

# Persuasion

The Art & The Science

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# Persuasion



# What does persuasion mean to you?

- Can you think of times when the media or attractive communicator changed your mind about something?



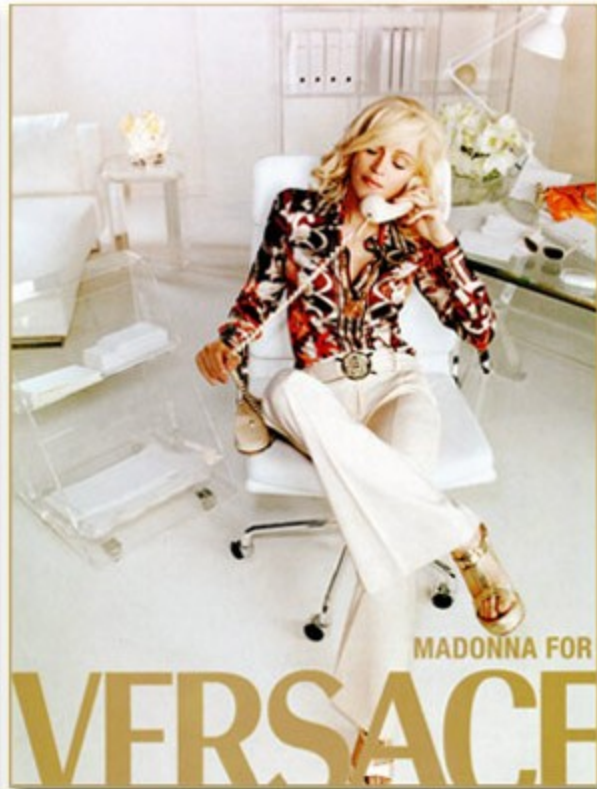


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# What is persuasion?

## PERSUASION vs. COERCION



# Persuasion

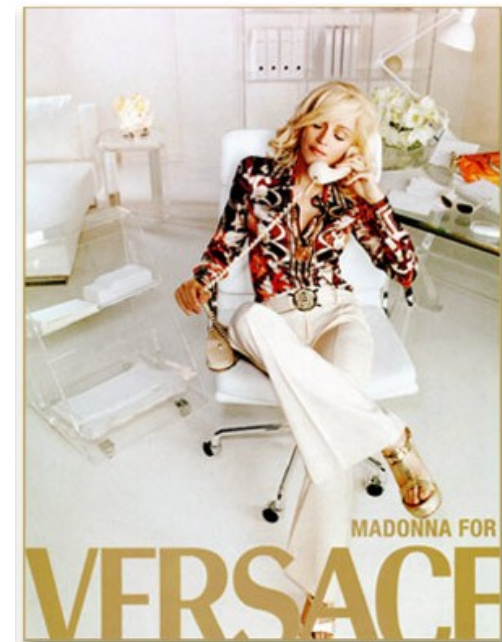
- ***Persuasion:*** a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behavior regarding an issue through transmission of a message, in an atmosphere of free choice.

(Perloff, 2008)



# Persuasion definition summary

- Persuasion is a symbolic process
- Persuasion involves an attempt to influence
- People persuade themselves
- Persuasion involves the transmission of a message
- **Persuasion requires free choice**



# Coercion

- ***Coercion***: a technique for forcing people to act as the coercer wants them to act, and presumably contrary to their own preferences. It typically employs a threat of some horrible consequence if the person does not do what the coercer demands.

(Perloff, 2008)





# Persuasion vs. Coercion

## Persuasion:

- Advertising
- Loved one's antidrug appeal
- Health public service messages
- Political campaigns
- Sales and telemarketing
- Friend's attempt to influence another's opinion of something

## Coercion:

- Threatening messages
- Employer's directives
- Interrogation
- Ban of smoking
- Enforcement of seat belt laws
- Communication in dangerously abusive relationship

- Coercion and persuasion are not polar opposites. They are better viewed as lying along a continuum of social influence. They are overlapping concepts.

persuasion

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Nature of psychological threat  
Ability to do otherwise  
Perception of free choice

coercion

# Persuasion – Coercion Continuum

persuasion

Nature of psychological threat  
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# Persuasive communication effects

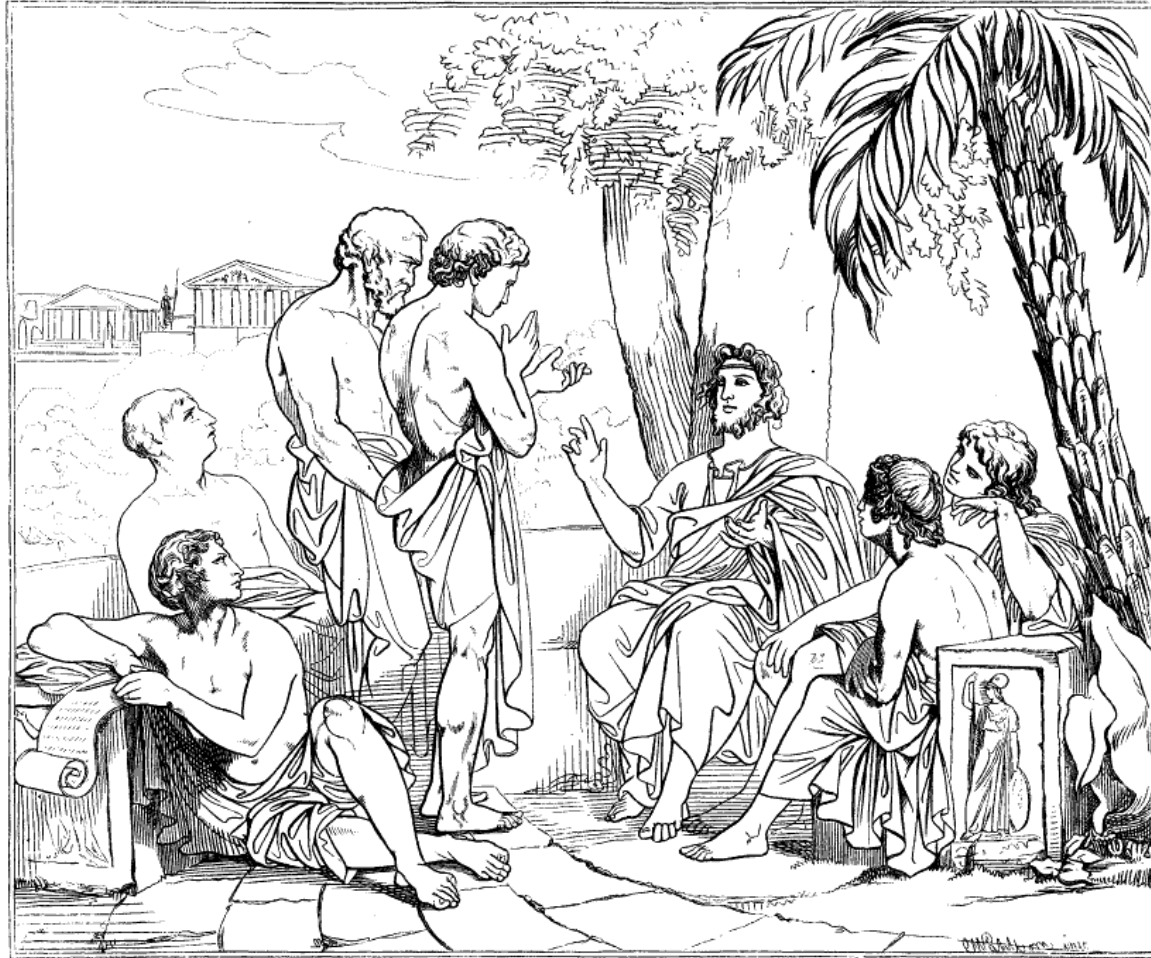
- Attitude **SHAPING**
  - stimulating favorable impressions
    - Unknown political candidates; new brand; new company; first date, etc.
- Attitude **REINFORCING**
  - making impressions more salient
    - Political campaigns; reinforcing the image of the brand, etc.
- Attitude **CHANGING**
  - Change of “direction”
    - Antismoking campaign, African-American Civil Rights Movement, etc.

# Historical perspective

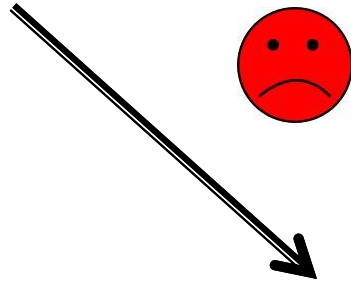
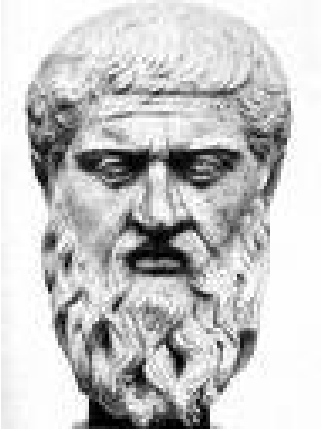
*"Those who don't study history are doomed to repeat it."*



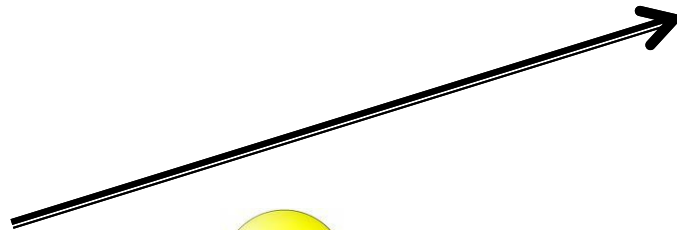
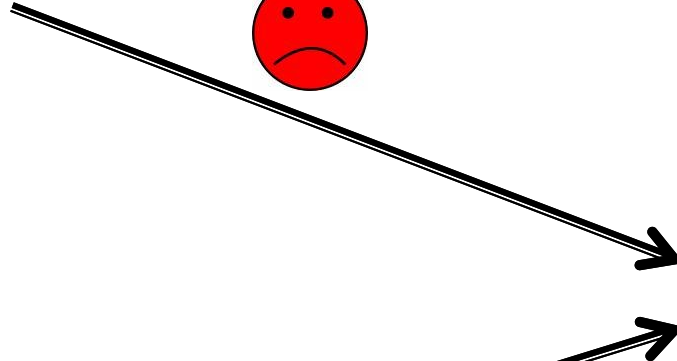
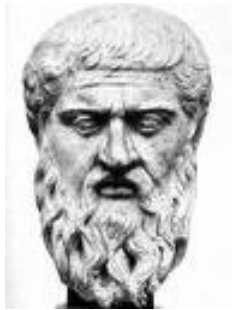
# Sophists



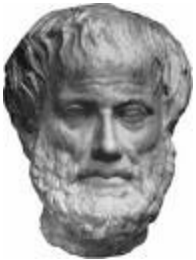
# Plato



# Plato vs. Sophists



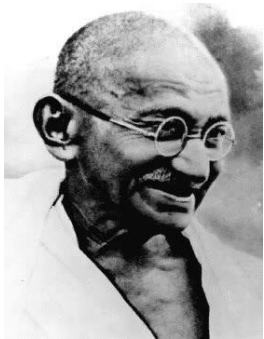
# Aristotle – The First Scientist



- Argued that both had a point:  
Plato - the truth is important.  
Sophists - persuasive communication is a useful and important tool.
- Ethos = the nature of communicator
- Pathos = emotional state of audience
- Logos = message arguments



# Persuasion in the Modern World



# Ethics

WRITE DOWN:

- What are the factors of ethical persuasion?
- Write down three examples of ethical persuasive communication and unethical persuasive communication.

# Ethics



Gandhi

*"evil means produce evil ends"*



Machiavelli

*"the ends justify the means"*

- Kant – “treat other as ends, not as means”
- Utilitarianism – actions should be judged based on whether they produce more good than evil.

# Ethics

- Persuasion is profoundly civilizing influence. Of course, persuasion is not always nice. It can be mean, ugly and untruthful.

**BUT WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR  
DECISIONS WE MAKE!**

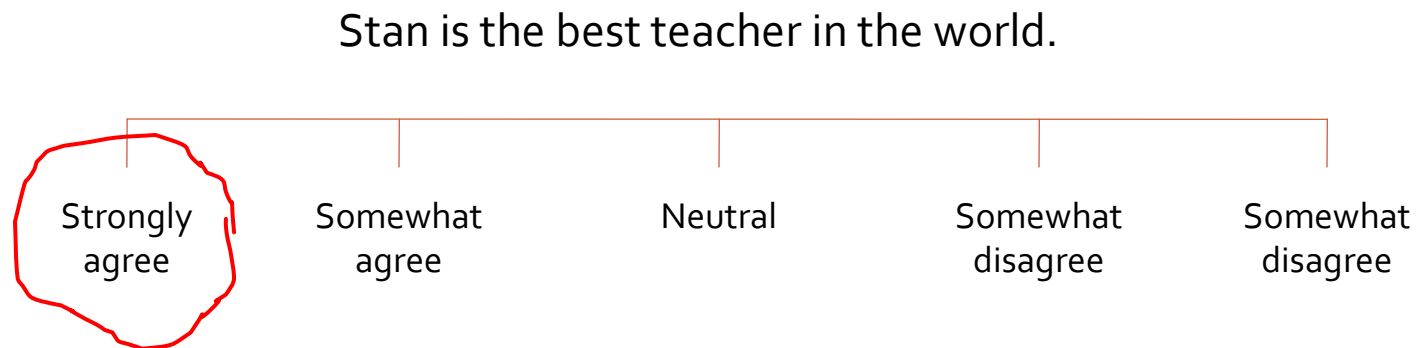
**EDUCATION**

# Attitude measurement tools

- Likert scale
- Semantic differential
- Error choice technique

# Likert Scale

- An one-dimensional scale that consists of attitude-related statements and asks individuals to indicate their agreement/disagreement with each statement along a numerical scale



# How to create the Likert scale?

- 1) Generate more questions than you need
- 2) Get a group of people to score the questionnaire
- 3) Sum the scores for all items
- 4) Calculate the intercorrelations between all pairs of items
- 5) Reject questions that have a low correlation with the overall score
- 6) For each item, calculate the t-value. Reject questions with lower t-values (higher t-values show questions with higher discrimination).





# Error-choice technique (Hammond, 1948)

- Attitudes can be indirectly measured by the bias shown in answering a mixture of factual and non-factual questions concerning a given topic
- Respondents think it is a knowledge test

The average IQ of black people is:

A: 87%

B: 113%

The average IQ of Japanese people is:

A: 85%

B: 115%

# Summary

- Persuasion
- Coercion
- Persuasive communication effects
- Historical perspective
- Ethics
- Attitude measurement