



THE GUTENBERG COLLEGE
EDUCATION CONFERENCE
INDEPENDENT
AUG 9-10, 2024
EUGENE, OREGON MIND

READINGS SELECTED FROM
THE RIGHTEOUS MIND BY J.
HAIDT & *PROPAGANDA* BY
JACQUES ELLUL

SCHEDULE
READINGS
TALK & WORKSHOP
DESCRIPTIONS

the RIDER & the
elephant
JONATHAN
HAIDT

CHARACTERISTICS
OF PROPAGANDA
JACQUES ELLUL



2024 EDUCATION CONFERENCE THE INDEPENDENT MIND



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This booklet is intended solely for academic use.
Address questions or comments to office@gutenberg.edu.

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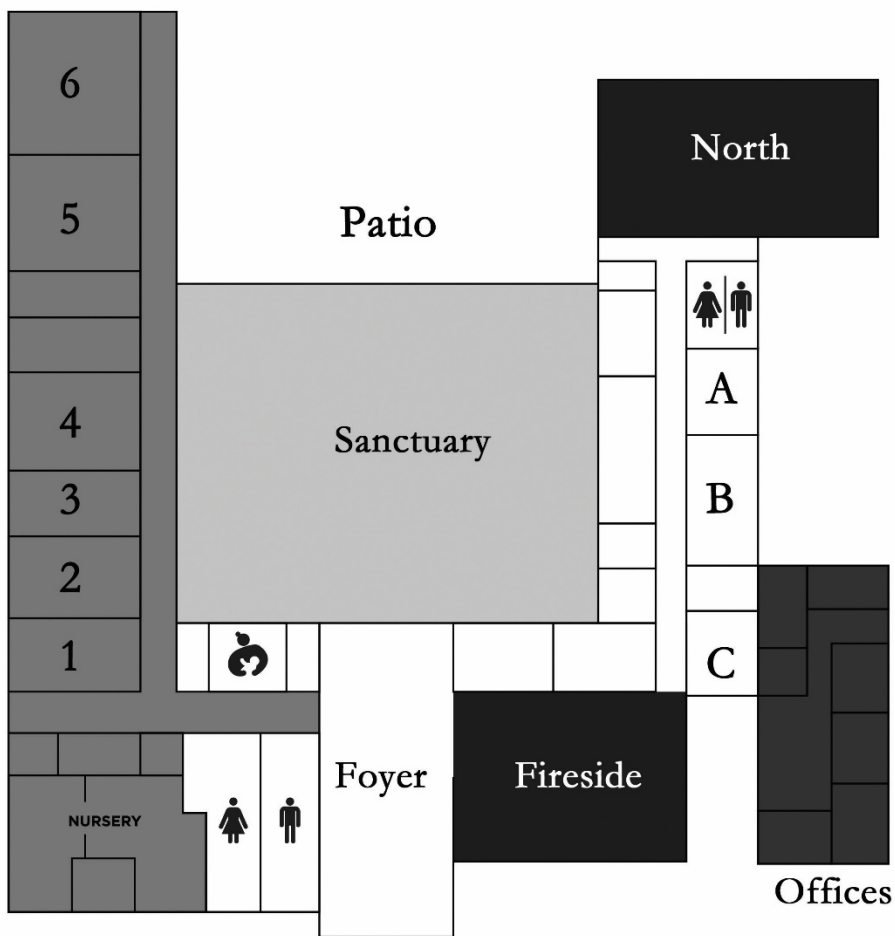
GUTENBERG COLLEGE'S MISSION

The purpose of Gutenberg College is (1) to provide an outstanding, broad-based liberal arts education in an environment respectful of biblical Christianity, and (2) to encourage students to become mature, independent thinkers. To accomplish these goals, Gutenberg course work emphasizes interaction with writings of exceptional intellectual merit and the development of sound learning skills.

We aim to fulfill this mission not only through our undergraduate program, but also in our various other offerings. Your discussions at this year's education conference are an opportunity to both interact with challenging texts and practice the particular learning skills embodied in discussion. We hope you enjoy yourselves and benefit from them!

If you would like to find out more about Gutenberg College, please check out our website at gutenberg.edu or visit our table in the foyer for information.

University Fellowship Church



Talks: Sanctuary

Discussions: Fireside, North, A, B, C, 5, 6

Workshops: Sanctuary, Fireside, North, B

Sponsors and Registration: Foyer

EDUCATION CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, August 9th

- 8:00 AM Registration Opens
- 9:00 AM Welcome & Introduction
- 9:15 AM **Session 1, Chris Swanson:**
“The Challenge of Culture”
- 10:15 AM Break
- 10:30 AM **Session 2, Andrea Lipinski:**
“Cultivating Judgement, Cultivating Independence
- 11:30 AM Lunch
- 12:30 PM Introduction to Gutenberg (optional)
- 12:45 PM Introduction to Discussion
- 1:00 PM **Session 3, Discussion on 1st Reading:**
Selection from *Propaganda* by Jacques Ellul
- 2:30 PM Break
- 2:45 PM **Session 4, Workshops:**
Amanda Butler: “How Math Can Foster Independence of Mind”
Charley Dewberry: “Science and the Independent Mind”
Andrea Lipinski: “Cultivating Attention”
Davies Owens: “Fine Tuning Parent-School Relations for Positive Student Impact”
- 3:45 PM Break
- 5:30 PM Banquet (ticket required)
- 7:30 PM **Session 5 (Keynote Address), Davies Owens:**
“Teaching Independent Thinking in a Digital-Dependent World”

Saturday, August 10

- 8:00 AM Breakfast
- 9:00 AM Welcome
(Teens: Hike to Spencer's Butte or Hendrick's Park)
- 9:15 AM **Session 6, Amanda Butler:**
“Developing Independence of Mind through Virtue”
- 10: 15 AM Break
- 10:30 AM **Session 7, Workshops:**
Amanda Butler: “How Math Can Foster Independence of Mind”
Charley Dewberry: “Science and the Independent Mind”
Andrea Lipinski: “Cultivating Attention”
Davies Owens: “Fine Tuning Parent-School Relations for Positive Student Impact”
- 11:45 AM Lunch
(Teens: Lunch and “Young Philosophers Live” at Gutenberg College)
- 12:45 PM Introduction to Gutenberg (optional)
- 1:00 PM **Session 8, Discussion on 2nd Reading:**
Selection from *The Righteous Mind* by Jonathan Haidt
- 2:30 PM Break
- 2:45 PM **Session 9, Eliot Grasso:**
“The Independent Mind in Pursuit of Truth”
- 3:45 PM Break
- 4:00 PM **Session 10, Speaker Q&A**

SPEAKERS & TALK DESCRIPTIONS



FRIDAY, 9:15 AM

Chris Swanson: “The Challenge of Culture”

Description: In Judges 2:11-12 we see a stark example of the influence of culture:

Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals, and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the LORD to anger.

We, like the Israelites, live in a culture that offers us many nearly irresistible idols, and we are not immune. In this talk, I will explore how we as Christians and educators can better understand ourselves and our culture and strive for independence of mind.

CHRIS SWANSON has been a tutor at Gutenberg since 1994, and in 2016, he became president of the college. He has a B.S. in physics and math and both an M.S. and Ph.D. in physics. He has also done post-doctoral research at the University of Oregon and taught at Westmont College in California.



FRIDAY, 10:30 AM

Andrea Lipinski: “Cultivating Judgement, Cultivating Independence”

Description: Rhetoric is decision making in community.

Every day is filled with decisions, some seemingly less important than others. The accumulation of decisions influences who we are becoming on the way to where we are going. How can we help our students develop wisdom and virtue on this journey? We will explore how cultivating our faculty of judgment cultivates our independence.

ANDREA LIPINSKI is the Vice President of Training and Consulting for the CiRCE Institute, where she also serves as a Head Mentor in their teacher training program, the Rocky Mountain Apprenticeship. A homeschooling mother of two sons, she has graduated her oldest son, who attends the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, NY. Her younger son has one more year at home. She and her family live in the Pacific Northwest where they grow

fruit, ski Mt. Baker, and paddle the lakes. She is a co-author of “A CiRCE Guide to Reading.”



FRIDAY, 7:30 PM (Keynote Address)

Davies Owens: “Teaching Independent Thinking in a Digital-Dependent World”

Description: For centuries, classical educators have taught students using time-proven methodologies and curricula. As a result, we have held to a reasonable confidence that what has always worked will continue to work. But are our students truly inoculated to what Lewis calls “the great cataract of nonsense that pours from the press and the microphone of his own age”?

Unfortunately, we have recently crossed the Rubicon, leaving behind Lewis’s polite press and microphones. We’ve entered a world where the digital barbarians are not simply at the gate but are firmly established in our homes. They dine with us, captivate most of our waking hours, and steal more than nine hours a day from the average young person in the form of glowing screens and competing narratives. These digital barbarians aggressively form dependent and soft minds lured by hours of carefully programmed algorithms tuned to the exact needs, interests, and wants. Even in the most Luddite homes, these influences leach through and captivate students, overriding a day of classroom-formed loves, affections, and knowledge with more tantalizing and delightful nonsense. These influences are not only from screens but from the accumulation of pressures reshaping the modern family driven by shifting economic uncertainty, over-consuming schedules, detachment from family and lack of generational wisdom, and a loss of church community and connections.

Can we form independent minds, resilient and thriving in our cultural moment, in the midst of the barbarians? Hope exists IF we are willing to pay attention and calibrate our schools and classrooms to the students before us and our modern parent partners. We can be confident, anchored in the Truth as purveyors of better stories and a love for deep thinking in an environment of more beautiful experiences and rich relationships. We can reassert a love of wisdom, over a love of opinion and self.

Just saying “no” to the barbarians isn’t enough; we have to say “yes” to something more alluring, which forms independent minds and is the heart of classical Christian education!

DAVIES OWENS is the founder and host of the BaseCamp Live podcast. As a speaker, teacher, leader, and serial entrepreneur, he has connected with school leaders, parents, and students for more than three decades. His primary goal is to assist parents and schools in building confidence, clarity, and renewed enthusiasm as educators. With over two decades of experience in classical Christian school leadership, along with teaching and training leaders on a national scale, he has honed proven strategies and solutions to help them thrive.

Davies earned his M.Div. at Duke Divinity School and his doctorate at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, focusing on online interaction and community.



SATURDAY, 9:15 AM

Amanda Butler: “Developing Independence of Mind through Virtue”

Description: What does virtue have to do with independence of mind? We will explore the seven cardinal virtues and their relationship to teaching and learning.

