



PROPAGANDA

REVIEW

Number 5

Summer 1989

\$5

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Kinder, Gentler? More Subtle. Perhaps.

By Claude Steiner

Frequently we are asked: "Can you assure us that you are not, merely and finally, propagandists for the Left posing as propaganda analysts?"

It is true that we have been critical of right-of-center propaganda activities, exclusively, so far. We have done this for two reasons: First we believe that, at this time, right-leaning propaganda is so massive as to overwhelm what little may be coming from the Left. Which probably is the cause for the second reason; we have not received any articles that address the disturbing aspects of leftist propaganda.

It has been taken for granted by some that we are awash in left-leaning propaganda. But we insist that if you compare leftist propaganda with the volume of propaganda that inundates us from the Right it is practically negligible. Estimates of US government propaganda expenditures place it at 3 billion dollars per year. The USIA alone spends one billion yearly increased from 300 million in 1981. Corporate PR budgets, a large portion of which support conservative, rightwing ideology and effectively limit political debate in the mass media, are in the tens of billions. The disproportion between right and left propaganda dollars spent just on issues management alone is easily a thousand fold; that is to say, for every dollar spent by a progressive cause on propaganda campaigns such as we describe in this issue, (See Fenton Interview, p. 14), one thousand dollars are spent by the political opposition to neutralize it. We can therefore be forgiven if we don't apply an "even-handed" approach to the issue.

Three years ago, Propaganda Review was conceived in the heat of the Reagan presidency as a cry of protest against the obvious mind-twisting that people

were being subjected to by the Reagan administration.

Some might argue that Reagan was exposed and is safely retired in California. Some might further argue that with George Bush things are quite different in the propaganda environment; that the media is not supine, the photo opportunities not effective, the spin controllers not as active, in short, that the average citizen can again believe what he reads in the papers and views on the TV. Perhaps propaganda analysis is no longer an important activity in this kinder, gentler nation; we can relax.

Would that it were true. Reagan launched the propaganda age and just because Bush is cruising comfortably high above Reagan's clouds (his approval rating at 70 percent) does not mean that propaganda is anything but alive and well on the hard ground. More than ever, because so subtle, propaganda and its effects guide our awareness and actions. Where Reagan lied even as people knew he was lying, today's government continues to manage our consciousness, feed our cynicism, dull our senses and our critical abilities. If you think otherwise think again; look at yourself in the mirror and give yourself a smart, wake-up slap. It might be easy to see the crude tactics of Chinese government propaganda in the wake of the Tiananmen square massacre; the propaganda that engulfs us is not as obvious.

We at PR will continue to keep up with the postmodern era of propaganda. Show us to your friends, subscribe or re-subscribe and attend our conference in San Francisco on August 11-13.

P.S. - Propaganda Review recently won its first journalism award. "Project



Is propaganda analysis no longer an important activity in this kinder, gentler nation?

Censored" selected Peter Kornbluh's article, "Reagan's Propaganda Ministry," PR# 2, Summer, 1988, as one of the runner-ups in the "Most Censored Stories of 1988 Awards." Kornbluh, an analyst at the Washington-based National Security Archive, wrote about the State Department's Office of Public Diplomacy and its domestic propaganda operations on behalf of Reagan's war against Nicaragua.

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Letters

Where's Leonard Peltier?

Ward Churchill is one of the most knowledgeable and respected scholars of recent Native American oppression. Unfortunately his skeletal essay in PR #4, Spring 1989, barely touched on issues potentially relevant today.

Leonard Peltier remains in prison 13 years after being falsely tried and sentenced to two consecutive lifetimes in the deaths of two FBI agents on June 26, 1975.

Richard Marshall is still imprisoned on similarly conjured charges, convicted and sentenced by a trial tainted with fabricated evidence, perjured testimony and coerced witnesses.

Native Americans generally continue to be killed, harassed, cheated, and otherwise abused by government and corporate interests, including factions of their own people intent on the white man's way.

Last winter I participated in collecting resources for Pine Ridge elders. The winter before, elders had died because of lack of food, heat and adequate shelter dying alone after nearly every inch of their land and every ounce of their energy had been robbed by our so-called civilized society.

The propaganda and media void is a lot deeper than a government covering up its massacre of native-American people. It is inherent in the fact that we blithely rent another video for our evening's entertainment while our benefactors have insufficient food for the evening meal, two thousand miles away.

Stefan White
Leonard Peltier Defense Committee
Big Sur, California

Recycled Paper?

When working with fellow union members and discussion leads us to politics and the environment, as it often does, I always ask them if they recycle their garbage. The awareness that we all share the responsibility of the condition of the world around us and that there really is no boogey man needs to become universal. Direct action as an expression of public outrage needs to start at home. A common thread of not only awareness but of commitment is beginning to form which will change the face of the planet. Each time I start my car or use a plastic container I look for an alternative, just as I scan the horizon for political choices and look for an alternative.

Congratulations on providing us with an excellent alternative to our industry serving media. Propaganda Review lies along side Zeta, Open Road, the Earth Island Journal, and the Monthly Planet on my coffee table.

As I am a new convert to your publication and have not read all your back issues this question may be redundant, but I need to ask. Why is Propaganda Review printed on shiny white, environmentally insensitive paper?

Tom Candrian
San Rafael, California

[We are not unaware of the environmental problems caused by the use of bleached paper and have requested that our printer look for a source of recycled paper in spite of the 20% increase in cost to purchase same. There are apparently only four mills producing recycled paper in the United States but our printer reports that

demand is increasing partially because of a better print quality.

If anyone is interested in using recycled paper products at home or in the office, Earth Care Paper publishes a 24-page catalog. The Wisconsin company sells stationery, bond paper, envelopes, note and greeting cards, gift wrap, mailing labels, plus books on recycling and the environment for children and adults. The catalog is \$1 and is available from: Earth Care Paper Co., 100 South Baldwin, Dept. 274, Madison, WI 53703; phone (608) 256-5522. Ed.]

"Hitler's Last Laugh?"

As to Martin A. Lee's "Hitler's Last Laugh," both the Reds and participating "Free World" countries that defeated Germany, selectively saved and sponsored prominent Nazis for various reasons at war's end. That these newcomers never made a political dent in their host nations goes without saying. The Iron Curtain has not subsequently become "Hitlerized" nor has America created apartheid. Unless PR publishes exposes that include the Soviet Bloc (nearly half a century after the fact), the astute reader can only conclude that the motivation behind discussing this moldy material is just another leftist jibe to attempt to discredit the popular current and past Republican administration. I won't hold my breath waiting any forthcoming exposes by Mr. Lee of Soviet "sponsorship" of Nazis or of publication of this letter.

Paul Prentiss
San Francisco, California

Resources

Editor — Issue 5

Claude Steiner

Senior Editors

Johan Carlisle
Loretta Graziano
Sheila O'Donnell
Hannah Silver
Frederic Stout

Copy Editor

Hannah Silver

Design, Layout & Desktop Publisher
Johan Carlisle

Illustrations

Dan Hubig
Lisa Ryan

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Mail to: PROPAGANDA REVIEW
Media Alliance
Fort Mason Center, Building D
San Francisco, CA 94123

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Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age

The **Center For Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age**, a research and public education organization founded in 1983, is committed to an interdisciplinary study of the psychological dimensions of the global crisis generated by the arms race and the destruction of the environment. The **Center** seeks to understand the psychological and social forces that perpetuate the crisis and to apply that understanding to help create new modes of thinking and behaving demanded by the dangerous realities of the nuclear age.

The **Center** brings together researchers, clinicians, and thinkers from a variety of disciplines and is currently sponsoring a range of research projects to further its objectives. Some of those projects are concerned with dynamics at leadership or policy-making levels. Others investigate dynamics which permeate all levels of society. The complementary nature of Center projects and their capacity to inform each other magnifies the potential impact of individual efforts.

The Center's public education program has several components. The Center's colloquia and lecture series provide a forum for invited speakers to share the latest thinking on arms control and environmental issues with public audiences. Further, the **Center** disseminates its own work through researcher speaking engagements, lay and professional publications, and consultation to outside groups. In addition, it distributes its own publication, *Center Review*, and mails out article reprints, audio-visual materials, and its bibliography of bibliography of articles and books on request.

Contact the **Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age** at 1493 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 (617) 497-1553.

Greenpeace

Greenpeace is an international organization dedicated to preserving the earth and all the life it supports. **Greenpeace** activists work to stop the threat of nuclear war, to protect the environment from nuclear and toxic pollution, and to halt the needless slaughter of whales, dolphins, seals and other endangered animals.

The **Greenpeace** ethic is not only to bear witness but also to take direct nonviolent action to stop atrocities against the environment. The organization also organizes and mobilizes communities to demonstrate concern over local issues. **Greenpeace** investigators also document the scientific, financial, and political roots of environmental problems which are then presented as research briefs, papers, articles, films, videotapes, and slides. **Greenpeace** seeks to educate and inform the general public as well as those in decision making positions.

In addition, the organization produces a bimonthly magazine, *Greenpeace*, which covers international environmental issues. The magazine uses brilliant photography and covers environmental successes as well as those areas needing improvement.

Contact **Greenpeace** at 1436 U Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009 (202) 462-1177.

Propaganda Watch

Red Scare Hype

It was December, 1986, and Washington was a cold, dark place for the Reagan administration. Ed Meese had recently been on TV to announce the Iran-contra scandal. President Reagan was on the ropes, having been caught lying on TV. Perhaps a sexy media event would divert attention from the administration's troubles.

Conspiracy or not, the Moscow Embassy scandal certainly helped to distract the media. In December of '86, a US embassy guard in Moscow, Sergeant Clayton Lonetree, admitted that he had given classified information to the Soviets. Another guard, under duress, confessed to espionage, but later recanted. Only Lonetree was convicted as legal cases against others fell apart. For months, the story unfolded in the daily press. Experts claimed that the Soviets had not only compromised our embassy guards, but that they had bugged the US embassy's code room. Later, the story escalated into charges that the new US embassy building was filled with so many bugs that it would have to be rebuilt. Caspar Weinberger, then Secretary of Defense, called it "the worst spy case of the century."

Now, Time magazine (7/3/89), in what the Washington Post calls "an unusual journalistic debunking," says that the Soviets never successfully penetrated the US embassy at all. This directly challenges the findings of a book, *Moscow Station*, that Time excerpted as its cover story four months ago. The book is now being made into a mini-series. Perhaps, someday we'll see a mini-series about how these overblown red scares get pro-

Third Reich's PR Men

A landmark film which may explain why the Nazis thought they could get away with the "final solution" is scheduled to appear on TV this fall. Gerald Rafshoon, Jimmy Carter's top TV ad man, is producing "The Nightmare Years," former Hearst reporter William L. Shirer's chronicle of the Nazi rise to power.

Reportedly the film will show how Hitler and his PR men crafted one of the best cover-ups in history—the idea, accepted by millions of Americans, British, and French, that Hitler was nothing to fear. The film, according to the San Francisco Examiner (5/11/89), will explain how the Nazis exploited the media with unparalleled success: "the brilliant filmmaking, the superb manipulation of state-controlled radio, the seduction of the foreign press corps."

With Bob Woodward as script writer and Anthony Page ("The Missiles of August" - the acclaimed TV docudrama about the Cuban missile crisis) as director, "The Nightmare Years" should be worth a foray into TV-land. It will be shown on Turner Network Television in September. Christopher Matthews, the San Francisco Examiner's Washington correspondent, says, "If it succeeds, 'The Nightmare Years' will answer one of the big questions posed by [WW II]: why did the Nazis believe they could hide their final solution to the Jewish question from the world? It was their propaganda that convinced them, propaganda that portrayed Adolf Hitler as a prophet whose only desire was to lead his people out of the darkness and into the light of day."

Subliminal Messages for the People

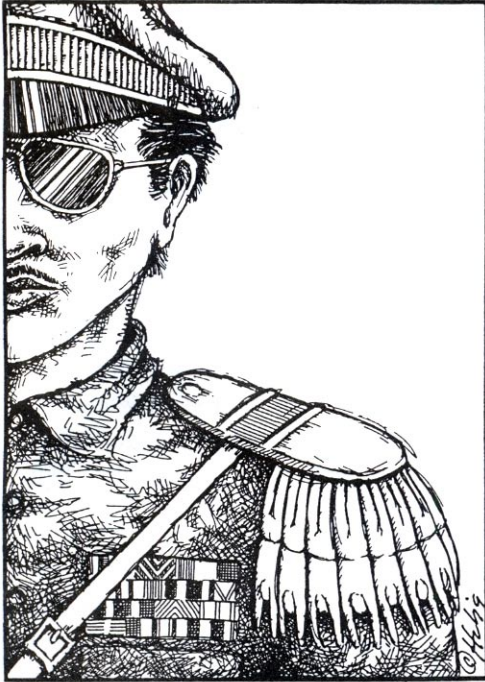
A Louisiana high school senior won a state writing contest recently by using subliminal messages throughout the text of his essay. Printed in tiny letters in 13 places within Jason Loupe's essay on "The Power of Subliminal Messages" was the message: "Give this essay first place." Loupe's 250-word essay explained how advertisers use hidden messages to influence consumers.

Interestingly, Associated Press, which reported on this clever high school kid in the San Francisco Examiner (6/7/89), didn't speculate about whether subliminal messages are still being used. These subtle "hidden persuaders," which Vance Packard wrote about in the '60s, were supposedly made illegal. But recently there have been reports about subliminal audio tapes being played in supermarkets and department stores which remind the employees not to steal and encourage the shoppers to spend more money.

The lack of background information in the AP story illustrates a type of propaganda-by-absence, which is common in the news media and is largely responsible for the lack of historical perspective among Americans.

"Red Scorpion"—Propaganda Blockbuster

Most of the anti-Soviet propaganda clichés that the right has systematically drummed into the American psyche over the last few years were present in "Red Scorpion," a sensational Ramboesque feature film that played last spring. The infamous "Hind helicopter gunship" which dumped



Dan Hubig

“yellow rain” on the natives stole the show from the Russian assassin, played by Dolph Lundgren, the evil Soviet boxer in “Rocky IV.” The absurd plot which had the Soviet assassin on a mission to Angola to off Jonas Savimbi ends up with the Russians abandoning the assassin who is adopted by a bushman. He is so inspired by their simple way of life that he goes back and singlehandedly wipes out the Soviets. As the Russian leaves, the bushman, dramatically framed by a sunset-washed butte, says, with feeling, “Das vadanya!”

This propaganda film, not unlike “Red Dawn”, portrays the Soviets as singularly evil, while their enemies, in this case the Angolan “freedom fighters,” are pure and loveable. [See Images of the Enemy, p.22]

The circumstances behind the creation of “Red Scorpion,” however, are more interesting than its propaganda value. The producer, Jack Abramoff, has connections to the World-Anti Communist League through his organization, the International Freedom Foundation (IFF). According to Covert Action Information Bulletin (Winter 1989), IFF is closely associated

with South Africa, where “Red Scorpion” was filmed (the only American film to do so in the face of an industrywide boycott) and has offices in Tel Aviv. Abramoff, who specializes in right wing propaganda films, also helped Oliver North raise money for the contras, according to a declassified National Security Council memo [see PR #1]. Abramoff also actively marketed videotapes of Oliver North’s contra slide show.

How many other Hollywood films have pedigrees like “Red Scorpion”?

“Carnal Torture”

If you’ve ever wondered what the CIA is up to in El Salvador, a recent article in Mother Jones provides a clue. In a typical week in San Salvador, the following movies were playing - most of them reportedly made in the United States:

Rapists of Virgin Girls, Absolute Diabolical Terror, Armed Response, Diabolical Gangs, Diabolical Nymphs, Girl Prisoners of War, Carnal Torture, Mercenaries of Hate, Squads That Kill, and Savage Dogs, “a series featuring oversized Dobermans tearing undressed women limb from limb.” The Mother Jones’ article [April 1989] included this startling list next to a catalog of mutilated and tortured Salvadorans. The writers didn’t elaborate, but, it wouldn’t be surprising to find out that these movies are part of a CIA psychological warfare operation.

The CIA did similar things in Chile preceding the coup and assassination of President Salvador Allende. In a 1980 book, Death In Washington, Fred Landis and Donald Freed document a psychological warfare technique developed and used by the CIA called “El Desquartzizado,” the

“quartered man.” Dozens of stories about disfigured and mutilated people and animals were planted in the news media by the CIA, usually, where possible right next to stories about Allende. The cumulative effect was that Chileans were subconsciously manipulated into associating the “quartered man” with Allende.

The appalling number of mutilations and torture in El Salvador may well be partly due to just such an operation involving the above movies.

Johan Carlisle

Ms. Liberty Turns Up In Atlanta

Downtown Atlanta may not be Tianamen Square, but a particularly timely version of Ms. Liberty turned up there in late June, shortly before the Supreme Court decision that gutted Roe v. Wade was handed down.

Atlanta’s Lady Liberty, projected onto an office building, stood 100 feet tall and wore absolutely nothing but the word “mine” scrawled across her torso. Her appearance amazed passersby and stopped traffic for nearly an hour until she was removed.

Although her visit was short, Ms. Liberty Atlanta-style was the powerful message of a guerrilla abortion-rights group making clear its displeasure with the antics of the good 01’ boys and girls on the Supreme Court.

Hannah Silver

What Is Propaganda, Anyway?

Three Views By Current and Former Editors of *Propaganda Review*

*The following three essays continue our **Dialogue** feature, designed to allow our readers, writers, and editors to debate ideas and follow up or disagree with the thoughts of others. Propaganda analysis has been likened to a fish scrutinizing the water it swims in - the very ubiquity of it makes an objective critique difficult. Many of the central themes in propaganda analysis invite, indeed require, a multi-faceted approach to obtain even an approximation of the truth.*

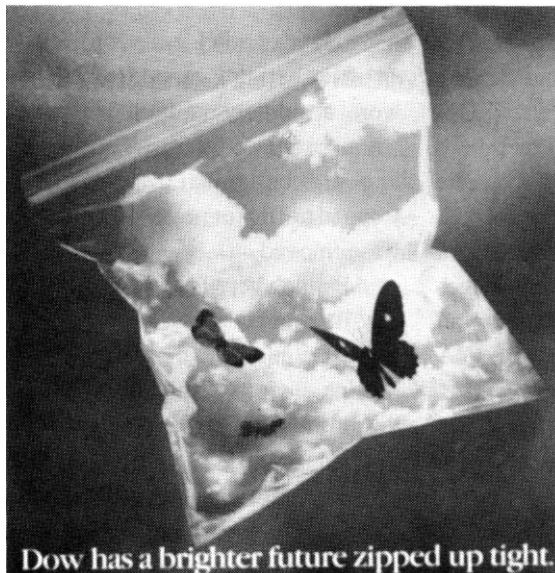
Propaganda analysts must contend with the fact that mainstream propaganda dominates the culture to such an extent that progressive critiques often seem

like cries in the wilderness.

The first essay, by Marcy Darnovsky, was published in Propaganda Review #1. It was written as an editorial introduction to a new magazine and, thus, contains several references to the magazine itself. Darnovsky, who was the Editor-in-Chief of Propaganda Review (and its predecessor, Propaganda Analysis Review) from 1986-1988, wanted the essay printed as it was originally written. Following, in alphabetical order, are essays by Senior Editors, Claude Steiner (with Charles Rappleye) and Frederic Stout.

The Propaganda Environment

Marcy Darnovsky



The problem with calling a magazine *Propaganda Review* is that “propaganda” is a slippery concept, difficult to define. Worse, its several meanings are mutually conflicting. In many countries and in many dictionaries, propaganda is a neutral term, akin to persuasion. To most Americans, it’s an insult.

