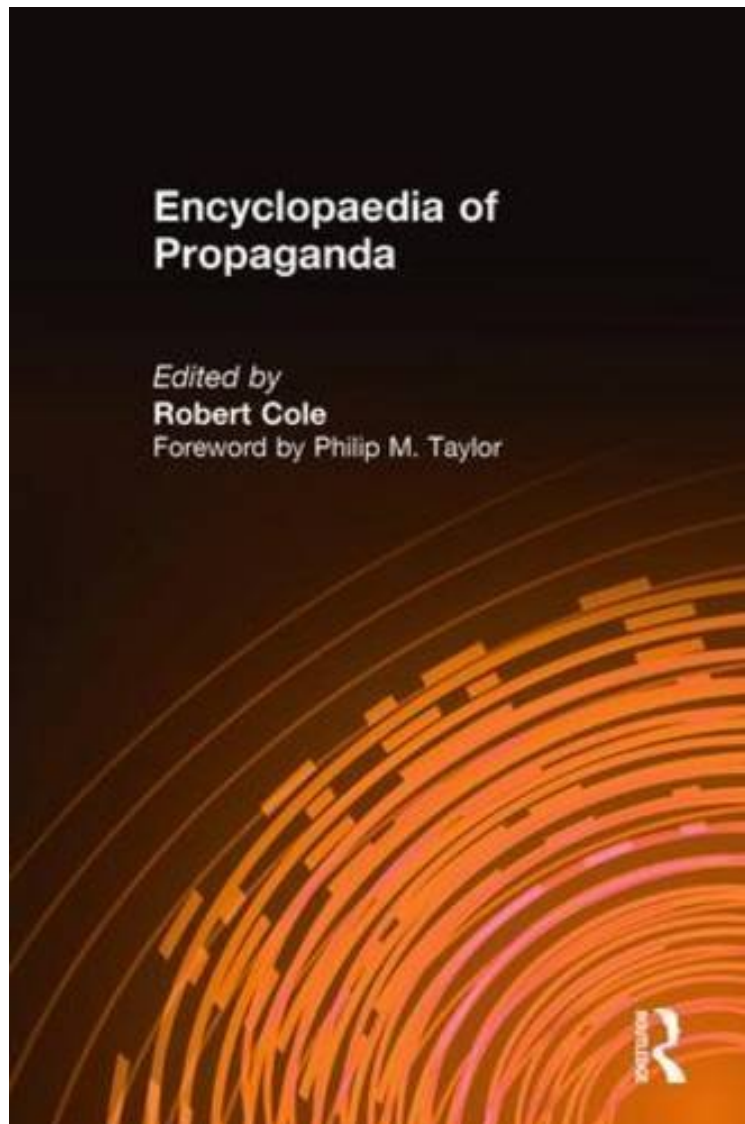


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Encyclopaedia of Propaganda

Robert Cole

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#1654373 in Books M E Sharpe Reference 1997-11-01 Original language: English PDF # 3 10.60 x 3.90 x 8.50l, 6.71 #File Name: 0765680092800 pages | File size: 48.Mb

Robert Cole : Encyclopaedia of Propaganda before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Encyclopaedia of Propaganda:

This well-organized, easy-to-use A-Z reference examines in great detail the historical, political, sociological, cultural, and artistic aspects of propaganda around the world. It addresses those forms of communication -- mass

communication in particular -- that are intended to produce changes in thinking and behavior.

From School Library Journal Grade 9 Up A According to the foreword, this set addresses "those forms of communication that are intended to produce changes in thinking or behavior of their audiences." The encyclopedia's purpose is to consider propaganda in "value-neutral terms." The essays cover a wide range of topics, such as social realism, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the United Nations, architecture and monuments, Charlie Chaplin, film and politics, birth control, and photography and photojournalism. Of the 510 alphabetically arranged entries, 82 are brief definitions written by the editor. The remaining essays, ranging in length from 300 to 2500 words, are written by scholars. Writing styles vary but all of the articles deal with relatively sophisticated concepts. The medium-length essays have short lists for further reading; the longer ones have annotated lists. The text is enlivened with black-and-white photographs, reproductions, and cartoons. Volume three contains an extensive bibliography, filmography, index, and a list of entries that group articles under 15 broadly defined categories such as nations, persons, artistic and literary issues, health and medical issues, and historical events and eras. Because of its unique point of view and emphasis on mass media, this set will add valuable material to reference collections.

Priscilla Bennett, State University of West Georgia Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist It is difficult to be objective about an emotion-laden topic like propaganda, but the editor of this source has managed to do that. The publisher's note reminds us that propaganda is simply "the intent and means used to persuade a target audience." Entries cover the spectrum from "good" propaganda--immunization campaigns and assorted religions--to "bad" propaganda--that utilized by the Nazis to justify their pogroms, and the more recent machinations on both sides of the Cold War. Another distinction is between white (overt) propaganda, which announces its source; and black (covert) propaganda, which disguises the origin of its message. The three volumes include 510 alphabetically arranged entries that address 15 broadly defined categories, including artistic and literary issues, historical events and eras, media and journalism, and politics and government, among others. Emphasis is on the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, although the entry propaganda history reveals the early existence of propagandistic activity in classical Greece. There are more than 200 contributors, all of whom are identified by institutional affiliation or geographic location, but not by credentials. Editor Cole authored 82 definitions that are crucial to an understanding of the concept of propaganda. Many entries begin with a dispassionate capsule statement, such as the one that defines temperance movements as "organized efforts in the United States to suppress the consumption of alcoholic beverages." The medium-length essays offer suggested readings, and the longer ones end with annotated bibliographies, making this a useful source for students and other researchers. Some include maps, photographs, charts, or textual sidebars. Sample entries include: abortion debate; Common Cause; Esperanto; Goebbels, Joseph; Guthrie, Woody; Limbaugh, Rush; Mothers Against Drunk Driving; postage stamp art; Save the Children Federation; and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Browsing every volume is a learning experience. Under anthems is the information that the tune of the song we know as "America" ("My Country 'Tis of Thee") has been used by Great Britain, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Austria, and Liechtenstein to inspire patriotism. Four-Minute Men are described as volunteers who gave brief speeches in cinemas and other public places to boost patriotism during World War I. Charles Lindbergh's aviation-related fame is supplemented with a summary of his pro-German beliefs and activities prior to Pearl Harbor. Rastafarianism's connection with Haile Selassie of Ethiopia is explained, as is Marcus Garvey's. Volume 3 features several appendixes: a filmography, an expansive general bibliography by Cole, a categorized list of entries, and an index. While there are cross-references within the entries, the index is not as complete as desired. Browsing, for example, teaches us that Ida Lupino was the director of the film *Outrage*, which treated rape so movingly, but Lupino is not in the index. The entry Germany: 1933[^]-1945 treats the Holocaust extensively, but Holocaust is not in the index. Orson Welles' radio production of *The War of the Worlds* is a classic example of the power of the media to move people, yet not only does Orson Welles rate no entry of his own but the index does not direct the reader to the reference to *The War of the Worlds* in the H. G. Wells entry. The writing style is straightforward and coolly objective, allowing an adult to read about emotionally charged subjects in a balanced way. That same detachment might make it easy for a younger person to miss the significance of some historic events and people. For example, Ayatollah Khomeini is described as an "Iranian religious and political leader" and Iran as a "Middle Eastern Islamic nation, formerly known as Persia." Recommended for large reference collections and wherever there is an interest in the subject and a need to facilitate the evaluation of information's credibility and significance.