Amanda Butler is Vice President of Training and Support with Classical Conversations. After a nearly decade-long career in semiconductor engineering (a.k.a. playing with electrons), Amanda stumbled into her true vocation while helping elementary school students memorize Bible verses during Vacation Bible School. Teaching immediately became her passion. Since making the transition from electrons to children over 20 years ago, she has taught in various capacities including public school, private school, homeschooling, and private tutoring. Out of a heart to equip teachers as she has been equipped, Amanda hosts book clubs and learning events in her home and community and leads Classical Conversations’ Training and Support and Customer Service departments. One of Amanda’s favorite things about Christian, classical education is that students are rightly recognized as image-bearers of God and accordingly encouraged and equipped to better know God, themselves, and the world around them via ongoing conversations with one another.

Amanda is passionate about learning and about people. She and her husband, Ryan, reside in Round Rock, Texas. Their firstborn attends college, and they homeschool their youngest.



SATURDAY, 2:45 PM

Eliot Grasso: “The Independent Mind in Pursuit of Truth”

Description: Nicodemus visited Jesus to seek the truth—but privately and under cover of darkness. If he had met Jesus in broad daylight in the marketplace, Nicodemus would have met great friction within his culture. As a member of Pharisaical culture, Nicodemus knew well his culture’s assumptions about the promised Messiah. Clearly, his culture’s expectations about the Messiah differed from Jesus’. What if our cultural assumptions are wrong about what’s true? Much like the Pharisees, modern Western culture delimits and distorts what is knowable and what is teachable. What happens when God’s truth doesn’t conform to our expectations, desires, and assumptions? How will we engage in education when goodness and culture part ways? In this talk, I will examine the relationship between culture, truth, and education.

Eliot Grasso is the vice president of Gutenberg College and has been a tutor at Gutenberg since 2012. He holds a B.A. in music from Goucher College, a M.A. in ethnomusicology from the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, and a Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Oregon School of Music and Dance. He studies the relationship among melodic variation, cognition, and socio-cultural context. Eliot’s scholarship and teaching have been recognized with awards from the Society for Ethnomusicology and the University of Oregon.

WORKSHOPS

There will be two workshop sessions at the conference, one on Friday at 2:45 PM and one on **Saturday at 10:30 AM**. Attendees can choose between four workshops in each session:

AMANDA BUTLER: “HOW MATH CAN FOSTER INDEPENDENCE OF MIND”

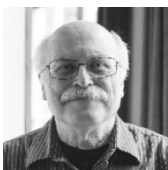
Description: The way we teach math can encourage dependence or independence of mind. We will explore a teaching form that can build courage and humility of mind.

CHARLEY DEWBERRY: “SCIENCE AND THE INDEPENDENT MIND”

Description: We are taught from primary school through graduate school that science is a method of testing hypotheses and that, by following the method, the scientists’ biases and opinions are eliminated—or at least practically eliminated. As a result, scientific knowledge is more objective and certain than knowledge gained in the arts. Ironically, this also means that the independent mind of the scientist is eliminated by the method.

Since the 1960s, however, philosophers of science have rejected the perspective above, claiming that it is not defensible. But scientifically minded scientists and educators, for the most part, do not communicate with philosophers, and scientists rarely take philosophy courses, and so they ignore the philosophers’ rejection.

However, the philosophers of science who reject the traditional view of science are right. They are rejecting the perspective that science is different from the arts. In fact, science is high art, and the independent mind of the scientist is critical for pursuing what is true. This workshop examines this philosophical issue and explores the implications for teaching science from primary school through graduate school.



Charley Dewberry is the dean and a tutor at Gutenberg College, a practicing scientist and stream ecologist, and the author of *Saving Science: A Critique of Science and Its Role in Salmon Recovery* (2004) and *Intelligent Discourse: Exposing the Fallacious Standoff Between Evolution and Intelligent Design* (2006). He holds a B.S. in the arts (political science, economics, and zoology; 1975) and an M.S. in stream ecology (1978) from Michigan State University, and a Ph.D. in

philosophy with an emphasis on philosophy of science from the University of Oregon (1995).

ANDREA LIPINSKI: “CULTIVATING ATTENTION”

Description: One skill is needful; upon this skill all others build. Attention is the first skill that needs to be cultivated. Attention is necessary for relationship development as well as truth perception and judgment. In this workshop, we will practice ways to cultivate attention that you can continue at home and in class.

DAVIES OWENS: “FINE TUNING PARENT-SCHOOL RELATIONS FOR POSITIVE STUDENT IMPACT”

Description: How do we partner well with today’s generation of Millennial and Gen Z parents? Many of the schools’ approaches to connecting and communicating with parents and students are changing. Most school administrators are not of the same generation as the parents they are serving. And many of the approaches, including the content and the systems we use to communicate, can be ineffective in a world on the run. This workshop will be a chance to roll up our sleeves and look at ten best practices that schools are implementing to better partner with this new generation of parents.

YOUNG PHILOSOPHERS LIVE!

A Saturday event for teens who are in town during this year's Education Conference

“Personal Identity”

Young Philosophers Live will combine the best of two worlds: the great outdoors and thoughtful discussion. After breakfast at the conference on Saturday, we will take a short drive to either Hendricks Park or Spencer's Butte, depending on how ambitious we feel. We'll walk around the gorgeous arboretum or hike to the top of the local landmark and then go to Gutenberg for lunch. After lunch, we'll discuss personal identity, starting with some standard explanations and then letting our conversation unfold naturally. We will return to the conference in time for Eliot Grasso's talk, “The Independent Mind in Pursuit of Truth,” at 2:45 pm.

This special edition of Young Philosophers is free to conference attendees.

READING DISCUSSIONS

Conference attendees will participate in two small-group discussion sessions. (Everyone will be assigned a small-group room when they arrive.) The groups will discuss two short readings that follow in this booklet. Please read the selections prior to the discussion sessions.

Friday, 1:00 pm: This first reading discussion will focus on a selection from Jacques Ellul's *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. In this selection (from Chapter 1, “The Characteristics of Propaganda” and Chapter 3, “The Necessity of Propaganda”), Ellul describes the methods of propaganda that attempt to unify the thoughts and beliefs of mass society.

Saturday, 1:00 pm: This second reading discussion will focus on a selection from Jonathan Haidt's *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. In this selection (from Part 1, Chapter 2, “The Intuitive Dog and Its Rational Tail,” and Chapter 3, “Elephants Rule”), Haidt explores the ways that our beliefs, habits, and emotions influence our independent thinking.

During both discussions, we will take some time to debrief on the discussion process itself and reflect on what makes a good discussion.

PROPAGANDA

THE FORMATION OF MEN'S ATTITUDES

(Vintage Books, NY 1965)

By
Jacques Ellul

CHAPTER 1

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPAGANDA

1. External Characteristics

The Individual and the Masses

Any modern propaganda will, first of all, address itself at one and the same time to the individual and to the masses. It cannot separate the two elements. For propaganda to address itself to the individual, in his isolation, apart from the crowd, is impossible. The individual is of no interest to the propagandist; as an isolated unit he presents much too much resistance to external action. To be effective, propaganda cannot be concerned with detail, not only because to win men over one by one takes much too long, but also because to create certain convictions in an isolated individual is much too difficult. Propaganda ceases where simple dialogue begins. And that is why, in particular, experiments undertaken in the United States to gauge the effectiveness of certain propaganda methods or arguments on isolated individuals are not conclusive: they do not reproduce the real propaganda situation. Conversely, propaganda does not aim simply at the mass, the crowd. A propaganda that functioned only where individuals are gathered together would be incomplete and insufficient. Also, any propaganda aimed only at groups as such—as if a mass were a specific body having a soul and reactions and feelings entirely different from individuals' souls, reactions, and feelings—would be an abstract propaganda that likewise would have no effectiveness. Modern propaganda reaches individuals enclosed in the mass and as participants in that mass, yet it also aims at a crowd, but only as a body composed of individuals.

What does this mean? First of all, that the individual never is considered as an individual but always in terms of what he has in common with others, such as his motivation, his feelings, or his myths. He is reduced to an average; and, except for a small percentage, action based on averages will be effectual.

Moreover, the individual is considered part of the mass and included in it (and so far as possible systematically integrated into it), because in that way his psychic defenses are weakened, his reactions are easier to provoke, and the propagandist profits from the process of diffusion of emotions through the mass and, at the same time, from the pressures felt by an individual when in a group. Emotionalism, impulsiveness, excess, etc.—all these characteristics of the individual caught up in a mass are well known and very helpful to propaganda. Therefore, the individual must never be considered as being alone; the listener to a radio broadcast, though actually alone, is nevertheless part of a large group, and he is aware of it. Radio listeners have been found to exhibit a mass mentality. All are tied together and constitute a sort of society in which all individuals are accomplices and influence each other without knowing it. The same holds true for propaganda that is carried on by door-to-door visits (direct contacts, petitions for signatures); although apparently one deals here with a single individual, one deals in reality with a unit submerged into an invisible crowd composed of all those who have been interviewed, who are being interviewed, and who will be interviewed, because they hold similar ideas and live by the same myths, and especially because they are targets of the same organism. Being the target of a party or an administration is enough to immerse the individual in that sector of the population which the propagandist has in his sights; this simple fact makes the individual part of the mass. He is no longer Mr. X, but part of a current flowing in a particular direction. The current flows through the canvasser (who is not a person speaking in his own name with his own arguments, but one segment of an administration, an organization, a collective movement); when he enters a room to canvass a person, the mass, and moreover the organized, leveled mass, enters with him. No relationship exists here between man and man; the organization is what exerts its attraction on an individual already part of a mass because he is in the same sights as all the others being canvassed.

Conversely, when propaganda is addressed to a crowd, it must touch each individual in that crowd, in that whole group. To be effective, it must give the impression of being personal, for we must never forget that the mass is composed of individuals, and is in fact nothing but assembled individuals. Actually, just because men are in a group, and therefore weakened, receptive, and in a state of psychological regression, they pretend all the more to be “strong individuals.” The mass man is clearly subhuman, but pretends to be superman. He is more suggestible, but insists he is more forceful; he is more unstable, but thinks he is firm in his convictions. If one openly treats the mass as a mass, the

individuals who form it will feel themselves belittled and will refuse to participate. If one treats these individuals as children (and they are children because they are in a group), they will not accept their leader's projections or identify with him. They will withdraw and we will not be able to get anything out of them. On the contrary, each one must feel individualized, each must have the impression that *he* is being looked at, that *he* is being addressed personally. Only then will he respond and cease to be anonymous (although in reality remaining anonymous).

