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A Retrospective on Early Studies of Propaganda and Suggestions for Reviving the Paradigm
Rebecca M.L. Curnalia

The purpose of this paper is to review the findings of early propaganda analyses, trace and explain the decline in propaganda studies, and offer potential applications of these early findings to modern mass communication research. These early studies, conducted from the 1920s to the 1960s, were the foundation upon which the field of communication studies was built. A paradigm shift in the late 1940s, which firmly took hold in the 1960s, led to the abandonment of this field and the valuable results it yielded. However, propaganda studies could be examined using current theories of mass communication effects.

Propaganda, or war communication studies, was the foundation upon which the communication field was built (Sproule, 1987, 1989; Jowett & O'Donnell, 1999). The evolution of the field, however, has left propaganda analysis a stagnant paradigm for 40 years. Though there was a slight resurgence in the 1980s in studies of Cold War propaganda analysis (e.g., Parry-Giles, 1994, 1996; Lindhal, 1983), there has been no systematic reconstruction of the paradigm since its inception. Having been replaced by the "minimal effects" approach, the abandonment of the descriptive tradition in mass communication research included discarding the study of propaganda despite its relevance to modern societies.

In an initial attempt to reintroduce and update the study of war propaganda, I will begin with a discussion of the historical evolution of definitions of propaganda from the 1920s through the 1990s to form a synthesized definition. The definitions discussed here will focus solely on war propaganda to avoid significant inconsistencies in the scope of definitions. Further, I will discuss the components of propaganda that rhetoricians have cataloged and briefly discuss the transition away from critical studies that lead to the demise of the paradigm. Finally, using the

Rebecca Curnalia (MA, Northern Illinois University, 2003) is a Doctoral Student in the School of Communication Studies at Kent State University; Email: rlukasie@kent.edu. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2004 convention of the National Communication Association in Chicago, IL.

definition propaganda, the components of propaganda campaigns, and prominent theories of media effects, I will discuss how propaganda is created and perpetuated by the media and its potential effects.

Definitions of Propaganda

Jowett (1985), in an essay reviewing several new approaches to propaganda, noted that, "there has never been a clear agreement on exactly what propaganda is" (p. 99). This is a problem that has plagued the paradigm for over 75 years. Jowett attributes this to the difficulty of quantifying, or operationally defining, what propaganda is. However, a review of definitions demonstrates similarities in approaches.

In one of the first attempts to define and explain propaganda, Lasswell (1927) concluded that propaganda is a weapon used to psychologically weaken the morale of an opponent to further a military effort. It is also used to create and maintain allies and to persuade neutrals to support the war effort or remain passive. Further, it is used at home to promote unity and support for the war cause. Lasswell contended that the use of specific rhetorical devices and methods of presenting information lead to the mass persuasion of nations.

Extending the weapon metaphor used by Lasswell, Doob (1935) described propaganda as a weapon where sociology (the climate of society) was the "gun" and psychology (manipulations of individuals' psychology) was the "ammunition" that drove the process. Doob defined propaganda as "a systematic attempt by an interested individual (or individuals) to control the attitudes of groups of individuals through the use of suggestions and, consequently, to control their actions" (p. 89).

Emphasizing the intentions of propaganda, rather than the effects that Lasswell's and Doob's definitions focused on, The Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA: 1939) defined propaganda as "the expression of opinion or action by individuals or groups deliberately designed to influence opinions or actions of other individuals or groups with reference to predetermined ends" (p. 15). This definition clarifies propaganda as an intentional, systematically orchestrated attempt at persuasion. However, this definition would include all forms of persuasion. Propaganda, later researchers reasoned, was specifically large-scale campaigns, as Lasswell (1927) initially asserted.

Further refining the systematic nature of propaganda and specifying the breadth of dissemination, Hummel and Huntress (1949) defined propaganda as "any attempt to persuade anyone to a belief or to a form of action" (p. 2) that is a "systematic [assault] on public beliefs" (p. 4) disseminated through "personal contacts, newspapers, magazines, radio programs, books, and visual media such as motion pictures, the theatre, and television" (p. 4). It also involves adapting to the audience to achieve a persuasive purpose. Audience characteristics such as hostility, general, culturally based attitudes, beliefs, or cultural "myths" are used to form a targeted message. In this definition, compared to the IPA's (1939) definition, the understanding emerges that propaganda is a pervasive, persuasive campaign that permeates many communication channels to deliver a specific, targeted message.

Recognizing mass dissemination as a key component of propaganda, Lee (1952) added that propaganda is emotionally charged. He contended that propaganda uses "combinations of words, personalities, music, drama, pageantry, and other symbols . . . [that are] frequent and charged with emotion. They may be wholly or partly true, confusing, or false" (p. 2). Lee contended that propaganda must be both vivid and simple, and dramatic in that it frequently emphasizes struggles and uses connotatively laden symbols. In this perspective, propaganda is a tool of manipulating emotions to change attitudes.

Emphasizing the role of the media in propaganda campaigns, Schramm (1955a) quoted a British propagandist from World War II, saying that the "art of propaganda" involved convincing journalists to develop their news stories in a way that "told him the kind of news he had to use and the weight he had to give each kind . . . the art of propaganda is not telling lies, but selecting the truth you require and giving it mixed up with some truths the audience wants to hear" (p. 83). In short, propaganda is a method of influence that conveys biased information covertly via the media, an idea that would be emphasized later in Herman and Chomsky's (1988) propaganda model.

