

Incapable of Compassion

Propoganda Ammended for use in the 21st Century

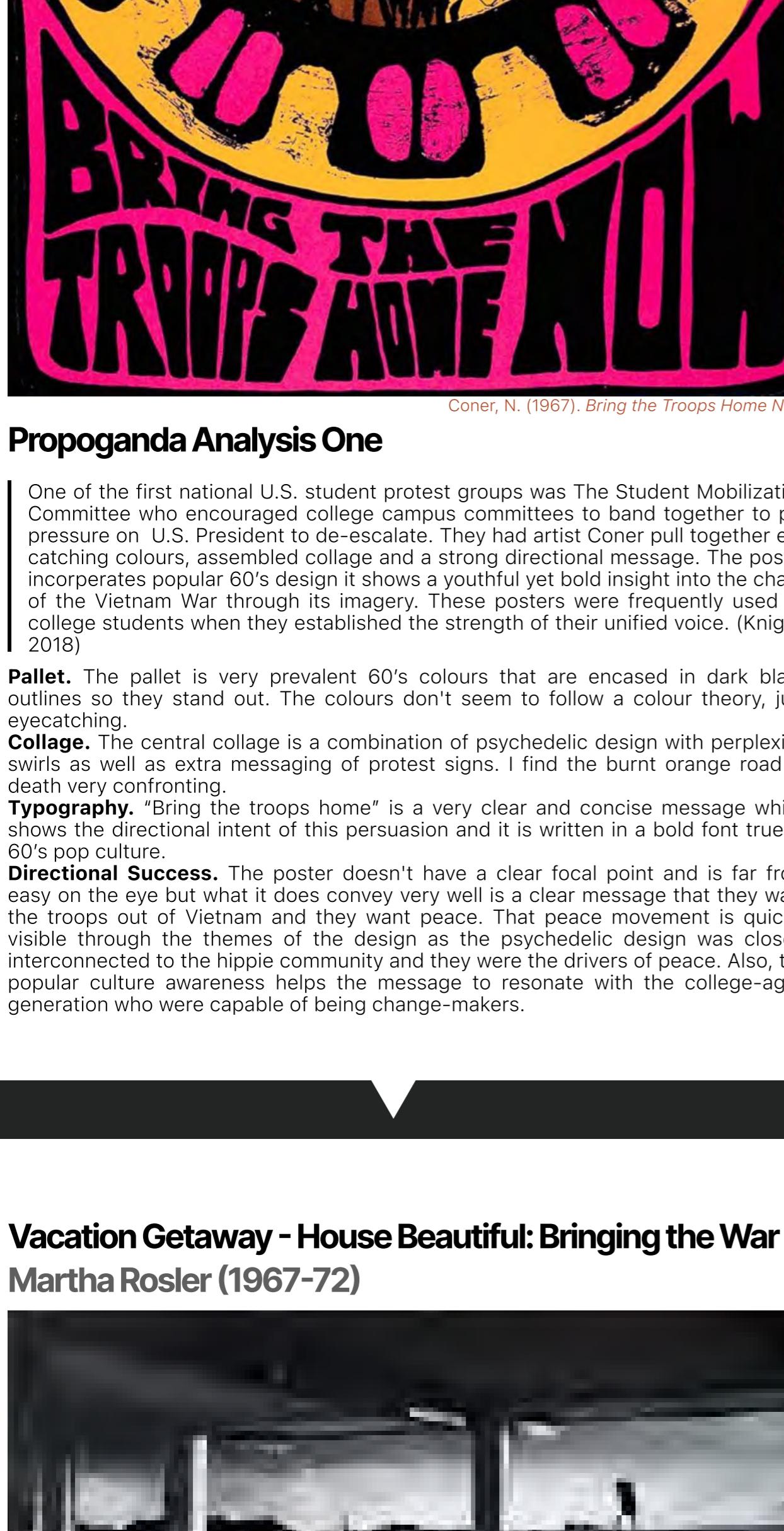
The Vietnam War

While people differ on their stance on war, for some it is hard to understand the loss and devastation of war let alone get to the bottom of why conflicts like this emerge in the first place.

