



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

*Anthony Pratkanis, Elliot Aronson*

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We live in an age of propaganda. Americans consume 57% of the world's advertising while representing only 6% of the population, and half of our waking hours are spent with the mass media. Persuasion has always been integral to the democratic process - it's how we make decisions, elect governments, do business, and resolve disputes, but increasingly, thoughtful discussion is being replaced with simplistic sound bites, manipulative messages, and deceptive propaganda tactics.

An eye-opening analysis of the use and abuse of persuasion in daily life, *Age of Propaganda* reveals how persuasion influences our behavior, which propaganda strategies are most commonly used today, and why some techniques work better than others. Drawing on the history of propaganda and modern research in social psychology, the authors show how the tactics used by political campaigners, sales agents, advertisers, televangelists, demagogues, and others, often take advantage of our emotions by appealing to our deepest fears and most irrational hopes, creating a distorted vision of the world we live in.

Thoroughly revised and updated, this new edition of *Age of Propaganda* includes coverage of the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal, recent election campaigns, the rise of talk radio, teen suicide, U.F.O abductions, the Columbine shootings, and novel propaganda tactics based on hypocrisy and false allegations. Also included is a completely new chapter on how to protect yourself from unwanted propaganda.

An invaluable guide to today's message-laden world, *Age of Propaganda* provides us with the knowledge we need to understand how manipulative messages work, how to deal with them sensibly, and how to use persuasion wisely and effectively.

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