

## Teacher's Image Analysis Worksheet

**Instructions:** Take a close look at your postcard image with the four critical lenses. Consider the guiding questions to help you analyze and place the image in the larger historical and social context. Then note your analysis in terms of observations, inferences and questions about the image.

**Postcard Title:** *More nurses are needed!*

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*Students' answers may vary, but need to demonstrate their applying critical lenses in responding to the questions. Teacher can use the class discussion to model articulating specific critical approaches, as well as any relevant prior knowledge and visual/textual evidence from the image being analyzed.*

**1.** What is the image's main message? Who is its creator/producer? What is its purpose? Who is the audience?

*Students ought to use text clues both on and in caption below the image to infer its message, creator/producer, purpose, and audience—help & join Army Nurse Corps, US Army and Dover Publications, recruitment during WWII, women, respectively. Students may note how the image originally was on a poster during WWII and then on a postcard in 2001. Teacher may guide students to understand that there is no information that can identify the purpose for the 2001 postcard.*

**2.** What time period is the postcard image from? At that time, what historical events happened, and what were the mainstream cultural and social trends? How does the image reflect them?

*After identifying WWII as the original production date of the image, students may offer answers based on their existing knowledge about the mainstream US society and WWII in mid-20th century. They may identify the axis countries and several allied countries fighting the war; limited career/educational opportunities for women and minorities; cultural and social trends that benefit mostly male, white, middle-class people, etc. They may mention how the war, unintentionally, catalyzed inclusion of women and minorities who became essential in war time. Students identify the portrayal of the female nurse as the reflection of the mainstream idea of an army nurse, which mirrors the qualities of an acceptable/good woman of that time—clean, conventionally attractive, light-complexioned, etc.*

**3.** What are the symbols in the image? What do they convey and to whom?

*Students may identify three visual symbols, each of which conveys the following:*

- the caduceus, the winged-staff with two snakes wrapped around it, which is a symbol of medicine;*
- the rifle behind the woman is serving as a make-shift IV-drip pole, symbolizing medical care in a battle field and/or the unseen but assumed male wounded soldier; and*
- the background colors of splash-patterned yellow beneath darker olive-toned color seem to reference the explosions in battle fields.*

**4.** Who and how are people depicted? What is their identity—gender, class, race/ethnicity?

*Students again contextualize the only female nurse on the image, whose class and ethnicity may seem unclear, in the context of the socially acceptable feminine qualities of mid-20th century in the United States. The female portrayal is absent of the nurse's skills and training.*

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**5.** From whose perspective are the people illustrated? What power relationships does the image show? How does the image foster or change the norm and the existing power structure?

*Students consider that the image reflects military and male perspectives that foster the dominant culture during 1940s—white male perspectives. They are able to reference the ways in which the nurse is depicted as a woman with traditional femininity and clean appearance despite her work in the frontline of the battle field. They may note her gestures and facial expressions also being from the male perspective, and not from how real military nurses see themselves working in the battle field.*

**6.** What information or image is missing? How does that absence further support the message of the image?

*Students identify a lack of men, as the image may imply men are soldiers and women are nurses. They may note how the realities of war-time nursing are mostly missing, as the image seems to dramatize and glamourize the female army nurse.*

**7.** What ideas about nurses or nursing does the image communicate? What can you conclude about social rules, norms, power, and power structure that shaped this image?

*Students summarize their analysis of the image in responding to this question. They articulate that the image communicates that women are suitable only as nurses in the military during a war. They decipher that the poster image reflects the power structure and gender norms established by dominant white male culture.*