Emphasizing manipulation of thought processes as an objective of propaganda, Ellul (1965) defined propaganda as a campaign that "seeks to induce action, adherence, and participation – with as little thought as possible" (p. 180). Propaganda, in this perspective, is a series of messages specifically designed to circumvent thought. Ellul contended, "propaganda standardizes current ideas, hardens prevailing stereotypes, and furnishes thought patterns in all areas. Thus it codifies social, political, and moral standards" (p. 163). It is any consistent, biased message. The process is effective for several reasons. First, individuals use social norms to establish their own opinions and propaganda offers the justifications individuals need. Second, because of the nature of propaganda messages, it offers individuals a sense of righteousness in complying. Finally, as a result of the above reactions, propaganda crystallizes individuals' opinions so that they reject alternative perspectives and ideas. In short, Ellul concluded that by complying with a propaganda message, individuals gain a sense of social stability and protection from alienation. This may be closely linked to the type of language used in propaganda campaigns, as Lee (1952) contended.

After a period of dormancy in the late 1960s and 1970s, the 1980s brought about propaganda analyses of Cold War rhetoric. In one such study, propaganda was defined as an organized and intentional process of influence used to change attitude and knowledge structures to secure positive responses (Lindhal, 1983). This definition is in agreement with Ellul's emphasis on attitude and belief crystallization as a key aspect of a propaganda campaign, but it ignores the massive systematic nature of propaganda versus isolated persuasive attempts.

In a more recent attempt to define the phenomena that agrees with Ellul's (1965) perspective, Jowett and O'Donnell (1999) defined propaganda as "the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response" (p. 53). O'Donnell and Jowett also articulated three forms of

propaganda: white, gray, and black. In this perspective, propaganda ranges from truthful to deceitful. As a potential extension of the variations in truthfulness described in Jowett and O'Donnell (1992) definition, Smith (1989) defined propaganda as an overt attempt to influence a targeted individual or group of individuals to achieve a specific outcome by manipulating arguments. He identified four techniques for manipulating information to create propaganda: "falsehoods, omissions, distortions, and suggestions" (p. 85). These components work together in creating a propagandistic message. In a definition that synthesized many of the above conceptualizations, Sproule (1994) concluded that propaganda is, "the work of large organizations or groups to win over the public for special interests through a massive orchestration of attractive conclusions packaged to conceal both their persuasive purpose and lack of sound reasoning" (p. 8).

   In this brief review of definitions, it is clear that the definitions of propaganda have evolved. The addition of components of messages, intended effects, systematic influence, the role of media, individuals' attitudes and cognitions, and social processes to the definitions of propaganda mark the natural progression through time of theoretical shifts in communication research.

Synthesis of Definitions

Based on the varied definitions reviewed above, a tentative definition of propaganda can be offered. Specifically, propaganda is a series of targeted, systematic messages disseminated through multiple channels for a prolonged period of time that offer biased opinions or perspectives through the selective use of specific, emotionally arousing, comprehensible, and aesthetically appealing techniques that circumvent scrutiny of the message to influence attitudes and beliefs. Clearly, there are components of this definition that need further specification. The amount of dissemination, number of channels employed, and length of the campaign sufficient to constitute propaganda is unclear. However, aside from these vague components, there has been systematic investigation into the method of presenting propagandistic messages.

Historical Approaches to the Analysis of Propaganda

Paradigm Shift

Sproule (1997, 1987, 1989) commented on the evolution of propaganda studies as it yielded to media effect studies and quantitative analysis. The field of communication began with propaganda studies that analyzed the components of messages used during wartime. This approach began in the 1920s with Lippmann (1922), who argued that mass communication afforded the opportunity for mass persuasion. As Sproule (1987) summarized, "propaganda analysts probed institutions, media, and messages to identify who was trying to score points in public opinion, how, and with what aim in mind" (p. 66).

Table 1 Replication of Lasswell's (1927) Results

Lasswell's (1927) Findings	IPA (1939)	Hummel & Huntress (1949)	Doob (1935)	Lowenthal & Guterman (1948)	Schramm (1955a)	Lee (1952)
Propaganda organizations						
Ensure unity of messages	X	X			X	X
Stay ahead of events to mold opinions						X
Use the language of average people (done by hiring journalists). Simple language.	X	X				X
Have intimate knowledge of the groups they target					X	
Dangers of organizations						
Used to promote partisan interests						X
Potential for fabrication	X	X				X
Prejudiced positions perpetuated						X
Identifying a nation as an enemy						
Mobilizing against them in a time of crisis						
Exposing a record of lawlessness and violence				X		
War as vindication						
Promoting unity			X		X	
Appealing to common history	X	X	X			X
Enemy as an obstacle to peace						
Appeals to collective egotism (Bandwagon effect)	X	X				X
Describing the war as one of beliefs						
Emphasizing profits						
Religious justifications						X
Satanizing the enemy						
Own country described in connotatively laden positive terms	X		X			X
Describing the enemy in connotatively laden negative terms	X		X			X

