

# Politics and propaganda assignment

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Essay #4: Politics and Propaganda Many people have witnessed, heard, or read some famous politician's speech. It is because of their speeches that they are either elected or thrown off the ballots depending on how nice their future promises and words are. However, according to Donna Cross' article called " Propaganda: How not to be Bamboozled", taking into consideration their choice of words and persuasive techniques would help us. We could be misunderstanding them, falling for their hidden tricks.

By reading through a speech by Sally Kern and taking into consideration the advice of Cross, we can learn how to look carefully at details and unravel their disguises. Instead of falling for their sugar coated lies, looking deeper into the true meaning of words will get you voting for who you should actually vote for. Propaganda is not necessarily wrong to use, it gets people elected, but its methods are questionable and perhaps dishonest. A politician's duty is to persuade people to stand with them and their ideas. According to Cross' article, there are many methods that they use to sweet talk their audience.

One of the methods found first in Sally Kern's speech is the testimonial about Christianity and the Bible. In " How not to be Bamboozled", Cross states that testimonials are given to show support for an idea from someone or something to distract from their main purpose (Cross 535). For example, in Kern's speech, she uses many Christianity references from books such as The Practical Benefits of Christianity and Total Truth to build up support for her claims and ideas later on. She tried to sway her audience by reminding them that " What made us great is that we were a nation founding on Christian principles" (Kern 1).

These were attempts to earn favor and distract her audience to think about her statement regarding the Bible. Though her testimony is not false, and her ideas may or may not be wrong, but her methods are. Besides making testimonials using Christian references to catch her audience, she also begs the question. According to Cross' definition of begging the question, Kern used this when she stated that “ Our founding fathers knew that and that's why they chose Christianity, and most of our founding fathers were believers in Jesus Christ” (Kern 1).

She had already established a point in her debate or point, but she restates it again. These are just many of the few ways politicians will try to get at their audience. In addition to testimonials and begging the question, Kern also glittered generalities, which was by using words with positive meanings or connotations such as being “ civilized”. By giving her audience the definition of it meaning decent, respectful and moral, she hoped to use it as a way to say that society is not civilized and tell us why.

Regardless of her point, she uses the definition to add positivity to her idea, that is was the way to go. In relation to her glittering generality of the use of being “ civilized” she uses name calling to tell her audience that gays are not civilized. Cross says that label people or ideas with words of bad connotation to make their ideas and themselves better (Cross 527). This is true in Kerns speech when she technically bashed on gays, calling one an “ obnoxious gay” (Kern 2). This could also be known as an “ argument to the man”, making personal attacks.

By doing this, she clearly calls anyone gay lower and not ideal for a civilized society. To put them down more, she uses a faulty cause and effect which, according to Cross' definition, tries to supposedly win the audience over with the idea that the speaker can possibly make the situation better. Kern tells her audience “ what we see happening today us today is the homosexual agenda is destroying this nation” (Kern 2). She points the finger at homosexuals, saying it is their fault if the nation was going to crumbles.

By pointing the finger at homosexuals, Kern also makes use of transfer of guilt. Cross explains that politicians will try to transfer a certain negative aspect of the people they are against for a reason against something (Cross 629). In this case, it is when she blames the destruction of the nation on gays. Furthermore, the faulty cause and effect happens once again when Kern tries to lists the facts on why the homosexuals' lives are deadly and against moral. By saying gays have more suicides, illnesses, shorter lifespan, and discouragement, she hoped to change her audience's opinion (Kern 3).

This could also be known as card stacking because she selects only information useful to her, leaving out the possible reasons why there may be more suicides for the gay community. By stating multiple reasons and stacking them one on top of the other, they are like stacks of what she calls proof. Not only Kern, but according to Cross, politicians use all these types of propaganda and almost anything to win their audience over. Anyways, to wrap up a nice speech, politicians also use stroking.

This is, according to Cross' article, a way to tell her audience what they want to hear. Kern does this by informing her audience by calling them developing

students (Kern 3. ) To also finish it off, a two-extreme fallacy was used. This is when there are only two possibilities, and they are absolute opposites (Cross 532). An example would be Kern's idea that you either " believe in a creator or you believe there isn't" (Kern 4). Of course there could be in between options, but politicians only want two, possibly theirs and the absolute opposite.

Propaganda may not be illegal to use, it is just deceitful and perhaps not a nice thing to do. However, it gets the politicians who use them elected. One does not have to agree or disagree to know facts being presented our wrong. In fact, even if they are wrongly used to support their idea, many times it does not stop anyone from voting for a particular person. Works Cited Cross, Donna Woolfolk. " Propaganda: How not to be Bamboozled". 526-535. Kern, Sally. Published Speech. March 2008.