Thus all modern propaganda profits from the structure of the mass, but exploits the individual's need for self-affirmation; and the two actions must be conducted jointly, simultaneously. Of course this operation is greatly facilitated by the existence of the modern mass media of communication, which have precisely this remarkable effect of reaching the whole crowd all at once, and yet reaching each one in that crowd. Readers of the evening paper, radio listeners, movie or TV viewers certainly constitute a mass that has an organic existence, although it is diffused and not assembled at one point. These individuals are moved by the same motives, receive the same impulses and impressions, find themselves focused on the same centers of interest, experience the same feelings, have generally the same order of reactions and ideas, participate in the same myths—and all this at the same time: what we have here is really a psychological, if not a biological mass. And the individuals in it are modified by this existence, even if they do not know it. Yet each one is alone—the newspaper reader, the radio listener. He therefore feels himself individually concerned as a person, as a participant. The movie spectator also is alone, though elbow to elbow with his neighbors, he still is, because of the darkness and the hypnotic attraction of the screen, perfectly alone. This is the situation of the “lonely crowd,” or of isolation in the mass, which is a natural product of present-day society and which is both used and deepened by the mass media. The most favorable moment to seize a man and influence him is when he is alone in the mass: it is at this point that propaganda can be most effective.

We must emphasize this circle which we shall meet again and again: the structure of present-day society places the individual where he is most easily reached by propaganda. The media of mass communication, which are part of the technical evolution of this society, deepen this situation while making it possible to reach the individual man, integrated in the mass; and what these media do is exactly what propaganda must do in order to attain its objectives. In reality propaganda cannot exist without using these mass media. If, by chance, propaganda is addressed to an organized group, it can have practically no effect

on individuals before that group has been fragmented. Such fragmentation can be achieved through action, but it is equally possible to fragment a group by psychological means. The transformation of very small groups by purely psychological means is one of the most important techniques of propaganda. Only when very small groups are thus annihilated, when the individual finds no more defenses, no equilibrium, no resistance exercised by the group to which he belongs, does total action by propaganda become possible.

Total Propaganda

Propaganda must be total. The propagandist must utilize all of the technical means at his disposal—the press, radio, TV, movies, posters, meetings, door-to-door canvassing. Modern propaganda must utilize *all* of these media. There is no propaganda as long as one makes use, in sporadic fashion and at random, of a newspaper article here, a poster or a radio program there, organizes a few meetings and lectures, writes a few slogans on walls; that is not propaganda. Each usable medium has its own particular way of penetration—specific, but at the same time localized and limited; by itself it cannot attack the individual, break down his resistance, make his decisions for him. A movie does not play on the same motives, does not produce the same feelings, does not provoke the same reactions as a newspaper. The very fact that the effectiveness of each medium is limited to one particular area clearly shows the necessity of complementing it with other media. A word spoken on the radio is not the same, does not produce the same effect, does not have the same impact as the identical word spoken in private conversation or in a public speech before a large crowd. To draw the individual into the net of propaganda, each technique must be utilized in its own specific way, directed toward producing the effect it can best produce, and fused with all the other media, each of them reaching the individual in a specific fashion and making him react anew to the same theme—in the same direction, but *differently*.

Thus one leaves no part of the intellectual or emotional life alone; man is surrounded on all sides—man and men, for we must also bear in mind that these media do not all reach the same public in the same way. Those who go to the movies three times a week are not the same people who read the newspapers with care. The tools of propaganda are thus oriented in terms of their public and must be used in a concerted fashion to reach the greatest possible number of individuals. For example, the poster is a popular medium for reaching those without automobiles. Radio newscasts are listened to in the better circles. We must note, finally, that each medium includes a third aspect of specialization—

saving for later our analysis of the fact that there are quite diverse forms of propaganda.

[...]

Not only does propaganda seek to invade the whole man, to lead him to adopt a mystical attitude and reach him through all possible psychological channels, but, more, it speaks to all men. Propaganda cannot be satisfied with partial successes, for it does not tolerate discussion; by its very nature, it excludes contradiction and discussion. As long as a noticeable or expressed tension or a conflict of action remains, propaganda cannot be said to have accomplished its aim. It must produce quasi-unanimity, and the opposing faction must become negligible, or in any case cease to be vocal. Extreme propaganda must win over the adversary and at least use him by integrating him into its own frame of reference. ...

[...]

Continuity and Duration of Propaganda

Propaganda must be continuous and lasting—continuous in that it must not leave any gaps, but must fill the citizen's whole day and all his days; lasting in that it must function over a very long period of time. Propaganda tends to make the individual live in a separate world; he must not have outside points of reference. He must not be allowed a moment of meditation or reflection in which to see himself vis-à-vis the propagandist, as happens when the propaganda is not continuous. At that moment the individual emerges from the grip of propaganda. Instead, successful propaganda will occupy every moment of the individual's life: through poster and loudspeakers when he is out walking, through radio and newspapers at home, through meetings and movies in the evening. The individual must not be allowed to recover, to collect himself, to remain untouched by propaganda during any relatively long period, for propaganda is not the touch of the magic wand. It is based on slow, constant impregnation. It creates convictions and compliance through imperceptible influences that are effective only by continuous repetition. It must create a complete environment for the individual, one from which he never emerges. And to prevent him from finding external points of reference, it protects him by censoring everything that might come in from the outside. The slow building up of reflexes and myths, of psychological environment and prejudices, requires propaganda of very long duration. Propaganda is not a stimulus that disappears quickly; it consists of successive impulses and shocks aimed at various feelings or thoughts by means of the many instruments previously mentioned. A relay

system is thus established. Propaganda is a continuous action, without failure or interruption: as soon as the effect of one impulse is weakened, it is renewed by another. At no point does it fail to subject its recipient to its influence. As soon as one effect wears off, it is followed by a new shock.

[...]

Immediately thereafter he will hear the new truth reassessed a hundred times, he will find it explained and proved, and he does not have the strength to fight against it each day on the basis of yesterday's truth. He does not even become fully involved in this battle. *Propaganda* continues its assault without an instant's respite; *his* resistance is fragmentary and sporadic. He is caught up in professional tasks and personal preoccupations, and each time he emerges from them he hears and sees the new truth proclaimed. The steadiness of the propaganda prevails over his sporadic attention and makes him follow all the turns from the time he has begun to eat of this bread.

[...]

What is needed, then, is continuous agitation produced artificially even when nothing in the events of the day justifies or arouses excitement. Therefore, continuing propaganda must slowly create a climate first, and then prevent the individual from noticing a particular propaganda operation in contrast to ordinary daily events.

[...]

Orthopraxy

[...]

Such an action cannot be obtained by the process of choice and deliberation. To be effective, propaganda must constantly short-circuit all thought and decision. It must operate on the individual at the level of the unconscious. He must not know that he is being shaped by outside forces (this is one of the conditions for the success of propaganda), but some central core in him must be reached in order to release the mechanism in the unconscious which will provide the appropriate—and expected—action.

[...]

This is a particular example of a more general problem: the separation of thought and action in our society. We are living in a time when systematically—though without our wanting it so—action and thought are being separated. In our society, he who thinks can no longer act for himself; he must act through the agency of others, and in many cases he cannot act at all. He who acts cannot

first think out his action, either because of lack of time and the burden of his personal problems, or because society's plan demands that he translate others' thoughts into action. And we see the same division within the individual himself. For he can use his mind only outside the area of his job—in order to find himself, to use his leisure to better himself, to discover what best suits him, and thus to individualize himself, whereas in the context of his work he yields to the common necessity, the common method, the need to incorporate his own work into the overall plan. Escape into dreams is suggested to him while he performs wholly mechanized actions.

[...]

For action makes propaganda's effect irreversible. He who acts in obedience to propaganda can never go back. He is now obliged to believe in that propaganda because of his past action. He is obliged to receive from it his justification and authority, without which his action will seem to him absurd or unjust, which would be intolerable. He is obliged to continue to advance in the direction indicated by propaganda, for action demands more action. He is what one calls committed—which is certainly what the Communist party anticipates, for example, and what the Nazis accomplished. The man who has acted in accordance with the existing propaganda has taken his place in society. From then on he has enemies. Often he has broken with his milieu or his family; he may be compromised. He is forced to accept the new milieu and the new friends that propaganda makes for him. Often he has committed an act reprehensible by traditional moral standards and has disturbed a certain order; he needs a justification for this—and he gets more deeply involved by repeating the act in order to prove that it was just. Thus he is caught up in a movement that develops until it totally occupies the breadth of his conscience. Propaganda now masters him completely—and we must bear in mind that any propaganda that does not lead to this kind of participation is mere child's play.

[...]

The essential objective of pre-propaganda is to prepare man for a particular action, to make him sensitive to some influence, to get him into condition for the time when he will effectively, and without delay or hesitation, participate in an action. Seen from this angle, pre-propaganda does not have a precise ideological objective, it has nothing to do with an opinion, an idea, a doctrine. It proceeds by psychological manipulations, by character modifications, by the creation of feelings or stereotypes useful when the time comes. It must be

continuous, slow, imperceptible. Man must be penetrated in order to shape such tendencies. He must be made to live in a certain psychological climate.

The two great routes that this sub-propaganda takes are the conditioned reflex and the myth. Propaganda tries first of all to create conditioned reflexes in the individual by training him so that certain words, signs, or symbols, even certain persons or facts, provoke unflinching reactions. ...

2. Internal Characteristics

Fundamental Currents in Society

Propaganda must not only attach itself to what already exists in the individual, but also express the fundamental currents of the society it seeks to influence. Propaganda must be familiar with collective sociological presuppositions, spontaneous myths, and broad ideologies. By this we do not mean political currents or temporary opinions that will change in a few months, but the fundamental psycho-sociological bases on which a whole society rests, the presuppositions and myths not just of individuals or of particular groups but those shared by all individuals in a society, including men of opposite political inclinations and class loyalties.

A propaganda pitting itself against this fundamental and accepted structure would have no chance of success. Rather, all effective propaganda is based on these fundamental currents and expresses them. Only if it rests on the proper collective beliefs will it be understood and accepted. It is part of a complex of civilization, consisting of material elements, beliefs, ideas, and institutions, and it cannot be separated from them. No propaganda could succeed by going against these structural elements of society. But propaganda's main task clearly is the psychological reflection of these structures.

It seems to us that this reflection is found in two essential forms: the collective sociological presuppositions and the social myths. By presuppositions we mean a collection of feelings, beliefs, and images by which one unconsciously judges events and things without questioning them, or even noticing them. This collection is shared by all who belong to the same society or group. It draws its strength from the fact that it rests on general tacit agreement. ...

It seems to us that there are four great collective sociological presuppositions in the modern world. By this we mean not only the Western world, but all the world that shares a modern technology and is structured into nations, including the Communist world, though not yet the African or Asian worlds. These common presuppositions of bourgeois and proletarian are that man's aim in life

is happiness, that man is naturally good, that history develops in endless progress, and that everything is matter. [...]