**One aspect of the
propaganda
environment is
commodity society**

The advantage of our name, on the other hand, is that it so often hits a nerve - the nerve that produces a sneer when confronted with advertising claims, PR hacks, campaign promises, and the statements of government officials.

But even if such skepticism and cynicism were universal, they would not be adequate responses to the attempts at manipulating

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Propaganda is a Conscious Conspiracy, Period

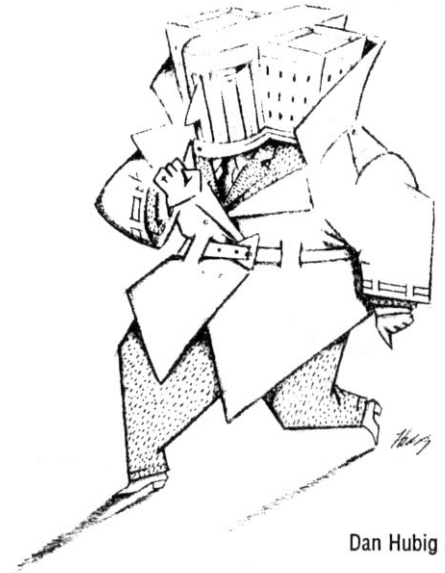
Claude Steiner and Charles Rappleye

In modern intellectual usage the term propaganda has lost much of its meaning, evolving into a pejorative catchall convenient for hurling at one's political enemies. Any distasteful slogan, advertisement, or cultural trend can be discredited as "propaganda." The upshot is that the concept of propaganda has lost its meaning. We would like here to restore some order.

Certainly, propaganda involves an effort to manipulate public opinion. But we need to go further. Does any conscious conspiracy to manipulate public opinion comprise propaganda? The question goes to the heart of this debate, and our answer is "No." In today's mass society, almost any endeavor requires some degree of manipulation of opinion, but propaganda doesn't necessarily enter the picture. Clearly, we need a more workable definition.

The concept of
propaganda
has lost its
meaning

continued on page 10



Propagandized Culture

Frederic Stout

As I have argued elsewhere ("Propaganda and Postmodernism," PR#3), the urgent challenge facing propaganda analysis today is to understand and articulate what makes contemporary propaganda so radically different from anything that has come before. In using the term "postmodernism," I attempted to draw a distinction between how propaganda operates today, in the late 20th century, and how it operated in its *modernist* phase (as an instrument of military and ideological imperialism reaching its high water mark during World War II) - continued from page 7



Ronald and Nancy Reagan at the 1984 Republican National Convention

Human thought
patterns, indeed
human culture itself,
has become
thoroughly
propagandized

Darnovsky—continued from page 6

opinions and belief that pervade modern society. Propaganda is more than an inflated claim, more than a set of ideas that some cabal is trying to shove down the throats of an innocent population - though such ideas and such cabals exist. As we understand propaganda, it pervades culture and consciousness. It's a subtle yet frighteningly powerful means of social coercion.

For this reason, we tend to accept the negative connotations that American parlance has assigned to the word. Persuasion, on the other hand, we consider to be a different species entirely. We disapprove not of systematic attempts to win people's hearts and minds, but of manipulation that warps the heart and cripples the mind.

Our goal in launching Propaganda Review is to bring those kinds of manipulation out of the closet and to explore them under the rubric "propaganda." We want to develop the skeptical sneer elicited by isolated instances of propaganda into a deeper and more critical understanding. In short, we want to name propaganda as a political issue, to make it visible and recognizable so that it can be resisted.

Propaganda USA

In the American political arena, the Reagan Administration has put propaganda at center stage. While manipulation has always been a tool of governance, Reagan and Company have pioneered and refined a variety of new techniques. They are masters of what Edward Bernays, the father of public relations, called the "engineering of consent" - connoisseurs, in their own words, of "perception management," "spin control," and "plausible deniability."

Though they are master propagandists, the Reagan crew can't take credit for the most important factor in their success: what we call "the propaganda environment." This pervasive cultural condition cannot be explained as the work of clever conspirators or public relations experts. It is the outcome of large-scale social and historical trends - mass society, mass media, mass production depending on compulsive consumerism. The propaganda environment is nurtured in every state - people's republic or capitalist democracy - that draws its legitimacy from the consent of the governed while it devotes vast resources to manufacturing that consent.

In other eras and other societies, social consensus was achieved by different means, often as coercive as those of today. Some of these earlier constraints on belief and understanding have been loosened just during the past hundred years—religious dogma, for

example, or rigid value systems imposed by family, ethnic group, and social class.

Today, what a person thinks and the way he or she lives are determined much less by neighborhood, ethnicity, or family ties. Suffocating though these communities of belief often were, they at least served as buffers against coercion by larger social forces. As they have crumbled, the individual has been left to the whims and requirements of state and marketplace.

Social consensus is now produced by means of social engineering. From electing a president to selecting a wardrobe, we are bombarded with messages and images that are carefully crafted in specialized agencies and disseminated everywhere by sophisticated delivery systems. These masterpieces of manipulation help to mold not just an opinion here and a brand loyalty there, but the framework through which we see the world and our expectations about the way we live.

One aspect of the propaganda environment is commodity society. With instant and direct access to everyone, it "cultures" the obsessiveness of consumerism—to the point where culture itself is nearly consumed. It trains people from birth to be manipulable, channeling their fears and desires to its needs. Consciousness and subconsciousness, attitude and emotion, become ever more vulnerable to fashion, trend, stereotype, and slogan.

The propaganda environment has also largely subverted political discourse. Government by propaganda has become an institution, and to a frightening degree, the population has been rendered incapable of the sustained critical thinking that is a prerequisite to democracy. Part symptom of this malaise and part cause, television has become chief arbiter of reality. It puts deodorant and death on equal footing, and transmutes both into entertainment. Other facets of the consciousness industry

We see the banning of

books as less of a

problem today than is

the systematic

development of a

culture in which no one

wants to read them

- the education system, public relations, public opinion polling, market research - play significant supporting roles.

The managers of our society take seriously their jobs as captains of consciousness. They appreciate the centrality of propaganda to social control; they study it and talk to each other about it in journals, institutes, and think tanks. Propaganda should be at least as pressing an issue for those of us who see communication as inquisitive dialogue and as a means of developing the self and enriching others; for those who consider democracy a broadly participatory process rather than an intermittent rubber-stamping ritual.

Toward this end, Propaganda Review will cover both government disinformation campaigns and commercial advertising campaigns, both intelligence agencies and public relations agencies. Our range will include the Cold War and soap operas, the techniques of the propagandists and the character structures of the propagandized.

Though we won't ignore traditional concerns about information and communication - freedom of the press, media monopolization, censorship, government secrecy, the commercialization of information - we may approach them in untraditional ways. We are wary of thought control even in the absence of thought police; we decry surpluses of irrelevant information as much as we oppose censorship and cover-ups. We see the banning of books as less of a problem today than is the systematic development of a culture in which no one wants to read them.

These issues have seldom been considered together; for us they are threads of understanding waiting to be woven into a coherent pattern.

Who We Are

The Media Alliance members who founded the propaganda analysis project in 1985 conceived of propaganda as both a media issue and a larger political problem. That group and those who joined it in the ensuing year were driven to the extreme measure of undertaking a volunteer-based publication by a propaganda and ideological blitz from the White House and the new right. The editorial statement published in the first issue of Propaganda Analysis Review (the tabloid predecessor of Propaganda Review)



spoke of a "new and shadowy threat" to "American press freedom and all the other freedoms of a democratic society."

The far right kept right on rising, claiming to be divinely blessed. Ronald Reagan had been reelected, teflon intact. The administration spewed out a seemingly unlimited supply and variety of disinformation campaigns - windows of vulnerability, supply-side economics, yellow rain, and Star Wars as nuclear umbrella, Russian MIGs on their way to Nicaragua and Sandinistas on their way to Texas. The Reagan team was prolific both with carefully arranged propaganda spectacles - the invasion of Grenada, the orgies of patriotism surrounding the Olympics and the Statue of Liberty celebration - and with impromptu psychodramas of manipulation, like the ones that followed the KAL 007 disaster and the nuclear accident at Chernobyl.

We watched as the Reaganites got away with it. In part they succeeded because the major media played along. The alternative press and an occasional columnist might point out that the Great Communicator contradicted himself, fumbled his lines, made ridiculous claims, imagined entire incidents-but on the whole, the watchdogs lapped it up. The Washington press corps apparently found amusing a sign posted on presidential press secretary Larry

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Propaganda is a

conscious conspiracy

that uses the mass media

to facilitate or to influence

the activities of the state

through the manipulation

of public opinion



Steiner/Rappleye - continued from page 7

Propaganda and the State



Modern propaganda developed in response to the emergence of mass opinion as a source of political power. Originally the state and church acted in largely autonomous fashion. The advent of revolution, democracy, and mass communication, however, required public acquiescence, and at times, consensus.

Propaganda, then, comprised the state's systematic effort to maximize its power through the management of public opinion. Similar efforts by large interest groups to influence state activity through the manipulation of that same public opinion qualify as propaganda as well. We contend that despite the changes in the nature of the culture surrounding it, propaganda's essential role has not changed; it continues to be the state's effort to maintain its power through communication or the efforts of other large entities, particularly political parties and interest groups, which have recognized the latent power of mass opinion and seek to achieve specific goals through its manipulation. But in both cases, the ultimate objective is to facilitate or influence the activities of the state.

What causes the current confusion, we believe, is that the concept of propaganda is being applied to other communication developments in American culture which emerged alongside propaganda early in the century. The most widely cited case is advertising.

Propaganda and Advertising



Like modern propaganda, modern advertising developed roughly in the middle 1920s when Edward Bernays, the "father of public relations," borrowed Freud's thinking and applied it to sales. His use of symbols and images revolutionized the marketplace and may have been the single most significant factor in the development of our current consumer society.

Yet, to call advertising propaganda is to adulterate both terms and encumber any effort to better understand either. To our minds, the advent of modern advertising was a cultural development similar to the invention and subsequent impact of the printing press. Similarly, the development of the methods used in modern advertising - methods frequently borrowed by the propagandist - represented a major change in the culture but cannot be categorized by labeling it "propaganda."

The distinction that we are making between propaganda and advertising is not just a capricious creation of two categories out of the single phenomenon of manipulation of mass opinion. For

there is a fundamental difference between the activities of the state and its opposition and all those other opinion manipulators - eg., business advertisers. The difference is that the objectives of business are inherently unidimensional while the objectives of the state encompass the full range of state activity, ranging from child care and abortion to warfare and imperialism.

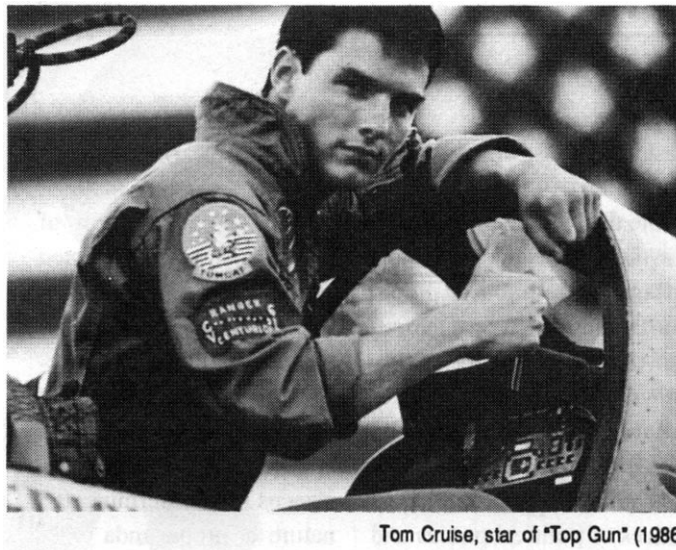
The object of advertising is simply to stimulate sales. Advertising seeks to place its products at the center of the public soul, but not necessarily to change the nature of what is at its center. To do so would be costly and might not be effective. However, advertising does occasionally involve itself in changing public consciousness, e. g., the Advertising Council's promotion of consumerism or the war on drugs.

But the objective of propaganda is different. When the public soul proves to be an obstacle to state activity, the propagandist seeks to change it. The public is not simply an audience to be seduced, but is itself the subject of the propagandist's work, something to be altered when mass opinion stands in the way of state objectives.

The distinction we are making here is between activities located within the mass culture, which include advertising as well as film, television, popular music, literature, and even fads; and propaganda, which stands outside of the culture and seeks to change it.

So far our definition of propaganda is the systematic manipulation of public opinion by the state or by parties seeking to influence the activities of the state. Here we would add a few secondary criteria which we believe will make this a more useful and precise definition. First off, propaganda must be conscious and intentional. This excludes educators, novelists, journalists, and any other communicators whose material contains messages,

perhaps even political messages, but who, unless party to some organized conspiracy to advocate one program or another, cannot be labeled propagandists. Secondly, we believe that propaganda must involve more than one individual. It cannot be the manic agitation of a lone pamphleteer, championing causes on street corners; it requires organized, systematic activity by a group of people — a conspiracy — seeking to manipulate mass opinion.



Tom Cruise, star of "Top Gun" (1986)

the activity of propaganda; for example, the journalist who unknowingly repeats Soviet or White House disinformation is a dupe, but he or she is not a propagandist. This journalist transmits the message, but does not generate it. Another journalist may, on the other hand, be a propagandist in that he consciously transmits what he knows to be disinformation.

The only truly tangible aspect of propaganda is its

The Propaganda Environment

Our critics contend that this narrow definition of propaganda ignores the new sophistication of propaganda in an increasingly complex mass communication society, developments which they address under the umbrella term "propaganda environment." We would respond that our definition does not overlook the concept of the propaganda environment, but distinguishes the environment from propaganda itself.

Propaganda messages emanate from a technically sophisticated source and spread like concentric waves away from the source of their production. Like waves, which require a medium -water-the propaganda information requires a medium, which is conducive of the message; the propaganda environment. The information manufactured by the propagandists disseminates, and co-mingles through the propaganda environment's continuum. Every successful propaganda message eventually becomes part of the culture and modifies the culture's structures. The propaganda environment simply describes the culture in terms of its conductivity of and receptivity to, propaganda messages generated by a political cabal seeking to manipulate the public.

We have found that, unless propaganda is distinguished by intent, the term can be applied to a myriad of images and symbols generated through the media. Intent is often a factor in definition - in a court of law, intent is what divides murder from manslaughter. In both cases the victim is dead; what was going on in the mind of the perpetrator makes a real difference. Similarly, intent is crucial in

source, the propagandist's activity. Beyond this tangible reality, propaganda permeates the culture in an increasingly diffuse and imperceptible manner. Propaganda messages are on their way to becoming part of the culture the moment that the recipient is no longer conscious of their purpose but believes them to be an unadorned version of reality. The propaganda environment is an essential aspect of propaganda's function but it isn't, in itself, propaganda; chicken soup is needed to breed botulism but chicken soup, even botulism-poisoned chicken soup, is not botulism.

To sum up: *Propaganda is a conscious conspiracy that uses the mass media to facilitate or to influence the activities of the state through the manipulation of public opinion.* We can see this definition at work in an analysis of two films: "Rambo II" and "Top Gun."

"Rambo" versus "Top Gun"

"Rambo II" was an enormously popular film that took on significance as an emblem for the resurgent chauvinism that engulfed the US in the mid- '80s. But to our thinking, and by our definition, "Rambo" was not propaganda. Sylvester Stallone, who masterminded the project, had no interest in promoting patriotism beyond the impact that political posture would have on the production's bottom line. Rather than propaganda, "Rambo II" was a cultural expression that captured the mood of the country,

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Stout — continued from page 7

War II) and in its premodernist phase (as an instrument of religious proselytizing during the Reformation).

In advancing that argument, I wrote that certain geopolitical and technological developments in the years since 1945, the years of the Cold War, had set the stage for postmodern propaganda and had established the major themes of “the contemporary propaganda environment.” In this, I echoed the highly original formulation of Marcy Damovsky whose editorial statement in PR# I (“Political Discourse in the Propaganda Environment,” reprinted here, see page 6) announced an editorial policy for our new magazine that would include an interest in not only the propagandistic practices of political parties and government agencies but closely related developments in advertising, the arts and popular culture as well.

Now, however, come Claude Steiner and Charles Rappleye with a demand for greater precision in defining “propaganda” in such a way that the “botulism” of propaganda properly so-called may be distinguished from the “chicken soup” of the propaganda environment. By the terms of the Steiner-Rappleye definition which explicitly rules out commercial advertising and entertainment-oriented movies unless their producers had conscious propagandistic intent - true propaganda consists only of a “conscious conspiracy to manipulate public opinion,” the “ultimate objective” of which is to “influence the activities of the state.”

There are, it seems to me, two different problems with the definition that Steiner and Rappleye propose. The first is that it fails to address the fundamental purpose of propaganda analysis which is to draw a meaningful distinction between propaganda and legitimate forms of argument and persuasion. The threat that propaganda poses to our free press traditions and democratic process is that it poisons the well of rational political discourse, yet Steiner and Rappleye’s formulation clearly suggests that all forms of political argument are a priori propagandistic. By defining propaganda in this way, Steiner and Rappleye use the word in its European sense - that is, roughly equivalent to “information” or “communication” - and thus turn their backs to common American usage wherein the word implies an underhanded manipulation of the truth or flat-out deceit.

The second problem is that the Steiner-Rappleye definition is ahistorical and fails to recognize how thoroughly postmodern propaganda has been infiltrated into the popular culture and mass consciousness.

Propagandization

Any viable definition of propaganda must be rooted in a firm understanding of the different roles propaganda has played in a succession of historical and cultural contexts and in the special and unique circumstances that determine the nature of propaganda practice today. No one definition of propaganda can serve as a reliable guide to the analysis of phenomena as diverse as the proselytizing of the 16th century Papacy, on the one hand, and the electioneering of the 20th century American political parties on the other.

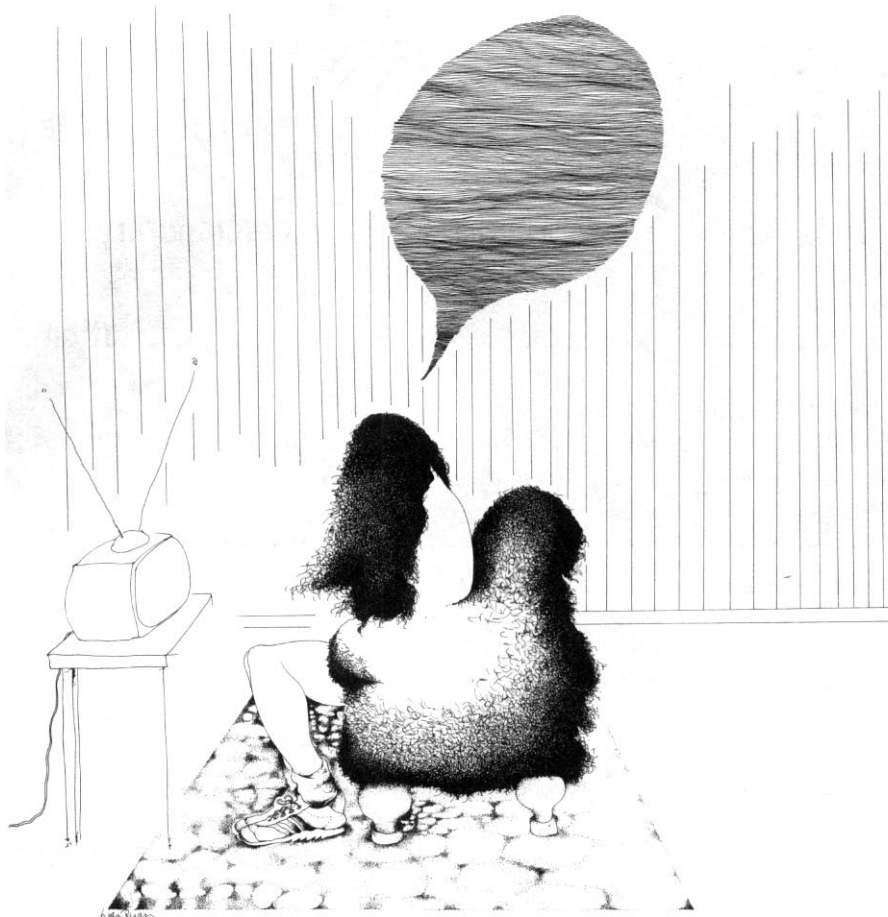
True, certain broad themes and tendencies may indeed be traced throughout the history of propaganda, and certain broad formulations - such as “conscious conspiracy to manipulate public opinion” or “a combination of information manipulation and myth creation” or merely “lies” - may be used as a kind of shorthand distillation of what we are talking about. But any truly useful definition of propaganda as it operates today must respond to the specific nature of the current situation. And for me at least, that truly useful definition of the contemporary propaganda situation rests on the concept of propagandization.

