategies work.

The specific questions are as follows:

What makes a game a propaganda game?
Why does propaganda in games work?
How can Tuch’s theory be applied to games?
What are the effects of different strategies in games and what are their advantages and disadvantages?
Why are children a target audience?
How do games change with time and culture?
Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Overview

My research process in detail will be explained in the following chapter. I will do a content analysis of different games in the context of propaganda and play theories. In order to compare my findings, I will select a number of categories that include the most important criteria to understand how a game can fulfil its propaganda purposes. I will collect a wide range of games. My focus will be on games that were given to children during the Nazi era in Germany, as this is my case study. I will also look at games from Ireland and other countries in order to compare them in terms of the time period and the place in which they were released.

The goal of this method is to create an understanding of propaganda games and a theoretical foundation on the topic in order to achieve interesting findings.
3.2 Qualitative research

As opposed to quantitative research, qualitative research can provide emphasis and therefore create a ‘complete picture of meaning and contextual codes’ (Shoemaker and Reese 1996, p. 32). Since the main focus of my study is on latent content, it is my research method of choice. I will not use quantitative research, as it lacks the ability to ‘capture the context’ of the games (Newbold et al. 2002, p. 84).

The first step of qualitative research is to define the research questions I want to answer in my analysis. A general outlook on the questions is in the conclusion of my literature review. Afterwards, I have to collect research sites and data. This includes official data sources and statistics as well as specific case studies and examples. While most of the theories of propaganda and play can be found in the literature, current examples are more likely to be found through online resources. During the interpretation of the data, I will see if further data are needed. After collecting and interpreting all the information, I will take a look at the concept and theories of my research in the context of the questions I asked at the beginning. The final step is to write down my findings and come to a conclusion (Bryman 2004).

In order to start my research, I therefore have to set a goal (Brendel 1998). The main goal of my dissertation is to determine how games for children work as a propaganda tool. I will look at specific games with a measurement strategy. Therefore, my research focus will be on qualitative research, especially content analysis, which Neuendorf (2002) describes as ‘the primary message-centered methodology’ (p. 9). The analysis will also include comparisons and discussions.
3.3 Content analysis

Qualitative content analysis is used for games as well as other media like films or music. Material is selected, examined and interpreted afterwards. The goal of the analysis is to find patterns, themes and meanings of the material. Content analysis puts a focus on the background of the material. This means that symbols and other connections are discovered rather than just a description of the obvious material. Symbolic elements can, for example, be colours or flags. Other aspects like the technical analysis of the material do not concern my research field. The symbolic elements are latent content. This means they are an interpretation in the context of symbols and other information. In my analysis, I want to also look at manifest content. Manifest content can be seen at the surface of the material and is physically present (Smyth 2017).

Some games might contain small paragraphs of text or an interesting use of language I can use for a textual analysis. This means deciding on possible interpretations in the context of the given data (McKee 2016).

Laswell (1948), who introduced media content analysis in order to analyse propaganda, lists the following points to be relevant in a content analysis (p.12):

- Who is speaking?
- What is the topic?
- What is the channel?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the effect?

These questions need to be answered in relation to examples of games in my analysis. This includes describing characteristics in substance and form (Berelson 1952). Newbold et al. (2002) note that the question of who is speaking also aims at the perceived credibility of the source. The audience can be defined with aspects like
‘age, sex race, ethnicity, education levels and socioeconomic position’ (p. 84). I will only identify characteristics that have an effect on the way of perceiving the content.

Another important part of the analysis is the context. Newbold lists the example of the era in which a game is published as one of the points that need to be considered. However, Laswell’s (1948) questions are kept very general. This is why I will use my own criteria specifically for games that are based on Laswell’s. I will use a set of different categories.

I will analyse these aspects on a number of examples. In order to select the material, I will use a strategy by Miles and Huberman (1994) that focusses on choosing the best material in order to answer the research question rather than making the choices as representative as possible. My main question is not if some games contain propaganda, but how propaganda in games works. Therefore, it makes sense to only choose material that can directly help to answer this question.

However, the first technique is to select examples that seem representative at first sight, which means selecting the most obvious material of a topic. The next technique is to find examples that are specifically negative and finally add exceptions to the material. The material from these three techniques is then used for my analysis.

I will also use a case study as part of my research design. The term case study refers to the subject (the case) as well as the strategy (the study). Yin (2014) recommends case studies for the investigation of a phenomenon that varies with the context. Wolcott (1992) has a different perception of case studies and refers to them as the ‘end-product’ of research. My case study will be on propaganda games in the era of National Socialism. I will investigate examples and context as Yin (2014) said, but my analysis will also profit from the further findings of the entire research process.

The use of graphics will support my findings and make it easier to compare and come to conclusions (Tufte 2001).
Every example will be looked at in the context of the theories I have gathered in my literature review, especially my key theory of black, white and grey propaganda by Tuch (1990).

In order to analyse the collected data, I will develop categories into which I can sort the examples. Each category has a general frame that unites different examples. During the research process, I will write notes on every example in order to sort them at a later stage.

I will take a closer look at the following categories of my game:

**Age:** As explained in my literature review, the way children play and learn changes with age. Different age groups have different needs in their play and react differently. I will research the age group a game is aimed at and how it matches the audience.

**Gender:** Gender can be seen as part of the identification of a person, just as games are a part of a child’s identity (James 1890). Therefore, it is relevant to see what gender the game is aimed at, as well as what gender figures have in the game.

**Source:** The source of a game is one of the two important criteria of my key theory. Knowing the source can help identifying the goal of a product and is an important part of the analysis. Unfortunately, the source is not always clear. I might not be able to identify the sources in the case of grey and black propaganda.

**Language:** Not only the content of the text, but also the language can say something about an object. Punctuation and style oftentimes leave room for interpretation.

**Content:** Content is the other criterion of my key theory, as I need to measure the truthfulness of a product. This content does not necessarily have to be text, but also includes images and symbols. In order to understand a game and its propaganda message, the content is the most important thing to analyse in most cases.
Effect: I want to see if and how a game influences children. This can be done by applying different theories of the way children play and process information to the examples of games.
3.4 Conclusion

My research approach is very similar to a typical media content analysis. This makes it easy to apply theories, but also leads to one challenge; games cannot always be analysed in the same way as common media outlets. For example, Laswell’s (1948) findings on a helpful media content analysis cannot be applied exactly to my games. As opposed to other media sources like papers or TV stations, games do not have a clear channel. It is also a bit more difficult to apply my key theory. The truthfulness of the information is hard to define, as many games do not include any hard facts or text at all and only work with emotions and symbols. I will have to adjust the given theories to my specific cases and therefore work with my own strategy. Not every category can be analysed in every game, but I will try to make similar interpretations in order to compare the games later on. I will also be open to add some new criteria if a game appears to offer more interesting information to analyse. All in all, I believe that my methodology is the right choice in order to form an understanding of the topic through a theoretical approach and help me to answer my research questions.
Chapter 4: Analysis

4.1 Propaganda games during National Socialism

During the era of National Socialism, there were a lot of propaganda games on the German market. The Ministry of Propaganda spoke about the need for war-related toys in the upbringing of children, as they were supposed to be educated about the war and learn to be faithful to their country. The main goal was the militarisation of the youth. They were supposed to mentally prepare the public for the war and keep up military thinking during the war. Toy manufacturers used the new demand of the public and created a wide range of games with a propaganda background (Retter 1979).

