

Extended Controversial Issue Discussion Lesson Plan Template

Lesson Title: Should the Federal Government Have Spent Millions of Dollars on Entertainment to Boost the Morale of Soldiers and Civilians During World War II?

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Appropriate for Grade Level(s): 8th Grade

US History Standard(s)/Applicable CCSS(s): H1.11 Explain the effects of World War II on social and cultural life in the United States. H3.19 – Explain how literature, MUSIC, and art are ways people voice protest or support and prompt social change. H3.23 Explain how literature, music, media and the visual arts affect social change. **CCSS – Key Ideas and Details 1 – Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. Research to Build and Present Knowledge – Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis reflection, and research.**

Discussion Question(s): Should the U.S. Government Have Spent Millions of Dollars on Entertainment to Boost the Morale of Soldiers and Civilians During World War II?

Engagement Strategy: Philosophical Chairs Discussion Format

- Student Readings (list):**
1. Origins of OWI, NWMC and MWC from Young's book Music of the WWII Era.
 2. Typed version of Artie Shaw's excerpt from JAZZ: A Film by Ken Burns
 3. Glenn Miller and Swing – From Things to Come: Swing Bands, Bebop, and the rise of a Post War Jazz Scene – Lewis Ehrenberg (pages 235 and 236)
 4. Video – Donald Duck in Nutziland (Der Fuehrer's Face) You Tube video 1944.
 5. Der Fuehrer's Face Lyrics and WWII Soldier's comment re: Spike Jones recording
 6. Oscar Hammerstein in Variety Magazine – January 5, 1944
 7. Billboard 9/23/44, Dinah shore reports, Songs that Fought the War by John Bush Jones p 28.
 8. Woody Herman remembers from The Songs that Won the War by John Bush Jones pgs 12 and 13

Total Time Needed: 3 to 4 - 50 minute class periods to go over the documents, view the video etc. 1 class period to listen to music selections and prepare talking notes. 1 class period for the discussion and part of class period following the discussion for the writing/reflection piece.

Lesson Outline:

Time Frame (e.g. 15 minutes)	What is the teacher doing?	What are students doing?
20 to 30 min	Read aloud document 1 and then go through questions in Deep Contextual Analysis style.	First time through – read silently. 2 nd time through follow along as teacher reads aloud. Answer questions alone, then share with group, then whole class.
15 to 20 min	Leading question and answer period after students have read document 2.	Reading document 2 and then answering the questions. Participating in whole class answer share.
20 to 30 min	Read aloud document 3 and then go through	First time through – read silently. 2 nd time –

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	questions all done in Deep Contextual Analysis style.	follow along as teacher reads aloud. Answer questions alone, share with small group, share.
30 min	Watching Video Document 4 Donald duck in Nutziland. Keep kids on task. Facilitate Answer share.	Watching Video, answer questions, share answers.
20 min	Document 5 – play Spike Jones recording, look at lyrics of Der Fuehrer’s Face, facilitate answer share	Listening, writing, answer share
15 min	Document 6 facilitate questions and answers	Read, answer questions, share
20 min	Document 7 – after students have read, give them background of Billboard – today’s American Top 40 etc. Discuss stars traveling to entertain the troops etc. Facilitate answer share	Read, comprehend, answer questions and share
30 min	Document 8 – facilitate questions, answers and singing	Read document, answer questions, sing White Christmas, share
20 minutes	Play popular recordings of WWII - Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, In the Mood, Jukebox Saturday Night, Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition, Chattanooga Choo Choo, etc. (try to play 2 OWI – military themed songs and 2 or 3 top choice songs of civilians and soldiers.	Listening. Can get up and dance if they want to (I taught my students the Jitterbug)
30 min	Keeping kids on task	Preparing talking points for each side of the argument.
10 minutes	Go over Discussion Norms we have used all year and explaining the one new part – 2 cents worth – all students will be given 2 pennies and they must pay the 2 pennies to talk. After all students have talked – Put in their 2 cents worth – then students can talk again and may speak as much as they want.	Listen to discussion norms review. Ask questions.
50 minutes	Discussion - Facilitate	Discussion - participate
30 minutes	Keep students on Task	Write reflection piece

Description of Lesson Assessment: Teacher will use class roster with the following headings: Times Talked, Document Cited, Discussion Norms Used, Moved Chairs/Sides, Behavior. This will be filled out as the discussion is taking place and will be used to give the students feedback at the beginning of class the following day. The Discussion is the Assessment.