By “propagandization” I mean the process by which very nearly the entire population of the world has become saturated by an unending and all-pervasive stream of mutually reinforcing propagandistic messages, so much so that propaganda has come to infuse and dominate the very cognitive processes and subconscious imagery of human consciousness. In our time, human thought patterns, indeed human culture itself, has become thoroughly propagandized.

Many factors have contributed to the contemporary propagandization of culture, but two stand out as particularly important: the Cold War and television.

Throughout the modernist phase of propaganda history, propaganda was understood, especially in the Western

Many factors have contributed to the contemporary propagandization of culture, but two stand out as particularly important: the Cold War and television.



Lisa Ryan

and Madison Avenue.

democracies, to be a wartime exigency, an additional tool-turned-weapon of statecraft used temporarily (like wartime censorship regulation) in the effort to further a military struggle. Since 1945, however, propaganda war, especially between the United States and the Soviet Union, has become permanent, unrelenting, a continuous side effect of Cold War superpower hostilities. And insofar as the Cold War has now continued for nearly half a century, the result is that fully three generations of humanity have now been subjected to this unending process of propagandization.

Recognizing that the effectiveness of propaganda has always been limited by the available means of communicating messages, we must also recognize that the peculiar handmaiden of Cold War propaganda, and the current cultural process of propagandization, is television. The modernist propagandists of the World War II era used every means of mass communications technology available to them - posters, radio, film, mass rallies dominated by pageantry and loud-speakers - but none of their message-carrying media had the range or the scope of contemporary broadcast television. TV has

become ubiquitous throughout the world, and so have the propaganda messages it carries. And the characteristic passivity of the television viewer, reduced from an early age to the status of an hypnotic subject, insures that those messages will reach into the innermost recesses of consciousness.

Finally, one other characteristic of contemporary postmodern propaganda must be pointed out: today, the special emphasis of the propagandists is to target domestic populations as a means of consent management and social control. To achieve this end, the propagandists of postmodernity freely borrow techniques derived from advertising and the entertainment industry to convey political messages, and the producers of our popular culture freely inject political messages into their ads and movies. As a result, the United States Information Agency, our government's nominally "official" propaganda agency, has been largely supplanted by the corporate news media, the opinion pollsters, Hollywood,

Propaganda and Popular Culture

Originating in Cold War ideological struggles and disseminated through all possible media of communications, especially television, postmodern propaganda succeeds to such an amazing and alarming degree because of continual repetition and reiteration. Propaganda has become a constant drum beat that drowns out all other sensory input and thus results in the condition I call propagandization.

A content analysis of current American propaganda would reveal a number of basic themes - racism, sexism, anti-communism, a crude kind of lowest-common-denominator patriotism, a generalized contempt for the Third World and a national chauvinism intimately tied to a blind dogmatism about the superiority of the capitalist system of "Free Enterprise." What is immediately obvious about these basic themes is that they come to

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The PR Wizard Who Stopped Alar

An Interview With David Fenton



L to R: David Fenton, Leila McDowell-Head (acct. executive at Fenton Comm.), Jesse Jackson, Michael Manley (Jamaican Prime Minister) at Transfrica Forum 12th Anniv. dinner, 6/12/89

Sharon Farmer

During the '60s and '70s,
David Fenton spent time with
Abbie Hoffman and Jerry
Rubin whom he describes as
"way ahead of their time in
understanding how television
could be used to effect mass
movements. "

Introduction

Public relations experts rarely appear in the headlines - they toil invisibly behind the scenes figuring out ways to manipulate the media to serve their clients' goals. In most cases, the clients are corporations, governments, or movie stars. Rarely can a progressive organization afford the high cost of a public relations firm. In the recent, highly visible, media campaign against the apple growers' use of the chemical Alar, the unexpected happened. A progressive cause won its battle in the media.

Propaganda Review wanted to find out how this extraordinary event came about. One of our editors knew the man behind the scenes in the Alar story, David Fenton, and arranged an extensive interview. Excerpts of that interview appear below-if you would like a full transcript of the complete interview, send us \$3 and its yours.

David Fenton, 37, who heads Fenton Communications with offices in New York and Washington, employing nine people, has worked for the last 20 years in and around the media and public relations business. He quit high school at 16 to photograph the anti-war movement for Liberation News Service. During the '60s and '70s, he spent a lot of time with Abbie Hoffman and some with Jerry Rubin whom he describes as "way ahead of their time in understanding how television could be used to effect mass movements."

In 1971, he moved to Ann Arbor and helped start and publish for six years an alternative newspaper, the Ann Arbor Sun. The newspaper was the centerpiece of a movement to free

John Sinclair, a radical activist, from a politically motivated prison sentence. Eventually the Ann Arbor Sun was successful in helping to start a progressive, third political party called the Human Rights Party. The party got control of the Ann Arbor City Council, which had been Republican from time immemorial, and also helped elect the city's first Black mayor. In the late '70s Fenton was the director of Public Relations for Rolling Stone Magazine when it was doing political investigative news stories such as the CIA's influence on the US press and the Karen Silkwood story.

He then started free lancing for Ralph Nader, Mother Jones and the Sierra Club. He later brought Abbie Hoffman home from the underground to the "Barbara Walters Show."

In the following interview by Propaganda Review Senior Editor, Claude Steiner, Fenton discusses his highly successful work against contra aid, and more recently, how he helped manage the campaign that culminated in the withdrawal from the market of the chemical Alar.

He is one of a handful of progressive media specialists. Among his colleagues, he names Herb Gunther in San Francisco, Bill Zimmerman who does television advertising in Los Angeles, and Josh Baran in Los Angeles who has done work for the nuclear freeze, the anti-war movement and the women's movement and who master minded the campaign behind the successful TV show, "The Day After."

Claude Steiner: *What do you call yourself? What is it that you do?*

David Fenton: The word propaganda is skewed with all the wrong meaning in this culture. Public relations implies that you would work for anything and say anything. I'm a communications consultant, or something along those lines. We try to help progressive activists, non-profit organizations and in some cases governments and others to insert views into the media that just wouldn't get there on their own. We work to pierce through the media's usual bias by making new ideas attractive to them.

What would you say the media bias is?

The American media is particularly addicted to conventional wisdom and amazingly unable to think outside of it or to

even conceptualize what thought outside conventional wisdom might be. It's dominated by the government, by the pseudo-free enterprise ideology of the '80s and it continues to be dominated by an industry bias and a Cold War foreign policy perspective. You can't separate the corporate ownership of the media from the way it reports things. Yet, most journalists would argue that corporate ownership has absolutely nothing to do with anything that they write.

Which I think, shows how out of touch they are with how things actually operate.

There is a remarkably perfected, cultural auto-pilot, where things outside the homogeneous universe are never considered. Our job is to press things into the public eye that just wouldn't get there on their own.

How did you engineer the Alar campaign?

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), which is entering the media age, had a report which showed that children are at great risk from legal levels of pesticides allowed by the government on fruits and vegetables. Kids consume lots more fruits and vegetables for their size than adults, yet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had never bothered to consider this when they set the "safe" levels. This report showed that the worse offender is a chemical called Alar in apples and especially in apple juice, apple sauce, and other apple products. Alar is causing one cancer in 40 thousand children while the government deems it acceptable to cause one cancer in a million. NRDC also had Meryl Streep graciously willing to play a major role in speaking out on this issue.

What groups such as this normally do is hold a press conference, get a story in some newspapers, get on the news wire the next day. Then the story goes away and that's the end of it. The NRDC hired us and we set out to create many repetitions of the findings of this report and the message we wanted to put forward. This elementary principle applies not just to advertising,

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to this kind of work

but to the way populations absorb and learn anything through the press and especially television; one exposure is not enough. Our goal was to reach average Americans, not just the elite, so that wherever they turned they would hear our message, many different times, via multiple outlets.

This is very rarely done by public interest groups while the right wing and corporations do it all the time. We devised a scenario that started with a segment on the weekly TV program “60 Minutes,” which reaches 40 million people. We arranged to have a press conference the next morning and to have an article in Time magazine that same day by making various embargo agreements, which are standard in the PR industry. We arranged a number of talk shows including the “Today” show and some evening news programs.

The report was very strong; it could withstand all kinds of scrutiny and was very shocking. We went to different TV shows and said: “We are releasing the report on February 26th. Take time to investigate and check it, develop film for TV and so on

We prearranged all of that so it would come out at the same time. We worked on this campaign for about five months before it finally hit on the planned date. The “news embargo” is standard operating procedure. In some ways it’s a good practice because inaccuracies happen when a news conference is called and journalists are expected to master complex material in the three hours they have to file. At any rate, the report withstood their scrutiny and was widely reported upon on the day we lifted our embargo, February 26, 1989.

It’s not easy to get on “60 Minutes.” Did you get on just simply on the strength of the report?

Also very important is the credibility we have built as a firm over the years. There is no question that reputation and getting your phone calls returned are key to this kind of work.

There also has been rising public environmental concern since last summer. The symbolic appeal of the thought of apples as a threat to children, as well as NRDC’s reputation were all factors. But it was the strength of the report and the alarming nature of its findings, peer reviewed by scientists that was

most influential. After the first week of attention on the report, NRDC announced a new organization: “Mothers and Others for Pesticide Limits,” headed by Meryl Streep. Streep went on the “Donahue” show, and again on the “Today” show and she gave interviews by satellite all day long with local television anchors. The American public is hungry for celebrities and having one available really helps. We were taken up by People magazine.

Three months prior to the embargo date we had placed this story in *Women’s Day*, *Family Circle*, *Redbook*, *Organic Gardening*, and *New Woman*. Their combined circulation was 20 million copies. Over a two week period, if you turned on the “Today” show or the evening news or “Donahue” you saw it. You heard it on the radio. If you opened your local home town newspaper you read about it four times. It was everywhere. At that point a phenomenon takes place - the story becomes a myth; it obtains a level of recognition and presence that gives it a life of its own. As a result of all the repetition, the average person on the street would have heard about the problem with pesticides in fruits and vegetables endangering children.

Then, of course, after the story achieved quite a bit of prominence on its own, the strange coincidence came about of two poisoned Chilean grapes being discovered that caused a weeklong ban of Chilean fruit. School systems started banning apples around the country. That added to the story. “60 Minutes” was attacked, and in response did an unusual, second segment in May which made mincemeat of the critics. Now even the industry is pleading with EPA to ban Alar so that people will buy apples again. I’m sure that we will see the next round of pesticide legislation go through the Congress a bit faster than it would have before.

As you began to have success, what was the response from the other side?

An industry-funded front group called “The American Council on Science and Health,” whose role is to say that there is no harm from anything, ever, swung into action. The media likes a “balanced” view. In some of the stories, fraudulent non-scientific material was accorded equal status to our report. The message to the viewer becomes: “One group says its dangerous and the other group says its not, they cancel each other out, so who knows what to think?” In addition, the chemical industry got a copy of a version of our report, and they released it to the press on the Friday before our release date. This is based on the



Even the *Washington Times* (3/8/89 Commentary page) got with it.

theory that if there is going to be bad news it's useful to put your spin on it and release it on a Friday so it appears in Saturday's newspapers, which nobody reads, hoping that the story will die. They didn't realize that all these talk shows, and magazines stories had been pre-arranged. So their attempt to bury the story was quite ineffective but it would have worked in other, less prepared cases.

I remember seeing on the evening news that you have to eat several tons of apples to get sick ...

**Given the stigma
against the Left, if I
tried to operate in some
dishonest way,
they would never talk to me
again**

That was their response line. The media had given so much exposure to our findings, they came under enormous pressure from industry groups. The EPA and FDA started putting out statements assuring schools that apples were safe. These statements were false, but the media wants to report "both sides." Also, the market place was really being damaged. The price

of apples fell enormously. The stock of Alar's manufacturer, Uniroyal, dropped considerably. Consumer buying habits changed overnight. Lines started forming in health food stores. The sales of organic produce soared. All of which we are very happy about.

The media started feeling pressure from the industry in the form of a barrage of releases, phone calls and meetings. They used both the carrot and the stick. The heads of industries call the heads of networks. The right wing columnists went into action. William Safire wrote an apoplectic column. The front page of the *Washington Post* featured an attack on the media for blowing the whole thing out of proportion, and this story missed the very central point; that because of the amount of apples that kids consume the levels of Alar they're exposed to aren't safe.

Did you report it exactly as it was or did you put a spin on it?

I would never say something that wasn't true about it; that would undermine my ability to be successful. However, any reporter would write a lead paragraph that stresses the most dramatic aspects of the story.

Would you leave out information that you know could be used to diminish the impact of the report?

No. Given the stigma against the Left, in tried to operate in some dishonest way, they would never talk to me again. We really try to adhere to a journalistic ethic. I am dealing with very conservative editors and producers and I want them to keep talking to me. The basic lesson of the Alar story is that if you work in advance, plan carefully and use all the techniques that are available and you have a good story; you can have a much greater impact than if you do it the standard way, which is to call a press conference.

What were the finances of the project?

The campaign was designed so that revenue would flow back to NRDC from the public. The group sold a book about pesticides through a 900 telephone number on the "Donahue" show and to date 90,000 copies have been sold. The other side must be spending over two million dollars to "manage" the issue. I think that it's a typical guerrilla war situation where you get a lot more done with a lot less money than the opposition.



Dan Hubig

Contra Aid

Lets talk about contra aid.

In 1983 I went to Nicaragua and met peasants who had been raped, had their fingernails pulled and reported massacres carried out by the contras. I returned to the US and there was not a word about these atrocities. I was introduced to an attorney named Reid Brody by Reverend Joe Eldridge of The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA). Brody was compiling a report based on multiple eye-witness affidavits - irrefutable documentation. Together, we set a plan in motion to bring Brody's report to major public and congressional attention. The central thing we did was to offer the report to the New York Times and "CBS Evening News" a month before it's release date. We said: "Look, don't take our word for it. Please send a reporter to Nicaragua and reinterview the many eye-witnesses. If you find that these allegations hold up, consider publishing a story on the day we release our report." They agreed because nobody had ever presented them such a body of data, clearly, carefully, and intelligently done by a reputable American professional and because they know me to be careful and to bring them reliable stories. The New York Times put the story on the front page and said "Our reporter, Larry Rohter, verified this story. This is what the contras are doing." Until that moment the contra's human rights record was not an issue. The "CBS Evening News" ran a long report the same day. We arranged for the author of the report to appear with some very gruesome video on the "Donahue" show, which, like "60 Minutes" has an amazing impact. We held a news conference. The right wing attacked us immediately which kept the story going for several more days; you can always depend on them for

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that. Basically, the fact that the New York Times verified our story on the front page, put the issue of contra human right abuse on Congress's agenda from that moment on. If we had just done a press conference by a religious group, the Times would perhaps have run a paragraph. Basically, they made an investment in the story, and it paid off for them as well.

A year later VV VLA asstgneu IVIary UUI(ler, 31IUUItr U;) 3LLurney from Witness for Peace, to do a very similar report. What happened next was very interesting. We set a date to release the report, but made no public announcement of it. We called up the "Good Morning America" show, offered them Mary Dutcher with Representative Peter Kostmayer [D-Penn.] who had sent a staff member to investigate the report in Nicaragua. "Good Morning America" agreed to do the interview. The next day they called us back and said, "The National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty is going to issue a report on human rights violations by the Sandinistas, the same day that you are releasing your report. We are going to put them on with you." This seemed a strange coincidence, and we had never heard of this group. Their report was not a study at all; it was the emotional statements of a Mormon student who they sent down to Nicaragua who had not one affidavit. Yet some of the media (not the New York Times, to its credit) then reported, "Today two reports came out about Nicaragua human right abuses; one said the Sandinistas, the other said the contras are guilty."

When Oliver North was brought before Congress, he testified that the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty was his tax exempt organization to arm the contras. Yet to a certain extent they succeeded in neutralizing our report.

So the basic tactic would be that if you know a damaging report is coming out, you manufacture a report that is contradictory.

Right, because of the so called "objectivity ethic" the media feels that if charges are being made on one side, it has to air the charges from the other.

Would they do the same thing if the roles were reversed, say

if somebody was coming out with a detailed report about Sandinista misdeeds and somebody released an obviously flimsy account on the contras?

No, the anti-contra report would be ignored then. The bias is always given to the government's point of view. Especially when you're charging the U.S. government with backing blood thirsty killers. Most Americans do not want to believe that kind of a thing.

What about the people who make decisions for "Good Morning America"?

I think they don't want to believe such a thing either. The Reagan administration was manipulating them and pressuring them into setting a world view. The pressure on the media was severe.

What were the finances of this campaign?

Three people were employed full time. We were working for, and raising money through, almost every anti-intervention group to try and make sure there was a steady stream of alternative information getting into the media and balancing the perspectives of the reporters. So, if Reagan was about to meet with the contra

leadership at a hotel, we would make sure that on that day Edgar Chamorro, an ex-CIA contra spokesman, held a news conference in the same hotel to denounce the contras for human right abuses. We tried, when we could, not to let Reagan have the TV

screen all to himself. If stories are put in terms and packaged in ways that the media digests and works with every day, if they are shaped into what the media professionals view as a story, they will tend to accept it. True, people from the Heritage Foundation and industry are turned to and quoted, much more than people from the left or grassroots groups. Certainly, the opposition has more money and that helps a lot; they can hire people endlessly. But understanding the process is as important.

I would say that the left in America is way behind the right in understanding how the media works, the impact it has on society and designing and shaping their actions to be of interest to the media. As a result, progressive thought is left out of the debate much more than it should be. And it is the TV debate that determines much of our future. •

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and packaged in ways that
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will tend to accept it**

David Fenton on the Left and the Media

"The small Left that still exists in the US is primarily not involved in the mass communication process that determines what this country thinks and does. It's not only a case of media exclusion. Much of the Left in America - a broad term in which I mean to include most of the public interest world in this country - is operating from a pre-electronic perspective and lacks a recognition of contemporary media politics. The funding base of a lot of progressive organizations is such that if the funders see your news stories in the New York Times, maybe the Los Angeles Times, but certainly not the "Donahue" show, when you are

considered to be successful. In some circles there is a cultural alienation from the mass media which, while understandable, is pretty dreadful. People don't watch the mass media and don't know much about it. I think there is a real failure to look at mass culture. How are you supposed to succeed in a society, not to mention one dominated by mass communication, if you don't study mass culture? People also believe that the media is totally closed to any progressive viewpoint no matter what you do, and that is just not true. It's biased against it but that doesn't mean that you can't get in there."

