

Propaganda Types

- 1. Bandwagon:** The basic idea behind the bandwagon approach is that everyone is doing this, or everyone supports this person/cause, so should you. The bandwagon approach appeals to the conformist in all of us: no one wants to be left out of what is perceived to be a popular trend.
EXAMPLE: Everyone in Lemmingtown is behind Jim Duffie for mayor. Shouldn't you be a part of this winning team?
- 2. Testimonial:** This is the celebrity endorsement of a philosophy, movement, or candidate.
EXAMPLE: "Sam Slugger," a baseball Hall of Famer who led the pros in hitting for years, appears in a TV ad supporting Mike Politico for U.S. Senate. Since Sam is well known and respected in his home state and nationally, he will likely gain Mr. Politico many votes just by his appearance with the candidate.
- 3. Plain Folks:** Here a person or cause of great stature is connected with common people from everyday walks of life. The idea is to make the person/cause come off as being "one of us" and all-American.
EXAMPLE: After a morning speech to wealthy donors, a presidential candidate stops by McDonalds for a burger, fries, and a photo-op.
- 4. Fear (and other emotional appeals):** This idea is to present a dreaded circumstance and follow it up with the kind of behavior needed to avoid that horrible event. (This is an emotional appeal, which means other emotional appeals, like appealing to pity, guilt, etc. can also be used to persuade the audience.)
EXAMPLE: The Citizens for Retired presents a magazine ad showing an elderly couple living in poverty because their social security benefits have been drastically cut by the Republicans in Congress. The solution? The CRR urges you to vote for Democrats.
- 5. Loaded Language:** This is using language that has strong emotional connotations to evoke emotions in the audience and therefore sway an argument.
EXAMPLE: Men who didn't serve in the military are traitors to American values.
- 6. Glittering Generalities:** Here, a generally accepted virtue is used to stir up favorable emotions. The problem is that these words mean different things to different people and are often manipulated for the propagandist's use. The important thing is that the propagandist uses these words in a positive sense. They often include words like: democracy, family values, rights, civilization, even the word "American."
EXAMPLE: 1) An Ad by a cigarette company tells smokers: Don't let them take your rights away! ("Rights" is a powerful word, something that stirs emotions for many, but few on either side would agree on exactly the "rights" of smokers are.)
2) Good citizens will support new housing developments in our community.
- 7. Name Calling:** A speaker uses emotionally charged, negative terms for a person, group, etc., designed to make the person or caused to be viewed negatively and lose credibility.
EXAMPLE: In a campaign speech to a logging company, the Congressman referred to his environmentally conscious opponent as a "tree hugger."
- 8. Transfer:** 1) Transfer employs the use of symbols, quotes or images to convey a message not necessarily associated with them. The propagandist attempts to persuade us through the indirect use of something we respect, such as a patriotic or religious image, to promote his/her ideas. 2) It can also refer to illogical connections between two things.
EXAMPLE: 1) An environmentalist group, in its attempt to prevent a highway from destroying the natural habitat of thousands of plant species, creates a TV ad with a "scientist" in a white lab coat

explaining the dramatic consequences of altering the food chain by destroying this habitat. 2) If politics is corrupt, this candidate is also corrupt.

9. Card stacking: A speaker mentions only the facts that will build the best case for his or her argument, ignoring other facts or evidence that might hurt his or her argument.
EXAMPLE: A major clothing store advertises their spring clothing sale, but fails to mention only 20 items in the store are on sale.
10. False generalizations: Words such as *all*, *everywhere*, *everyone*, *always*, *never* and *no one* signal that a broad generalization is being used, and is therefore very likely false.
EXAMPLE: Every athlete is concerned more with his or her salary than his or her on-field performances.
11. Either/or: This is done by acting as though people only have a choice between two alternatives, when there are really other options available.
EXAMPLE: Without a college education, you're doomed to working at minimum wage all of your life.
12. Slippery Slope: The writer/speaker bases the claim on the assumption that if a particular event occurs, so will other undesirable events. However, there are no reasons to believe that the subsequent actions will occur. It's a fallacy that's usually rooted in fear.
EXAMPLE: If we put limits on the right to bear arms, soon all of our Constitutionally-given rights will be taken away.
13. Two Wrongs Make a Right: The writer/speaker defends an action on the grounds that someone else has done something similar.
EXAMPLE: Residents of Madison should not have to recycle because Perry residents don't have to do so.
14. Circular reasoning: The writer defends the claim by using the conclusion as one of the premises to support the conclusion.
EXAMPLE: God exists because the Bible says so. The Bible is reliable because it is the Word of God.
15. From Ignorance: The argument here is simply that the point is true because it has not been proven otherwise. The fact that the counterclaim has not been proven does not make a claim correct.
EXAMPLE: I believe that ghosts are in my house because no one has proven that they aren't.
16. Old Is Better/New Is Better: 1) For Old Is Better, the writer/speaker appeals to traditional wisdom to support the argument. 2) For New Is Better, the writer/speaker claims that something new is better simply because it is new.
EXAMPLES: 1) People have long believed that fish is "brain food." The FDA is wrong when they say that eating fish does not increase intellect. 2) Papers typed using new computers and apps are more error-free than ones typed on older ones because the new ones make use of new technology.