CHAPTER 3 THE NECESSITY OF PROPAGANDA

2. The Individual's Necessity

The Subjective Situation

Some psychological characteristics of modern man, partly results of his reality situation, also explain his irrepressible need for propaganda. Most studies on propaganda merely examine how the propagandist can use this or that trait or tendency of a man to influence him. But it seems to us that a prior question needs to be examined: Why does a man involuntarily provoke the propaganda operation?

Without going into the theory of the "mass man" or the "organization man," which is unproven and debatable, let us recall some frequently analyzed traits of the man who lives in the Western world and is plunged into its overcrowded population; let us accept as a premise that he is more susceptible to suggestion, more credulous, more easily excited. Above all he is a victim of emptiness—he is a man devoid of meaning. He is very busy, but he is emotionally empty, open to all entreaties and in search of only one thing—something to fill his inner void. To fill this void he goes to the movies—only a very temporary remedy. He seeks some deeper and more fulfilling attraction. He is *available*, and ready to listen to propaganda. He is the lonely man (The Lonely Crowd), and the larger the crowd in which he lives, the more isolated he is. Despite the pleasure he might derive from his solitude, he suffers deeply from it. He feels the most violent need to be re-integrated into a community, to have a setting, experience ideological and affective communication. That loneliness inside the crowd is perhaps the most terrible ordeal of modern man; that loneliness in which he can share nothing, talk to nobody, and expect nothing from anybody, leads to severe personality disturbances. For it, propaganda, encompassing Human Relations, is an incomparable remedy. It corresponds to the need to share, to be a member of a community, to lose oneself in a group, to embrace a collective ideology that will end loneliness. *Propaganda is the true remedy for loneliness.* It also corresponds to deep and constant needs, more developed today perhaps, than ever before: the need to believe and obey, to create and hear fables, to communicate in the language of myths. It also responds to man's intellectual

sloth and desire for security—intrinsic characteristics of the real man as distinguished from the theoretical man of the Existentialists. All this turns man against information, which cannot satisfy any of these needs, and leads him to crave propaganda, which can satisfy them.

This situation has another aspect. In our society, man is being pushed more and more into passivity. He is thrust into vast organizations which function collectively and in which each man has his own small part to play. But he cannot act on his own; he can act only as the result of somebody else's decision. Man is more and more trained to participate in group movements and to act only on signal and in the way he has been taught. There is training for big and small matters—training for his job, for the driver and the pedestrian, for the consumer, for the moviegoer, for the apartment house dweller, and so on. The consumer gets his signal from the advertiser that the purchase of some product is desirable; the driver learns from the green light that he may proceed. The individual becomes less and less capable of acting by himself; he needs the collective signals which integrate his actions into the complete mechanism. Modern life induces us to wait until we are told to act. Here again propaganda comes to the rescue. To the extent that government can no longer function without the mass (as we have demonstrated above), propaganda is the signal to act, the bridge from the individual's mere *interest* in politics to his political *action*. It serves to overcome collective passivity. It enters into the general current of society, which develops multiple conditioned reflexes, which in turn become signals for man to play his part in the group.

At the same time, the individual feels himself *diminished*. For one thing, he gets the feeling that he is under constant supervision and can never exercise his independent initiative; for another, he thinks he is always being pushed down to a lower level. He is a minor in that he can never act with his full authority. To be sure, we're talking of the average man; obviously a corporation president, high-level administrator, or professional man does not feel diminished, but that fact does not change the general situation. The feeling of being unimportant stems from general working conditions, such as mechanization and regimentation; from housing conditions, with small rooms, noise, and lack of privacy; from family conditions, with loss of authority over children; from submission to an ever-growing number of authorities (no one will ever be able to assess fully the disastrous effect on the human soul of all the bureaus and agencies); in short, from participation in mass society. We know that the individual plunged into the mass experiences a feeling of being reduced and weakened. He loses his human rights and the means to satisfy his ambitions.

The multitudes around him oppress him and give him an unhealthy awareness of his own unimportance. He is drowned in the mass, and becomes convinced that he is only a cipher and that he really cannot be considered otherwise in such a large number of individuals. Urban life gives a feeling of weakness and dependence to the individual: he is dependent on everything—public transportation, the tax-collector, the policeman, his employer, the city's public utilities. Separately, these elements would not affect him, but combined they produce this feeling of diminution in modern man.

But man cannot stand being unimportant; he cannot accept the status of a cipher. He needs to assert himself, to see himself as a hero. He needs to feel he is somebody and to be considered as such. He needs to express his authority, the drive for power and domination that is in every man. Under our present conditions, that instinct is completely frustrated. Though some routes of escape exist—the movies give the viewer a chance to experience self-esteem by identification with the hero, for example—that is not enough. Only propaganda provides the individual with a fully satisfactory response to his profound need.

The more his needs increase in the collective society, the more propaganda must give man the feeling that he is a free individual. Propaganda alone can create this feeling, which, in turn, will integrate the individual into collective movements. Thus, it is a powerful boost to his self-esteem. Though a mass instrument, it addresses itself to each individual. It appeals to *me*. It appeals to *my* common sense, *my* desires, and provokes *my* wrath and *my* indignation. It evokes *my* feelings of justice and *my* desire for freedom. It gives *me* violent feelings, which lift me out of the daily grind. As soon as I have been politicized by propaganda, I can from my heights look down on daily trifles. My boss, who does not share my convictions, is merely a poor fool, a prey to the illusions of an evil world, I take my revenge upon him by being enlightened; I have understood the situation and know what ought to be done; I hold the key to events and am involved in dangerous and exciting activities. This feeling will be all the stronger when propaganda appeals to my decision and seems to be greatly concerned with my action: "Everything is in the clutches of evil. There is a way out. But only if everybody participates. *You* must participate. If you don't, all will be lost, through your fault." This is the feeling that propaganda must generate. My opinion, which society once scorned, now becomes important and decisive. No longer has it importance only for me, but also for the whole range of political affairs and the entire social body. A voter may well feel that his vote has no importance or value. But propaganda demonstrates that the action in which it involves us is of fundamental importance, and that everything depends on me. It

boosts my ego by giving me a strong sense of my responsibility; it leads me to assume a posture of authority among my fellows, makes me take myself seriously by appealing to me in impassioned tones, with total conviction, and gives me the feeling that it's a question of All or Nothing. Thanks to such propaganda, the diminished individual obtains the very satisfaction he needs.

Propaganda in colonial countries plays on this same need of diminished peoples for self-assertion. Africans are even more susceptible to almost any propaganda, because they lived under the guardianship of their colonizers and were reduced to a position of inferiority. But one must not conclude that a feeling of inferiority is to be found only in the oppressed; it is the normal condition of almost every person in a mass society. Also, to the extent that modern man is diminished, he finds himself faced with the almost constant need for repression. Most of his natural tendencies are suppressed by social constraints.

We live in an increasingly organized and ordered society which permits less and less free and spontaneous expression of man's profound drives (which, it must be admitted, would be largely anti-social if completely unleashed). Modern man is tied to a timetable and rarely can act on the spur of the moment; he must pay constant attention to what goes on around him. He cannot make the noise he may want to make; he must obey a growing number of rules of all sorts; he cannot give free reign to his sexual instinct or his inclination to violence. For despite present-day "immorality," of which people complain, contemporary man is much less free in those matters than was the man of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. And in the world of politics, modern man constantly faces obstacles which suppress his tendencies and impulses. But it is impossible to keep the individual in such a situation for long.

The individual who feels himself in conflict with the group, whose personal values are different from those of his milieu, who feels tension toward his society and even toward the group in which he participates—that individual is in a tragic situation *in modern society*. Until recently, such an individual enjoyed a certain freedom, a certain independence, which allowed him to release his tension in external—and quite acceptable—actions. He had a circle of personal activities through which he could express his own values and live out his conflicts. That was the best way of maintaining his equilibrium. But in the technological society, the individual no longer has either the independence or the choice of activities sufficient to release his tensions properly. He is forced to keep them inside himself. Under such conditions the tension becomes extreme and can cause illness. At that very moment propaganda will intervene as the

(fake) instrument for reducing these tensions by external action. To seal all outlets and suppress man in all areas is dangerous. Man needs to express his passions and desires: collective social repression can have the same effect as individual repression, which is the concern of psychoanalysts. Either sublimation or release is necessary. On the collective level, the latter is easier than the former, though some of the most oppressed groups were the most easily led to acts of heroism and sacrifice for the benefit of their oppressors. In the need for release we find some spontaneous expression; surely, jazz is a means, for many young people, of releasing repressed impulses, and so are violent displays (James Dean, black leather jackets, the rebellion in Sweden in 1957, and so on.)

But whereas these possibilities of release are very limited, propaganda offers release on a grand scale. For example, propaganda will permit what so far was prohibited, such as hatred, which is a dangerous and destructive feeling and fought by society. But man always has a certain need to hate, just as he hides in his heart the urge to kill. Propaganda offers him an object of hatred, for all propaganda is aimed at an enemy. And the hatred it offers him is not shameful, evil hatred that he must hide, but a legitimate hatred, which he can justly feel. Moreover, propaganda points out enemies that must be slain, transforming crime into a praiseworthy act. Almost every man feels a desire to kill his neighbor, but this is forbidden, and in most cases the individual will refrain from it for fear of the consequences. But propaganda opens the door and allows him to kill the Jews, the bourgeois, the Communists, and so on, and such murder even becomes an achievement. Similarly, in the nineteenth century, when a man felt like cheating on his wife, or divorcing her, he found this was frowned on. So, at the end of that century a propaganda appeared that legitimized adultery and divorce. In such cases the individual attaches himself passionately to the source of such propaganda, which, for him, provides liberation. Where transgression becomes virtue, the lifter of the ban becomes a hero, a demi-god, and we consecrate ourselves to serve him because he has liberated our repressed passions. A good deal of popular allegiance to the republic and of the failure of Catholicism in France at the end of the nineteenth century can be traced to this battle over adultery and divorce.

Propaganda can also provide release through devious channels. Authoritarian regimes know that people held very firmly in hand need some decompression, some safety valves. The government offers these itself. This role is played by satirical journals attacking the authorities, yet tolerated by the dictator (for example, *Krokodil*), or by a wild holiday set aside for ridiculing the regime, yet paid for by the dictator (for example, the Friday of Sorrows in Guatemala).

Clearly, such instruments are controlled by the regime. They serve the function of giving the people the impression that they are free, and of singling out those about to be purged by the government as guilty of all that the people dislike. Thus these instruments of criticism serve to consolidate power and make people cling even more to the regime by providing artificial release of tendencies that the state must keep in check. In such situations, propaganda has an almost therapeutic and compensatory function.