Spin Control, Nazi-Style

Brian J. McGinn

**When Rudolf Hess,
Deputy Führer of the
Third Reich, flew to
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When Rudolf Hess, Deputy Führer of the Third Reich, flew to Scotland on a self-appointed peace mission on May 10, 1941, the Nazi press and propaganda ministries faced a public relations crisis of unprecedented proportions. Over the following days and weeks, finding a plausible explanation for Hess' enigmatic behavior would test the creativity—and internal cohesion—of a regime already noted for its mastery of media manipulation.

When news of Hess' flight reached Adolf Hitler at his country retreat in the Bavarian Alps, the Führer reacted with paroxysms of rage. Lashing out blindly, Hitler ordered the arrest of two of Hess' adjutants, the innocent bearers of the bad news. He instructed Heinrich Himmler, head of the notorious SS, to detain the ground personnel at Augsburg Airport, from which Hess had taken off, and to round up for interrogation the numerous astrologers, fortunetellers, and faithhealers with whom Hess—who had a longstanding interest in the occult—had associated.

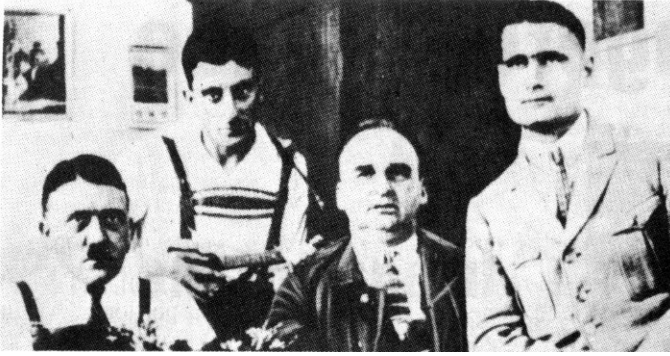
These petty reprisals, however, did not begin to address the grave political and strategic implications of the Hess flight. Hess might reveal Hitler's top secret plans for an invasion of Russia, scheduled to start in just six weeks. Hitler's Italian ally, Benito Mussolini, might misinterpret the affair and rush into a separate peace treaty with the British. "Who will believe me," Hitler agonized, "when I say that Hess did not fly there in my name, that the whole thing is not some sort of intrigue behind the backs of my allies?"

And what would the German public think when they learned that the Deputy Führer had flown into the enemy camp on a private mission? If peace seemed imminent, military discipline might break down as soldiers disregarded orders or avoided risky encounters with the enemy.

Mussolini, at least, could be taken care of: Hitler promptly dispatched his foreign minister to Rome to set the Italian leader's mind at ease. But there was nothing Hitler could do to prevent Hess, should he choose, from revealing the upcoming Russian invasion to the British. "If only he would drown in the North Sea," the Führer mused aloud. "Then he would vanish without a trace, and we could work out some harmless explanation at our leisure."

Hitler's hopes were dashed on the evening of May 12 when the BBC announced that Hess had landed in Scotland. But the Führer's concern about the security of his military plans was unnecessary, at least insofar as Hess was concerned. There is no evidence that Hess revealed the Russian invasion to the British. British intelligence, however, had already learned of the invasion by breaking a German Luftwaffe code, and had sent a warning to Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin. But Stalin distrusted the British almost as much as the Nazis, and ignored the admonition.

Dealing with the domestic fallout of the Hess flight was a job for Joseph Paul Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda and Cultural Enlightenment. Goebbels, however, was nowhere to be found. Although he was well aware of the seriousness of the situation—Goebbels described Hess' defection as worse than the loss of an entire Army Corps—the Propaganda Minister had



Serving sentences in Landsberg prison for the 1923 putsch, Hitler and Rudolf Hess (on right) pose comfortably with two Nazi cronies.

retired to the seclusion of his lakeside villa at Lanke, near Berlin.

"There are situations," Goebbels explained to an aide, "which even the best propagandist in the world cannot cope with." It was one of the rare occasions during the war when Goebbels, whose oratorical skills rivalled those of Hitler himself, was completely at a loss for words.

If Goebbels was speechless, Hitler had a ready substitute in Otto Dietrich, who held the dual titles of Reich Press Chief and Under Secretary of State in the Propaganda Ministry. Although nominally subordinate to Goebbels, Dietrich was in fact a scheming rival who regularly outmaneuvered his boss. Indeed, it was not uncommon for Goebbels and Dietrich to dispatch completely contradictory instructions to the editors of Germany's 23 hundred daily newspapers. In these bureaucratic battles, Dietrich enjoyed a significant advantage. Unlike Goebbels, Dietrich was a permanent member of Hitler's staff and could insist that his instructions came directly from the Führer himself.

The hapless editors, wary of angering Hitler, usually resolved these dilemmas by following Dietrich's guidance. On picking up his newspaper the next morning, Goebbels was often reduced to impotent rage as he realized that Dietrich had upstaged him once again. But Goebbels held his tongue, realizing that these built-in rivalries and overlapping responsibilities were Hitler's method of keeping his most powerful deputies in their places.

Dietrich now jumped at the opportunity to issue radio and press communiques on the Hess affair. Aided by Hitler's confidant Martin Bormann, Dietrich finally settled on an explanation that Hess had suggested in a final letter to Hitler: "And if, my Führer, this project ends in failure or the fates decide against me, simply say I was crazy."

On the evening of May 12, German radio broke the story with the news that Hess' letter "unfortunately shows signs of a mental disturbance which justifies the fear that Hess was the victim of hallucinations."

Dietrich's venture in propaganda was a public relations disaster. Instead of reassuring the public, this simplistic explanation raised more questions than it answered. Even the most avid Nazi

supporters, party members and military personnel, were confused and disturbed. How could someone who was mentally disturbed, they asked themselves, have remained Deputy Führer for eight years? And if Hess was indeed insane, might not other leaders of the Third Reich suffer from similar hallucinations?

Among the general public, reactions were no better. When Hitler's personal interpreter Paul Schmidt took an informal poll in his neighborhood, a local gardener responded: "Didn't you already now that we are governed by madmen?"

In Berlin, a city noted for its cynical humor, street-corner wits were having a field day.

"Did you hear," went one joke, "that the Thousand Year Reich has been changed to the Hundred Year Reich?"

"No, why is that?"

"Well, with Hess gone, there is now one zero less!"

As Dietrich's amateurish effort in propaganda continued to backfire, Goebbels sensed his opportunity. Re-emerging from seclusion, he quickly took charge of the damage control operation. He could not believe, Goebbels told an aide, that Hitler could have approved such a damaging explanation. The Führer, he continued disingenuously, was not always a good psychologist, and should have consulted him instead of Dietrich.

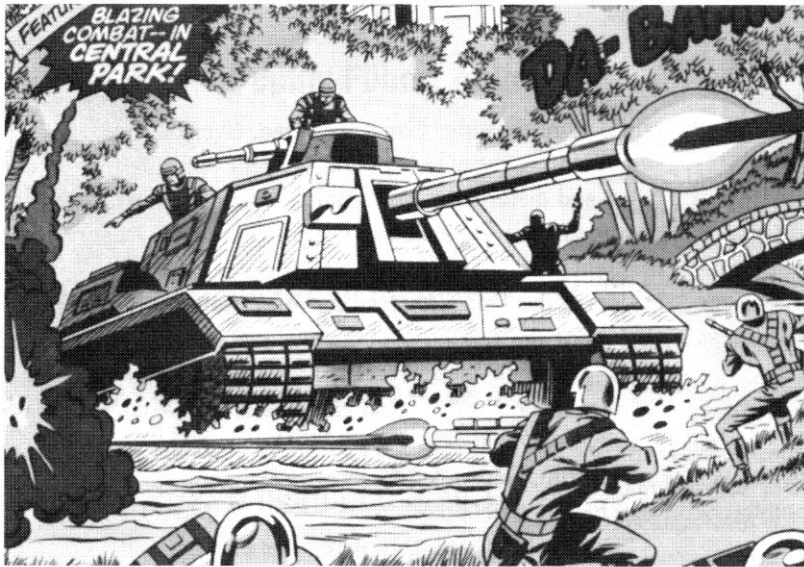
With the damage already done, Goebbels reasoned, the best strategy was to erase Hess from the public memory. In effect, the former Deputy Führer would become a Nazi non-person.

In Berlin, Goebbels geared up his powerful propaganda operation with a series of urgent instructions. Make sure, he ordered his staff, that Hess was edited out of all the weekly newsreels. And group photographs that included Hess should no longer be released for publication. For the next few days, Goebbels told his radio and press departments, military news should be dramatized. Traffic accidents and murders, in particular, should be worked up into sensational lead stories.

Slowly but surely, thoughts of the enigmatic Deputy Führer began to fade from public consciousness. And on June 22, while Hess languished silently in the Tower of London, Hitler launched his surprise attack on Russia. In the press and on the radio, news from the Eastern Front quickly preoccupied public attention. •

Brian J. McGinn is a freelance writer based in Alexandria, Virginia who has written extensively on WWII.

The World is a Dangerous Place



GI Joe

Images of the Enemy on Children's Television

Petra Hesse and Ted Stimpson

**To break the cycle of
enemy images and
violence, we have to know
as parents, educators,
politicians, and
journalists how to
counteract these
depictions**

*"In a fundamental way, television helps to create what children expect of themselves and of others and what constitutes the standards of civilized society."*¹

*"America has become the first culture to have substituted secondary, mediated versions of experience for direct experience of the world. Interpretations and representations of the world are being accepted as experience, and the difference between the two remains obscure to most of us."*²

Despite glasnost and the warming of relations between East and West, images of allies and enemies continue to affect many contemporary political conflicts. Traditional images fuel not only the arms race of the superpowers, but also the war between Iran and Iraq, apartheid in South Africa, and international terrorism. While nobody would question the role images of allies and enemies play in all of these contexts, their origins and developmental history in children are not well understood. The significance of this for the study of propaganda is hard to underestimate.

Many people believe that conceptions of the enemy are acquired early in life, and passed on from one generation to the next; to break the cycle of enemy images and violence, we have to know as parents, educators, politicians, and journalists how to counteract these depictions.

While conducting a study on children's and adolescents' images of the enemy,

we came across many statements such as the following: Leigh, a 5 year old girl commented “an enemy kills people and takes jewelry, I saw it on the news.” Jai, 6 years of age, said, “A bad guy attacks you. I watched it on TV ... He always fights and he shoots people, he is angry ... “ These statements by children in the youngest age group we studied indicate that children’s views of the enemy are influenced, even molded by programs they see on television.

Methods

With the help of Action for Children’s Television and the National Coalition Against Television Violence as well as spontaneous references made by children, we identified eight of the most highly rated cartoon shows on children’s television, and analyzed the images of the enemy and the political and ideological messages conveyed on them. The shows we selected are “He-Man,” “She-Ra,” “Rambo,” “GI Joe,” “Transformers,” “Gobots,” “Voltron,” and “Defenders of the Earth.”

To enhance our understanding, we taped 20 episodes of each show, and then analyzed them with the following questions in mind:

1. What is the enemy image? What does the enemy look like? What does the enemy do?
2. What are the enemy’s intentions? What are the origins of the enemy’s motivation?
3. What is the characteristic plot?
4. What are the political/ideological messages conveyed to children in these shows?

Results

Our intensive viewing led us to the conclusion that, generally, portrayals of the enemy fall into certain well defined categories.

The Enemy as Animal: In almost all of the shows, but in particular on “He-Man” and “She-Ra,” two shows geared towards the youngest viewers, the enemy tends to be an animal or is surrounded by dangerous animals. Lions, tigers, panthers, rattlesnakes, and scorpions frequent all of the shows, their black or red coloring, or their ugliness enhance their frightening effects.

The Enemy as Different Looking: The enemy is frequently portrayed as a different looking human being with a foreign accent. General Warhawk, the leader of the enemies on “Rambo,” is surrounded by collaborators with Eastern European and German

accents, the assassins he uses tend to be Asians (Ninjas) or Arabs. Similarly, Cobra Commander, the enemy on “GI Joe,” has an entourage of Eastern European-looking and sounding collaborators. And even on “He-Man” and “She-Ra,” the enemy frequently collaborates with people of color who speak English with a foreign accent.

The Enemy is Evil:

For no apparent reason, the enemy wants money, absolute power and war. Skeletor and Hordak, the enemies on “He-Man” and “She-Ra,” respectively, frequently scream “I want war.” General Warhawk and Cobra Commander, the enemies on “Rambo” and “GI Joe,” exclaim “Soon all that money will be mine” or “The world belongs to us.” The origins of the enemies’ greed and power hunger remain unclear. The enemy seems to be evil for evil’s sake and he seems to have been evil all along. As a result, the prospects of changing him are dim.

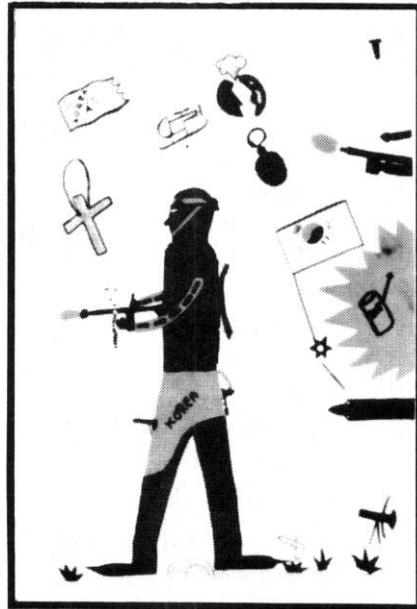
The Enemy as Dictator: A related theme is expressed in the portrayal of the enemy as an authoritarian ruler. Warhawk, Cobra Commander, Skeletor, and Hordak all strive for absolute power over their own people as well as the world. They tend to enforce their authoritarian rule through severe punishment of their own subordinates. And they are frequently portrayed as enslaving other peoples by forcing them to work in labor camps. Overall, the enemy combines characteristics of fascist as well as Soviet rulers. Like Hitler, the enemy wants to exterminate, extinguish, and gas the heroes. In keeping with other stereotypic notions of the Soviet Union, the enemy is portrayed as militaristic and as running labor camps.

The Enemy as Barbarian: He destroys the treasures of ancient cultures or steals and sells them in order to buy weapons with the profit. Occasionally, the enemy is even described as being threatened by beauty.

The Enemy as Threat to Personal Identity and Physical Existence: Not only does the enemy aspire to global rule, he is willing to destroy peoples and cultures in the process. He also

Cobra Commander, the enemy on “GI Joe,” has an entourage of Eastern European-looking and sounding collaborators

**“The enemy:
A ninja.”
Drawn by Gordon,
11 years, West
Germany**



evokes a very personal threat to the hero's and the viewer's physical existence and to his personal identity. For example, Skeletor and Hordak are skeletons. The enemy is also portrayed as a torturer. On “GI Joe” and “Rambo,” the enemy frequently threatens to beat and bum the heroes and their friends.

Finally, in several shows mind control plays a major role. Cobra Commander repeatedly tries to gain control over people's thoughts and feelings by taking over television or other media.

All of these images decrease identification with the characters as fellow human beings, and thus lower the threshold for aggression against them. The images also provide moral justifications for the need to physically restrain or even punish those who oppose us.

Close observation of these programs reveals a pattern. Each show tends to have one main enemy or leader of the enemies who is surrounded by dangerous animals, foreigners, and people with dubious looks and character who reinforce the threat the enemy presents to the heroes. What follows is a deeper analysis of the heroes and villains of one show - “GI Joe.”

Cobra Commander

Cobra Commander, the enemy of the GI Joes, is the most Hitleresque of all the enemies shown on children's television. Many scenes on “GI Joe” seem to be based on Charlie Chaplin's “The Great Dictator” and newsreels of Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini speeches.

Some of Cobra Commander's closest collaborators are foreigners. The baroness, a Soviet scientist, has a strong Russian accent, and uses human beings as subjects in a variety of unethical “scientific” experiments, reinforcing an image of the USSR as evil.

Cobra Commander is portrayed as enjoying aggression

and violence. He constantly wants to attack, destroy, and exterminate his enemies. His slogans are “shoot first and ask questions later” and “let's reach out and crush someone.” Cobra Commander rejoices when he destroys or hurts his enemies.

Cobra Commander wants to rule and terrorize the whole world. He kidnaps scientists, and steals military secrets in an attempt to threaten and blackmail the leaders of the world. Cobra Commander's greed for money is secondary to his hunger for power. He needs money in order to buy the weapons that will guarantee his domination of the world. Cobra Commander threatens the world with chaos and destruction, because he believes that “only a show of force can convince the world leaders to surrender.” In other words, Cobra Commander practices violence at both the personal and at the political level. Violence is the regulatory principle of all human conduct according to Cobra Commander.

Cobra Commander seems more Hitleresque than some of the other enemies on children's television, because he frequently talks about exterminating people. It is probably most accurate to characterize Cobra Commander as a Nazi-Soviet dictator. Propaganda and poison gas play a peculiar role in the “GI Joe” cartoon. Cobra Commander shares with the Nazis the use of gas to “exterminate” people. Gas is also used for mind control, thus evoking an image of Soviet propaganda rather than concentration camps.

Cobra Commander initiates conflict, because he is evil and enjoys violence against individuals and nations. He is portrayed as an authoritarian ruler who surrounds himself with Nazi-Soviet allies.

The GI Joes

The heroes are the exact opposite of the enemies. As the enemies are completely evil, the GI Joes are all good - a striking feature of all children's cartoon shows.

Propaganda and poison gas play a peculiar role in the “GI Joe” cartoon. The GI Joes are a group of heroes unlike Rambo and He-Man who tend to go on missions alone. The GI Joes look like a cross-section of the American population. Most are white, though most ethnic groups are represented. While Cobra Commander and his forces are fighting constantly with each

**Propaganda and
poison gas play a
peculiar role in the
“GI Joe” cartoon**

other as well as the rest of the world, the GI Joes cooperate with and support each other.

The GI Joes are also quite friendly to the rest of the world. In comparing themselves to the Cobras they say that they “do not shoot first and ask questions later.” They resort to violence only if everything else fails. Their goal is to contain the enemy, not to attack it. To obtain this goal they occasionally use deception, for example, in one episode, one of the GI Joes pretends to be a traitor to get access to Cobra Commander. However, deception is never used against any other GI Joe.

The GI Joes fight for freedom and liberty in the world, to make the world safe for democracy. They are portrayed as defenders of US territory, of the “free world,” of free will, and of freedom of speech.

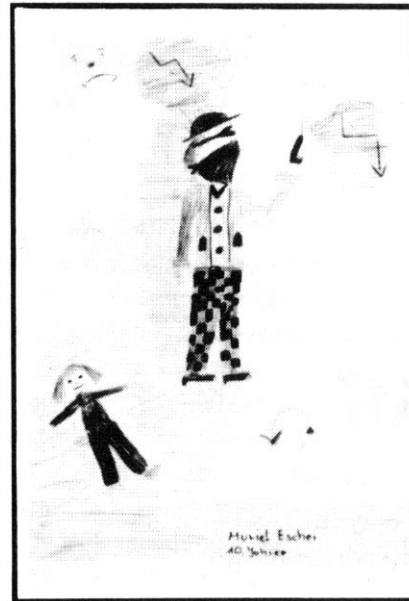
The Effects of Enemy Images on Children

In the eight cartoon shows we examined, children learn that there are many evil people in this world. Quite a few of these evil people are from foreign countries. They speak with an accent and look different. Children find out by watching the cartoon shows that evil forces and people cannot be controlled easily. They tend to attack other people and countries for no apparent reason, just because they are evil and want to rule the world. The face, voice and behavior of the enemies on children’s television may thus contribute to a tendency to overestimate real world violence.³

Children acquire information about world social and political actors in the course of watching children’s television. From TV, children learn that there are good and evil people in this world. The good people tend to be American, evil people are frequently foreign. Good and evil forces struggle for power, in fact, they compete for the domination of the universe. Enemies are portrayed as aggressors who tend to strike first. The good people or heroes with whom the children identify use aggression only in self-defense.

