

One Idea To Rule Them All
In An Age of Deception
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Dedication

To Alex, Chris
Sophia and Byrce
For
Freedom

Introduction

What if there are identifiable ways that your brain takes shortcuts to fixed beliefs and what if those shortcuts we're harnessed and utilized to influence you in a way you would never ever recognize? Historically it was called manufacturing of consent, crystallizing public opinion, public relations, and plain old 'propaganda'. But let's just call it; 'idea bullying' and it really does exist. You probably learned nothing about it in school, or in an episode of "60 Minutes." Your friends never talk about. And you won't find anything in Wikipedia.

'Idea bullying' is one group's ability to shout down the rest, in the marketplace of ideas. With a large enough megaphone, no other ideas can compete. Democracy shuts down and grinds to a halt. Only orthodoxy remains; one idea to rule them all.

The 'idea bullying' megaphone was created in the 20th century. Its' power is now vast, yet hidden. The megaphone is disguised as your trusted advisors (authority), your counselors (organizations and non-profits), your imagination (media), your education and even your experiences (staged events). Because of the megaphones potential to surround you and work through apparently disconnected sources without your recognition, you come in time to receive the megaphone's ideas as your very own.

You will learn how the news came to be swallowed up and encompassed by the megaphone when idea creation and story narrative displaced an object search for the truth. As I sit here writing, the brouhaha over "fake news" rages on, "What is it?" and "Who exactly is promoting it?" are topics of concern. I hope to answer those questions without being expressly political. Both sides of the political aisle rabidly point fingers at the other, two expressly hardened sides shouting each other down with a mystified, disgusted, partially apathetic group in the center throwing up their hands in frustration; certain that there is no way to know the real truth in this day and age. This too is a end product of the megaphone which killed debate long ago.

So let's get started on this Idea archeology dig and see what we find. The endgame is to foster critical thinking and for you to closely examine each aspect of the 'idea bullying' megaphone so that you can learn how to detect its boorish overreaching shout, veiled in its many disguises, as it shovels its "one idea to rule them all," down the throats of the public.

Lesson One

Selling A War?

Quick, name the first propaganda experts in the fledgling era of mass media? The Russians? The Germans? If you answered Americans, you'd be correct. But wait, that can't be right. Isn't propaganda telling people lies and falsehoods? In America, our leaders are telling the truth so doesn't that disqualify use of the term propaganda with reference to America?

George Creel, head of the propaganda effort created in World War I, boasted that the committee's efforts were a vast enterprise in salesmanship, the world's greatest adventure in advertising." [7]

If "selling a war", sounds like a dubious proposition, you are probably in the majority. Shouldn't leaders either have good reasons for entering a war or not, why the need to "sell" and whose being "sold"?

As Creel famously put it, "Could we be sure that a hundred million—the fathers, the mothers, the children of America, alien born and native alike—understood well enough so that they would support one loan after another, would bear the burdens of taxation and send wave after wave of America's young manhood to die in Flanders fields?" (HWAA, p. 99)

Indeed, American's were sold the nebulous proposition that their sacrifices were necessary to "Make the world safe for democracy", whatever on earth that means.

George Creel and The Committee on Public Information

Prior to the war Creel, was a progressive journalist heavily involved in Woodrow Wilson's reelection campaign. He was named to head the Committee on Public Information (CPI) April 14, 1917, only six short days after the United States formally declared war. Any history buff will recall that Woodrow Wilson was reelected for a second term running on the platform slogan of "He kept us out of war".

Upon the urging of Walter Lippmann, an expansive bureau had been envisioned to sell the war effort. The publicity bureau was created by executive order and

sought to be a clearinghouse for information on government activities that would mobilize the propagandistic skill of artists, intellectuals, journalists, and other media professionals from around the country.

Arthur Bullard, a former student of Woodrow Wilson, was the first to advocate the bureau. He publically advocated the idea in, *Mobilizing America*, a newly published book, which he sent to Wilson early in 1917. Bullard's rationale for such a massive undertaking was the volatility of the middle classes and the potential for revolt by the common man who thought that this was a "businessmen's' war".

Britain was having trouble mobilizing the lower classes to fight and he envisioned a similar problem in the states unless action was taken to organize propaganda campaigns to make the struggle comprehensible... and popular. Apparently, the "little people" were not towing the line in rabid, enthusiastic support for the war.

The Poem "Red Feast" penned by Ralph Chaplin, a leader of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was a challenge that struck a chord among the lower classes. Chaplin taunted those who would go and fight by calling them fools for sacrificing their lives to the "Lords of War", rich capitalists who would profit handsomely from the gruesome purge.

Red Feast

Tear up the earth with strife
And give unto a war that is not yours;
Serve unto death the men you served in life
So that their wide dominions may not yield.
Stand by the flag-the lie that still allures;
Lay down your lives for land you do not own,
And spill each other's guts upon the field;
Your gory tithe of mangled flesh and bone.
But whether in the fray to fall or kill
You must not pause to question why nor where.
You see the tiny crosses on that hill?
It took all those to make a millionaire. [1] p. 102

Walter Lippmann, a man who we will examine in more detail later, was instrumental in laying out the specifics of the plan for the bureau at the request of the president. These plans were delivered to him April 12th two days before Creel was named and the executive order signed.

His ground plan included rallying “a wide range of communication specialists, including people working in the motion picture industry to support the war effort. He also advocated “intelligence functions for the bureau that would monitor foreign press and track down rumors and lies that would undermine American morale.”

(PR p. 108 [2].

Propaganda Posters Films And More

Creel built a broad sweeping propaganda apparatus with the help of advertising agencies "that, in **scope and conception, transcended anything that had previously existed**"... To achieve the ideological mobilization of an entire nation and to sell America's vision of the war globally, an extensive fabric of persuasion would have to be knit." [4]

How could the national emergency be met without national unity?" Creel inquired rhetorically. "The printed word, the spoken word, motion pictures, the telegraph, the wireless, poster, signboards, and every possible media should be used to drive home the justice of America's cause. pg. 5 HWAA

The goal of the CPI was to impregnate the entire social fabric with the message of the war.

The extensive propaganda apparatus, euphemistically titled, “The House of Truth”, by Creel included the following.

Division of News

- Press Releases channeled through the mail and telegraph wires 24 hours/day
- Syndicated human interest feature pieces
- Publication of its own "Official Bulletin" targeting public officials, other newspapers and any agency that distributed information

Foreign News Division News distributed internationally to offices in over 30 countries.

Advertising Division Hundreds of advertisements and billboards were created and thousands of dollars of free advertising space was solicited from newspapers for CPI use.

Division of Pictorial Publicity Volunteer artists, painters, sculptors, designers, illustrators and cartoonists were recruited for the cause.

Division of Films A “scenario” department, which drafted story outlines, were given to film producers for feature film production and distribution. The end products were *Pershing’s Crusaders*, *America’s Answer*, and *Under Four Flags*.

Academics Well known and respected academics were recruited to write “authoritative” pamphlets to justify the war effort.

Division of Speaking

- **Four Minute Men** The support of local leaders, businessmen or professional men were enlisted, to give seemingly extemporaneous speeches in local communities with whom they had influence. They were given detailed guidelines and sample speeches that included specific information and ideas to be conveyed. A typical speech might be given at the picture show in between the changing of the movie reels. (See below for sample)
- **Junior Four-Minute men** Enlisted the support of the best and brightest school age youth by holding speaking competitions for elementary and secondary schools.
- **Speaking Circuit** The contacts of 10,000 speakers and 300 “super” speakers who were both native and foreign born notables were on file for large and small engagements.

National School Service Bulletin Teachers were provided with topics and “talking points” for regular classroom discussion.

Policing Function Four Minute men were encouraged to identify, interrogate and even report people in their communities who expressed antiwar sentiment.

- **Espionage Act (1917)** Upheld censorship of ideas considered deleterious to the war effort
- **Sedition Act (1918)** Made any criticism of the Wilson’s administration illegal.

The propaganda apparatus that Creel had created had everyone pulling in the same direction and for those who would not, there was always censorship of dissenting ideas. The numbers of people advocating for peace reached their peak prior to the government crackdown in 1917-18.

Sample of Government Talking Points

The following passage is a sample of a Four Minute man speech, prepared by Washington and given in a local cinema.

While we sit here tonight, enjoying a picture show, are you aware that thousands and thousands of people in Europe--People not unlike ourselves--are languishing in slavery under Prussian masters? If we are not vigilant, their fate could be ours.

Now, then, do you folks here in Portland want to take the slightest chance of meeting Prussianism here in America? If not, then you'll have to participate in summoning all the resources of this country for the giant struggle. In addition to buying Thrift Stamps, and War-Savings Stamps to support our boys overseas, we must also hold fast the lines here at home. To do this, we must remain alert. We must listen carefully to the questions that our neighbors are asking, and we must ask ourselves whether these questions could be subverting the security of our young men in uniform. You have heard the questions:

Is this a Capitalists' war?

Was America deliberately pushed into the war by our captains of industry, for money-making purposes?

Are the rich coining blood into gold while the poor are taking on the greater burden?

Take heed. These questions are not innocent. They cannot be ignored. These are questions constantly whispered by German sympathizers, openly asked by many others who simply do not understand. Our response to these questions is plain.

Our democratic system of income tax insures that the rates paid by those who are most well-off are greater than those rates paid by Americans who are less well--off. Tell those who ask such questions, that all Americans are sacrificing to defeat Prussianism, to make the world safe for democracy.

When you hear such questions, take heed. Do not wait until you catch someone putting a bomb under a factory. Report the man who spreads pessimistic stories, or who asks misleading questions, or who belittles our efforts to win the war. Send the names of such persons--even if they are in uniform--to the Department of Justice in Washington. Give all the details you can, with names of witnesses if possible.

Show the Hun that we can beat him at his own game. For those of you who are concerned for your own, or your family's safety, I can assure you that the fact that you made a report will never become public. Make the world safe for democracy! Hold fast the lines at home! p. 102 spin

Imagine What They Can Do Now?

If you are more than a little bit surprised at the magnitude of effort, organization and rhetoric used to sell the First World War you are not alone. WWI stands as the most comprehensive and broad based propaganda campaign that the world had known to that point.

The committee on Public Information was disbanded soon after the end of the war but the knowledge and pursuit of mass persuasion techniques gleaned during this era would be harnessed by political and corporate leaders forever going forward and would profoundly change the landscape of civic life in the republic.

Public attitudes could now be manufactured with almost as much precision as physical items. There was no more need for reason and discourse, slow and tedious methods of persuasion.

Discussion Questions:

1. Surprised at the magnitude of effort, organization and rhetoric used to sell WWI? Was it necessary?
2. Is "selling" a war is morally justified?
3. Does the slogan "Make the world safe for democracy" have any meaning?
4. If public attitudes can be shaped and molded, is there any need for reason and discourse?
5. What effect does having that kind of coordinated power/money have on the possibility of success for dissenting opinions?
6. After witnessing the incredible power that coordinated campaigns could have on public attitudes, is it likely that men of power would summon them only once to support World War I and cease to use them again?

7. Imagine what they can do now?

Additional Reading

The following is a quote from Creel's, *How We Advertised America*, in which he boasts about the incredible success of pamphlets written by academics and distributed in various ways.

Many a good and misinformed citizen, who had an unformed but vivid impression that the "Creel Committee" was some iniquity of the devil, took with his breakfast a daily diet of our material from the same journal that had given him this impression, met us again at lunch when his children came home with what the teacher had given them from material we prepared, heard us again through our Four Minute Men organization when he went to the "movies," where our films might be part of the program, and rose to local prominence by the speeches he drew from the pamphlets of that other useful organization, the Committee on Public Information. Like the truant boy who ran away from the schoolmaster, Hugh Toil, he found us recognized and unrecognized, at every turn of the road.

1. Why would people have thought the "Creel Committee" was some iniquity of the devil?
2. What did Creel mean when he bragged that in the very same journal that gave a certain man an impression that the Creel Committee was an iniquity of the devil, he was also being feed government war propaganda?
3. What are the implications of this idea?

Additional Reading

Here is different passage from Creel's *How We Advertised America*, where he rationalizes the need to promote the war message and rehab America's image to an expansive foreign audience.

The volume of information that went out from our shores was small, and what was worse; it was concerned only with the violent and unusual in our national life. It was news of strikes and lynchings, riots, murder cases, graft prosecutions, sensational divorces, the bizarre extravagance of "sudden" millionaires." Naturally enough, we were looked upon as a race of dollar-mad materialists, a land of cruel monopolists, our real rulers the corporations and our democracy a "fake".

Looking for some way to remedy this evil situation, we saw the

government wireless lying comparatively idle, and through the close and generous cooperation of the navy we worked out a news machinery that soon began to pour a steady stream of American information into international channels of communication.

Opening an office in every capital of the world outside the Central Powers, a daily service went out from Tuckerton to the Eiffel Tower for use in France and then for relay to our representatives in Berne, Rome, Madrid, and Lisbon. From Tuckerton the service flashed to England, and from England there was relay to Holland, the Scandinavian countries, and Russia. We went into Mexico by cable and land wires; from Darien we sent a service in Spanish to Central and South-American countries for distribution by our representatives; the Orient was served by telegraph from New York to San Diego, and by wireless leaps to Cavite and Shanghai. From Shanghai the news went to Tokyo and Peking, and from Peking on to Vladivostok for Siberia. Australia, India, Egypt, and the Balkans were also reached, completing the world chain.

1. According to Creel, American democracy was considered “fake” by people overseas and “corporations the real rulers.” What do you know about history that might lend support for or against this criticism?

Endnotes

[1-6] Ewen, Stuart. *PR!: A Social History of Spin*. New York: Basic, 1996. Print.

[7] Creel, George. *How We Advertised America; the First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information That Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920. Print

Lesson 2

Manufacturing Ideas

Never before had the resources of a country been appropriated so thoroughly to instill a singular message through so many diverse mediums for such a length of time. Opposing opinion was stifled through the sedition and espionage acts as well as through citizen's "snitches" reporting on other neighbors. All in all the campaign was a spectacular success in mobilizing a nation toward the goal of full and unwavering support for a war that many felt was no business of theirs.

Following the war, an idea took shape, "If public attitudes could be so easily shaped and molded, even in the face of significant resistance and in light of the enormous sacrifices on the line for the populace, was there anything that could not be "sold" in like manner?

What further need was there for appeals to reason and debate to influence society?

The success of World War I showcased to many astute observers the power of propaganda in the age of mass media. Propaganda had, of course, always existed. What was new was the incredible reach of the "new" media tools that could be broadcast and disseminated with surgical precision well beyond one nation even to the far reaches of the world.

The tantalizing thought that the leaders of society could actually manufacture ideas and inject them into the population in such a manner as to win wide reaching assent without the slow and tedious need for reason and discourse was proven correct. This explosive idea's time had come, never mind that it flew in the face of every democratic ideal envisioned and held dear by the founders of the country.

Gustave Le Bon, a Frenchman who wrote, *The Crowd: A Study Of The Popular Mind*, first wrote about this seedling of an idea, which had now come to full term, in 1896. According to Stuart Ewan, a Hunter College Professor, Le Bon's book was translated into nineteen languages within a year, and soon gained a wide readership among Western elites.

Le Bon declared the coming age, the "Era of Crowds" (p. X) and was one of the first men to talk about mass psychology, characteristics of the crowd and what techniques were effective in swaying the opinions of multitudes of people.

At that time it was popular to discuss the threats to order that the crowd of unwashed masses presented to the ruling elite. They were "very uneasy with regard to the threatening aspirations of the masses and the destructions and upheavals foreboded thereby," wrote Le Bon. (p. 48)

While all our ancient beliefs are tottering and disappearing, while the old pillars of society are giving way one by one, the power of the crowd is the only force that nothing menaces, and of which the prestige is continually on the increase." (p. x)

Le Bon opined that "Crowds are like the sphinx of ancient fable: it is necessary to arrive at a solution of the problems offered by their psychology or to resign ourselves to being devoured by them. " (p. 61)

In the spirit of that attitude, Le Bon offered up ways that the crowd could be "managed".

Images Words and Formulas

The power of words is bound up with the images they evoke and is quite independent of their real significance. Words whose sense is the most ill defined are sometimes those that possess the most influence. Such for example, are the terms democracy, socialism, equality, liberty, etc., whose meaning is so vague that bulky volumes do not suffice to precisely fix it. Yet it is certain that a truly magical power is attached to the short syllable, as if they contained the solutions of all problems. (p.61)

Ideas Simplified

Ideas, being only accessible to crowds after having assumed a very simple shape, must often undergo the most thoroughgoing transformation to become popular. It is especially when we are dealing with somewhat lofty philosophic or scientific ideas that we see how far-reaching are the modifications they require in order to lower them to the level of the intelligence of crowds. These modifications are dependent on the nature of the crowds, or of the race to which the crowds belong, but their tendency is always belittling and in the direction of simplification. (p. 31)

Illusions

Who ever can supply them with illusions is easily their master; whoever attempts to destroy their illusions is always their victim." (p.67)

Experience

Experience constitutes almost the only effective process by which a truth may be solidly established in the mind of the masses, and illusion grown

too dangerous be destroyed. To this end, however, it is necessary that the experience should take place on a very large scale, and be very frequently repeated. The experiences undergone by one generation are useless, as a rule for the generation that follows, which is the reason why historical facts, cited with a view to demonstration, serve no purpose.” (p. 67-68)

Affirmation

Affirmation pure and simple, kept free of all reasoning, and all proof, is one of the surest means of making an idea enter the mind of crowds. The more concise the affirmation is, the more destitute of every appearance of proof and demonstration, the more weight it carries. p.77)

Repetition

Affirmation however has no real influence unless it be constantly repeated, and so far as possible in the same terms. The thing affirmed comes by repetition to fix itself in the mind in such a way that it is accepted in the end as a demonstrated truth. (p.77)

Contagion

When an affirmation has been sufficiently repeated and there is unanimity in this repetition...what is called a current of opinion is formed and the powerful mechanism of contagion intervenes. Ideas, sentiments, emotions, and beliefs possess in crowds a contagious power as intense as that of microbes. (p.78)

Imitation

Man, like animals, has a natural tendency to imitation. Imitation is a necessity for him, provided always that the imitation is quite easy. It is this necessity that makes the influence of what is called fashion so powerful. Whether in the matter of opinions, ideas, literary manifestations, or merely of dress, how many persons are bold enough to run counter to the fashion? (p.79)

Prestige

Prestige in reality is a sort of domination exercised on our mind by an individual, a work, or an idea. This domination entirely paralyses our critical faculty, and fills our soul with astonishment and respect. Prestige is the mainspring of all authority. Neither gods, kings, nor women have ever reigned without it.