How will students reflect on the process and their learning? The students will fill out the Discussion Reflection Page (attached) The goal is for them to evaluate how thoroughly they read, participated in and answered the questions we spent days on in class. They will then reflect on how well they prepared their talking points for the discussion. In addition they will rate themselves on discussion participation and usage of norms during the actual discussion. Finally they will piece it altogether with a paragraph of what they did well, what they have learned about discussions this year, and what skills they still need to work on to improve.

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DISCUSSION LESSON

SHOULD THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAVE SPENT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS ON ENTERTAINMENT TO BOOST THE MORALE OF SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS DURING WORLD WAR II?



BY

DIANE DOMITEAUX

APRIL 30, 2012

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DOCUMENT 1

Origins of the Office of War Information (OWI), National Wartime Music Committee (NWMC) and the Music War Committee (MWC) as explained in William and Nancy Young's book *Music of the World War II Era*. 2008.

The federal government, in an effort to maintain public morale and control the flow of information about the war...formed the Office of War Information (OWI)...they hired artists to create propaganda posters...put together newsreels about the war and home front to show in theaters...OWI also addressed the issue of popular music and the war effort...and established the National Wartime Music Committee (NWMC)...the heavy hand of government in the music business. The committee sought to find that (one) particular song capable of boosting morale and maintaining it throughout the war. No matter how sincere or patriotic the intentions of the people in the NWMC, their efforts produced little, if anything, of substance. The mass market was in no mood to endorse war-oriented songs. The NWMC voted itself out of existence and the Music War Committee (MWC) came next.

Even with these patriotic songs...the nation was not doing well [in the war] in 1942 and 1943...officials [government] fretted about sagging public morale...many in the government felt the country needed...stirring martial music for the nation to be victorious. The songs kept coming, but not the right one.

What the proponents of rousing war songs could never seem to grasp was that a tune's success or failure rested in the hands of stateside civilians and military personnel stationed abroad...The home front preferred more traditional and popular tunes. Troops in both the European and Pacific Theaters...overwhelmingly demanded songs about those things they left behind (and for which they fought) wives, girlfriends, home and family. This category of sentimental composition- what the MWC disparagingly called "Slush"...won out every year of the conflict (WWII) Soldiers and civilians, defying the assumptions of the MWC continued to reject most tunes that celebrated anything military and demanded the greatest hits.

Questions:

1. What do OWI, NWMC and MWC stand for?
2. What were the NWMC and then the MWC in search of during WWII?
3. What was the government worried about during 1942 and 1943? What did they think would help?
4. What songs did the soldiers demand to hear? What did the MWC call it?

DOCUMENT 2

Artie Shaw, Musician and Bandleader

Audio excerpt from JAZZ: A Film by Ken Burns

Artie Shaw led a Navy band that toured the South Pacific – playing in jungles so hot and humid that the pads on the saxophones rotted and horns had to be held together with rubber bands. Seventeen times they were bombed or strafed by Japanese planes.

“ I remember an engagement on the USS Saratoga, this huge carrier,” said Shaw. “And we were put on the flight deck and we come down into the cavernous place where three thousand men, in dress uniforms were waiting...and a roar went up. I tell ya you know it really threw me. I couldn’t believe what I was seeing or hearing, I felt something extraordinary. I was by that time inured (1) to success and applause and all that you’d take for granted after a while. You could put your finger out and say, ‘Now they’re gonna clap.’ But this was a whole different thing. These men were starved for something to remind them of home and whatever is mom and apple pie. And the music had that effect I suppose.”

- 1) Immune, unaffected.

Questions:

1. What was Artie Shaw’s job in WWII?
2. How did the audience/troops make Artie feel?
3. In Artie’s opinion what type of music did the soldiers want to hear? Why?
4. Which side of the debate should this source be used for?