In the process of watching these shows, children learn that they, as vulnerable citizens of a good country, have to be ready to defend themselves against arbitrary attacks of an evil, foreign enemy who lurks behind every corner. Children learn to expect the worst, that the world is never safe, and that their country has to remain in a state of military readiness.

Implicit in children’s cartoon shows is a message that peace negotiations are difficult if not impossible. Heroes and enemies never get together to negotiate. They only meet to fight.



**“The enemy: A kidnapper and child murderer.”
Drawn by Muriel,
10 years, West
Germany**

As a result, children are socialized to believe in peace through strength.

In sum, in the course of watching television, children are taught some of the key elements of US patriotism: the struggle for dominance among the superpowers, linked to the defense of freedom and democracy in the world. •

Petra Hesse is an assistant professor of psychology at Wheelock College in Boston, Massachusetts, and a research associate at the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age. Ted Stimpson was Ms. Hesse’s assistant on this project while an undergraduate at Harvard University.

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Oil and the Cold War

Peter Dykstra

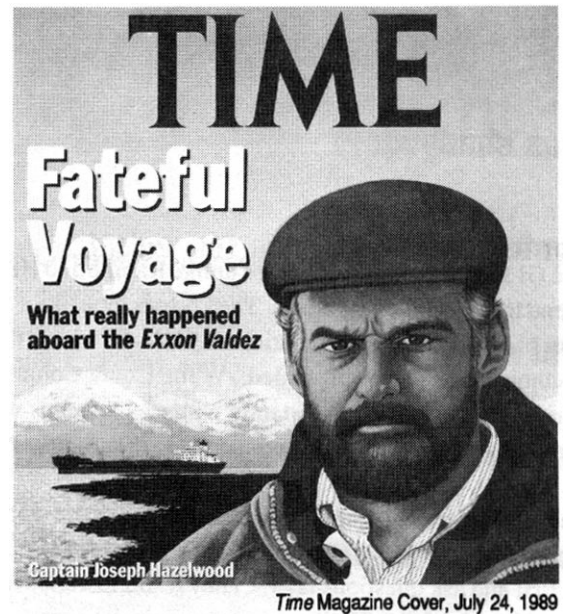
Love Canal. Three Mile Island. Bhopal. Chernobyl. Valdez.

When an army of journalists, government officials, wildlife rescuers, and rockscrubbers virtually doubled the population of Valdez, Alaska, following the March 24, 1989, *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, it was inevitable that days of predictable images would dominate North America's news. We saw angry fishermen, facing a possibly devastating future; cleanup workers, vowing to do the best they could; penitent company men, trying vainly to put a good face on it all; environmentalists and government officials, vying for oil-soaked photo ops to proclaim how mad-as-hell they were; and of course, heart-rending shots of birds and sea otters, dead and dying. This worst of American oil spills added its own touch to the now familiar oil spill story: Captain Joseph Hazelwood, beadyeyed, bearded, and scowling. He had a rap sheet as a drunk and, for several days after the accident, was a fugitive. A team of scriptwriters working around the clock couldn't have concocted a more perfect villain to personify the Valdez spill.

The Cold War Mystique

What was remarkable about Valdez, though, is what did not happen in the news. Scarcely a decade after a pair of bogus "gas shortages" drove Americans to distraction and helped spawn movements to conserve and replace fossil fuels, alternative energy has vanished from the American vocabulary. Despite advances in solar and other energy forms, despite solid progress in fossil-fuel efficiency, and despite the firm knowledge that oil supplies are dwindling while oil's environmental consequences are multiplying, the United States is as drunk on oil as it was twenty years ago, and a disaster as big as the one in Valdez has done little to sober us up.

The need to push ahead with oil production is deep within the US consciousness, fueled by the fear that America will fall without a healthy oil economy. Our love affair with the automobile and our affection for gluttonous energy consumption have helped Big Oil position itself as a major guarantor of National Security. Energy propagandists have long relied on basic Cold War media tactics to sell their message — whether describing the ominous threat of reliance on imported oil, or the glowing promise of nuclear power, the national security hammer is held over the consumer's head. While the energy industry's image may be tarnished by the Valdez spill, the Cold War mystique has helped stifle a more legitimate and productive question: Just why are we so dependent on *anyone's* oil?



**The need to push
ahead with oil
production is deep
within the US
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fueled by the fear
that America will fall
without a healthy oil
economy**

Oil or Nuclear Power, Name Your Poison

Mobil's infamous, long-running series of ads on the op-ed pages of US papers are just one example of Big Oil's expert spin control on energy news. Independence of oil imports has become a National Security axiom - nuclear power and increased domestic oil production have become patriotic issues. The US Council for Energy Awareness, a nuclear lobby group, frequently runs ominous ads, in national magazines and newspapers, with a caricature of the Ayatollah Khomeini leering as Uncle Sam dangles from his little finger. The ad's headline reads "Imported Oil Strengthens our Ties to the Middle East - Nuclear Energy means more energy independence." (This ad was reprinted in "No Comment," PR #4)

Western overreliance on oil has been chronically underemphasized in the past two disastrous decades of American policy in the Middle East. The sailors of the USS Stark and the civilians of last year's Iranian airbus disaster are only some of the people who died for our oil. The Persian Gulf remains a global flashpoint - and ironically its own waters are still fouled from a major 1983 well blowout.

The fears raised by the Ayatollah and others over our energy independence have helped overshadow more legitimate reasons to be afraid: Environmental threats related to our fossil fuel lust loom closer than ever. The Greenhouse Effect — the gradual warming of the earth caused largely by fossil fuel consumption, acid rain, and other problems have solutions which are simply incompatible with our current energy mindset. It's worth noting that America's three most prominent "liberal" newspapers — the *L. A. Times*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*, each ran two editorials in the ten days following the spill. While the editorials waxed on at length about drunken sea captains, lax oil companies, and despoiled Alaskan scenery, none of the six pieces mentioned fossil fuel's largest environmental costs — as if to underscore that a shift away from massive fuel consumption is too dreadful for many Americans to contemplate. When the *New York Times* did run a fuel efficiency editorial, on May 22, 1989, it made only passing mention of pollution — focusing instead on "increase(d) dependence on the Persian Gulf,"] thereby returning the reader's attention back to National Security issues.

The myopic journalism which followed the spill also failed to emphasize the decade-long effort by all oil companies to scale back safety regulations. Two years ago, the Coast Guard bowed to industry pressure to relax conditions for supertanker use of "automatic pilot" in the waters just off Valdez. (Third

Mate Gregory Cousins, at the helm when the *Exxon Valdez* tore open on Bligh Reef, realized too late that the ship was on full computer navigation and was ignoring his frantic commands for a course change.) In 1981, the Alyeska consortium, which operates the pipeline, felt sanguine enough about its tanker safety that it disbanded a round-the-clock twenty-person emergency oil spill response team in Valdez. A 1987 Alyeska contingency plan offered assurance that cleanup equipment could be at work within five hours of a spill. On March 24, 1989, much of Exxon's equipment was in storage.² It took ten to twenty hours to load the cleanup ships many of which were ill-designed to deal with such a huge spill.³ Exxon defended its slowness by claiming that state officials stalled in approving the use of chemical dispersants to break up the spill without pointing out that dispersants are of little value in either cold waters or choppy seas - and are more toxic than the oil itself.

Environmentalists Respond

For the most part, environmental groups were both slow and divided in responding. Several groups joined Ralph Nader in launching an Exxon boycott, and by late May they reported receiving 18 thousand Exxon credit cards from angry Exxon customers. But many national groups bowed out of the boycott strategy, reasoning that the oil industry, and not just one company, should be the focus of public outrage.

The company took the boycott announcement seriously, and responded with full-page ads in major US dailies warning that a boycott would only hurt Exxon's privately-owned dealerships. In effect, they were hiding behind their small franchises.⁴ Ironically, many of those same small dealerships have been fending off an aggressive buyout campaign by Exxon for more than two years.

The boycott strategy's major weaknesses revealed themselves in June: The boycott declined when initial outrage over Valdez wore off. Not even the mid-June weekend in which three separate spills soiled the shores of Texas, Delaware, and Rhode Island could reignite the public furor which followed Valdez. Even if they could, none of the three spills took place under the auspices of the Exxon Corporation - underscoring the argument that a boycott singling out one company's bad track record isn't appropriate when the entire industry's track record is bad.

In spite of growing environmental clout in Washington, Congress has stalled in advancing fuel-efficiency standards. The US continues to lag behind Japan and other industrialized Western nations in auto fuel economy. The trend from Detroit is to revert to

The hijacking of the Department of Energy

— with the resultant absence of any

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energy stories of the last decade

bigger car models, fulfilling Henry Ford II's autoindustry bromide: "Mini-cars mean mini-profits."⁵

Cold Warriors

Possibly the least told, but most important part of the energy/Cold War story is the curious history of the US Department of Energy (DOE). Created as a cabinet-level stepchild of the Atomic Energy Commission, the DOE's earliest conspicuous mission was to research and promote energy alternatives. The gas lines and high prices of the 1973 "Energy Crisis" powered DOE's mission. Even with veteran Cold Warrior James Schlesinger as DOE's first Secretary, the Department created some creditable alternative and energy efficiency programs.⁶

Perhaps for that very reason, Presidential candidate Ronald Reagan vowed to abolish DOE if elected. Under the aegis of James Edwards, a dentist-turned-politician who as South Carolina Governor was a steadfast cheerleader for the Savannah River Nuclear Complex, Reagan decimated DOE's most progressive programs. The Department languished for two years under Reagan and Edwards, then underwent a rebirth with the 1983 launching of the Strategic Defense Initiative. DOE thrived, its early visions of windmills and solar panels supplanted by billions devoted to plutonium production, nuclear weapons testing, and SDI research. The hijacking of the Department of Energy - with the resultant absence of any environmentally progressive US energy policy — remains one of the great untold energy stories of the last decade.

Don't expect DOE's priorities to change soon. James Watkins, the new energy secretary, has responded to a wave of concerns over environmental problems at DOE weapons facilities by naming a former James Watt protege, Diane Morales, as Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety, and Health. In addition to her service for Watt, Morales' qualifications for DOE's highest environmental post include a ten-year hitch as a buyer and manager for the Neiman-Marcus department store chain.

Oil Bonanza for Shell

A recent subsection of that story began to unfold in mid-May. With outrage levels still high over Valdez, the Interior Department's Minerals Management Service quietly awarded exploratory permits to Shell Oil for a new drilling area in the Chukchi Sea,

northwest of Alaska. Covered with pack ice most of the year, the Chukchi oil fields are both treacherous and potentially rich for the oil companies. Environmentalists have raised few objections here, focusing instead on the ongoing fight to keep the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge closed to Big Oil. If oil finds in the Chukchi Sea are as big as Shell hopes, the industry will try to move quickly to build a new branch of the Alaska Pipeline, further increasing traffic and risk in the Valdez oil terminal. In late June, the drillship Canmar Explorer left for the Chukchi fields, starting the process. To pull this off, of course, Shell officials are also hoping that the American public will forget the Valdez spill- and remember their longstanding oil addiction. •

Peter Dykstra is the Media Director for Greenpeace in Washington, D.C.

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How Business Ethics Became “Issues Management”

All I Need to Know About Business Ethics I Learned in Kindergarten

Loretta Graziano

In kindergarten, I learned that it's OK to steal cookies as long as you don't get caught. If you get caught, say you're sorry. A good apology gets the teacher off your back, and soon you can get back to stealing cookies.

American managers seem to have learned their kindergarten lessons well. When accused of social irresponsibility in the '60s, they responded with profuse apologies. The contrite tone echoed from paid ads and community grants to newly endowed chairs in Business Ethics. “Social responsibility” became the watchword in boardrooms and business schools.

By the 1970s, most corporations had established a government relations department to represent their new marriage to the public interest. And most American business schools began offering or requiring a course on “Business Ethics” or “Business and Society.” But an inside look at these programs suggests that they have come not to praise social responsibility, but to bury it.

While chirping about “responsiveness,” Corporate America only responds to one thing: the threat of regulation. In the '80s, the programs launched in the name of business ethics have become organized modes of defusing regulatory pressures. As such, the business ethics movement was worse than a fad; it was a front for a new round of cookie-stealing.

An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Lobbying

The ritual corporate bow to the public interest has come to be known as “Issues Management.” This strategy asserts that business



Dan Wasserman, *Boston Globe*

must stop being a passive victim of consumer, environmental, and labor interests, plus a hostile press and government. Instead, say issues management specialists, business must enter the fray and help shape public policy. In business schools, where issues management is penetrating the curriculum, students learn that “managing” social pressures is simply one more aspect of management. “Business and Society” courses now teach future managers how to resist the onslaught of social interventionism.

The Issues Management approach begins with the “issue life cycle.” Stage one of the cycle, called “public policy formation,” begins with the “emergence and development of public opinion.”¹ In other words, the issue doesn't begin when a firm dumps dioxin, or when its engineers discover the leak, or even when the EPA detects it. Pollution is not an “issue” until the public starts talking about it (thanks to a few loudmouths).

At stage one, say professionals, corporate communication can be most effective. Early on, a few well-chosen studies can still keep people from getting “hysterical” (even if they should be). One text explains:

“Participation in the public policy debate gives the company the opportunity to present alternatives that could obviate the need for specific regulation altogether. From a corporation's point of view, the effect of a good communication strategy is that it reduces the need for other more expensive and potentially troublesome strategic options farther along in the public policy life cycle Some argue that when government gets involved with an issue, it is too late for business to have much effect on the outcome.”²

The book lists

offshore oil rigs as a
form of aesthetic
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over the threat they
pose to water and
wildlife

Stage two of the issue life cycle is “public policy formulation.” At this stage, public concerns have become legislative proposals, and business must involve itself directly in the political process through contacts with officeholders and candidates. In addition to the traditional tools of lobbying and campaign contributions, issues managers stress coalition-building to leverage their impact. To this end, Issues Management Networks have been sprouting up around the country.

The Daylight Savings Coalition is an interesting example.

It was led by a major manufacturer of charcoal briquettes and outdoor paint, hoping to extend the barbecue season and help the working guy struggling to paint his house after work. The firm rounded up other groups interested in extending daylight savings time: the National Glaucoma Association, the National Softball League, and an association of convenience store owners. This coalition - a comic testimony to the adage that politics makes strange bedfellows - succeeded where conservationists failed, as Congress voted to extend daylight savings for a few weeks into the spring and fall.

This coalition didn't hurt the public interest, but it raises the spectre of firms joining together in the name of public responsiveness to protect their right to dump toxic waste, for example.

Stage three, “public policy implementation,” arrives if business fails to get involved, or just plain fails, at stages one and two. At this point, a law has already been passed, but this is no time for business to give up;

“Continual contact with government agencies is important. Industry has much of the technical information needed if reasonable and workable regulations are to be developed. Experts in environmental affairs, for example, need to work with EPA professionals to reach realistic compromises on pollution standards [and] timetables.”³

Think Globally, Act Selfishly⁴

With the flurry of corporate scandals in the '70s came a drive to teach ethics in business schools. There are now over a dozen major textbooks on the social environment of business, and the business school accrediting agency (the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business) now requires a course on the subject. Ostensibly, these texts aim to teach future managers about the social environment within which they must operate. On closer inspection, however, these books seem to teach antipathy to the public interest, through the choice of information they include and omit. Let us consider the example of *Business Environment and Public Policy*, by Rogene Buchholz.

The text presents two alternative views of socio-political structure: the power-elite model and the pluralist model. The power-elite model is quickly dismissed without serious consideration, while the more leisurely discussion of interest group pluralism explores the weaknesses of that system.⁵ Since the weaknesses of a power-elite society are not discussed, we are left with the impression that it is the organized interest groups of a pluralist society that cause our country's problems.

The book details regulations affecting business without mentioning the circumstances that prompted regulatory action. Reading a list of laws without knowing the hazards those laws are meant to abate makes the legislation seem onerous and oppressive. If you don't know that many chemicals are toxic in extremely small doses, and that many firms use and dump these chemicals in the manufacturing process, then “cradle-to-grave” control of hazardous waste is bound to seem harsh.

The text's references to social problems systematically minimize them. The environmental chapter divides pollution into five types: air, water, solid waste, noise, and aesthetic pollution.⁶ Elevating noise and aesthetic pollution in this way undermines the seriousness of the first three. The book goes on to list offshore oil rigs as a form of aesthetic pollution, skimming over the threat they pose to water and wildlife.⁷ Consumer protection is diminished by the suggestion that consumer advocates are a selfish special interest group that represents only its members (while business, presumably, represents everyone).⁸

The book's minimizing of social ills is pervasive. For example, the chapter on occupational safety explains that workers, unlike their bosses, are not legally liable for violations of workplace safety rules. Since the chapter barely touches the worker's loss of life and limb, it leaves the impression that workers, unlike their bosses, are unconcerned about workplace safety. ~ The chapter on

equal employment gives more examples of reverse discrimination than discrimination, and the instructor's case book relies on a hypothetical case on "discrimination against left-handed people."¹⁰

While business efforts to influence policy are glorified by the term "strategy," the efforts of public interest groups are referred to as "tactics." II The book lists seven such tactics: "boycotts, demonstrations, terrorism, media, lobbying, coalitions, and litigation."¹² One can easily sympathize with business executives wielding nothing but Rotary Club speeches against adversaries using these tactics.

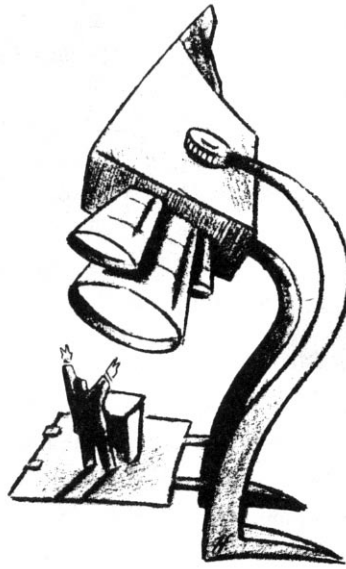
Business' role in causing and curing social problems is neatly obscured. The causes of pollution, according to the text, are: "population growth and concentration; rising affluence; technological change; and increased expectations and awareness."¹³

You've Got to be Taught

Business Environment and Public Policy is an especially dismaying piece of literature when viewed from the student's perspective. Most students have worked at bad jobs and recall swimming in dirty water. They are young enough to worry about the long-run consequences of environmental destruction.

Far from being a lesson in the public interest, the text seems expressly crafted to avert the risk of future managers sympathizing with the public. Blinding one's self to the social consequences of business operations is, it would seem, a learned skill.

This text, like most in the field, includes a chapter on (the theory of!) ethics, but asserts that social responsibility is not just ethical- it's good business. A good nose for public relations would appear to be more essential than a conscience. When responsible behavior is profitable, ethics are irrelevant. When responsible behavior doesn't happen to be profitable ... ooops. Maybe the theory needs more work.



Dan Hubig

The conclusion that ethics are irrelevant might be reached through quite a different line of reasoning. Ethics are only necessary when managers are free to choose whether to expose workers, consumers, and communities to toxic chemicals. This is unacceptable in a democracy. Managers should not be free to defile the public interest in the pursuit of profit. The majority would not choose leukemia and emphysema over dividend cuts if they were adequately informed. Unfortunately, most of us are not so informed - and we will not be until there are as many chemists representing voters as there are representing companies.

I want more standing between me and toxic waste than one manager's ethics. •

Loretta Graziano is an Associate Editor of *Propaganda Review* and an associate professor of International Business at California State University, Hayward. She is working on a book called *Information Overload Democracy*.

