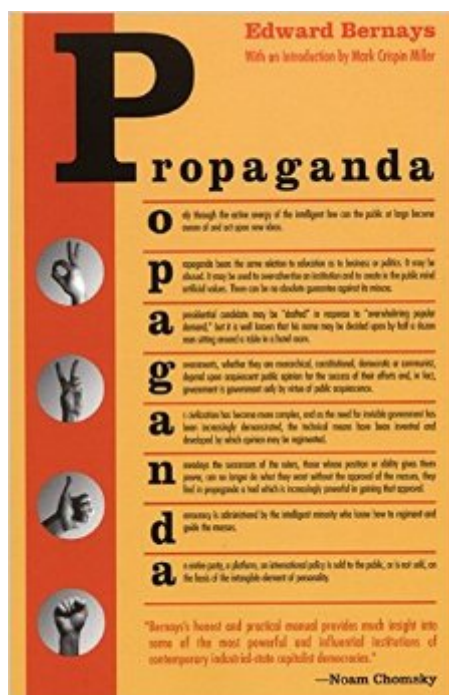


The book was found

Propaganda



Synopsis

“Bernays’s honest and practical manual provides much insight into some of the most powerful and influential institutions of contemporary industrial state capitalist democracies.” —Noam Chomsky “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.” —Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* A seminal and controversial figure in the history of political thought and public relations, Edward Bernays (1891–1995), pioneered the scientific technique of shaping and manipulating public opinion, which he famously dubbed “engineering of consent.” During World War I, he was an integral part of the U.S. Committee on Public Information (CPI), a powerful propaganda apparatus that was mobilized to package, advertise and sell the war to the American people as one that would “Make the World Safe for Democracy.” The CPI would become the blueprint in which marketing strategies for future wars would be based upon. Bernays applied the techniques he had learned in the CPI and, incorporating some of the ideas of Walter Lipmann, became an outspoken proponent of propaganda as a tool for democratic and corporate manipulation of the population. His 1928 bombshell *Propaganda* lays out his eerily prescient vision for using propaganda to regiment the collective mind in a variety of areas, including government, politics, art, science and education. To read this book today is to frightfully comprehend what our contemporary institutions of government and business have become in regards to organized manipulation of the masses. This is the first reprint of *Propaganda* in over 30 years and features an introduction by Mark Crispin Miller, author of *The Bush Dyslexicon: Observations on a National Disorder*.

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Customer Reviews

In a piece of amazingly brazen subterfuge, Bernays gives his book a title - "Propaganda" - which doesn't tell you what the book is ABOUT so much as what the book IS. That is to say, as Mark Crispin Miller points out in the Introduction, the true nature of this book is to act as propaganda for propaganda. To get the full message on how to carry out propaganda you have to watch what Bernays is actually DOING. If all you take from the book is what Bernays says overtly about how to mount a propaganda campaign you will have missed the whole point of the book. Bernay's central message is, in effect, "Never openly admit what propaganda is." And to this end he carefully confuses and conflates propaganda, PR and straightforward advertising. Indeed, although he uses the term "propagandist" a number of times in the book, he usually referred to himself as a "personal relations counsel". As an example of how this confusion technique is used in this book, Bernays makes the perfectly reasonable claim that manufacturers need to use advertising to bring their products to the notice of the general public, but manages to blur the distinction between advertising and propaganda so as to make it seem that it is propaganda which is a perfectly natural process in a well-organized society. First of all he sets us up by a series of seemingly reasonable but actually quite ludicrous statements (page 39 - it's a long Introduction): "In practice, if everyone went around pricing, and chemically testing before purchasing, the dozens of soaps or fabrics or brands of bread which are for sale, economic life would be hopelessly jammed." [Yes it would, but don't we actually test many things in a less exhaustive way every time we go shopping?

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