DOCUMENT 3

From "Things to Come: Swing Bands, Bebop, and the Rise of a Postwar Jazz Scene," by Lewis Ehrenberg; in *Recasting America*, edited by Larry May (University of Chicago Press 1989 pp. 235-236).

"According to [promoter] Billy Rose, show business was to make us love what is good in America and hate what Hitler and the minor thugs around him stand for. Swing musicians thus stood for 'home' values and became symbols of a war to defend the American way....Musicians enlisted in the armed forces, joined USO tours and bond rallies and made V-discs...In a total war dominated by large-scale bureaucracy and rigid military hierarchy, air force Major Glenn Miller fused the spontaneity of popular culture and a new social purpose. No longer was swing an outsider to the establishment. Rather, Miller superbly wove together swing and nationalism. Under Miller's lead, the music became more organized as well as more sentimental....Miller became an officer, his band a military orchestra, and his style an 'arranged' one, where coordination of the group meant players' roles were laid out from on high and improvisation was severely diminished....in Miller's hands, the regimentation of the armed services began to curb the ecstatic rhythm of the music, and the lyrics became more expressive of personal security and happiness....Miller also consciously shaped his band in and all-American image by demanding that his singers adopt the look of innocent boys and girls from the heartland. Yet, while the band included musicians of ethnic extraction, whom he stereotyped as proper for certain instruments, it excluded blacks."

Questions:

1. According to the author, what was the job of show business in WWII?
2. What did swing musicians stand for?
3. What did Glenn Miller weave together? Why would this be important during war time?
4. Infer why Glenn Miller's music became 'more expressive of personal security and happiness'?
5. What group of people may not have had the best morale based on some stereotyping and exclusion mentioned near the end of this document? Why?

DOCUMENT 4

DISNEY'S CARTOON

DONALD DUCK IN NUTZILAND (ALSO KNOWN AS DER FUEHRER'S FACE)

You tube video

Questions:

1. What in this cartoon might boost the morale of a soldier overseas or someone on the home front?
2. What in this cartoon might make a soldier or someone on the home front fearful or actually lose morale?
3. What in this cartoon would be considered politically incorrect by today's standards? Infer why this was not considered by most to be politically incorrect during WWII.
4. Does this cartoon fit with today's image of Disney? Why or why not?

DOCUMENT 5

Der Fuehrer's Face

Ven der Fuehrer says, "Ve iss der Master Race!"
Ve Heil! Heil! Right in der fueherer's face.
Not to love der fuehrer iss a great disgrace.
So ve Heil! Heil! Right in der fuehrer's face.

Ve bring der vorldt new Order
Heil Hitler's vorldt New Order!
Ef-ry one off foreign race,
Ve love der Fueher's face,
Ven ve bring to der vorldt dis(-) order.

A soldier wrote the following about the Spike Jones' recording of Der Fuehrer's Face:

"To us, Mr. Jones's orchestrations [of Der Fuehrer's Face] furnish a refreshing departure from Frank Sinatra's groaning and Andre Kastelanetz's symphonic syrup...We need more of Mr. Jones's syncopated arrangements to keep us from believing in a sugar-plum world where everyone has a tingling spine[a lyric in the song, "As Time Goes By"]...Our ability to laugh at ourselves in an American tradition to be cherished. The world needs...more guys like Jones."

Questions:

1. What is the soldier's explanation for why he and other servicemen need more silly songs like this?
2. What in the lyrics might or might not boost the morale of a soldier overseas? What about someone on the home front?
3. What side of the argument could this source be used for? Explain.

DOCUMENT 6

Oscar Hammerstein in *Variety* - January 5, 1944.

Hammerstein looked at the continuing flow of militant flag-wavers (songs) produced during more than 2 years of America's involvement in the war, and said "the public just didn't want most of the war songs that kept coming along"...they were no darn good. "The important point in a war song," he wrote, "is that there is no virtue in its high purpose or patriotic intent. To justify itself it must stand on its feet as a really good song. A fairly good war song is of no more use to the war effort that a fairly good egg is to breakfast"

Questions:

1. According to Hammerstein what must a good song do?
2. What does Hammerstein say about a 'fairly good war song'? How might this phrase be explained in plain English?
3. What was the public opinion of all the war songs that kept coming along?
4. What might Hammerstein answer if asked the question -"Should the U.S. government keep spending all this money to try and come up with the perfect war song?"

