



THE AIR UNIVERSITY



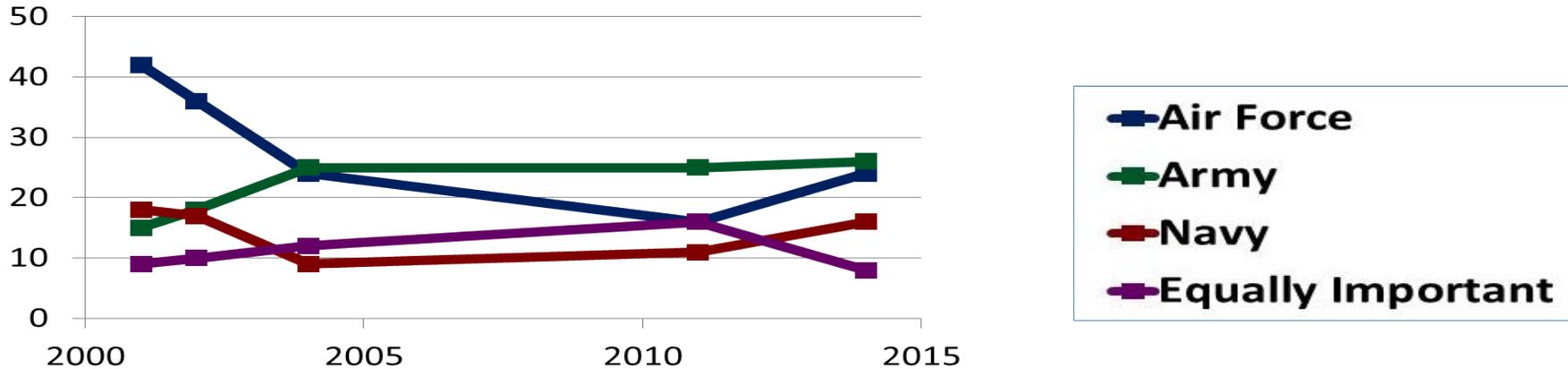
Transforming the U.S. Air Force Narrative

Think Tank
SOS Class 14E



CSAF Question

- American public perception: Services are “equally important” (May 2014 Gallup poll / RAND study)
- BLUF: Change the narrative, motto, and establish an integrated outreach led by a Media Operations Center



