


"A well-connected citizenry is made up of men & women who discuss & debate ideas & issues among themselves & who constantly test the validity of the information & impressions they receive from one another - as well as the ones they receive from their government"

- Al Gore *The Assault on Reason*

The Art of ● Persuasion

Changing or reinforcing a listener's attitudes, actions, behaviors, & beliefs through the transmission of a message

Persuasive Communications
are designed to influence,
 not uncover, universal truths.

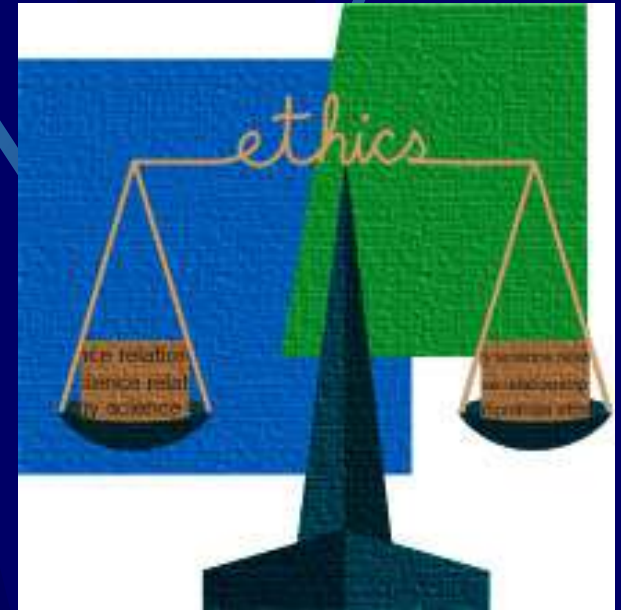
In fact, persuaders sometimes hide
the truth, mislead, or lie outright!

Every human is susceptible to various forms of persuasion and propaganda



Ethics

The study of the general nature of morals and specific moral choices. The rules or standards governing the conduct of a person



Morals

Rules or habits of conduct;
the sense of right and
wrong.



The field of ethics is concerned with determining when it is morally appropriate to deviate from the truth and when such deviations are ethically indefensible.

Persuasion vs. Coercion

Coercion is NOT persuasion.

Coercion uses force to get another person to think or behave as you wish

Coercion is unethical because it takes away free choice!

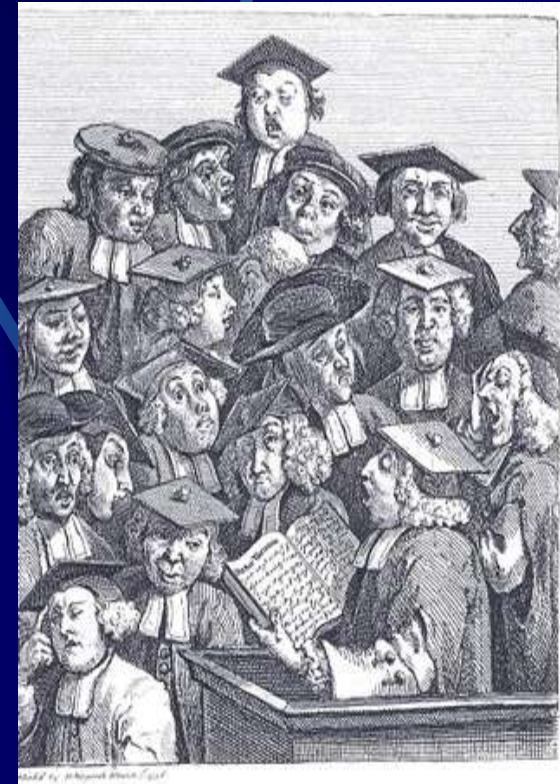


Who Studies Persuasion?