What is known is that the Vietnam War took the lives of more than one million soldiers and two million civilians between 1960 and 1975. The war was fought between the communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the north and the US-backed Republic of Vietnam in the south. New Zealand's participation in the war alongside the U.S. and Australia was highly controversial and attracted widespread condemnation and therefore protest. The fallout of the war struck a new debate about New Zealand's place in the world and the two major political parties advocated for different strategies of foreign policy.

Bring the Troops Home Now

Nancy Coner (1967)



Coner, N. (1967). Bring the Troops Home Now.

Propoganda Analysis One

One of the first national U.S. student protest groups was The Student Mobilization Committee who encouraged college campus committees to band together to put pressure on U.S. Presidents to de-escalate. They had artist Coner pull together eye catching colours, assemble collage and a strong directional message. This poster incorporates popular 60's design; it shows a youthful yet bold insight into the chaos of the Vietnam War through its imagery. These posters were frequently used by college students when they established the strength of their unified voice. (Knight, 2018)

Pallet. The pallet is very prevalent 60's colours that are encased in dark black outlines so they stand out. The colours don't seem to follow a colour theory, just eye-catching.

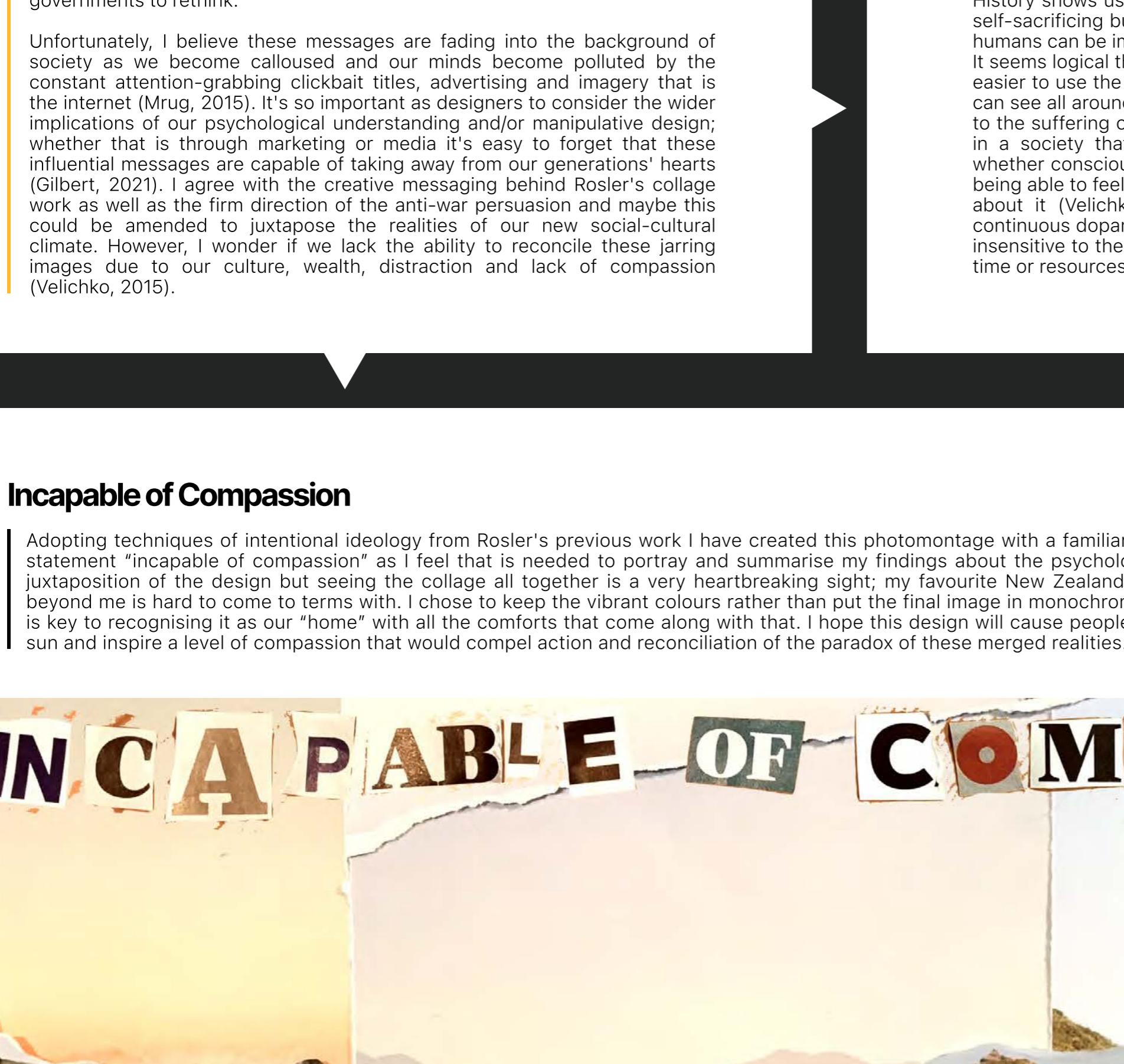
Collage. The central collage is a combination of psychedelic design with perplexing swirls as well as extra messaging of protest signs. I find the burnt orange road to death very confronting.