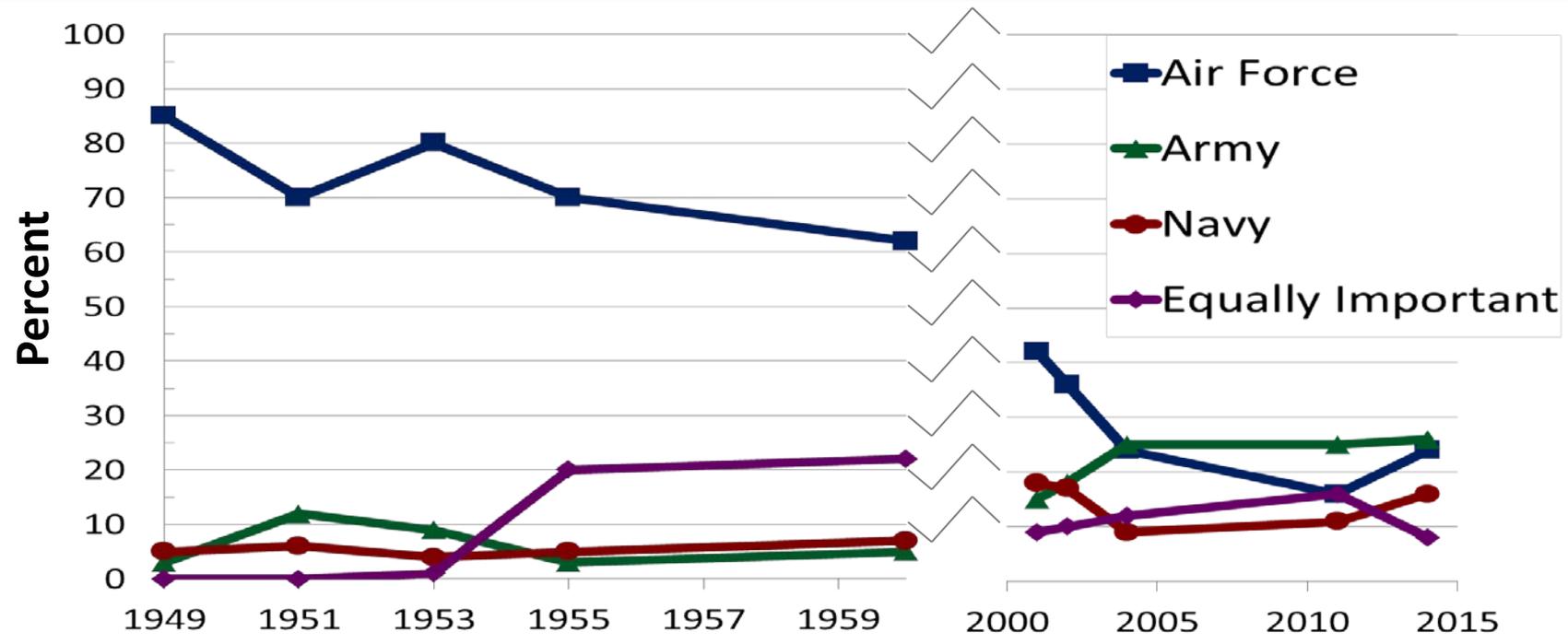


Overview

- **Timeless Narrative**
- **Enduring Motto**
- **Integrated Media Campaign**



Public Perception



AF narrative does not resonate with the American public

¹Vick, A. (2014.) *American Public Is Less Inclined To Distinguish Among Service Branches*. RAND Project Air Force, PAF-1P-239, June, 1-2



Why We Care

- Go-to choice
- Capability/effects with immediacy
- Public support
- More than technology
 - Recruit & retain
 - Belief in the mission



Winning does not require having the most people...it demands the best

Defending America's Horizons

Born of Necessity – Grown Through Innovation – Eyes on the Horizon



Methodology

- **Public Opinion, Narratives**
 - Vexing problems, solutions
- **Corporate Insights**
 - Message, culture, emotion
- **Reconstruction of narrative**
 - Start with WHY

GALLUP POLL



The Pew Research Center



Passive narrative approach – Needs to answer “why”



Findings and Insights

“Cultural Narratives”

“Over not Through”

“Give me Liberty”

“Victory Through Air Power”

“Peace Is Our Profession”

“Victory Through Air Power”

“We Are Critical Enablers”





