



Young Adult Series

Course #9: The Buying of Science

Guided Notes

Remember: You can pause the video for extra time on any section.

Hanlon's Razor: "Never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity."

Though, sometimes with big pharma and public health, it really is malice – or at least self-interest / corruption.

Tobacco Science: The biased reporting of scientific data, especially when it favors the agenda of a particular industry – named after the Tobacco Industry's actions.

American Journal of Public Health, Allan Brandt from Harvard University:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3490543/>

... the tobacco industry would launch a new strategy, largely unprecedented in the history of US industry and business: it would work to erode, confuse, and condemn the very science that now threatened to destroy its prized, highly popular, and exclusive product...

The tobacco industry already had a long history of innovative advertising, marketing, and public relations that had centered on making smoking universal....

...if the current cultural context was inhospitable to the product, one could—through shrewd and creative public relations interventions—change the culture to fit the product.

Within the industry, marketing experts had developed a powerful notion of social engineering, what early public relations theorist Edward Bernays had called the "engineering of consent."

Edward Bernays: Father of Public Relations, guru behind "Torches of Freedom."

- You can simply Google or DuckDuckGo search for "Torches of Freedom" to learn more about the campaign.
- Here are two links:

<https://yourstory.com/2014/08/torches-of-freedom/amp>

<https://biblio.uottawa.ca/omeka2/jmccutcheon/exhibits/show/american-women-in-tobacco-adve/torches-of-freedom-campaign>

Bernays used his secretary, Bertha Hunt, to hijack women's groups, pretend to be a feminist, and organize a PR stunt where she and other women would light up cigarettes on fifth avenue at the peak of the Easter Parade as a gesture of women's liberation.

The New York Times ran a story the following day titled "Group of Girls Puff at Cigarettes as a Gesture of Freedom." Bernays belief was proven true, that culture could be engineered.

Global Citizen Example:

Global Citizen bills itself as an organization dedicated to ending extreme poverty.

Global Citizen's "Together At Home" concert, supported the establishment response to COVID via the World Health Organization. It was sponsored by, among others, Johnson & Johnson, and GlaxoSmithKline, both of whom had COVID vaccines in their pipeline.

After Together At Home, Global Citizen put on the Vax Live concert, using celebrities and influencers to promote vaccination to their young fans, and, most importantly, tying the vaccinations to a social cause just like big tobacco led feminist groups to do.

Olivia Munn Clip: (Time Code 25:20 – 26:04)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C02GCe5_bDk

On a messaging level, this subconsciously ties the idea of being anti-racist, of being a good, moral, virtuous person, with the vaccine.

Selena Gomez Clip: (Time Code 48:46 – 49:05)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C02GCe5_bDk

Duchess of Sussex Clip: (Time Code 1:36:57 – 1:38:11)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C02GCe5_bDk

You are not immoral, or unethical, or evil, for making an informed decision about whether you want a profitable pharmaceutical product injected into your body, manufactured by organizations with previous criminal penalties for bad and unethical behavior.

Tobacco's Hijacking of Science & Culture:

Big tobacco hired John W. Hill, the president of a top PR firm, Hill & Knowlton.

According to Brandt at Harvard:

https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/3372908/Brandt_Recruiting.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Hill understood that simply denying emerging scientific facts would be a losing game... So he proposed seizing and controlling science rather than avoiding it.

... seizing control of the science of tobacco and health would be essential to seizing control of the media. Although public relations practitioners had considerable experience manipulating the

media, what was radical about Hill's proposed strategy was the desire to manipulate scientific research, debate, and outcomes.

It was Hill who hit on the idea of creating an industry-sponsored research entity. Ultimately, he concluded, the best public relations approach was for the industry to become a major sponsor of medical research.

Hill understood that simply giving money to scientists—through the National Institutes of Health or some other entity, for example—offered little opportunity to shape the public relations environment. However, offering funds directly to university-based scientists would enlist their support and dependence. Moreover, it would have the added benefit of making academic institutions “partners” with the tobacco industry in its moment of crisis.

Hill and his clients had no interest in answering a scientific question. Their goal was to maintain vigorous control over the research program, to use science in the service of public relations.

If science now threatened the industry, the industry must “secure” science.

The firm systematically documented the courtship of newspapers and magazines wherein it could urge balance and fairness to the industry.

In these entreaties on behalf of the industry, the firm's staffers repeated several key themes.

First, they would note that the industry completely understood its important public responsibilities.

Second, they would affirm that the industry was deeply committed to investigating all of the scientific questions relevant to resolving the controversy.

Third, they urged skepticism regarding statistical studies.

Finally, they offered members of the media a long list of “independent” skeptics to consult to ensure balance in their presentations.

In their work to control the science, the companies had also found that they had secured considerable advantages in the realms of media, law, and public opinion.

The tobacco industry's public relations campaign permanently changed industry–science relationships and public culture.

Their disinformation campaign, built on a foundation of conflicts of interest, demonstrates a series of problems that continue to evolve regarding the relationship between medical science and industrial influence.

Sharyl Attkisson Clip (10 minutes):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bYAQ-ZZtEU>