Notes:

1. Rogene Buchholz, *Business Environment and Public Policy*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1989, p. 514.
2. Ibid., p. 514.
3. Ibid., p. 545.
4. With apologies to the Plutonium Players' new performance, "Women Who Think Too Much."
5. Buchholz, op. cit., pp. 134-48.
6. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 411.
7. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 411.
8. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 391.
9. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 371, 360, 364. 10. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 65.
11. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 140.
12. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 144.
13. Buchholz, op. cit., p. 409.

White Hats, Black Hats, & Red Scares

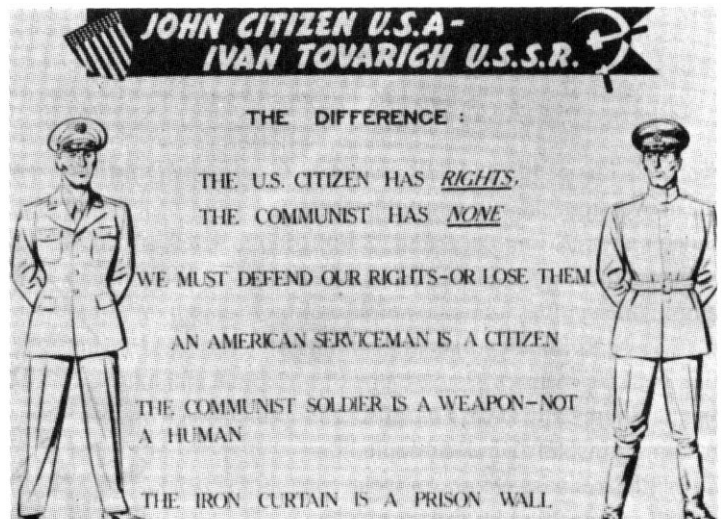
Political Demonology in the Reagan Era: The Case of Nicaragua

Stephen Ducat

The paperboy bicycles his way languorously through a generic well-scrubbed suburban neighborhood, past immaculate crewcut hedges that testify to an ordered and conflict-free life. The gentle, distant bark of a dog announces, to those still nestled in their somnolence, that it is morning again in America. Children are shuttled to school by fretful but conscientious and loving mothers, while fathers head for their agricultural, industrial, or corporate stations. Everyone is in his or her place and all is right with the world. Or, is it?

In the local high school, a history teacher is lecturing to earnestly attentive teenagers on the rapacious exploits of Genghis Khan. His conquests are illustrated on a map placed at the front of the room that shows the Mongol hordes emerging from a large, disturbingly familiar land mass that spans Northern Asia and Eastern Europe. The lecture is suddenly interrupted, first by the sound of jet aircraft, and then by the sight of the wild blue yonder being darkened by thousands of paratroopers who descend like a plague of locusts on the school's pristine athletic field. The outsiders, ranting in an indecipherable foreign tongue, advance on the classroom with automatic rifles and grenade launchers and begin slaughtering students with abandon.

This massacre is merely the opening volley of what is to be a full-scale Soviet invasion and occupation of the United States, spearheaded by bloodthirsty Cuban and Nicaraguan shock troops. The impending holocaust is but the logical outcome of decisive victories won by the International Communist Conspiracy: The Green Party had gained control of the West German parliament and demanded the removal of nuclear weapons from Europe.



US Army

This led to the dissolution of NATO and to the military isolation of the United States. When a ravenous Nicaragua gobbled up El Salvador and Honduras, engulfing Mexico in turn, in revolution, the pitiful helpless American giant was left with very few allies.

This paranoid tableau opened the 1984 xenophobic film fantasy, "Red Dawn;" a nightmare vision that seemed to emerge directly out of the collective unconscious of American right wing policy makers. The movie debuted at a time when Ronald Reagan's political demonology was reaching new levels of baroque complexity and in many ways mirrored the president's fears and fantasies. We not only had to contend with the Evil Empire, the Soviet Union, he believed, but with its demonic surrogates like Libya, Cuba, and, most dangerous of all, Nicaragua. "Gathered in Nicaragua," President Reagan told a nationwide television audience early in his second term, "are ... all the elements of international terror - from the PLO to Italy's Red Brigades to Colonel Qaddafi."

The delirious ardor with which the Reagan administration pursued its monomaniacal campaign against Nicaragua has puzzled many. The disinformation, the atrocities, the drug trafficking, and various illegal covert interventions associated with America's proxy war against the Sandinistas have been examined in depth by a number of critical journalists. Yet, there seem to be few compelling explanations for the US administration's motives in these actions. Surely, the notion that Nicaragua constitutes some kind of military threat to the United States is laughable on the face of it—a fantasy evocative of Grand Fenwick's "invasion" of America in *The Mouse That Roared*. Almost as absurd is

the prospect of a Nicaraguan attack on any of the US's Central American client states. An assault of this nature would doubtless provoke an American military response of such magnitude that Nicaragua would be rapidly converted into a parking lot for Honduras. The Sandinistas know this and the US government knows they know this.

The real motive for the American holy war against Nicaragua will not be found in the litany of ever-shifting rationalizations put forth by the State Department. There is little point in citing all of them here or offering the obvious refutations that are surely familiar to most readers. The actual reasons America's power elite has been obsessed with Nicaragua are manifold and have political, economic, and psychological dimensions.

Certainly one important reason is that there are many in the ruling circles of the United States who could not risk the existence of an economically successful and fully democratic nation that was born out of a popular insurgency against a US-backed regime. Such an outcome (so far, unrealized in Nicaragua) would be a dangerous example which populations in other American client states in the region might be tempted to follow. This is why the sabotage of the Nicaraguan economy (unwittingly aided by the Sandinistas' own mismanagement) has been as important as the military assault upon that nation.

A second, perhaps more fundamental reason for the enmity against Nicaragua is that American policy planners need an enemy. Such an enemy should fulfill (at least) four requirements:

1. It should espouse some variety of socialist or communist ideology. 2. It should be populated by people who do not look or talk like average (i.e. white, Anglo) Americans. 3. It should be a nation easily defeated in the event of an actual military confrontation. 4. It should be a country located in "our back yard" so that a threat to US national security could be rendered at least remotely plausible. Nicaragua obviously fulfills each of these criteria.

The Reagan administration revealed through various actions just how desperately it needed Nicaragua as an enemy. In an April 1989 meeting of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Senator Thomas Harkin [D., Iowa] brought forth evidence that the CIA intervened in the 1984 Nicaraguan elections to prevent the main opposition candidate, Arturo Cruz, from running. The obvious aim was to delegitimize the elections so that continued support for the contras could be justified. Likewise, when official voices in the Reagan State Department scorned the Arias regional peace plan, they revealed their deep fear of a diplomatic resolution.

There are two motives that comprise this need for an enemy, one is economic and the other is psychological. The former motive is easy to see: Without some kind of threatening villain in the world, defense contractors would be out of business. Now that arms negotiations, glasnost, and Gorbymania have brought the Soviet Union's Evil Empire status into question, the burden of Red villainy has fallen even more on Nicaragua. We should not be surprised then that, while the US government treated the visiting Mikhail Gorbachev with more respect, if not gushing affection, than the Royal Family, Daniel Ortega was denied a visa to address an April 1989 meeting of the National Association of Newspaper Editors.

The psychological motive for enmity is less obvious and requires a fuller explanation. The unconscious aspects of the American revival of jingoism and xenophobia can be best appreciated by understanding a developmentally primitive defense mechanism psychoanalysts refer to as splitting. Young children, and sometimes adults, resort to splitting to protect themselves against being aware of conflictual feelings or perceptions about persons to whom they have a deep emotional attachment. Because the individual cannot yet integrate "good" and "bad," loving and hating, or omnipotent and weak mental representations of those he or she cares for, these representations are split in half. The mother who feeds and nurtures is not seen as the same person as the mother who frustrates and reprimands. The theory of splitting is derived from both the clinical observations of child and adult psychotherapists and from child development studies by research psychoanalysts.

The intolerance of ambivalence that splitting describes, when it occurs in adults, is generally regarded as a regressive defense.

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ON THE THRESHOLD!
Gale, *Los Angeles Times*, 1920, from *Faces of the Enemy*

Splitting assumes its most visible expression when people project the unacceptable aspects of themselves or of those they love onto more distant people or groups. Their self-image or the images of those with whom they identify become sanitized of all conflictual content. Shameful desires, murderous rage, and other psychic impurities are attributed to “outside agitators” of various stripes. This may sound like a pathological impairment too debilitating to be commonplace, yet it has been typical of the paranoid political discourse that has characterized the Reagan era. Splitting has been seen most clearly in the various expressions of pre-summit anti-Soviet demonology, in which all social blemishes, duplicitous motives, violent impulses, threatening intrapsychic parental images, and predatory imperial aspirations were disowned by Americans and projected onto the Evil Empire.

The concept of splitting can help us understand how we select allies as well as enemies. For example, it can illuminate the psychological component of Ronald Reagan’s infamous Teflon exoskeleton. The most striking expression of the splitting of Reagan’s image can be found in two editorial cartoons that appeared in the same issue of a national magazine in the early 1980s. The first cartoon portrayed the president heroically wielding the budget ax, notably without a victim. The second cartoon appeared on the next page. In this image the reader saw an anonymous state functionary also holding a budget ax, but one that was about to decapitate a victim. Thus, the all good image of Reagan was

split from the deadly consequences of his policies.

The most disturbing aspect of splitting, in both international as well as interpersonal relations, is not so much how it impairs our judgement and perception, but the degree to which we become what we attribute to the enemy. In other words, we eventually act out and assume the qualities that are split off. Examples in the political realm are numerous and obvious:

The Soviet Union is accused of nuclear superiority; the US actually achieves it. (This, in fact, is how the arms race has progressed for the last 40 years, with US paranoia fueling every major advance.) Russians are said to believe in a winnable nuclear war, then the US government develops plans to deliver the mail amid the radioactive embers of a post-holocaust America. (Neither snow, nor rain, nor nuclear fire-storms shall stay these couriers) In order to prevent the loss of civil liberties that might result from a “communist takeover” of America’s Third World client states, the government spends billions of dollars to prop up right-wing regimes that jail, torture, and murder those who voice opposition. All the while, Reagan asserts that “in the Russian language there isn’t even a word for freedom.” In each of these cases, what we fear from our enemies we end up imposing ourselves.

American foreign policy toward Nicaragua is merely the most recent example of engaging in the behaviors we can only see in others. In 1986, President Reagan told us that Nicaragua was a “Soviet ally on the American mainland” (Our “back yard” had become the living room). But, worse than that, it was a “safe house, a command post for international terror.” So, while Nicaragua was being accused of terrorizing and subverting its neighbors (for which no evidence was provided), the Reagan administration was funding and aiding the real terrorists, the contras, and the CIA was mining Nicaraguan harbors. Interestingly, when Reagan said that

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the contras were “the moral equivalent of our Founding Fathers” he was correct in ways he would not have wanted to acknowledge. Specifically, in the first Red Scare in this country’s history, the “threat” posed by Native Americans, 18th and 19th century US forces, like the contras, made extensive and systematic use of murder, torture, and other forms of terrorism against Indian noncombatants. Mr. Reagan’s unconsciously ironic comment reminds us that the history of American political demonology has been a long one, and its consequences have been far more than ideological.

Among the many unanswerable questions this analysis begs is: Will Nicaragua continue to occupy a central position in George Bush’s pantheon of political demons, as it has in Ronald Reagan’s? Should peace break out in Nicaragua, against all efforts by American policy makers, which nations or groups will become the next targets for projective splitting? While I am loathe to make predictions, especially when the risk of being wrong is so great, it seems safe to say that the guiding cognitive mode of those who

shape US foreign policy will remain basically the same for awhile. That is, we can expect Americans to need all-good allies and all-bad enemies unless or until the combined forces of childrearing practices, public education, and the mass media encourage the tolerance of ambivalence. We must be able to see ourselves and those we love in all our unsanitized and imperfect humanity. We must be able to sustain this perception without collapsing into shame, conjuring delusions of omnipotence, or attributing our weaknesses to others. This is not to say that warfare is not largely determined by the desire for political and economic gain. But, without engaging in splitting, we are stripped of important emotional fuel and must face our naked self-interest without the benefit of a dehumanized enemy. •

Stephen Ducat, *author of Taken In: American Gullibility and the Reagan Mythos*, is a professor of political psychology at New College of California in San Francisco.

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The Strange Origin of the Pledge of Allegiance

John W. Baer

Every class day over 60 million public and parochial school teachers and students in the US recite the Pledge of Allegiance along with thousands of Americans at official meetings of the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Elks, Masons, American Legion, and others. During the televised bicentennial celebration of the US Constitution for the school children on September 17, 1987, the children as a group did not recite any part of the Constitution. However, President Reagan did lead the nation's school children in reciting the Pledge. Yet probably not one of them knows the history or original meaning of the Pledge.

In the presidential campaign of 1988, George Bush successfully used the Pledge in his campaign against Mike Dukakis. Ironically, Bush did not seem to know the words of the Pledge until his campaign manager told him to memorize it. The teachers and students in the New England private schools he attended, Greenwich Country Day School and Phillips Andover Academy, did not recite the pledge. By contrast, Dukakis and his mother, a public school teacher, recited the Pledge in the public schools. Yet Bush criticized Dukakis for vetoing a bill in Massachusetts requiring public school teachers but not private school teachers to recite the Pledge. Dukakis vetoed the bill on grounds that it violated the constitutional right of free speech.

**One hundred years ago
the American flag was
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classroom or in front of
the school**

How did this Pledge of Allegiance to a flag replace the US Constitution and Bill of Rights in the affections of many Americans? Among the nations in the world, only the USA and the Philippines, imitating the USA, have a pledge to their flag. Who institutionalized the Pledge as the cornerstone of American patriotic programs and indoctrination in the public and parochial schools?

In 1892, a socialist named Francis Bellamy

created the Pledge of Allegiance for *Youth's Companion*, a national family magazine for youth published in Boston. The magazine had the largest national circulation of its day with a circulation around 500 thousand. Two liberal businessmen, Daniel Ford and James Upham, his nephew, owned *Youth's Companion*.

One hundred years ago the American flag was rarely seen in the classroom or in front of the school. Upham changed that. In 1888, the magazine began a campaign to sell American flags to the public schools. By 1892, his magazine had sold American flags to about 26 thousand schools.)

In 1891, Upham had the idea of using the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' discovery of America to promote the use of the flag in the public schools. The same year, the magazine hired Daniel Ford's radical young friend, Baptist minister, Nationalist, and Christian Socialist leader, Francis Bellamy, to help Upham in his public relations work. Bellamy was the first cousin of the famous American socialist, Edward Bellamy. Edward Bellamy's futuristic novel, *Looking Backward*, published in 1888, described a utopian Boston in the year 2000. The book spawned an elitist socialist movement in Boston known as "Nationalism," whose members wanted the federal government to nationalize most of the American economy. Francis Bellamy was a member of this movement and a vice president of its auxiliary group, the Society of Christian Socialists.² He was a baptist minister and he lectured and preached on the virtues of socialism and the evils of capitalism. He gave a speech on "Jesus the Socialist" and a series of sermons on "The Socialism of the Primitive Church." In 1891, he was forced to resign from his Boston church, the Bethany Baptist church, because of his socialist activities. He then joined the staff of the *Youth's Companion*.

By February 1892, Francis Bellamy and Upham had lined up the National Education Association to support the *Youth's Companion* as sponsor of the national public schools' observance of Columbus Day along with the use of the American flag. By June 29, Bellamy and Upham had arranged for Congress and President Benjamin Harrison to announce a national proclamation making the public school flag ceremony the center of the national Columbus Day celebrations for 1892.⁴

Bellamy, under the supervision of Upham, wrote the program for this celebration, including its flag salute, the Pledge of

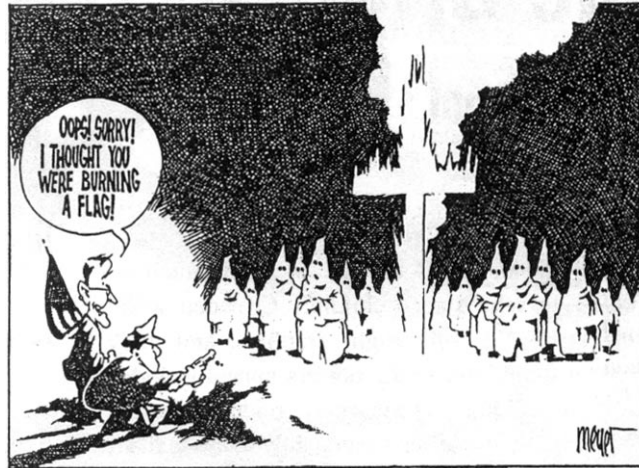
Allegiance. His version was, "I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the Republic for which it stands - one nation indivisible - with liberty and justice for all." This program and its pledge appeared in the September 8 issue of *Youth's Companion*.⁵ He considered putting the words "fraternity" and "equality" in the Pledge but decided they were too radical and controversial for public schools.⁶ The original Pledge was recited while giving a stiff, uplifted right hand salute, criticized and discontinued during WWII. The words "my flag" were changed to "the flag of the United States of America" because it was feared that the children of immigrants might confuse "my flag," for the flag of their homeland. The phrase, "Under God," was added by Congress and President Eisenhower in 1954 at the urging of the Knights of Columbus.⁷

The American Legion's constitution includes the following goal: "To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism." One of its major standing committees was the "Americanism Commission" and its subsidiary, the "Counter Subversive Activities Committee." To the fear of immigrants, it added the fear of communism.⁸

Over the years the Legion has worked closely with the NEA and with the US Office of Education. The Legion insisted on "one hundred percent" Americanism in public school courses in American history, civics, geography and English. The Pledge was a part of this Americanism campaign⁹ and, in 1950, the Legion adopted the Pledge as an official part of its own ritual.¹⁰

In 1922, the Ku Klux Klan, which also had adopted the "one hundred percent Americanism" theme along with the flag ceremonies and the Pledge, became a political power in the state of Oregon and arranged for legislation to be passed requiring all Catholic children to attend public schools. The US Supreme Court later overturned this legislation.¹¹

Perhaps a team of social scientists and historians could explain why over the last century the Pledge of Allegiance has become a major centerpiece in American patriotism programs. A pledge or loyalty oath for children was not built around the Declaration of Independence - "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." Or the Gettysburg address - "a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal ..."



Apparently, over the last century Americans have been uncomfortable with the word "equality" as a patriotic theme. In 1992 the nation will begin its second century with the Pledge of Allegiance. Perhaps the time has come to see that this allegiance should be to the US constitution and not to a piece of cloth. •

John W. Baer is a professor of economics at Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, Maryland.

Notes:

1. Louise Harris, *The Flag Over the Schoolhouse*, C.A. Stephens Collection, Brown University, Providence, R.I., 1971, p. 69.
2. Margarette S. Miller, *Twenty-three Words*, Printcraft Press, Portsmouth, VA, 1976, pp 63-65.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-65.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-111.
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7. Christopher J. Kaufmann, *Knights of Columbus*, Harper & Row, NY, 1982, pp. 385-386.
8. Raymond Moley, *The American Legion Story*, Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, NY, 1966, p. 7.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 371.
10. Miller, p. 344.
11. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America, 1967, Vol. 10, p. 738-740.

Commercials in the Classroom

By Kathleen Tyner

"Business involvement in education is mostly in the form of propaganda that furthers the goals of a commercial culture. Under business' tutelage, knowledge becomes the means to an end quantitative, pragmatic and marketable. The result is an anti-intellectual emphasis which creates a trade school mentality to secure jobs and a consumptionist drive to purchase status goods." Sheila Harty in The Corporate Pied Piper

The deal is seductive. Every school gets 40 television sets, VCR's, and a satellite dish. In exchange, high school students corralled in study halls are required to watch 12 minutes of news and feature programming, called Channel I, produced especially for them. So what's not to like?