Kroner (1982) argues that games only played a very small role in the military upbringing of children and describes other areas like school as a bigger influence. However, experts agree that they do fulfil the purpose of spreading propaganda messages and influencing children (Kauffmann 1978).

The following are a number of examples of propaganda games that were given to children during the Nazi era in the context of the political situation.

Since Tuch’s theory (1990) about black, grey and white propaganda is my key theory, I will focus on the areas of source and content. I have developed different categories of content and a case study of a big toy manufacturer that developed with National Socialism, as representative of typical sources. My second case study explores the development of an interesting propaganda game that leads to several interpretations.
4.1.1 Content categories

There are many similarities as well as differences in the propaganda games of the Nazi era. Next to the source, the content plays an important role for the analysis. I have collected several examples of games and sorted them into categories based on their content.

4.1.1.1 Games about being a soldier

The militarisation of children includes preparing them for the life as a soldier (Bond 1985). Some games focussed on that aspect and had the life of a soldier as their topic.

The game ‘Soldier’s daily life’ (Figure 1) was given out in 1937 and showed the activities of a soldier’s daily life. These include activities in their free time as well as marches, attacks and so on. Overall, the daily life was very romanticised. The game was not only given out to boys, but also to actual soldiers in order to increase positive identification with the job of a soldier. ‘Oh, what fun to be a soldier!’ was released in the same year and with the same goal of romanticising the soldier life. However, this game focussed on the entire career from draft and medical tests to the first fights as well as the first promotion. The gender of both games is quite obvious, as the figures
are male. The language is especially relevant in the second example, as the title is the pure expression of enjoyment. The soldiers drawn on the package and the game have bright smiles on their faces. The games could give young boys the wrong impression of what being a soldier means and make them an easy target for recruitment later on in life (Van der Vegt 2013). The game transports an ideology, as it motivates the society for political purposes (Eagleton, 1991).

4.1.1.2 Games about military actions

Some of the games were directly linked to specific military actions like bombing raids. The board game ‘Wir fahren gegen Engeland’ (We’re driving against England) was first sold in 1940. The players compete in reaching the English island with different military vehicles like submarines, boats or planes. The Nazi background cannot only be seen in the choice of the enemy England, but also on the packaging. The big boat on the label has a Nazi flag. In the ‘Adler Luftkampfspiel’ (Eagle aerial combat game), children could pretend to throw bombs from planes (Smith Journal 2017). The eagle was also the symbol for the German empire (Diem 2009).

Both games do not contain gender specific figures. However, it is a natural assumption that they are primarily aimed at a male audience, due to the strong military reference. Since the games are comprised of several players, the whole
family could play together. There is no age group defined by the manufacturer, but the content and complexity are fitting for the ages of 12 years and upwards and can even be interesting for grown-ups.

The games might lead children to link the pretended military actions to a fun activity and therefore work as militarisation, which can be seen as the transportation of an ideology in the context of Gramsci’s (1925) idea of hegemony. Instead of forcing the society to support the political forces, outlets like media, in this case games, create a positive perception among society. This leads to a society that willingly supports the ruling political force.

The source of the games are two toy manufacturers, which are displayed clearly and the military context is not a secret. Therefore, the games could be considered white propaganda. However, the games and their content are made for the militarisation of the youth, which might not be completely transparent to the audience, which is why it can also be described as grey propaganda. The correct application of Tuch’s theory (1990) can be argued in this case.

4.1.1.3 Games that focus on education

Every one of the listed games had the purpose of somehow influencing the players. However, many just had this influence as a side effect of the play and rarely used text. In these examples, the focus is on information and teaching the children to support their ideology.
One of Hitler’s goals of the war was to extend the German country. By 1940, there already were new borders that added new cities to the country. ‘Greater Germany’s Cities’ was given out that year and used the most important cities as part of their game. During play, children could learn the names and location of the cities on the map and deepen their new picture of the country. This game could possibly be described as white propaganda, as the map does match reality (Van der Vegt 2013).

The example of Hausser, ‘From World War to Third Reich’ (Figure 17), which was covered in Section 4.1.2.5, also goes under this category. By playing the foursome card games, children were learning the historical information of Germany that was written on the cards.

4.1.1.4 Games that discriminate others

Some games were specifically describing an enemy as a country or a culture. One example would be ‘We’re driving against England’, which specifically names the opponent as the country of England. Another example is listed later on in Section 4.1.3. It is called ‘Jews out!’ and discriminates the Jewish people in many different ways including language and symbols. The main goal of the game was to expel Jews from their homes.

While naming the enemy was a common strategy, the government criticised ‘Jews out!’ The National Socialist magazine ‘Schwarze Korps’ reviewed the game as a ‘trivialisation’ of the problem and continued: ‘We are not slaving away towards the solution of the Jewish question to relieve able toymakers of their worries about a big seller or to help children with an amusing little game’. This statement leads to the
conclusion that the National Socialists did not want political topics in children’s games at all, which is not the case according to Retter (1979), as I stated earlier in the text. The government possibly just did not want to be brought into connection with the game, as they saw it as an ‘easy target for criticism of the Third Reich in the international press’ (Wiener Library 2017).

Games that transport the race ideology of the National Socialists support Gouldner’s (1976) argument of a link between ideology and extremism.

4.1.1.5 Toy figures

All children play, no matter how young they are, but they first start developing a deeper thinking behind play when they achieve the age of two years. They might not play complicated board games with many rules, but their toys start to have a symbolic meaning (Sutton-Smith 1986). Since they have a strong bond to their toys and perceive them as part of their identity (James 1890), toys form an excellent propaganda tool, even for children as young as two years old. Toys without rules or supervision have the advantage of leaving the child space for its own creativity, which increases the child’s enjoyment of play (Rogers and Sawyers 1988).

Children at the age of ten years are the most effective in processing information through a combination of text and images, which makes structured board games a more common choice to influence them (Bensur and Eliot 1993). However, this high amount of information is too much to process for children under the age of eight years. They are better at processing information simply through images or symbols like toys (Guercin 2001). This makes symbolic toys the natural propaganda tool for children from two to eight years old.