DOCUMENT 7

Billboard - Top Record Sales - September 23, 1944

1. "Swinging on a Star" - Bing Crosby
2. "I'll Walk Alone" - Dinah Shore
3. "You Always Hurt the One You Love" - Mills Brothers
4. "I'll Be Seeing You" - Bing Crosby
5. "Time Waits for No One" -
6. "Is You Is or Is You Ain't (Ma' Baby) - Bing Crosby and the Andrews Sisters
7. "I'll Walk Alone" - Martha Tillen
8. "His Rockin' Horse Ran Away" -
9. "It Had to Be You " -
10. "G.I. Jive" - Louis Jordan

Dinah Shore's anecdotal history on what the overseas soldiers wanted to hear. September 30, 1944.

She said 9 of the 11 top hit songs stateside were what she was asked to sing on the overseas tour she had just gotten back from. She also reported the songs the GIs sang to themselves while riding in their war vehicles.

John Bush Jones writes on page 28 in his book The Songs That Fought the War:

If what Shore reported the troops abroad liked to sing was accurate, her observation says a good deal about music and morale among the military. Romantic ballads were the clear singing choice among troops abroad, arguing strongly that they played a positive role in morale-building among GIs, rather than having the deleterious (1) effects on fighting men the OWI expected....The music choices lend considerable credence to a thesis of mine that two primary ingredients of successful war-related songs were sentiments and humor. These qualities have tremendous capacity for building morale and motivation for war-related activities, because they both [sentiments and humor] touched the hearer in a very personal way. 1. Deleterious - harmful to health and well being

Questions:

1. What line of work was Dinah shore in?
2. What did the OWI rely on Dinah shore to report on? What did Billboard do in the states?
3. What does John Bush Jones say are the two primary ingredients of a successful war-related song? How do these song ingredients boost morale?

DOCUMENT 8

Background - Woody Herman, bandleader at the most famous Stage Door Canteen in NYC was told by canteen operators who answered to the Office of War Information (OWI) which songs were okay to play and which were not. (This excerpt was taken from pages 12 and 13 of John bush Jones' book The Songs that Won the War.)

Woody Herman remembers being told not to play "slush"...songs that elicited all strong feelings whether for home, mother, and sweetheart, or flag, God, and country. Herman observed that even "God Bless America" made the verboden (1) list, and the national anthem was "played only on special occasions." Which left the bands little to perform...Herman was even personally asked not to play "White Christmas" because "It makes the boys too nostalgic." Despite this prohibition, it soon became the most requested song by GIs worldwide...in fact it has been argued by Jody Rosen in his book one "White Christmas" - that although [Irving] Berlin didn't originally intend any connection between his song and the war, the global conditions created them. The song's images of nostalgic longing for a more tranquil and simple place and time made it the one "war song" to universally capture the imagination of home front and GIs abroad, although the tempo and tone differed greatly from anything the OWI deemed proper to unify wartime America. The OWI's kind of songs were in fact being written, published, played and recorded; the problem was that the public wasn't paying too much attention.

(1) Not allowed, forbidden, prohibited

Questions:

1. What type of songs was Woody Herman told not to play? Why?
2. Despite being on the 'don't play' list, which song was the most requested by GIs?
3. What evidence in the text explains what type of songs the OWI (Office of War Information) wanted the civilians and servicemen to hear?
4. Explain the difference between what soldiers and civilians wanted to hear and what the OWI (government) wanted them to hear?

DISCUSSION NORMS

1. PLEASE USE ACCOUNTABLE TALK:

I BELIEVE _____ BECAUSE...

I AGREE WITH _____ BECAUSE...

I WOULD LIKE TO BUILD ON WHAT _____ SAID...

I DISAGREE WITH _____ BECAUSE...

I NEED CLARIFICATION ON WHAT _____ MEANT WHEN THEY SAID...

IN OTHER WORDS WHAT YOU SAID WAS...