Two minutes of commercials targeted to students, for one thing. The furor surrounding the Whittle Communications plan to garner a teenaged audience of Super Bowl proportions in exchange for much needed equipment and curricular material comes as no surprise to teachers inundated for years with advertising imbedded in free teaching materials. The Whittle ads have attained a higher profile because they are more blatant about their purpose to deliver young consumers to advertisers and because they are shown on television, a medium that brings out teacher ambivalence, at best.

Whittle Communications began its venture into the school market by introducing informational posters, called "The Big Picture" for elementary schools and Connections for high school. The posters are prominently displayed in billboard like frames installed free by Whittle reps, where they can be seen by

children. "The Big Picture" features tips on personal hygiene, fitness and other topics of interest to school aged children. Crowded with information, bright graphics, and pop stars' advice, the posters appeal to kids and come with a teacher's guide. What the sample teacher's guide downplays is that the posters display a strip of product logos at the bottom which the school agrees to display for 30 days in exchange for the maintenance of the display area by the company. After that, the bottom strip of ad material can be trimmed away.

The posters were the company's entry into schools and helped them develop a pivotal relationship between the school market and advertisers. It was a logical business decision for Whittle to step up to the far more lucrative television commercials with sponsors like Procter & Gamble's Head & Shoulders shampoo, Wrigley's gum, Warner Lambert's breath mints, Levi Strauss, and Gillette shaving products. Other commercial enterprises are eyeing the Whittle experiment intently as the window of opportunity opens in the schoolhouse marketplace.

The Business End of Channel 1

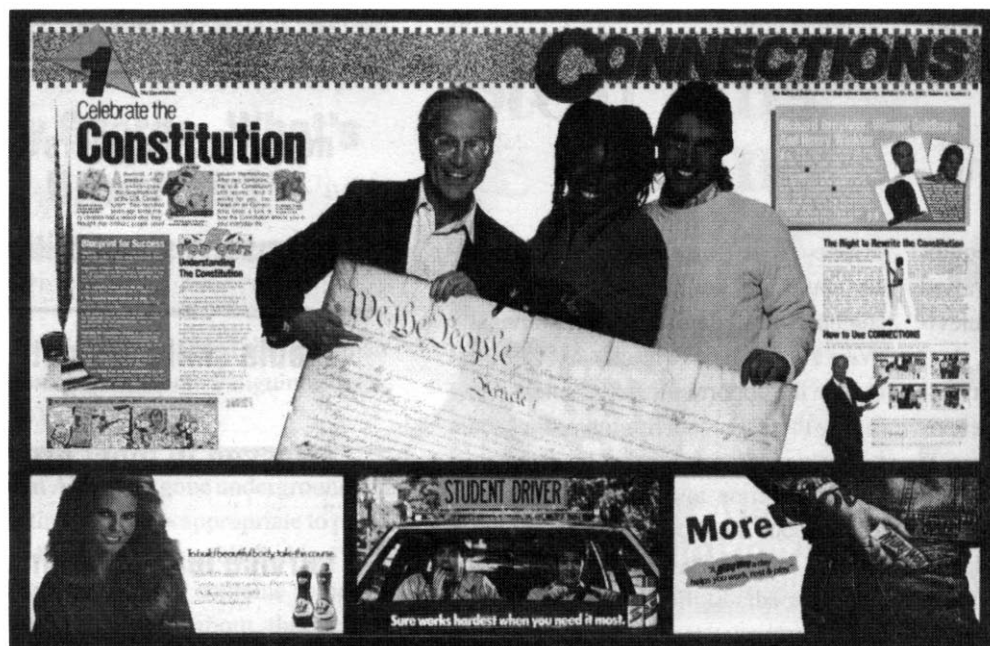
Last year, Chris Whittle, chairman of Whittle, sold 50 percent of the company to Time Inc. for \$185 million dollars with an option to increase its share to 80 percent in 1993. Industry insiders have speculated that the sale was made partly on the basis of the Channel I project which has projected revenues as high as \$75 million to \$100 million annually.

The looming merger of Warner Communications and Time, Inc. is the most extensive merger in history and will

Since product identification
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in consumer behavior, it is
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advertisers to establish
their product in the minds of
consumers early and often

result in the biggest communications multinational in the world. In the event of such a merger, Whittle Communications will become one miniscule appendage attached to the body politic of a communications giant. The company denies that Time Inc. is contributing anything to Channel I except "advice and counsel" (Advertising Age, January 16, 1989). Time, Inc. offers its own educational materials for public schools.

Denounced by the National Parent Teachers Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Action for Children's Television and others, Whittle came up swinging with fullpage ads in the New York Times like one with 57 blank spaces and a line that reads "Here's a list of everyone willing to donate \$250,000 to schools." Chris Whittle, Whittle chairman and a former managing editor at Fortune and Money magazines, has said, "Schools have an enormous need for technology and programming. The only place the funding for that is going to come from is the business community." (Education Week, January 25, 1989).



it is in the best interest for advertisers to establish their product in the minds of consumers early and often. School children are a natural demographic target. What they lack in buying power, they make up for by influencing family purchases. And these up-and-coming consumers make for great photo-ops in media and on annual reports.

Commercials in the classroom are not limited to the United States. In her book, *The Corporate Pied Piper*, Sheila

Several factors converge to add complexity to the Whittle debate. The public increasingly sees the role of public schools as one of training future workers in a time of economic uncertainty and the business sector has loudly bemoaned the lack of rudimentary skills in entry level workers. In enlightened self-interest, the business community began forming partnerships with school districts by providing much needed capital and fostering programs to promote job readiness.

Add to this relationship the current business trend toward splashy philanthropy through public relations projects, an educational system hamstrung by social, economic and political forces, and a consumer society awash in media and the Whittle venture can be seen as a logical outgrowth of historical and market forces.

Readin', Ritin' and Reeboks

The groundwork for commercials in the classroom was laid long ago. School systems have never been long on funding and teachers have been inundated for decades with free teaching materials replete

with commercial sponsorships. Teachers use films, video and filmstrips about coal by mining companies, about nuclear energy by power companies, about personal hygiene by toothpaste companies, with the obligatory movie star spokesperson. They pass out chemistry booklets produced by chemical companies, hang posters about nutrition by cookie companies and attend lavish literacy theatrical productions by dessert companies complete with samples of the snack.

In a funding vacuum, teachers and administrators often welcome these supplements to the classroom curriculum. Some of the most enthusiastic supporters of the Whittle experiment are educators, as public schools cull highly coveted support from the private sector. In addition to tangible benefits, a school's association with business can lend the sparkle of status and glamour to a public education system tarnished by relentless contempt and criticism from all sectors of society.

Brand Loyalty Begins at Birth

Since product identification is such an important factor in consumer behavior,

Harty cites examples in country after country. A yo-yo competition in Sweden offered free Coke, Fanta, and Sprite and other prizes with soft drink logos on each yo-yo. In Malaysia, the Nestle Company set up a cooking competition that requires that the recipes use Nestle products; in Australia, the Aerosol Association distributed a free audio-visual kit entitled "How Aerosols Work," which dismisses the debate over the damage of chloro-fluorocarbons to the ozone. In the United States, Cheeseborough-Ponds sponsored an art contest using Q-Tip swabs with prizes of up to \$40,000 worth of savings bond for four winners from each grades and a trip to Athens, Cairo or Florence for a lucky teacher. The schools bought their own Q-Tips.

Is Network News Knowledge?

The major piece of hardware in public schools today is chalk, so it is not surprising that educators are excited by Whittle's largesse. But in the stampede for equipment, few questions have been raised about the value of television — and television news — to education.

**Teachers sometimes are
not critical viewers
themselves and critical
media skills are not
stressed in most pre-
service teacher training**

Although recent studies show that children as young as two learn from television, what they learn is far less clear. If indeed students can learn role modeling behaviors and facts from television, then the implications are chilling, considering the programming on network television. Parents hope, and the latest research indicates, that at best, television watching is a waste of time. Other studies indicate that at its worst, television can leave frequent viewers with a darker, more pessimistic view of the world than those who watch occasionally. Some research links aggression in children to behaviors that they imitate from television. Less clear is the educational value of swift paced sound bites, staged photo opportunities, and political spinnerism as knowledge. Teachers already complain that their students have short attention spans and blame television for creating a need for the fastpaced, razzle dazzle that works against the tedium of competent scholarship.

Bring Pencils, Books, and Media Literacy Skills

The opportunity for critical viewing is addressed by Stan Jasinkas, principal of the Kansas City school which participated in the Whittle pilot program. He indicated in a New York Times interview that teachers could use the commercials to make students view television more skeptically (New York Times, February 1, 1989). Although the opportunities for critical viewing are there, a recent Strategies for Media Literacy study reveals that teachers

have very little time and fewer materials to teach about media. Teachers sometimes are not critical viewers themselves and critical media skills are not stressed in most pre-service teacher training.

Without leadership and emphasis from school administrators to install critical viewing programs side-by-side with advertiser-sponsored materials, it is likely that the opportunity to sharpen critical skills will be squandered.

Tilting At Windmills?

Peggy Charren of Action for Children's Television has emerged as the point-person among opponents of the Whittle plan. Ms. Charren agrees with the need for news programming, but voices opposition to the ads, referring to Channel 1 as a "Trojan Horse." Action for Children's Television calls for "Whittle-Free Zones" and distributes an informational packet to help those who want to counter commercials in the classroom.

A veteran in-fighter in the arena of children and television, Ms. Charren acknowledged in a recent *New York Times* interview, "I'm not sure we're going to win this battle." •

Kathleen Tyner is director of Strategies for Media Literacy in San Francisco.

Resources:

Action for Children's Television- 20 University Road, Cambridge MA 02138, (617) 876-6620.

Whittle Communications- 505 Market St., Knoxville, TN 37902. (615) 595-5000.

Harty, Sheila, *Hucksters in the Classroom: A Review of Industry Propaganda in Schools*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Study of Responsive Law: 1979, and *The Corporate Pied Piper: Ideas for International Consumer Action on Business Propaganda in Schools*. Malaysia: International Organization of Consumers Unions: 1985, \$10. For ordering information: Sheila Harty, 2032 Belmont Rd., NW, #612, Washington, DC 20009.

Strategies for Media Literacy, 347 Dolores Street, Room 306, San Francisco, CA 94110 (415) 621-2911

Latest Developments

As we go to press, Whittle Communications is having serious trouble with Channel 1 in the nation's two largest states. New York has banned Channel 1 from public schools

and California's school Superintendent has threatened to cut some state funding for any school subscribing to Channel 1. In spite of the setbacks, Whittle

announced, on June 8, 1989, that it will launch the controversial program on a coast-to-coast basis.

Book Review

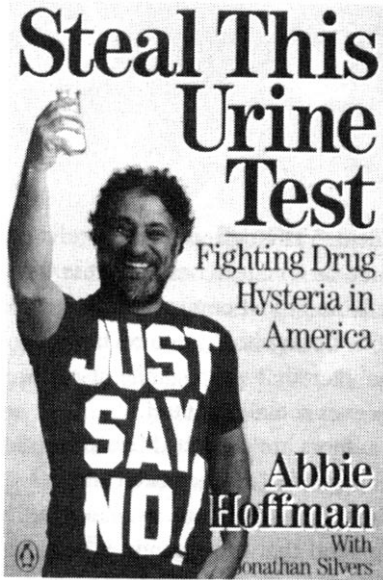
"Hey George, What's Urinalysis?"

By Johan Carlisle

Steal This Urine Test, by Abbie Hoffman with Jonathan Silvers, Penguin Books, 1987, NY, \$5.95, 262 pp.

Now that Abbie has gone underground for the last time, it seems appropriate to point out that his final book published in 1987, *Steal This Urine Test*, contains some insightful information about the propaganda techniques of the US government, the media, and the moral majority. While most of the book is about urine tests and how to beat them, the first third contains propaganda analysis gems about the Reagan crusade against drugs; the history of drug control and use/abuse; and the puritanical hypocrisy of making certain drugs illegal (mostly those which make you feel good or, sometimes, open your mind,) while the majority of society regularly uses a veritable pharmacopoeia of legal drugs (not to mention the standard uppers and downers - coffee, cigarettes, and alcohol).

Hoffman describes the purpose of the book as "pro-choice, pro-civil liberties, and antitotalitarian - American values as old as the Declaration of Independence." He admits that the book will probably be seen as a pro-drug manifesto, "because virtually everything the average citizen sees on TV or reads in the newspapers on the subject is a combination of irrelevant nonsense and disinformation posing as antidrug knowledge. Anyone who disputes these watered-down factoids, as I do in this book, gets lumped with the deviant opposition." A place where Hoffman always felt right at home. For him, the present danger is not drug abuse, which he shows can be treated,



but the infringement on our civil liberties by the "bladder cops."

Hoffman presents a theoretical matrix with which to analyze the drug crusades. He coins a phrase, the "National Party Line" as "the modern American gospel, dictating rights and wrongs. Deviation from its scripture conjures up the label 'heretic.' The NPL on drugs dictates which drugs are morally acceptable and which are not. It also determines which users are socially acceptable and which are stigmatized outlaws God is great, communism is evil, drugs do the work of the devil. End of the debate."

He also brings a class analysis to the drug debate, pointing out that 99 percent of the treatment programs for ordinary people are totalitarian in nature, using "breakdown therapy" and urinalysis to rigidly intimidate the clients. "This is the Enforcer model of choice, and it rules the land. It gets the lion's share of government funding, and is prejudiced against programs based on very different philosophies. Let's not rule out class hypocrisy. Celebrity moral experts would not send their kids to Day top Village [NYC program] any more than they would sleep at the Salvation Army. These programs are for poor people. They are programs to recommend for other people's

The present danger is not drug abuse, which he shows can be treated, but the infringement on our civil liberties by the "bladder cops"

kids." The rich and famous go to the Betty Ford Clinic and others like it which cost up to \$60,000 or more a month per person, while most ordinary clinics expend \$1500 to \$3000 per month per person.

One of the few good clinics, according to Hoffman, is San Francisco's HaightAshbury Free Clinic, founded in 1967. Unfortunately, it and most other "free" clinics are forced to turn away more people than they can treat. While Ronald and Nancy Reagan were campaigning against drugs for eight years, in reality they were just saying no to treatment and education funds, much as President Bush and his Drug Czar, William Bennett are doing today. Doctor Inaba, Director of the Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic estimates that "15 percent [of the 500 per month who are turned away] attempt suicide because we can't provide the facilities." Hoffman says, "Welcome to the real War on Drugs."

One of the major faults with Hoffman's book is his analysis of the motives behind the establishment's hypocritical "War on Drugs." When a propaganda campaign of

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Book Review

Propaganda & Persuasion

By Alfred McClung Lee

Propaganda and Persuasion, by Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, Sage Publications, 1986, 244 pp.

Propaganda is such a pervasive subject that its study both benefits and is handicapped by its multidisciplinary involvements. The competing propagandas of World War I resulted in a wave of books and academic courses labeled propaganda or propaganda analysis in such departments as speech, journalism, psychology, social psychology, sociology, political science, education, international relations, and social history. But after World War II, in order to assure hegemony over at least part of this dynamic and challenging field of investigation, the term propaganda became displaced by more limited labels in all those departments. It is only as part of the resurgence of an interdisciplinary emphasis and of the harsh and changing ideological struggles of the 1980s that propaganda, as a term and an educational emphasis, is rising to prominence again.

Communications historian Garth Jowett and rhetorician Victoria O'Donnell were "intrigued with how poorly propaganda had fared in recent years as part of general communication studies." They discovered "that few students were being given the opportunity or encouragement to examine this subject in a systematic manner." It was "so vast in scope, it was difficult to cover it in anything but the most cursory way."

"Propaganda, in the most neutral sense," write Jowett and O'Donnell, "means to disseminate or promote particular ideas." This definition may

well be considered as a neutral one, and it is the traditional and most common dictionary definition, but it should not be taken to alter the fact that propaganda itself is scarcely ever actually neutral.

The authors are disturbed because the term propaganda "has not been successfully differentiated from persuasion." They contend that propaganda is- somewhat of a one-way effort and that persuasion is "a reciprocal process in which both parties are dependent upon one another." On the contrary, so is the propagandizing process. For example, such an established and realistic textbook as that of Scott M. Cutlip and others on *Effective Public Relations* (6th ed., Prentice-Hall, 1985) points out that professional propagandists try to make their efforts through mass media appear as a reciprocal or a transaction process.

As I note in my *Sociology for People* (Syracuse University Press, 1988, chap. 5), propagandists typically work in terms of an A - B-C pattern. They make an appeal that strikes into the probable interests of a public. Then that is linked by a bond as a tie-in with thy commodity - the idea that is being offered. Effective propagandists constantly sense the significance of public reactions to their commodity and try to adapt their appeals and bonds to make the process achieve desired results. It is thus both an A-B-C process and a CB-A one.

Jowett and O'Donnell devote chapters to the development of propaganda in relation to centuries of changing media and audiences. Other chapters summarize social scientific research methods and changes in media and opinion research, the role of

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propaganda in psychological warfare, methods of propaganda analysis, five brief case studies, and a process model to suggest how propaganda operates in contemporary society.

Their descriptions of the federal government's propaganda arrangements, of psychological warfare procedures, of a naval propaganda incident in 1968 off the coast of North Korea, and of an undercover propaganda operation by South African officials spell out at least briefly the growing significance of the subject to those concerned with the achievement of international peace. They conclude, "As long as people care, propaganda's powers are controlled; if we give up our rights to free speech, for whatever reason, then we lose control to those who control the propaganda systems." But, as they substantially imply, we have already lost a lot of that control, and we need to learn how we might get it back. •

Alfred McClung Lee is professor emeritus at the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York and was Director of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis from 1940- 1942.

Mini Reviews

TV Analysis at Its Best

By Hannah Silver

Boxed In: The Culture of TV by Mark Crispin Miller, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1988, \$14.95.

In this remarkable book, Mark Crispin Miller confronts TV and the culture it has created head-on. At the showdown, it's the one-eyed monster who blinks. Miller doesn't limit himself to merely savaging obvious inanities (a deodorant commercial) and sacred cows ("The Cosby Show"); he looks behind the flickering screen to ponder what's in the minds of TV's creators, and in our minds as well.

What he finds are not only the media manipulators in high places that intellectuals have been fussing about for years, but a compliant viewing mass that embraces the televisual version of reality

with considerable ardor. His conclusion: that Americans are indeed boxed in, believing their own family and work lives hopelessly dull when compared with the comfy cuteness of "The Cosby Show" or the dramatic professional lives of the characters on "LA Law."

As well as looking behind the screen, Miller looks outward to the wider culture assessing the damage TV has done to our ability to think critically. According to Miller, one way TV has trashed our critical abilities is by frequently turning the joke upon itself (we're all in this dreary mess together), making enthusiasm or indignation look inappropriate or downright stupid.

Poking around in America's cultural thickets, Miller finds gems (the movies of Alfred Hitchcock) and abortions (rock music). The book concludes with two long

sense of complacency.

If this last charge is true, then Gorbie has certainly gone to extreme lengths to plant the big lie. He did, after all, fire fully one-quarter of the CPSU central committee recently. As for the first charge, Soviet involvement in the Kennedy assassination has long been a furrow that Epstein has plowed, somewhat dubiously, in books such as *Counterplot: Garrison Vs. the US* and *Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald*. For some time now, Epstein's books have been virtual wet dreams for conspiracy theorists.

