

PROPAGANDA & OBEDIENCE TO THE STATE

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Questions to Keep in Mind 1: The Culture of Obedience to Authority



1. why do so many people obey authority? [often unquestioningly]

- what role does coercion play in enforcing obedience?
- what role does culture and political values play in making people obey willingly?
- what role does propaganda play in encouraging obedience?

Questions to Keep in Mind 2: The Culture of Liberty



{Eugène Delacroix, "Liberty leading the People (1830)}

2. what makes some people challenge or reject authority?
- how can we promote a "culture of liberty"?
 - how can we oppose a "culture of obedience to authority"?

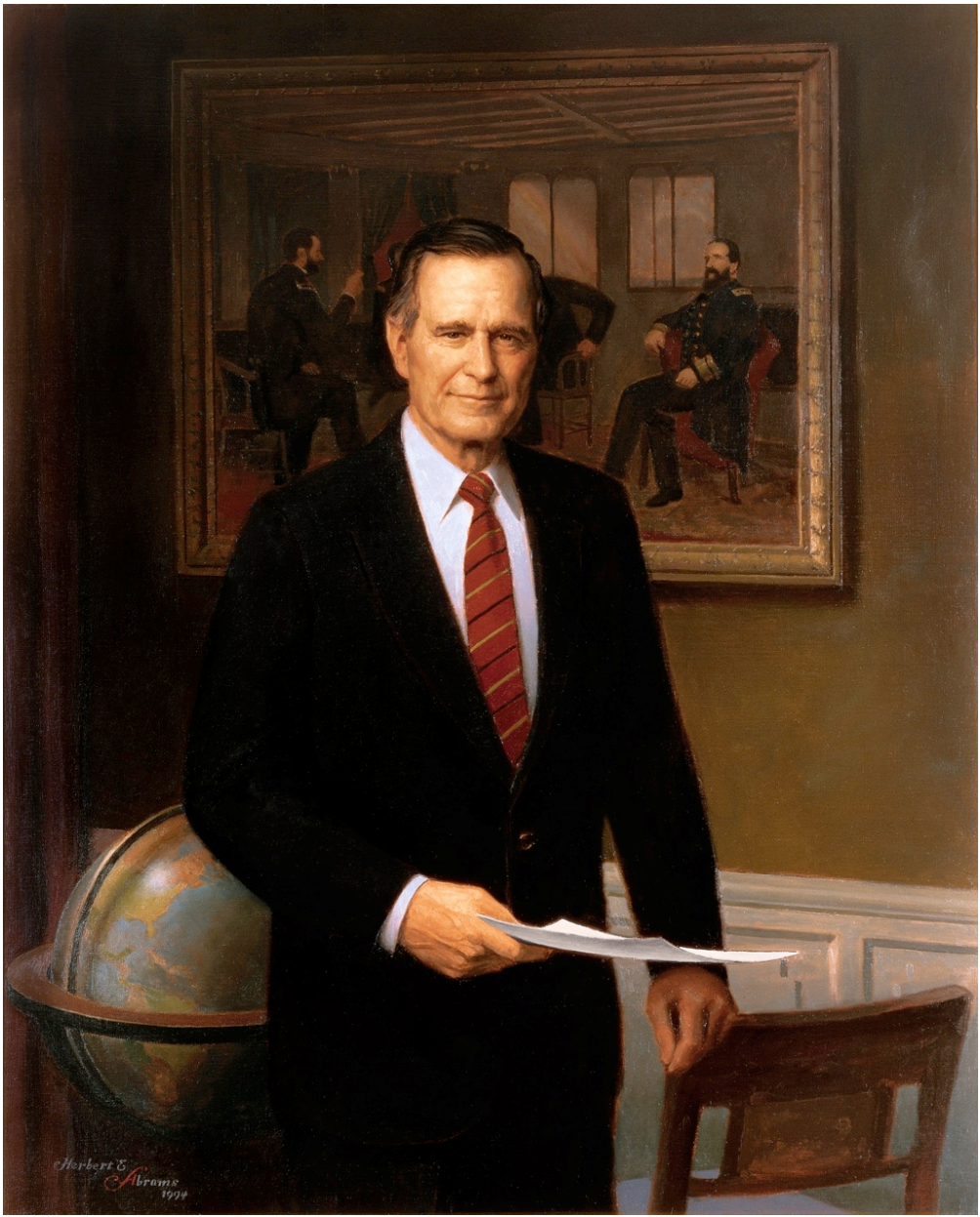


All rulers have similar aims

They need:

- to get power & to retain power
- to be able to “extract” resources from citizens (i.e. taxation)
- to exercise a monopoly of the use of force
- to be considered the legitimate power
- to keep opponents and dissidents under control
- to have compliant and obedient citizens and taxpayers (who will “obey and pay”)
- to be loved (or feared) by their subjects

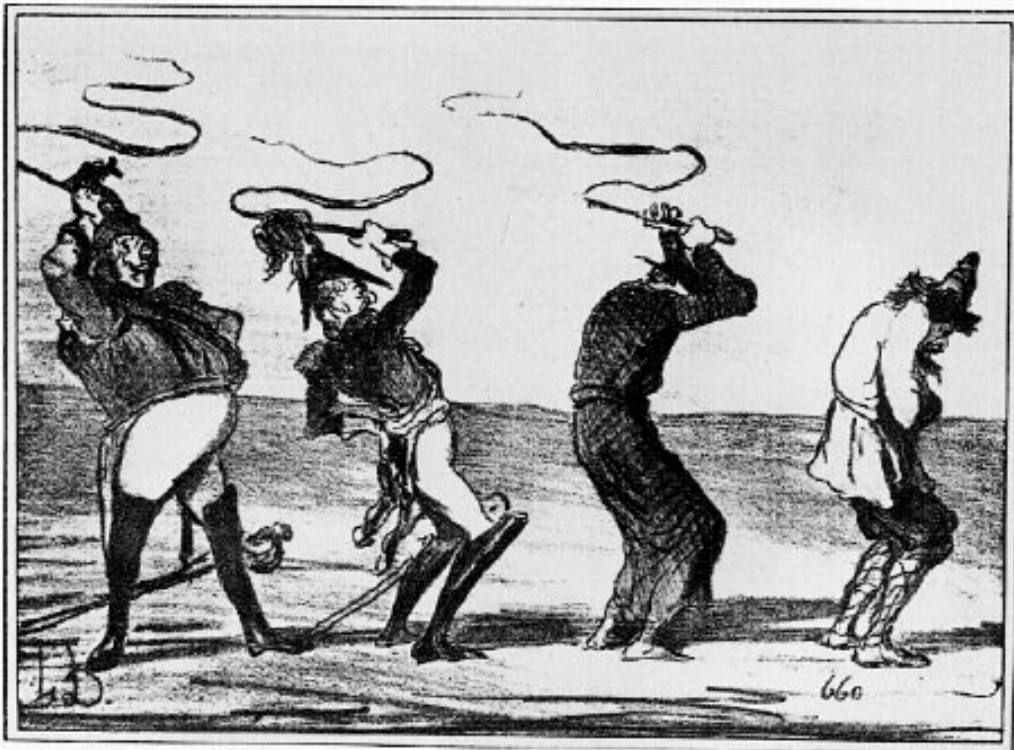




Why don't rulers compel obedience?

Why don't rulers just use their monopoly of the use of force to compel compliance?

