PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES


Appeal to Authority. Appeals to authority cite prominent figures to support a position idea, argument, or course of action.

Bandwagon and Inevitable Victory. Bandwagon-and-inevitable-victory appeals attempt to persuade the target audience to take a course of action "everyone else is taking." "Join the crowd." This technique reinforces people's natural desire to be on the winning side. This technique is used to convince the audience that a program is an expression of an irresistible mass movement and that it is in their interest to join. "Inevitable victory" invites those not already on the bandwagon to join those already on the road to certain victory. Those already, or partially, on the bandwagon are reassured that staying aboard is the best course of action.

Glittering Generalities. Glittering generalities are intensely emotionally appealing words so closely associated with highly valued concepts and beliefs that they carry conviction without supporting information or reason. They appeal to such emotions as love of country, home; desire for peace, freedom, glory, honor, etc. They ask for approval without examination of the reason. Though the words and phrases are vague and suggest different things to different people, their connotation is always favorable: "The concepts and programs of the propagandist are always good, desirable, virtuous." Generalities may gain or lose effectiveness with changes in conditions. They must, therefore, be responsive to current conditions. Phrases which called up pleasant associations at one time may evoke unpleasant or unfavorable connotations at another, particularly if their frame of reference has been altered.

Simplification. Favorable generalities are used to provide simple answers to complex social, political, economic, or military problems.

Name Calling or Substitutions of Names or Moral Labels. This technique attempts to arouse prejudices in an audience by labeling the object of the propaganda campaign as something the target audience fears, hates, loathes, or finds undesirable.

Types of name calling:

- Direct name calling is used when the audience is sympathetic or neutral. It is a simple, straightforward attack on an opponent or opposing idea.
• Indirect name calling is used when direct name calling would antagonize the audience. It is a label for the degree of attack between direct name calling and insinuation. Sarcasm and ridicule are employed with this technique.
• Cartoons, illustrations, and photographs are used in name calling, often with deadly effect.

Plain Folks or Common Man: The "plain folks" or "common man" approach attempts to convince the audience that the propagandist's positions reflect the common sense of the people. It is designed to win the confidence of the audience by communicating in the common manner and style of the audience. Propagandists use ordinary language and mannerisms (and clothes in face-to-face and audiovisual communications) in attempting to identify their point of view with that of the average person. With the plain folks device, the propagandist can win the confidence of persons who resent or distrust foreign sounding, intellectual speech, words, or mannerisms.

Social Disapproval. This is a technique by which the propagandist marshals group acceptance and suggests that attitudes or actions contrary to the one outlined will result in social rejection, disapproval, or outright ostracism. The latter, ostracism, is a control practice widely used within peer groups and traditional societies.

Virtue Words. These are words in the value system of the target audience which tend to produce a positive image when attached to a person or issue. Peace, happiness, security, wise leadership, freedom, etc., are virtue words.

Slogans. A slogan is a brief striking phrase that may include labeling and stereotyping. If ideas can be sloganized, they should be, as good slogans are self-perpetuating.

Testimonials. Testimonials are quotations, in or out of context, especially cited to support or reject a given policy, action, program, or personality. The reputation or the role (expert, respected public figure, etc.) of the individual giving the statement is exploited. The testimonial places the official sanction of a respected person or authority on a propaganda message. This is done in an effort to cause the target audience to identify itself with the authority or to accept the authority's opinions and beliefs as its own. Several types of testimonials are:

Lying and distortion. Lying is stating as truth that which is contrary to fact. For example, assertions may be lies. This technique will not be used by US personnel. It is presented for use of the analyst of enemy propaganda.
**Simplification.** This is a technique in which the many facts of a situation are reduced so the right or wrong, good or evil, of an act or decision is obvious to all. This technique (simplification) provides simple solutions for complex problems. By suggesting apparently simple solutions for complex problems, this technique offers simplified interpretations of events, ideas, concepts, or personalities. Statements are positive and firm; qualifying words are never used.

**Stereotyping** is a form of simplification used to fit persons, groups, nations, or events into readymade categories that tend to produce a desired image of good or bad. Stereotyping puts the subject (people, nations, etc.) or event into a simplistic pattern without any distinguishing individual characteristics.

**REPETITION**

An idea or position is repeated in an attempt to elicit an almost automatic response from the audience or to reinforce an audience's opinion or attitude. This technique is extremely valid and useful because the human being is basically a creature of habit and develops skills and values by repetition (like walking, talking, code of ethics, etc.).

**Fear of change.** People fear change, particularly sudden, imposed change over which they have no control. They fear it will take from them status, wealth, family, friends, comfort, safety, life, or limb. That's why the man in the foxhole hesitates to leave it. He knows and is accustomed to the safety it affords. He is afraid that moving out of his foxhole will expose him to new and greater danger. That is why the psychological campaign must give him a safe, honorable way out of his predicament or situation.

**Terrorism.** The United States is absolutely opposed to the use of terror or terror tactics. But the psychological operator can give a boomerang effect to enemy terror, making it reverberate against the practitioner, making him repugnant to his own people, and all others who see the results of his heinous savagery. This can be done by disseminating fully captioned photographs in the populated areas of the terrorist's homeland. Such leaflets will separate civilians from their armed forces; it will give them second thoughts about the decency and honorableness of their cause, make them wonder about the righteousness of their ideology, and make the terrorists repugnant to them. Follow up leaflets can "fire the flames" of repugnancy, indignation, and doubt, as most civilizations find terror repugnant.
Available on http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/41879/50.html
“For Girls Must Work that Men May Fight,” by M.B., 1917
Available on http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/41869/menu.html
# WWI Propaganda Choice Activity

Choose this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 points</th>
<th>4 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze the two WWI propaganda posters below. Identify which techniques are used and explain why and how they are effective.</td>
<td>Provide a modern-day example of propaganda. Identify which techniques are used and explain why and how they are effective.</td>
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Or this:

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<th>10 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create an original WWI propaganda poster. Use at least two techniques from the handout and provide an explanation of how the techniques are evident in your poster.</td>
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