- **Acquired Prestige** That which results from name, fortune and reputation.
- **Personal Prestige** Something essentially peculiar to the individual it may

coexist with reputation, glory and fortune or be strengthened by them. (p. 81)

Le Bon's ideas were undermining a fundamental idea central to western thought; that you should appeal to a man's reason in order to change his opinion. The notion of man as a seeker of truth or any appeal to truth at all was fundamentally undercut. Ideas are no longer to be rationally explained, argued about, or debated in the era of crowds.

The orators who know how to make an impression upon them always appeal in consequence to their sentiments and never to their reason. The laws of logic have no action on crowds.

*To bring home conviction to crowds it is necessary first of all to thoroughly comprehend the sentiments by which they are animated, to **pretend to share these sentiments**, then to endeavor to modify them by calling up, by means of rudimentary associations, certain eminently suggestive notions, to be capable if need be, of going back to the point of view from which a start was made, and, above all, to divine from instant to instant the sentiments to which one's discourse is giving birth." (p.70)*

According to Le Bon, the subconscious mind of the crowd could be manipulated and the crowds held at bay through scientific means, if one could learn the "tricks" of manipulating opinion.

The overwhelming success of World War I demonstrated to those who held the levers of power that a new era was being born. Men like Edward Bernays and Walter Lippmann took close notice of the powers that were unleashed and quickly put them into practice. Bernays was the father of public relations and Lippmann one of the most prominent newsmen of his time. The next two lessons will be focus on their writings and accomplishments.

Lesson Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think it is possible for democracy to survive in an age of manufactured ideas?
2. Is democracy in America just a slogan at this point?
3. Can you see ways in which the mass media and/or politicians utilize Le Bon's principles of influencing the crowd?

4. How hard is it to go against the general orthodoxy promoted by the media/culture? Do you think this is imitation and contagion at work?
5. Name a way that you have been influenced by prestige perhaps against your best interests.

Additional Reading

This passage is from *Brave New World Revisited* (1958) by Aldous Huxley.

Human beings act in a great variety of irrational ways, but all of them seem to be capable, if given a fair chance, of making a reasonable choice in the light of available evidence. Democratic institutions can be made to work only if all concerned do their best to impart knowledge and to encourage rationality. But today, in the world's most powerful democracy, the politicians and their propagandists prefer to make nonsense of democratic procedures by appealing almost exclusively to the ignorance and irrationality of the electors.

"Both parties," we were told in 1956 by the editor of a leading business journal, "will merchandize their candidates and issues by the same methods that business has developed to sell goods. These include scientific selection of appeals and planned repetition . . . Radio spot announcements and ads will repeat phrases with a planned intensity. Billboards will push slogans of proven power . . . Candidates need, in addition to rich voices and good diction, to be able to look 'sincerely' at the TV camera.

The political merchandisers appeal only to the weaknesses of voters, never to their potential strength. They make no attempt to educate the masses into becoming fit for self-government; they are content merely to manipulate and exploit them. For this purpose all the resources of psychology and the social sciences are mobilized and set to work.

Carefully selected samples of the electorate are given "interviews in depth." These interviews in depth reveal the unconscious fears and wishes most prevalent in a given society at the time of an election. Phrases and images aimed at allaying or, if necessary, enhancing these fears, at satisfying these wishes, at least symbolically, are then chosen by the experts, tried out on readers and audiences, changed or improved in the light of the information thus obtained. After which the political campaign is ready for the mass communicators.

All that is now needed is money and a candidate who can be coached to look "sincere." Under the new dispensation, political principles and plans for specific action have come to lose most of their importance. The personality of the candidate and the way he is projected by the advertising experts are the things that really matter.

In one way, or another, as vigorous he-man or kindly father, the candidate must be glamorous. He must also be an entertainer who never bores his audience. Inured to television and radio, that audience is accustomed to being distracted and does not like to be asked to concentrate or make a prolonged intellectual effort.

All speeches by the entertainer-candidate must therefore be short and snappy. The great issues of the day must be dealt with in five minutes at the most -- and preferably (since the audience will be eager to pass on to something a little livelier than inflation or the H-bomb) in sixty seconds flat.

The nature of oratory is such that there has always been a tendency among politicians and clergymen to over-simplify complex issues. From a pulpit or a platform even the most conscientious of speakers finds it very difficult to tell the whole truth. The methods now being used to merchandise the political candidate as though he were a deodorant positively guarantee the electorate against ever hearing the truth about anything. (p.56)

Questions:

1. Can democracy survive given the following statement, "But today, in the world's most powerful democracy, the politicians and their propagandists prefer to make nonsense of democratic procedures by appealing almost exclusively to the ignorance and irrationality of the electors."
2. Whose best interests are likely being addressed when the "crowd" can be manipulated like this?

Additional Reading

This passage is from *The Abolition of Man* (1943) by C.S. Lewis.

Man's conquest of Nature, if the dreams of some scientific planners are realized, means the rule of a few hundreds of men over billions upon billions of men. There neither is nor can be any simple increase of power on Man's side. Each new power won by man is a power over man as well. Each advance leaves him weaker as well as stronger. In every victory, besides being the general who triumphs, he is also the prisoner who follows the triumphal car.

I am not yet considering whether the total result of such ambivalent victories is a good thing or bad. I am only making clear what Man's conquest of Nature really means and especially that final stage in the conquest, which, perhaps, is not far off.

The final stage is come when Man by eugenics, by pre-natal conditioning and by an education and propaganda based on a perfect applied psychology, has obtained full control over himself. Human nature will be the last part of Nature to surrender to Man.

The battle will then be won. We shall have 'taken the thread of life out of the hand of Clotho' and be henceforth free to make our species whatever we wish it to be. The battle will indeed be won. But who precisely, will have won it?

For the power of Man to make himself what he pleases means, as we have seen the power of some men to make other men what they please. In all ages, no doubt, nurture and instruction have, in some sense, attempted to exercise this power. But the situation to which we must look forward will be novel in two respects.

In the first place, the power will be enormously increased...but we may well thank the beneficent obstinacy of real mothers, real nurses, and (above all) real children for preserving the human race in such sanity, as it still possesses. But the man-molders of the new age will be armed with the powers of an omnipotent states and an irresistible scientific technique: we shall get at last a race of conditioners who really can cut out all posterity in what shape they please.

The second difference is even more important. In older systems both the kind of man the teachers wished to produce and their motives for producing him were prescribed by the "Tao"— a norm to which the teacher themselves were subject and from which they claimed no liberty to depart. They did not cut men to some pattern they had chosen. They handed on what they had received: initiated the young neophyte into the mystery of humanity which over-arched him and them alike. It was but old birds teaching young birds to fly.*

This will be changed. Values are now mere natural phenomena. Judgments of value are to be produced in the pupil as part of the conditioning. Whatever is left of the Tao will be the product, not the motive, of education. The conditioners have been emancipated from all that.

It is one more part of Nature they have conquered. The ultimate springs of

human action are no longer, for them, something given. They have surrendered—like electricity; it is the function of the Conditioners to control, not to obey them.

They know how to produce conscience and decide what kind of conscience they will produce. They themselves are outside, above. For we are assuming the last stage of Man's struggle with Nature. The final victory has been won. Human nature has been conquered— and, of course, has conquered, in whatever sense those words now bear.

Explanation of the "Tao"- *The thing that I have called for convenience the Tao, and which others may call Natural Law or Traditional Morality or the First Principles of Practical Reason or the First Platitudes, is not one amount a series of possible systems of value. It is the sole source of all value judgments. If it is rejected, all value is rejected. If a value is retained, it is retained. The effort to refute it and raise a new system of value in its place is self-contradictory. There never has been, and never will be, a radically new judgment of value in the history of the world. What purport to be new systems or (as they call them now) 'ideologies', all consists of fragments from the Tao itself, arbitrarily wrenched from their context in the whole and then swollen to madness in their isolation, yet still owing to the Tao and to it alone such validity as they possess. (450-452 in TEC)*

Questions:

1. Explain the statement, "Man's conquest of Nature, if the dreams of some scientific planners are realized, means the rule of a few hundreds of men over billions upon billions of men." and relate it to today's lesson.
2. Who are the man-molders of today?
3. Lewis states, "The final stage is come when Man by eugenics, by pre-natal conditioning and by an education and propaganda based on a perfect applied psychology, has obtained full control over himself." How far away from this are we now?

Lesson 3

The Original "Fake News"

Respect for the press as an unbiased news organization innocently seeking the truth is at an all time low.

People on the left think FOX news is peddling "fake news" and people on the right think CNN and MSNBC are trafficking in "fake news". While the term is bandied about like a ping-pong ball, who can make a decision about which side has the truth?

Mention the term "fake news" and most people think of news outlets disseminating false or misleading news. Perhaps those statements are later retracted but in many cases the damage is already done. Erroneous sound bites unleashed into the public domain do damage before a retraction which largely goes unheard.

This is a lamentable state of affairs but "mistakes" of this nature openly engaged in by the press are symptomatic of a terminal end not the beginnings of corruption. The steep fall of the press from their lofty reputation of the past began nearly 100 years ago.

Harkening back to Le Bon, who foretold of experience as the one of the most "effective processes by which a truth may be solidly established in the mind of the masses and illusions grown too dangerous be destroyed; (p.67) men came to realize that experience or events could be created and specifically designed and tailored to be newsworthy.

Coverage by the news was a signal to the masses that an idea or issue was important. It also galvanized 'newsworthy' experiences to broad national audiences; magnifying their influence many times above what could be accomplished by a local presence alone.

Creating or staging events so that they can be defined as 'news' to impress a naïve public is really the original 'fake news'.

Edward Bernays: The Mastermind Behind The Original "Fake News"

Edward Bernays, more than any other person was instrumental in launching

public relations as a profession. As a young man during World War I, Bernays served with the Committee on Public Information, and quickly recognized that “what could be done for a nation at war could be done for organizations and people in a nation at peace.” (Cutlip, (1994), p 168)

One of the first to see the potential of propaganda and harness its power, Bernays recognized that public opinion could now be influenced almost at will. With this knowledge in hand, he began to work side by side with the corporate community, eager to test this new and exciting way to manipulate the public mind.

By 1928, the year he published the book *Propaganda*, Bernays was already in a class by himself and the staged event was Bernays’ trademark.

At the end of the day, the counsel’s intellectual arsenal had one primary purpose: the manufacture of the news. “The public relations counsel must not only supply the news—he must create news.”

This did not happen by dropping off press releases at newspaper or other media offices. It came instead from an educated ability to understand “what news actually is”— what it looks and tastes like—and the capacity to orchestrate occurrences that will attract news coverage and be viewed by the public as current events.

The public relations counsel must lift startling facts from his whole subject and present them as news. He must isolate ideas and develop them into events so that they can be more readily understood and so they can claim attention as News. (CPO, P. 22-23)

Many years later, Bernays, would continue to insist that public relations is the science of “creating circumstances,” mounting events that are calculated to stand out as “newsworthy,” yet, at the same time, which do not appear to be staged. To this day, public relations experts hold to similar but more advanced illusory techniques.

In the following passage, Bernays explains what this event creation strategy would look like for a political leader using his methods.

The political leader must be a creator of circumstances, not only a creature of technical process of stereotyping and rubber-stamping.

Let us suppose that he is campaigning on a low-tariff platform. He may use the modern mechanism of the radio to spread his views, but he will almost certainly use the old psychological method of approach which was old in Andrew Jackson's day, and which business has largely discarded. He will say over the radio: "Vote for me and low tariff, because the high tariff increases the cost of the things you buy." He may, it is true, have the great advantage of being able to speak by radio directly to fifty million listeners. But he is making an old fashioned approach. He is arguing with them. He is assaulting, single-handed, the resistance of inertia.

If he were a propagandist, on the other hand, although he would still use the radio, he would use it as one instrument of a well-planned strategy. Since he is campaigning on the issue of a allow tariff, he not merely would tell people that the high tariff increase the cost of the things they buy, but would create circumstances which would make his contention dramatic and self-evident. He would have groups, whose interests were especially affected by the high cost of living, institute an agitation for lower schedules. He would dramatize the issue; perhaps by having prominent men boycott woolen clothes, and go to important functions in cotton suits, until the wool schedule was reduced. He might get the opinion of social worker as to whether the high cost of wool endangers the health the poor in winter.

In whatever ways he dramatized the issue; the attention of the public would be attracted to the question before he addressed them personally. Then, when he spoke to his millions of listeners on the radio, he would not be seeking to force an argument down the throats of a public thinking of other things and annoyed by another demand on its attention; on the contrary, he would be answering the spontaneous question and expressing the emotional demands of a public already keyed to a certain pitch of interest in the subject. (p. 121-122)

Debate, reasoning and the appeal to truth are passé. Bernays shows how the "new" political leader will orchestrate events behind the scenes that appear to be initiated at the grassroots level. The high level coordination of these "spontaneous" events creates an illusion that significant numbers of people think a certain way on a particular issue.

Only after the national mind has been primed in this manner, does a political leader take a stand to influence the national "discussion"; in reality, no discussion is intended nor desired. The outcome of the issue has already been pre-determined.

Modern Day Example

The following passage about a contrived event that influenced the Persian war, make clear that this technique has been utilized since Bernays time and will no doubt continue to be used by all types of leaders in the future because it is so effective.

A potent specimen of this practice can be found in the months that preceded the U.S. entry into the Persian Gulf War in the winter of 1991.

Some months before, during the fall of 1990, a particularly alarming story began to be circulated by American news agencies. Following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the report affirmed, Iraqi soldiers entered hospitals in Kuwait City and removed hundreds of premature infants from incubators, leaving them to die on the cold hospital floor. Appearing again and again in the American news media, the story attested to the profound cruelty of the invasionary force.

The Source of this story was an anonymous fifteen-year-old Kuwaiti girl, call Nayirah, who had testified to the horrific events before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus on October 10, 1990. According to her story, she was a “hospital volunteer” and a first hand witness to the purported barbarism. To ensure her continued safety, the head of the caucus announced, the girl’s true identity had to be kept secret.

Only much later, after the Persian Gulf War was fading into the historical record, did it turn out the “Nayirah” was, in fact, Nayirah al-Sabah, daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the United States. Her actual whereabouts, at the time of the alleged cruelties, were questionable; she had been witness to no such events.

Beyond the dubiousness of her tale, it also turned out that the meeting of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus itself had been the brainchild of Gary Hymel, a vice -president of Hill and Knowlton, one of the largest public relations firms in the world. Hymel had graciously provided the caucus with all the witnesses that it heard. Hymel and Hill and Knowlton were on the payroll of the Kuwaiti royal family in exile and had been given the assignment of manufacturing public support for U.S. intervention.

-John R. MacArthur, *The Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the Gulf War* (New York, 1992). pp. 58-59.

While this has been a limited and brief introduction to Edward Bernays, his influence on modern society is far reaching and might have already surpassed that of his uncle Sigmund Freud. Bernays summed up the essence of the public

relations expert for Stuart Ewen, a Hunter college professor at the ripe age of 98.

As a member of that intellectual elite who guides the destiny of society, the PR, "professional", Bernays explained, aims his craft at a general public that is essentially, and unreflectively, reactive. Working behind the scenes, out of public view, the public relations expert is "an applied scientist," educated to employ an understanding of "sociology, psychology, social psychology, and economics" to influence and direct public attitudes... A highly educated class of opinion-molding tacticians is continuously at work, analyzing the social terrain and adjusting the mental scenery from which the public mind, with its limited intellect, derives its opinion. (Ewen, PR p.10)

"Adjusting the mental scenery" is a euphemistic way to say they "put one over on the public" who if they knew the truth of the matter would rightly feel that they had been duped or cheated by the deceptive act. The practitioners of this craft cannot help but take a dim view of the subjects upon which they act.

Propaganda masters, born out of the rumble of World War I, masquerading as public relations experts, could now infiltrate the news with deception. The ideal of news, as the quest for truth and unbiased reporting, was started on a slow downward death spiral; until today the institution is almost unrecognizable as an institution of integrity. The current "fake news" crisis, only the tip of the corruption iceberg.

Discussion Questions

1. America has always prided itself on a "Free" Press. Is there still a free press in America?
2. Look up the term "astroturfing". What is it? Is "astroturfing" just another version of a staged event designed to manipulate public opinion?
3. Are you surprised that Gary Hymel, a public relations expert, provided all the witness that were heard by a U.S. Congressional Committee?
4. Which do you think is more dangerous news outlets themselves distorting the news story or outside organizations creating and manufacturing news?
5. Do you agree or disagree with the authors' contention the ideal of news

started to die more than one hundred years ago?

Additional Reading

The following is a passage about the battle between the Food Industry's PR firms and the blogosphere and the "new" tactic of creating "disinterested" front groups.

The increase of industry-sponsored spin comes at a time when big food and agrochemical companies are waking up to a new consumer. Millions of American—and more every day—are concerned about growing scientific evidence of the impacts of agrochemicals, factory farming and GMOs on the environment and on public health. These concerns have translated into skyrocketing sales of organic, sustainable, local and non-GMO consumer products...

Blockbuster moves such as Food Inc. (2008), which grossed more than \$5 million domestically⁷, books such as The Omnivore's Dilemma (2007), and Fast Food Nation (2001), and public scandals — including numerous meat recalls and food-borne illnesses — have all contributed to increased public awareness and concern about the food system. On social media and in the blogosphere, this dramatic rise in interest in healthier, more sustainable food is reflected in a new wave of bloggers, independent journalists and websites focused on the benefits of organic agriculture and the risks to the public health and the environment inherent in the industrial food system.