- number of taxpaying & law abiding citizens vastly outnumber the number of soldiers and policemen
- force alone is not sufficient to ensure compliance & obedience
- all rulers depend upon the voluntary obedience of the ruled
- Etienne de la Boétie, *Discourse of Voluntary Servitude* (1576)

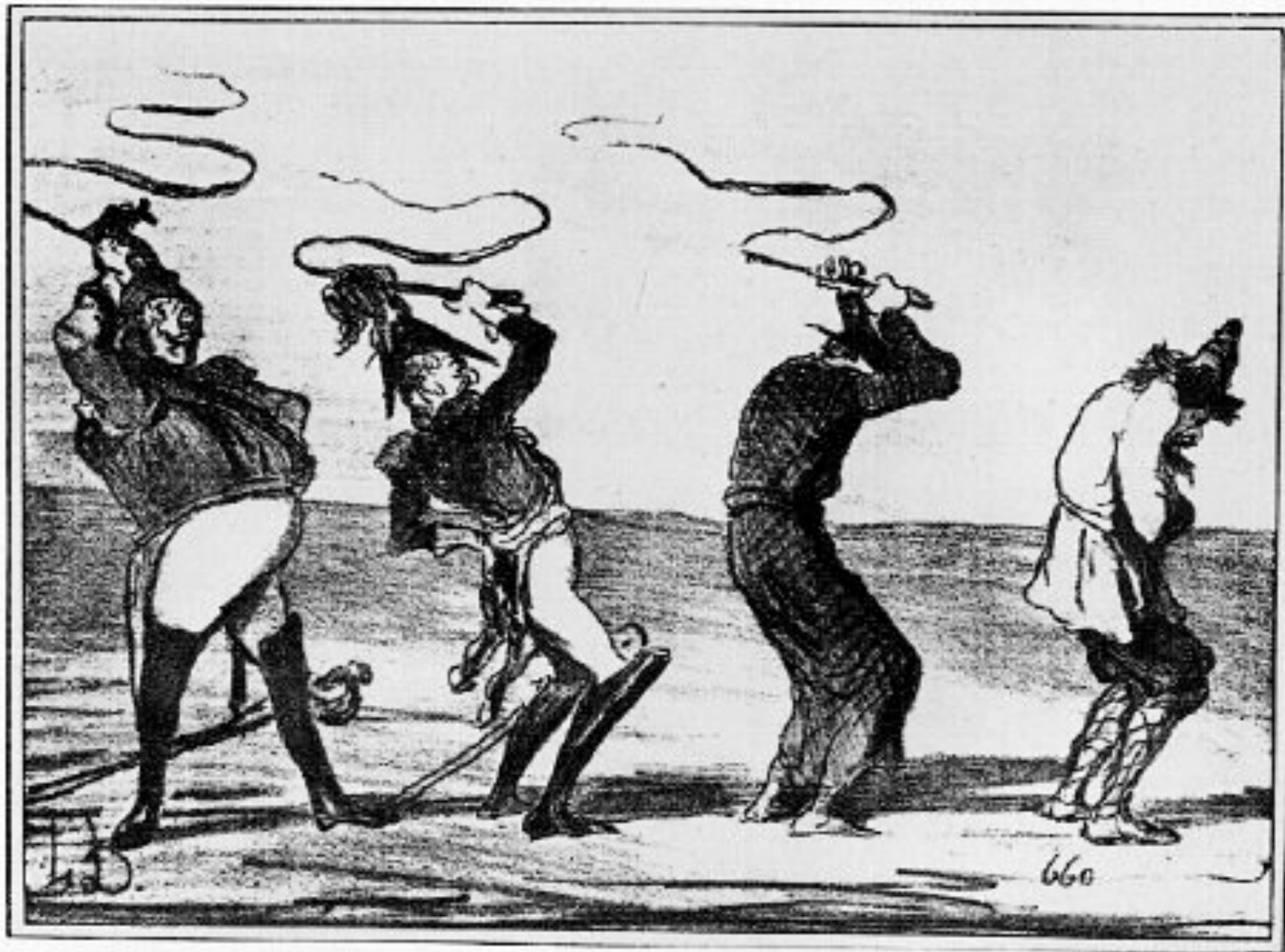


The Army Hierarchy.

Honoré Daumier, “The Army Hierarchy” (1860s)



[Etienne de la Boétie (1530-1563)]



The Army hierarchy.

Honoré Daumier, "The Army Hierarchy" (1860s)



Revolutions occur when enough people withdraw their voluntary compliance with existing authority & transfer it to another authority

- most recent example is the “Arab Spring” of February/March 2011 in Tunisia, Egypt
- collapse of Soviet Union 1991 - rulers lost confidence to rule; the ruled lost belief in their legitimacy to rule



The Use of Persuasion (Propaganda) to Encourage us to “Obey & Pay”

Given the **insufficiency of force alone**, all Rulers have to persuade the people that their rule is:

- inevitable
- necessary &
- just
- in other words that it is “**legitimate**”

Over hundreds of years Rulers have resorted to **similar strategies to encourage voluntary compliance** on the part of the Ruled



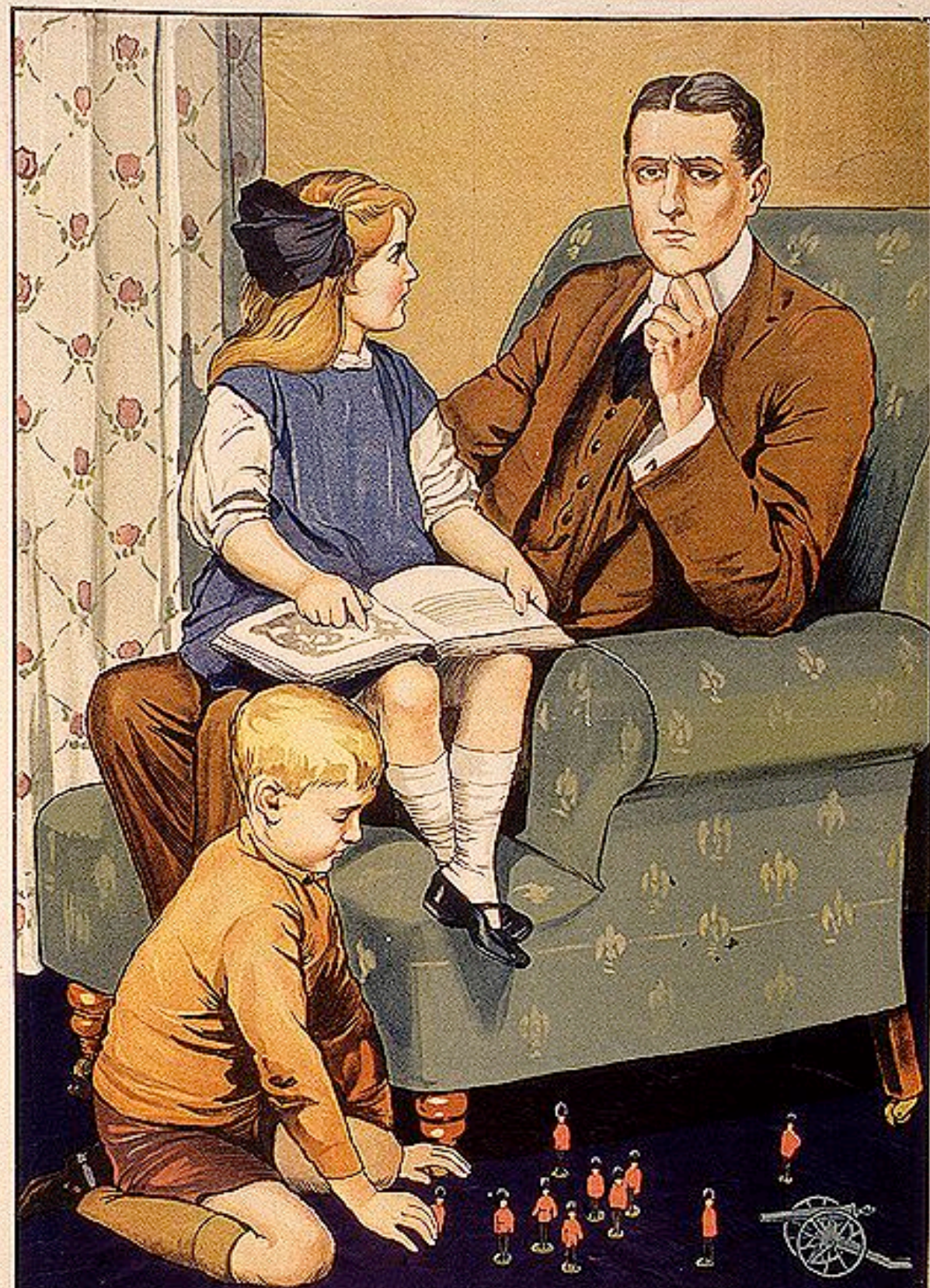


GEE !!
I WISH I WERE
A MAN

I'd JOIN
The NAVY,

Howard Chandler Christy, 1918

NAVAL RESERVE
OR
COAST GUARD



Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?