Typegraphy. "Bring the troops home" is a very clear and concise message which shows the directional intent of this persuasion and it is written in a bold font true to 60's pop culture.

Directional Success. The poster doesn't have a clear focal point and is far from easy on the eye but what it does convey very well is a clear message that they want the troops out of Vietnam and they want peace. The peace movement is quickly visible through the themes of the design as the psychedelic design was closely interconnected to the hippie community and they were the drivers of peace. Also, the popular culture awareness helps the message to resonate with the college-aged generation who were capable of being change-makers.

Vacation Getaway - House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home

Martha Rosler (1967-72)



Collage Protest Analysis

This piece is part of a collection of photomontages that combine images of war and glossy magazine advertisements of home interiors from the American publication House Beautiful. It's an uncomfortable paradox that compels people to consider their circumstances and defy the reality of how the images 'should' look. This forced people in their home comforts to feel this uncomfortable agitation and hopefully helped them to consider reality.

Collage. The idea of using physical merging to symbolise a hard to comprehend reality is a powerful persuasion technique because it does a lot of the thinking for the viewer and then they are left to decide what they want to about this new reality.

Composition. While the composition is limited to what images were currently in the magazines at the time it was a primed composition because people had seen images like this for years, a perfect basic composition to leave room for it to be decoded.

Monochrome. While other works of Rosler's did include vibrant images of females I chose this poster because there is something about the monochrome that lets us rest in the fact that this was a different time, but then we are deeply confronted with the reality that it's actually not a different time and the same issues still persist. The monochrome helps to blend the two realities seamlessly but I don't believe it is very effective in grabbing attention or appealing to young audiences.

Type. The image speaks for itself in the context of its collection but without the text it's hard to disseminate a clear directional message and leaves a lot up to interpretation. I think for our current climate an image like this might be more powerful with direct text explaining the intention of jarring configurations to incite thoughtful consideration as opposed to reinforcing privilege.