Propaganda analysis, Sproule (1989, 1987) explained, was a critical paradigm that was perceived as obsolete by the mid 1950s, when the emphasis on social scientific research methods increased (as advocated by Lasswell, 1948, cited in Sproule, 1987). Further, the emphasis on message components was lessened, and the focus on individual effects became prominent (as advocated by Klapper, 1960) as the "magic bullet myth", or the perspective that the media had significant, direct, and uniform effects, lost credence. This is not to say, however, that all studies conducted from the 1920s to 1960 were message-based. To the contrary, researchers like Blumer (1933) and Berelson (1949) were using interviews about people's experiences; Lazarsfeld (1944) was using surveys; and, finally, Hovland, Lumsdaine, and Sheffield (1949) used controlled experiments to explain the effects of mass communication.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the propaganda analysis tradition was replaced by individual-level media effect studies in mass communication research. Jowett (1985) explained that measures of effects in laboratory studies had yielded only minimal support for the effects of propaganda. For example, Hovland et al.'s (1949) research on World War II films found that individual variables, such as education, mediated the effects of propaganda films. Klapper (1960) used this, and findings from such studies as Lazarsfeld (1944) on the effects of interpersonal communication in formulating political opinions, to substantiate the claim that the media had only minimal effects. As a result of this shift, the propaganda components articulated in seminal texts were rejected by researchers without a concerted attempt to integrate that knowledge into the new paradigm.

However, there is evidence that the classifications established by early propaganda analysts were replicable. Just as the early work of Berelson (1949) and Herzog (1944), which relied on collecting information then classifying individuals' responses to develop typologies of media uses, contributed significantly to subsequent Uses and Gratifications research, so too early propaganda typologies could contribute to current research on media effects. Therefore, the next section will include a review of the findings of early propaganda studies to compare the typologies that emerged before discussing their application to current theories of media effects.

Analysis of Propaganda Studies

Rhetorical Studies

Lasswell (1927) conducted a thorough analysis of propaganda techniques used during World War I. Using historical materials, Lasswell identified common components of each country's propaganda to determine how messages were conveyed and what purpose they were meant to serve. He identified four primary purposes for propaganda, each necessitating specific rhetorical techniques. First, Lasswell found that a common goal was identifying a specific foreign nation as an enemy. This was accomplished by (a) mobilizing against them in a time of crisis, (b) incriminating them for putting the target society in the role of aggressor, (c) exposing a record of

lawlessness, violence, and malice, and (d) suggesting that the war was vindication for those transgressions.

The second purpose of propaganda Lasswell found was promoting support for war within one's own country. Promoting unity included (a) appealing to a common history, (b) using a religious vocabulary, (c) painting the enemy as an obstacle to peace and security, (d) appeals to collective egotism, (e) describing the war as one of beliefs, (f) emphasizing profitability, (g) offering religious justification, and (h) appealing to interest groups.

As an extension of the first two purposes of propaganda, Lasswell also identified Satanism, or creating an "evil" image of the enemy, as an objective. He found that during World War I statements from trustworthy sources were used to describe the opposing nation in connotatively charged words that implied a general evil nature. To complete this dichotomization, nations also reinforced the perception of their own country as good, creating interpretations of the war in terms of heroism and idealism and creating the illusion of victory by insisting on the feebleness of the enemy and the strength of their own forces through the use of euphemisms.

Another purpose of propaganda that Lasswell found was to demoralize the enemy, or the propaganda of diversion. The war was described as unethical, confidence in the government was challenged, and the nations insisted that the opponents' cause was hopeless by intense concentration on their losses.

In a similar approach, namely classification of techniques, the IPA (1939) also developed a typology of common components of propaganda campaigns. Their typology was somewhat similar to Lasswell's (1927), but offered more concrete definitions of the components that Lasswell identified. The IPA (1939) identified seven techniques used in propaganda: (a) name calling "are words that mean different things and have different emotional overtones" (p. 26) and is used to condemn a person or group; (b) glittering generalities are "virtue words" (p. 47) that are used induce acceptance of an idea or action; (c) transfers are symbols used to compare ideas or actions to something favorable in an attempt to gain compliance; (d) testimonial is using a person who is either highly regarded or generally disliked to gain compliance; (e) plain folks techniques involve using certain language to imply that an idea or action is good because it is supported by average people; (f) card stacking is using only the best or worst ideas or positions to support or refute a position; (g) band wagon techniques use inclusive language to imply general, public support to an idea or action. Propaganda analysts such as Cantril (see Sproule, 1987) contributed to the development of this critical framework.

The IPA replicated several of Lasswell's findings. For example, both Lasswell and the IPA found that propaganda included using connotatively laden terms to elicit emotional responses. Also, both Lasswell and the IPA found that propaganda campaigns included the use of simplistic language to appeal to average people and used appeals to nationalism.

Similarly, Hummel and Huntress (1949) found that propaganda involved use of common language, connotatively laden language, and also provided further evidence that historical imagery was used, as Lasswell (1927) found. However, Hummel and

Huntress focused more intently on the potential for propaganda to include deception or manipulation of emotions. Specifically, Hummel and Huntress (1949) advocated a categorization of rhetorical devices commonly used in propaganda campaigns. They identified nine primary components of propagandistic messages: (a) satirical humor was used to denigrate the opposition; (b) shocking images or stories were also used to incite dislike for the enemy; (c) half truths, they reasoned, were evasions of truth, and also included the selectivity of facts relayed; (d) ad hominem arguments were also used in campaigns, where the cause is attacked based on unpleasant characteristics of individuals advocating that cause; (e) ad populum arguments involved praising the audience for some admirable trait (e.g., patriotism), without defining or explaining what the trait was or why they embodied it; (f) the bandwagon device was used to emphasize conformity to popular opinion or exert normative pressure; (g) snob appeal and home folks were two similar strategies that used testimonials from prominent people or lay people to "prove" support for an idea or behavior; (h) begging the question involved discussing an idea or issue as though it were decided when it was not; (i) finally, affective language was used to incite emotion in propagandistic messages in the form of name calling and glittering generalities.