Strategies to Encourage us to “Obey & Pay”

- **civic rituals** to get public support - “pomp & ceremony” of inaugurations, coronations, weddings
- public **national holidays** to commemorate founding of the nation/state, important wars, birthdays of leaders
- to erect **statues and monuments** in public spaces to honour the rulers, past wars
- to show **rulers in a flattering light** - official portraits, heads of coins, flattering & sycophantic media
- writing of **national history** to glorify the nation state, its leaders, & its wars - idea of national “**exceptionalism**”
- to create a **uniform “national culture”** to reduce costs of ruling - conscription into army, compulsory public education



The sum of all these strategies is what I call the “**Culture of Authority**” or the “**Culture of Obedience**”

Our Task

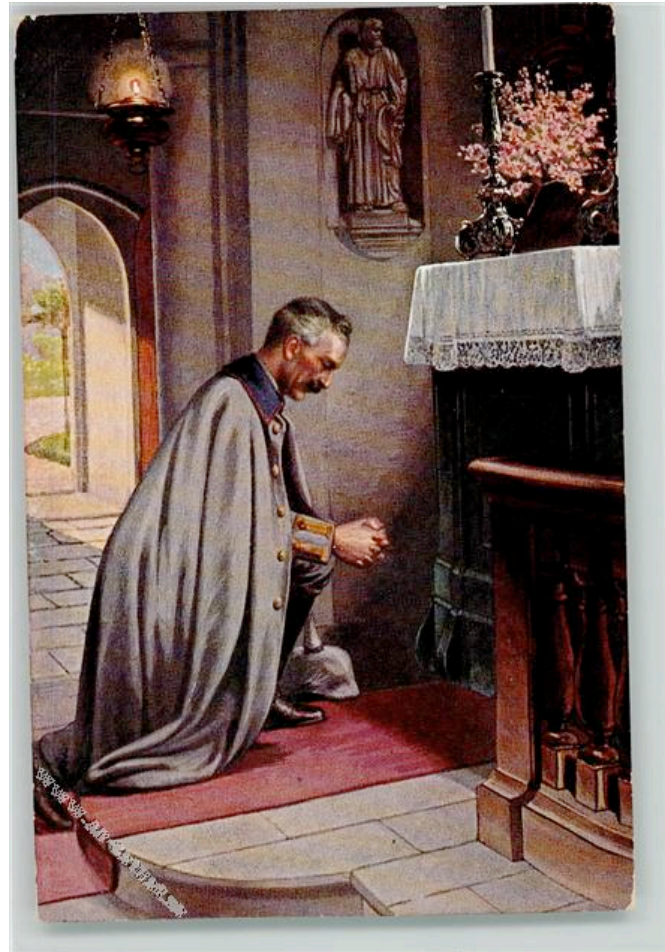


- to understand this “culture of authority/obedience” & what its purpose is
- to challenge the claims of the Ruler that their rule is “inevitable, necessary, & just”
- to strip away cloak of “legitimacy” & show that “the emperor has no clothes”
- “god, king, & country” have historically been the key pillars of this ideology or culture of political authority
- these ideological pillars go back hundreds of years & have been modified & adapted by modern Rulers to suit their own purposes

The Three Pillars of Authority: God, King, & Country



The Culture of Authority I: “Altar” (God)





German Soldier's Belt Buckle "Gott mit Uns" (1939)

The Culture of Obedience to Authority: God (Altar)



Russian Empire (1883) - "God is with Us"

The Culture of Obedience to Authority: God (Altar)



With God as Our Champion



Lincoln 2 Cent Piece (1864)



"In God we Trust" (1956)

The Culture of Obedience to Authority: God (Altar)



“God Bless America” (Indianapolis, Memorial Day 2009)

The Culture of Obedience to Authority: God (Altar)