Vexing Problems



Only service uniquely equipped to face the multitude of vexing problems



Timeless Narrative

BORN OF NECESSITY,

1917-1940

1921-1940

***GROWN THROUGH
INNOVATION,***

1941-1948

1949-1990

EYES ON THE HORIZON

1991-2003

2004-2011



The Timeless Air Force Narrative

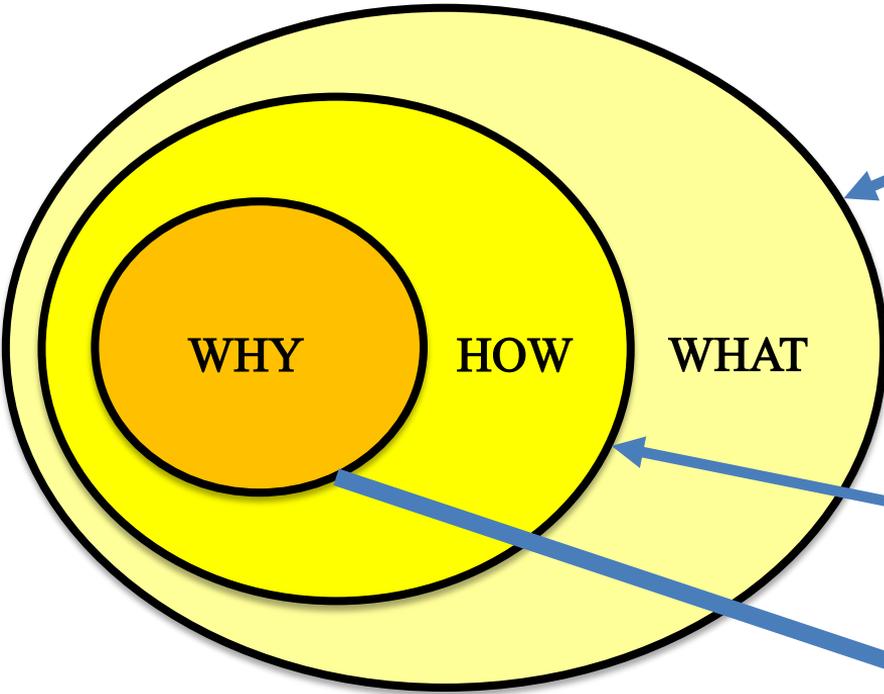


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Start with WHY



MISSION
FLY, FIGHT,
AND WIN



Where is the why?



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AMERICA'S
HORIZONS**



Way Forward

- **Internal:**
 - Create a culture of story telling
 - Education for advocacy
 - Media Operations Center

- **External:**
 - Project to the public
 - Develop a battle rhythm, optimize effects!
 - Popular media



Way Forward - Internally

- **Storytelling**
 - Nelson Farris
- **Emotional Connections**
- **Create a culture**
 - Bottom Up
- **Identity education**
 - Career fair, “Airmen 101”
 - Every Airman an ambassador





External - Optimized

- **Make an emotional connection**
- **Focus on our people**
 - Documentaries, docudramas
 - Short story compilation
- **Tap into admiration for senior leadership**
 - Biographies
 - Leadership
 - Life lessons





Way Forward

- **Create a central Media Operations Center (MOC)**
 - No more stove pipes – Integrate PA, Recruiting





External - Current Strategy

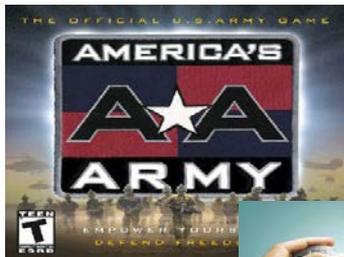




External - Optimized

■ Integrated Marketing Strategy

- Variety of Media Outlets
- Native Advertising
- Search Engine Optimization
- Apps / video games



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Imagine...

INFOCON 3 UNCLASSIFIED EPCON Alpha

http://www.af.mil/ The Official Home ...

U.S. AIR FORCE JOIN THE AIR FORCE

HOME NEWS ABOUT US AF SITES Search AF.mil

AMERICA'S AIR FORCE
A CALL TO THE FUTURE

THE AIR FORCE STRATEGY

FEATURED LINKS

SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH
Get help here

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE FORCE MANAGEMENT
CLICK HERE

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention

LATEST NEWS

- Remembering 9/11: Tributes throughout the Air Force
- Enlisted evaluation and promotion systems implementation timeline
- Invictus Games kick off with opening ceremony
- Critical Days of Summer ends; focus on risk management heightens
- Sept. 10 – Pulse on AF force management

VIDEOS

- Invictus Games 2014
- Air Force Report: Invictus Games
- Around the Air Force: Suicide Prevention Month

ENGAGE

The C-5 is so #awesome, it flies itself...and @USMC planes. #WellPlayed #Aircraft

Read in-depth stories by our #Airmen & their families on the #AirForce's official #blog!
<http://t.co/92uIRKm2bz>

http://www.af.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/223/Article/496897/strategic-agility-is-the-future-of-the-air-force.aspx