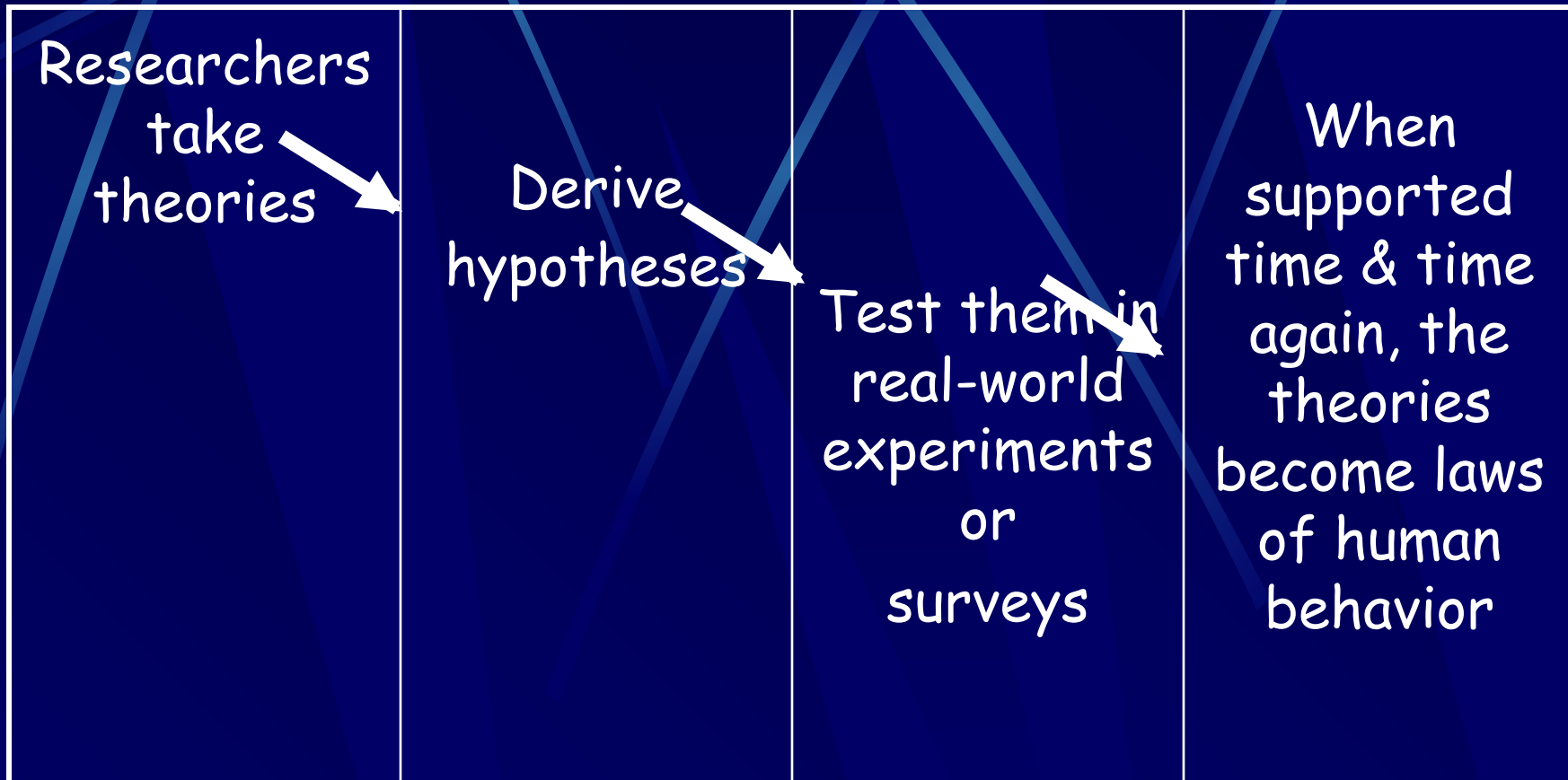
Communication scholars – examine the influences of media on health and politics

Marketing scholars – examine consumer attitudes & influences on buying behaviors

Social Psychologists – focus on the individual, exploring people's attitudes and susceptibility to persuasion.