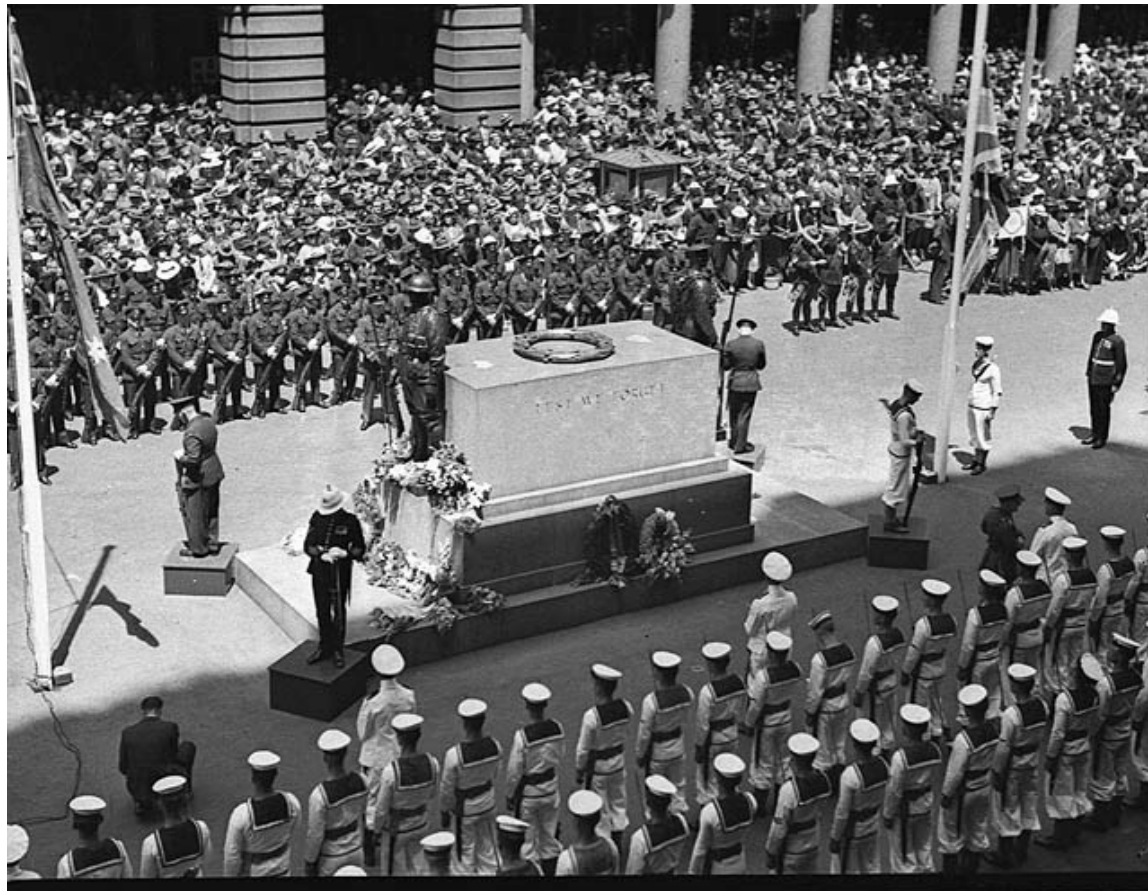
The Culture of Authority II: Country





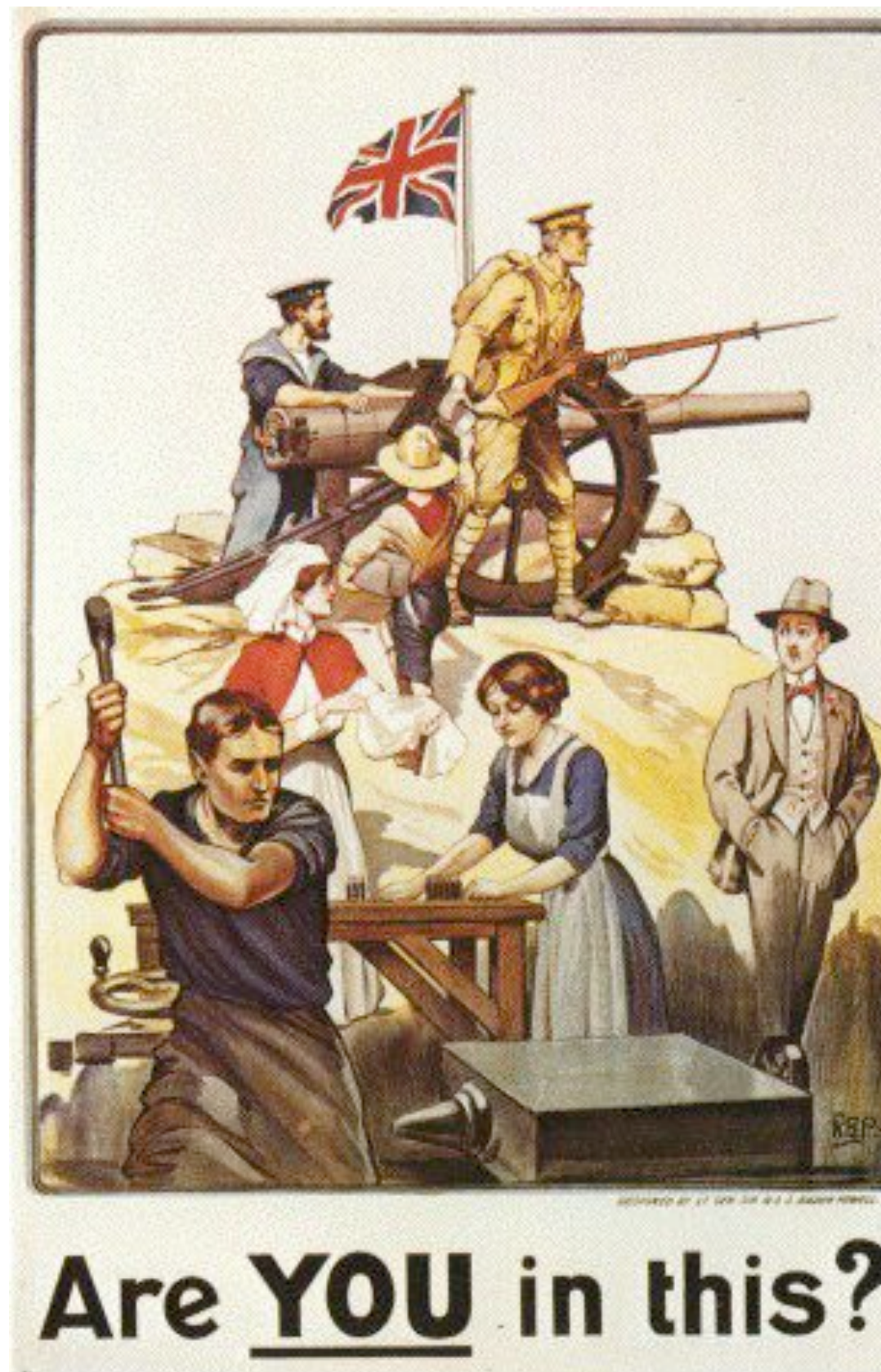
Nation, Fatherland, Heimat, la Patrie

- Sacrifice for the nation (enlistment)
- Dying for one's country
- Monuments for mourning the dead
- Public displays of military force
- Oaths of allegiance to country & leader
- Anthems & hymns to the country & leader

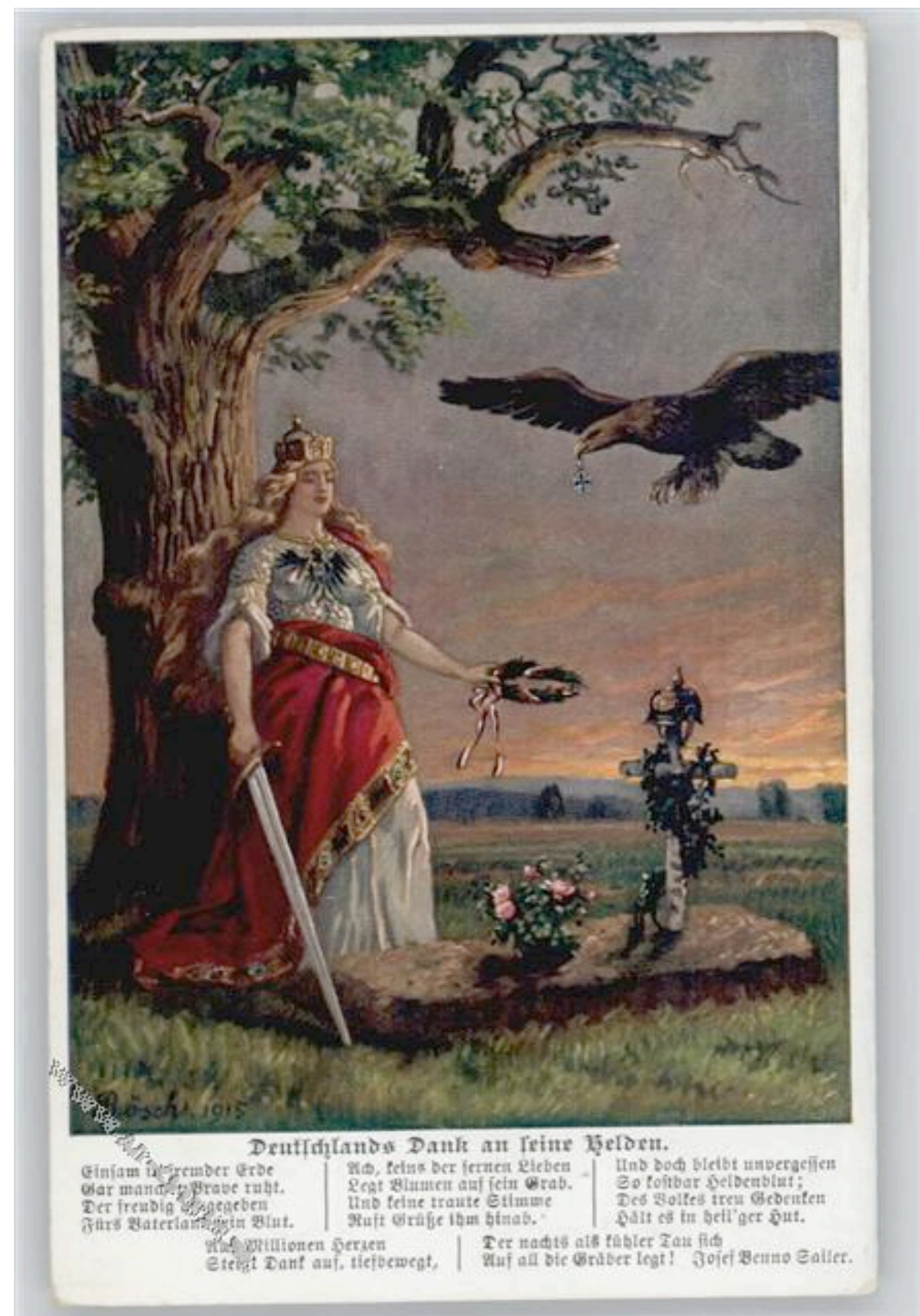




US Propaganda Poster by James Montgomery Flagg (1917)



