

# Propaganda model essay example

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



## **Communication**

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### **Question 1**

Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky came up with the propaganda model.

This is a conceptual framework which shows how propaganda is spread within the political economy (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). The model indicates how propaganda and systemic biases are involved in the mass media and the roles they play. Furthermore, the model indicates how manipulations of the social, economic, and political issues are shaped in the minds of the people as a result of the propaganda. There are different ways through which the information can be presented; the media, governmental institutions, advertising, among others. Herman and Chomsky (1988) indicated that there are five filters in the propaganda model. The filters are as discussed in the paragraphs below.

The first filter is the ownership of the media. According to Herman and Chomsky, 1988, the model indicates that media houses are mostly profit seeking institutions. As such, they tend to make sure that their interests are propagated in the news they spread. As a matter of fact, the institutions are mostly capitalist in nature (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). As such, they tend to give information that is biased to their interests. This filter has a very strong influence on the information that is delivered to the public. There is no way the media owners can give information that is destructive to their business. On the contrary, they try all means possible to make sure that they give information that favors their interests (Nichols and McChesney, 2009).

As such, they tend to give negative propaganda on information that is against their interests, while giving much favorism to the information that best serves their interests. With such strategies, the media owners have greatly managed to assert their authority in the information world. They have moved masses and affected major decisions such as policies, choices of leaders, among others.

Funding is the second filter. There is no way that the media houses can survive unless they have enough funding. In this case, most of the funding for the media houses comes from advertising (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). In order for the newspapers to keep in circulation, they have to have a large base of clients who advertise in their papers. This is the only way in which they can remain afloat in such a competitive world. Given this provision, it is, therefore, not a wonder that most of the media houses tend to align themselves in such a manner that they attract the largest advertisers.

Edward and Chomsky noted that there is a cut-throat competition in the media industry. As such, the media houses have to be at their best so as to beat competition. Morrison (2011) observes that it is the affluent individuals who often read the newspapers. These are the elite section of the society, which are actually involved in the decision making processes. It, therefore, goes without saying that if a media house is in favor with such individuals, it gets a greater share of the advertisements. It also gets to have a larger clientele base for its newspapers. Therefore, the media houses tend to give information that will be appealing to these sources of funds. The content is planned in such a manner that it woees the elite society. Anything that can make this part of the society shy away from buying the newspapers tends to

be shunned. Bettig and Hall (2009) indicate that this is the reason as to why information given by the media house is often biased and well crafted.

Editors have to go through the information to make sure that the reporters do not give anything that can brew a conflict between the media house and the intended buyers. In the long run, there is a total manipulation of the stories as the idea is to get to a certain set in the population. Information is not wholesome and unbiased; it is doctored in order to achieve a given alternative.

The third filter is the sourcing aspect (Bettig, 2003). As per the model given by Herman and Chomsky, there is no way that media houses can place their reporters anywhere. On the contrary, they want to have their people in places where information is likely to flow. This is regardless of the size of the institution. As such, there tends to be a lot of information people hovering around favorite spots such as the Pentagon, White House, and other governmental outlets. The main reason as to why this is the case is because the media outlets want to get the information from the horse's mouth. As such, they have to be strategically placed so that they can tap this information as raw as it comes (Bettig, 2003). Issues reported on include issues such as labor affairs. The media gets the information from the government and gives it as it is. Any attempts to paint the government in the wrong manner can be followed up with threats such as denial of fresh news (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). Due to this, the media houses often tend to act as just an outlet of the information given by the governmental officials.

The above three filters are the commonest and most influential. However,

there are others that are also equally important. The fourth filter is what Herman and Chomsky termed as flak. According to Morrison (2011), flak is the negative response that is given to a statement from a media house. There are different forms that can be taken by flak. These include but are not limited to telephone calls, fax, emails, letters, telegrams, and speeches. In some cases, the media information can be quiet sensitive that it has to be addressed as a bill in the congress. Occasionally, there are also law suits filed against media houses for carrying certain information on specific individuals. Occasionally, flak can be made up by large corporations which question the credibility of information given on some critical issues such as environmental threats, global warming, among others. Of course, such efforts are at times propelled by the interests of certain industries, such as the manufacturers and oil industries, whose activities might be attacked by the media messages. Regardless of the source or motivation of the flak, it is undeniable that flak forms a basis for media information.

According to Bettig and Hall (2008), fear often propels people to act. It makes them take preventive measures so as to prevent the negative effects that can arise from a given threat. This is also an aspect that applies to the media fraternity. It comprises of the fifth filter, which Herman and Chomsky termed as the ' anti-communism and fear. This was initially termed as the manufacturing consent which was written after the Cold War. Herman and Chomsky termed this as fear of communism. This fear is propagated by the fact that communism is likely to gag media houses. It is no wonder that the media is often quick to criticize and rise against any form of communism. This can be seen in the manner in which the media covered stories about

Saddam Hussein, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, and other communistic leaders who came up after the Cold War. The rise against communism is largely based on the fact that such a system silences the voice of the elite. As such, it is a threat to other filters of the media such as source and funding. It is no wonder that the media is so vigilant against any kind of communism. The terrorism threats are also a common issue in the media. This is because it attracts much fear to the society. As such, key components on terrorism and other anti-terrorism issues are continually raised in the media.