The following examples give children the opportunity to play pretend. Children use play to try out life plans. These could be working as a nurse, but also as a Nazi soldier or even a dictator. Playing pretend helps them to understand the behaviour of
grown-ups (Freud 1920). However, children do not necessarily adapt all the behaviour they have seen from grown-ups. Oerter (1999) sees the creation of an own reality as a characteristic of play. The child creates its own storyline with its own rules. Figures of Nazi soldiers do not necessarily have to go to war in the child’s fantasy. This could mean two things. It is either bad for propaganda purposes, since the child does not learn and adapt the rules and ideology it is supposed to. This could, for example, be the perception of war heroes. On the other hand, giving the symbols a different meaning could lead to an even more positive perception of their subjects. Pretending that a Hitler figure is going to the store to buy groceries makes him look human and accessible to the child. Piaget (1969) lists this as a symbolic type of play. In this type, an object stands for something different than it actually is in the child’s fantasy. A dictator could easily be transformed into a teacher in the child’s fantasy. Wygotski (1993) sees the child’s fantasy behind the objects as more important than their actual meaning.

The first option might be the obvious goal of the producers, but they cannot completely control the perception. However, both options would be a helpful propaganda tool.
This collection of Nazi soldiers, their house and Adolf Hitler giving a speech (Figure 6) was given to children during the Nazi regime, just like the figure of Hitler doing the Hitler salute (Figure 7).

The toys also support another aspect of play, that has also been defined by Piaget (1969); the imitation of different persons or characters. Hitler (Figure 7) is giving the Hitler salute, a gesture that was performed by the Nazis during the regime. It involves raising the straight right arm (Allert 2008). Children could be encouraged to imitate the Hitler salute.

Toy soldiers weren’t only a German phenomenon. The British manufacturer Airfix was founded in 1939 and sold plastic soldiers and military vehicles to an audience in the United Kingdom, the United States and even Germany. Products are still available today. However, the Swastika symbol on German figures has been replaced (Caddick-Adams 2006).

Toy soldiers are still available for children today. A natural Irish example to look at is Smyths Toys Superstores. According to the spokesman of the company, Michael Frost, Smyths is the biggest toy retailer in Ireland and makes up about 60% of the toy market (Smith 2008). The following items can currently be ordered at the online shop.

![Figure 8](image1.jpg)  
**Figure 8**  
Soldier Force 9 Stealth Patrol Helicopter  
€10.00

![Figure 9](image2.jpg)  
**Figure 9**  
The Corps Elite Combat Strike 4 Vehicle Set  
€34.99
The toys include soldiers, a bunker, weapons, tanks and more items that are directly related to war. They are aimed at the same age group and have similar effects as the former examples from the Nazi era. The only difference is that they are not linked to a political party or ideology. However, they also promote the idea of war. Toy soldiers fit Pratkanis and Aronson’s (2001) definition of propaganda as being manipulative. The message of the toys might not be as obvious as in some other examples of games for older children. However, these toy soldiers are symbols, which are an important part of propaganda strategies (Le Bon 1895). They have the advantage that Lippmann (1992) sees in media outlets as being helpful tools to spread a message without being an obvious influence on the masses at first sight. This type of propaganda would be considered grey propaganda in my key theory by Tuch (1990). The sources seem to be clear due to the seller, but the audience does not necessarily know if the government had an influence on the products. The truthfulness of the source is hard to measure, as there is no text involved, which means no hard facts. However, the toys serve a purpose of creating an image of war heroes, regardless of the actual course of a war or the history. Therefore, I would say both criteria can be considered as a grey area and war toys for children count as grey propaganda.

The influence of toys on children should not be underestimated. They can have a great impact on the development of a child and possibly help to spread propaganda messages among children of as young an age as two years.

4.1.1.6 Regular games that use symbols

The importance of symbols is explained in the section about toys for children from two to eight years, but they have an important meaning for older children as well, as political propaganda often uses symbols in order to increase patriotism (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland 2004). The main symbol of the Nazis is the ‘Hakenkreuz’
(Swastika), which can be seen on flags and uniforms as well as many products for the general public (Diem 2009). Many of the games that mainly work from the effect of symbols are regular games that have been established before the Nazi era and were slightly changed in their appearance. Some examples are this military chess set from 1939 (Figure 10) or this game set from 1938 (Figure 11).

The chess set shows Nazi soldiers at the front and the figures look like Nazi symbols, for example an eagle, instead of the regular chess figures. The game set has Swastika symbols on the playing stones.

4.1.1.7 Conclusion

Other than their style of content, these examples have a lot in common. Next to the propaganda message, many can be sorted under the same category of Tuch’s theory. They are grey propaganda. The clear source is a toy manufacturer, but the influence of political parties cannot be fully traced. It is hard to define the truthfulness of the content of games in general, since many do not involve any facts that can be proven right or wrong. This is why the main criteria for games is the source, more specifically the political influence on a source. This also applies to the other examples in my dissertation.
This section showed that the propaganda message can be carried out in many different ways, but also that there is more than just one message or goal of the propaganda. While some games romanticise war, others want to build a stronger connection of the children to the country. They all have in common that they are in sync with the political ideology of the political party of the National Socialists ‘NSDAP’ and have no critical views whatsoever on the topic.

As I stated, some games can be sorted into several of my categories, as they are complex in content and work with several strategies.
4.1.2 Toy manufacturers

The source of a game is an important criterion of an analysis. In many cases, this is the toy manufacturer. Therefore, I will take a close look at an interesting manufacturer of the time.

4.1.2.1 Case study of the toy manufacturer O. & M. Hausser

The German toy manufacturer O. & M. Hausser was created in 1904 and soon became established with around half a million toys being produced every year in the 1930s. They offered all kinds of games but had a big focus on war toys. However, the success of the company increased dramatically with the success of the National Socialist party. They developed a wide range of propaganda games. I will look at the evolution of the company and its products from the 1930s until after the war. The chronology of the events is adopted from the College of Literature, Science, and Arts at the University of Michigan, while the dates of the company are according to the Bavarian economic archive.

4.1.2.2 Before the 1930s

The title pages of the Hausser product catalogues were developing with the situation of the country. In 1924, long before the time of the NSDAP, the title page (Figure 12) shows an elephant and monkeys. There is absolutely no connection to war and politics in the drawing. However, the company was already selling some war-related products like toy soldiers.
4.1.2.3 From 1930 to 1932
Most citizens were unhappy with the situation in the country. There was a lot of poverty and people were still suffering from the aftermath of the First World War and the global economic crisis. National Socialists gathered and started forming political strategies and Hitler's political party, the NSDAP, was created.

This is the title page of the Hausser catalogue for costumers in 1932. The product range includes a number of toy soldiers and other war toys, but there are no indications of a National Socialist background.

4.1.2.4 Hitler becomes imperial chancellor of Germany
In 1933, Hitler and his political party, the NSDAP, take over Germany. Hitler becomes imperial chancellor and declares a totalitarian regime.
The title page of the catalogue from 1934 only contained toys that are linked to war, while the one from 1932 also showed a few neutral toys. However, the increased militarisation became even more obvious inside the catalogue. It contained games like the ‘Hitlerjugend Geländeübung’ (Hitler youth field exercise) (Figure 15). The Hitler youth was a youth organisation created by the NSDAP. All other youth organisations were forbidden with Hitler as chancellor, therefore, it became the only one (Struck 2000). The rules of the strategic game were similar to the established game ‘Halma’. It could be played by up to four players and was aimed at the young male audience that is either a member or could be a potential member of the Hitler youth (Merkel and Dittrich 2011). The figures were small stones of different colours and therefore genderless. The connection to the Nazi regime was not only obvious through the title of the game, but also through the use of symbols. The ‘Hakenkreuz’, the symbol of the Nazi regime, was shown on the flags and the typical soldier uniforms.