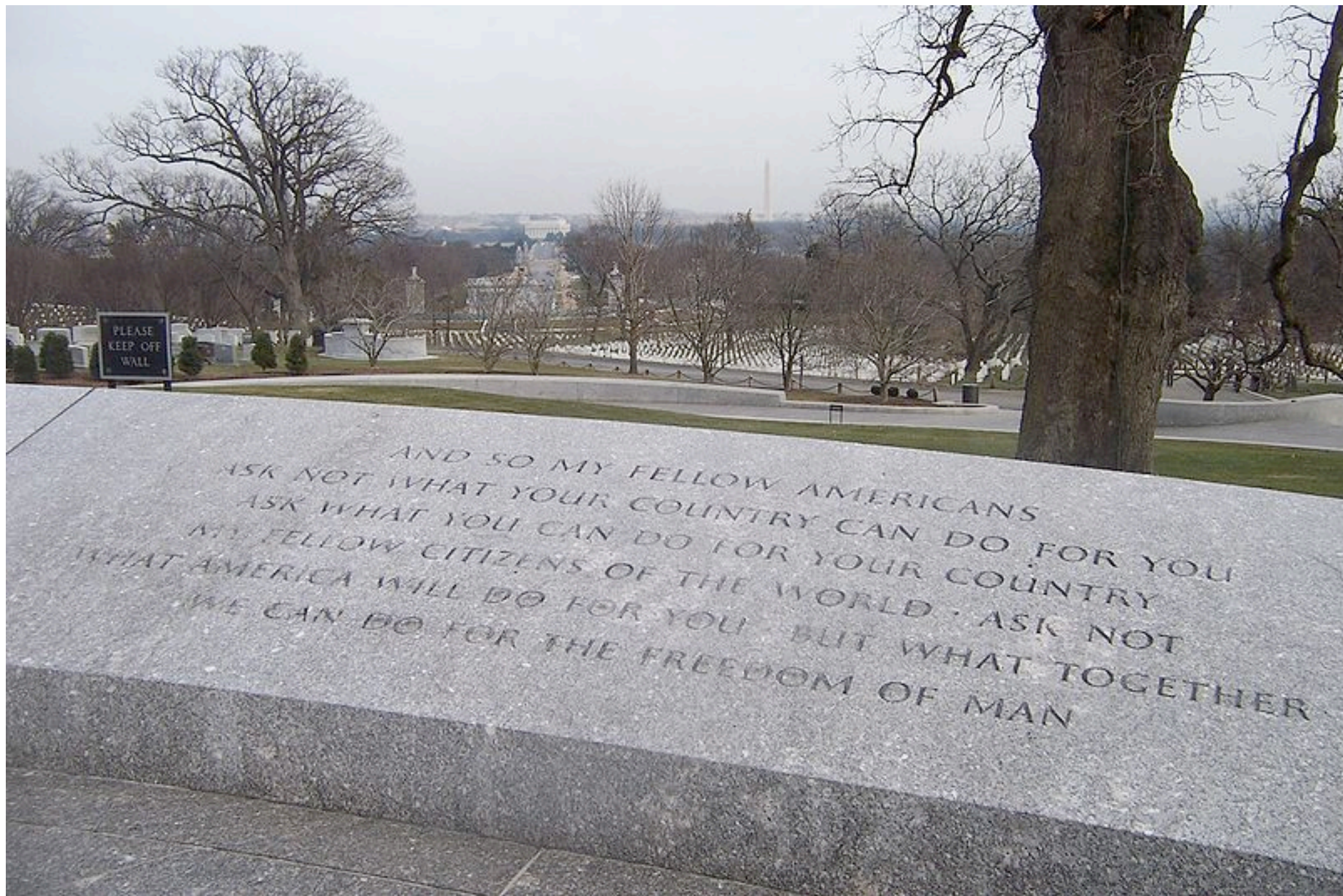
“War Socialism” - The Mobilization of all Classes



Dying for One's Country: Germanica & Fallen Heroes

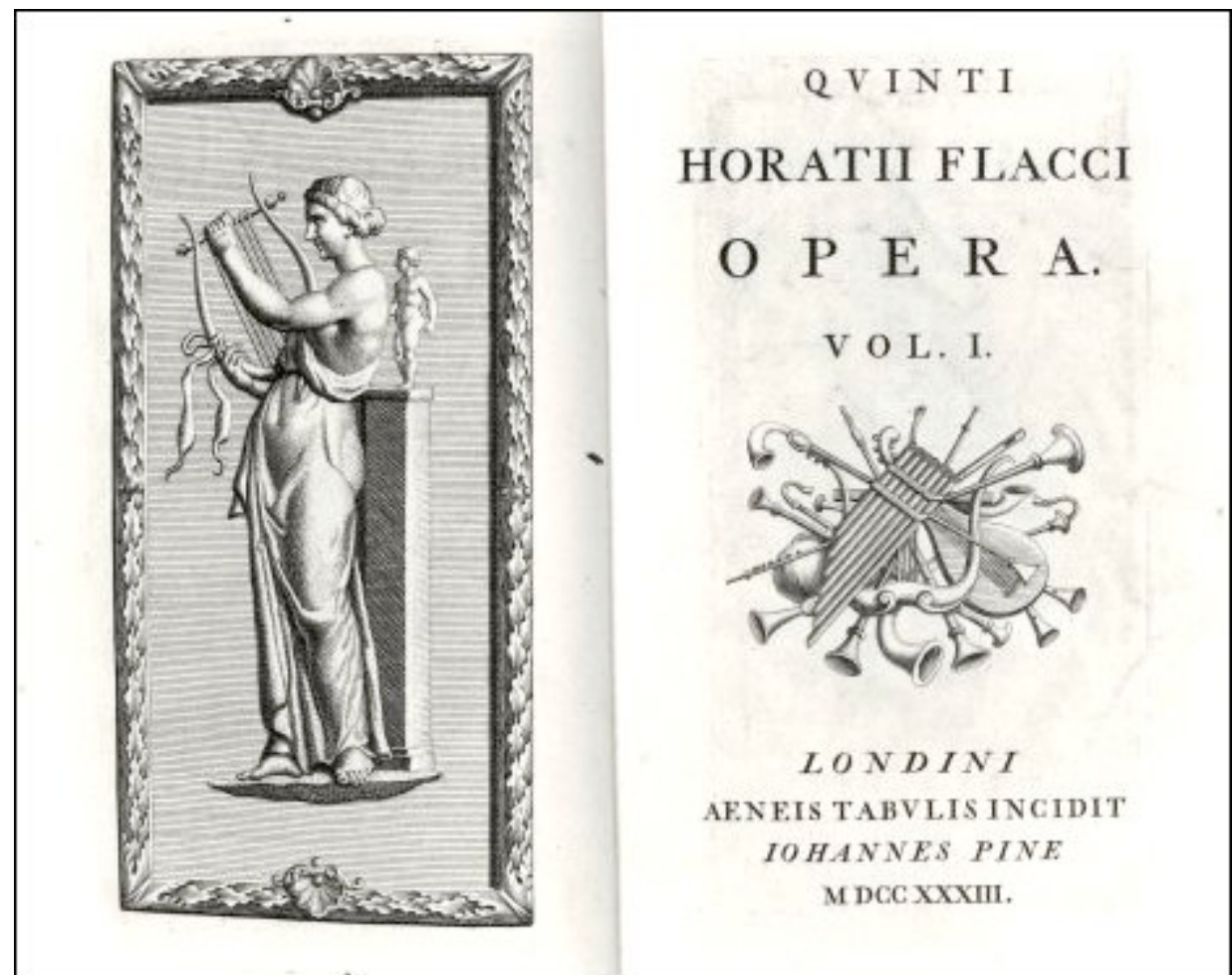


Dying for One's Country: Cenotaph in London



Memorial to John F. Kennedy, Washington D.C.
Inauguration speech: “What you can do for your country” (1961)

“And so my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.” (1961)



“Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori”

It's sweet and fitting to die for one's country.