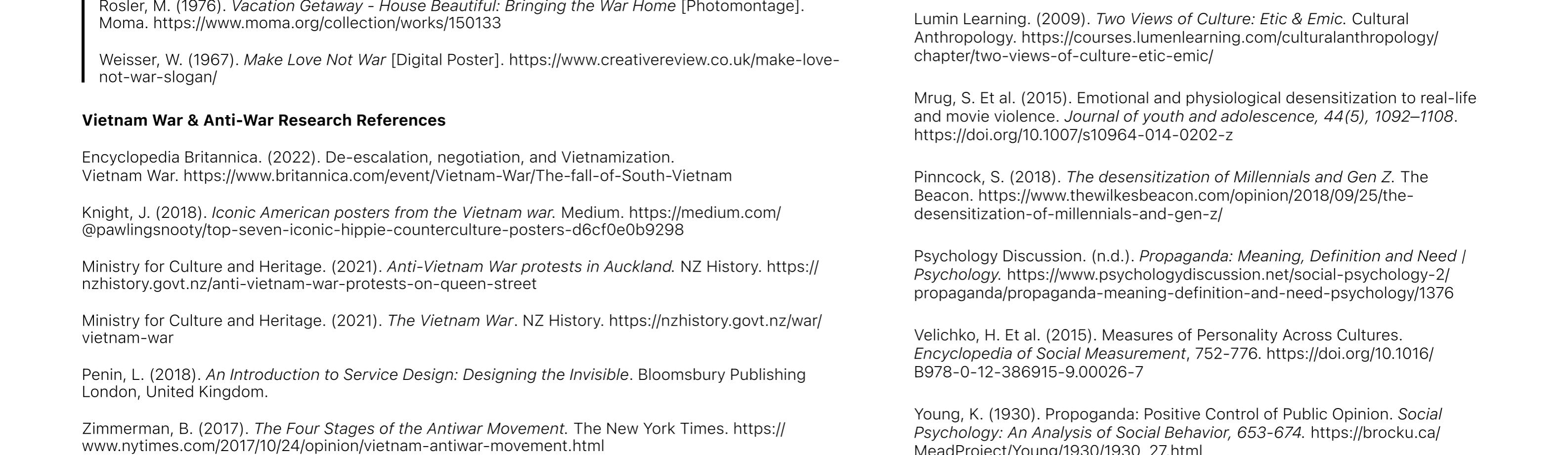
Reflection

Beyond the design strategies adopted throughout the propaganda I believe the three posters were successful because other people supported the messaging and ideology behind the propaganda. The intentions displayed throughout these posters whether that was through text, release type and colour, or collage disseminated a message of peace and de-escalation as well as self-reflection during that critical period in time. I think this radiant movement of Anti-War posters was key to getting people to pressure governments to rethink.

Unfortunately, I believe these messages are fading into the background of society as we become calloused and our minds become polluted by the constant attention-grabbing clickbait titles, advertising and imagery that is the internet (Mrug, 2015). It's so important as designers to consider the wider implications of our psychological understanding and/or manipulative design; whether that is through marketing or media it's easy to forget that these influential messages are capable of taking away from our generation's hearts (Gilbert, 2021). I agree with the creative messaging behind Rosler's collage work as well as the firm direction of the anti-war persuasion and maybe this could be amended to juxtapose the realities of our new social-cultural climate. However, I wonder if we lack the ability to reconcile these jarring images due to our culture, wealth, distraction and lack of compassion (Velichko, 2015).

Incapable of Compassion

Adopting techniques of intentional ideology from Rosler's previous work I have created this photomontage with a familiar landscape composition. I have chosen to add my polemic statement "incapable of compassion" as I feel that is needed to portray and summarise my findings about the psychology behind wealth and decreased compassion. I enjoy the juxtaposition of the design but seeing the collage all together is a very heartbreakng sight; my favourite New Zealand destinations being plastered with the reality of the world beyond me is hard to come to terms with. I chose to keep the vibrant colours rather than put the final image in monochrome black and white because the colouring of the landscape is key to recognising it as our "home" with all the comforts that come along with that. I hope this design will cause people to stop and think about the realities of life here under the sun and inspire a level of compassion that would compel action and reconciliation of the paradox of these merged realities.



Pathways to Research Assignment 1

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