The catalogue of 1935 (Figure 16) has a similar title page; a boy playing with war toys with the caption ‘What the Hausser youth wants’. The boy on the front page underlines the approached audience of the war segment.

4.1.2.5 The war approaches

With the takeover of the NSDAP, the Nazi ideology was spread across the country. The first concentration camps were built and resulted in countless acts of violence by the government. The country was clearly preparing for war and in 1938, it was just a matter of time until the beginning of the Second World War.
Hausser released a catalogue which covered a page of new products of the year as well as established products. The page of new products (Figure 17) offered four examples of propaganda games. There were also games without political messages, number 286, for example, was about learning the names of different flowers. The propaganda games however had very specific messaging.

**Figure 17**
The title of game number 154 can be translated into ‘On the Reichsautobahn (Freeway) – the way to the goal, a German game’. This does not sound like a propaganda game at first sight. Hitler was known to the country as the founder of the freeways in Germany. It was later proven that the concept was not developed by Hitler, but by the previous government. However, the first freeway was built under Hitler and the propaganda machine made the public believe that freeways were completely invented by him (Focus Online 2016). This means the idea of freeways was part of the Nazi propaganda. A game that lets children play pretend to be on a freeway supports the positive image of the concept. One of the reasons for that effect is that the game could be played by several players and activities in a social surrounding were perceived as a positive experience, which is the best foundation for children to learn and process (Spitzer et al. 2007). The game does not contain any further hints to National Socialism like symbols or text. Therefore, it could be described as grey propaganda.

Game 12/1 N is about shooting military planes, which is a very specific military process. There are several examples of games that focus on a specific military action. This subject is covered in section 4.1.1.2.

‘Germany needs colonies’ was the name of game number 294. The specific title does not lead to much need for interpretation, as the proposed messaging is made very clear. However, the drawing on the packaging holds another message (Figure 18).

The drawing shows the German country with several factories. This makes Germany look industrial and highly developed. Two soldiers are shown on the way to three
islands. These islands have palms and people on them. The people have typical African characteristics in terms of skin colour and clothing and carry or prepare beverages. This makes the message of the game even more specific, as identifying the need for German colonies in African countries. Compared to the image of Germany, the other countries seem less developed and have no industry.

The fourth example of propaganda is number 688. ‘From World War to Third Reich’ was a foursome card game. Every card had some historical information about episodes of German History. This involved the last century as well as the beginning of the NSDAP and Hitler’s leadership. Compared to the other examples, this game had the most content and gave a distorted overview of German history in favour of the NSDAP. Falsified information makes it easy to define this game as black propaganda.

The complete overview of the new products can also be interpreted as a reflection of the typical roles boys and girls had in the society of the time. The gender roles of the National Socialists were clear: a heterosexual family. The woman was supposed to stay at home and be a mother while the man was supposed to defend the country (Emmerich 2013). Next to the three military games and the game about the freeway, there are two games about road safety and a strategic game. The six other games were about classic activities at home like knitting or crafting and about flowers. This could lead to the assumption that Hausser created a balanced collection of games for girls and boys. Six of the new games were for girls and six for boys. However, the games about the freeway and the road safety as well as the strategic game cannot be definitely defined as purely for boys.
4.1.2.6 During the war

The Second World War took place from 1939 to 1945. The product range of Hausser was not extended during the war. The company stopped production from 1943 to 1946.

4.1.2.7 After the war

Hausser continued production until 2013. The products were adjusted soon after the war.

The title page of the catalogue from 1950 (Figure 19) shows the image of Indians and has no link to the war or the Nazi ideology. However, the company kept on producing war toys that were unrelated to political parties.

However, the title page shows another sensitive topic. Cowboys versus Indians was a popular game and still is until today. The play represents a specific violent altercation between two opponents. Children replay the western conquest of America. Yellow Bird (2004) criticizes the falsification of history due to the caricatures in games and media. He argues that the mainstream society only gets to see the one-sided views of the western colonizers. He compares the play with Cowboys and Indians to playing SS soldiers and holocaust prisoners, which would be receive a lot of criticism today. The society clearly has a different perception of the colonization than it has on other
military conflicts of the past. Manufacturers seem to focus on the perception of a subject rather than developing consequent criteria.

4.1.2.8 Conclusion

The different title pages and examples of games give a good impression of the changes the country and its industry were going through. Other examples like the competitor ‘Lineol’ have a similar product history. The manufacturers reacted to the change in the country. This turned out to be a good economic decision. In 1935, there was an increase of sales of 25% in the toy market compared to the year before (Lüpke 2013).
4.1.3 From ‘Yut’ to ‘Jews out!’

The German board game ‘Mensch ärgere dich nicht’ (Human, don’t be annoyed) was successful, with over 90 million copies sold since its invention in 1910 according to the manufacturer ‘Schmidt Spiele GmbH’ and was the inspiration of the propaganda game ‘Juden raus!’ (Jews out!), which was sold during the era of National Socialism (Morris-Friedmann and Schädler 2003).

However, the game was not really a new invention by the Germans. It was the result of an evolution of a game that can be traced back to the sixteenth century.

‘Yut’ was invented in Korea, in the sixteenth century approximately and still is a traditional and popular board game to this day. The name is the Romanised and translated term of the original name ‘윷놀이’ from the Korean alphabet. The rules are as follows:

The game is played by two opponents, which can be two teams or two individual players. It can be played on a specially designed board but was also played on the floor or any other square-shaped or rectangular base. On this base, four straight lines are formed to a square and crossed by two diagonal lines. On every line, there are five playing fields, which adds up to 30 playing fields. One of the fields is the start field. Instead of the typical dices used in board games, the players use four throwing sticks. The sticks are round on one side and flat on the other. Each opponent receives four playing figures, which originally do not have a gender.

In order to win, all of the four figures need to end up at the starting point. They either have to go all the way around the field or take a shortcut through the diagonal lines of the field. This shortcut is only possible if a figure is put directly on one of the corners of the square.

If a figure steps on the same field as another one, it can kick the figure out, which means it has to go to the start field again.
For each turn, a player throws the four sticks, in order to receive the amount of steps his figures can take on the board. Every stick can either fall on the flat or the round side. Every combination of the sticks stands for a different number of steps. For example, one flat and three round sides mean that the figure can take one step, while four round sides mean the figure can take five steps and the player can go again. The most popular combinations are four round or four flat sides, as they both mean the player can go again and have the two highest numbers of steps. The rules can be found in the game instructions of different companies, for example Elixir Toys or Jung Jin Art.

The five different combinations have different animal names. This can be traced back to typical farm animals of the time when the game was invented. The least popular combination is the pig, because it means the figure can only take one step on the field. Pigs were also not linked to positive characteristics and only had the purpose of being slaughtered. The best combination is the horse, which is considered fast in real life and therefore, means the highest amount of steps for the figure. Farming was the typical work people had in the sixteenth century. Therefore, the citizens could connect with this game.

Yut still is considered a traditional game for the whole family in Korea. For the Korean New Year’s Day, the whole family gets together and plays (Hwa, E-Wha, Park et al. 2006).

However, Korea was not the only country that perceived this kind of a game as part of their culture. India has a very similar game named ‘Pachisi’, which can be traced back to 1694.

Pachisi was inspired by Yut. Similarities are the possibility to kick out another figure and the basic concept of getting all four figures of a player to the starting point. Even though the number of steps is decided by throwing snail shells instead of sticks, a
certain combination offers the chance for a player to go again. Another difference is
the playing field, which has the form of a cross (Parlett 1999). However, the game
reminds a lot of its inspiration, but is still considered a part of Indian culture. Lukáscy
(1972) sees a link between the rules of the game and the Indian belief in
reincarnation. The figures can be thrown out of the game and have to start at the
beginning, just as the belief means that there is a reincarnation after death. The
figures can also reach the goal and be done with the game, which he compares to
being in paradise at the end. It is very interesting to see that people perceive a
deeper cultural meaning in this game, since the rules were originally created by a
different culture.

There are many versions of Yut that have been developed until today. The basic
strategy can be found in many popular western games. ‘Ludo’ for example is a
popular version developed in England and used dices to determine the number of
steps a figure can take. It is produced by big companies and uses many colours and
easy rules in order to suit children better that its previous versions, since this was
more fitting for the market of the twentieth century. The German version ‘Mensch
ärgere dich nicht’ is believed to be a direct descendent of Ludo. The first sales of the
game were in 1914 and it is still popular today. The rules combine aspects of different
variations of the original Yut (Głonegger 1988).

This successful game was adapted by the Nazis for propaganda purposes. They
developed a different version called ‘Juden raus!’ (‘Jews out!’ or ‘Out with the
Jews!’). It was first sold in 1938, but most copies were destroyed after the war. There
are only a few examples left and displayed in museums. The success of the game is
hard to measure, as some sources say it sold over one million copies, like holocaust
experts Ben Barkow, who works at a museum or author Barbara Rogasky (1999).
The number has not been officially proven and was possibly exaggerated for
propaganda purposes as the game was not officially published or sold by the government, but by an industrial company named Günther & Co., which worked with forced labourers in the Second World War but was not specialised in games (Morris-Friedmann and Schädler 2003). The fact that they worked with forced labourers leads to the assumption that they definitely supported the ideology of the government and maybe even worked for it by creating the game.

![Game image](image)

**Figure 20**

The following rules can be found with a copy of the game from the Wiener Library. The game is played on a board with a number of playing fields arranged next to each other. Thirteen of the fields have a picture of a Jewish storefront on them. Every player gets a figure and throwing a dice decides how many steps the figure can take on the field. The figures look like people but cannot be directly linked to a certain
culture. If a figure lands directly on a storefront, the player receives a figure of a hat (Figure 21). A player can win by collecting six of these hats.

The main similarity of the game to former versions is that in order to win, a player needs a certain number of steps and to land exactly on one playing field.

However, ‘Juden raus!’ is the first version to show several anti-Semitic messages. It starts with the title, which makes the meaning of the game obvious. The language is very bold and an exclamation point is used at the end. The former German version ‘Mensch ärgere dich nicht’ did not contain an exclamation mark, even though it was also a sentence addressed directly to the players (Human, do not be bothered).

The goal of the game is to step on several Jewish storefronts. This could be interpreted as stepping on the Jewish culture. The hat that the players get for stepping on such a field represents a Jew. It has an unfriendly face on it, which contains the characteristics the Nazis described as typical for Jews in their race ideology, including a long, big nose, dark hair and dark eyes (Böhnke 2017). The hats are referred to as ‘Jewish hats’. Jewish hats were the former versions of the ‘Kippah’, today’s religious head ware of the Jews. They were white or yellow and had the shape of a cone, similar to the hats in the game (Liebe 1903).

The collection of the Jews from their stores can be interpreted as the expulsion from their homes. This means that the message of the game is that it is best to evict as many Jews as possible from their homes and their home country Germany.

The game uses text on the board itself. Next to the title, there are two other bold statements. Both statements have two lines that rhyme and are kept short. They show that the developers were not trying to hide the anti-Semitic message of the game. The text can be translated as follows:
‘Show skills in the game, so that you can collect many Jews!’ and ‘If you manage to throw out six Jews, you’re a winner without question!’

Both sentences also end with an exclamation mark. The open use of anti-Semitism makes the game an important aspect of the history of propaganda in games.

Next to the playing fields, there is a caricature of a Jewish family of two parents and a son that show the same characteristics of the race ideology as the hats. They appear to be walking and two of them are wearing bags. Under the caricature it says, ‘Go to Palestine!’ Palestine was a country to which many discriminated or persecuted Jews emigrated, even before National Socialism and from countries other than Germany. Many Jews gathered on Palestinian grounds in order to someday build a Jewish state together. The Jewish state, Israel, became an independent country in 1948, three years after the end of the war (Wünschmann 2014). This sentence is directed at the Jews, in this case in the form of a caricature, instead of to the Germans like the other text passages.

The playing field is surrounded by a wall. There are no official explanations, but an obvious assumption would be that the wall is supposed to separate the Germans and their country from the collected Jews. A wall symbolises separation, in this case probably the separation of races.

The goal of propaganda is to get the audience to form a certain opinion and to transmit an ideology (Jowett and O’Donnell 2012). The content of the game fits with Eagleton’s (1991) definition of ideology as a collection of ideas that legitimate a ruling political force. In this case, the game tries to specifically legitimate the discrimination and persecution of Jewish citizens and promotes the race ideology of the Nazis.

The original Yut and the version of the National Socialists can be directly compared in regard to a few characteristics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Yut</th>
<th>Juden raus!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
<td>The right number of steps is needed to succeed; a figure needs to go all the way around the field back to the starting point; can be played by two players or two groups of any number of people.</td>
<td>The right number of steps is also needed to succeed; a figure needs to step directly on six specific playing fields, which means collecting six figures of Jews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Simple and natural</td>
<td>Direct, provoking, bold, multiple uses of the word ‘Jew’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbols</strong></td>
<td>Any small objects can be playing figures; combinations of throwing sticks have the names of more or less popular farm animals.</td>
<td>Stepping on Jewish storefronts = stepping on Jewish culture; collecting hats = collecting Jews and taking them away from their home, caricature of a Jewish family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Message</strong></td>
<td>Farm life; worth of farm animals varies. Some animals like horses have better attributes than others, like pigs.</td>
<td>Success means taking the most Jews away from their homes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On one hand, this comparison highlights the extreme changes that have been made to the game, especially when it comes to the message. On the other hand, one can also see that the game was never completely unpolitical. The game always had a deeper message and helped to define a culture. That is why later it was a natural choice for a Nazi propaganda game.

