

Defending The (Digital) Home Front

Propaganda and citizen defense, then and now

A workshop with Dr. Gillian "Gus" Andrews
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“Keep Calm and Carry On,” a British wartime slogan, enjoyed a surprising resurgence over the past decade. Online, it’s re-purposed to encourage people to keep their heads and do everything from “use the force” to “eat tacos.” The slogan links the propaganda of yesteryear with images on social media today that encourage us to think, feel, and act in particular ways. Like older poster propaganda, social media content can be harnessed to move us to action in hard times—for good, or for ill.

It’s because of these connections that media literacy educator Gus Andrews incorporates poster art from the World Wars and Great Depression in her book, *Keep Calm and Log On*, a sort of “scout handbook” that gives everyday citizens the tools they need to survive an era of cyberwarfare and technological revolution. In these posters, Dr. Andrews finds inspiration for how we can mobilize our communities to protect against online attacks.



Dr. Andrews will take her book on the road in the summer of 2020, speaking in front of a backdrop of this antique poster art. She’ll talk about what these posters, and the civilian activities they promoted, can teach us about supporting our communities during hard times—and how that translates to the current historical moment.

Attendees will return home with iconic images that help them remember key ideas for defending against disinformation and propaganda, protecting their digital security, and conserving new kinds of resources that are drained by cyber-war efforts (like our attention and our opinions).

Dr. Andrews hopes to host related events at a number of the archives whose material she used in the book (including the Library of Congress and British Imperial War Museum), to call attention to what we can learn from these fascinating historical collections. She welcomes the opportunity to arrange this as a panel discussion or fireside chat, bringing in other experts who have worked on related historical and archival material.