Diverting from the IPA's (1939) intent focus on the message, Hummel and Huntress contended that the analysis of propaganda should begin with an analysis of the event and should also include an explanation of the aims of the message. Hummel and Huntress argued that the facts used by propagandists had to be separated from the judgments being made. The use of rhetorical devices also needed to be analyzed for their logic (e.g., logical fallacies) and purpose. Finally, the audience needed to be analyzed and conclusions drawn about the methods to best persuade them and message components that appeared to be targeted to them.

Hummel and Huntress, however, were not the first to emphasize potential effects in their propaganda analysis. Doob (1935) had more clearly articulated an outcome-based interpretation of propaganda 14 years earlier. Doob classified "kinds of suggestion," and found, in keeping with Hummel and Huntress (1949) and Lasswell (1927), that appeals to nationalism and the use of connotatively laden symbols were key components of propaganda. Though no experiment was conducted, Doob used theories from psychology to explain how these techniques may function. Doob posited a "psychology of suggestion," which involved "perception, the arousal of pre-existing attitudes, and a new integration of attitudes" (p. 52). Doob contended that attitudes are not controlled directly. Rather, each individual's attitudes are influenced to a different extent because exposure to a stimulus will activate different existing attitudes in each individual. Doob emphasized that the use of specific language elicits a unique, culturally biased response in receivers. Repeated exposure to a message, therefore, does not necessarily mean that an attitude is continually changed, but that it is continually activated. Testimony from a prestigious source, Doob argued, elicits the attitudes associated with the message and the source. Finally, because attitudes are based on social norms, imposing normative pressure can change attitudes. Doob concluded that perceptions of the message as "socially accepted" were garnered through mass dissemination. In sum, Doob hypothesized that propaganda is a

process of activating attitudes related to a stimulus through continued media coverage and consumption.

Lowenthal and Guterman (1948) contended that propaganda is aimed at agitation and social change through using certain types of appeals. Specifically, they identified (a) listing grievances through emphasizing economic, political, cultural, and moral grievances. Further, to appeal to individuals' emotions, propagandists (b) incite distrust of the enemy. Propaganda also (c) emphasizes dependence on leaders for protection through premonitions of disaster that incite anxiety, and attempts to disillusion receivers of certain social injustices.

Schramm (1955a, 1955b) analyzed propaganda in Britain and Germany during World War II by looking at the development of organizations intended to propagandize the people of each country in favor of the war. He also discussed cultural differences between the two countries and how propaganda campaigns differed as a result of those differences. Further, Schramm discussed how propagandists employed the media in different ways to disseminate their propaganda. For example, Schramm noted that there was much more hostility in Britain toward government propaganda, and, therefore, attempts at mass influence were covert. In Britain the emphasis and repetition of stories in newspapers and via the BBC were considered covert tactics for influencing public opinion. Schramm also discussed how different audiences were targeted through specific types of media and variations of the message. Schramm (1955a) concluded that, to persuade specific groups, the best way was to "target respected leaders of opinion (generally local) with the relevant facts, objectively presented, leaving them to draw the right conclusions and publicize them" (p. 77). The basic tactic of the British government, he concluded, was to maintain the appearance of objectivity in the propaganda. Soviet propaganda, Schramm (1955b) noted, was much more detailed and overt and pervasive.

Lee (1952) found two appeals to sympathy: bonds, or inclusive language, and commodity, or the issue that is being advocated. Lee's techniques were similar to those discussed previously: (a) creating an issue by defining it in an appealing way was a common technique; (b) case-making was done through the use of certain rhetorical devices, selective truths, and simplified interpretations. The simplifications were dichotomizing, used emotion-arousing language and symbols such as culturally respected icons that implied common values or cultural "myths", and testimonials. Lee contended that content analysis could be used to determine the extent of symbol use. The analysis can address: glittering generalities, name-calling, identification through testimonial, "plain folks" generalities, appeals to a bandwagon effect, and guilt-by-association processes. Lee further classified types of propagandists and the mediums of communication by which propaganda is disseminated.

Lee contended that different communication mediums served different purposes in the process of propaganda. He contended that there are formal and informal channels and direct and indirect channels that were influenced differently by propagandists and influenced individuals differently. In this approach, propagandists used the medium that best suited their messages and more easily target their audience. Lee asserted that news was a valid vehicle for propaganda because it gives the appearance

of an event as significant. Further, Lee contended that use of the news media "keeps ideas afloat in society where people can test and retest them as possible explanations for a variety of difficulties, as possible solutions to a number of problems" (p. 131). Lee further explained that the silencing of opposing opinions assists in making the propagandists' stance more accessible in the public's mind.

Lee had rejected the large-effects perspective that critical researchers were being faulted for and advocated an indirect-effects approach. However, his classification of components of propaganda is similar: (a) the "hot potato" is blaming an individual or group for something that was beyond their control and forcing them to answer for it in an attempt to embarrass them; (b) stalling, or "delay tactics" (p. 217) were used to cause the enemy to "lose vigor, interest and support" before attacking them; (c) least-of-evils involves making an unappealing option appear to be the only solution, or the least distasteful solution; (d) scapegoating, which involves blaming individuals or groups against which there is typically bias or dislike, for a problem; (e) shift-of-scene involves changing the focus of the attack when the original attack had been unsuccessful. Its conceptual twin is change-of-page because both involve "changing the terms of competition or conflict" (p. 223); (f) big tent is the process of attacking a group by stereotyping and demonizing them as a whole.

Contrary to Lee's assertion that propaganda can be content analyzed, Ellul (1965) concluded that psychological research methods were too specific and concentrated to explain a phenomenon like propaganda. Because of the longevity, targeted dissemination, and qualitative components of propaganda, Ellul contended that controlled, quantitative laboratory research could not demonstrate the full effects of propaganda. Further, Ellul argued that public-opinion polls, such as Gallop Polls, were not sufficient for measuring the effectiveness of propaganda campaigns because propaganda messages are targeted to specific populations. Ellul concluded that only historical, critical research, or "the observation of exact phenomena" (p. 276), could fully explain what propaganda was and how it functions in a society. Research should be historical, he concluded, because the effects of propaganda cannot be realized in an immediate situation, but only after opinions had stabilized.

Shift to Quantitative Research

Berlson and De Grazia (1947), like Lee (1952) advocated using content analysis to determine the effects of propaganda. However, their method included quantifying the total allotment of broadcast time and accounting for whether the coverage was compulsory or voluntary. Further, the consistency of messages was quantified in content analysis to speak to the mass dissemination of a message. Lee also advocated content analysis, but in conjunction he called for qualitative analysis of the historical and cultural climate. Unfortunately, laboratory experiments, as Sproule (1987) commented, yielded only mild effects for propaganda, and the null findings led researchers to quickly abandon quantitative analysis of propaganda.

A Mass Media Model of Propaganda

In a more recent attempt to explain how propaganda functions in the US, Herman and Chomsky (1988) created a model to explain the media's role in creating and disseminating propaganda by illuminating the "filters" through which information flows. Specifically, Herman and Chomsky contended that propaganda was created by:

> (1) The size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass media firms; (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media, (3) the reliance on the media of information from the government, businesses, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power; (4) "flak" as a means of disciplining the media; (5) "anticommunism" as a national religion and control mechanism. (p. 2)

In this view, media ownership and reliance on viewership contributes to the homogeneity of opinions expressed.

   This model is a provocative one, but does not speak to the effects of propaganda. The methodology advocated by Berlson and Grazia (1947) also had this fault. It does, however, emphasize the importance of analyzing the source of information, types of information, and the breadth and consistency of coverage. To return to the earlier discussion of examining the role of government in people's lives, this model could explain why propaganda is disseminated, and assist in drawing general conclusions about the type of information individuals are receiving.

Unifying Critical and Scientific Approaches

Upon reviewing in their textbook the current theories of mass media effects, including agenda setting and framing (McCombs and Shaw, 1972), cultivation (Gerbner et al., 1979), and the spiral of silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1977), Jowett and O'Donnell (1999) reached three conclusions that they felt could explain the effects of propaganda. First, the media has a reinforcing effect on attitudes. Second, there are a variety of social, individual, and message factors that account for effects. Third, because attitudes, values, and beliefs are consistent, they can be more easily manipulated by propaganda that panders to those deeply held beliefs. Fourth, public compliance does not always imply individual compliance. Finally, they contended that the more influential the source of communication, the greater the effects of exposure.

   Jowett and O'Donnell characterized media and persuasion theories as replacing critical propaganda analysis. However, they make an interesting point that has not yet been investigated empirically: modern media and persuasion theories can explain the effects of propaganda. Sproule (1994) also argued for an interdisciplinary look at the components and effects of propaganda using the critical, historical, and scientific paradigms. Here too, however, Sproule did not address and specific theories, nor discuss how these paradigms could be integrated in the study of propaganda. Therefore, using the definition synthesized from historical conceptualizations and the propaganda components that emerged in propaganda analysis, I will offer a

framework for studying empirically propaganda using several prominent theories of mass media.

Three Theories to Explain Propaganda and Propaganda Effects

Prominent theories of mass communication can explain how an issue is made salient (agenda setting), the effects of continued exposure to the issue (priming and attitude accessibility), how the method of relaying the information may bias an attitude (framing), and, finally, how this complete process of propagandizing may lead to suppression of conflicting viewpoints and a perception of the prevailing majority viewpoint as the actual minority viewpoint (spiral of silence). In concert, these theories can explain why the mass dissemination of a particular propagandistic message that dominates public discourse and for which particular frame(s) are be employed, cause a perception of broad support that is perceived to be more prevalent than it actually is, and effectively silences the majority opinion.

Agenda setting

The pervasiveness of a propaganda campaign may set the public's agenda by making an issue more salient and action appear more imminent. McCombs and Shaw (1972) conducted the original agenda-setting study, where they "attempted to match what Chapel Hill voters *said* were key issues of the [1968 presidential] campaign with the *actual content* of the mass media used by them" (p. 177, emphasis original). Upon finding a significant correlation between agendas, they concluded, "the media appear to have exerted a considerable impact on voters' judgments of what they considered the major issues of the campaign" (p. 180). Further, the different media they analyzed tended to agree on the salient issues in the campaign.

