



## Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion

By Anthony Pratkanis, Elliot Aronson

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Americans create 57% of the world's advertising while representing only 6% of its population; half of our waking hours are spent immersed in the mass media. Persuasion has always been integral to the democratic process, but increasingly, thoughtful discussion is being replaced with simplistic soundbites and manipulative messages.

Drawing on the history of propaganda as well as on contemporary research in social psychology, *Age of Propaganda* shows how the tactics used by political campaigners, sales agents, advertisers, televangelists, demagogues, and others often take advantage of our emotions by appealing to our deepest fears and most irrational hopes, creating a distorted vision of the world we live in.

This revised and updated edition includes coverage of the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal, recent election campaigns, talk radio, teen suicide, U.F.O. abductions, the Columbine shootings, and novel propaganda tactics based on hypocrisy and false allegations.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Drawing on the history of propaganda and modern research in social psychology, this book reveals mass persuasion in action -- not just the tactics, but why they work so well, and how we can protect ourselves from manipulation.

#### From Library Journal

Psychologists Pratkanis and Aronson present a thorough overview of how individuals and the mass media manipulate us using devious persuasive techniques. In order to understand how and why we are persuaded, the authors analyze the various tactics people use to get us to comply; point out ways we might deal sensibly and effectively with propaganda; and examine persuasion in a context of argument and debate. The authors' quarrel with persuasive communication today is that, rather than using logical argument, it uses emotional symbols to manipulate us. Advertisers, for example, use short, catchy, visually oriented messages to get us to buy things we might not need. Pratkanis and Aronson skillfully summarize research findings from the field of social psychology to illustrate their points. While a large portion of the book is devoted to advertising techniques, the authors also examine media coverage of the Gulf War, cult leaders, and political elections. Highly recommended for public and academic libraries.

- *Gary D. Barber, SUNY at Fredonia Lib.*

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#### From Scientific American

In one brilliant tour-de-force, Pratkanis and Aronson give us...a comprehensive text of what we really need to know about the most pervasive cultural phenomena of our time.

### Users Review

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