FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

2\textsuperscript{nd} SEMESTER 2019

ASSIGNMENT 1

Persuasion and Propaganda

(PAP721S)
Date: 22 September 2019

ASSIGNMENT 1

Give scholarly and your own definitions of Persuasion and Propaganda. Explain the importance of this body of knowledge to a student of Communication.

50 marks

Answer
Your response could have included the following points.
Definitions of persuasion.

1. To induce; to undertake a course of action or embrace a point of view by means of argument, reasoning, or entreaty (The Free dictionary.com)

Etymology: Latin: persuādēre : per-, per- + suādēre, to urge]

Synonyms: persuade, induce, prevail, convince
These verbs mean to succeed in causing a person to do or consent to something. Persuade means to win someone over, as by reasoning or personal forcefulness: Nothing could persuade her to change her mind.

To induce is to lead, as to a course of action, by means of influence or persuasion.

To convince is to persuade by the use of argument or evidence e.g. The sales clerk convinced me that the car was worth the price.

2. The act of influencing the mind by arguments or reasons offered, or by anything that moves the mind or passions, or inclines the will to a determination. (Brainy quote.com)

Perspectives of persuasion from rhetoricians

Cicero: Eloquence (cf St. Augustines)
Elements of persuasion

• Inventing or discovering evidence and arguments;
• Styling them artistically;
• Organising;
- Memorising;
- Delivering.

Plato

- Flattery and cookery
- Meeting of the souls

Plato and the sophists: differences in the goals and nature of persuasion

Aristotle

3 proofs

- Ethos (Personality and stance, Cockcroft & Cockcroft, 2005)
- Pathos (Feelings)
- Logos (Reason thus argumentation)
  - Deductive arguments
  - Premises that lead to conclusion
  - Inductive arguments (Experience and observation)

Therefore persuasion is:

- Is a process;
- Is aimed at achieving a desired end;
- Deals with a target audience(s);
- Is aimed at changing how they think and to call them to act in a desired way;
- May or may not succeed depending on a number of variables such as educational levels, economic, social and political conditions.

What is propaganda?

Definition 1.

Information, ideas, or rumours deliberately spread widely to help or harm a person, group, movement, institution, nation, etc. (Dictionary.com)

2. the deliberate spreading of such information, rumours, etc.

3. the particular doctrines or principles propagated by an organization or movement.
In 1622 by Pope Gregory XV established a committee of cardinals for the supervision over foreign missions and the training of priests for these missions.

A school (College of Propaganda) established by Pope Urban VIII for the education of priests for foreign missions.

**Definition 2 of propaganda**

The systematic propagation of a doctrine or cause or of information reflecting the views and interests of those advocating such a doctrine or cause. (Free online dictionary)

- Material disseminated by the advocates or opponents of a doctrine or cause: *wartime propaganda.*

**Roman Catholic Church**

A division of the Roman Curia that has authority in the matter of preaching the gospel, of establishing the Church in non-Christian countries, and of administering Church missions in territories where there is no properly organized hierarchy.

**Definition 3 reflecting a historical overview of propaganda.**

- In its neutral sense the term means to disseminate or promote particular ideas (Garth & O’Donnell, 2006).
- In Latin the term means ‘to propagate’ or ‘to sow’.
- In 1622 the Vatican established the Sacra Congregation de Propaganda Fide meaning the sacred congregation for propagating the faith of the Roman Catholic Church.
- The intention was to spread the faith to the New World and to oppose protestantism.
- Because of this the word propaganda lost its neutrality. It became pejorative.
- So propaganda refers to something dishonest and negative.
- Synonyms: lies, distortion, deceit, manipulation, mind control, psychological warfare, brainwashing and palaver (idle talk)
- Modern equivalents: spin (manipulation of political information) and news management – ideological squares.
- Press secretaries and PR Practitioners are called ‘Spin doctors’.
- Propaganda uses unethical, harmful & unfair tactics.
- It is often viewed as ‘organized persuasion’. Why?