Agenda setting may account for the perceived salience of propagandist's chosen issues. As noted in the tentative definition of propaganda offered earlier, based on the assertions of Berlson and Grazia (1947), Lasswell (1927), Doob (1935), Lee (1952), and Schramm (1955a,b), the prevalence of a propagandist's message in mass media may be significant in increasing the perceived significance of the action being advocated.

There has been some speculation that agenda-setting effects are more noticeable in group, rather than individual, agendas (Shaw & Martin, 1992). Looking at racial, age, education, and gender groups, Shaw and Martin found that, as newspaper readership in groups increased, the groups collectively agreed more on the importance of the issues reported in the newspaper, agreed more individually with the importance of the issues reported in the newspaper, and, therefore, agreed more with other members of the group.

Megwa and Brenner (1988) also attempted to explain agenda setting as a process that involved interest groups. Agenda setting, they reasoned, is a function of gatekeeping, where the media determines which issues are most important, relays them to the public, and the consumers of the media adopt these issues as their own

agenda. Megwa and Brenner concluded that the mere inclusion of an event in a newscast "endows an issue or event with an aura of importance" (p. 49).

McCombs (1997) reviewed literature on agenda setting to support the hypothesis that common issue salience can build community cohesiveness. Increased exposure to news correspondingly increased perceived issue salience in both broadcast and print media. He also clarified that agenda setting is a by-product of creating the news, but that there are active attempts in media to make an issue salient (e.g., investigative reporting). McCombs concluded that the media "do much more than call our attention to issues. They also frame those issues in various ways" (p. 4).

Megwa and Brenner's and McCombs's findings may account for the "bandwagon" effect commonly cited in propaganda analyses (e.g., Lasswell, 1927; Doob, 1935; Ellul, 1965). Further, several propaganda analysts pointed to the use of certain media to target groups (Lasswell, 1927; Lee, 1952) and create normative pressure to conform (Ellul, 1965; Lee, 1952).

Wanta and Hu (1994) found that individuals only rely on media outlets that they find to be credible, and individuals' agendas are set by that media. Zhu et al. (1993) found that individuals seek information from media about issues that are unobtrusive or that they have no personal experience with. They found that individuals sought information about international issues from the media and information about domestic issues from their social groups and peers. In short, the most common focus of propaganda – war – could be characterized as an unobtrusive issue for most people, therefore causing them to turn to the media for information. Both Lasswell (1927) and Schramm (1955) emphasized the importance of relaying propagandistic messages through media channels that were perceived to be credible as key components of developing support for war.

The agenda of the media is also influenced by external factors. Wanta and Foote (1994) found that the President was successful in influencing the media's agenda on "international problems, social problems, and social issues" (p. 443). Therefore, a causal link likely exists in situations where propaganda is likely to occur: (a) the president declares an intention or potentiality of engaging in a military conflict, (b) the media report on the potential military conflict, which is an unobtrusive issue and, therefore, (c) individuals turn to the media for information and (d) the potential military conflict becomes the primary, salient issue for citizens.

Iyengar and Simon's (1993) findings support this interpretation of agenda-setting effects. They investigated agenda setting, priming, and framing in relation to the press coverage and public awareness of the Persian Gulf crisis and subsequent war. They found that the media set the agenda, making the conflict salient, thus priming individuals to evaluate the US President on foreign-policy performance because it was the most accessible and salient issue, and the framing of news stories induced individuals to support a military rather than diplomatic solution. Therefore, to further refine the role of media in perpetuating propaganda framing must be addressed.

Framing, Priming, and the Accessibility Heuristic

Propaganda is largely a method of framing an attitude object using certain rhetorical techniques. Scheufele (1999) investigated the cognitive effects of agenda setting, priming, and framing as three distinct, but interdependent theories of media effects. He contended that both agenda setting and priming are based on similar assumptions of attitude accessibility, or more specifically that exposure to an issue increases its accessibility in memory and, therefore, its salience.

Framing, Scheufele argued, is part of the agenda-building process where the message is built. It involves frame building, based on pressures and norms within the media industry, and frame setting, or the impact of frames on audiences' schematic mapping of the issue. Scheufele (1999b) defined frame building as the organizational and structural factors imposed on or resulting from the media institution and the perceptions of the journalist that contribute to the frame. Therefore, the sources of frames can be the individual journalist, the organization, or special interest groups. Frame setting, the second step, involves defining which attributes of an issue are salient. The frame, then, is received, interpreted, and integrated into individuals' schemas to construct an understanding of the event. This conceptualization of frame building is similar to Herman and Chomsky's (1988) propaganda model. In the model, Herman and Chomsky asserted that the profit-orientation of the media forces issue definitions (e.g., issue frames) that are socially acceptable and support the ideologies of corporate sponsors and the government. The frames that media use, given these explanations, may contribute to the process of propagandizing by replication and reinforcement of institutional issue frames.

Liebes (2000) contended that the production and editing of a news story can serve as a frame because it can bias perceptions of events. Further, Brewer (2002) addressed how value words (e.g., the use of "equality" versus "morality" terms in the debate over homosexual marriage) create frames and, in turn, influence how individuals conceptualize an event. When the issue was framed as one of equality, recipients used more equality-related language in their responses to the event. In short, the terms used by the media to define and describe an issue influence how individuals construct meanings about the issue. This understanding of the process of framing reinforces the significance of specific rhetorical devices and types of language used to form a propagandistic message that are defined by propaganda analysts (e.g., IPA, 1939).