This role is even more prominent in the presence of another phenomenon: anxiety. Anxiety is perhaps the most widespread psychological trait in our society. Many studies indicate that fear is one of the strongest and most prevalent feelings in our society. Of course, man has good reasons to be afraid—of Communist subversion, revolution, Fascism, H-bombs, conflict between East and West, unemployment, sickness. On the one hand, the number of dangers is increasing and, because of the news media, man is more aware of them; on the other, religious beliefs, which allowed man to face fear, have disappeared almost entirely. Man is disarmed in the face of the perils threatening him, and is increasingly alarmed by these perils because he keeps reading about them. For example, the many medical articles on illnesses in the major papers are disastrous because they attract man's attention to the presence of illness: information provokes fear. This largely explains why the dominant fears in our society are “social” fears, tied to such collective and general phenomena as political situations, much more dominant than such individual fears as those of death or of ghosts. But fear tied to a real threat and of a degree proportionate to that threat is not anxiety. Karen Homey was right in stating that an essential difference between fear and anxiety is that anxiety is a reaction disproportionate to the actual danger or a reaction to an imaginary danger. She was also right in pointing out that anxiety is actually tied to the conditions of our civilization, though the dangers to which a person responds with anxiety may remain hidden from him. The anxiety may be proportionate to the situation, but it still may be experienced for unknown reasons.

With regard to real and conscious threats, a frequent reaction is to expand them with fables. Americans create fables about the Communist peril, just as the Communists create fables about the Fascist peril—and at that moment anxiety sets in. It is tied to rumors, to the fact that the real situation is inaccessible, to the diffuse climate of fear, and to the ricocheting of fear from one person to the next.

However that may be, anxiety exists and spreads. It is irrational, and any attempt to calm it with reason or facts must fail. To demonstrate factually in a

climate of anxiety that the feared danger is much smaller than it is believed to be, only increases anxiety; the information is used to prove that there is reason for fear. Of course, in psychoanalysis anxiety is often regarded as the source of neurosis. But, as we maintain here that anxiety is a collective phenomenon affecting a very large number of individuals in our society, we do not want to say that all these people are neurotics in the clinical sense. Anxiety provoked by social conflicts or political threats rarely goes so far as to cause neurosis. But such a progression is not impossible; we will simply say that individuals find themselves in a situation in which neurosis is a constant possibility. And neurosis can actually become collective when some event throws a whole group into frenzied anxiety or irrational considerations.

Man also feels himself the prey of the hostile impulses of others, another source of anxiety. Besides, he is plunged into conflicts inherent in our society which place him in conflict with himself, or rather place his experiences in conflict with the social imperatives. Karen Homey has described some of these conflicts, but many more exist. Aside from the conflict between the government's proclaimed respect for our needs and their frustration in reality, between the advertised freedom and the real constraints, peace is worshiped in societies that prepare for war, culture is spread that cannot be absorbed, and so on. The experience of contradiction is certainly one of the prevalent experiences in our society. But man cannot endure contradiction; anxiety results, and man struggles to resolve the contradiction in order to dissolve his anxiety.

Finally, as a result of all the threats and contradictions in contemporary society, man feels *accused, guilty*. He cannot feel that he is right and good as long as he is exposed to contradictions, which place him in conflict with one of his group's imperatives no matter which solution he adopts. But one of man's greatest inner needs is to feel that he is right. This need takes several forms. First, man needs to be right in his own eyes. He must be able to assert that he is right, that he does what he should, that he is worthy of his own respect. Then, man needs to be right in the eyes of those around him, his family, his milieu, his co-workers, his friends, his country. Finally, he feels the need to belong to a group, which he considers right and which he can proclaim as just, noble, and good. But that righteousness is not absolute righteousness, true and authentic justice. What matters is not to *be* just, or to *act* just, or that the group to which one belongs *is* just—but to *seem* just, to find reasons for asserting that one is just, and to have these reasons shared by one's audience.

This corresponds to man's refusal to see reality—his own reality first of all—as it is, for that would be intolerable; it also corresponds to his refusal to

acknowledge that he may be wrong. Before himself and others, man is constantly pleading his own case and working to find good reasons for what he does or has done. Of course, the whole process is unconscious.

Such justification corresponds at least partly to what American psychologists call rationalization, *i.e.*, the search for good reasons. But rationalization covers less territory than justification. Rationalization occurs when the individual is prey to the difficulties of social life. The collision with various groups and other individuals provokes tension, conflicts, frustrations, failures, and anxieties for which man has a low tolerance. He tries to avoid all this, but cannot. He therefore gives himself excuses and good reasons for avoiding the disagreeable consequences of such conflicts, or fabricates a conclusion, which explains his failure and gives it the appearance of success (“sour grapes”); or he justifies everything by creating a scapegoat, or justifies his conduct by showing that the other party is to blame (racial prejudice), and so forth. Clearly, the individual believes the reasons he gives, all the more so as these reasons are “good” to the extent that they are shared by a large number of people, if not by everybody. The individual who justifies himself is always scandalized if told that the reasons he gives for his conduct are false, that he has acted for other reasons, and that his explanations are only embroideries to make his conduct acceptable and to win praise for it.

This need seems abnormal. On the individual level, it is often considered pathological, because it shows a dissociation from the self. But in reality this judgment was discarded because of its moral implications, the process involved being nothing other than hypocrisy. It was then concluded that there is nothing pathological in this need—for two reasons. The first is the universality of the phenomenon. Practically everybody justifies himself all the time, to himself and to his group, and it is difficult to call a general attitude pathological. The second is the usefulness of the process: it is generally accepted nowadays that in his psychic life man automatically finds what is useful for him and permits him to exercise “economies.” Justification is undeniably useful. Through justification man not only defends himself against tensions and anxieties, transforming failure into success, but also asserts his sense of right and wrong, justice and injustice. Often a man's true beliefs are revealed only through this channel (justification).

Such hypocrisy has another use: it permits man to cast off some of his inhibitions without having to assert anti-moral or anti-social convictions publicly. Whereas inhibited behavior is damaging to society, an overloud declaration of immoral or asocial convictions is damaging too. Here we

encounter the old problem: Is it better to behave badly and hide it, as in 1900, or to behave badly and advertise it, as in 1960 (taking into account that the man of 1960 uses different justifications)? The process of justification is thus found everywhere because of its great utility.

On the collective level one can say that most ideologies and political or economic theories are justifications. A study by M. Rubel has shown that Marx's rigid and seemingly uncompromising doctrine was one gigantic intellectual justification for sentimental and spontaneous positions taken by him in his youth.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to accept reality as it is and acknowledge the true reasons for our behavior, or to see clearly the motivations of a group to which we belong. If we practice a profession, we cannot limit ourselves to its financial rewards; we must also invest it with idealistic or moral justification. It becomes our calling, and we will not tolerate its being questioned. Even the most pragmatic, such as the Nazis, try to give their action moral or social justification: for example, the concern for maintaining the superiority of the Aryan race justified the sadism of the concentration camps. Even the greatest materialists, such as the Communists, try to justify themselves with ideals: for example, humanitarian interests will justify a certain tactic. In the conflict between necessity and moral or religious imperatives, everybody covers himself with the cloak of rationalization to assert that no conflict exists. When a man obeys necessity, he wants to prove that such is not the case and that he really obeys his conscience. On the day when the draft is introduced, everybody discovers he has a fervent love for his country. On the day when Stalin allies himself with Hitler, the Communists discover the excellence of German Socialism. And on the day when the Hungarian Government forces the Christian Church to make peace propaganda, the Church discovers voluntarily that peace is a Christian virtue.

Obviously, the prodigious universality of justification makes it so effective: the man who justifies himself and unconsciously plays this farce not only believes it himself but also has the need for others to believe it. And, in fact, the others do believe it, because they use the same rationalizations and become accomplices of the play in which they are themselves actors. Justification really attains its effectiveness only on the basis of this complicity, which is so all-pervasive that even those who are the victims of justification go along with it. For example, the racist justifies his prejudice by saying that the "inferior" group is anti-social, immoral, biologically inferior; and in many instances members of the stigmatized group will accept such judgments and experience a feeling of

inferiority that will justify discrimination in their own eyes. That is because they, too, use justifications on other levels.

The tremendous diversity of these personal and collective justifications derives from three sources. First, the traditional explanations transmitted to us by the group to which we belong and instilled in us through school and so forth. For example, the judgment of the worker by the bourgeoisie, which goes back to 1815 and is carefully transmitted from generation to generation: "The worker is a lazy brute and a drunk." Or take France's mission to "spread civilization," used to justify colonialism. Second, there are the rationalizations which we ourselves fabricate spontaneously. These usually deal with our own conduct rather than with that of the group.

What interests us most here is the third type of rationalizations, which are *both* individual and collective, which deal with new situations and unforeseen necessities, and to which traditional solutions do not apply. These rationalizations are the fruit of propaganda. Propaganda attaches itself to man and forces him to play its game because of his overpowering need to be right and just. In every situation propaganda hands him the proof that he, personally, is in the right, that the action demanded of him is just, even if he has the dark, strong feeling that it is not. Propaganda appeases his tensions and resolves his conflicts. It offers facile, ready-made justifications, which are transmitted by society and easily believed. At the same time, propaganda has the freshness and novelty which correspond to new situations and give man the impression of having invented new ideals. It provides man with a high ideal that permits him to give in to his passions while seeming to accomplish a great mission. It is precisely when propaganda furnishes man with these justifications, at once individual and collective, that propaganda is most effective. We are not talking here of a simple explanation but of a more profound rationalization, thanks to which man finds himself in full accord with his group and with society, and fully adjusted to his environment, as well as purged, at the same time, of his pangs of conscience and personal uncertainty.

Man, eager for self-justification, throws himself in the direction of a propaganda that justifies him and thus eliminates one of the sources of his anxiety. Propaganda dissolves contradictions and restores to man a unitary world in which the demands are in accord with the facts. It gives man a clear and simple call to action that takes precedence over all else. It permits him to participate in the world around him without being in conflict with it, because the action he has been called upon to perform will surely remove all obstacles from the path of realizing the proclaimed ideal.

Here, propaganda plays a completely idealistic role, by involving a man caught in the world of reality and making him live by anticipation in a world based on principle. From then on man no longer sees contradiction as a threat to himself or as a distortion of his personality: the contradiction, through propaganda, becomes an active source of conquest and combat. He is no longer alone when trying to solve his conflicts, but is plunged into a collective on the march, which is always “at the point” of solving all conflicts and leading man and his world to a satisfying monism. One is always at the point of finishing the war—in Algeria or Vietnam or the Congo, of overtaking the United States, of repelling the Communist threat, of eliminating all frustrations.