Research plays a critical role



**But few laws exist in
social science**



Why?

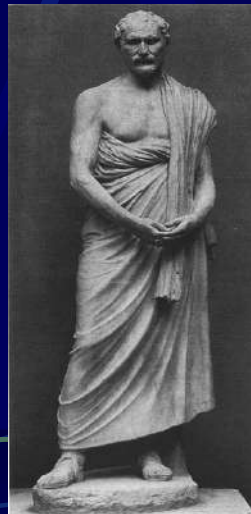


Historical View of Persuasion

Ancient Greece (500 BC) – The Greeks loved public speech.

Trophies were awarded for skills in oratory.
Lawsuits occurred.

Citizens expressed interest in obtaining training in rhetoric.



Rhetoric

Rhetoric – the
art of public
speaking



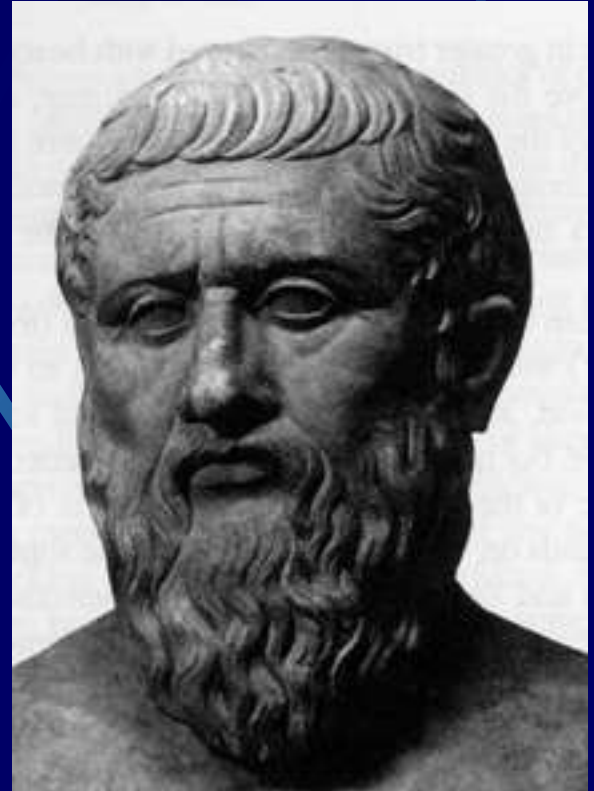
Sophists –
teachers of
rhetoric (comes
from the word
sophos –
knowledge)

Plato

Believed truth was a supreme value

Firm believer in math (black and white issues)

Felt Sophists sacrificed truth for persuasion.