CAN YOU GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF THAT?

I CAN GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT I MEAN...

2. REMEMBER TO KEEP A LEVEL VOICE TONE

3. STAY IN YOUR SEAT (UNLESS OF COURSE YOU ARE MOVING TO THE OTHER SIDE BECAUSE THEY HAVE PERSUADED YOU TO CHANGE YOUR MIND)

4. WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO FINISH BEFORE YOU BEGIN TALKING

5. HAVE YOUR DOCUMENTS AND TALKING POINTS ON YOUR DESK SO YOU CAN REFER TO THEM.

6. BE RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS.

Rubric for WWII Discussion
5/8/2012

	4	3	2	1	0
Documentary Evidence	The student refers to the documents 4 times	The student refers to the documents 3 times	The student refers to the documents 2 times	The students only makes one reference to a document	The student does not ever refer to a document
Use of Accountable Talk	Accountable talk is used effectively each time the student speaks in the discussion	Accountable talk is used 3 out of 4 times the student speaks or the student uses most of the aspects of accountable talk when they speak	Accountable talk is used half the time the student speaks or the student uses part of the aspects of accountable talk when they speak	Accountable talk is used once or twice when the student speaks or the student uses very little aspects of accountable talk when they speak	Accountable talk is not attempted
Discussion Participation	The student actively participates in the discussion by speaking 4 or more times	The student speaks 3 times during the discussion	The student speaks 2 times during the discussion	The student speaks 1 time during the discussion	The student does not speak during the discussion
Demonstration of Topic Knowledge	Student shows excellent knowledge of the topic and has even researched and discussed documents they found on their own	Student shows excellent knowledge of topic using documents and information gone over in class	Student shows some degree of knowledge of topic	Student shows little knowledge of topic	Student shows no topic knowledge whatsoever.

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Should the U.S. Government Have Spent Millions of Dollars on Entertainment to Boost the Morale of Soldiers and Civilians During World War II?

Diane Domiteaux

On December 8, 1941, just one day after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the president of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) encouraged all member-songwriters to "do their bit in the present crisis by writing 'fighting songs'." It was evident that America would be joining in World War II. The government believed that American soldiers and civilians would need to keep their morale up in order to win the war. The Office of War Information (OWI), a newly created branch of the federal government, was quick to realize that the entertainment industry could play a huge part in boosting morale and could indeed be capable of even greater influence during wartime than they ever had before. Should the federal government have spent millions of dollars to boost the morale of U.S. soldiers and civilians during World War II?

All U.S. citizens were soon to be involved in the war effort from the youngest to the oldest in a unified mission to win the war. In order to complete this mission Kathleen Smith thought the government must cultivate and ensure the people's loyalty.

"To do so the government sought to use music as a booster of morale, both in terms of keeping people happy and unifying their will. There was a prevailing view during World War II that people's spirits and thus morale were kept high by entertainment: movies, theatrical performances, concerts, dance bands, and other social events were ranked high as morale boosters. Music, first and foremost a form of entertainment, readily served this purpose."

In their endeavor to support public morale for the war effort and control information about the war, the U.S. government established the Office of War Information (OWI).

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They hired people to produce war information newsreels that were played in movie theaters nationwide. The OWI was also responsible for hiring artists to produce hundreds of propaganda posters. In addition they also were the overseers of the large issue concerning popular music and the war effort. The government agency formed to be the heavy hand of the government in the music business was the National Wartime Music Committee (NWMC). Their main task was to encourage the creation of one main song that would be capable of boosting the morale of soldiers and civilians for the entire war. Many authors of World War II music stated that the NWMC was on the hunt for a song that would do for WWII what "Over There" did for WWI. According to William and Nancy Young in their book Music of the World War II Era, no matter how sincere or patriotic the intentions were of the people in the NWMC, their efforts produced little, if any, results. The mass market of soldiers and civilians were in no mood to listen to war-oriented songs. Eventually the NWMC voted itself out of existence and the Music War Committee (MWC) took its place.