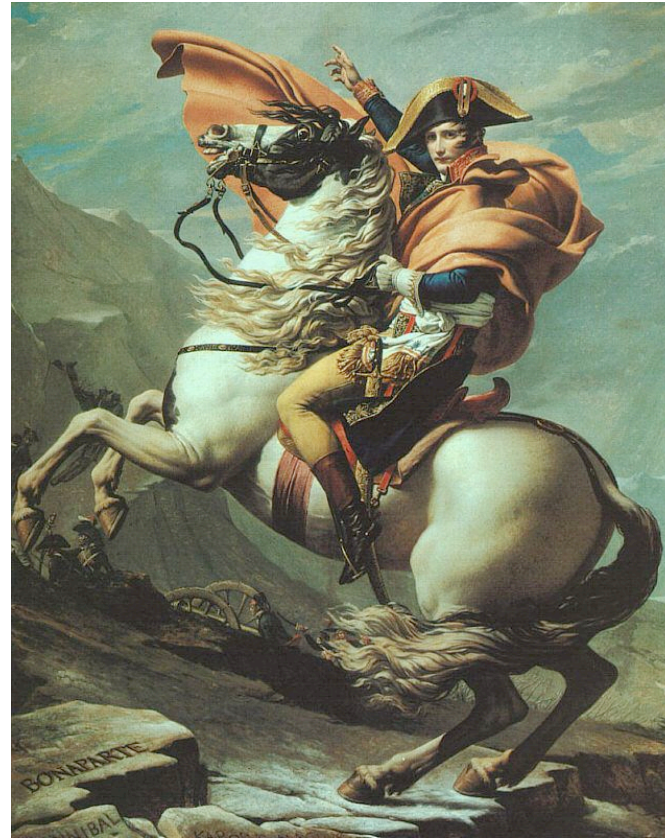
Yet death chases after the soldier who runs,
and it won't spare the cowardly back
or the limbs, of peace-loving young men.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus (Horace), (65-8 B.C.)
Odes II.2



Dying for One's Country: Arlington Memorial Amphitheatre

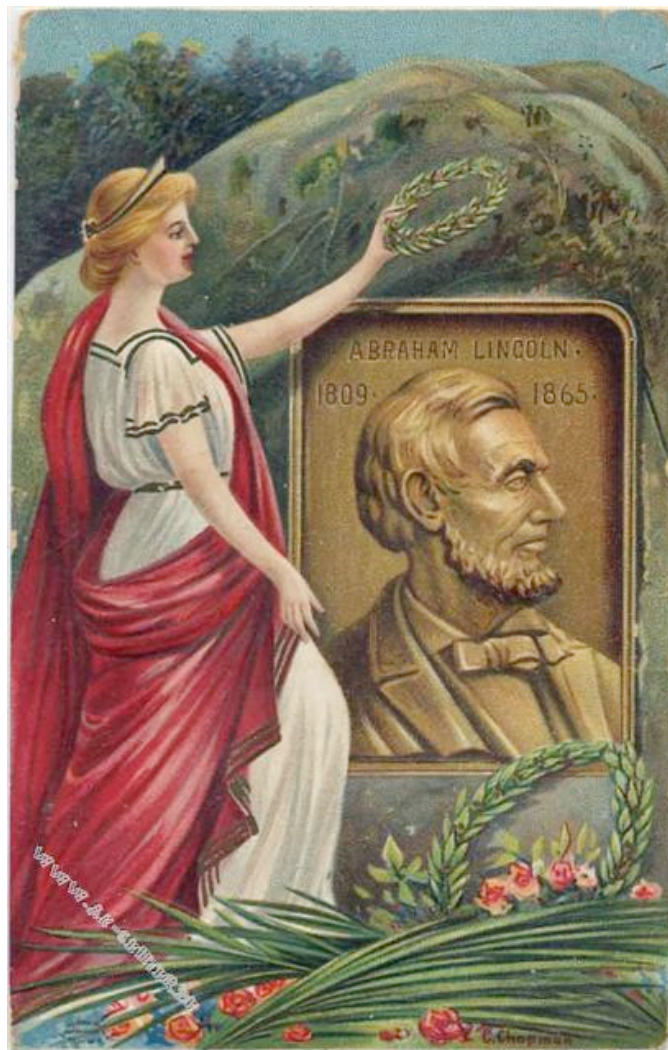
The Culture of Authority III: King/Throne





Kings, Emperors, Presidents

- Official portraits
- Heads on coins
- Coronations & Inaugurations
- Statues in public spaces
- Choosing the party leader
- State funerals
- Great powers of the leader
- Leaders in military uniform





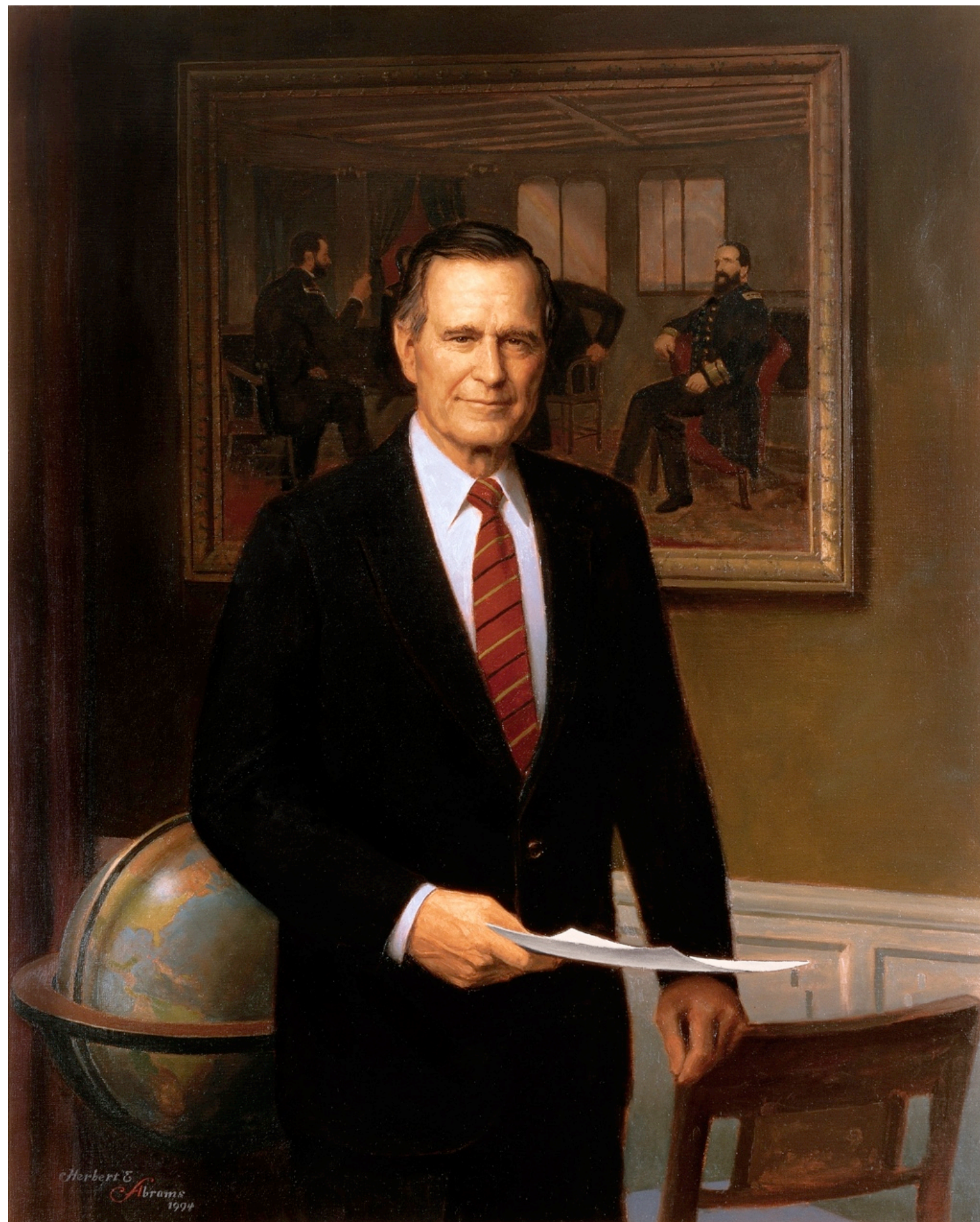
Hyacinthe Rigaud, Louis XIV (1701)



