

U.S. Government

RECOGNIZING PROPAGANDA: “Come On, You Can Trust Me”

“Senator Albertson is a stubborn, inflexible, thoughtless voter on any legislation dealing with the environment.”

“Senator Albertson is a consistent, high-minded supporter of positive legislation dealing with the environment.”

“On three occasions, Senator Albertson has introduced bills to clean up harbors and rivers throughout the country.”

Can you see how different each statement is? The first is a highly unfavorable comment. The second is favorable. The third states the facts. The first two are slanted statements of opinion. The last is a factual statement.

PROPAGANDA is “a technique of persuasion aimed at influencing individual or group behaviors to create a particular belief regardless of its validity.” The first two statements above may qualify as propaganda. Propagandists often have a worthy goal. You yourself have undoubtedly been a propagandist at times. Though propaganda may urge you on to good actions, you should still be aware of the techniques used. Then you can choose your course of action on the basis of clear thinking. The following list gives examples of propaganda techniques.

1. Bandwagon - Tries to persuade everyone to join and do the same thing.
2. Loaded Words - Using words with strong emotional associations.
3. Plain Folks - Suggesting something is practical and a good value for ordinary people.
4. Glittering Generality - Using words so strongly positive in emotional content that just hearing them makes you feel good. The words express a positive meaning without actually giving a guarantee.
5. Transfer - Transferring good looks, feelings, or ideas to the person who the propaganda is meant to influence.
6. Testimonial - Using a famous person to endorse the candidate.
7. Repetition - Using the candidate name or a keyword or phrase over and

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Ad 2:

Ad 3:

Ad 4:

Ad 5:

Ad 6:

Ad 7:

Ad 8:

Ad 9: