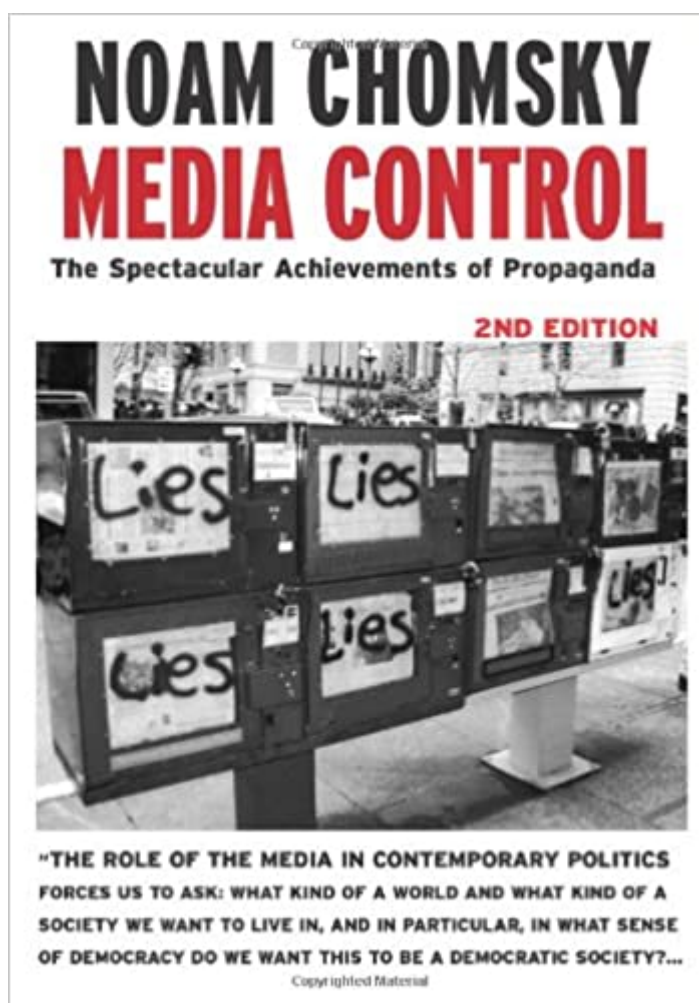


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Media Control, Second Edition: The Spectacular Achievements Of Propaganda (Open Media Series)



Synopsis

Noam Chomsky's backpocket classic on wartime propaganda and opinion control begins by asserting two models of democracy "one in which the public actively participates, and one in which the public is manipulated and controlled. According to Chomsky, "propaganda is to democracy as the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state," and the mass media is the primary vehicle for delivering propaganda in the United States. From an examination of how Woodrow Wilson's Creel Commission "succeeded, within six months, in turning a pacifist population into a hysterical, war-mongering population," to Bush Sr.'s war on Iraq, Chomsky examines how the mass media and public relations industries have been used as propaganda to generate public support for going to war. Chomsky further touches on how the modern public relations industry has been influenced by Walter Lippmann's theory of "spectator democracy," in which the public is seen as a "bewildered herd" that needs to be directed, not empowered; and how the public relations industry in the United States focuses on "controlling the public mind," and not on informing it. Media Control is an invaluable primer on the secret workings of disinformation in democratic societies. From the Audiobook Download edition.

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Customer Reviews

NOAM CHOMSKY is known throughout the world for his political and philosophical writings as well as for his groundbreaking linguistics work. He has taught at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

since 1955 and remains one of America's most uncompromising voices of dissent. From the Audiobook Download edition.

I've always heard of Chomsky but I never quite got around to reading anything he wrote. Then one day 'Media Control' was on sale at [Amazon](#) and I gave it a shot. This book is mind-blowing, not just because of what he puts in that I hadn't heard of before but because it forced me to think about the relationship between power and knowledge. Chomsky pulls no punches when discussing the subtle (and not-so-subtle) ways that governments control their people and keep groups too fractured to ever truly change the status quo. This book is a good introduction to his ideas and once you read it, you'll want to dive into the rest of his works just like I do. You may think that he's a little extreme sometimes, but much more often you'll find yourself thinking that he makes just a little too much sense.

Propaganda is a form of communication that aims to influence attitudes toward a cause or position. It is primarily aimed to influence an audience. Fundamentally, it should be a neutral term. However, it grew up with a negative connotation by association with the world wars. In 1924, Adolf Hitler wrote that "propaganda is a truly terrible weapon in the hands of an expert". While the term propaganda might evoke oceanic crowds of people rising arms and shouting "Heil Hitler" it is important to note that it was not invented by the Nazis. The original Latin word refers to the biological reproduction of flora and fauna (to propagate, things that must be disseminated), whereas the Papacy coined the phrase *propaganda fide*. The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith is a Congregation of the Roman Curia for the Evangelization of Peoples (*Congregatio pro Gentium Evangelizatione*). In 1622, Pope Gregory XV founded the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (*sacra congregatio christiano nomini propaganda*) but it was Pope Urban VIII who made it an institution. Noam Chomsky's *Media Control* is a little and easy to read book. Loved it. If you get a chance and you would like to know what is the role of the media in contemporary politics (and open your mind to new ways of thinking if you are not familiar with Propaganda) this is a book for you. Clearly, it is U.S. centric (as pretty much all the books available to market). It will take one hour of your time (more or less depending on your reading skills) to be read. Noam Chomsky goes directly to the point and his thinking will not leave the reader disappointed. You might wish to try it as an appetizer. Then, if you want more. There's much more Content worth reading/watching/listening to from Noam's brilliant mind.

"The Essence of Society is engineering Consent." --Edward Bernays, adviser to Woodrow Wilson. "Media Control" is both brief and informative. The great thing about this book is you can apply the concepts to instances in the past and present. The omniscient and omnipotent media. It dictates what most of us discuss at the dinner table, or over a cup of coffee or beer. The topics at hand are spoon-fed to us, and often our very own opinions are spoon-fed to us also. Often, we get a narrow pre-defined "choice" of 2 positions to take on these complicated topics. Often the two positions are oversimplified and more nuanced than actually opposing one another. These issues and circumstances are not that simple. But the media constructs and defines the parameters, simplifies and narrows them, and dishes them out to the public. This is the narrow field of play the mainstream media hands to us. We sheepishly accept it, often without being aware of it nor critically thinking about it. Our opinions on these chosen topics are often limited. "Media Control" is applicable for the past, present, and future. The rules basically stay the same. "Not every item of news should be published. Rather must those who control news policies endeavor to make every item of news serve a certain purpose." -Joseph Goebbels "It is the absolute right of the state to supervise the formation of public opinion." -Joseph Goebbels Recent real-life instances of "Media Control" include Freedom Fries, pre-emptive attacks, war-mongering, PNAC, and the Neo-con fad that has infiltrated the US government via appointments, and influenced the US public in recent years: A high percentage of the American public according to polling data is not interested in attacking and overthrowing governments in foreign countries. Therefore, the public has to be influenced, excited, and engineered to endorse such endeavors. Fear is the best motivator to influence public opinion. One example cited among many was the American public's perception and belief that Iraq would invade the United States. Iraqi armed forces landing on the shores of New Jersey or California? Imagine that. The Americans had to "fight them [the Sunnis] on their soil or they'd have to fight them on our soil." 7/10 American polled believe Iraq & Hussein were involved in 9-11 during the media onslaught that began with Judith Miller of the NY Times and the GWB administration. The Iraq conflict is near (perhaps) the end of US troop involvement, but it's a great illustration of Media Control. Another example from this book is former Panamanian ally, Manuel Noriega: a small time operator that dealt drugs in cooperation with the US the government, until he fell out of favor. Noriega was made larger than life. Made into a caricature of a dangerous thug. A threat. The USA removed him and restored power to the 8% white minority elite, having U.S. military officers in positions throughout the government. Before this in the 1980s, there was the Emergency Threat to the United States: Latin American, Lessor Developed Countries, with ill-trained, and ill-equipped armies. Ironically, the Creel Commission (CPI) is noted in "Media Control," and appropriately so. The Creel Commission was a

propaganda campaign to get the USA involved in WWI. It's widely considered by historians to be the center of the creation of the Public Relations (PR) industry. The media is all-powerful. The thoughts most think, the tenets most believed in, and the words people say, are the words of others. Highly recommended.

Chomsky Readers generally "Get It". For those not yet "Getting It", "Media Control" is a great starting point and a be considered summoning the non converted to Chomsky's vision of a "Real, People instigated DEMOCRACY".

The key value of this book is the brilliant, spot-on framework of "activist democracy" vs. "spectator democracy" -- i.e., the notion, very well-supported, that while the US continues to present itself to its citizens and the outside world as "of the people, by the people", in truth the powers that be actively mold the mind of the public through propaganda, and give the public the illusion of control. The public thinks they make their own decisions but in truth they are led to specific outcomes through well-established methods. The lengths to which this propaganda can take the population are practically without limit; typically it involves whipping up public support for wars (sometimes ridiculously unjust, like the overthrow of the Guatemalan government, leading to decades of civil war, for the sake of the United Fruit Company), for the benefit of the military-industrial complex. It's a very quick read, and your understanding of how the US really works will become qualitatively better.

I consider Chomsky an intellectual far leftist. Not my cup of tea.

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