Finally, propaganda also eliminates anxieties stemming from irrational and disproportionate fears, for it gives man assurances equivalent to those formerly given him by religion. It offers him a simple and clear explanation of the world in which he lives—to be sure, a false explanation far removed from reality, but one that is obvious and satisfying. It hands him a key with which he can open all doors; there is no more mystery; everything can be explained, thanks to propaganda. It gives him special glasses through which he can look at present-day history and clearly understand what it means. It hands him a guide line with which he can recover the general line running through all incoherent events. Now the world ceases to be hostile and menacing. The propagandee experiences feelings of mastery over and lucidity toward this menacing and chaotic world, all the more because propaganda provides him with a solution for all threats and a posture to assume in the face of them. Crowds go mad when they no longer know what posture to assume toward a threat. Propaganda provides the perfect posture with which to place the adversary at a disadvantage. There is no question here of reassuring the people or of demonstrating the reality of a situation to them; nothing could upset them more. The point is to excite them, to arouse their sense of power, their desire to assert themselves, and to arm them psychologically so that they can feel superior to the threat. And the man who seeks to escape his strangling anxiety by any means will feel miraculously delivered as soon as he can participate in the campaign mounted by propaganda, as soon as he can dive into this liberating activity, which resolves his inner conflicts by making him think that he is helping to solve those of society.

For all these reasons contemporary man needs propaganda; he asks for it; in fact, he almost instigates it. The development of propaganda is no accident. The politician who uses it is not a monster; he fills a social demand. The propagandee is a close accomplice of the propagandist. Only with the propagandee's unconscious complicity can propaganda fulfill its function; and

because propaganda satisfies him—even if he protests against propaganda in *abstracto*, or considers himself immune to it—he follows its route.

We have demonstrated that propaganda, far from being an accident, performs an indispensable function in society. One always tries to present propaganda as something accidental, unusual, exceptional, connected with such abnormal conditions as wars. True, in such cases propaganda may become sharper and more crystalized, but the roots of propaganda go much deeper. Propaganda is the inevitable result of the various components of the technological society, and plays so central a role in the life of that society that no economic or political development can take place without the influence of its great power. Human Relations in social relationships, advertising or Human Engineering in the economy, propaganda in the strictest sense in the field of politics —the need for psychological influence to spur allegiance and action is everywhere the decisive factor, which progress demands and which the individual seeks in order to be delivered from his own self.

THE RIGHTEOUS MIND

WHY GOOD PEOPLE ARE DIVIDED BY POLITICS AND RELIGION

(Pantheon Books, NY 2012)

By
Jonathan Haidt

PART 1

INTUITIONS COME FIRST, STRATEGIC REASONING SECOND

Chapter 2. The Intuitive Dog and Its Rational Tail

The Rider and the Elephant

It took me years to appreciate fully the implications of Margolis's ideas. Part of the problem was that my thinking was entrenched in a prevalent but useless dichotomy between cognition and emotion. After failing repeatedly to get cognition to act independently of emotion, I began to realize that the dichotomy made no sense. Cognition just refers to information processing, which includes higher cognition (such as conscious reasoning) as well as lower cognition (such as visual perception and memory retrieval).

Emotion is a bit harder to define. Emotions were long thought to be dumb and visceral, but beginning in the 1980s, scientists increasingly recognized that emotions were filled with cognition. Emotions occur in steps, the first of which is to appraise something that just happened based on whether it advanced or hindered your goals. These appraisals are a kind of information processing; they are cognitions. When an appraisal program detects particular input patterns, it launches a set of changes in your brain that prepare you to respond appropriately. For example, if you hear someone running up behind you on a dark street, your fear system detects a threat and triggers your sympathetic nervous system, firing up the fight-or-flight response, cranking up your heart rate, and widening your pupils to help you take in more information.

Emotions are not dumb. Damasio's patients made terrible decisions because they were deprived of emotional input into their decision making. *Emotions are*

a kind of information processing. Contrasting emotion with cognition is therefore as pointless as contrasting rain with weather, or cars with vehicles.

Margolis helped me ditch the emotion-cognition contrast. His work helped me see that *moral judgments is a cognitive process*, as are all forms of judgment. The crucial distinction is really between *two different kinds of cognition*: intuition and reasoning. Moral emotions are one type of moral intuition, but most moral intuitions are more subtle; they don't rise to the level of emotions. The next time you read a newspaper or drive a car, notice the many tiny flashes of condemnation that flit through your consciousness. Is each such flash an emotion? Or ask yourself whether it is better to save the lives of five strangers or one (assuming all else is equal). Do you need an emotion to tell you to go for the five? Do you need reasoning? No, you just see, instantly, that five is better than one. *Intuition* is the best word to describe the dozens or hundreds of rapid, effortless moral judgments and decisions that we all make every day. Only a few of these intuitions come to us embedded in full-blown emotions.

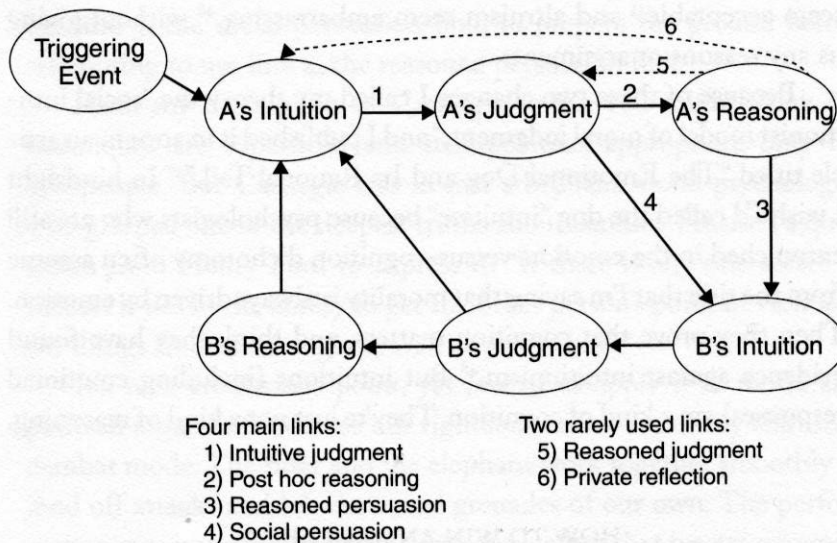
In *The Happiness Hypothesis*, I called these two kinds of cognition the rider (controlled processes, including “reasoning-why”) and the elephant (automatic processes, including emotion, intuition, and all forms of “seeing-that”). I chose an elephant rather than a horse because elephants are so much bigger—and smarter—than horses. Automatic processes run the human mind, just as they have been running animal minds for 500 million years, so they're very good at what they do, like software that has been improved through thousands of product cycles. When human beings evolved the capacity for language and reasoning at some point in the last million years, the brain did not rewire itself to hand over the reins to a new and inexperienced charioteer. Rather, the rider (language—based reasoning) evolved because it did something useful for the elephant.

The rider can do several useful things. It can see further into the future (because we can examine alternative scenarios in our heads) and therefore it can help the elephant make better decisions in the present. It can learn new skills and master new technologies, which can be deployed to help the elephant reach its goals and sidestep disasters. And, most important, the rider acts as the spokesman for the elephant, even though it doesn't necessarily know what the elephant is really thinking. The rider is skilled at fabricating post hoc explanations for whatever the elephant has just done, and it is good at finding reasons to justify whatever the elephant wants to do next. Once human beings developed language and began to use it to gossip about each other, it became

extremely valuable for elephants to carry around on their backs a fulltime public relations firm.

I didn't have the rider and elephant metaphor back in the 1990s, but once I stopped thinking about emotion versus cognition and started thinking about intuition versus reasoning, everything fell into place. I took my old Jeffersonian dual-process model (figure 2.1) and made two big changes. First, I weakened the arrow from reasoning to judgment, demoting it to a dotted line (link 5 in figure 2.4). The dots mean that independently reasoned judgment is possible in theory but rare in practice. This simple change converted the model into a Humean model in which intuition (rather than passion) is the main cause of moral judgment (link 1), and then reasoning typically follows that judgment (link 2) to construct post hoc justifications. Reason is the servant of the intuitions. The rider was put there in the first place to serve the elephant.

I also wanted to capture the *social* nature of moral judgment. Moral talk serves a variety of strategic purposes such as managing your reputation, building alliances, and recruiting bystanders to support your side in the disputes that are so common in daily life. I wanted to go beyond the first judgments people make when they hear some juicy gossip or witness some surprising event. I wanted my model to capture the give-and-take, the round after round of discussion and argumentation that sometimes leads people to change their minds.



We make our first judgments rapidly, and we are dreadful at seeking out evidence that might disconfirm those initial judgments. Yet friends can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves: they can challenge us, giving us reasons and arguments (link 3) that sometimes trigger new intuitions, thereby making it

possible for us to change our minds. We occasionally do this when mulling a problem by ourselves, suddenly seeing things in a new light or from a new perspective (to use two visual metaphors). Link 6 in the model represents this process of private reflection. The line is dotted because this process doesn't seem to happen very often. For most of us, it's not every day or even every month that we change our mind about a moral issue without any prompting from anyone else.

Far more common than such private mind changing is social influence. Other people influence us constantly just by revealing that they like or dislike somebody. That form of influence is link 4, the social persuasion link. Many of us believe that we follow an inner moral compass, but the history of social psychology richly demonstrates that other people exert a powerful force, able to make cruelty seem acceptable and altruism seem embarrassing, without giving us any reasons or arguments.

Because of these two changes I called my theory the “social intuitionist model of moral judgment,” and I published it in 2001 in an article titled “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail.” In hindsight I wish I'd called the dog “intuitive” because psychologists who are still entrenched in the emotion-versus-cognition dichotomy often assume from the title that I'm saying that morality is always driven by emotion. Then they prove that cognition matters, and think they have found evidence against intuitionism. But intuitions (including emotional responses) are a kind of cognition. They're just not a kind of reasoning.

How To Win an Argument

The social intuitionist model offers an explanation of why moral and political arguments are so frustrating: *because moral reasons are the tail wagged by the intuitive dog*. A dog's tail wags to communicate. You can't make a dog happy by forcibly wagging its tail. And you can't change people's minds by utterly refuting their arguments. Hume diagnosed the problem long ago:

And as reasoning is not the source, whence either disputant derives his tenets; it is in vain to expect, that any logic, which speaks not to the affections, will ever engage him to embrace sounder principles.