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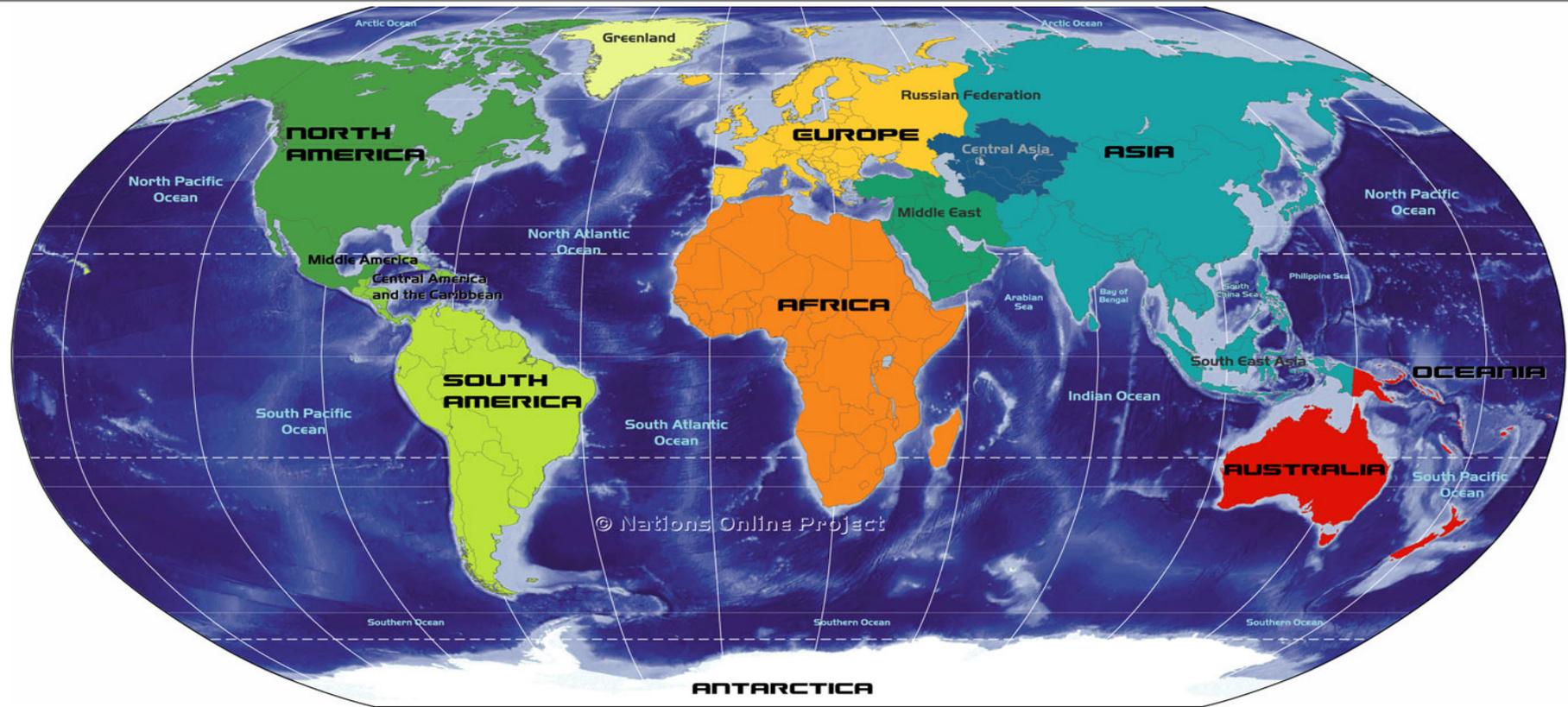