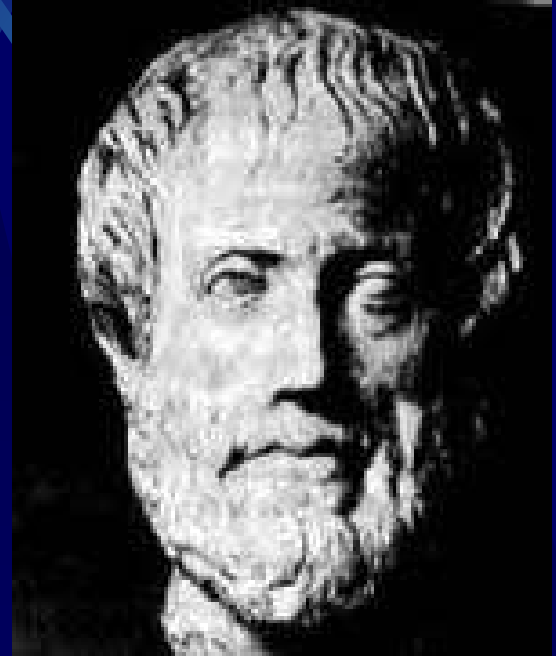


Aristotle

Believed in both the
Sophist and Plato
approach

Take a scientific approach
to persuasion

Use logic and reasoning



Greek Views

Ethos - ethical nature & credibility of the speaker

Logos - the logical arguments presented

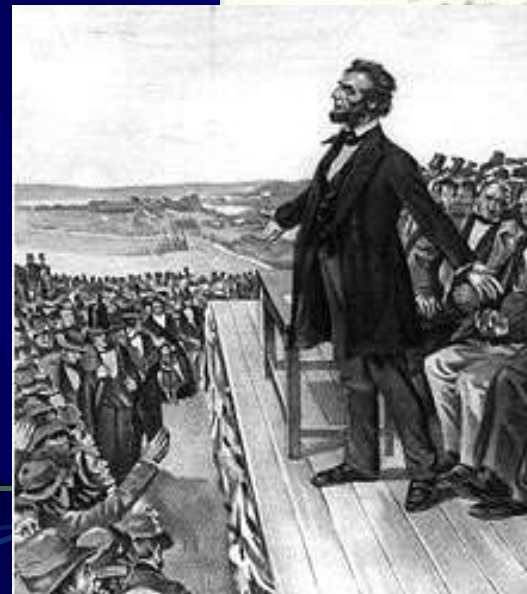
Pathos - the emotional appeals made

Rhetorical Developments in the U.S.

Declaration of
Independence

Lincoln's Gettysburg
Address

Presidential State of the
Union Addresses



Persuasion & Rhetoric is more popular than ever before

More articles and books on persuasion have been published over the past 50 years than in the previous 3,000.

College courses and high school classes are now taught on the subject matter.

Rhetorical theorists exist today as social scientists.

Persuasive Messages



What you say and how you say it influences people

The Structure of the Message

One-sided message presents one perspective on the issue (only the pro or only the con).

Two-sided message offers arguments on behalf of both the pro and the con position.

Research points out that the two-sided message is more persuasive if the message refutes (shoots down) the opposition's argument.
(I'm right, you're wrong)

Types of Conclusions

Implicit conclusions allow one to believe they arrived at the conclusion on their own.

Explicit conclusions are detailed and forceful.

Research points out that explicit conclusions are more persuasive than implicit conclusions.

The Content: Evidence

- factual statements originating from a source other than the speaker, objects not created by the speaker, and opinions of persons other than the speaker's claims

Evidence consists of:

Facts	Quantitative Data (stats)	Eyewitness statements
Narrative Reports	Expert Testimonials	Opinions Advanced By Others

Evidence changes attitudes when...

It is supported by highly credible sources

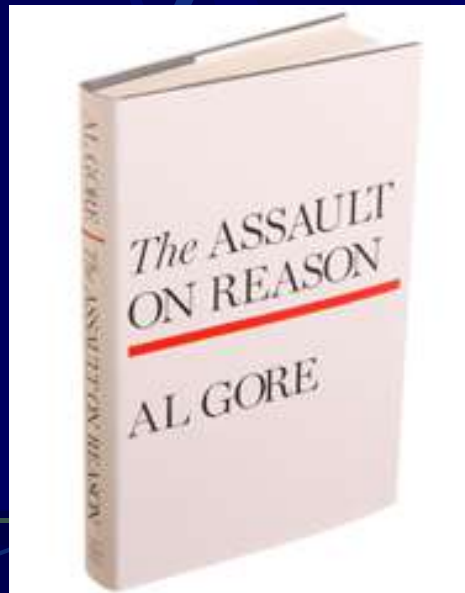
It is more plausible and unique

It is emotionally interesting

It is processed, thought out

"Fear displaces reason,
reason challenges faith,
faith overcomes fear."

- Al Gore (2007) *The Assault on Reason*



Fear Appeals

- Scare people into changing a dysfunctional attitude, action, behavior or belief.

Why use fear?

People are
emotional
(they feel)

People do not
always do what is
best for them

People are
cognitive
(they think)

People are tempted
by items which seem
appealing but can
cause harm

The definition of FEAR!