**Jacques-Louis David, The Emperor in his Study in the
Tuileries (1812)**



Official Portrait: George Washington



Official Portrait: G.H.W. Bush



**Official photo of Pres. Barack
Obama's 1st day in office**

The Great Powers of the Leader



Leaders Kissing Babies



Chinese Propaganda Poster celebrating Mao Tse Tung's feat of swimming the Yangste river (1956)

Rulers in Military Uniform or on Horseback



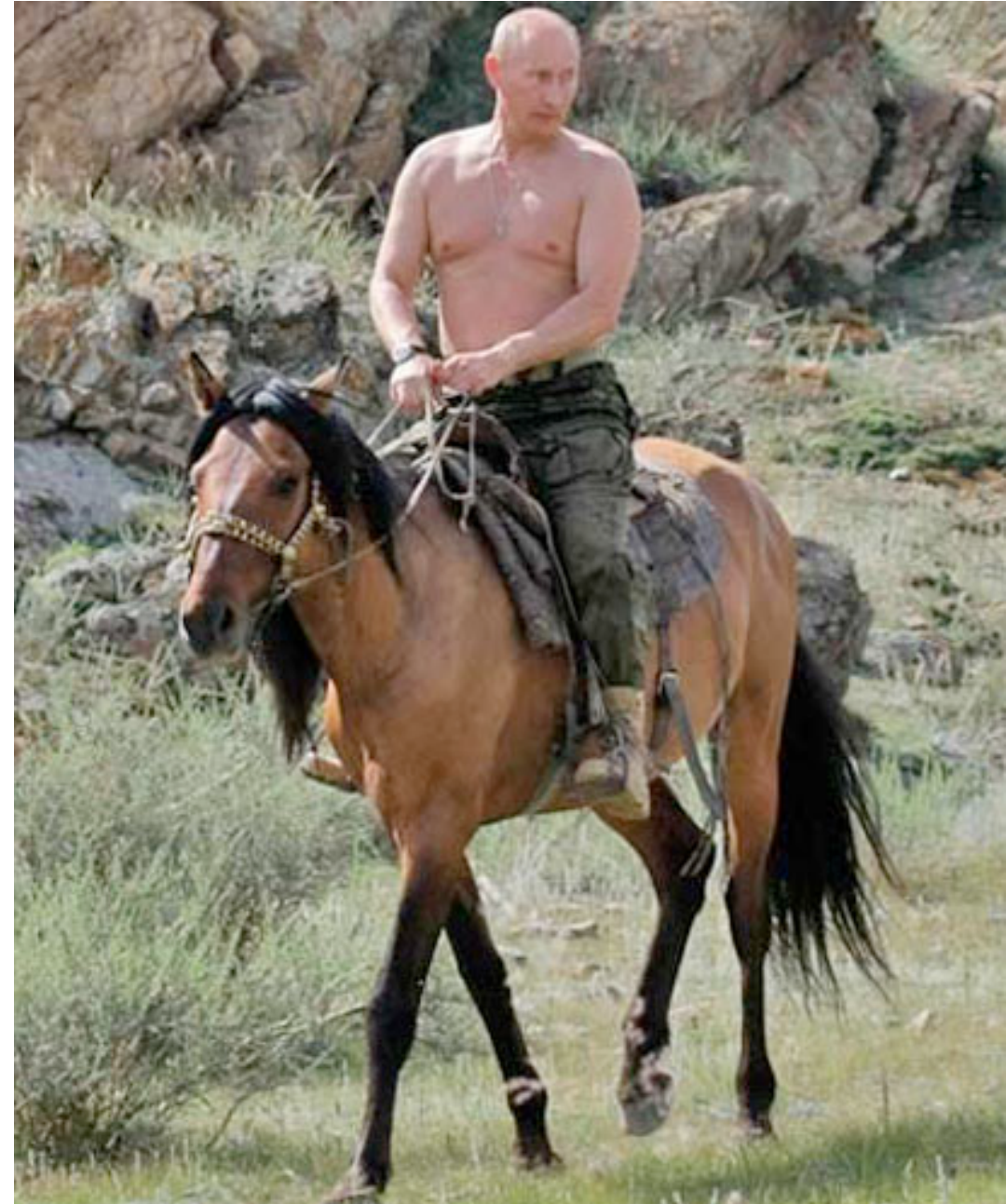
Jacques-Louis David, "Napoleon Crossing the Saint Bernard Pass" (1805)



State Funeral of JFK (1917-1963)



George W. Bush announcing “Mission Accomplished” on USS Abraham Lincoln (May 1, 2003)



**Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation
(2000-2008)**

Oaths & Anthems to the State/Leader



Queen Elizabeth II “Trooping the Colour” (1986)

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen:
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us:
God save the Queen.

**O Lord, our God, arise,
Scatter her enemies,
And make them fall.
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks,
On Thee our hopes we fix,
God save us all.**

Thy choicest gifts in store,
On her be pleased to pour;
Long may she reign:
May she defend our laws,
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice
God save the Queen

**National Anthem of the United Kingdom &
Royal Anthem of Australia**

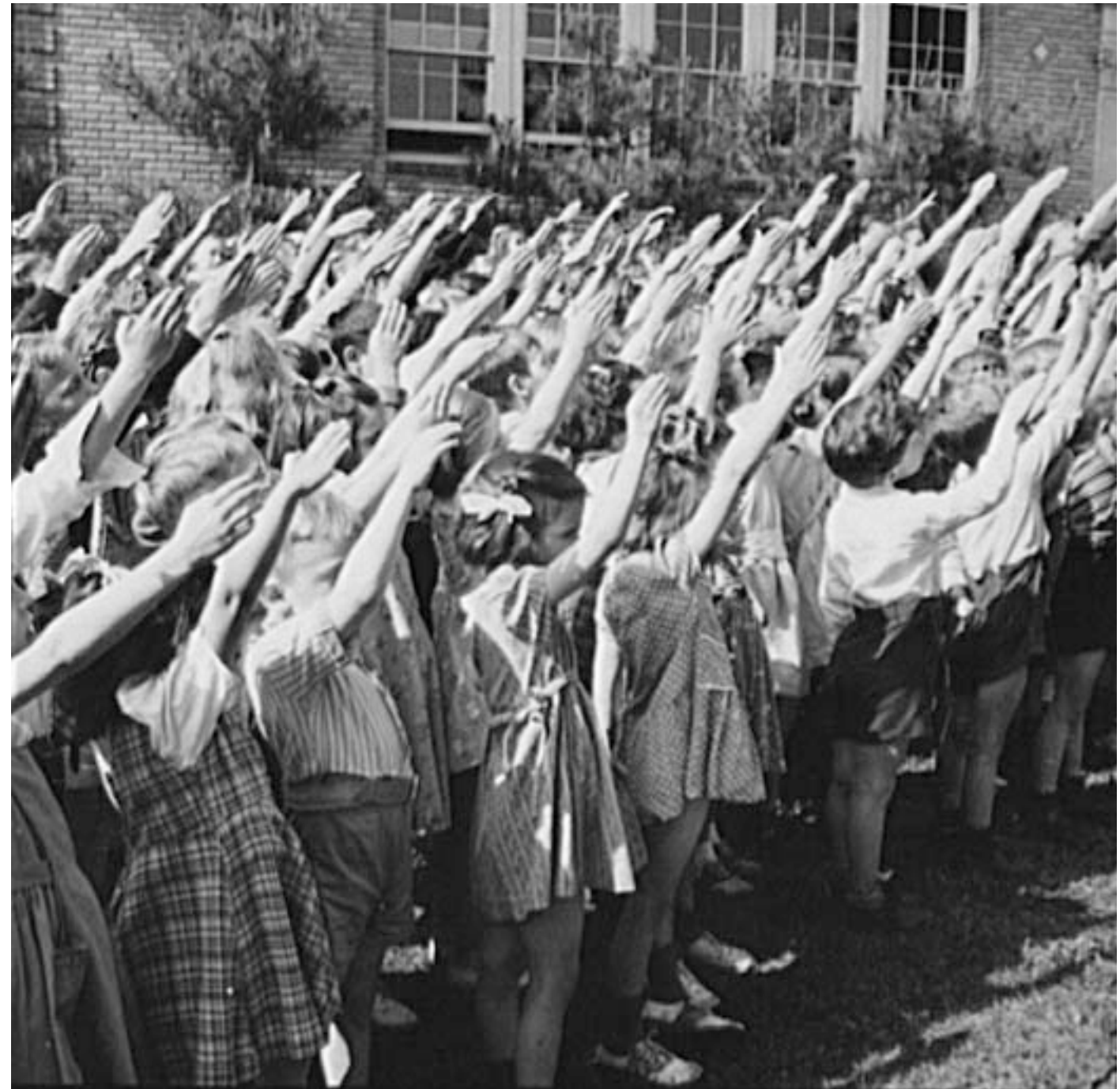
Presidential March, “Hail to the Chief” (Albert Gamse, James Sanderson) (Andrew Jackson, 1829)