Conclusion

- **Timeless Narrative**
- **Enduring Motto**
- **Integrated Media Campaign**

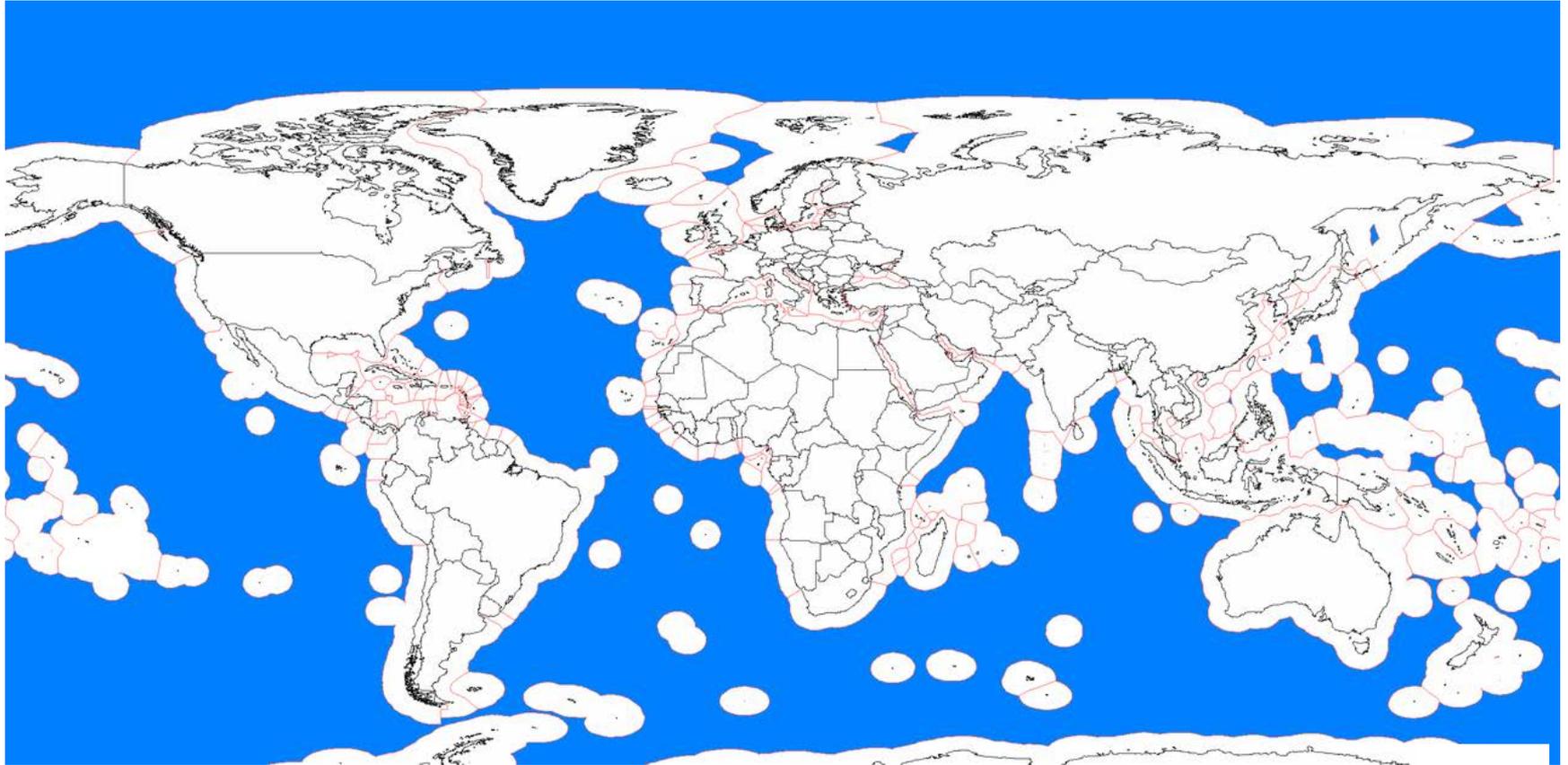


1/3 Land





2/3 Water





100% AIR FORCE!



**DEFENDING
AMERICA'S
HORIZONS**



Transforming the Air Force Narrative

- **Public perception problem:** services are “equally important” - May 2014 Gallup poll/RAND study
- Ground wars shaped “critical enabler,” & USAF passively adopted; fails to highlight core mission
- **BLUF:** Change narrative, motto, establish integrated campaign led by a Media Operations Center

Current Narrative → New Narrative

- Narrative = Vexing Problems, Bold Solutions
- Current narrative fails to highlight unique AF
 - Air, ICBM, space, ISR, cyber, innovation
- AF is more than support / “critical enabler”
- USAF: capability / power projection
- Uniquely suited to counter vexing problems
- New Timeless Narrative Needed – what USAF always has been/will be... need to codify it