All of this has not gone unnoticed by the food industry: As one trade publication explained, referring to the groundbreaking work of UC Berkeley journalism professor and journalist Michael Pollan, the industry has become alarmed about the "Pollan-ization" of the public mind.⁸ In response, it has turned up the volume on its spin machine, spending hundreds of millions of dollars and deploying new tactics to convince Americans that industrial food is safe, healthy, and environmentally sound. Many of these tactics are life from the playbook of the tobacco industry, which used spin to stall regulation.

While food companies have always engaged in marketing, they are increasingly using covert tactics to shape the public's understanding about controversial food issues. The California Strawberry Commission can always be expected to advertise strawberries, but when this industry trade association funds a front group, the Alliance for Food and Farming, to defend the hazardous chemical used to produce those strawberries

and disparage organic farming, it is engaging in a covert public relations tactic.

The Food industry's growing investment in covert spin comes at a time when mainstream media is contracting, meaning there are fewer resources to do the kind of in-depth reporting to uncover this spin. Today PR professional outnumber journalists by a ratio of nearly 5 to1, according to the Pew Research Center.⁹ As Pew wrote in 2015, "many news outlets that once had substantial resources to report on critical issues no longer have those resources and "special interests have filled the void."¹⁰

It is in this media context that the food industry is working to shape the story of food. The following pages describe how industry-funded front groups and trade associations craft deceptive messages and often use covert tactics to move this message into the public consciousness. This multi-million-dollar effort aims to craft a narrative about food that is intended to defuse public concern about the real risks of chemical-intensive industrial agriculture and undermine the public's perceptions of the benefits of organic food and diversified, ecological agriculture systems.

*—The Friends of Earth, Spinning Food: How Food Industry Front Groups and Covert Communications Are Shaping The Story of Food.
Hamerschlag, Lappe, and Malkan. 2015 [PDF online](#)*

Questions:

1. What is a front group? Who forms it and what is its purpose?
2. In this lesson we learned about creating or staging newsworthy events as a way to influence the public. Is it possible to think of front groups as capitalizing on the authority or prestige of an organization?
3. The Food Industry clash resembles "David and Goliath" from a money perspective. Is it possible to win over public opinion in the battle of ideas when one side has millions of dollars to spend?

Endnotes

7 "Food, Inc." IMDb. IMDb.com. Web. 2 May 2015.

8 Agri-Pulse. "Farm & PR Groups Wrestle With National 'Ag Image' Campaign." Grist Magazine. WordPress, 8 Sept. 2010. Web. 18 Apr. 2015. .

9 Williams, Alex. "The Growing Pay Gap between Journalism and Public

Relations.” Pew Research Center. Pew Research Center, 11 Aug. 2014. Web. 2 May 2015. < <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/08/11/the-growing-pay-gapbetween-journalism-and-public-relations/>>.

10 Ibid.

Lesson Four

You're Too Stupid For Democracy

Are you, my friends too dumb, too preoccupied and too prejudice for democracy to work correctly?

During the 20th century the prevailing opinion was "that the media are independent and committed to discovering and reporting the truth, and that they do not merely reflect the world as powerful groups wish it to be perceived.

Leaders of the media claim that their news choices rest on unbiased professional and objective criteria and they have support for this contention in the intellectual community.

If however, the powerful are able to fix the premises of discourse, to decide what the general populace is allowed to see, hear, and think about, and to "manage" public opinion by regular propaganda campaigns, the standard view of how the system works is at serious odds with reality." (MOC, p. X)

As we learned from the first two lessons, the success of World War I was changing attitudes toward democracy and the news. "The propaganda efforts of the CPI reinforced a growing belief that ordinary men and women were incapable of rational thought. For democracy to work effectively, public opinion needed to be guided by what historian Robert Westbrook has characterized as 'enlightened and responsible elites.'" (CPO, p 18)

Ironically Walter Lippmann (1889-1974), the "most influential journalist of the 20th century", the "Father of Modern Journalism", and winner of two Pulitzer prizes did more to propagated these ideas than any other figure in history. He exerted unprecedented influence on American public opinion through his syndicated newspaper column "Today and Tomorrow" for more than 40 years. Popularly understood, he was a journalist of first rank.

To those who knew him or examined his writings his anti-democratic leanings easily emerged. To a friend, he stated, "The size of the electorate, the impossibility of educating it sufficiently, the fierce ignorance of these millions of semi-literate, priest-ridden, parson-ridden people have gotten me to the point where I want to confine the actions of majorities. " (WL spoken to learned hand Steel, p. 217)

Lippmann's propaganda work during World War I, made him realize how easily

public opinion could be manipulated, and how often tempers distorted the news. (Steel, p. 172)

In describing how the French would repeatedly magnify German casualties by constant repetition of certain formulaic phrases without regard to the battlefield realities ('according to prisoners the German losses in the course of the attack have been considerable'... 'it is proved that the losses'... 'the enemy exhausted by his losses has not renewed the attack') Lippmann remarked that **"We have learned to call this propaganda. A group of men, who can prevent access to the event, arrange the news of it to suit their purpose."** (PO, p. 26)

He explained that by putting dead Germans in the focus of the picture, and by omitting to mention the French dead, a very special view of the battle was built up.

He also goes on to say,

Without some form of censorship, propaganda in the strict sense of the word is impossible. In order to conduct propaganda there must be some barrier between the public and the event. Access to the real environment must be limited, before anyone can create a pseudo-environment that he thinks wise or desirable." (PO, p 27)

Creating Pictures of a Pseudo Environment

According to Lippmann, men hold pictures or images of the complex modern world around them, acting as shortcuts to understanding and that function as springboards to action.

The way the world is imagined determines at any particular moment what men will do.... But what is propaganda, if not the effort to alter the picture to which men respond?" (PO, p.19)

The meaning of intricate, perplexing and veiled modern events could be condensed and summed up into simple pictures: Muslims are bad; Russia is always bad; China is getting bad; bombing Syria is good; corrupt banks are good; corrupt debt is good; war is normal; government dependence is good: tolerance is good etc..

Representative Government Will Not Work

In 1922, Lippmann wrote *Public Opinion*, in which he argued that the modern world had become so complex and the issues so distant from the common man, that it was impossible for the masses to have an accurate opinion on most

public issues.

With neither the time, nor the inclination to research the facts, the average citizen was encumbered by local biases and prejudices that made him a poor prospect to render fair and impartial conclusions affecting the future of the nation.

Lippmann's conclusion was,

Representative government, either in what is ordinarily called politics, or in industry, cannot be worked successfully, no matter what the basis of election, unless there is an independent, expert organization for making the unseen facts intelligible to those who have to make the decisions.” (PO, p. 22)

Who Organizes The Opinions?

Lippmann believed that a technocracy of sorts should evaluate the options at hand, make decisions and then organize the story for the media.

*Public opinions must be organized **for the press** if they are to be sound, **not by the press** as is the case today.”(PO, p. 22)*

Later he argues “the real sequence should be one where the **disinterested expert** first finds and formulates the facts for the man of action, and later makes what wisdom he can out of comparison between the decision, which he understands and the facts, which he organized.” (PO, p 201)

Questions

1. Who will be responsible for organizing public opinions for the press? Who is this disinterested expert? Lippmann's thesis demands answers.
2. What is the difference between a representative government and democracy? Is this distinction important to debunk Lippmann's thesis.
3. How is it possible that Lippmann's view of democracy and his public image as a great journalist were able to co-exist?

Additional Reading

In Lippmann's biography, Steel writes this,

In Public Opinion, Lippmann went behind such mechanics to scrutinize the centerpiece of democratic theory: the "Omni-competent citizen." That theory assumed that the average citizen, being rational, could make intelligent judgments on public issues if presented with the facts. The job of the press was to present those facts objectively. This is what Lippmann himself had written in Liberty and the News only two years earlier.

Now, however, he had had to abandon that faith. Having learned from his wartime propaganda work how the facts could be distorted and suppressed, he realized that distortion was also embedded in the very workings of the human mind. The image most people have of the world is reflected through the prism of their emotions, habits and prejudices.

One man can look in a Venetian canal and see rainbow, another only garbage. People see what they are looking for and what their education and experience have trained them to see. "We do not first see, and then define, we define first and then see," Lippmann wrote.

Since no man can see everything, each creates for himself a reality that fits his experience, in effect a 'pseudo environment' that help impose order on the otherwise chaotic world. ... This posed a political dilemma, for classic democracy 'never seriously faced the problem which arises because the pictures inside people's heads do not automatically correspond with the world outside.'

They did not correspond for a number of reasons— stereotypes, prejudice, and propaganda. The result was to erode the whole foundation of popular government. It was no longer possible, Lippmann asserted, to believe in the 'original dogma of democracy.'

Questions

1. If Lippmann's thesis is true about the public that "People see what they are looking for and what their education and experience have trained them to see," isn't it also true of the 'disinterested expert' who would be managing the images for the public?

Additional Reading

In 1922, the year *Public Opinion* was published, Lippmann's ideas were considered explosive yet quickly forgotten. A short 6 years later, the opening lines of Bernays' *Propaganda* (1928) was a frank admission that Lippmann was indeed correct. This provocative and titillating statement, is one which most

people find hard to believe even one hundred years after it was written.

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government, which is the true ruling, power of our country.

We are governed, our minds molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. This is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized. Vast numbers of human being must cooperate in this manner if they are to live together as a smoothly functioning society.

Our invisible governors are, in many cases, unaware of the identity of their fellow members in the inner cabinet.

They govern us by their qualities of natural leadership, their ability to supply needed ideas and by their key position in the social structure. Whatever attitude one chooses toward this condition, it remains a fact that in almost every act of our daily lives, whether in the sphere of politics, business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number of persons— a trifling fraction of our hundred and twenty million— who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires, which control the public mind, who harness old social forces and contrive new ways to bind and guide the world.

Questions

1. Is Bernays' view correct today?
2. Has democracy been transformed into an Oligarchy?

Lesson 5

The First Sign of Tyranny?

Surprising as it sounds, the first signs of tyranny are not identified by police states; armed guards throughout the country; violent repressions of the populace; suppressions of free speech; riots; show trials for enemies of the state; or the rights to assemble denied. A change much more subtle and hidden is the key to alerting the population that tyranny has begun. That change may predate more overt signs of tyranny by years. That change is the shift in the relationship between leaders and followers and the subsequent use of words as a tool of control.

Abuse of Language, Abuse of Power

Josef Pieper, a Thomas scholar wrote a small book entitled “*Abuse of Language, Abuse of Power*” (1972) that was translated into English in 1992. Most people in America have been indoctrinated against classical Western thought, in fact against all ideas, in general, that could be considered “old”. Many even lack the logical framework to think and discuss such profound ideas, nonetheless I proceed forward; for understanding this concept is a key to fighting back against the corruption and collapse being witnessed in our country.

Broadly speaking, Pieper states that components parts of human words and language consist of 1) a message about reality/truth composed and directed 2) to another human being.

First, words convey reality. We speak in order to name and identify something that is real, to identify it for someone, of course- and this points to the second aspect in question, the interpersonal character of human speech... We may already here suspect that the word's degeneration and corruption can also be twofold. (Pieper, p.15)

Words Convey Reality

If you are unsure what the phrase “words convey reality’ means, here is an example. In the late 1800’s the rise of the social sciences reflected a growing ideology of Man. He was no longer created in the image of God but rather a creature of evolution. As this ideology took over, new terms were created to discuss the nature of man without reference to God; personality replaced the term character.

This was a tectonic shift. Character related terms laden with moral connotations such as patience, temperance, malice, greed, lascivious (driven by lust), gluttony,

fornication, virtue were abandoned in favor of neutral words to describe man's personality now without reference to God. Patience was replaced by low frustration tolerance; virtue changed to "pro-social" behavior; gluttony has given way to the idea that obesity has genetic pre-determinants instead of being about personal self-control; other words like "greed", "temperance", "lasciviousness" and "malice" are rarely used today.

The first set of words convey a God-centered reality, the second set of words convey a man-centered reality. Both realities cannot be true at the same time. The loss of words to speak about reality results in the diminished force of that reality and displacement by a different reality. Words are truly revolutionary.

Listen to Syme, the philologist who specializes in Newspeak and is tasked with writing a new dictionary in the dystopia by George Orwell (1984)

Do you know that Newspeak is the only language in the world whose vocabulary gets smaller every year?"... "Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thought crime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it." (Orwell, p.52 White)

Interpersonal Nature of Language

Which brings us to the second of Pieper's central ideas about human language, that the words are to be spoken "to someone" to describe and/or understand reality. Together, a dialogue is taking place, based on mutual respect and a mutual search for truth by human beings on equal footing.

Corruption of Language

It is possible then to corrupt language in two different ways.

1) Words themselves are changed or corrupted and thereby cease to be accurate representations of reality.

2) The other person ceases to be a co-equal partner in the quest for truth; instead manipulation is sought thereby corrupting the relationship.

When words and language are not intended to communicate truth because there is an ulterior motive. The person spoken to

...Becomes an object to be manipulated, or possibly dominated, to be

handled and controlled...I concentrate on his weaknesses and on those areas that may appeal to him-all in order to manipulate him, to use him for my purposes. And insofar as words are employed, they cease to communicate anything. Basically what happens here is speech without a partner (since there is no true other); such speech, in contradiction to the nature of language, intends not to communicate but to manipulate. The word is perverted and debased to become a catalyst, a drug, as it were, and is as such administered. Instrument of power may still seem a somewhat strong term for this; still it does not seem so farfetched any longer" (Pieper, p. 22-23)

Sophists: The Great Manipulators of the Language

In Pieper's short essay, he references Plato's disdain and criticism for the sophists of his time who were able to craft perfectly worded and brilliantly formulated speeches which were strikingly written, performed and staged but in their essence were "false; and not only false, but outright bad, inferior, contemptible, shameful, destructive, wretched -- and still marvelously put together." (Pieper, p.19)

And this brings us to the main argument of the lesson, that all speech in which the strict standard of truth or reality has been disregarded stands by its nature to "serve as an instrument in the hands of any ruler to pursue all kinds of power schemes...it creates an atmosphere of epidemic proneness and vulnerability to the reign of the tyrant." (Pieper. p. 31)

Propaganda Early Diagnostic of Tyranny

Human relationships based upon power and/or manipulation alone signal the miserable decay to which human interactions have fallen. Pieper claims that this seed "becomes better known as propaganda." (Pieper, p.31) and is sure to grow into the tree of tyranny.

The abuse of political power is fundamentally connected with the sophistic abuse of the word, indeed, finds in it the fertile soil in which to hide and grow and get ready, so much so that the latent potential of the totalitarian poison can be ascertained, as it were, by observing the symptom of the public abuse of language. (Pieper, p, 33)

The Dignity of Man is Lost With The Dignity of the Word

Words, when converted into a tool of manipulation signal the downfall of Man's dignity and all bets are off as to how the collapse of that relationship will play out.

The degradation, too, of man through man, alarmingly evident in the acts of physical violence committed by all tyrannies (concentration camps, torture), has its beginning, certainly much less alarmingly, at that almost imperceptible moment when the word loses its dignity."

What Is It That Makes The Sophists So Dangerous?

Plato asked himself this question continually over the course of a 50-year career.

The most perfect propaganda achieves just this: that the menace is not apparent but well concealed. Still, it must remain visible; it must remain recognizable. At the same time, those for whom the menace is intended must nevertheless be led and eased in to believing (and this is the true art!) that by acquiescing to the intimidation, they really do the reasonable thing, perhaps even what they would have wanted to do anyway." (Pieper, p.31)

Plato is alluding to the fact that propaganda could be used to control and dominate people outside of their knowledge. In fact, they could be manipulated into a willing acceptance of the tyranny closing around them.

The sophists, he says, 'fabricate a fictitious reality'. A world "taken over by pseudo-realities whose fictitious nature threaten to become indiscernible is truly a depressing thought...For the general public is being reduced to a state where people not only are unable to find out truth but also become unable even to search for truth because they are satisfied with deception and trickery that have determined their convictions, satisfied with a fictitious reality created by design through the abuse of language." (Pieper, p 34)

Writing in 1972, Pieper was concerned, that modern man would become satisfied in the convictions, instilled by deception and trickery, that he has come to call his own. The art of propaganda, though known for centuries, has been honed and crafted for the last one hundred years with tools that were unimaginable in Plato's time. The sophist's reach is now global

This is incidentally what Aldous Huxley termed the final revolution.

The older dictators fell because they could never supply their subjects with enough bread, enough circuses, enough miracles and mysteries. Nor did they possess a really effective system of mind manipulation...

*Under a scientific dictator, education will really work -- with the result that most men and women will grow up to love their servitude and will never dream of revolution. There seems to be no good reason why a thoroughly scientific dictatorship should ever be overthrown. (Huxley, *Revisited*, p.253)*

Questions

1. Explain why the loss of a word from everyday vocabulary can result in, the concept embodied by that word, being forgotten or minimized?
2. Do Plato's sophists sound like modern day propagandists?
3. What do you think is meant by the term "fabricate a fictitious reality" or "pseudo-reality"?
4. If this statement is true, "The most perfect propaganda achieves just this: that the menace is not apparent but well concealed." How is it possible to identify it?
5. What types of instruction would prevent people from loving their servitude as Huxley describes?

Additional Reading

The following is a passage from John Whitehead, an attorney and author who has written, debated and practiced widely in the area of constitutional law and human rights. Whitehead's concern for the persecuted and oppressed led him, in 1982, to establish The Rutherford Institute, a nonprofit civil liberties and human rights organization whose international headquarters are located in Charlottesville, Virginia.

In totalitarian regimes—a.k.a. police states—where conformity and compliance are enforced at the end of a loaded gun, the government dictates what words can and cannot be used. In countries where the police state hides behind a benevolent mask and disguises itself as tolerance, the citizens censor themselves, policing their words and thoughts to conform to the dictates of the mass mind.

Even when the motives behind this rigidly calibrated reorientation of societal language appear well-intentioned—discouraging racism, condemning violence, denouncing discrimination and hatred—inevitably, the end result is the same: intolerance, indoctrination and infantilism.

It's political correctness disguised as tolerance, civility and love, but what it really amounts to is the chilling of free speech and the demonizing of viewpoints that run counter to the cultural elite.