The sales show that the public did not perceive a connection between the game and its inspiration ‘Mensch ärgere dich nicht’, since the sales of the original were still good after the Nazi era.

Another interesting finding is that the basic idea of the game was perceived as a cultural good of several different cultures, when in fact, it was invented in Korea. This leads to the conclusion that the perception of a game is much more important than its actual background and that foreign ideas can become part of a national identity.

‘Juden raus!’ can be considered as black propaganda according to Tuch’s theory (1990). The source has been faked on purpose, as the game is sold as a German product, while the original idea was not German and the game spreads the race ideology of the Nazis and does not contain truthful content.
4.1.4 German games after the war

Right after the end of the war in 1945, there were no new war toys released by German manufacturers until 1949. The allies had forbidden production, but in 1949, Germany became independent again. The company ‘Arnold’ released a toy version of a jeep from the American army. The success of the game reopened the market for war toys. However, politicians were sensitised about the topic and decided on a ban of military toys in Germany in 1950. This meant that manufacturers were no longer allowed to produce or sell toys that were somehow related to war. Most manufacturers did not react to the ban and kept on producing military toys. They were not punished, probably because the politicians had many other important issues to focus on and did not want to harm the economy. However, there was a big difference in the toys. They were no longer about the German army, but about the American one. America had won the war and therefore all products related to their army were more popular. Toys connected to the Germans and the NSDAP did not make a successful comeback until the 1970s. Figures of Hitler and other politicians of that time were sold just like board games in which the player played from the perspective of the German army. Symbols like raising the right arm or the Swastika were used again (Lüpke 2013).

The use or circulation of extreme right-wing parties like the NSDAP was ultimately forbidden in German law (Strafgesetzbuch, §86). This law is still active today. There are a few exceptions like the use for educational purposes, art or science, as well as editorial purposes. This is why the symbols can still be seen in the media or are allowed to be shown as examples in this dissertation. However, these exceptions do not include toys. Therefore, it is strictly forbidden to produce or sell toys with NSDAP symbols. The punishment for breaking the law is a fine or imprisonment for up to three years.
Today, no toys related to the NSDAP can be bought in toy stores. However, the topic is still popular. Lüpke (2013) believes that companies have developed a strategy to profit from the big market of military toys and yet stay out of the discussion and not get criticised; the labelling. Manufacturers usually have different categories like dolls or outdoor games. However, they rarely put their military games into specific categories anymore. They are put as part of model making or role play. The toys stay the same, but the public does not give as much attention to them.
4.2 Games around the world

My former examples were all focussing on war and militarisation. As I said, military toys can still be found in toy stores today. However, political propaganda is not always about war, but about delivering other ideologies as well (Jowett and O'Donnell 2012).

An ideology can be the creation of a better perception of reality (Pfennig 2012) and does not necessarily have to be linked to a ruling political force (Minouge 1985). The definition of ideology I am referring to is given by Seliger (1976). He simply defines an ideology as an idea followed by a society.

In order to spread the ideology, propaganda strategies are created. The term propaganda has a bad reputation as the conscious attempt by a group to influence the masses for own goals but can also be seen as a phenomenon of society (Ellul 1965). I selected games that have a propaganda effect, even if this effect was not intended by the manufacturer.
4.2.1 Propaganda games to increase patriotism

However, the goal of political propaganda is usually to increase patriotism, which means increasing the citizen’s love for their country (Orwell 1945). The reasons are that the better identification with the country makes the citizens work harder for the economy or, to return to the former examples, join the military (Hirschi 2011). One of the main strategies to increase patriotism is the use of symbols (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland 2004).

In order to identify games that increase patriotism, one has to understand what factors are relevant for the citizen’s identification with their country. The ‘International Journal of Public Opinion Research’ (2014) created a list of criteria in order to measure patriotism around the world. These criteria are a good approach to find out what kind of games can increase patriotism. The main criteria are political influence, military forces, success in sports, economy and technical innovation. This means that games need to give children the impression that their country is successful in these areas. I will analyse different examples separated into the criteria. I added another criterion that I found important to the list: culture, because it also is an essential element that defines a country, as it is ‘the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people’, including ‘language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts’ (Zimmermann 2017). Due to the wide meaning of the term, this will be the largest and most diverse category.

4.2.1.1 Political influence

‘1960: The Making of the President’ is a board game that allows players to relive the US election between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. The game is based on actual facts and

Figure 22
events like the ‘Catholic Question’, but the players can create a different outcome of the election. There are two players that each take the role of one of the candidates. They have to decide on topics of that time concerning different fields like the economy. The goal is to win the election. During play, the players are confronted with important political topics of that time, some of them even today. They have to find the right balance in order to get as many voters as possible. Z-Man Games is an American company that sells several historical board games.

The game forms a great way for players to get to know more about an election campaign and a democracy as well as specific American politics. This makes it very educational for the players. Hirschi (2011) argues that patriotism is indeed an educational matter.

‘Israeli Independence’ is a game to replay the first war between Israel and Arabia. It begins in the time of 1948. Israel is a newly declared state and Arabic forces are trying to invade the country. The essence of the game is to defeat Israel.

The manufacturer, ‘Victory Point Games’, describes the game as ‘particularly well suited to classroom use’ to study recreated situations. The company thereby admits the intention of influencing the youth with the game. The background of the company is in the United States. The company sells a variety of war games about different kinds of current and historical conflicts with a direct link to reality. It is an obvious assumption that the creator reflects his own political views in the game. These views are common among many Americans, as American politics
show a sympathy towards Israel in the conflict, which has been shown through military and financial support in the past (Sharp 2010). However, there is no proof of the involvement of any political forces and the game is most likely the work of an individual. It can be argued that this is propaganda because of this individual’s purpose behind the game (Parry-Gilles 2002). The purpose usually is to get the audience to form a certain opinion (Jowett and O’Donnell 2012).

4.2.1.2 Military forces

These are a few examples of today’s military games. The main effect would be the militarisation of the youth. While they do not get as specific as the examples in my analysis of National Socialism, they are based on similar rules.

‘Risk’ is a strategic board game about a military conflict between different countries. Players have to capture territories on a world map (Parkers Brothers 1963). The game is sold since 1957 by the American company Hasbro. Its success all over the world makes it a natural example of military games. However, Hasbro describes it as a strategic game about diplomacy rather than a pure military game (Hasbro 1993). The game still reminds of propaganda, because it is manipulating the youth towards a military point of view (Pratkanis and Aronson 2001). This manipulation might not be obvious for the players. Lippmann (1992) sees that as one of the advantages of new media strategies. He believes that games can spread messages among the public without being an obvious influence on the masses.
The traditional game ‘Sea Battle’ has been produced by several manufacturers over the years. The background of the game can be seen in the title; a military battle between ships on the sea. Players try to eliminate the ships of their opponents (Smyths 2018). Propaganda wants to achieve social, political or religious goals (Jowett and O’Donnell 2012). The game achieves a mix of social and political goals; the militarisation of the youth.