The structure described above has an effect on the coverage of local and international news. This is because the media houses try to align themselves in such a manner that they benefit greatly from the information generated. This is quite contrary to how information would have been presented in a liberal media fraternity. According to Nichols and McChesney (2009), a liberal media fraternity would present information that is unbiased, balanced, and that which seeks out the truth. It would not be in favor of specific authorities or individuals. Simply put, the information would be more credible. Herman and Chomsky (1988) indicates that this structure also affects the manner in which the media houses picks on worthy and unworthy victims when reporting on international issues. The choice is based on the influence that the victim has on the media houses. The more significant the influence, the higher the publicity, and the reverse is also true.

## **Question 2**

Advertising is one of the commonest institutions in the modern world. There are manufacturing industries as well as service industries. All these strive in making sure that they serve their clients to their satisfaction. However, there

is much competition in the businesses. As such, the different players try to make sure that there is effective advertisement of their wares. This is the only way that they can make the people aware of their products and services. This brings about the necessity of advertising. According to Norris (1989), advertising started way back in the medieval period in Egypt. Major growth in the industry took place in the 19th century. However, total maturation and incorporation of advertising into the society as a social institution can be traced back to the 20th century. This is the point at which industrialization kicked in and there was greater civilization in the society. With the rise of industrialization came up other support industries such as catering, transport, health, and others (McChesney, 2004). These were meant to make the lives of the workers easier. Industrialization also meant that people had a centralized way of life; they had to do certain things on a daily basis. Furthermore, the living standards improved, implying that people could afford luxurious leisure activities. Technology also increased to a great extent, which gave way to growth of the media and other advertising agents (Bettig and Hall, 2012). This development, therefore, led to the rapid rise of advertising. Competing institutions had to make themselves known to the people giving the people a reason as to why they were the best as compared to the others in the market. By and by, advertising became a major social institution in the US.

According to Thad (2008), advertising has a major influence on the US economy. It has to be noted that advertising improves popularization of goods and services. As such, it propagates trading activities between the different parties. Advertising targets local as well as international clients.

This, therefore, implies that advertising plays a major role in bringing about a kind of flow in business. Needless to say, greater cohesion in business implies that there is more money flowing in the economy. As such, it is arguable that the advertising institution offers much benefit to the American economy.

Despite the fact that advertising is a positive aspect, it has also been associated with negative effects. Most notably is the fact that there is hyper-commercialism. McChesney (2004) observes that this is a situation where there are a lot of advertising message put up. This implies that the clients are bombarded with a lot of information. Hyper-commercialism also tends to bring about an aspect of insincerity. This tends to create some kinds of mental imaginations in the target audience which might not be true. The clients tend to over-expect from the products, given the publicity given to the same products through advertising. This is quite negative as it can lead to disappointment of the clients. Hyper-commercialism has also changed the orientation of the media houses. They tend to focus more on advertising rather than giving the consumers information that they might need in making the purchasing decision. The same goes for the cultural and educational institutions. Due to the hyper-commercialism, there is a tendency for these institutions to align themselves to the advertising frenzy. This often makes them lose focus; they tend to offer what they feel would attract the people, rather than what they know is actually good for them. The excessive advertising information also tends to confuse the buyers. More often than not, impulse buying can result as a function of excessive commercialization. This is an aspect that mostly affects young children and



adolescents. These groups might end up buying products which are actually harmful to them. These include products such as fast-foods and other products which could have negative effects. They have such attractive advertising messages which tend to draw the users to them. This is just one of the negative effects that hyper-commercialism has on the society.

The structure of the media industry has not been spared by the advertising frenzy. According to Norris (1989), the media houses are trapped because they need to make more money from the advertisers. As such, they cannot shy away from taking the lucrative deals that come from advertising. As a result, their structures are greatly affected. This is because they have to incorporate the advertising message in everything they do. This affects their programming. It also affects the departmentation in the media houses. This is mainly because they have to create a department that deals with advertisements. This has to deal with the logistical processes involving reception designing, and airing of the advertisements. This cannot be incorporated into other departments. With such evidence, it is undeniable that advertising has a major influence on the structure of the media houses.

The form and content of media output are also greatly affected by advertising. There are the mainstream kinds of information that are expected to be delivered through the media. These include news and announcements, as well as other educative programs. However, due to the rise of advertising, these programs are designed in such a manner that they give room for advertising. It is not uncommon to have news sections such as the Prime News interrupted so that an advertising message can be delivered. The media fraternity has also had to pull up its socks in terms of creativity so

as to accommodate the advertisements. For instance, there has to be complex graphical presentations, animations, and other computerized strategies aimed at bringing out an advertising message. The media houses have to master such techniques as this is what draws clients to them. The better the advertisements, the more the clientele base they attract, and the better it is for the media house. As such, it is undeniable that advertising has a considerable impact on the content and form of media output.

According to Bagdikian (nd), the society and the media needs to be liberated from the influence of media advertising. There are various alternatives that can be exploited so as to achieve this. For instance, there should be governmental regulations on the contents of an advert. It should be clearly stipulated that an advert has to be a true depiction of the product. This can help in avoiding misleading information that is often delivered through the adverts. Secondly, there should be much of consumer education. It is often argued that knowledge is power. With reference to advertising, consumers need to be enlightened on what to look out for in the different products on offer. As such, they cannot be easily misled by any advertising messages as they can clearly tell the difference between the reality and faux claims. By strengthening the consumer's awareness, there is creation of a barricade against negatively influential advertising messages. Lastly, the media houses need to be more vigilant in the advertisements they put up. They should shift their attention from the financial gains of the adverts. Rather, they should look out for the good of the society in general. As such, they can help in enforcing more responsible and reasonable advertising. Simply put, the

society and the media fraternity need to take action in order to liberate themselves from the excessive influence of advertising.

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