As a society, we've become fearfully polite, careful to avoid offense, and largely unwilling to be labeled intolerant, hateful, closed-minded or any of the other toxic labels that carry a badge of shame today. The result is a nation where no one says what they really think anymore, at least if it runs counter to the prevailing views. Intolerance is the new scarlet letter of our day, a badge to be worn in shame and humiliation, deserving of society's fear, loathing and utter banishment from society.

For those "haters" who dare to voice a different opinion, retribution is swift: they will be shamed, shouted down, silenced, censored, fired, cast out and generally relegated to the dust heap of ignorant, mean-spirited bullies who are guilty of various "word crimes."

We have entered a new age where, as commentator Mark Steyn notes, "we have to tiptoe around on ever thinner eggshells" and "the forces of 'tolerance' are intolerant of anything less than full-blown celebratory approval."

In such a climate of intolerance, there can be no freedom speech; expression or thought...where we stand now is at the juncture of OldSpeak (where words have meanings, and ideas can be dangerous) and Newspeak (where only that which is "safe" and "accepted" by the majority is permitted).

The power elite have made their intentions clear: they will pursue and prosecute any and all words, thoughts and expressions that challenge their authority. This is the final link in the police state chain. <http://rutherford.org>

Questions

1. How is it possible to get citizens to agree to censor themselves in a democracy that promotes the concept of free speech?
2. Do you think this citizen censorship is more effective or less effective than

state sponsored censorship like banning books?

3. If citizens have "created" the censorship described above, why does Whitehead say that, "The power elite have made their intentions clear: they will pursue and prosecute any and all words, thoughts and expressions that challenge their authority?"

Additional Reading

The following passage is by Jon Rappoport, a free-lance investigative reporter for over 30 years. He is the author of three explosive collections, *The Matrix Revealed*, *Exit From The Matrix*, and *Power Outside The Matrix*. He has written articles on politics, health, media, culture and art for LA Weekly, Spin Magazine, Stern, Village Voice, Nexus, CBS Healthwatch, and other newspapers and magazines in the US and Europe.

Illiteracy Leads to Censorship

"...intellectual freedom is a deep-rooted tradition without which our characteristic western culture could only doubtfully exist. From that tradition many of our intellectuals are visibly turning away. They have accepted the principle that a book should be published or suppressed, praised or damned, not on its merits but according to political expediency. And others who do not actually hold this view assent to it from sheer cowardice." (George Orwell, 1953)

When those who control public discourse, in a nation, see that they are losing to upstarts, that their flimsy ideas are being supplanted by much stronger ideas from these newcomers (who are actually traditionalists), the shocked controllers turn to the more direct strategy of censorship.

In terms of substance, and even popularity, the ministers of truth are losing; so they abandon reasoned discourse altogether. They desert this fertile, competitive, and NECESSARY territory. They no longer debate. They ban.

Among their supporters are crowds of illiterates.

There are many people who, because their education was a vaporous thing, have no interest in the written or spoken word.

The reason is obvious: they can't read.

Their natural impulse is to make excuses. "Who needs books?" "People

who write books are showing their privilege."

For these excuse-makers, book burning would mean NOTHING. All that matters is: what slogans should I shout?

For the illiterate, a book is a mystery. How could anyone put all the words together and write one? Somehow, the author must have a secret method of downloading the book from an elite source, a cloud, a machine, a trick in their DNA.

A book, a report, an article, a study, an essay---millions of people in "advanced societies" don't have a clue. When censorship tightens, who cares? It's just words.

IT'S JUST WORDS.

Long ago, when I taught school, I had an experience I wish many people could share. Twenty children in a 10th-grade classroom. No student was reading up to that grade level. Each student was reading at a DIFFERENT (sub-standard) level. Time to teach reading. How could it be done? It couldn't.

Elite societal players welcome illiteracy. They love it. It's one of their cherished goals. Ignorance is good. More than that, illiterate people are easy to convince that repressive censorship isn't a problem. It's just something that "happens."

If you don't have "the right ideas," you should be censored.

IT'S JUST WORDS.

Words are useless "things" like tacks and marbles and crayons and paper clips. Who cares?

"Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed, will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten." (George Orwell, "1984")

At its root, illiteracy becomes a form of reductionism. What can be comprehended, discussed, debated, or reasoned shrinks.

IT'S JUST WORDS.

Illiteracy is more effective than political correctness. Untold numbers of people can't understand the sentences that are floating and flying by them every day. They register this by building up anger. Unfocused anger. They are perfect fodder for know-nothing social and political movements that require violence and repression. After all, they were repressed, weren't they? Weren't they left hanging out in the wind by their education, their schooling? Now is the time for revenge.

Along the way, censorship becomes a very good thing. They were limited in what they learned; therefore, limit everyone else. Why not?

IT'S JUST WORDS.

There is a sub-text percolating in many, many schools: "All right, you students, this is your education. We're going to keep you from learning the language. We're going to hold it back from you. At the same time, we're going to praise you and push you ahead from grade to grade. You'll know something is wrong. But you'll accept what we do to you. It's easier. You'll take a ride through school, and then we'll dump you out into the world. We're making rebels wholesale. Ignorant rebels. Rebels, without the tools for THINKING. You'll have to find a place where thinking isn't important. Good luck. Here's a suggestion. Find a group where all you have to do is yell and throw rocks. Learn what to yell. Demand your right to get EVERYTHING FOR NOTHING. That is all."

Do you want a piece of interesting news? I can offer it, based on my experience of the past 17 years writing online. The declining system of education creates a vacuum. And into that vacuum, writers who do value language step forward, and they do present actual ideas. This is a large vacuum, so it can accommodate many writers.

They are creating new realities.

And readers show up.

Miracle of miracles.

These writers and readers are the "replacement team." They are standing in for the colleges and universities and the sloganeers.

They are not censoring themselves or anyone else.

They are proliferating language, not reducing it.

Here is the secret: the history of humans reveals that language does, in fact, expand. It doesn't lie down and die. It doesn't wait for know-nothings to catch up. It doesn't wait for anyone. Poets and novelists and playwrights and essayists find and invent new branches of word and thought.

Their present is the future. They are making the future every day.

And as far as pure ideas go, no matter how hard some people have tried, Jefferson and Madison and Tom Paine and John Adams are not dead yet. Their shaped principles embedded in sentences live on.

If at some point, the entire population of the planet were illiterate, except for four writers, those four would invent a new ocean that can't be contained---and somehow, readers would show up.

Perhaps you think I'm describing a kind of magic, and maybe I am, but I'm also giving you ironclad fact. It has always been so.

The Internet may have been invented with machine language, but the writers who have appeared on it are multiplying their own language.

They are outdistancing the machine.

They always will.

Questions

1. According to Jon, Why do crowds of illiterates, raised on technology and flimsy education, cheer on the banning of words?
2. Who is the “replacement team” filling the vacuum?
3. Is “functional illiteracy” a way of removing the ability to think altogether?

Lesson 6

Propaganda Goes Underground?

American propaganda; who knew there was such thing? In the last lesson we learned about the power of words to name and clarify reality. Tracking the word 'propaganda' from all the rage to relative obscurity will help illustrate this concept.

Backlash to War Time Propaganda

Following World War I, the explosive power of using coordinated campaigns to influence the attitudes and opinions of an entire nation attracted the attention of devotees and critics alike. In 1935, Harold Lasswell, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, commented that, "The practice of scientific propaganda has permeated the Great Society until scientists and laymen view it today with curiosity and even with alarm." (Lasswell p. i x)

The unique potential that mass media now afforded the propagandist and the growing list of techniques available to successfully bypass reason were celebrated by some and were of grave concern for others.

Despite men like Bernays, attempting to champion the word with his book *Propaganda*, (1928) the general public's antipathy toward the word was too great to overcome.

During the First World War especially the propaganda campaigns were carried on with such zeal and with such disregard of standards of truth and ethics that the strong revulsion, which set in during the next decade, appears to have followed naturally. A feature of the period was the publication of books exposing the practices of wartime propagandists, of which Arthur Ponsonby's 'Falsehood in War Time' and Philip Bibbs' 'Now It Can Be Told' were perhaps the best known. Such books were written in a "never gain" spirit, which was destined not to last." (Weaver, IDOT, p. 303-304)

Lasswell, expresses tellingly the feeling of betrayal felt by the country following the great war.

A word has appeared, which has come to have an ominous clang in many minds—Propaganda. We live among more people than ever, who are puzzled, uneasy, or vexed at the unknown cunning which seems to have

duped and degraded them. It is often an object of vituperation, and therefore, of interest, discussion and, finally, of study.

These people probe the mysteries of propaganda with that compound of admiration and chagrin with which the victims of a new gambling trick demand to have the thing explained. That credulous utopianism, which fed upon the mighty words, which exploited the hopes of the mass in war, has in many minds given way to cynicism and disenchantment, and with these earnest souls propaganda is a far more serious matter.

Some of those who trusted so much and hated so passionately have put their hands to the killing of man, they have mutilated others and perhaps been mutilated in return, they have encouraged others to draw the sword, and they have derided and besmirched those who refused to rage as they did.

Fooled by propaganda? If so, they writhe in the knowledge that they were blind pawns in the plans which they did not incubate, and which they neither devised, nor comprehended, nor approved. (Lasswell, PT 1927 p. 2-3)

As a result of this backlash, Lasswell, declared that "it was common for modern promoters of attitudes to borrow the prestige of words like education, information, public relations and publicity. " (Lasswell, PPA p.3); in other words the word 'propaganda' went underground.

A significant number of people now intuitively understood the menace implied by Bernays "**If we understand the mechanism and motives of the group mind, is it not possible to control and regiment the masses according to our will without their knowing about it?**" (Bernays prop p.71)

It is just this menace that the term propaganda includes and no other term will suffice. The loss of the word will cause the population to lose track of the danger because there is no word to speak about it.

Words like education, information, public relations, PR, spin and publicity all seem innocent, benign and do not convey the inherent danger that true propaganda imply.

Rightly understood, propaganda, post World War I, was a totally new reality or phenomenon which modern man was struggling to articulate and comes to terms with. It included a massive, coordinated, multifaceted campaigns to alter

opinions and attitudes of the public according to the will of the government, corporations or others who understood its' potential.

Backlash toward the true understanding of what propaganda was and how it had been employed in a supposedly democratic country caused practitioners of propaganda to dissociate themselves from the term. So effective was this withdrawal that the term is almost never applied to American propaganda, but only to foreign offenders as a pejorative when the opinion is proclaimed in error.

Despite the term going underground, the use, interest in, and study of propaganda has never abated. The names that encompass the topic are now draped under the cloak of science. "The public relations expert is an applied scientist," educated to employ an understanding of "sociology, psychology, social psychology, and economics" to influence and direct public attitudes. " (Ewen, p. 10)

Another technique to neuter the word of its' powerful meaning of menace and therefore to blunt awareness is to attempt to redefine the word to mean a technique that can either be used for 'good' or 'bad'. While it is true that large-scale campaigns using public opinion techniques can be performed in the public interest; the attempt to change attitudes toward smoking is an example; it can easily be classified under the simple heading of influence. The attempt to influence others for their good in our society has never been censored.

In the two decades following World War I, propaganda awareness was at its' zenith; the public being acutely aware of the dangers. As the true meaning of propaganda has slipped into the forgotten past through redefinition and lack of use, the true reality of this modern leviathan has settled behind a shrouded mist.

As a result, people become extremely susceptible to its manipulation. Without the word we might just have lost the understanding of how imperiled is the current ability to think for ourselves.

Richard Kirsch of the Los Angeles Times summed up Jacques Ellul's thesis in *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*; "Propaganda, whether its ends are demonstrably good or bad, is not only destructive to democracy, it is perhaps the most serious threat to humanity operating in the modern world"

In summary, Richard Weaver's definition encompasses all the necessary ingredients to fully appreciate the term.

Propaganda may be defined as the conscious attempt to create attitudes and induce actions with reference to some predetermined end. The Term is employed to include both the process of propagandizing and the things that are propagated, which are ideas, opinions, and policies. The propagandist always has some end in view; he seeks to attain the end by means that are often devious and sometimes concealed; and this end is not the good of the person or group to whom the propaganda is addressed when all things are taken into consideration. Propaganda, which is emitted by an entire nation as in times of war, must be regarded as selfish in the sense that the nation is judging its own cause.

It is of primary importance to distinguish propaganda from education. These two are confused in the minds of many people because both are concerned with communication. Education imparts information and also seeks to inculcate attitudes. Propaganda frequently contains information, and it is always interested in affecting attitudes. A good part of modern propaganda, furthermore, tries to parade as education. The critical difference appears only when one considers the object of each. The true educator is endeavoring to shape his audience for the audience's own good according to the full set of enlightenment available. In doing so he erects and strives to follow a standard of objective truth. The propagandist, on the contrary, is trying to shape his audience according to the propagandist's interest, whether that be economic, political, social, or personal. For example, if a dietician should try to induce children to drink more milk by presenting facts and by exhortation because milk is needed for their growth, this would be for education. But if a milk company sought to do the same thing for the purpose of getting rid of a surplus, this would have to be regarded as milk company propaganda. Even though its presentation might contain some truthful information, the welfare of the children would in this case be subordinate to the end of selling more milk...

All propaganda must be regarded as cynical in some degree toward those to whom it is addressed, since it has in mind something less than their welfare. (IDOT, Weaver p.300-301)

Questions

1. Why do you think it was necessary for "modern promoters of attitudes to borrow the prestige of words like education, information, public relations and publicity?"

2. What does it mean to “borrow prestige”?
3. The central point in identifying propaganda is to answer the question, “Whose interests does the message serve?” Do you agree or disagree?
4. How is this chapter an object lesson for the last chapter?

Additional Reading

From Orwell’s book *1984*, Syme waxes on about his exciting job of eliminating words for the dictionary of Newspeak.

You think, I dare say, that our chief job is inventing new words, but not a bit of it. We’re destroying words— scores of them, hundreds of them, every day. We’re cutting the language down to the bone...Don’t you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought?...Every year fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller. ..."By 2050—earlier, probably— all real knowledge of Oldspeak will have disappeared. The whole literature of the past will have been destroyed. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron— They’ll exist only in Newspeak version, not merely changed into something different, but actually changed into something contradictory of what they used to be. Even the literature of the party will change. How could you have a slogan like ‘freedom is slavery’ when the concept of freedom has been abolished? The whole climate of thought will be different. In fact there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking—not needed to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness.” (Orwell, 1984 p. 51-52)

Questions

1. Discuss how the loss of the word 'propaganda' has resulted in a loss in consciousness regarding the danger of propaganda for people living in the United States.

Additional Reading

The American Historical Association produced the G.I. Roundtable Series to help win World War II. Or so they were led to believe. In fact the U.S. Army sought the pamphlets as part of a larger effort to prepare for the transition to the postwar world, and represent a novel effort at social control. "What Is Propaganda?" by Ralph D. Casey, was published in July 1944.

While most persons who give the matter a thought make distinctions between an objectively written news report and propaganda, they

encounter difficulty when they try to define propaganda. It is one of the most troublesome words in the English language. To define it clearly and precisely, so that whenever it is used it will mean the same thing to everybody, is like trying to get your hands on an eel. You think you've got it-then it slips away.

When you say "policeman" or "house," everybody has a pretty clear idea of what you mean. There's nothing vague about these terms. But when you try to mark off the exact boundaries of "propaganda," you wrinkle the brows even of the men who spend their lives studying the origin and history of words. And the problem of defining propaganda is all the more tangled because in the first World War it acquired certain popular meanings that stick to it like burrs to a cocker spaniel.

To some speakers and writers, propaganda is an instrument of the devil. They look on the propagandist as a person who is deliberately trying to hoodwink us, who uses half-truths, who lies, who suppresses, conceals, and distorts the facts. According to this idea of the word, the propagandist plays us for suckers.

Others think especially of techniques, of slogans, catchwords, and other devices, when they talk about propaganda. Still others define propaganda as a narrowly selfish attempt to get people to accept ideas and beliefs, always in the interest of a particular person or group and with little or no advantage to the public. According to this view, propaganda is promotion that seeks "bad" ends, whereas similar effort on behalf of the public and for "good" ends isn't propaganda, but is something else. Under this definition, for example, the writings of the patriotic Sam Adams on behalf of the American Revolution could not be regarded by American historians as propaganda.

The difficulty with such a view is that welfare groups and governments themselves secure benefits for a people through propaganda. Moreover, national propaganda in the throes of a war is aimed to bolster the security of the non-aggressor state and to assure the eventual well-being and safety of its citizens. No one would deny that this kind of propaganda, intelligently administered, benefits every man, woman, and child in the land.

The experts have plenty of trouble in agreeing upon a satisfactory definition of propaganda, but they are agreed that the term can't be limited to the type of propaganda that seeks to achieve bad ends or to the form that makes use of deceitful methods.

Can you distinguish propaganda from other forms of expression or

promotion by saying that it is something that depends upon “concealment”—on hiding either the goals men are working for, or the means that they use, or the identity of the people behind the propaganda? A few authorities say “yes” to this question, but most of them say “no.” Most analysts of propaganda do not limit the term propaganda to “veiled” promotion. Nor do they think it accurate to describe propaganda as an activity that resorts only to half-truths and downright falsehood. They say simply that some propaganda hinges on deceit and some does not. As a matter of fact, they recognize that a shrewd propagandist prefers to deal above the table, knowing just what the reaction of a propaganda-conscious public will be to dishonest trickery when it is exposed.

Some people limit the term propaganda to efforts that make use of emotional appeals, but others will differ about this idea. In a campaign to capture public opinion, a propagandist may rely heavily upon emotional symbols—but he may appeal to logical thinking as well.

Some people assert that propaganda is present only in controversial situations. One writer, for example, says, “Propaganda is an instrument of conflict or controversy, deliberately used.” And another says, “If the report is deliberately circulated to influence attitudes on controversial issues it is propaganda.” When existing loyalties, customs, and institutions are attacked, there is controversy. In a democratic system, propaganda replaces violence and censorship as a method of bringing about change. All this may be granted, and yet the question can be raised whether the word “propaganda” should be limited to efforts to influence attitudes on controversial matters only.