If you want to change people's minds, you've got to talk to their elephants. You've got to use links 3 and 4 of the social intuitionist model to elicit new intuitions, not new rationales.

Dale Carnegie was one of the greatest elephant-whisperers of all time. In his classic book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Carnegie repeatedly urged readers to avoid direct confrontations. Instead he advised people to “begin in a friendly way,” to “smile,” to “be a good listener,” and to “never say ‘you’re wrong.’” The persuader’s goal should be to convey respect, warmth, and an openness to dialogue before stating one’s own case. Carnegie was urging readers to use link 3, the social persuasion link, to prepare the ground before attempting to use link 4, the reasoned persuasion link.

From my description of Carnegie so far, you might think his techniques are superficial and manipulative, appropriate only for salespeople. But Carnegie was in fact a brilliant moral psychologist who grasped one of the deepest truths about conflict. He used a quotation from Henry Ford to express it: “If there is any one secret of success it lies in the ability to get the other person’s point of view and see things from their angle as well as your own.”

It’s such an obvious point, yet few of us apply it in moral and political arguments because our righteous minds so readily shift into combat mode. The rider and the elephant work together smoothly to fend off attacks and lob rhetorical grenades of our own. The performance may impress our friends and show allies that we are committed members of the team, but no matter how good our logic, it’s not going to change the minds of our opponents if they are in combat mode too. If you really want to change someone’s mind on a moral or political matter, you’ll need to see things from that person’s angle as well as your own. And if you do truly see it the other person’s way—deeply and intuitively—you might even find your own mind opening in response. Empathy is an antidote to righteousness, although it’s very difficult to empathize across a moral divide.

In Sum

People reason and people have moral intuitions (including moral emotions), but what is the relationship among these processes? Plato believed that reason could and should be the master; Jefferson believed that the two processes were equal partners (head and heart) ruling a divided empire; Hume believed that reason was (and was only fit to be) the servant of the passions. In this chapter I tried to show that Hume was right:

- The mind is divided into parts, like a rider (controlled processes) on an elephant (automatic processes). The rider evolved to serve the elephant.
- You can see the rider serving the elephant when people are morally

dumbfounded. They have strong gut feelings about what is right and wrong, and they struggle to construct post hoc justifications for those feelings. Even when the servant (reasoning) comes back empty—handed, the master (intuition) doesn't change his judgment.

- The social intuitionist model starts with Hume's model and makes it more social. Moral reasoning is part of our lifelong struggle to win friends and influence people. That's why I say that “intuitions come first, strategic reasoning second.” You'll misunderstand moral reasoning if you think about it as something people do by themselves in order to figure out the truth.
- Therefore, if you want to change someone's mind about a moral or political issue, *talk to the elephant first*. If you ask people to believe something that violates their intuitions, they will devote their efforts to finding an escape hatch—a reason to doubt your argument or conclusion. They will almost always succeed.

I have tried to use intuitionism while writing this book. My goal is to change the way a diverse group of readers—liberal and conservative, secular and religious—think about morality, politics, religion, and each other. I knew that I had to take things slowly and address myself more to elephants than to riders. I couldn't just lay out the theory in Chapter 1 and then ask readers to reserve judgment until I had presented all of the supporting evidence. Rather, I decided to weave together the history of moral psychology and my own personal story to create a sense of movement from rationalism to intuitionism. I threw in historical anecdotes, quotations from the ancients, and praise of a few visionaries. I set up metaphors (such as the rider and the elephant) that will recur throughout the book. I did these things in order to “tune up” your intuitions about moral psychology. If I have failed and you have a visceral dislike of intuitionism or of me, then no amount of evidence I could present will convince you that intuitionism is correct. But if you now feel an intuitive sense that intuitionism *might* be true, then let's keep going. In the next two chapters I'll address myself more to riders than to elephants.

Chapter 3. Elephants Rule

On February 3, 2007, shortly before lunch, I discovered that I was a chronic liar. I was at home, writing a review article on moral psychology, when my wife, Jayne, walked by my desk. In passing, she asked me not to leave dirty dishes on

the counter where she prepared our baby's food. Her request was polite but its tone added a postscript: "As I have asked you a hundred times before."

My mouth started moving before hers had stopped. Words came out. Those words linked themselves up to say something about the baby having woken up at the same time that our elderly dog barked to ask for a walk and I'm sorry but I just put my breakfast dishes down wherever I could. In my family, caring for a hungry baby and an incontinent dog is a surefire excuse, so I was acquitted.

Jayne left the room and I continued working. I was writing about the three basic principles of moral psychology. The first principle is *Intuitions come first, strategic reasoning second*. That's a six-word summary of the social intuitionist model. To illustrate the principle, I described a study I did with Thalia Wheatley, who is now a professor at Dartmouth College. Back when Thalia was a grad student at UVA, she had learned how to hypnotize people, and she came up with a clever way to test the social intuitionist model. Thalia hypnotized people to feel a flash of disgust whenever they saw a certain word (*take* for half of the subjects; *often* for the others). While they were still in a trance Thalia instructed them that they would not be able to remember anything she had told them, and then she brought them out of the trance.

Once they were fully awake, we asked them to fill out a questionnaire packet in which they had to judge six short stories about moral violations. For each story, half of the subjects read a version that had their hypnotic code word embedded in it. For example, one story was about a congressman who claims to fight corruption, yet "takes bribes from the tobacco lobby." The other subjects read a version that was identical except for a few words (the congressman is "often bribed by the tobacco lobby"). On average, subjects judged each of the six stories to be more disgusting and morally wrong when their code word was embedded in the story. That supported the social intuitionist model. By giving people a little artificial flash of negativity while they were reading the story, without giving them any new information, we made their moral judgments more severe.

The real surprise, though, came with a seventh story we tacked on almost as an afterthought, a story that contained no moral violation of any kind. It was about a student council president named Dan who is in charge of scheduling discussions between students and faculty. Half of our subjects read that Dan "tries to take topics that appeal to both professors and students in order to stimulate discussion." The other half read the same story except that Dan "often picks topics" that appeal to professors and students. We added this story to

demonstrate that there is a limit to the power of intuition. We predicted that subjects who felt a flash of disgust while reading this story would *have* to overrule their gut feelings. To condemn Dan would be bizarre.

Most of our subjects did indeed say that Dan's actions were fine. But a third of the subjects who had found their code word in the story still followed their gut feelings and condemned Dan. They said that what he did was wrong, sometimes very wrong. Fortunately, we had asked everyone to write a sentence or two explaining their judgments, and we found gems such as “Dan is a popularity-seeking snob” and “I don't know, it just seems like he's up to something.” These subjects made up absurd reasons to justify judgments that they had made on the basis of gut feelings—feelings Thalia had implanted with hypnosis.

So there I was at my desk, writing about how people automatically fabricate justifications of their gut feelings, when suddenly I realized that I had just done the same thing with my wife. I disliked being criticized, and I had felt a flash of negativity by the time Jayne had gotten to her third word (“*Can you not . . .*”). Even before I knew why she was criticizing me, I knew I disagreed with her (because intuitions come first). The instant I knew the content of the criticism (“. . . *leave the dirty dishes on the . . .*”), my inner lawyer went to work searching for an excuse (strategic reasoning second). It's true that I had eaten breakfast, given Max his first bottle, and let Andy out for his first walk, but these events had all happened at separate times.

Only when my wife criticized me did I merge them into a composite image of a harried father with too few hands, and I created this fabrication by the time she had completed her one-sentence criticism (“. . . *counter where I make baby food?*”). I then lied so quickly and convincingly that my wife and I both believed me.

I had long teased my wife for altering stories to make them more dramatic when she told them to friends, but it took twenty years of studying moral psychology to see that I altered my stories too. I finally understood—not just cerebrally but intuitively and with an open heart—the admonitions of sages from so many eras and cultures warning us about self-righteousness. I've already quoted Jesus (on seeing “the speck in your neighbor's eye”). Here's the same idea from Buddha:

It is easy to see the faults of others, but difficult to see one's own faults. One shows the faults of others like chaff winnowed in the wind, but one conceals one's own faults as a cunning gambler conceals his dice.

Jesus and Buddha were right, and in this chapter and the next one I'll show you how our automatic self-righteousness works. It begins with rapid and compelling intuitions (that's link 1 in the social intuitionist model), and it continues on with post hoc reasoning, done for socially strategic purposes (links 2 and 3). Here are six major research findings that collectively illustrate the first half of the first principle: *Intuitions Come First*. (In the next chapter I'll give evidence for the second half—*Strategic Reasoning Second*). Elephants rule, although they are sometimes open to persuasion by riders.

1. *Brains Evaluate Instantly and Constantly*

Brains evaluate everything in terms of potential threat or benefit to the self, and then adjust behavior to get more of the good stuff and less of the bad. Animal brains make such appraisals thousands of times a day with no need for conscious reasoning, all in order to optimize the brain's answer to the fundamental question of animal life: Approach or avoid?

In the 1890s Wilhelm Wundt, the founder of experimental psychology, formulated the doctrine of “affective primacy. *Affect* refers to small flashes of positive or negative feeling that prepare us to approach or avoid something. Every emotion (such as happiness or disgust) includes an affective reaction, but most of our affective reactions are too fleeting to be called emotions (for example, the subtle feelings you get just from reading the words *happiness and disgust*).

Wundt said that affective reactions are so tightly integrated with perception that we find ourselves liking or disliking something the instant we notice it, sometimes even before we know what it is.” These flashes occur so rapidly that they precede all other thoughts about the thing we're looking at. You can feel affective primacy in action the next time you run into someone you haven't seen in many years. You'll usually know within a second or two whether you liked or disliked the person, but it can take much longer to remember who the person is or how you know each other.

In 1980 social psychologist Robert Zajonc (the name rhymes with “science”) revived Wundt's long-forgotten notion of affective primacy. Zajonc was fed up with the common view among psychologists at the time that people are cool,

rational information processors who first perceive and categorize objects and then react to them. He did a number of ingenious experiments that asked people to rate arbitrary things such as Japanese pictograms, words in a made-up language, and geometric shapes. It may seem odd to ask people to rate how much they like foreign words and meaningless squiggles, but people can do it because almost *everything* we look at triggers a tiny flash of affect. More important, Zajonc was able to make people like any word or image more just by showing it to them several times. The brain tags familiar things as good things. Zajonc called this the “mere exposure effect,” and it is a basic principle of advertising.

In a landmark article, Zajonc urged psychologists to use a dual process model in which affect or “feeling” is the first process. It has primacy both because it happens first (it is part of perception and is therefore extremely fast) and because it is more powerful (it is closely linked to motivation, and therefore it strongly influences behavior). The second process—thinking—is an evolutionarily newer ability, rooted in language and not closely related to motivation. In other words, thinking is the rider; affect is the elephant. The thinking system is not equipped to lead—it simply doesn’t have the power to make things happen—but it can be a useful advisor.