Further, Nabi (2003) conducted research on the biasing effect individuals' emotional frames had on the type of information they desired. In instances where anger was elicited, individuals desired more information on how to punish offenders. When fear was incited, individuals desired more information on how to protect themselves. Nabi concluded that emotional reactions are dependent on the accessibility of information, and that certain types of messages elicit an emotion that affects cognition. In short, Nabi contended that discrete emotions "can have distinct persuasive affects" (p. 243). Therefore, the use of emotionally laden terms, noted by many propaganda analysts as a key feature of propaganda campaigns, may

have significant effects on how individuals think about the issue being advocated (IPA, 1939; Lasswell, 1927; Doob, 1935; Lee, 1952; Ellul, 1965).

Iyengar and Simon also conducted research in episodic versus thematic frames. An episodic frame "depicts public issues in terms of concrete instances or specific events," whereas thematic frames "places issues in some general or abstract context" (p. 369). Further, responsibility is attributed in the frame, either focusing on the cause of the problem (causal responsibility) or on who has the ability to fix the problem (treatment responsibility). Exposure to the episodic frame increased support for a military reprisal. This research also shares a commonality with many of the propaganda analyses previously discussed. Specifically, propaganda clearly involves attributing responsibility to an enemy to create distrust and animosity toward them (Lasswell, 1927; IPA, 1939; Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952; Lee, 1952).

In support of many of the assumptions offered linking agenda setting and framing to the process of propaganda, Baker and Oneal (2001) investigated a "rally round the flag effect." Supporting a war initiative and increased presidential popularity was clearly influenced by how the media presented the conflict to the public, the perceived support for the action, and how the president "spun" the event. Though this was not a "framing" study, it does suggest an effect on public opinion for how issues are presented in the media and public discourse.

Spiral of Silence

Noelle-Neumann (1972, 1977) posited the spiral of silence theory to explain the likelihood of individuals expressing their political opinions. The theory is based on five primary hypotheses: (a) individuals develop a perception of what the majority opinion is and whether other individuals support it; (b) the willingness to express an opinion is determined by the perceived support for it; (c) as perceptions of a contrary majority opinion increase, the likelihood of expressing a perceived minority opinion decreases; (d) as conflicting opinions are repressed, a spiral of silence is created where only one group has a voice in the conflict and other groups are increasingly more silent; (e) as conflicting opinions become more repressed, the actual majority can become silenced, and the minority opinion can become commonly perceived as the majority opinion and force compliance. Noelle-Neumann found that differences in gender, socioeconomic status, and education mediated the likelihood of speaking out. Generally, she found that individuals were more prone to express their opinion if they perceived it to be the majority opinion as opposed to the minority opinion. Noelle-Neumman also found that perceptions of the majority opinion did not always coincide with the actual majority.

Taylor (1982) found support for the spiral of silence theory, but found more commonality between individuals' perception of the majority opinion and the actual majority opinion. Further, Taylor found that willingness to express a minority opinion depended on the issue. Glynn et al. (1997) conducted a meta-analysis of spiral of silence research and concluded that there was little support for the theory that individuals holding a minority opinion were less prone to speak out. Jeffres et al.

(1999) found that there was little evidence of the spiral of silence surrounding the O.J. Simpson verdict and that there were no differences in willingness to express an opinion between races. However, they did find that individuals' willingness to express an opinion was moderated by the audience that the opinion would be shared with. Lin and Salwen (1997) further qualified the effect of perceived majority opinion. They found that the local media climate toward the issue moderated individuals' proneness to speak out about an issue. Further, individuals were less likely to offer an opinion outside of their community, where they knew what the opinion climate was.

It is possible that the spiral of silence would be more pronounced during wartime, particularly if war is a key agenda item in the media and being framed as patriotic, necessary, and justified. Exposure to media that presents war as a major agenda item and frames it in a favorable way, may decrease individuals' proneness to discuss anti-war sentiment. If this is true, minority opinion may in fact outweigh majority opinions if the majority opinion is oppressed or derogated in the media. Taken together with Lin and Salwen's finding that the climate of the opinion expressed in the media influenced individuals' likelihood of expressing an opinion, the potential silencing effect of media frames could be quite pronounced, supporting Doob's (1935) and Ellul's (1965) assumptions about the "crystallizing effect" of propaganda.

Directions for Future Research

Propaganda can be studied using methods similar to those used to test the theories discussed above. Specifically, content analyses can be used to determine the breadth of coverage and the commonality of specific frames employed by the mass media. A comparative, longitudinal analysis of specific semantics used by the White House, or other propaganda organization, and the semantics used by the media can be conducted to see the breadth of influence that the propagandist has had on public discourse. Further, public-opinion polls can be used to trace the perceived importance of the issue and the climate of public opinion. On an issue that is widely discussed, such as war, laboratory research could be conducted to determine if (a) there is a correlation between the propagandists' emphasis, media coverage, and the perceived importance of the topic, (b) if there is a significant correlation between propagandists' construction of an issue, media frames, and individuals' cognitive representations of the issue, and (c) if the breadth of coverage and media frames influence perceptions of public opinion and, consequently, the willingness to openly express opinions.