Fear is an internal, emotional reaction composed of psychological (mind) and physiological (body sweat) dimensions that may be aroused when a serious and personally relevant threat is perceived.



Barriers within Fear Appeal



Contrary to popular belief, it is not easy to scare people successfully

Unrealistic optimism or the illusion of invulnerability

The belief that one is less likely to experience negative life events than others

Fear Appeals contain two elements:

Threat – the severity of the information and the susceptibility of the information

Efficacy – coping strategies involving the response to the fear appeal

Question?

**“Why do reason, logic,
and truth seem to play a
sharply diminished role in
the way America now
makes important
decisions?”**

- Al Gore, *The Assault on Reason*

Facts vs.

Truth



“Facts and truth really
don’t have much to
do with each other”

- William Faulkner

Facts vs Truth

Facts

Information presented
as objectively real

A real occurrence or
event

Real, measurable
existence

Something that has
been done

Truth

A statement proven to
be or accepted as
true

Reality

Actuality

Example: Mr. Jones declared
“I’ll fire you the next time you
no-show your job.” This is a
factual statement because he
said it; however, Mr. Jones is
not the boss and does not
have the power to hire or fire
employees. Therefore, the
statement is **not truthful**.

Goal:

**Analyze the facts
to find the truth!**



Logic – a system of valid reasoning.

The formal guiding principles of a discipline, school, or science.



The Battle Against Logic & Reason

The print revolution broke up the stagnant medieval information monopoly & led to an explosion of knowledge that was disseminated to masses of people who had previously received no knowledge whatsoever that wasn't transmitted from above by some hierarchy of power (religious or secular).



The Age of Print



The Age of Reason



The Age of Democracy

What combats
Logic & Reasoning?

Power!

The **love** of **power** can become so
intoxicating that it overwhelms
reason.

Images also combat Reasoning

We rely more heavily on electronic images that can illicit emotional responses, often without requiring reflective thought.



When viewing images, remember....

- Individuals receive, but they cannot send
- They absorb, but they cannot share
- They hear, but they do not speak
- They see constant motion, but they do not move themselves



Illiteracy hurts Reasoning

Today, reading and writing do not play as important a role in how we interact with the world



Simplicity is always more appealing than complexity





Remember, the
public's lack of
participation
(empathy often
brought about from
illiteracy)
empowers its
abusers.

Finally **Fear** often trumps **Reason**
“We will not be driven by **fear**
into an age of **unreason**.”



– Edward R. Murrow
CBS News

Fear can trigger the temptation to surrender freedom to a demagogue promising strength and security in return.

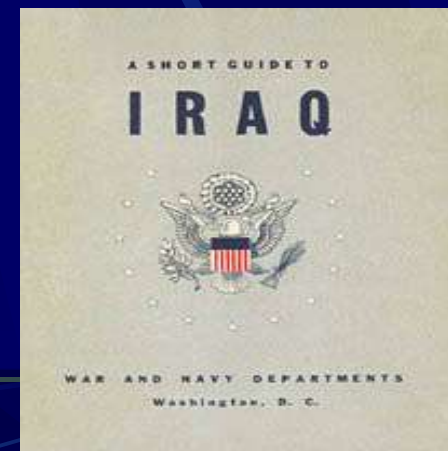


Demagogue – a leader who obtains power by means of impassioned appeals to emotion and prejudices.



Demagogues exploit our fears for political gain.

Any leader who combines
simplistic policies with claims
of divine guidance is more
likely to escape difficult
questions based on glaring
logical flaws with his
arguments.