Hail to the Chief we have chosen for the nation,
Hail to the Chief! We salute him, one and all.
Hail to the Chief, as we pledge cooperation
In proud fulfillment of a great, noble call.

Yours is the aim to make this grand country grander,
This you will do, that's our strong, firm belief.
Hail to the one we selected as commander,
Hail to the President! Hail to the Chief!



**Adulation of the Leader as the Chief or Commander of the
military (1829-2011)**



The “Bellamy Salute” for the American Pledge of Allegiance (pre-1942)

1892

"I pledge allegiance to my flag
and the republic for which it
stands: one nation indivisible with
liberty and justice for all."

1892 to 1923

"I pledge allegiance to my flag
and **to** the republic for which it
stands: one nation indivisible with
liberty and justice for all."

1923 to 1924

"I pledge allegiance to **the** flag **of
the United States** and to the
republic for which it stands: one
nation indivisible with liberty and
justice for all."

1924 to 1954

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of
the United States **of America**,
and to the republic for which it
stands; one nation indivisible with
liberty and justice for all."

1954 to Present

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of
the United States of America, and
to the republic for which it stands,
one nation **under God**,
indivisible, with liberty and justice
for all."

American Pledges of Allegiance

"Ich schwöre bei Gott diesen
heiligen Eid, daß ich dem Führer
des Deutschen Reiches und
Volkes Adolf Hitler, dem
Oberbefehlshaber der
Wehrmacht, unbedingten
Gehorsam leisten und als tapferer
Soldat bereit sein will, jederzeit
für diesen Eid mein Leben
einzusetzen."

"I swear by God this sacred oath
that to the Leader of the German
state and people, Adolf Hitler,
supreme commander of the
armed forces, I shall render
unconditional obedience and that
as a brave soldier I shall at all
times be prepared to give my life
for this oath."

**Wehrmacht Oath of Loyalty to
Hitler (1934)**

Conclusion

What can we do?

1. how can we oppose/challenge a "culture of obedience to authority"?

2. how can we promote a "culture of liberty"?

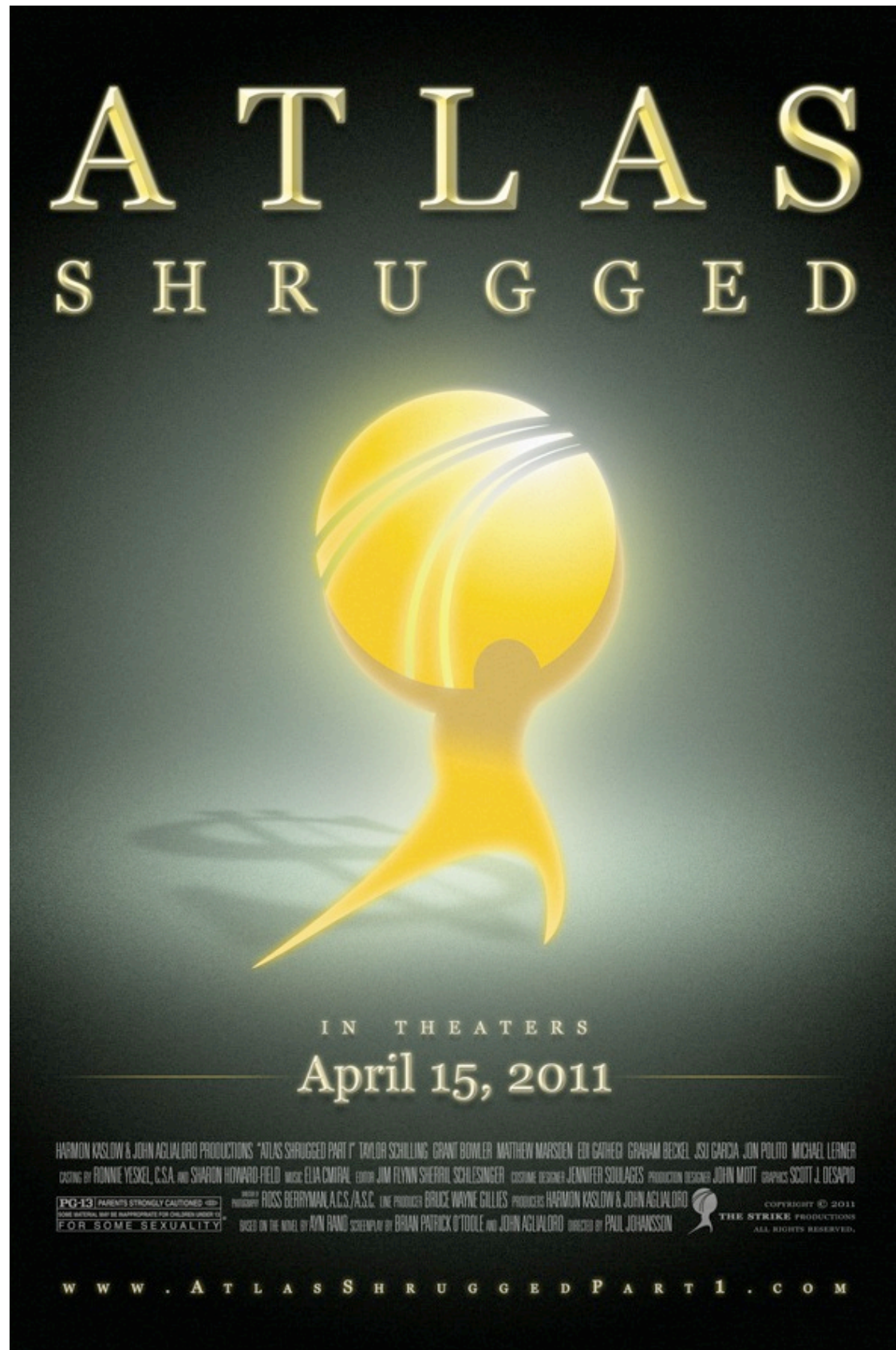
- be aware of how pervasive the “culture of authority” is & how it operates
 - not just in authoritarian societies but also in “democracies”
- challenge the claims made by Politicians and Political Leaders that their rule is “inevitable, necessary, & just” by means of
 - the “struggle of ideas” - academia, journalism, public policy
 - political activism
- help create a “culture of liberty” which
 - celebrates the non-coercive life & activities of free people
 - mocks, satirizes, & otherwise undermines the official culture of authority/obedience



James Gillray, "The British Atlas, or John Bull supporting the Peace Establishment" (1816)



Honoré Daumier, “Gargantua” (1831)



**Will Atlas ever shrug?
[Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* (1957)]**