Along the way, however, there is some fascinating information about the murky world of strategic counterintelligence in *Deception*. The book begins with a quote from James Jesus Angleton, the CIA's legendary "mole catcher" with

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compared with the comfy

cuteness of "The Cosby

Show"

essays on the decline of critical thinking in America. •

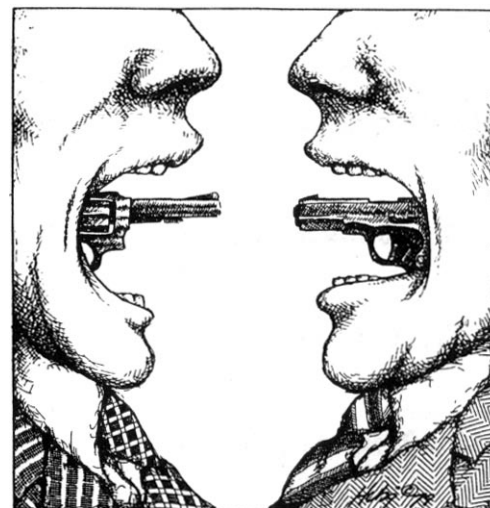
Hannah Silver is a Senior Editor of Propaganda Review.

Spook Story

By Frederic Stout

Deception: The Invisible War Between the KGB and the CIA by Edward Jay Epstein, Simon and Schuster, NY, 1989, 335 pp., \$19.95

The two big messages of Edward Jay Epstein's *Deception* are that the Soviets were involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy and that Gorbachev's current glasnost/perestroika campaign is just one more commie trick - he calls it "the sixth glasnost," in fact - meant to lull the freedom-loving capitalist West into a



Dan Hubig

whom Epstein conducted numerous, often befuddling interviews: "Deception is a state of mind-and the mind of the state." The extended passage in which Angleton discourses on the elaborate "pseudocopulation" mechanisms of orchid fertilization is a stunning insight into the labyrinthine mind of the man who was, until he was fired by CIA director William Colby in 1973, the American intelligence community's official paranoid.

Another pregnant insight -- as much about Epstein's own access to sources as about the content of the information itself -- is that the author was granted multiple interviews with Soviet defector Yuri Nosenko - the man Angleton was convinced was a false defector and who was literally imprisoned in a CIA vault for years - and that those interviews were arranged, without too much difficulty, by editors of *Reader's Digest*, who work closely with the intelligence community on publishing projects. •

Epstein says that

Gorbachev's current

glasnost/perestroika

campaign is just one

more commie trick

Over the Air

By Frederic Stout

Radio Warfare: ass and CIA Subversive Propaganda by Lawrence C. Soley, Praeger, NY, 1989, 249 pp" \$24.95,

Radio has been and continues to be one of the most effective means of mass propaganda, as anyone who has listened to the nightly deluge of low-brow talk radio shows can readily attest. But the real story of on-the-air propaganda begins with what Lawrence Soley calls "subversive radio broadcasting," the ultra-sophisticated, clandestine and often enormously daring uses of the technology by the major intelligence agencies - in this country, the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the Office of War Information (OWI), and the postwar CIA,

Soley, a professor of journalism and mass communications at the University of Minnesota, has produced a major piece of scholarship in *Radio Warfare*, the first book-length treatment of the subject ever published. Scrupulously footnoted and boasting a five-page bibliography of sources, *Radio Warfare* may well tell the general reader more than he or she might possibly want to know about the countless episodes of radio subversion practiced during and since World War II by the Nazis, the Soviets, the British, and the Americans as an instrument of state policy. For the specialist, however, this is the definitive statement.

Radio Warfare will also become a key

The real story of on-the-air

propaganda begins with

"subversive radio

broadcasting," the ultra

sophisticated, clandestine

uses of the technology by

the major intelligence

source for students and analysts of the CIA. Everyone knows that the CIA grew out of the wartime ass, but Soley makes an important point when he writes, "Where the CIA (today) sees agents of Moscow, there are only indigenous radicals who oppose the status quo. The CIA world view concerning the 'international Communist enemy' is the outgrowth of the postwar hysteria brought about by congressional opponents of the New Deal, (racial) integration, and democracy... For this reason, the CIA's history and ideology are more closely related to that of the House Un-American Activities Committee than to its predecessor, the ass," •

Frederic Stout is a Senior Editor of Propaganda Review.

Dazibao

By Simon Loekle



A dazibao is a Chinese large-character poster.

Today, dazibao lives on in the fevered brain of Simon Loekle, an itinerant teacher of Elizabethan literature and celebrated ranterraveron Pacifica outlet WBAI in New York. Mr. Loekle lives on the Upper West Side of Manhattan which, he remarks disgruntledly, used to be called the Upper Left Side but is now known as the Yupper West Side.

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Speakes' desk that read, "We don't tell you how to report the news. Don't tell us how to stage it."

We were not amused. We met, we talked, we put out five issues of *Propaganda Analysis Review* and sent it to the members of Media Alliance. The response was encouraging. Calling propaganda by name seemed to hit the nerve we were aiming for.

-

Marcy Damovsky is studying propaganda at the University of California at Santa Cruz graduate school. She was the founding editor of *Propaganda Review*.

ascribing a precise meaning to the word "propaganda," those ancillary investigations will be enhanced by helping analysts avoid bogging down in a quagmire of vague language and loaded connotations. •

Claude Steiner is a Senior Editor of *Propaganda Review*. He is a psychologist working on a book. with Charles Rappleye. about propaganda. Charles Rappleye is a free-lance journalist in Los Angeles.

Steiner-Rappleye - continued from page 11

for better or for worse, and became a symbol for it. To condemn it as propaganda may make us feel better but it doesn't tell us a thing about the movie, or about the public reaction to it.

"Top Gun" is on the surface a similar case - another film glorifying military macho in a country frustrated by its inability to solve its geopolitical problems through the application of state force. There is, however an essential difference. For thrills and excitement, "Top Gun" relied heavily on footage of supersonic fighter planes in action. Those planes were the real thing, supplied courtesy of the US government after reviewing the script to see that the message would promote the proper image and interests. That, we contend is an example of propaganda in action. The propagandists in this case are not the producers and directors of the film, but the government agents who decided to commit valuable resources to generate certain images through the film's vehicle. The "Rambo-thing" was a phenomenon of American culture - "Top Gun" was also, but with an element of propaganda at work.

This is a definition of propaganda that we feel will return some power and meaning to a word that has been watered down until it means very little. Our relatively strict definition of propaganda does not seek to dismiss or negate investigations into advertising or various other aspects of propaganda; how it functions, how it influences society, and how new developments in a culture will impact on the task of the propagandist. Instead, we feel that by

Stout - continued from page 13

us at almost every moment of our daily lives and through virtually every channel of our shared popular culture. The messages of Americanism and freedom versus communism and "economic slavery" are constantly being reinforced not just by the appeals of political parties and organized interest groups, but by television entertainment programming and sports spectacles as well ... not just through the pronouncements of government agencies, but also, and with equal effectiveness, through advertising and mass-audience movies.

My own interest in propaganda analysis began during the Reagan-Mondale election campaign when I published two articles that examined the congruence of Cold War ideological messages and their dissemination through televised popular culture. The first of those pieces ("The Primary as TV Show," *MediaFile*, July 1984) looked at the way in which the American political process had borrowed, indeed become consumed by, the techniques of commercial product advertising and the stylistic approaches of made-for-TV movies. Beginning with Mondale's "Where's the beef?" remark to Gary Hart and culminating in Reagan's brilliant "Morning In America" spot, the 1984 campaign demonstrated the awful truth of Marshall McLuhan's dictum that the medium is the message. The second article ("News As Propaganda, Propaganda As News," *MediaFile*, September 1984) focused on the televised presentation of the Los Angeles Olympics, a virtual orgy of low-brow national chauvinism injected into supposedly apolitical sports culture, and the explicit expropriation of the spirit of those games by the Republican Party.

In both of these cases, what interested me - and struck me as a radically new departure - was not so much the content of the propaganda itself as the way in which the presentation of the

propaganda messages deliberately blurred the distinction between political discourse and popular entertainment. This crossover effect is the heart and soul of propagandization in the contemporary propaganda environment.

Definition Versus Understanding

By the terms of the Steiner/Rapleye definition of propaganda, "Morning in America" would be accepted as a valid example of propaganda because it represented a conscious attempt to manipulate public opinion in order to influence the activities of the state - i.e., to win a national election - but the 1984 Olympics would not - not, that is, until the American medal winners were paraded onto the floor of the Republican convention in Dallas, sparking a reprise of the Los Angeles chant, "USA, USA!"

But why? How useful, after all, is a definition that rules out the chauvinism of the 1984 Olympics prior to its exploitation in an explicitly political context when all the themes of that later propaganda usage were clearly evident beforehand? And how useful is a definition of propaganda that rules out films like *Rambo* or that other Sylvester Stallone masterpiece, *Rocky IV*, where the American superhero meets the evil Soviet robot in the ring, wins and brings an end (on American terms) to the Cold War?

Similarly, how useful is a definition of propaganda that fails to see the repeated uses of national chauvinist catch phrases in commercial advertising--Chevrolet's "The Heartbeat of America" versus Chrysler's "Here's To You, America." Or, on a deeper level, fails to recognize that all advertising is both propaganda for an individual product *and*, cumulatively, on-going propaganda for the consumerist base of the very capitalist system upon which American politics rests?

In an attempt to differentiate between the botulism of propaganda and the chicken soup of the propaganda environment, Steiner and Rapleye have formulated an *a priori* definition that works, as all *a priori* definitions do, only within a closed system.

More significantly, the definition of propaganda proposed by Steiner and Rapleye turns a blind eye to the real world we now all inhabit, the world of blurred distinctions and day-to-day inter- penetration of the explicitly and subliminally political. In a situation where all the chicken soup contains botulism, what's the difference? A definition of propaganda that draws a firm line between propaganda and the propaganda environment fails to recognize the importance of contemporary propagandization and, to paraphrase Ludwig Wittgenstein on the subject of the mind-body dichotomy, proposes a distinction without a difference, a

pseudo-problem. •

Frederic Stout is a Senior Editor of Propaganda Review and teaches Urban Studies at San Francisco State University and Stanford University.

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this scope (some 50 programs and agencies in the last 75 years) is continually funded and accepted by the public, one needs to look closely for the motives. Hoffman simply says that the leaders, throughout history, who had "bad trips" outlawed the drugs they didn't like. It seems more likely that the law enforcement lobby has been so successful and the financial rewards for the criminal syndicates so great that an unholy alliance of the two supposed enemies has won out over common sense.

If psycho-active drugs were legalized in the US and a mere pittance of the funds spent on law enforcement were allocated for education and treatment, the huge legal bureaucracy involved with drugs would wither away. In addition, the moral and social control mechanisms developed by these cops would disappear leaving the citizenry much freer to develop their own attitudes not only about drug use but about many other lifestyle questions which the establishment would rather not leave open to choice.

Ultimately, legalization would hurt the criminal syndicates the most. The billions of dollars spent each year on "controlled substances" are the foundation of cartels which trade not only in drugs, but, in association with several Western intelligence agencies, including the CIA, in vast quantities of automatic weapons which find their way to the various counter-insurgencies around the world. In short, the motive behind the drug war propaganda campaigns for the last 75 years has been only partly moral. The hidden power elites - the intelligence agencies, the free-lance spooks, and the criminal syndicates - all depend upon the illegality of drugs for their very survival. •

Johan Carlisle is a Senior Editor at Propaganda Review.

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5 Election Coverage As Propaganda by Jay Rosen The media hasn't noticed, but half the country doesn't bother to vote for president. Do the reporters on the campaign trail cover the event—or create it?

10 Measuring the American Mind by Nina Eliasoph The Wallonians: Do you strongly approve? Strongly disapprove? or all of the above?

15 Jewish Souls Arab Bones by James Zogby Anti-Arab racism in US media and culture blinds us to Palestinians as human beings. Instead we are taught to see the "Palestinian problem."

15 US Media Twists PLO Role by Dennis Perrin

The Palestinian uprising has made criticism of Israel kosher, but anti-PLO bias is still the bottom line.

21 Piscataway Stalemate by Barbara Haber When 670 student radicals gathered to form a national organization, the myths of the sixties raised expectations to unscalable heights.

25 Reagan's Propaganda Ministry by Peter Kornbluh Beginning in 1983, the Office of Public Diplomacy mounted a "vast psychological warfare operation" aimed at the American people. Has OPD been stopped?

29 Jaques Ellul: Quirky Trailblazer of Propaganda Theory by Claude Steiner and Charles Rappleye

Ellul's 1965 classic broke new ground in propaganda studies. In an interview with PR, he updates his views on the engineering of attitudes in mass society.

34 Speak No Evil by Michael Miley The religious right and the Federal Communications Commission join forces to attack Pacifica's listener-sponsored radio network and Pacifica fights back.

38 Ethel Rosenberg Remystified? by Marjorie Penn Lasky - *Ethel Rosenberg: Beyond the Myths* by Ilene Philipson. Since her execution as an A-bomb spy, Ethel Rosenberg has been an icon of the left. Does delving into her psyche bring us closer to the truth?

41 Readin', Rantin' and Rhetoric by Paul Lichterman On *Closing of the American Mind* by Alan Bloom, *Cultural Literacy* by Edward Hirsch, and their critics. What should Jane and Johnny learn? And who should decide?

45 Ad Watch by Valerie Kuletz

The Tasteless Intrigue: What's wrong with this picture? by Marina Hirsch Point and Click: Immediate gratification via remote control.

47 Inside Stories by J.A. Savage The Corporate Communicators: A reporter squares off with the PR flaks-and their bosses.

49 Resources Project Censored; Media & Values; National Security Archive

Issue #3, Winter 1988

1 Editorial: Propaganda and Postmodernism

by Frederic Stout A call to a conference on why propaganda is different today and what we can do about it.

4 Propaganda Watch

Boston University's "School for Propaganda Practitioners;" the "designated driver" campaign; "Press Freedom" in West Berlin?

5 Anatomy of a Disinformation Campaign

by Johan Carlisle New evidence shows that the State Department had a story all ready and waiting when the bomb went off at La Penca.

10 An Influential Ghost: The Institute for Propaganda Analysis by Alfred McClung

Lee and Elizabeth Briant Lee The modern age of propaganda began and a gallant organization set out to oppose it ... leaving its mark for all who would follow.

15 Nuclear Culture by Chellis Glendinning

Out of the laboratories ... and into our minds. A report by 'the world's first nuclear archaeologist.'

18 Seeing Is Believing: The Strange Case of the Jackson-Arafat Photo by Paul Rockwell

A "doctored photograph" is used to slander Jesse Jackson because the press doesn't read its own clips.

21 Magical Mike: Falwell's Comic Book

by Frederic Stout Who takes credit for the major themes of the '88 Bush campaign? Jim Baker? Lee Atwater? Or maybe the Moral Majority?

25 First Amendment: Friend or Foe?

by Peter Franck Has "freedom of the press" rhetoric become a smoke screen for corporate greed and international imperialism?

29 A Propaganda Model by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky An excerpt from a new book on propaganda and the media by Herman and Chomsky- "The Five Filters for What's Fit To Print."

32 Brave New World Revisited, Revisited

by Claude Steiner How close has Huxley's vision come to contemporary reality?

36 I'm Optimal, You're Optimal by Loretta Graziano The Moral Dimension: Toward a New Economics. The Economist's Way of Knowledge and why we swallow their psuedo-science.

34 Ad Watch by Mark Crispin Miller

The odd couple-Ronald Reagan and Michael Jackson almost meet in front of a telling backdrop.

38 Mommy Made Me Do It! by Hannah Silver Taken In, a new book on the psychological susceptibility to propaganda comes up with a reductionist, one-dimensional view.

40 Resources

Strategies for Media Literacy; Fund for Open Information and Accountability, Inc.; Global Options; Association for Responsible Dissent.

Issue #4, Spring 1989

3 Editorial: Who and What We Are

by Sheila O'Donnell

4 Propaganda Watch — Smith & Wesson's kinder, gentler weapon; US shoots down two Libyan MiG's; United Airlines shows women how to be both on the mommy track and the executive track; USIA defines propaganda; Urban guerrillas create news.

6 The Media and Government Deception

by David Pearson Deception takes its toll upon the individuals and organizations that practice it.

12 Renegades, Terrorists and Revolutionaries

by Ward Churchill Propaganda was integral to the government's strategy of repression against the American Indian Movement.

17 Hitler's Last Laugh

by Martin A Lee

An in-depth analysis of a recent book, *Blowback*, which documents the "ghoulish tryst" between the CIA and exNazis which was largely responsible for the rabid nature of the Cold War.

22 Economic Data - Moral Equivalent of Fast Food

by Loretta Graziano Inflation and unemployment rates have become powerful propaganda tools; as long as the figures are low the electorate looks no further.

26 A Nazi in the Hand is Worth Two in the Bush

by Chip Berlet Bush utilizes the Big Lie technique to sidestep charges in the Bellant Report that the campaign's Coalition of American Nationalities was infiltrated by Nazi collaborators, racists, and fascists.

31 The Wages of Cynicism

by Michael Miley

Inspired by a reading of Peter Sloterdijk's book *Critique of Cynical Reason*, Michael Miley puts a magnifying glass to the dominant mood of our culture and suggests that it is an essential aspect of today's propaganda.

34 Against From Within - Godard, Mievile and TV

by David Levi Strauss When Jean-Luc Godard abandoned film for TV, he turned the medium against itself and discovered new possibilities for real communication.

40 Dialogue: The Perils of Polling

by David Kubrin Is polling a valid way to assess public opinion? Kubrin thinks not.

43 Dialogue: Taken In - Two Divergent Perspectives

by Stephen Ducat and Hannah Silver

The Case for Psychoanalytically-Informed Politics: Stephen Ducat responds to Hannah Silver's review of his book and she replies.

46 Ad Watch

by Marina Hirsch "Juggling Act" — Two women in the public eye: Mariel Hemingway and Rosanne Barr provide contrasting role models.

48 Resources

Peace By Peace; National Abortion Rights Action League; Political Research Associates.

No Comment



Quayle Stresses Human Rights at Meeting in San Salvador

Vice President Dan Quayle with Defense Minister Gen. Humberto Laris, left, and Col. Emilio Ponce, Army Chief of Staff, in San Salvador, where

he also met with Roberto d'Aubuisson, the rightist leader. Mr. Quayle is holding a Soviet-made flame thrower reportedly confiscated from guerrillas.

News item on the front page of the *New York Times* June 14, 1989, p. A-1.

Viet Nam has a housing shortage . . . And they are doing something about it . . .

RENT CONTROL: IT'S WORSE THAN BOMBING

NEW DELHI — A "romantic" conception of socialism" . . . destroyed Vietnam's economy in the years after the Vietnam war, foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach said Friday.

Addressing a crowded news conference in the Indian capital, Mr. Thach admitted that controls . . . had artificially encouraged demand and discouraged supply . . .

House rents had . . . been kept low . . . so all the houses in Hanoi had fallen into disrepair, said Mr. Thach.

"The Americans couldn't destroy Hanoi, but we have destroyed our city by very low rents. We realized it was stupid and that we must change policy," he said. (From a news report in the *Journal of Commerce*)

Rent controls have turned New York City's rental housing to rubble. Tax dollars are paying to rebuild it. Let's phase out rent controls, and put those tax dollars to work for the homeless, better schools, and improved police protection.



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Paid Advertisement in the *New York Times* June 12, 1989, p. A-19



"Through clever and constant application of propaganda, people can be made to see paradise as hell, and also the other way around to consider the most wretched sort of life as paradise."

Adolf Hitler *Mein Kampf*, 1927

"The ideological — or rectitude-based — organization is singularly dependent on the agitational skills of its leaders to state and reiterate the purposes that are its *raison d'être*."

Jeane Kirkpatrick, 1980



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