Enduring Motto

- Horizons (temporal) – looking to future, next threat; effectiveness in current & next fight
- Horizons (geographic) – AF defending skies with ability to deter/prosecute war anywhere
 - Capability keeps men out of trenches
- Horizons (technological) – not satisfied with status quo → new innovation / capabilities
- Motto rallies trust / support / partnerships advancement are a product of belief

Motto / Strategic Narrative



Born of Necessity, Grown Through Innovation, Eyes on the Horizon

Key Recommendations

- Own / shape strategic narrative / motto
- Branding – emotional connection
- Storytelling and advocates: give the “WHY”
- Media Ops Center – integrate, optimize effect

Convey capabilities, importance...resonate



BACKUP SLIDES



Social Currency

- An idea or topic has social currency if people
 - Find it relevant in their daily lives
 - Seek or share information about it
 - Advocate for or identify with it
- Measured by frequency of
 - Airmen appearing on cover of Time
 - Senior Airmen publish books
 - Air power concepts and tech appear in books and internet searches

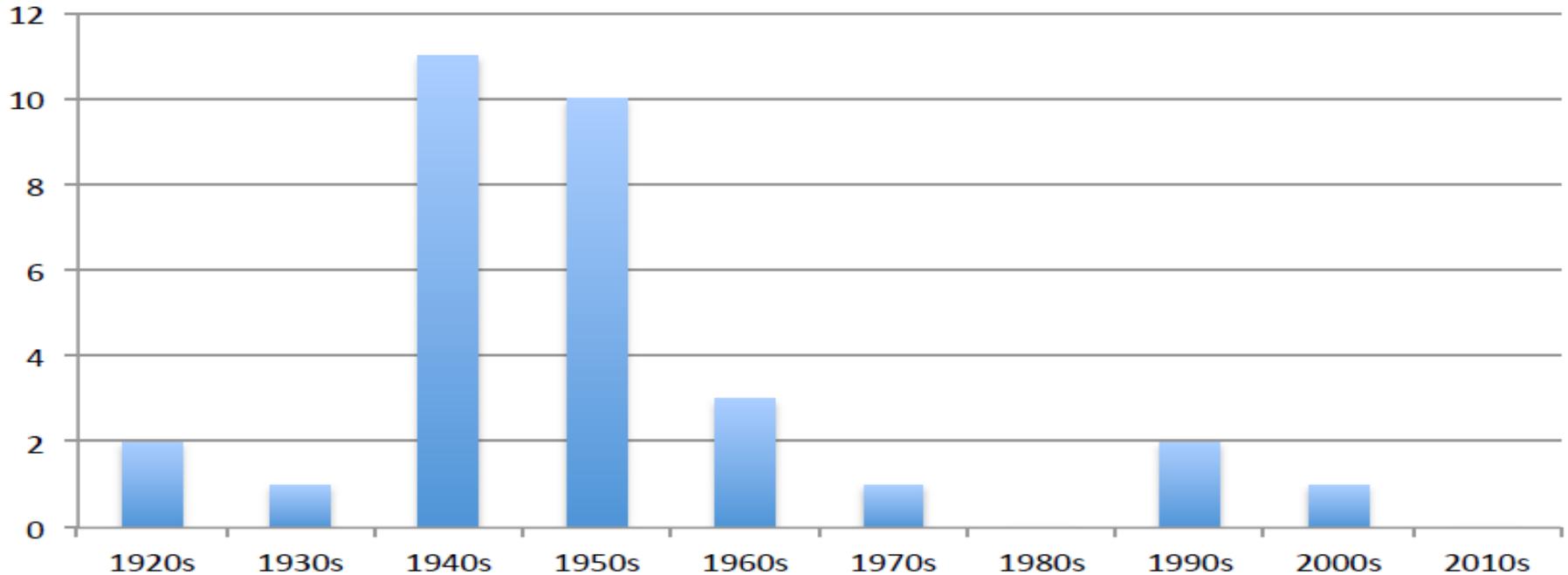


Source: *Social Currency Impact Study, 2013: What It Takes to Create Lasting Impact*, New York: Vivaldi Partners Group, 2013.



