

PROPAGANDA BINGO

A META-PROGRAMMING GAME

About Propaganda Bingo

Propaganda is a form of mental programming. We're susceptible to propaganda because our education system doesn't provide us with sufficient tools to develop independent critical thinking. Insufficient critical filters leave the mind vulnerable to manipulation.

Mental manipulation is most often carried out by organisations and individuals who want us to follow some doctrine or ideology, buy some product or otherwise exhibit behaviour favourable to their agenda.

By learning to recognise the patterns that propagandists use, you can disrupt their programming. Propaganda Bingo is a meta-programming tool to help you to bolster your mind against manipulation by others.

How to use Propaganda Bingo

1. Read through the descriptors to familiarise yourself with the most commonly used propaganda techniques.
2. Pick up a newspaper, turn on the TV or go online.
3. Using the Propaganda Bingo card for reference, see how often these techniques are used to convince you to buy something, do something or be something that is *of direct benefit to the propagandist*.

Practice makes perfect, so play often! By strengthening your awareness of propagandists' patterns, you can break them.

Warning

Playing Propaganda Bingo might reduce your susceptibility to mental manipulation techniques. Signs of that this is happening are:

- Reduced consumption of non-essential consumer products
- Increased scepticism for all forms of ideology and organised indoctrination
- Decreased tendency to manipulate the viewpoints of others
- Increased happiness and peace of mind

Ad hominem	Attacking one's opponent, as opposed to attacking their arguments
Ad nauseam	Tireless repetition of an idea
Appeal to authority	Cite prominent figures to support a position, idea, argument, course of action
Appeal to fear	Instill anxieties and panic in the general population
Appeal to prejudice	Use of loaded or emotive terms to attach value or moral goodness to believing the proposition
Bandwagon	Attempt to persuade the target to take the course of action that "...everyone else is taking."
Beautiful people	Famous/ attractive/ happy people used to suggest that if individuals buy a product or follow a certain ideology, they too will be successful/ attractive/ happy
Big Lie	Repeated articulation of a complex of events that justify subsequent action. The descriptions of these events have elements of truth, and the "big lie" generalizations merge and eventually supplant the public's accurate perception of the underlying events.
Black-and-White fallacy	Presenting only two choices, with the product or idea being propagated as the best choice e.g. <i>You're either with us or against us</i>
Cherry picking or Selective truth	Selection of truth that is requisite for a given purpose, and presented it in such a way that the recipient does not think s/he is receiving any propaganda.
Classical conditioning	If object A is always present when object B is present, and object B causes an emotional or physiological reaction, then when presented only with object A, subjects experience reaction as if B were present.
Cognitive dissonance	If people hate a candidate but love actor A, actor A's endorsement can be used to change their minds. People can't tolerate inconsistency so must either dislike actor A or like the candidate.
Common man	Convince the audience that the propagandist's positions reflect the common sense of the people by communicating in the common manner and style of the target audience.
Cult of personality	Use mass media to create an idealized and heroic public image. The hero personality then advocates the positions that the propagandist desires to promote
Demonizing the enemy	Making individuals from an opposing nation, different ethnic group, or those who support an opposing viewpoint, appear to be subhuman

Dictat	Using images and words to tell the audience exactly what actions to take, thereby eliminating other possible choices.
Disinformation	The creation or deletion of information from public records.
Door-in-the-face technique	Used to increase a person's latitude of acceptance i.e. an initial offer is made at an inflated cost and subsequently reduced to make it seem like a good deal.
Euphemism	A generally innocuous word or expression used in place of one that may be found offensive or suggest something unpleasant.
Euphoria	Use of an event that generates euphoria to boost morale.
Exaggeration	(Or hyperbole) occurs when the most fundamental aspects of a statement are true, but only to a certain degree. Making something appear more powerful, meaningful, or real than it actually is.
Fear, uncertainty and doubt	Influence public perception by disseminating negative and dubious information designed to undermine the credibility of their beliefs.
Flag-waving	Attempt to justify an action on the grounds that doing so will make one more patriotic, or will benefit a group, country, or idea.
Foot-in-the-door technique	A small gift is given. The recipient of the gift has now incurred a psychological debt to the gift-giver. The gift-giver eventually asks for a larger favour and the recipient feels obligated to reciprocate.
Framing	Process of selective influence over an individual's perception of the meanings attributed to words and phrases. Social construction of a social phenomena often by mass media, political or social movements, organizations, individuals etc.
Glittering generalities	Emotionally-appealing words that are applied to a product, person or idea, but present no concrete argument or analysis.
Guilt by association	Technique used to persuade a target audience to disapprove of an action or idea by suggesting that the idea is popular with groups hated, feared, or held in contempt by the target audience
Half-truth	A deceptive statement that includes some element of truth
Intentional vagueness	Generalities are deliberately vague so that the audience may supply its own interpretations. In trying to "figure out" the propaganda, the audience forgoes judgment of the ideas presented.
Labeling	Euphemism is used when the propagandist attempts to increase the perceived quality, credibility, or credence of a particular ideal. Dysphemism is used when propagandist's aim is to discredit, diminish the perceived quality, or hurt the perceived righteousness of an individual.