Take, for example, the campaign in the United States, conducted under the direction of the Surgeon General, for the control, cure, and eradication of venereal disease. This systematically organized campaign tried to gain its ends by direct appeals to the people. Those who handled it considered carefully just what agencies to use in reaching the people—whether newspapers or magazines, the radio or the public platform, or a combination of these. They used both emotional and logical appeals. They planned the campaign to persuade diseased persons to decide to visit a physician to get cured. Their campaign used the techniques of propaganda, persuaded persons to a course of conduct, and promised a reward—good health. It used, as has been said, both emotional and logical appeals.

Unless “controversy” is interpreted to include minor debates and the making of choices in matters that command general social approval, a definition of “propaganda” that insists on stressing controversy hampers

one's approach to an understanding of the subject.

All this will indicate that there is a lot of difficulty in working out any formal definition of propaganda. Most students of the subject agree that propaganda has to do with any ideas and beliefs that are intentionally propagated. They agree also that it attempts to reach a goal by making use of words and word substitutes (pictures, drawings, graphs, exhibits, parades, songs, and similar devices). Moreover, although it is used in controversial situations, most experts agree that it is also used to promote noncontroversial, or generally acceptable, ideas. Types of propaganda range from the selfish, deceitful, and subversive to the honest and aboveboard promotional effort. It can be concealed or open, emotional or containing appeals to reason, or a combination of emotional and logical appeals.

While propaganda influences the behavior of individuals, it is important to bear in mind that it is only one of the means by which man's behavior is influenced. There are other forms of inducement employed in winning assent or compliance. In limited or wholesale degree, depending upon the political organization of a given country, men have used force or violence to control people. They have resorted to boycott, bribery, passive resistance, and other techniques. Bribes, bullets, and bread have been called symbols of some of the actions that men have taken to force people into particular patterns of behavior.

Whatever propaganda may be, it differs from such techniques because it resorts to suggestion and persuasion.

<https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/gi-roundtable-series/pamphlets/what-is-propaganda/defining-propaganda-i>

Questions

1. The US Army formulated the pamphlet you just read to prepare troops for post-war living. Does this sound like “propaganda” about “propaganda?”
2. Do you think the following is a better definition of propaganda?

Some people assert that propaganda is present only in controversial situations. One writer, for example, says, “Propaganda is an instrument of conflict or controversy, deliberately used.” And another says, “If the report is deliberately circulated to influence attitudes on controversial issues it is propaganda.”

3. The final summary compares propaganda with violent attempts to change the public's opinion. What do you think is the effect of this comparison?

Lesson 7

Propaganda A Rich Man's Sport

One of Edward Bernays' trademarks, as we have seen, is the creation of circumstances to influence public attitudes. The following passage is one of Bernays' examples of an attempt to change the public attitudes such that the public willingly seeks out a product, instead of needing to be 'sold'.

If, for instance, I want to sell pianos, it is not sufficient to blanket the country with a direct appeal, such as;

"YOU buy a Mozart Piano now. It is cheap. The best artists use it. It will last for years."

The claims may all be true, but they are in direct conflict with the claims of other piano manufacturers, and in indirect competition with the claims of a radio or a motorcar, each competing for the consumer's dollar.

What are the true reasons the purchaser is planning to spend his money on a new car instead of on a new piano? Because he has decided that he wants the commodity called locomotion more than he wants the commodity called music? Not altogether. He buys a car, because it is at the moment the group custom to buy cars.

*The modern propagandist therefore sets to work to create circumstances, which will modify that custom. He appeals perhaps to the home instinct, which is fundamental. He will endeavor to develop public acceptance of the idea of a music room in the home. This he may do, for example, by **organizing an exhibition** of period music rooms designed by well-known decorators who themselves exert an influence on the buying groups. He enhances the effectiveness and prestige of these rooms by putting in them **rare and valuable tapestries**. Then, in order to create dramatic interest in the exhibit, he **stages an event or ceremony**. To this ceremony **key people**, persons known to influence the buying habits of the public, such as a famous violinist, a popular artist, and a society leader, **are invited**. These key people affect other groups, lifting the idea of the music room to a place in the public consciousness with it did not have before. The juxtaposition of these leaders, and the idea which they are dramatizing, are then **projected to the wider public through various publicity channels**. Meanwhile, **influential architects have been persuaded** to make the music room an integral architectural part of their plans with perhaps a specially charming niche in one corner for the piano. Less influential architects will as a matter of course imitate what is done by them whom they consider master of their profession. They in turn will*

implant the idea of the music room in the mind of the general public.

The music room will be accepted because it has been made the thing. And the man or woman who has a music room, or has arranged a corner of the parlor as a musical corner, will naturally think of buying a piano. It will come to him as his own idea.

Under the old salesmanship the manufacturer said to the prospective purchaser, "Please buy a piano." The new salesmanship has reversed the process and caused the prospective purchaser to say to the manufacturer." Please sell me a piano." (Bernays Prop p. 77-78)

Study the terms in bold. How much does it cost to stage an exhibition; obtain rare and valuable tapestries; stage another event—a ceremony with the rich and/or famous; publicize those events; and finally persuade influential architects to modify their designs to favor your pet project? From this one example alone, it is obvious that creating circumstances and influencing leaders is a costly endeavor.

Creel, boasted that the expenditure of the Committee on Public Information only cost the American taxpayers \$6,850,000 dollars. The real cost, after taking into account the actual cost of thousands of volunteers who freely gave their time to the war effort as a matter of patriotism, would be substantially greater. Using an inflationary calculator the cost of the campaign waged for World War I would be \$145,576,672 billion dollars in today's market (2018).

In 1929, Bernays was paid \$25,000 dollars (\$364,021 dollars in inflationary money) by Lucky Strike, to implement the Torches of Freedom Campaign, one of the most renowned publicity stunts in the early 1900's. It successfully influenced women, one half of the population, that smoking was no longer taboo. Cracking that market, George Washington Hill, the owner of Lucky Strike crowed, would "be like opening a new gold mine right in our front yard, " and indeed it was. (See full story below)

The People of the West and Freedom of Speech

One of the foundational ideals of western democracy is freedom of speech. This ideal allows for free circulation of ideas to be sorted through by young and old rich or poor, a veritable marketplace of ideas.

Weaver eloquently explains why the paid promotion of a single voice was felt to be antagonistic to democratic ideals.

But the people of the west, with their tradition of individual freedom, have never admitted the right of a single voice to prevail exclusively...But it is assumed also that man's progress toward truth is evolutionary, and that this progress is facilitated rather than impeded by allowing every responsible group to try to win adherents.

This is the competition of ideas in the market place upon which the theory of philosophical liberalism largely rests. Untruths and partial truths will frequently be offered, but eventually, at the cost of some time and expense, they will be driven from the market by the true article. And a truth acquired in this way is possessed more fully and securely than one, which is adopted without having to meet the test of competition. (Weaver, IDOT p. 307)

Who Will Win The War of Ideas?

If you think of democratic society as a marketplace of ideas, it is important that ideas have an equal playing field to be heard, discussed, accepted or rejected, even bad ideas. If I have an especially large megaphone and no one can hear your ideas. I will win every time.

Acknowledging the reality of this unlevelled playing field, Bernays dryly notes,

Millions of housewives may feel that manufactured foods deleterious to health should be prohibited. But there is little chance that their individual desires will be translated into effective legal form unless their half-expressed demand can be organized, made vocal, and concentrated upon the state legislature or upon the Federal Congress in some mode which will produce the results they desire. Whether they realize it or not, they call upon propaganda to organize and effectuate their demand. (Bernays, Prop, p. 57)

But of course, most housewives or even a collection of housewives don't have the money to purchase a propaganda campaign, with staggering expenses. Who will speak for them? The reality is that those who are able to control the mechanisms of propaganda, the paid promotions, the event creation, the purchase of spokespeople etc., will be the undisputed winners in the war of ideas. All other ideas will be lost to the dustbin of history.

Later, Bernays lays out the naked ideology that underlies his message. Only a

few select individuals with deep pockets can play the game at the top of the pyramid.

The invisible government tends to be concentrated in the hands of the few because of the expense of manipulating the social machinery, which controls the opinions and habits of the masses. To advertise on a scale, which will reach fifty million persons, is expensive. To reach and persuade the group leaders who dictate the public's thoughts and actions is likewise expensive. (Bernays, Prop, p. 63)

This reality is a cold bracing slap in the face to people who say that propaganda can be good or bad. While that may be true, only governments, large organizations and corporations can play the propaganda game utilizing all the potent weapons at their disposal through the media

Of course, the Internet has been revolutionary in giving the “little guy” a voice once again in democracy. Anyone with a computer, a blog or videos can get his message out. But “a voice” is not the same as a coordinated campaign utilizing all aspects of media saturating the public with the “one message” The mammoth resources outpace and attempt to overwhelm the small voice.

If he can't be overwhelmed or is gaining some type of traction in the public mind, the “propaganda machine” can be wound up and turned on individual voices to castigate, demonize and belittle those ideas and the people who hold them. Game over. Or is it?

Discussion Questions

1. We tend to think of the winners in history as those whose ideas competed and won. How might the history of the United States been influenced by unknown forces controlling propaganda and winning an unfair fight?
2. Reread the passage from Spinning Food found in lesson three. The housewives that Bernay's cited had a worthy cause but industrial food has dominated America's food choices for over 50 years. The housewives didn't win did they? How has this impacted the health of society?
3. Is censorship of the Internet a way to silence the small voice?
4. Do you think that the current trend for social media sites to monitor 'fake news' will improve or hinder the flow of ideas in a free society?

Additional Reading

As promised, the famed Torches of Freedom Story

In 1928 George Washington Hill, president of American Tobacco Company was an anxious man. While the company was doing roaring business selling cigarettes to men, women could not be induced to smoke under any circumstances. Tobacco use among men had soared after the First World War, especially since cigarettes were included in the soldier's rations. Not only that, there was no greater symbol of manly pride than rich brown Marlboros puffing out exotic scents of smoke. On the other hand, women who smoked were considered such social outcasts that prison sentences were handed out to punish this kind of immoral behavior.

The First World War of course changed all notions of traditional gender roles. With men away at war, women were forced to move out of the home and into the workplace and they were embracing this role with élan. The 1920's were a time of intense movements demanding equality for women- be it the right to vote or, as it would turn out, the right to smoke.

George Washington Hill was no feminist. But he was an opportunist. "If I can crack that market, it will be like opening new gold mine right in our front yard," he told Edward Bernays, the man hired to convince women how smoking cigarettes would land them a worthwhile victory in the fight for equality. Bernays was being paid \$25,000 to turn around the fortune of Lucky Strike, a ridiculously large sum. In 1929 public relations was a brand new experimental field, which Bernays had virtually invented.

Upon his death in 1995, he was honored as the father of public relations. There were several challenges to getting women to embrace the cigarette as a symbol of their freedom, the foremost being the social stigma attached to it. In the nineteenth century it was thought that only fallen women, 'whores' and 'prostitutes', would smoke. Only sly, devious and 'characterless' women were shown to be smoking on screen. The next was to teach women how to smoke properly. Apparently the few 'respectable' women who did it publicly made a mess of it and Hill was anxious that such clumsy displays would put fashionable women off this pursuit.

The women hired for the project had to be convincing and appealing enough to influence the masses, yet not too good looking or 'model-y' so as to give truth to the vamp stereotypes. Edward Bernays set about designing the Torches of Freedom campaign, a PR stunt the first of its

kind in the world.

On 31st March 1929, at the height of Easter Parade, a young woman named Bertha Hunt stepped out into the crowded fifth avenue and created a scandal by lighting a Lucky Strike cigarette. The incident was highlighted even more because the press had been informed in advance of Hunt's course of actions, and had been provided with appropriate leaflets and pamphlets.

What they did not know was that Hunt was Bernays' secretary and that this was the first in a long line of events that was aimed at getting women to puff. Bernays proclaimed that smoking was a form of liberation for women, their chance to express their new found strength and freedom.

While walking down the street Hunt told the New York Times that she first got the idea for this course of action when a man on the street asked her to extinguish her cigarette as it embarrassed him. "I talked it over with my friends, and we decided it was high time something was done about the situation." The New York Times dated 1st April 1929 ran a story titled, "Group of Girls Puff at Cigarettes as a Gesture of 'Freedom". As women all over the country took to this newfound symbol of their emancipation aggressively, Bernays must have had the last laugh at the ironic date of the story.

Ten young women followed Bertha Hunt that day down Fifth Avenue, brandishing their torches of freedom. The audience's imagination was captured as newspapers enthusiastically reported on this new scandalous trend. Bernays used "sexual liberation as a form of control." The days that followed saw Bernays not only emphasizing the liberation movement for women as far as cigarettes were concerned, but also waxing eloquence on its slimming properties and glamour quotient that ensured women getting hooked to Lucky Strikes. Sales doubled from 1923 to 1929.

Bernays justified his \$25,000 paycheck to Hill and their fruitful association continued for another 8 years that saw a miraculous jump in the sales of cigarettes. While voting rights were yet to be granted to women, Eddie Bernays got them an equally symbolic though hollow torch of freedom in a spectacular fashion.

Years later Bernays would smile confidently at the radical effect the campaign had wrought about in society, "Age old customs, I learned, could be broken down by a dramatic appeal. "While the intentions behind this radical change might certainly be murky, there is no doubt that the Torches of Freedom became a landmark trendsetter in the world of advertising and public relations and is influencing the rules of the game

even today. <https://yourstory.com/2014/08/torches-of-freedom/>

Questions

1. “Torches of Freedom” is a great example of creating circumstances to change public opinion. If you have enough money and a creative strategy, is there any prejudice or stereotype of a culture that can not be broken down?

Lesson 8

This Is How They Do It.

Please...Let's Be Done With The Seven Propaganda Techniques

A current lesson in propaganda, one endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) uses the very same seven propaganda techniques, publicized in 1938 by the Institute of Propaganda Analysis, as the basis to teach students, living in the 21st century about propaganda. The students are asked to learn the techniques and identify them in some text and political advertisements. Here are the seven techniques as laid out by the Institute.

- Name Calling: A device to discredit an opponent without refuting his claim
- Glittering Generalities: A device that identifies a position with "virtue" by use of virtue words Like truth, freedom, democracy, liberty etc.
- Transfer: An appeal, which seeks to carry over the authority, sanction or prestige of something we respect and never to some thing else.
- Testimonial: A device to use the opinion of an expert authority for propaganda purposes
- Plain Folks: An appeal to win confidence by appearing to be like the common people being addressing
- Card Stacking: An appeal that uses under-emphasis or over-emphasis to dodge issues and evade fact
- Band Wagon: An appeal that encourages us to follow the crowd because "Everybody is doing it."

The techniques themselves have been around for millennium, based on the logical fallacies identified during the Greco-Roman era. Below are examples of these fallacies and while useful during debates to identify error, most of today's propaganda is target not at rational faculties but at a pre-rational level; tapping into deep psychological triggers of the mass mind.

[Insert chart1]

Armed, alone with the knowledge of logical fallacies, is like going into a knife fight with a lollypop. 21-century educators think that is sufficient, but you will realize how narrow and inaccurate that simple conception is once you understand the propaganda model.

Recognizing seven simple rhetorical technique is a severely outdated way of conceptualizing what has become a multi-billion dollar industry using highly sophisticated schemes for creating alternative realities; so called narratives that control opinions, attitudes and behaviors of citizens of the United States.

The purpose of the following model is to clarify the present muddled-headed concepts of the term propaganda and to reclaim its use by citizens young and old to see clearly behind the curtain of 21st century influence.

Tyrannical Relationship

As was learned earlier from Joseph Pieper, the abuse of language or propaganda sets up a perverted relationship between the propagandist and the propagandee with a view toward manipulation and control.

In the absence of truth there is no overarching principle with which to guide the relationship, just the self-interest of the propagandist. It is always a one-way relationship for there is no dialogue from the masses back to the propagandist. There are, of course, reactions and attitude changes that the propagandist is ever monitoring like the technician hovering over the workings of a machine to create the perfectly crafted public opinion.

The masses are the target. The dignity of each individual man is subsumed within the whole. Groups of people can be separated out as targets of propaganda but the individual remains on the fringe even within the group and remains non-existent as a true factor of consideration for the propagandist. The dignity of man is always a casualty when propaganda is used.

Power is another aspect of the relationship. As noted in an earlier lesson, propaganda is an extremely expensive sport. The numbers of people, who can financially manipulate the levers of public opinion, are few. Vast government resources were put to work in the First World War to demonstrate efficacy. Early public relations experts honed their craft on the large financial resources of big corporations. In short, lots and lots of money is needed.

[Insert Chart 2]

Tools of the Trade

In the model, five major categories of manipulation and control are identified. During the course of this book you have already encountered many of them

through examples and the additional readings. The model is just a convenient way to remember them.

Media Hijack: Co-opting Media

Radio, TV, Internet, Movies, Art, Music

Captivating the imagination is one of the main objects behind use of most media today. The power of the mind to imagine through pictures and symbols and stories is profound. Le Bon correctly identified crowds or the mass mind as being susceptible to imagination ignited through the arts and entertainment. One could bypass reason and inject powerful ideas. Indeed, "to know the art of impressing the imagination of crowds is to know at the same time the art of governing them." (LeBon, crowds, p. 37)

Just as is the case with respect to persons in whom the reasoning power is absent the figurative imagination of crowds is very powerful, very active and very susceptible of being keenly impressed. ...For this reason theatrical representation, in which the image is shown in its most clearly visible shape, always have enormous influence on crowds.

Bread and spectacular shows constituted for the plebeians of ancient Rome the ideal of happiness, and they asked for nothing more. Throughout the successive ages this ideal has scarcely varied. Nothing has greater effect on the imagination of crowds of every category than theatrical representations. (LeBon, crowds, p. 35)

A good example is the use of motion pictures by the Office of War Information's Bureau of Motion Pictures (BMP) established in collaboration with Hollywood to produce films that advanced American war aims during World War II. Some of the feature films that were used included *Sergeant York* (1941), *Bataan* (1943), *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* (1944), *The Story of G.I. Joe* (1945), and *They Were Expendable* (1945).

According to Elmer Davis, director of the Office of War Information...