According to the Youngs, the government, in their crusade for the perfect WWII war song, never seemed to catch on to the fact that a song's success or failure rested in the hands of stateside civilians and military personnel stationed abroad. The home front preferred more traditional tunes and dance numbers. Troops in both the Pacific and European Theaters demanded songs about those things they left behind (and for which they were fighting for) wives, girlfriends, home and family. This type of music the MWC started calling "Slush". The MWC thought this type of music was too sentimental, nostalgic, and romantic and would drive morale down. However, the opposite was true.

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This so-called "Slush" was exactly what the people at home and the soldiers abroad wanted to hear. Both civilians and soldiers alike continued to reject all the military tunes the MWC kept insisting on and paying to be recorded.

Music and entertainment are known widely today to be large morale boosters for people in general. Just do a Google search on music and morale and you will see hundreds of articles on boosting employee morale through music. There are dozens of articles on using music to help patients manage pain, inspire students to learn better, and even to help coma patients come out of a coma faster. Even though this research was not available to the U.S. government at the time of World War II, it was widely known that music and entertainment were morale boosters and the government certainly chose to not ignore this fact. Many of the popular entertainers of the day were enlisted men or were hired to sing and play for the troops around the globe and the folks on the home front. Artie Shaw, a famous bandleader, recalls his experience:

"I remember and engagement on the USS Saratoga, this huge carrier. We were put on the flight deck and we come down into this cavernous place where 3,000 men in dress uniforms were waiting for us. A roar went up and I tell ya it really threw me. I couldn't believe what I was seeing and hearing. I felt something extraordinary...these men were starved for something to remind them of home and whatever is mom and apple pie. And the music had that effect I suppose."

In the book Things to Come: Swing Bands, Bebop, and the rise of a Postwar Jazz Scene by Lewis Ehrenberg promoter Billy Rose talks about show businesses purpose during World War II. Rose said that show business was to make us love what is good about America and

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hate what Hitler and the minor thugs around him stood for. Swing musicians (of the WWII Era) thus stood for 'home' values and became symbols of a war to defend the American Way.

Swing music played by all the greats went through a bit of a change in the hands of Glenn Miller, a Major in the Air Force at the time, which made swing universally accepted by most Americans and served as a great morale booster to all.

Finding arguments against the use of music and entertainment as a morale booster are virtually impossible to find. What can be argued, however, is was the U.S. government justified in their pursuit of the one true wartime song that would go down in history as THEE song of World War II? The famous Oscar Hammerstein in an interview for Variety magazine in January of 1944 said that the public just didn't want most of the (government sponsored) war songs that kept coming along because they were no darn good. He went on to say, "To justify itself a song must stand on its feel as a **really good** song and that a fairly good war song is of no more use to the war effort than a fairly good egg is to breakfast." Numerous band leaders across the nation discussed the infamous 'don't play' list forced upon them by the OWI. The OWI kept forbidding bands in the canteens across the nation from playing "Slush" songs that made the soldier's pine for home. Woody Herman, a bandleader at the most famous Stage Door Canteen in New York City remembered being told not to play the "slush" songs that stirred up strong feelings for home, mother, sweetheart, flag, God or country. Herman said that "God Bless America" even made the "don't play" list. One song that Hermann was personally asked not to play was "White Christmas" because "It makes the boys too nostalgic." Ironically enough that

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song became THEE most requested song by GIs worldwide. According to Jody Rosen author of a book on the song White Christmas, Irving Berlin never intended there to be any connection whatsoever between his song and the war, yet the song's images of nostalgic longing of a more peaceful and tranquil place and time made it the one "war song" to capture both the home front and GIs abroad. It is indeed ironic that the federal government spent so much money to inspire one true war song for World War II, when a song they had nothing to do with accomplished the goal. To add more fuel to the irony that song, "White Christmas", was everything the government didn't want the soldiers and civilians to hear.

In conclusion, it would seem that, yes, the government was wise to spend millions of dollars to boost the morale of civilians and soldiers during World War II. Everyone involved benefitted from the effort and the USA and the Allies did win the war. Most people who lived through that period in our history say it was the most patriotic time in their life. However, I would like to end this paper with a final thought; perhaps the government would not have needed to spend so much money to boost morale, as it seems other people were doing it quite unintentionally on their own without the government's intervention.

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