Latitudes of acceptance	If a person's message is outside the bounds of acceptance for an individual or group, most techniques will engender psychological reactance. To counter this, one can take an extreme position that will make more moderate positions seem more acceptable (see Door-in-the-Face technique). Alternatively, one can moderate one's own position to the edge of the latitude of acceptance and then over time slowly move to the more extreme position.
Loaded language	Use of words and phrases with strong emotional implications with a view to influencing the audience.
Love bombing	Bombard a person with affection in an attempt to isolate them from their prior beliefs and value system—see Milieu control
Lying and deception	Basis of Ad Hominem, Big-Lie, Defamation, Door-in-the-Face, Half-truth, Name-calling techniques.
Managing the news	<i>"The most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly - it must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over."</i> Adolf Hitler
Milieu control	An attempt to control the social environment and ideas through use of social pressure.
Minimisation	Opposite of exaggeration. Deception involving denial coupled with rationalization. Used in situations where complete denial is implausible
Name-calling	Used to incite fears and arouse prejudices
Obfuscation	see Intentional vagueness
Operant conditioning	Learning through imitation e.g. watching an appealing person buy products or endorse a position teaches a person to buy the product or endorse the position. Operant conditioning is the underlying principle behind Ad Nauseam, Slogan and other repetition public relations campaigns
Over-simplification	Favorable generalities are used to provide simple answers to complex social, political, economic, or military problems
Pensée unique	Enforced reduction of discussion by use of overly simplistic phrases or arguments (e.g. "There is no alternative to war.")
Quotes out of context	Selective editing of quotes to change meanings. Political documentaries designed to discredit an opponent or opposing political viewpoint often use this technique
Rationalization	Favorable generalities are used to rationalize questionable acts or beliefs

Red herring	Presenting data or issues that are irrelevant to the argument at hand, then claiming that data validates the argument
Repetition	Repeating a symbol or slogan so that the audience remembers it
Scape-goating	Assigning blame to an individual or group
Slogans	Brief, striking phrases that may include labeling and stereotyping. Used mainly as emotional appeals.
Stereotyping	Arouse prejudices in an audience by labeling the object of the propaganda campaign as something the target audience fears, hates, loathes, or finds undesirable
Straw man	To "attack a straw man" is to create the illusion of having refuted a proposition by substituting a superficially similar proposition (the "straw man"), and refuting it, without ever having actually refuted the original position
Testimonial	Use of quotations, in or out of context, cited to support or reject a given policy, action, program, or personality. The reputation or the role (expert, respected public figure, etc.) of the individual giving the statement is exploited. The testimonial places the official sanction of a respected person or authority on a propaganda message
Third party technique	People are more willing to accept an argument from a seemingly independent source than from someone with a stake in the outcome. Third party technique can take many forms, ranging from the hiring of journalists to report the organization in a favorable light, to using scientists within the organization to present their perhaps prejudicial findings to the public
Thought-terminating cliché	A commonly used phrase, sometimes passing as folk wisdom, used to quell cognitive dissonance (see Cognitive dissonance)
Transfer (AKA Association)	Projecting positive or negative qualities of a person, entity, object, or value onto another to make the second more acceptable or to discredit it
Unstated assumption	Used when the propaganda concept would seem less credible if explicitly stated. The concept is instead repeatedly assumed or implied.
Virtue words	Words in the value system of the target audience that produce a positive image when attached to a person or issue. Peace, hope, happiness, security, wise leadership, freedom, "The Truth"

Propaganda Bingo was initially inspired by the Scottish Referendum and finalised during #GE2015

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