Sussman, Gerald (ed.)

**The Propaganda Society**

Promotional Culture and Politics in Global Context


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**Book synopsis**

*The Propaganda Society* analyzes the rapid expansion of propaganda and promotional activities in the leading «post-industrial» states under the regime of neoliberalism. With the outsourcing of manufacturing, these states have converted to service, selling, and speculative economies, with a concurrent rapid growth of advertising, marketing, public relations, sales management, branding, and other promotional enterprises. Aided by digital technologies and the removal – «deregulation» – of political, legal, administrative, and moral barriers to state and corporate expansion on a global scale, a group of dominant political and commercial actors have brought about a common discourse and convergent set of practices rooted in sophisticated and unprecedented levels of propaganda and promotion. Written by leading scholars in the field, each of the eighteen chapters in this book discuss the ways in which elite uses of propaganda have radically transformed media and information systems, political and public culture, the conduct of war and foreign relations, and the overall behavior of the state.

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**About the author(s)/editor(s)**

Gerald Sussman is Professor of Urban Studies and Communication at Portland State University, where he teaches graduate courses in international community development, political economy, political communication, and media studies. His latest book is *Branding Democracy: U.S. Regime Change in Post-Soviet Eastern Europe* (Peter Lang, 2010). He is also the author of *Global Electioneering: Campaign Consulting, Communications, and Corporate Financing* (2005) and author or editor of three other books. Professor Sussman serves on a number of academic journal editorial boards as well as the Community Advisory Board of Portland, Oregon’s public broadcasting station, KOPB.

**Reviews**

«In direct contradiction to received doctrine, immense resources are devoted by the powerful to undermine markets by creating uninformed consumers who will make irrational choices, and to undermine democracy by similar means – perceived necessities, if passivity and obedience are to be maintained. The incisive essays collected here draw the curtain aside from many of the devices employed to ensure that the general public, ‘ignorant and meddlesome outsiders,’ will ‘be put in its place’ and not interfere with those who have the right to rule, in the words of
one of the most respected public intellectuals of the twentieth century, the progressive thinker Walter Lippmann, articulating the common elite understanding.« (Noam Chomsky)

«The global communications revolution has made it possible for political and economic elites to rule through the use of propaganda and deception as never before in human history. 'The Propaganda Society' exposes the workings of the corporate media monopoly and its links to political control. It shows how public communication is now used to sustain the endless accumulation of capital and achieve social conformity with a global order based on vast inequalities in wealth and power. The varied contributions make clear that the level of ideological indoctrination and cultural manipulation that prevails in this era of crisis-ridden global capitalism has truly reached that of a totalitarian system. This book is required reading for anyone who wishes to understand the machinations of power and domination in the twenty-first century.» (William I. Robinson, Professor of Sociology, Global, and Latin American Studies, University of California at Santa Barbara)