Sproule (1994, p.8) argues that propaganda is organized mass persuasion with covert intent and poor or non-existent reasoning: “Propaganda represents the work of large organizations or groups to win over the public for special interests through a massive orchestration of attractive conclusions packaged to conceal both their persuasive purpose and lack of sound supporting reasons.”

- Propaganda is done to spread a particular ideology to serve the interests of the propagandist (and his/her allies).
- Its use is associated with the need to offset and, or, even maintain a certain power matrix in favour of the propagandist.
- Examples:
Government trying to win massive support;
A terrorist group trying to entice people to join a jihad;
  - Do not forget Domesthenes and the Athenians versus the Macedonians (Cockcroft and Cockcroft, 2005);
  - The speech by Margaret Thatcher on achievements of her government.
  - Liberation movements in Africa;
  - The Chinese revolution;
  - The war in Arab Spring
  - Lybia, Syria, Egypt
  - More examples from the Middle East conflict and other parts of the world.

Discussion
Your discussion should have focused on the importance of knowledge of persuasion and propaganda in sharpening your critical thinking skills and ability to interpret and understand world events. This knowledge would make you a better citizen of the 21st century. You will become a world player. More should have been said by you following this line of thought.

Conclusion
The conclusion should have highlighted the positive and negative aspects related to the field. One has to use this body of knowledge in a responsible manner otherwise one becomes a social, political and economic malcontent.

ASSIGNMENT 2

Examine Persuasion and Propaganda techniques of advertising as persuasive communication. Use appropriate examples from the Namibian context to support your answer.

Candidate need to identify and explain any five techniques from the following:

- Name Calling
- Snob Appeal
- Bandwagon
- Testimonial
- Loaded words
- Card Stacking
- Misuse of Statistics
- Plain Folks

Other types need to be accepted on merit.

Name Calling: This technique uses derogatory language or words that carry a negative implication when describing an enemy, a rival product or a competitor. This type of propaganda tries to arouse discrimination. In advertising, it makes people to shun certain products, goods and services as they go for advertised alternatives.
An example of Name Calling Standler explains is when a "politician who disagrees with a judge can label him/her as a 'liberal activist judge'. You could give examples from the advertising industry in Namibia. For example, how Windhoek Larger is advertising as quality beer at the expense of other brands.

You were expected to give relevant examples from various contexts in life.

**Bandwagon**: Bandwagon is one of the most widespread techniques in both wartime and peacetime and plays an important part in modern advertising. "Bandwagon is also one of the seven main propaganda techniques identified by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis in 1938. Bandwagon is an appeal to the subject to follow the crowd, to join in because others are doing so as well."

Bandwagon propaganda is trying to convince people that one side is the winning side, because a lot of people have joined it. In advertising, it makes one to join others in spending money on popular goods, services and products. For example, FNB adverts which persuade people to bank with FNB.

**Card stacking**: This is one of the seven techniques identified by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA). This technique involves only presenting information that is positive to an idea or proposal and leaving out information that is different to it.

This technique is used in almost all forms of propaganda, and it is extremely useful in convincing the public. For example, to buy colgate.

Although the majority of information presented by the card stacking approach is true, it is dangerous because it omits important information.

**Plain folks**: The plain folk device is an attempt by the propagandist to convince the public that his views reflect those of the common person that they are also working for the benefit of the common person.

The propagandist will often attempt to use the accent of a specific audience as well as using specific idioms or jokes. Also, the propagandist, especially during speeches, may attempt to increase the illusion through imperfect pronunciation, stuttering, and a more limited vocabulary. Errors such as these help add to the impression of sincerity and spontaneity.

This technique is usually more effective when used with glittering generalities, in an attempt to convince the public that the propagandist views about highly valued ideas are similar to their own and therefore more valid. When confronted with this type of propaganda, the subject should consider the proposals and ideas separately from the personality of the presenter.

One was expected to give specific examples from various adverts in the Namibian context.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, you were expected to highlight the importance of the advertising techniques.

**Prepared for you by**

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