Social Currency

Airmen on cover of Time Magazine



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Social Currency



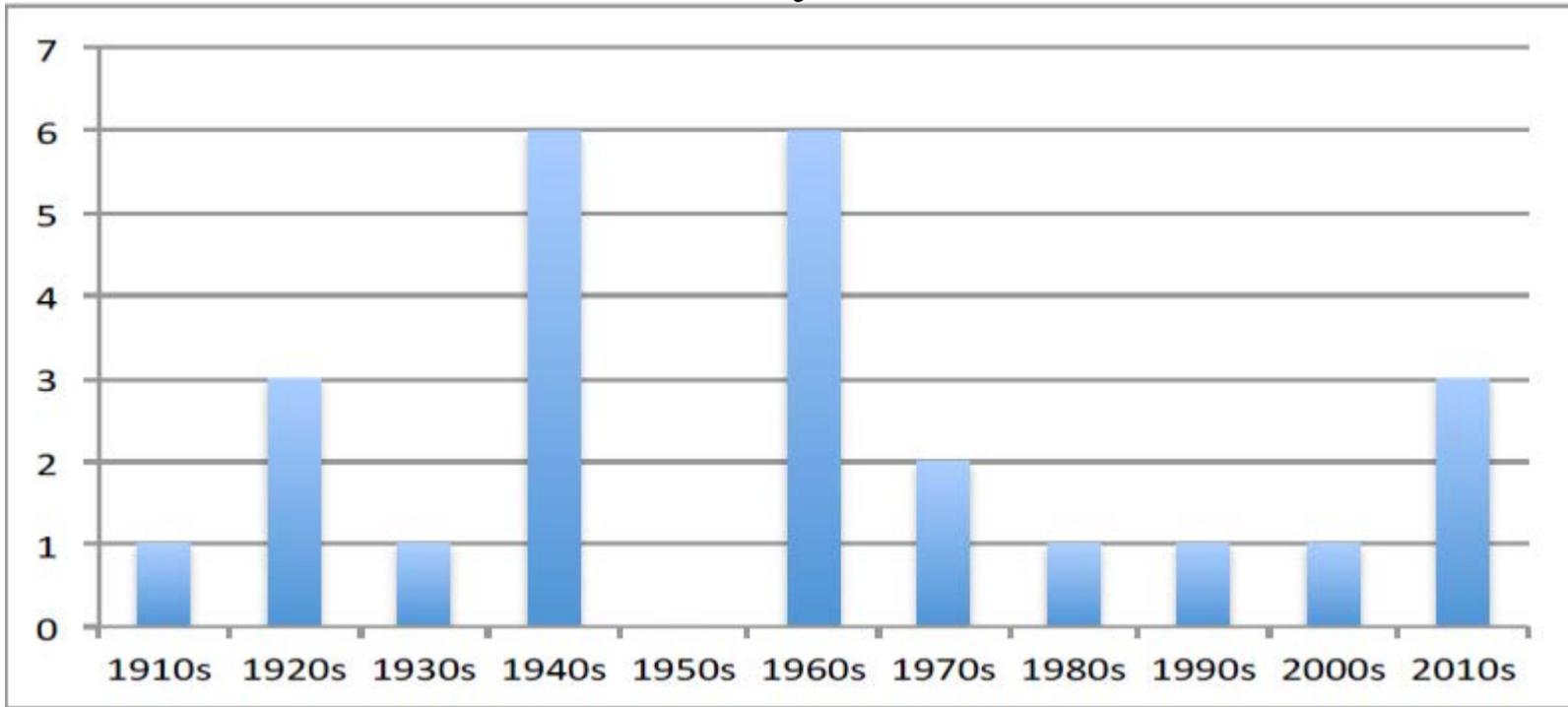
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Social Currency

Books written by Senior Airmen



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