"The easiest way to inject a propaganda idea into most people's minds is to let it go through the medium of an entertainment picture when **they do not realize that they are being propagandized.**" [1]

Leaders in the early 1900's considered the subconscious infusion of an idea into mainstream culture through arts and entertainment, an easy and opportune way to influence the masses, 21st century practitioners are doing the same with all

types of media as well.

Authority Hijack: Co-opting Trusted Authority

Most people do not have time to research everything that they need to know to make informed decisions. The first impulse of the public in making up its mind is to follow the example of a trusted leader. This is one of the most firmly established principles of mass psychology. "If you can influence the leaders, either with or without their conscious cooperation you automatically influence the group which they sway. " (Bernay, Prop, p. 73)

A good example of this was the prominent local leaders, enlisted by the Creel Committee in World War I, to become Four-minute men. They were recruited to give impromptu speeches, the topics of which were government orchestrated, but appeared to be extemporaneous heartfelt speeches, in order to influence friends and citizens in their community who respected and admired them, to support the war effort. In this case, the government hijacked local authority and prestige and used it for its own ends, drumming up support for the war

Tobacco companies paying Doctors to be in advertisements that promote smoking during the 1900's is another example of the use of authority to lend credibility and support behind an idea; that smoking doesn't harm you, even Doctors smoke.

Authorities can be co-opted or compromised for numerous reasons, including money, the promise of a lucrative job, a more prestigious title, or more widespread exposure. They can also be intimidated through fear of demotion, firing, mockery or ridicule.

News-media

Newspapermen or anchormen are traditionally well respected and highly thought of; they are supposed to be men of integrity, honest and fair, reporting news and events in an unbiased way. In order for the news to have credibility, the anchor or reporter must have credibility. Known liars, like Brain Williams must be removed from his position or the credibility of the news suffers.

Event creation piggybacks on this credibility when fake events are given prominence in respected publications or media conglomerates. (See below)

Organizations

Existing organization with clout can be co-opted to promote an issue or idea. The weight of their prestige will work on behalf to engender support among constituents.

Celebrities

Whether rightly earned or not, celebrities' opinions do hold weight for certain segments of the population. Their popularity can be borrowed in support for issues or causes.

Academics

Anyone with a title after his or her name is given general prestige by society and considered to be an expert on the topic of study. Academics can be co-opted to support ideas.

Stagecraft: Co-opting Experience

Creation of Events

The creation of an event is a method of staging public occurrences that are arranged to look like organic experiences arising spontaneously within communities and which are taken by the public at large to represent a valid concern, or expression of the public mind. They can be used to link persons of influence or trusted authorities with the ideas being promoted, thus enhancing the status of the idea.

Staged events like “Torches of Freedom” when covered by the press undergo a false magnification of importance. In fact, there was no woman or group of women who felt so passionately inspired by the idea of smoking that they were willing and motivated to organize this “protest”. By “faking” the event and publicizing it, the public receives the very vivid impression that there are significant numbers of women who wished to smoke and believed their equality with men should enable them to do so.

Bernays, in 1928 stated frankly that,

This practice of creating circumstances and of creating pictures in the minds of millions of persons is very common. Virtually no important undertaking is now carried on without it, whether the enterprise be building a cathedral, endowing a university, marketing a moving picture, floating a large bond issue, or electing a president. (Bernays, Prop, p. 52)

Astroturf

Astroturfing, a modern but related term, is event creation designed to look like an organic grassroots protest. Financial sponsors of the event, which can include paid protesters, are hidden from public view. News coverage of the event signals to the public that there are many people in the community who are disturbed or outraged at the issue being protested when in fact, this is not true. The intended message sent to the public is, "This is a hot topic of concern and something needs to be done!"

The "predetermined ends" for which the staged event was organized could be promoted at the event or later on the heels of the event by political leaders to appear as a "spontaneously" presented solution. Meanwhile the public has been "primed" to gullibly accept the solution selected for them by the masterminds of the event.

Agitation

Agitation is event creation designed for disruption. Think "rent a mob". Disruptors are paid to cause a riot, incite or instigate violence within an otherwise peaceful gathering. This method can co-opt another groups' organized event and turn things ugly in an attempt to discredit the group and/or the group's ideas. It can be used to destabilize a community causing fear and insecurity such that predetermined solutions can then be offered and readily accepted by the worried community.

Fake Social Media

Fake Social media can be considered a form of Internet astroturfing. Hired people and bots can project high volume interest over a pet issue, idea or cause (political or otherwise) creating the illusion of magnified grassroots support or outrage. Conversely it can be used to demoralize the opponent such that they appear to be outnumbered and ostracized.

Crises

This is no doubt the most controversial form of event creation. A large-scale disaster is orchestrated or co-opted to sway public opinion. Epic events are useful when promoters want to implement measures that run contrary to deeply held public beliefs. The more intractable the belief, the more useful the crisis; to dislodge and breakdown public resistance for a course of action that seems anathema to them.

Front Groups: Co-opting Organizational Authority

Front groups entail the creation of an organization perceived as working in the public interest, but that really benefits a company or industry. By avoiding mention of or only selectively disclosing funding sources, these groups hide their real agenda.

As public-interest lawyer Michele Simon writes in *The Best Public Relation Money Can Buy*, “Front groups often have deceptive sounding names and attempt to create a positive public impression that hides their funder’s economic motives.”*22 Though running media campaigns, providing friendly and accessible spokespeople to the media, producing reports and even supplying curricula to public schools, front groups have proven to be an effective strategy in shaping public opinion and fighting unfavorable policy. (Spinning Food, p. 10)

Front groups work because they appear to be unbiased expert organizations founded in the public interest. Instead of co-opting an existing authority is simply creates another authority that will be influential to the particular target group, but in reality the sham organization is established only to represent the moneyed-interests behind it. Remember, the funding required to create and sustain organizations for a fraudulent purpose, is beyond the reach of most people.

All of the following conglomerates use front groups to promote their messages including "Big Pharma", "Big Agriculture", "Big Education", "Big Medicine" and "Big Environment".

Education Hijack: Co-opt the Education System

Co-opting the education system is a matter of infiltrating the authority over children. Teachers are authority figures to students. This is a natural outgrowth of wanting to control public opinion. What better way to manufacture opinions then to start young and indoctrinate them before the age of reason? Teens and children especially can be more easily separated from their parents "prejudices and stereotypes" at an early age.

Teacher’s Education

If you can influence the leaders of those tasked with the oversight and implementation of public education you can sway the whole system. This idea is used repeatedly as one studies propaganda techniques closely. Target the leaders and the sheep will follow.

Federal Mandates

Federal mandates put curriculum control in the hands of government and political leaders. Federal education dollars are tied to curriculum adoption, all in the name of creating a better educational system. The local systems have no choice to comply or lose millions in education dollars promised by the government.

Curriculum

There is no such thing as a neutral viewpoint. Letting the federal government dictate the viewpoint upon which a child's education is based is to allow for wholesale indoctrination when worldviews are mal-aligned.

Control of Competing Views

A natural outgrowth of the attempt to dominate cultural attitudes and opinions is to censor competing ideas and the people who hold those ideas especially when the dominant ideas being projected into the culture are being resisted. The following are different forms of censorship.

Suppressing Alternatives

Down regulating the amount of time competing views and their promoters are allowed in the media.

Distortion of Alternatives

Distortion of alternative views including the partial or incomplete renderings of competing views to prevent a true picture idea.

Discrediting Alternatives Without Refuting

Taking some doctrine or opinion and treating it as if it were a universally accredited dogma "By this means of misrepresentation the propagandist assumes either boldly or blandly that everyone in his right mind accepts the opinion as a necessary presupposition, and then he proceeds to build his case upon it. The effect of this maneuver is to keep the proposition, which is essential to the argument away from public criticism. (Weaver, IDOT. p. 307)

Mockery and Ridicule of Alternatives Without Refuting

This is simply a belittling attack on ideas to demean them as inconsequential, or a personal attack on the people who hold those ideas.

Reframing Competing Ideas as Hurtful and Offensive

Ideas reframed as hurtful or offensive require social control for the benefit of the vulnerable population being "targeted". This can result in criminalization of those views and is an overt sign of totalitarianism.

Allow for Left and Right Political Dissent

The importance of this strategy is to ensure that the playing field of ideas still "looks level" even though it no longer is. It simulates the illusion of free speech, an extremely important deception in a supposed democratic society.

Endnotes

[1]

<http://marb.kennesaw.edu/hollywoodandwar/exhibits/show/hollywoodgoestowar/censorship/owiandbmp>

Questions

Additional Reading

Sharyl Attkisson is an investigative journalist based in Washington D.C. She is recently wrote a book entitled *Stonewalled* (Harper Collins), which addresses the unseen influences of corporations and special interests on the information and images the public receives every day in the news and elsewhere. She has won numerous awards for investigative skills and I highly recommend you get her book and study it.

Sharyl Attkisson TED Talk Published on Feb 6, 2015

Consider this fictitious example that's inspired by real life:

Say you're watching the news, and you see a story about a new study on the cholesterol-lowering drug called Cholextra. The study says Cholextra is so effective that doctors should consider prescribing it to adults and even children who don't yet have high cholesterol. Is it too good to be true? You're smart; you decide to do some of your own research.

You do a Google search; you consult social media, Facebook, and Twitter.

You look at Wikipedia, WebMD, a non-profit website, and you read the original study in a peer-reviewed published medical journal. It all confirms how effective Cholextra is. You do run across a few negative comments and a potential link to cancer, but you dismiss that, because medical experts call the cancer link a myth and say that those who think there is a link there are quacks, cranks, and nuts.

Finally, you learn that your own doctor recently attended a medical seminar.

The lecture that he attended confirmed how effective Cholextra is, so he sends you off with some free samples and a prescription. You've really done your homework. But what if all isn't, as it seems? What if the reality you found was false; a carefully constructed narrative by unseen special interests designed to manipulate your opinion?

A Truman Show-esque alternate reality all around you? Complacency in the news media combined with incredibly powerful propaganda and publicity forces mean we sometimes get little of the truth. Special interests have unlimited time and money to figure out new ways to spin us while cloaking their role. Surreptitious astroturf methods are now more important to these interests than traditional lobbying of Congress. There's an entire industry built around it in Washington.

What is astroturf? It's a perversion of grassroots, as in fake grassroots. Astroturf is when political, corporate, or other special interests disguise themselves and publish blogs, start Facebook and Twitter accounts, publish ads and letters to the editor, or simply post comments online to try to fool you into thinking an independent or grassroots movement is speaking. The whole point of astroturf is to try to get the impression there's widespread support for or against an agenda when there's not. Astroturf seeks to manipulate you into changing your opinion by making you feel as if you're an outlier when you're not.

One example is the Washington Redskins' name. Without taking a position on the controversy, if you simply were looking at news media coverage over the course of the past year, or looking at social media, you probably have to conclude that most Americans find that name offensive and think it ought to be changed. But what if I told you 71% of Americans say the name should not be changed? That's more than two thirds.

Astroturfers seek to controversialize those who disagree with them. They attack news organizations that publish stories they don't like, whistle-blowers who tell the truth, politicians who dare to ask the tough questions, and journalists who have the audacity to report on all of it. Sometimes,

astroturfers simply shove intentionally so much confusing and conflicting information into the mix that you're left to throw up your hands and disregard all of it, including the truth. Drowning out a link between a medicine and a harmful side effect say, vaccines and autism, by throwing a bunch of conflicting paid-for studies, surveys, and experts into the mix, confusing the truth beyond recognition.

And then, there's Wikipedia –an astroturfers dream come true. Built as the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit, the reality can't be more different. Anonymous Wikipedia editors control and co-opt pages on behalf of special interests. They forbid and reverse edits that go against their agenda. They skew and delete information in blatant violation of Wikipedia's own established policies with impunity, Always superior to the poor schlubs who actually believe anyone can edit Wikipedia only to discover they're barred from correcting even the simplest factual inaccuracies. Try adding a footnoted fact or correcting a fact error on one of these monitored Wikipedia pages, and poof!; sometimes within a matter of seconds you'll find your edit is reversed.

In 2012, famed author Philip Roth tried to correct a major fact error about the inspiration behind one of his book characters cited on a Wikipedia page, but no matter how hard he tried, Wikipedia's editors wouldn't allow it. They kept reverting the edits back to the false information. When Roth finally reached a person at Wikipedia - which was no easy task - and tried to find out what was going wrong, they told him he simply was not considered a credible source on himself.

A few weeks later, there was a huge scandal when Wikipedia officials got caught offering a PR service the skewed and edited information on behalf of paid publicity-seeking clients, in utter opposition to Wikipedia's supposed policies. All of this may be why, when a medical study looked at medical conditions described on Wikipedia pages and compared it to actual peer-reviewed published research, Wikipedia contradicted medical research 90% of the time. You may never fully trust what you read on Wikipedia again, nor should you.

Let's now go back to that fictitious Cholextra example and all the research you did. It turns out the Facebook and Twitter accounts you found that were so positive, were actually written by paid professionals hired by the drug company to promote the drug. The Wikipedia page had been monitored by an agenda editor, also paid by the drug company. The drug company also arranged to optimize Google search engine results so it was no accident that you stumbled across that positive non-profit that had all those positive comments.

The non-profit was, of course, secretly founded and funded by the drug company. The drug company also financed that positive study and used its power of editorial control to omit any mention of cancer as a possible side-effect. Once more, each and every doctor who publicly touted Cholextra or called the cancer link a myth, or ridiculed critics as paranoid cranks and quacks, or served on the government advisory board that approved the drug, each of those doctors is actually a paid consultant for the drug company.

As for your own doctor, the drug company in fact, like many continuing medical education classes, sponsored the medical lecture he attended that had all those positive evaluations. And when the news reported on that positive study, it didn't mention any of that. I have tons of personal examples from real life. A couple of years ago, CBS News asked me to look into a story about a study coming out from the non-profit National Sleep Foundation. Supposedly, this press release coming out said the study concluded we are a nation with an epidemic of sleeplessness, and we don't even know it, and we should all go ask our doctors about it. A couple of things struck me about that.

First, I recognized the phrase "ask your doctor" as a catch phrase promoted by the pharmaceutical industry. They know that if they can get your foot through the door at the doctor's office to mention a malady, you're very likely to be prescribed the latest drug that's marketed. Second, I wondered how serious an epidemic of sleeplessness could really be if we don't even know that we have it. It didn't take long for me to do a little research and discover that the National Sleep Foundation non-profit, and the study which was actually a survey not a study, were sponsored in part by a new drug that was about to be launched onto the market, called Lunesta, a sleeping pill. I reported the study, as CBS News asked, but of course, I disclosed the sponsorship behind the non-profit and the survey so the viewers could weigh the information accordingly.

All the other news media reported the same survey directly off the press release, as written, without digging past the superficial. It later became an example written up in the Columbia Journalism Review, which quite accurately reported that only we, at CBS News, had bothered to do a little bit of research and disclose the conflict of interest behind this widely reported survey.

So now you may be thinking, "What can I do? I thought I'd done my research. What chance do I have separating fact from fiction, especially if seasoned journalists with years of experience can be so easily fooled?" I have a few strategies that I can tell you about to help you recognize signs of propaganda and astroturf. Once you start to know what to look for,

you'll begin to recognize it everywhere.

First, hallmarks of astroturf include use of inflammatory language such as "crank", "quack", "nutty", "lies," "paranoid", "pseudo", and "conspiracy." Astroturfers often claim to debunk myths that aren't myths at all. Use of the charged language test well: people hear something's a myth, maybe they find it on Snopes, and they instantly declare themselves too smart to fall for it. But what if the whole notion of the myth is itself a myth, and you and Snopes fell for that?

Be aware when interests attack an issue by controversializing or attacking the people, personalities, and organizations surrounding it rather than addressing the facts. That could be astroturf. And most of all, astroturfers tend to reserve all of their public skepticism for those exposing wrongdoing rather than the wrongdoers. In other words, instead of questioning authority, they question those who question authority. You might start to see things a little more clearly; it's like taking off your glasses, wiping them, and putting them back on, realizing, for the first time, how foggy they'd been all along. I can't resolve these issues, but I hope that I've given you some information that will at least motivate you to take off your glasses and wipe them, and become a wiser consumer of information in an increasingly artificial, paid-for reality.

Thank you.

Sharyl Attkinsson Published on Feb 6, 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bYAQ-ZZtEU>

Questions

1. Name the ways “Big Pharma”, is covertly influencing the public to buy their drugs, according to Attkinsson.
2. Attkinsson mentions two other ways astroturfers are influencing public opinion besides just creating an illusion of multiplied support for their cause. Can you name them?
3. Attkinsson implies that we live in "an increasingly artificial, paid-for reality." What is your take on that?

Additional Reading

Here is a story from my own odyssey in learning to think for myself.

The Elizabeth O'Bagy Story on Fox News

FOX news anchor Brett Baer introduced an in-studio guest; a Syrian expert confidently suggesting that U.S. officials should arm the rebels because they were mostly moderates. Common sense told me that this woman, who was relatively young, late 20's or early 30's, was not likely to be a Syrian expert because of her youth and the cultural views middle easterners take toward women. Her unusual name, Elizabeth O'Bagy, caught my attention and the unusual organization that she worked for, The Institute for the Study of War, stood out.

Armed with my suspicions, I found out that the leadership for The Institute was almost exclusively led by ex-military and the majority of its funding as a non-profit came from the military-industrial complex, including CACI Ever Vigilant, General Dynamics, and ManTech International Corporation to name a few.

Questioning Secretary of State John Kerry during a Sept. 3 hearing on Syria, Senator John McCain read extensively from a Wall Street Journal op-ed by "Dr. Elizabeth O'Bagy" about the growing moderate Syrian opposition. The next day, testifying before a House committee, Kerry himself cited O'Bagy's work in explaining how only 15% to 20% of the 70,000 to 100,000 fighters on the ground Syria were "bad guys."

Dr. Elizabeth O'Bagy was being cited as a venerated Syria expert by some of the highest officials in America, when in fact, O'Bagy turned out to be a 26-year-old who had first begun to research Syria a mere 20 months previous as an intern at the Institute for the Study of War, a hawkish Washington non-profit.