Using the rhetorical components prescribed by propaganda analysts, I have compiled a framework for content analyzing news that defines five distinct frames (see Appendix 1) and the expected semantic devices of each frame. Further, I have compiled a framework for analyzing issue coverage in the media based on agenda setting (see Appendix 2). The final list should be used to generate a questionnaire for measuring dependence on media, trust in the media, individual opinions, and the perceived opinions of others, and is based on the research hypotheses of the three primary theories discussed in this paper and appropriate research measures

(see Appendix 3). Responses can be coded and correlated with the agenda of the media individuals reportedly consume and the frames used by those media. Finally, the results of the content analysis of media content should be compared to the frames used by propagandists to determine if a correlation exists.

Conclusion

Propaganda is an intricate process of interaction between the media and the audience that can be explained and tested using prominent theories of mass communication. Propaganda involves using (a) rhetorical devices to frame an attitude object, (b) disseminating the message widely enough to influence the public agenda, making the issue (c) more accessible and, therefore, more salient to individuals, thereby (d) influencing perceptions of the issue as broadly supported. This process affects people as they (e) perceive the majority opinion to be more in favor of the attitude object and experience normative pressure to conform or be silent.

This explanation of the process and effects of propaganda conforms to the definitions offered by propaganda analysts and empirical studies of media effects. It is unreasonable to assume, as past researchers have, that propaganda has nominal effects but the media's agenda and framing of single issues do have an effect. To disregard or discredit the study of propaganda as critical or biased is to ignore that certain rhetorical and linguistic devices were found consistently across studies spanning nearly 50 years, a claim that very few social scientific fields can make. An opportunity to integrate and refine our understanding of more broad media effects and the interrelationship among individuals, the media, and the government is being lost as a result of this division in the field. This paper takes only one small step toward integrating these paradigms, and future research should integrate more media effects theories for the purpose of studying propaganda. The results of doing so will likely benefit both fields by validating the categories established by critical researchers and adding support and external validity to empirical media-effects theories.

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Appendix 1: Propagandistic Framing Coding Scheme with References

Use of Religion

- Religious language to describe action and enemy (Lasswell, 1927)
- Virtue words to describe action (IPA, 1939)
- Religious justification for action (Lasswell, 1927)
- Satanizing/demonizing the enemy (Lasswell, 1927)
- Creating war of beliefs (Lasswell, 1927)

Use of Cultural Icons/Cultural Collectiveness (Lee, 1952)

- Cultural terms and icons to promote cause (Lee, 1950)
- Common history to promote cause (Lasswell, 1927)
- Collective egotism to promote cause (Lasswell, 1927)
- Cultural values to explain (Lasswell, 1927)
- Inclusive language (bandwagon: Lasswell, 1927; IPA, 1939; big tent: Lee, 1952)
- Plain folks to promote cause/testimonials (IPA, 1939; Lee, 1952)
- Dependence on leaders (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952)
- Emphasis on heroism (Lasswell, 1927)
- Transfers (IPA, 1939)

Dichotomization and Justification

- Name calling (IPA, 1939)
- Enumeration of grievances (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952; Lasswell, 1927)
- Vindication of wrongs (Lasswell, 1927)
- Enemy as liars/deceitful (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952; Lasswell, 1927)
- Scapegoating (Lee, 1952)

- Hot potato (Lee, 1952)
- Guilt of enemy by association (Transfer: IPA, 1939; Hummell & Huntress, 1949)

Minimizing Consequences

- Enemy as weak (Lasswell, 1927)
- Enemy wins as motivation to fight (Lasswell, 1927)
- Euphemisms (Lasswell, 1927)
- Least of evils (Lee, 1952)

Certainty of Need and Outcome

- Decidedness of language (IPA, 1939; Hummel & Huntress, 1949)
- Card stacking (IPA, 1939)
- Premonition of disaster (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952; Lee, 1952)
- Appealing definitions (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952)
- Over-simplification (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952; Lee, 1952)

Appendix 2: Media Coverage Analysis (with Sources)

- Repetition of a message in various media (Schramm, 1955)
- Consistency of the messages within media (Berlson & Grazia, 1947)
- Consistency of messages across media (Lee, 1952)
- Selectivity of facts/source of facts (Lowenthal & Guterman, 1952)
- Amount of space/time allotted (Berlson & Grazia, 1947)
- Appearance of objectivity (Lasswell, 1927)
- Appearance of trustworthiness of source (Lasswell, 1927)
- Media target audience and message adaptation (Lasswell, 1927)

Appendix 3: Variables from Theories Relevant to Propaganda Effects

Agenda Setting

- Salient issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972)
- Perceived importance of issues (Iyengar & Simon, 1993)
- Issue obtrusiveness (Zhu et al., 1993)
- Need for orientation (McCombs, 1997)
- Media trust (Wanta & Hu, 1994)
- Group affiliations (Shaw & Martin, 1992)
- Exposure to various media (McCombs & Shaw, 1972)

Framing

- Individuals' descriptions of issues (Brewer, 2002)
- Emotional reaction (Nabi, 2003)

Spiral of Silence

- Individuals opinions (Noelle-Neumann, 1977)
- Perceived majority opinions (Noelle-Neumann, 1977)
- Hostile media environment (Lin & Salwen, 1997)
- Willingness to express opinions (Noelle-Neumann, 1977)