Zajonc said that thinking could work independently of feeling in theory, but in practice affective reactions are so fast and compelling that they act like blinders on a horse: they “reduce the universe of alternatives” available to later thinking.” The rider is an attentive servant, always trying to anticipate the elephant’s next move. If the elephant leans even slightly to the left, as though preparing to take a step, the rider looks to the left and starts preparing to assist the elephant on its imminent leftward journey. The rider loses interest in everything off to the right.

Social and Political Judgments Are Particularly Intuitive

Here are four pairs of words. Your job is to look only at the second word in each pair and then categorize it as good or bad:

flower—happiness

hate—sunshine

love—cancer

cockroach—lonely

It’s absurdly easy, but imagine if I asked you to do it on a computer, where I can flash the first word in each pair for 250 milliseconds (a quarter of a second,

just long enough to read it) and then I immediately display the second word. In that case we'd find that it takes you longer to make your value judgment for *sunshine* and *cancer* than for *happiness* and *lonely*.

This effect is called “affective priming” because the first word triggers a flash of affect that primes the mind to go one way or the other. It's like getting the elephant to lean slightly to the right or the left, in anticipation of walking to the right or the left. The Hash kicks in within zoo milliseconds, and it lasts for about a second beyond that if there's no other jolt to back it up. If you see the second word within that brief window of time, and if the second word has the same valence, then you'll be able to respond extra quickly because your mind is already leaning that way. But if the first word primes your mind for a negative evaluation (*hate*) and I then show you a positive word (*sunshine*), it'll take you about 250 milliseconds longer to respond because you have to undo the lean toward negativity.

So far this is just a confirmation of Zajonc's theory about the speed and ubiquity of affect, but a big payoff came when social psychologists began using *social groups* as primes. Would it affect your response speed if I used photographs of black people and white people as the primes? As long as you're not prejudiced, it won't affect your reaction times. But if you do prejudge people implicitly (i.e., automatically and unconsciously), then those prejudgments include affective flashes, and those flashes will change your reaction times.

The most widely used measure of these implicit attitudes is the Implicit Association Test (IAT), developed by Tony Greenwald, Mahzarin Banaji, and my UVA colleague Brian Nosek. You can take the IAT yourself at ProjectImplicit.org. But be forewarned: it can be disturbing. You can actually feel yourself moving more slowly when you are asked to associate good things with the faces of one race rather than another. You can watch as your implicit attitude contradicts your explicit values. Most people turn out to have negative implicit associations with many social groups, such as black people, immigrants, obese people, and the elderly.

And if the elephant tends to lean away from groups such as the elderly (whom few would condemn morally), then we should certainly expect some leaning (prejudging) when people think about their political enemies. To look for such effects, my UVA colleague Jamie Morris measured the brain waves of liberals and conservatives as they read politically loaded words. He replaced the words *flower* and *hate* in the above example with words such as *Clinton*, *Bush*, *flag*, *taxes*, *welfare*, and *pro-life*. When partisans read these words, followed

immediately by words that everyone agrees are good (*sunshine*) or bad (*cancer*), their brains sometimes revealed a conflict. *Pro-life* and *sunshine* were affectively incongruous for liberals, just as *Clinton* and *sunshine* were for conservatives. The words *pro* and *life* are both positive on their own, but part of what it means to be a partisan is that you have acquired the right set of intuitive reactions to hundreds of words and phrases. Your elephant knows which way to lean in response to terms such as *pro-life*, and as your elephant sways back and forth throughout the day, you find yourself liking and trusting the people around you who sway in sync with you.

The intuitive nature of political judgments is even more striking in the work of Alex Todorov, at Princeton. Todorov studies how we form impressions of people. When he began his work, there was already a lot of research showing that we judge attractive people to be smarter and more virtuous, and we are more likely to give a pretty face the benefit of any doubt. Juries are more likely to acquit attractive defendants, and when beautiful people are convicted, judges give them lighter sentences, on average. That's normal affective primacy making everyone lean toward the defendant, which tips off their riders to interpret the evidence in a way that will support the elephant's desire to acquit.

But Todorov found that there was more going on than just attractiveness. He collected photographs of the winners and runners-up in hundreds of elections for the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. He showed people the pairs of photographs from each contest with no information about political party, and he asked them to pick which person seemed more competent. He found that the candidate that people judged more competent was the one who actually won the race about two-thirds of the time. People's snap judgments of the candidates' physical attractiveness and overall likability were not as good predictors of victory, so these competence judgments were not just based on an overall feeling of positivity. We can have multiple intuitions arising simultaneously, each one processing a different kind of information.

And strangely, when Todorov forced people to make their competence judgments after flashing the pair of pictures on the screen for just a *tenth of a second*—not long enough to let their eyes fixate on each image—their snap judgments of competence predicted the real outcomes just as well. Whatever the brain is doing, it's doing it instantly, just like when you look at the Muller-Lyer illusion.

The bottom line is that human minds, like animal minds, are constantly reacting intuitively to everything they perceive, and basing their responses on

those reactions. Within the first second of seeing, hearing, or meeting another person, the elephant has already begun to lean toward or away, and that lean influences what you think and do next. Intuitions come first.

Our Bodies Guide Our Judgments

One way to reach the elephant is through its trunk. The olfactory nerve carries signals about odors to the insular cortex (the insula), a region along the bottom surface of the frontal part of the brain. This part of the brain used to be known as the “gustatory cortex” because in all mammals it processes information from the nose and the tongue. It helps guide the animal toward the right foods and away from the wrong ones. But in humans, this ancient food—processing center has taken on new duties, and it now guides our taste in people. It gets more active when we see something morally fishy, particularly something disgusting, as well as garden-variety unfairness. If we had some sort of tiny electrode that could be threaded up through people's noses and into their insulas, we could then control their elephants, making them steer away from whatever they were viewing at the moment when we pressed the button. We've got such an electrode. It's called fart spray.

Alex Jordan, a grad student at Stanford, came up with the idea of asking people to make moral judgments while he secretly tripped their disgust alarms. He stood at a pedestrian intersection on the Stanford campus and asked passersby to fill out a short survey. It asked people to make judgments about four controversial issues, such as marriage between first cousins, or a film studio's decision to release a documentary with a director who had tricked some people into being interviewed.

Alex stood right next to a trash can he had emptied. Before he recruited each subject, he put a new plastic liner into the metal can. Before half of the people walked up (and before they could see him), he sprayed the fart spray twice into the bag, which “perfumed” the whole intersection for a few minutes. Before other recruitments, he left the empty bag unsprayed.

Sure enough, people made harsher judgments when they were breathing in foul air. Other researchers have found the same effect by asking subjects to fill out questionnaires after drinking bitter versus sweet drinks. As my UVA colleague Jerry Clore puts it, we use “affect as information.” When we're trying to decide what we think about something, we look inward, at how we're feeling. If I'm feeling good, I must like it, and if I'm feeling anything unpleasant, that must mean I don't like it.

You don't even need to trigger feelings of disgust to get these effects. Simply washing your hands will do it. Chenbo Zhong at the University of Toronto has shown that subjects who are asked to wash their hands with soap before filling out questionnaires become more moralistic about issues related to moral purity (such as pornography and drug use). Once you're clean, you want to keep dirty things far away.

Zhong has also shown the reverse process: immorality makes people want to get clean. People who are asked to recall their own moral transgressions, or merely to copy by hand an account of someone else's moral transgression, find themselves thinking about cleanliness more often, and wanting more strongly to cleanse themselves. They are more likely to select hand wipes and other cleaning products when given a choice of consumer products to take home with them after the experiment. Zhong calls this the Macbeth effect, named for Lady Macbeth's obsession with water and cleansing after she goads her husband into murdering King Duncan. (She goes from "A little water clears us of this deed" to "Out, damn'd spot! out, I say!")

In other words, there's a two-way street between our bodies and our righteous minds. Immorality makes us feel physically dirty, and cleansing ourselves can sometimes make us more concerned about guarding our moral purity. In one of the most bizarre demonstrations of this effect, Eric Helzer and David Pizarro asked students at Cornell University to fill out surveys about their political attitudes while standing near (or far from) a hand sanitizer dispenser. Those told to stand near the sanitizer became temporarily more conservative.

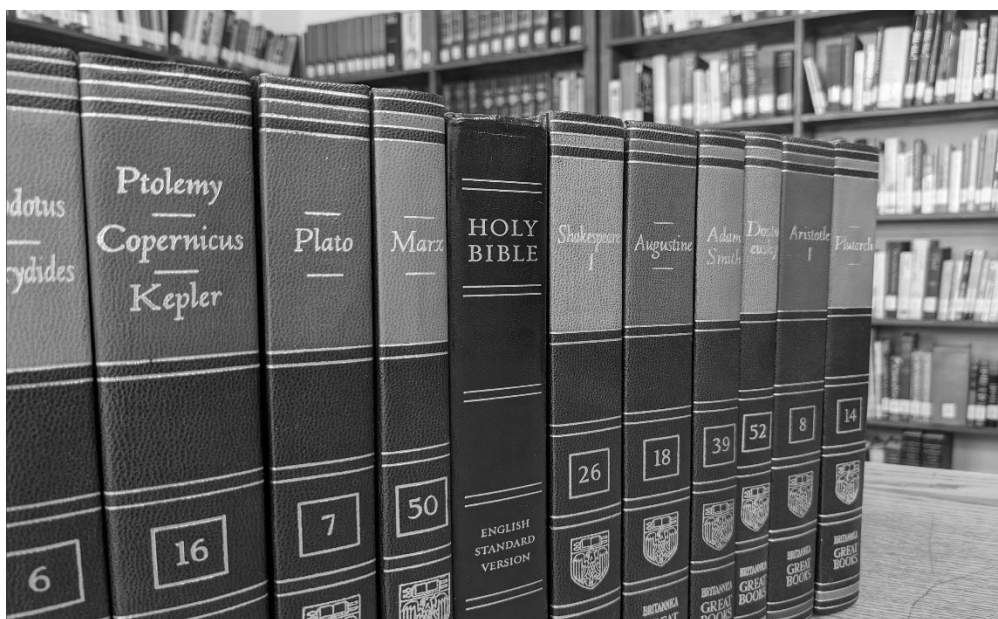
Moral judgment is not a purely cerebral affair in which we weigh concerns about harm, rights, and justice. It's a kind of rapid, automatic process more akin to the judgments animals make as they move through the world, feeling themselves drawn toward or away from various things. Moral judgment is mostly done by the elephant.

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