

How People Use Propaganda To Twist Our Minds

"Freedom" is always used in an argument as a propaganda term calling for a need to fight. "You have to fight for freedom" is the way the word is usually used, though not in those words.

You can't separate peace from freedom because no one can be at peace unless he has his freedom.
- Malcolm X

Malcolm X was a key leader and a powerful personality in the Black Panther movement in the US during the 1960s. He led a violent life and he died a violent death.

This quote is a propaganda statement. It's a call to fight, though it disguises itself as a quest for peace. How can fighting a peace be linked? With the word freedom.

"Freedom" is always used in an argument as a propaganda term calling for a need to fight. "You have to fight for freedom" is the way the word is usually used, though not in those words. "Freedom won't come naturally. The oppressors won't grant freedom voluntarily" are argument statements that follow.

Malcolm used the global objective of peace as his way of calling for violence, in his way of thinking the only way to achieve it.

The false logic of fighting a "war for peace" was used before Malcolm and has appeared several times since. Supporters of ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq used this as one of their arguments for the initial invasions of these countries. That and the infamous weapons of mass destruction argument.

"War for peace" should be considered a logical contradiction, by definition of the terms. Yet propagandists have linked their call to arms to the global quest for peace among all peoples as if the two make sense together.

Peace cannot be granted to anyone, any more than freedom can. These concepts are personal. Each can exist only in the mind of an individual.

The law may provide that an individual may sit anywhere on a bus or that an interviewer may not discriminate against an interviewee based on skin colour or some other feature over which they have no personal control. But that is not freedom, nor is it peace. These are laws which involve procedures and eventually votes in a legislative body, with much lobbying before the votes. Neither the concept of peace nor freedom enter into the process, except as propaganda devices.

Interestingly, a survey of people about what the terms freedom and peace actually mean to them turns up a wide variety of interpretations. Yet they are used in propaganda messages as if everyone agreed on their meanings.

Propaganda is an integral part of the life of every person, no matter where in the world they live. Its purpose is to persuade the listener or reader to a particular line of thought using language and thought devices that are not necessarily logical. They are just supposed to sound good to people who don't understand what others are trying to do to their minds.

Similar arguments toward violence or war used by propagandists include defending a way of life and appealing to patriotism or nationalism. Yet we can see milder forms of propaganda by watching any television commercial.

High school students should take a course in propaganda so they understand what propaganda is, what its devices are and how others use it to influence them. Including how others use it to persuade them to do things that will eventually end their lives or destroy their health.

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