



Comm Skills Virtual Learning

Public Speaking

Defining Propaganda

May 20, 2020



Lesson: May 20, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

Students will recognize that propaganda activates strong emotions, simplifies ideas, appeals to audience needs, and values, and targets opponents.

Bell Ringer/Let's Get Started

What are the potential benefits and harms that may result from propaganda? How has the rise of social media affected those potential outcomes?

Lesson/Activity

More propaganda is spread virally—from person-to-person—than through one way transmissions from newspapers, broadcasters, governments or advertisers. Today, “liking” and sharing a social media post can be a powerful way to influence the people in our social networks. This is because we trust our friends more than we trust people we do not know.

: Many people do not make careful decisions about whether “to share or not to share.” They might share online content automatically without too much thinking. They might share, for example, when their strong feelings are activated. But before sharing, we should first review the message carefully, understand it, and reflect on its value to us and its value to the people in our social networks.

Lesson/Activity

Find examples of propaganda.

First, find an example from the [Mind over Media](#) website that you would be VERY willing to share on your social media network.

Then, find an example that you would not be willing to share on your social media network.

Practice

Visit [Mind over Media](#), and use the rate tab to evaluate the examples of propaganda you chose.

Select a few others. In evaluating harms vs. benefits, think about whether or not you would share these on your social media.

Reflect: Create a journal response where you describe examples of propaganda you would feel comfortable sharing and examples of that you would not. What patterns are evident in the choices you make?

Additional Resources

[Governments Using Social Media for Propaganda](#)

[Propaganda in the Age of Social Media](#)

[Social Media in War](#)