4.2.1.3 Sports

The American company ‘Fremont Die Consumer Products Inc.’ sells board games concerning popular American sports from college teams to professional leagues. One example is the board game ‘NFL Game Day’. A game of American football is simulated with playing cards and a board that looks like a football field (Board Game Geek 2013).

The NFL is a league for American football and receives a lot of media coverage in and outside of the country, particularly during the Super Bowl, the final of the league, which is aired live all over the world (Jozsa 2004).

‘Top Gear’ was a British TV show by the BBC with up to five million viewers in the UK and many more around the world. It covers all car related topics and usually includes a race between two cars and is titled as ‘one of Britain’s most beloved cultural exports’ (Huffman 2012). Therefore, this game
combines British sports and TV culture for players from eight years and upwards. The essence of the game is also a pretend race between the players (Imagination Games 2008).

The games remind of Bernays’ (1961) view on propaganda as part of modern society and essential for the economy, because it makes citizens support brands by buying their products. He also sees it as a way of communication between the companies and the masses. In this case, it is an offer from the two big companies BBC and NFL towards their fans.

4.2.1.4 Economy

This is the USA edition of ‘The Logo Board Game’. In order to win, players have to guess different American brands by their logos. During the game, the player explores the large amount of successful companies in the country and possibly gets a better perception of the American economy. The game is recommended for young people from 12 to 15 years. It was not released by an American, but by a Canadian Company (Spin Masters 2012). The game can be considered propaganda because of its manipulative (Pratkanis and Aronson 2001) way of educating the players (Hirschi 2011) about the American economy and its successful brands. Bernays (1928) says that propaganda can also influence the public to buy new items. Players are more likely to buy items from the brands they know. By playing the game, they get to know new brands or are reminded of the ones they already know.

Players from the ages of eight and up can get an inside look on trading in the game ‘Stock Market – The Wall Street Trading Game’. Players make investments or put them on
sale in order to become the richest. Any player has the chance to win and become successful in business in the American stock market (Crossword Companion). This makes America look like the country with endless possibilities, especially the possibility of living the American dream. It also teaches about the economy and the processes on Wall Street. Generally, it increases the player's belief in the country's economy. The nation can profit from this kind of patriotism, as it makes the citizens work harder for the economy (Hirschi 2011).

4.2.1.5 Technical innovation

‘Brass’ covers the industrial revolution in England in the eighteenth century. Players have to choose industries and keep them successful in order to win. They use new technologies to create a modern change in the country (Brilliant Maps 2015).

‘Nerdy Inventions’ involves playing cards with all kinds of inventions and gives the players the chance to create their own ideas based on these inventions (Mayday 2016ga). The players learn about inventors and their innovations and are inspired to think of new ones. This game supports one of the reasons why countries profit from patriotism: they work harder for economic outcomes (Hirschi 2011). The game helps to raise tomorrow's technical innovators.

Both examples have a similar propaganda strategy as the economic games. They educate and create motivation for the players to work harder for the economic outcomes of their country (Hirschi 2011).
4.2.1.6 Culture

‘Scotland Yard’ is a game for three to six players of the ages eight years and up. Most of the players take the role of Scotland Yard detectives, only one plays ‘Mr X’, who is being tracked by Scotland Yard. The first aspect that creates identification with the country is quite obvious; the identification with Scotland Yard, the police service of the United Kingdom. However, the players get an even deeper connection to the country while playing the game. ‘Mr X’ has to be tracked around the city of London. The board shows an almost accurate plan of the city, which is included in the search. This leads to an examination of the city and Scotland Yard.

The game was created by Ravensburger, a German toy manufacturer (Ravensburger 2003). This means that the effect probably was not created intentionally, but Ellul (1965) argues that this does not have to be the case in propaganda. However, the game was sold internationally. Therefore, it not only increases identification of British people, but also creates a better image of London and the British police for other countries. This means it is influencing public opinion, which is a typical goal of propaganda (Jowett and O'Donnell 2012).
‘Discovering Ireland’ also works with the concept of the map as the board. Next to the geographical input, players can also learn a lot about Irish culture and regional traditions by experiencing typical Irish things like tea and scones or cows at a narrow lane. The Giant’s Causeway is another part just like some historical input. The game was launched by an Irish family business named Gosling Gifts and Games, which also sells other cultural games like a Celtic art memory game (Gosling Gifts and Games 1987).

**Figure 33**

Quizzes teach facts about a topic during play and therefore form an excellent strategy for influencing children. There are many examples of seemingly every country or topic. ‘Swiss IQ’ covers all topics from geography to culture related to the country for players from 12 to 99 years. The company, based in Switzerland, has created many different editions including other topics like ‘Beer IQ’ or other countries like France (Helvetiq 2017). Le Bon’s (1895) point of view to use symbols for
propaganda also applies to this game. The player learns about traditions, monuments and many other things that are symbolic of Switzerland.

![SwissIQ box](image)

**Figure 34**

Propaganda also describes the promotion of an idea (Jowett and O'Donnell 2012). Europe is one example of these ideas. Many games transmit and promote the idea of a European Union. Any strategies from quizzes to original board games can be found in the product range of several toy manufacturers. One example is this German quiz about European geography, which works the same as ‘SwissIQ’.

There is also a different version of the game “Discovering Ireland”, with the name “Discovering Europe”. Concept and manufacturer are the same, but it transports a positive image of Europe instead of just Ireland.

A relation between British games and the Brexit could not be found yet. Comparisons between British shops and shops of other European countries did not show a significant difference in amount and content of games about Europe.

![EUROPA Quiz!](image)

**Figure 35**

‘Flags of the World’ contains a map of the world as well as all the flags. The players have to find the right flags for the countries (Tactic 2018). This game is a very positive example of political influence, as it helps children to see the world as one
and get to know other countries. Sometimes, political propaganda has the goal of improving relationships of a state. In order to do so, it often uses symbols like flags (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland 2004). This game would be a classic example of diplomatic propaganda. However, there is no falsification in any shape or form and the game can be described as white propaganda.

‘The Chase’ is a British TV show from the channel ITV. The show has been adapted in many countries all over the world and is still successful in its home country, the UK (ITV Studios 2018). The American toy manufacturer ‘Ideal’ used the popularity to create a matching board game. The game might help to increase the appreciation of British TV culture. The show can be seen as a symbol for culture, which is a powerful tool of persuasion (Le Bon 1895).

4.2.1.7 Conclusion

Why do these games form a working tool for propaganda today? James (1890) argues that games are an important part of a child’s personality and influence its outlook on life. Therefore, they make a great propaganda tool.
The listed games help to transport an ideology, which means they support the goal of retaining or changing the society (Seliger, 1976).

Some games, like ‘Top Gear’ and ‘NFL Game Day’ are bought because they symbolise a child’s lifestyle.

Other examples, like ‘Swiss IQ’ or ‘Wall Street’ give the child the opportunity to learn something. Opposed to real life, they can practice the new skills and information without any real-life consequences, which helps them in their development (Sutton-Smith 1997).