Weeks after she had come to my attention, she was dismissed from the Institute for resume padding, claiming to have obtained a doctorate from Georgetown University. Her failure to disclose her dual job with the Syrian Emergency Task Force, a Washington lobby group advocating for the armed overthrow of the government of Syria in her op-ed article led to a closer look at her resume and ultimately her dismissal from the Institute.

Less than two weeks later, the ultimate war hawk himself, John McCain softened the harsh landing she should have received by appointing her as a legislative assistant with him in his Washington DC office.

I also found out that not only had she appeared on Fox News but she had received widespread exposure on numerous media outlets such as CNN, MSNBC, PBS, and NPR just to name a few.

That a 26 year old without vetted credentials and scant Syrian expertise

could become a media starlet, deliver speeches at universities and think tanks; briefing over 14 Senate and 20 House offices and get quoted by high ranking senior American officials at congressional hearings is a profoundly disturbing phenomenon and a striking example of propaganda in the heart of the American political system.

If we reverse engineer this bizarre story, we find a disconcerting scenario of events.

Elizabeth O'Bagy is a manufactured expert, made for TV, young, attractive, and well spoken. She is heralded as neutral (Institute for the Study of War) when in fact she is biased and works on behalf of the Syrian Emergency Task Force, a Washington lobby group advocating for the armed overthrow of the government of Syria. From this exalted position, she is exploited to support the ousting of Assad as an agenda promoted by powers much greater than herself.

She accompanied John McCain and his entourage to Syria and viola, newly minted expert who is farmed out to the various media outlets. Which brings us to the question of why she wasn't vetted by the various outlets on both the right and the left? What is more likely, an epic failure of numerous institutions and individual's to vet someone's credentials or an orchestrated effort to deceive by members of the media and government?

It seems incredibly unlikely that each and every media outlet is guilty of a singular instance of failing to vet an online expert when they all made the same mistake. The more sinister conclusion is that in fact the media is participating in systemic collusion with our own government with deception of the American people as the objective.

Ron Paul's response to this fiasco was to highlight O'Bagy's financial connection through the NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations-Syrian Emergency Task Force) to the America government itself.

The real scandal is not O'Bagy's falsely claimed PhD, but rather that at her other job, for the Syrian Emergency Task Force, she had been at the enter of a massive propaganda and influence campaign aimed at the American people, pushing the idea that there were moderates in Syria who the US should be supporting. O'Bagy played a key role in that influence campaign and she was being paid to lie about the insurgents by the US government itself! Yes, the real scandal is that O'Bagy was being paid as a State Department contractor to pose as a Syria expert and convince Americans that the Syrian insurgents should be supported...

We are being lied to about Syria, and to add insult to injury we are being forced to pay for the privilege. The myriad of cut-out NGOs pose as independent voices but in fact are on the payroll of the US government. That is the scandal. Not fake PhD's.

The O'Bagy Story Raises Profound Questions

The media, the secretary of state, a prominent senator, our government funded NGOs are all co-conspirators in promoting "experts" and pedaling illusions of reality with the intent to deceive the average American.

The breakdown of Elizabeth's story, the finances and the players who promoted and facilitated her rise to stardom is a fascinating study on the inner workings of the contemporary propaganda machine. Elizabeth O'Bagy was ultimately a propaganda puppet in the service of powerful elites facilitating her entry and manipulating her circulation in and amongst the most celebrated media establishments.

Two shocking takeaways from this story emerge; that the media is engaged in something other than simply reporting the news in an unbiased fashion and that manufacturing experts is part of a larger strategy of manufacturing opinion and steering the masses to a predetermined outcome.

Questions

1. Is it really possible, as this story implies, that experts can be created and then promoted through the media to sway opinion?
2. The propaganda model highlights that right and left politics in American is merely an illusion to create the appearance of free speech. Does this story support or refute that idea?

Lesson 9

Antidote To Propaganda

In countries where the levers of power are in the hands of a states bureaucracy, the monopolistic control over the media, often supplemented by official censorship, makes it clear that the media serve the ends of a dominant elite. It is much more difficult to see a propaganda system at work where the media are private and formal censorship is absent. Chomsky, MOC, p.1)

The Institute Failed

Bernays taunted the newly formed, Institute of Propaganda Analysis (1938), created to help the masses discern propaganda, by laughing at how useless it was to try to identify propaganda by divining intent.(See Below) At the time, many early practitioners were pushing the narrative that propaganda could be good or it could be bad, the only difference was the motive. Because it truly is impossible to "clairvoyantly" detect a motive, Bernays ended up being right.

Would it be possible then, to identify propaganda by determining the ends; if they be determined just, by being in the citizen's best interest or unjust by being in the propagandists' interest alone; in other words asking the question, "Whose end does it serve?"

While this is a good question to ask we can see by the Attkinsson example, that the propagandist frequently cloaks the propaganda as a benefit to the people it is designed to deceive. Big Pharma cloaked their desire to sell drugs with the following illusion.

Here is breakthrough news of legitimate scientific research, designed to help you overcome sleeplessness, which has become an epidemic problem.

Bingo, see how the deception works? See how wonderfully beneficial the ends appear for the consumer? This is the 'art' Pieper reveals in the following words.

The most perfect propaganda achieves just this: that the menace is not apparent but well concealed. Still, it must remain visible; it must remain recognizable. At the same time, those for whom the menace is intended must nevertheless be led and eased in to believing (and this is the true art!) that by acquiescing to the intimidation, they really do the reasonable thing, perhaps even what they would have wanted to do anyway." (Pieper,

p.31)

Improved Reasoning Is Not the Answer

As practical measure, instead of diving intent, the *Institute of Propaganda Analysis* turned toward arming citizens with the basics in logical thought or at least an “easy to learn” version of Greek fallacies that could be used to help detect propaganda. As we already learned, these inadequate measures are still used today.

If people can just be taught to “think well “ they will not be tricked. Improved reasoning ability or critical thinking though frequently suggested as the vaccine against propaganda, is not the remedy. The propaganda model shows us why.

But first we must go back to Le Bon, the man whose ideas are most responsible for starting this revolution.

Le Bon characterized his theory as applying to "the Crowd" or the mass mind. In reality there is no such thing as a mass mind or a collective crowd with one thought. It might be better to think of Le Bon as identifying mental shortcuts, outside of rational appeal, that man, as a member of a group, is subject to.

These shortcuts are extremely powerful forces within the herd or group, which enable man to make decisions quickly and more easily without having to gather original data or to think in detail on every imaginable topic. They also bind communities together. Imagination and shared experiences help individuals in the crowd identify value and find their place in society.

Each one of these shortcuts are wired into the non-rational part of mans' brain. They are go-to subconscious techniques of the brain to make living in a community more manageable. In the past, these shortcuts worked successfully in small rural communities but now serve to work against mass man submerged in an environment amidst savvy practitioners skilled in the art of manipulating shortcuts for their own ends.

Imagination

Imagination answers the question for man, “What should I like or value”? Imagination consists of stories, words, symbols, mental pictures, myths; the great ideas in society that fuel convictions, excite passions, expand horizons.

For many people their faith ignites a holy imagination. For others, terms like democracy, justice, and equality hold powerful imagery; encompassing values which have been arrived at, prior to the aid of reason.

The imagination can also be hijacked to fuel banal passions such as the “good life consists in having a beautiful wife or owning a new car or living in a big house.

Experience

Experience gives us tangible information about the world around us, helping us to draw conclusions quickly from our local settings. While our own personal experience may not be the best source of all available data, it suffices as a short circuit method of gathering information upon which to make judgments. In the age of mass communication, “local” communities become less influential and can be made obsolete because the dominate national culture defined by the media.

Prestige

Prestige is the honor bestowed upon members of the community deserving of respect, whether for acts of heroism; for their learned wisdom; for their judgment in leadership. They have earned the right to be heard and their opinions respected. In a small community, these people were generally personally known and deemed of high character; their words matched their behavior and could be trusted.

Symbols of authority now, are much more superficial and more easily manipulated in a mass culture. “Titles” and “positions” signal authority; certain professions still command authority (doctors, lawyers and scientists); the news, academia, science and non-profits organizations are considered neutral and unbiased deserving of respect.

Unfortunately we now know how easily those entities can be manipulated. In modern society it is nearly impossible for the average citizen to have any first hand knowledge or vouch for the authenticity or character of the authority in question.

Contagion

Contagion or social proof is the failsafe where a man, unsure of his conviction, looks around to see what other people think and modulates his response or

opinion as a result. "Should this product, idea, cause be valued?" is the question and the search for an easy answer can be found in the majority opinion, favorable reviews, or glowing news reports. It taps into the deep psychological need to be a part of a group and to belong as opposed to being a lone voice standing apart from the crowd. Rejection or ostracism is painful and uncomfortable for most people and the fear of it can cause the average person to go along instead of bucking the trend.

All the propaganda techniques listed in the propaganda model take advantage of manipulating one or more of the mental shortcuts highlighted by Le Bon.

Media especially movies, music, art, entertainment, and TV can be used to captivate or substitute for a more refined or elevated imagination. Stories, words, pictures and symbols are the stuff of media. Imaginations can be debased or elevated all according to the ends desired by those who control the media.

Authority Hijack, Front Groups and Education all work successfully at manipulating the shortcut of prestige that Le Bon isolated. Create or manipulate an authority and the people will follow.

Event creation in all its' forms manipulates the shortcut of experience to create illusions powerful enough to alter public opinion.

All the propaganda techniques including the media, authority endorsements, or phony experiences harnessed and pulling together stimulate massive contagion easily used to overwhelm the individual into thinking, "Everyone thinks this way" or "Everyone is doing this". Caught in this isolation, people can either retreat from their beliefs or resist. Remember, the flip side of contagion includes rejection and ostracism for those who do not adopt the main idea or opinion.

Rational thought alone, unfortunately, is not an infallible bulwark against propaganda, the majority of it is targeted to bypass the left or rational side of the brain and sneak in through the right side. It is pre-rational and deceptively concealed in appeals utilizing the shortcuts. Hidden in this way, it can bypass reason and our natural defenses against being duped. It is especially unrecognizable when cloaked in the veil of illusory benefits.

However, you now know the secrets. The curtain has been whipped open on the

pathetic Wizard of Oz. The keys to reverse engineering their magic are easy. Here are some simple tips to get you started.

Steel Toe Shoes Needed: Get Ready to Dig

As the previous chapters' additional readings made clear, identifying the influence of big money on our media environment can take some digging. I was struck by an anomaly, a young woman, being passed off as a Syrian expert and failed to align with what I knew about mid-east attitudes toward women. So off I went to explore. I used the Internet and came to my own conclusions. Later her degree status at Georgetown was investigated by another inquiring mind and found to be fraudulent.

Recognizing the catch phrase, promoted by the pharmaceutical industry, "Ask Your Doctor", ignited Attkinsson's digging instinct. Common sense also alerted her to ask the question, "How serious an epidemic of sleeplessness could there really be if we don't even know that we have it?" The rewards of her search, yielded a powerful and insightful look at how moneyed-interests and a complacent media can pedal a drug by creating the illusion: "Here is breakthrough news of legitimate scientific research, designed to help people overcome sleeplessness which has become an epidemic problem."

I must add that a healthy dose of skepticism is also required, but you already have that after reading this book or you should.

Follow The Money

Propaganda is not cheap; Money fuels the illusions so track the money like a bloodhound.

Don't trust any organization non-profit or otherwise until you know who is sponsoring them financially. All groups or individuals are beholden to their financial wellspring.

Don't trust any science or research until you know who is funding the research and if the researchers have any financial ties that would create a conflict of interest.

Don't trust any doctor's opinion until you determine whether or not they are getting consulting fees or are being enriched in anyway for the product or services they are recommending.

Identify Affirm/Repeat Patterns

Affirmation is taking some doctrine or opinion and treating it as if it were a universally accredited dogma. Affirm the dogma and then repeat over and over. Remember Weaver's words.

By this means of misrepresentation the propagandist assumes either boldly or blandly that everyone in his right mind accepts the opinion as a necessary presupposition, and then he proceeds to build his case upon it. The effect of this maneuver is to keep the proposition, which is essential to the argument away from public criticism. (Weaver, IDOT. p. 307)

Issues being promoted by the Affirm–Repeat pattern, without relevant evidence provided, are likely to be in error or unfounded. Dig Deeper.

Anything that is suggested to have obtained consensus is highly questionable and must be treated as suspect until further verification.

Look For Connections

When researching propaganda, look for connections between the promoters that might help identify the interest served by the individual or organization. Who is on their board of directors? What other organization are they connected to? Can you see a larger pattern or constellation of groups working together for one specific aim?

Evaluate Events

Protests and civil unrest by any group or organization should be evaluated in terms of the financial backers of the event. The timing of any event immediately on the heels of a crisis should arise suspicion in relation to the speed with which it is organized. Organic grassroots organization takes time especially when staffed by volunteers. The existence of paid protesters should immediately cast the entire event as fraudulent. Frequently, craigslist can be found to have advertising for paid protesters prior to the event. If arrests are made following the event, the presence of large numbers of people from out of state should bring suspicion.

Trusted Authority

The whistleblower is the "trusted authority" in the 21st century. Why? Because he has paid a price and may be continuing to pay a price in terms of reputation,

social ostracism, public ridicule, and financial remuneration to put his opinion across. The whistleblower is willing to risk this in pursuit of the truth or to warn of corruption. In short, they are motivated by the power of their conviction. They may not always be right, but they deserve careful attention lest we miss their message or warning.

As an insider of some large conglomerate, government agency, or profession; the whistleblower's opinion, should he choose to go rouge, will be censored. The dominant opinion, called orthodoxy, is elevated to unquestioned status; all other opinions are ridiculed.

As Weaver said, prior to 1963, "But when there exists a practical monopoly of channels of information and communication, it is next to impossible to put another alternative before any sizable part of the population." (Weaver IDOT, p. 307)

The stories of whistleblowers are found in books and on the Internet but rarely on mainstream media, which will refuse to publicize unorthodox opinions that could inflame their financial wellsprings. In most cases, smear campaigns have been launched against them and their lives have been disrupted in significant ways. They are not necessarily right but their sacrifice and tenacity in the face of the overwhelming forces allied against them, argue for their veracity and the respect of being granted a hearing from the public.

Here are a few whistleblowers whose stories might interest you.

Dr Marcia Angell

The Truth About the Drug Companies: How They Deceive Us and What to Do About It

During her two decades at The New England Journal of Medicine, Dr. Marcia Angell had a front-row seat on the appalling spectacle of the pharmaceutical industry. She watched drug companies stray from their original mission of discovering and manufacturing useful drugs and instead become vast marketing machines with unprecedented control over their own fortunes. She saw them gain nearly limitless influence over medical research, education, and how doctors do their jobs. She sympathized as the American public, particularly the elderly, struggled and increasingly failed to meet spiraling prescription drug prices. Now, in this bold, hard-hitting new book, Dr. Angell exposes the shocking truth of

what the pharmaceutical industry has become—and argues for essential, long-overdue change.

Edward Snowden

No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the U.S. Surveillance State by Glenn Greenwald

In May 2013, Glenn Greenwald set out for Hong Kong to meet an anonymous source who claimed to have astonishing evidence of pervasive government spying and insisted on communicating only through heavily encrypted channels. That source turned out to be the twenty-nine-year-old NSA contractor Edward Snowden, and his revelations about the agency's widespread, systemic overreach proved to be some of the most explosive and consequential news in recent history, triggering a fierce debate over national security and information privacy.

Andrew Wakefield

Callous Disregard: Autism and Vaccines--The Truth Behind a Tragedy

In 1995, Dr. Andrew Wakefield came to a fork in the road. As an academic gastroenterologist at the Royal Free School of Medicine and the University of London, he was confronted by a professional challenge and a moral choice. Previously healthy children were, according to their parents, regressing into autism and developing intestinal problems. Many parents blamed the MMR vaccine. Trusting his medical training, the parental narrative, and, above all, the instinct of mothers for their children's well being, he chose what would become a very difficult road. Callous Disregard is the account of how a doctor confronted first a disease and then the medical system that sought and still seeks to deny that disease, leaving millions of children to suffer and a world at risk.

Sharyl Attkisson

The Smear: How Shady Political Operatives and Fake News Control What You See, What You Think, and How You Vote

Ever wonder how politics turned into a take-no-prisoners blood sport? The New York Times bestselling author of Stonewalled pulls back the curtain on the shady world of opposition research and reveals the dirty tricks those in power use to influence your opinions. Behind most major political stories in the modern era, there is an agenda; an effort by opposition researchers, spin doctors, and outside interests to destroy an idea or a person. The tactic they use is the Smear. Every day, Americans are influenced by the Smear without knowing it. Paid forces cleverly shape virtually every image you cross. Maybe you read that Donald Trump is a racist misogynist, or saw someone on the news mocking the Bernie

Sanders campaign. The trick of the Smear is that it is often based on some shred of truth, but these media-driven "hit pieces" are designed to obscure the truth. Success hinges on the Smear artist's ability to remain invisible; to make it seem as if their work is neither calculated nor scripted. It must appear to be precisely what it is not.

John Taylor Gatto

Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling

After over 100 years of mandatory schooling in the U.S., literacy rates have dropped, families are fragmented, learning "disabilities" are skyrocketing, and children and youth are increasingly disaffected. Thirty years of teaching in the public school system led John Taylor Gatto to the sad conclusion that compulsory governmental schooling is to blame, accomplishing little but to teach young people to follow orders like cogs in an industrial machine. He became a fierce advocate of families and young people taking back education and learning, arguing that "genius is as common as dirt," but that conventional schooling is driving out the natural curiosity and problem-solving skills we're born with, replacing it with rule-following, fragmented time, and disillusionment.

And finally, investigate the track record of a spokesperson for an idea or cause to see if their lives are consistent with their message. Hypocrisy among leaders suggesting the public do one thing while they do another should obviously raise a red flag.

Don't Be Afraid To Stand In the Face of the Wind

Herding of the masses has taking place since the 1900's but the accelerated pace of groupthink in the 21st century is beyond comfort. Censorship to lack of Orthodoxy is growing. To be able to think for yourself will require courage to stand in the face of opposition. If you think like everyone else, and your main source of information is Television...warning, you have been indoctrinated.

