

Types of Propaganda

There are many techniques commonly used in the dissemination of propaganda. Use this handout to help you identify different types of propaganda throughout Cold War.

BANDWAGON: The basic idea behind the bandwagon approach is just that, "getting on the bandwagon." The propagandist puts forth the idea that everyone is doing this, or everyone supports this person/cause, so should you. The bandwagon approach appeals to the conformist in all of us: No one wants to be left out of what is perceived to be a popular trend.

EXAMPLE: Everyone in Lemmingtown is behind Jim Duffie for Mayor. Shouldn't you be part of this winning team?

TESTIMONIAL: This is the celebrity endorsement of a philosophy, movement or candidate. In advertising, for example, athletes are often paid millions of dollars to promote sports shoes, equipment and fast food. In political circles, movie stars, television stars, rock stars and athletes lend a great deal of credibility and power to a political cause or candidate. Just a photograph of a movie star at political rally can generate more interest in that issue/candidate or cause thousands, sometimes millions, of people to become supporters.

EXAMPLE: "Sam Slugger", a baseball Hall of Famer who led the pros in hitting for years, appears in a television ad supporting Mike Politico for U.S. Senate. Since Sam is well known and respected in his home state and nationally, he will likely gain Mr. Politico many votes just by his appearance with the candidate.

PLAIN FOLKS: Here the candidate or cause is identified with common people from everyday walks of life. The idea is to make the candidate/cause come off as grassroots and all-American.

EXAMPLE: After a morning speech to wealthy Democratic donors, Bill Clinton stops by McDonald's for a burger, fries, and photo-op.

TRANSFER: Transfer employs the use of symbols, quotes or the images of famous people to convey a message not necessarily associated with them. In the use of transfer, the candidate/speaker attempts to persuade us through the indirect use of something we respect, such as a patriotic or religious image, to promote his/her ideas. Religious and patriotic images may be the most commonly used in this propaganda technique but they are not alone. Sometimes even science becomes the means to transfer the message.

EXAMPLE: The environmentalist group PEOPLE PROMOTING PLANTS, in its attempt to prevent a highway from destroying the natural habitat of thousands of plant species, produces a television ad with a "scientist" in a white lab coat explaining the dramatic consequences of altering the food chain by destroying this habitat.

FEAR: This technique is very popular among political parties and PACs (Political Action Committees) in the U.S. The idea is to present a dreaded circumstance and usually follow it up with the kind of behavior needed to avoid that horrible event.

EXAMPLE: The Citizens for Retired Rights present a magazine ad showing an elderly couple living in poverty because their social security benefits have been drastically cut by the Republicans in Congress. The solution? The CRR urges you to vote for Democrats.

LOGICAL FALLACIES: Applying logic, one can usually draw a conclusion from one or more established premises. In the type of propaganda known as the logical fallacy, however, the premises may be accurate but the conclusion is not.

EXAMPLE:

- Premise 1: Bill Clinton supports gun control.
- Premise 2: Communist regimes have always supported gun control.
- Conclusion: Bill Clinton is a communist.

We can see in this example that the Conclusion is created by a twisting of logic, and is therefore a fallacy.

GLITTERING GENERALITIES: This approach is closely related to what is happening in TRANSFER (see above). Here, a generally accepted virtue is usually employed to stir up favorable emotions. The problem is that these words mean different things to different people and are often manipulated for the propagandists' use. The important thing to remember is that in this technique the propagandist uses these words in a positive sense. They often include words like: democracy, family values (when used positively), rights, civilization, even the word "American."

EXAMPLE: An ad by a cigarette manufacturer proclaims to smokers: Don't let them take your rights away! ("Rights" is a powerful word, something that stirs the emotions of many, but few on either side would agree on exactly what the 'rights' of smokers are.)

NAME-CALLING: This is the opposite of the GLITTERING GENERALITIES approach. Name-calling ties a person or cause to a largely perceived negative image.

EXAMPLE: In a campaign speech to a logging company, the Congressman referred to his environmentally conscious opponent as a "tree hugger."

Examples of Propaganda

from *Animal Farm* by George Orwell

Propaganda Example	Identify the Propaganda Technique used in the example to the right.
<p>When justifying the pigs' hoarding of the milk and apples, Squealer says, "Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back! Yes, Jones would come back! Surely, comrades," cried Squealer almost pleadingly, skipping from side to side and whisking his tail, "surely there is no one among you who wants to see Jones come back?"</p>	<hr/>
<p>Snowball explains away the objections of the birds to the maxim: <i>Four legs good, two legs bad</i>. "A bird's wing, comrades," he said, "is an organ of propulsion and not of manipulation. It should therefore be regarded as a leg."</p>	<hr/>
<p>Snowball says to Mollie, "those ribbons that you are so devoted to are the badge of slavery. Can you not understand that liberty is worth more than ribbons?"</p>	<hr/>
<p>Squealer says, "Suppose you had decided to follow Snowball, with his moonshine of windmills—Snowball, who as we now know, was no better than a criminal?"</p>	<hr/>
<p>Napoleon, on the other hand, argued that the great need of the moment was to increase food production, and that if they wasted time on the windmill they would all starve to death.</p>	<hr/>
<p>(Not from <i>Animal Farm</i> but it could be.) Nobody shirked their duties at Animal Farm—almost nobody. "Mollie, every beast on this farm works to his or her capacity to make Old Major's dream come true. Isn't it time for you to join us as well?"</p>	<hr/>

Create Your Own Advertisement

Assignment

Create your own advertisement based on a character, event, or product from *Animal Farm*. The advertisement must include at least a photograph and/or graphic with text. The ad must incorporate at least one of the propaganda techniques discussed in this handout.

Types of Advertisement

- ❖ Political Ad—an ad promoting what one of the characters is doing or an ad promoting the election of a character.
- ❖ Event Ad—an ad promoting one of the many events or meetings in *Animal Farm*.
- ❖ Product Ad—an ad to promote the sale or trade of products produced on the farm.

Sketch your advertisement below and include the text you will use.

Write the text you plan to use here.