Rogers and Sawyers (1988) see games that leave space for creativity as more attractive to children. ‘1960 – Making of the President’ leaves room for a child’s own ideas. However, Piaget (1969) also mentions another type of play. He argues that play following rules does not change the experience of the child.

Games like ‘Scotland Yard’ or ‘Nerdy Inventions’ give children the chance to play pretend. Whether they are a police officer or an inventor, they enjoy trying out grown-up behaviour. It helps them to explore their own personality (Freud 1920).

Oerter (1999) describes not having a deeper intention as one of the characteristics of playing a game. The child is focussed on the enjoyment of play. This makes it easy to manipulate the child in play without them noticing. Oerter also believes that the repeating of actions, which usually is the case in classic board games, increases the fun in the experience, as it gives children comfort and the chance to improve. Play is a safe space for them. Another factor that supports this feeling is that the children take the role of someone else. They prefer to play other roles rather than themselves (Elkonin 1980). In games, they can be presidents, police officers or guests on a quiz show.
Playing board games is the type of play that needs rules. However, the games are not completely adjusted to real-life rules, which makes the experience more relaxing (Piaget 1969).

The motivation behind games is most likely of an economic nature in most cases. If there is a popular phenomenon in the country, the game industry tries to profit from it and design matching products.

One of the main reasons that games work as propaganda is because they take a cultural phenomenon or something else that is typical for the country and increase the hype. This makes the phenomenon itself more popular, but also creates a greater identification from the players with it. If the children identify with phenomena, whether they are of a cultural, political or any other nature, they are more likely to identify with their country.
4.2.2 Side note: Social propaganda to define gender roles

When talking to other people about my research, many of them were especially interested in the creation of gender roles by the toy industry. They had gotten this impression from several markets and manufacturers. Of course, this is not a study, but rather a collection of opinions. That is why I want to make a short digression into this topic. I already discussed a similar investigation I have made in my case study on Hausser.

Jowett and O’Donnell (2012) also consider gender roles in games as propaganda, as propaganda follows social goals.

Eliot (2010) compared several studies and found that there is no significant difference between the male and the female brain and that gender roles are created by society. However, studies show that most children prefer toys that are using their gender stereotypes (Carter and Levy 1988).

A study identified one of the reasons: They compared toy catalogues and found that boys were four times as likely to be shown playing with toys that use male stereotypes, like cars, while girls were twice as likely to be shown with domestic toys like kitchens. This shows that not only the toys themselves, but also other factors like the advertisements in catalogues are part of the process of influencing a child.

Rebecca Hains from Salem University also sees the effect of symbols. She believes that small symbols like the colours pink and blue give children cues of what is fitting for them and their gender. These cues are set up by marketing (CBC Radio 2017).

In conclusion, the marketing factor is another part of the propaganda process.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

While children focus on the enjoyment of their play, politics and economy clearly have other goals to fulfil. Toy manufacturers want to sell as many products as possible and go with time and trends. Political forces can profit from the enormous influence toys have on children. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Ministry of Propaganda in Nazi Germany asked manufacturers to create toys that work to militarise children. Games about being a soldier motivated the youth to become one themselves one day, which was supported by games about military actions. Patriotism towards the country was increased by educating about a glorious history and present as well as placing Nazi symbols on all kinds of objects. Patriotism quickly turned into nationalism when the games started discriminating other cultures. Toy figures of soldiers and other military objects even reached an audience as young as two years old.

Not only the country itself had gone through an evolution during the war, the toy industry changed with the politics. The comparison of product catalogues from toy manufacturers like Hausser made that clear. Before the war, the front page was covered with animals, then there were more military toys and finally the front page was only covered with toys related to the war. After the war, the catalogues went back to showing products that were unrelated to war and politics. However, German costumers were still interested in military toys after the war but they did not want to buy products related to the German army anymore. They wanted to purchase products about the American army, the glorious winners. Nazi symbols were only allowed to be used in a few exceptions, such as for educational purposes. Today, it is illegal to produce toys with these symbols and there is a punishment of up to three years in prison.
Toys form part of a country’s national identity and can become traditions. However, I found that the perception of a game in a country is more important for a tradition than actual facts. The board game ‘Mensch ärgere dich nicht’ for example is perceived as a traditional German game in Germany, when in fact, it was originally invented in Korea in the sixteenth century.

A country can profit from the effect of toys even when there is no military conflict. They help to influence children politically and socially. The most common effect is the increase of patriotism. This helps a country because it makes the citizens work harder for their country, whether it is in the military or the economy. Patriotism is created through traditions, which board games provide, but also through other strategies. Factors that increase patriotism are technical innovation, political influence, military, success in sports, economy and culture of the country. Games that improve the country’s image in any of these areas have a propaganda effect. The image can, for example, be improved by showing a country’s greatest achievements in the play.

A big social influence can be found in toys that are created for specific genders. Toys that promote gender roles are more popular than ever. Girls are supposed to play with products related to housekeeping or social activities, while toys for boys focus on cars and technical items.

Many toys in today’s industry have some kind of influence on children. However, this is not necessarily the intention of the manufacturers. Companies usually focus on economic goals. If certain types of games become popular, they will produce them in order to make a profit, regardless of the influence. The toys themselves are also not the only things that are part of the influencing process. Other factors like their marketing are part of the persuasion as well.
My key theory about black, grey and white propaganda by Tuch was not easy to apply in many examples. While the source can be determined in many cases, it is hard to identify the truthfulness of a games’ content. Most games do not have a lot of text or hard facts to prove right or wrong, but they still transmit a message, for example by creating an emotion. This cannot be sorted into right and wrong in most cases. Only a few examples that work with specific discrimination can be defined as black propaganda. White propaganda is rare for the same reasons. The majority of propaganda games can be defined as grey propaganda. They influence the players but are not necessarily giving false information or faking the source. The fact that it is hard to define what type of propaganda a toy or game uses, supports the finding that it is often hard to identify propaganda in toys at all. This makes them a very easy tool to manipulate players. The reason that this manipulation actually works is based on the important role toys play in children’s lives. They are symbols of their identity and help them to find their personalities. This does not work as well with grown-ups, as they have a different way of learning and processing information. Children have the biggest learning effect in a social surrounding they enjoy with multi-visual impressions. Toys and games form an outstanding propaganda tool with many advantages like reaching a young audience and not being an obvious influence. A look in a toy store reflects society. If a country is facing a military conflict, there will be more military toys, while a country with great traditions will sell many matching products. I believe that this phenomenon will go on and that the toy industry will keep changing with society.
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Eagle aerial combat game
We’re driving against England
Greater Germany’s cities
Game set with swastika symbols
Hitler youth field exercise
Germany needs colonies
Jews out!
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7.2.2 Recent games
1960 – The Making of the President
Israeli Independence
Risk
Sea Battle
NFL Game Day
Top Gear
The Logo Board Game
Stock Market
Brass
Nerdy Inventions
Scotland Yard
Discovering Ireland
Discovering Europe
Swiss IQ
Europe Quiz
Flags of the World
The Chase
Smyth’s toy figures