*Leadership means inspiring
us to manage through our
fears.*



False Threats vs Real Threats

We tend to overreact to false/illusory threats

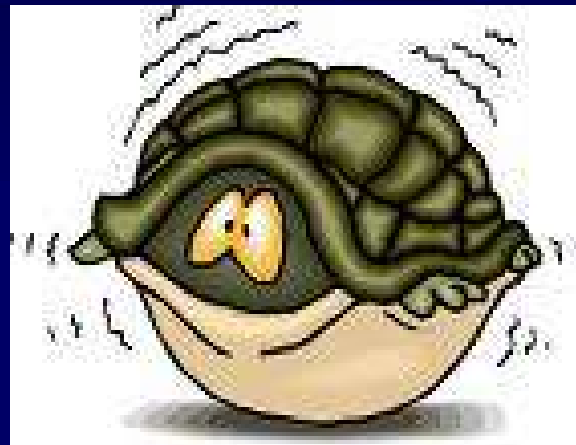


While under-reacting to real threats.

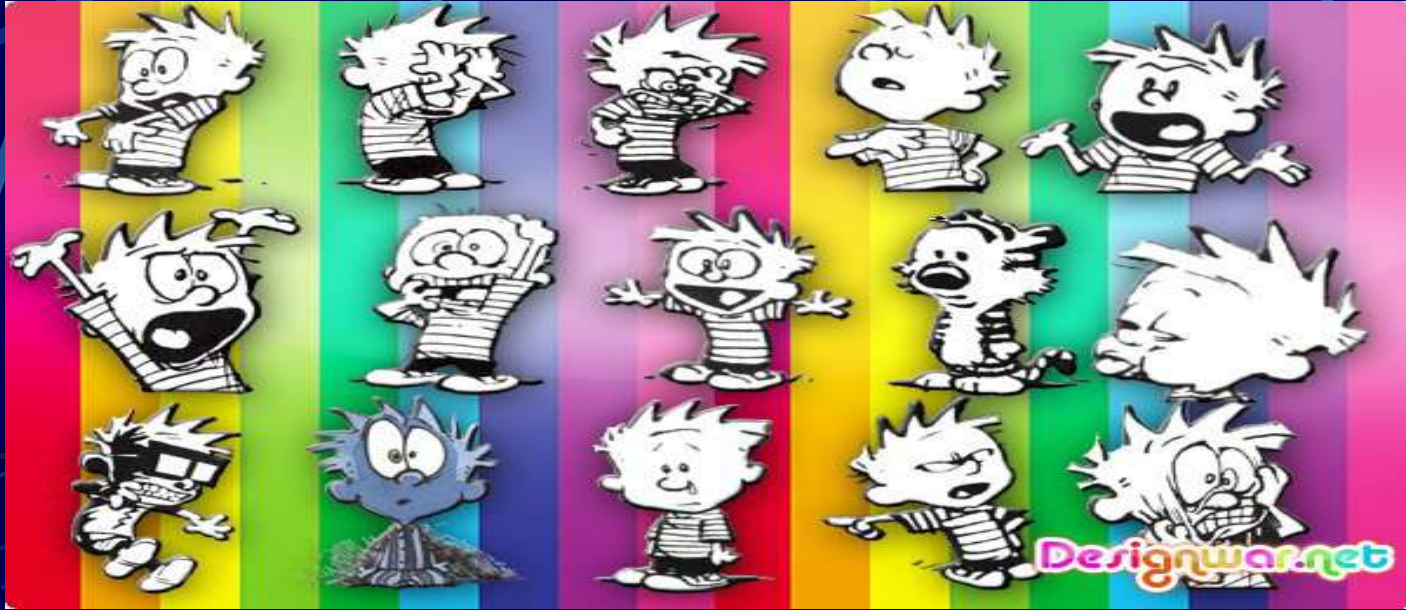




Emotions > reason
Particularly the emotion of fear



Judgments are often based on emotion over reason.



Our use of emotions to make decisions can also cloud judgment.

When fear is involved, it can completely overwhelm our reasoning process.



Barry Glassner's (USC) 3 Techniques to Fearmongering

Repetition

Misdirection

Making the irregular seem regular

- Focus on the magnitude of the consequence and ignore the probability.