Loving Truth

St Augustine defines virtue as Odo amoris, the ordinate condition of the affections in which every object is accorded that kind and degree of love which is appropriate to it. 11 Aristotle says that the aim of education is to make the pupil like and dislike what he ought. 12 When the age for reflective thought comes, the pupil who has been thus trained in 'ordinate affections' or 'just sentiments' will easily find the first principles in Ethics; but to the corrupt man they will never be visible at all and he can make no progress in that science.13 Plato before him had said the same. The little

human animal will not at first have the right responses. It must be trained to feel pleasure, liking, disgust, and hatred at those things, which really are pleasant, likable, disgusting, and hateful. (Lewis, AOM, p. 434)

This is just an older and more eloquent way of saying that the heart needs to be trained before the mind. Sentiment, value or affection that is 'just' or "true' is then able to inform the reason correctly. For most people today 'truth' is a foreign concept. The idea embodied by the word "truth' has been lost from consciousness, similar to the way 'propaganda' consciousness has been lost.

It is entirely possible that the true and authentic reality is being drowned out by the countless superficial information bits noisily and breathlessly presented in propaganda fashion," on a daily basis. (Pieper, P. 33)

A modern way of saying this would be Train the heart to love the right things, and the foundation of reason and its' right use will follow.

Indeed, our friend Pieper, who was introduced in an earlier lesson reminds us that

Public discourse, the moment it becomes neutralized with regard to the strict standard of truth, stands by its nature ready to serve as an instrument in the hands of any ruler to pursue all kinds of power schemes. Public discourse itself, separated from the standard of truth creates on its part, the more it prevails, an atmosphere of epidemic proneness and vulnerability to the reign of the tyranny. (Pieper, p 30-31)

In the propaganda model, this idea is reflected on the right side of the chart. Truth is the basis for all true dialogue.

If orientation toward the truth or the pursuit of truth is an indispensable protection from propaganda, let's look a bit closer at how C. S Lewis explains "Truth". Hang onto your boots, you moderns

In the Republic, the well-nurtured youth is one "who would see most clearly what ever was amiss in ill-made works of man or ill -grown works of nature, and with a just distant would blame and hate the ugly even from his earliest years and would give delighted praise to beauty, receiving it into his soul and being nourished by it, so that he becomes a man of gentle heart. All this before he is of an age of reason; so that when Reason at length comes to him, then, bred as he has been, he will hold out his hands in welcome and recognize her because of the affinity he

bears to here.' 15 In early Hinduism that conduct in men which can be called good consists in conformity to, or almost participation in, The Rta—that great ritual or pattern of nature and supertanker which is revealed alike in the cosmic order, the moral virtues, and the ceremonial of the temple. Righteousness, correctness, order, the Rta, is constantly identified with stay or truth, correspondence to reality. As Plato said that the Good was “beyond existence’ and Wordsworth that though virtue the stars were strong, so the Indian masters say that the gods themselves are born of the Rta and obey it.16 The Chinese also speak of a great thing (the greatest thing) called the Tao. It is the reality beyond all predicates, the abyss that was before the Creator Himself, It is Nature, it is the Way, the Road. It is the Way in which the universe goes on, the Way in which things everlastingly emerge, stilly an tranquilly, into space and time. it is also the Way which ever man should tread in imitation of that cosmic and super cosmic progression, conforming all activities to that great exemplar. 17 'In ritual,' say the Analects, 'it is harmony with Nature that is prized.' 18 The ancient Jews likewise praise the Law as being 'true.'19

This concept in all its forms, Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, Christian, and Oriental alike, I shall henceforth refer to for brevity simply as 'the Tao.' Some accounts of it, which I have quoted, will seem, perhaps, to many of you merely quaint or even magical. But what is common to them all is something we cannot neglect. It is the doctrine of objective value, the belief that certain attitudes are really true, and others really false, to the kind of thing the universe is and the kind of things we are. (Lewis, AOM, 435)

Let me give you an example. According to the 'Tao', you should be trained to love liberty and freedom over and above safety and security, which are secondary values. As we already learned, propaganda is frequently masked as something desirable, beneficial, and held out as the reasonable thing. If you are not grounded in truth, you will be much more susceptible to the propagandist's offer to protect you from harm, the climate, guns, fake news, hateful speech and rejection. The propagandist by offers safety and security by slay of hand. Liberty is the primary value.

Loving and valuing safety and security over freedom, is trading feathers for worms.

The Skylark, By G. H. Charnley

One day long ago, over the hot sands of a middle Eastern country, a white skylark flew in joyous loops about the sky. As she swooped near the earth, she heard a merchant cry out, “ Worms ! Worms ! Worms for feathers!

Delicious worms!"

The skylark circled about the merchant, hungry at the mention of worms, but puzzled as to what the merchant meant. Little did the skylark know that the merchant was the devil. And seeing that the skylark was interested, the devil motioned her nearer. "Come here, my little friend. Come! See the lovely worms I have!"

Cautiously, the skylark landed and cocked her head at the merchant. "Come! Taste the juicy worms! " The skylark became aware that she was, indeed, quite hungry. And these worms looked bigger and tastier than any she had ever dug for herself out of the hardscrabble ground of the desert. The skylark hopped closer and put her beak up close to the worm. "Two worms for a feather, my friend. Two worms for one!"

The skylark was unable to resist. And she had, after all, so many feathers. So, with a swift motion, she pulled out a feather-just a small one-from beneath her wing and gave it to the merchant. "Take your pick, my little friend...any two, your heart's desire!" And so the skylark quickly snatched up two of the plumpest worms and swallowed her meal with delight. Never before had she tasted such wonderful worms. With a loud chirp, she leapt into the air and resumed her joyful flight.

Day after day the skylark returned. And always the merchant had wonderful worms to offer: black ones and blue ones, red ones and green ones, all fat and shiny and iridescent. But one day, after eating her fill, the skylark leapt again into the air and to her horror, she fell to the ground with a thud. She was unable to fly!

All at once, with a shock, she realized what had happened. From the delicious worms she had grown fatter and fatter; and as she plucked her feathers one by one, first her body, then her tail, and finally her very wings had grown balder and balder.

Horrified, she remembered how, slowly, imperceptibly, day by day, it had been getting harder and harder to fly; and how she had told herself it was no matter; she could always stop before it was too late. Now, suddenly, here she was, trapped on the ground. She looked up and saw the merchant looking at her. Was that a small, sly grin spreading across his face?

In terror, the skylark ran off into the desert. She ran and ran and ran and ran. It took her hours and hours. Never in her entire life had she walked nor run so far. Finally, she came to the softer ground near the desert springs where, before she met the merchant, she daily had come to dig

for herself the small, dusty brown desert worms that could be found around the springs.

The skylark dug and dug in a frenzy. She piled up worm after worm until it was nearly dark. Then, wrapping her catch in a small fallen palm frond, she dragged it off back across the sand to where she saw the merchant, closing up his stall for the night.

The skin around her beak had grown bruised and tender; her small feet were bleeding from the great distances she had been forced to walk. "Oh, merchant! Oh, merchant! Please help me! Please help me! I cannot fly anymore! Oh, dear what shall I do? Please, please, take these worms from me and give me back my feathers!"

The merchant bent down and peered at the terrified skylark. He threw back his head and roared with laughter, a gold tooth, glinting in the red and setting sunlight. "Oh, I'll take those worms all right, my friend. A few weeks in this good soil and they, too, will be fat and green and glistening."

He unwrapped the worms and tossed them into a jar of black and humid soil. "But feathers?" He laughed again. "What will you do with feathers? Glue them on with spit?" He wheezed and cackled at his little joke. "Besides my friend," the merchant reached down and grabbed the already plucked and fattened skylark, "that's not my business-'feathers for worms.' Oh no..." He threw the skylark into a cage, ...my business is 'WORMS FOR FEATHERS!'"

The merchant slammed the little cage door shut, smiled hungrily at his victim, and with a loud SNAP! of his fingers, he vanished into the desert air.

If your heart is tuned toward truth you are able to stand on the courage of your convictions, on self-reliance/responsibility and the love and commitment of community; deceptive messaging that enslaves will not sway you.

Additional Reading

The following passage is another object lesson on how to dig and follow the money. Jon Rappoport investigates whether trust in the Centers For Disease Control (CDC) and the science they promote is warranted or misplaced.

CDC vaccine science covers up giant conflict of interest

If you wanted to buy a product...

And the main researcher of the product was the company selling it to you...

Would you automatically assume the product was safe and effective?

But you see, that's the just the beginning of the problem. Suppose the company's research was cited thousands of times in the press, as the authoritative standard of proof---and anyone who disputed that research was labeled a conspiracy theorist and a quack and a danger to the community and an anti-science lunatic.

Would you begin to suspect the company had awesome media connections? Would you suspect some very powerful people were backing the company?

This is exactly the situation with the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Read these two quotes:

The government's Vaccine for Children Program (a CDC organization) purchases vaccines for about 50 percent of children in the U.S." (The Atlantic, February 10, 2015)

"The CDC currently spends over \$4 billion purchasing vaccines [annually] from drug makers..." (Health Impact News, October 24, 2016)

However, the CDC is also the gold standard for research on the safety and efficacy of vaccines. It turns out an unending stream of studies on these subjects. And the results of those studies are dutifully reported in the mainstream press.

Do you think, under any circumstances, the CDC would publish data showing vaccines are ineffective and dangerous? They'd be cutting their own throats.

"Well, we spend \$4 billion a year buying vaccines from drug companies, but guess what? These vaccines are often dangerous..."

Every time you read about a CDC study on vaccines, keep this obvious conflict of interest in mind.

When, in 2014, William Thompson, a long-time CDC researcher, publicly admitted he and his colleagues had buried data that would have shown the MMR vaccine increases the risk of autism, he was throwing a stick of

dynamite into the whole CDC operation. He was also saying, in recorded phone conversations, that the CDC was lying about vaccine safety in other studies.

This is why major media refused to cover or investigate Thompson's claims. This is why they spread a blanket of silence over his revelations.

Thompson was threatening a \$ 4-billion-a-year enterprise.

The CDC is both a PR agency for, and a buyer from, Big Pharma.

Speaking of PR, would you like to see an example of how the CDC promotes the yearly flu vaccine by lying egregiously about flu deaths in the United States?

In December of 2005, the British Medical Journal (online) published a shocking report by Peter Doshi, which created tremors through the halls of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), where "the experts" used to tell the press that 36,000 people in the US die every year from the flu.

Here is a quote from Doshi's report, "Are US flu death figures more PR than science?" (BMJ 2005; 331:1412):

"[According to CDC statistics], 'influenza and pneumonia' took 62,034 lives in 2001---61,777 of which were attributable to pneumonia and 257 to flu, and in only 18 cases was the flu virus positively identified."

Boom.

You see, the CDC has created one overall category that combines both flu and pneumonia deaths. Why do they do this? Because they disingenuously assume that the pneumonia deaths are complications stemming from the flu.

This is an absurd assumption. Pneumonia has a number of causes.

But even worse, in all the flu and pneumonia deaths, only 18 revealed the presence of an influenza virus.

Therefore, the CDC could not say, with assurance that more than 18 people died of influenza in 2001. Not 36,000 deaths. 18 deaths.

Doshi continued his assessment of published CDC flu-death statistics: "Between 1979 and 2001, [CDC] data show an average of 1348 [flu] deaths per year (range 257 to 3006)." These figures refer to flu separated

out from pneumonia.

This death toll is obviously far lower than the parroted 36,000 figure.

However, when you add the sensible condition that lab tests have to actually find the flu virus in patients, the numbers of flu deaths plummet even further.

In other words, it's all promotion and hype.

"Well, uh, we used to say 36,000 people died from the flu every year in the US. But actually, it's closer to 20. However, we can't admit that, because if we did, we'd be exposing our gigantic psyop. The whole campaign to scare people into getting a flu shot would have about the same effect as warning people to carry iron umbrellas, in case toasters fall out of upper-story windows...and, by the way, we'd be put in prison for fraud."

The CDC must turn out a steady stream of outrageous lies about the need for vaccines. If they didn't, they'd have no way to justify the billions of dollars they spend every year buying the vaccines from drug companies.

Since the sold-out major media won't connect these dots, I and others need to.

Questions

1. What is the conflict of interest that Jon identifies?
2. Why shouldn't you trust the reported number of flu deaths cited by the CDC (36,000)?
3. If the flu deaths in one year are substantially lower than quoted, how might this impact motivation to receive the flu shot?

Additional Reading

Lesson 10

End of the Era of Crowds

If the 19th century was known for the great Industrial Revolution, the 20th century should be known for the great "Influence Revolution". A juggernaut was born...the power to control and regiment the masses according to the will of others without their knowledge. The annals of history fail to reveal anything like the perfect storm of far reaching influence manipulation wielded by a relative few.

And yet where is reference to this in the history books? How is it not common knowledge as a pivotal part of our history and heritage? How is it possible that one of the greatest innovations of the 20th century is largely unknown?

Does the answer lie with gutting the word "propaganda" of its menace and the its' subsequent transformation into a multi-headed hydra composed of disparate areas of academia including media, psychology, sociology, public relations, news, linguistics and advertising; all sounding completely innocence, inoffensive and unthreatening.

The rise of mass media and the unprecedented success of WWI propaganda forever changed the balance of democratic power, tipping it toward the hand of a remote elite, a financially endowed few who could command the techniques used to control the masses. Elite thinkers, like Lippmann abandoned the principles of democracy, declaring the masses utterly contemptible; and unable to think adequately for themselves in a complex society. The masses' subconscious fears and anxieties should in the future be manipulated, in order to point them toward the 'good of society' as determined by this same elite.

It became increasingly possible in the early 1900's, that someone with money was influencing you at a subconscious level using hijacked authority, fake news events, and magnifying the influence of their messages through an enormous media megaphone. Given this one hundred year history, where do you think we are now?

The end of propaganda, as clearly stated by Pieper, can be nothing less than tyranny whether you recognize it or not.

The main purpose of this workbook is that you come to recognize the extent of the propaganda machine built in this country and the tyranny that has followed.

I hope that I have convinced you of the following as a result of our examination of history and the writings of prominent leaders.

1. WWI was the first large-scale demonstration of public opinion manipulation utilizing every known technique at the time.
2. The ability to manufacture ideas or public opinion changed the entire power structure in the United States
3. "Event creation" was the original fake news.
4. Faith in democracy was eclipsed by the growing consensus among leaders that technocrats and enlightened leaders should now manufacture consent in the best interest of an unknowing public, the news becoming collateral damage of this poisonous philosophy.
5. Manipulation of the language for purposes other than the pursuit of truth is the first sign of tyranny
6. Propaganda, having gone underground, is more dangerous than ever before, precisely because its' machinations are now hidden
7. Propaganda is a technique employed by the rich, impoverishing the marketplace of ideas, by drowning out all small competitors
8. Propaganda is hard to detect because it plays on human shortcuts that are not rational and appeal to base desires that are cloaked in beneficial offerings such as safety and security.
9. Identification of propaganda includes a thorough understanding of the model and the abilities to follow the money, appreciate whistleblowers, ask questions, dig deeper and love the truth
10. Leadership, words, and the quest for truth are the primary antidotes to the abuse of language and the tyranny that follows in its wake.

Fictitious Reality Created By Design

Every 10 years a generation raised in comparative freedom from propaganda dies off and is replaced by a generation incubated and grown up in a culture of deception. How much longer before the ability to think for oneself is completely extinguished? Will there be anyone alive who can lead us back the "old" idea of truth and authentic relationships that existed prior to the propaganda tsunami unleashed in the 20th century and now on into the 21 century? What happens when even the desire for truth has been obliterated and all that remains is the fictitious reality masking the underlying tyranny willingly accepted by stupefied masses?

Those who were alive during the midst of the great propaganda debate, and perceived the danger were true prophets of the age.

They had ominous words to say about the future of mankind, Aldous Huxley being the most prominent.

*There will be, in the next generation or so, a pharmacological method of making people love their servitude, and producing dictatorship without tears, so to speak, producing a kind of painless concentration camp for entire societies, so that people will in fact have their liberties taken away from them, but will rather enjoy it, because they will be **distracted from any desire to rebel by propaganda or brainwashing, or brainwashing enhanced by pharmacological methods.** And this seems to be the final revolution"*

— Aldous Huxley 1958 in *Brave New World Revisited*.

For the general public is being reduced to a state where people not only are unable to find out about the truth but also become unable even to search for the truth because they are satisfied with deception and trickery that have determined their convictions, satisfied with a fictitious reality created by design through the abuse of language."

--Josef Pieper 1974 in *Abuse of Language, Abuse of Power* p.35

Leadership-The Antidote To Propaganda

In 1896, Le Bon confidently took up his pen and announced to the world, "The age we are to enter will in truth be the ERA OF CROWDS."

In the era of crowds, individuals do not exist, their hopes do not matter, their dreams do not matter, and their freedoms do not matter. The only thing that matters is the group and what the planners have in mind for the group. All that matters is the faceless crowd marching according to the tune played for them.

Individual ideas can be smashed and pulverized with the propaganda machine. Imagination crushed and trivialized by a thousand banal and thoughtless influences. Individuals who were leaders or who might have been leaders in the past co-opted and paid off by large moneyed-interests. Leaders don't exist because they are not sought and are actively undermined in the era of crowds.

But they, of all things on the face of the earth, are to be feared by that class of men who now rule from a distance with numbers, verbiage, trickery and bribes.

But cracks are beginning to show in the Land of Oz. All the leaders have not been demoralized and weakened. Belief that the news can be trusted is at an all time low. Belief that politicians, left or right, are doing the people's bidding is at an all time low. That curtain, that very same curtain hiding the "Great OZ "from view is slowly being drawn back.

Sons of Gondor! Of Rohan! My brothers! I see in your eyes the same fear that would take the heart of me! A day may come when the courage of men fails, when we forsake our friends and break all bonds of fellowship. But it is not this day. An hour of wolves and shattered shields when the age of Men comes crashing down! But it is not this day! This day we fight! By all that you hold dear on this good Earth, I bid you stand! Men of the West!

--Aragorn in the Lord of the Rings at the last battle

Game on Oligarchs
Your Time is Short
Men of the West, Arise!