**“Fear displaces reason,
reason challenges faith,
faith overcomes fear.”**

Al Gore, 2007. *The Assault on
Reason*



Michel Foucault
questioned the
notion of true
knowledge. He claimed
“knowledge and truth are
interwoven with *power*;
those who rule a society
define what is true and what
counts as knowledge.”

Persuasive Language

Speed of the speech

Intensity of the speech

Powerless vs. Powerful Speech


- Word selection “uh, like, sort of, don’t you think”

The Persuasive Person



Credibility
Authority
Charisma
Social Attractiveness

I. **Credibility** (Ethos) – an audience's perception of a speaker's.....

1.  1. Competence – informed, skilled, and knowledgeable.
2. Trustworthiness – believable and honest.
3. Dynamism – energetic.

Enhancing your Credibility Before you Speak

- Dress appropriately



- Have a brief summary of your qualifications



As You Speak:

Establish common ground with your audience

Support your argument with evidence
– (review notes on evidence)

Present a well-organized message

Maintain eye contact

After You Speak

Prepare your conclusion and deliver it well.

Be prepared to answer questions after your presentation

Social Attractiveness

Likability – nice and appealing

Similarity - between source and receiver

Physical Attractiveness

Authority and Charisma (Pathos)

Charisma – a rare personal quality of leaders who arouse fervent popular devotion and enthusiasm.

Exploited for evil purposes – Hitler

Used to lift human spirits – Martin
Luther King

Persuasion *V.S.* Propaganda



Both invoke social influence

**Interpersonal, one-on-one,
organizational**

**Mass influence through mass
media**

Propaganda

Materials disseminated by the
advocates of a doctrine or cause

Aimed at serving an agenda

To “propagate” (quickly spread) a
philosophy or point of view

The aim is to influence mass
opinions

Persuasion vs. Propaganda

**Interpersonal,
one-on-one,
organizational**

**Mass influence
through mass
media**

Persuasion vs. Propaganda

Can be slanted or one-sided; however, it allows a free flow of information (often pro and con).

A group has total control over the transmission of information (often one-sided).

Persuasion vs. Propaganda

**People can
question the
persuader and
offer a
difference of
opinion.**

**People fear
questioning the
persuader.**

Persuasion vs. Propaganda

**A positive force
can produce
beneficial
outcomes.**

**Negative
connotations
associated with
bad things.**

Warning!



On TV (especially 24-hour cable & radio news channels) many propagandists pretend to be journalists – they are NOT the same!



🌐 Propaganda & Voting

Reason vs Emotion
and Voting Habits

How People Vote

Party Affiliation

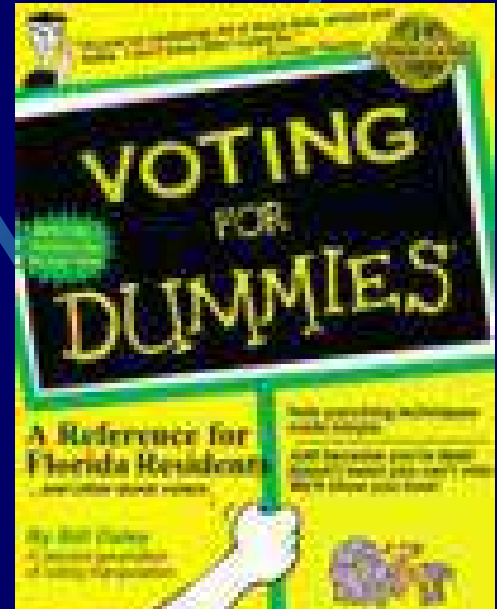
- Democrat or Republican

Single Issue

- Pro Life/Pro Choice

Heuristic feelings

- Which candidate you identify with
- Which candidate makes you feel good



Campaign Ads

Often target the heart, not the mind

Fear & Anxiety – leads us to research
candidate and the issue

Enthusiasm demonstrated by the
candidate/campaign.