

Unleashing Individualism

Self-expression, a new concept developed in the early 1920's, is the result of Edward Bernays' propaganda. As exemplified in the video "The Century Of The Self" Bernays strived to manipulate the masses by making it socially acceptable to use personal feelings to make purchases. Bernays eliminated factual selling techniques and implemented persuasion. He separated the barrier between the conscious and unconscious mind allowing the masses to have a desire for impulse purchases. During Bernays' era, women did not smoke in public. This taboo became Bernays' first, and most dramatic experiment. Popularity was in Bernays' favor when women were witnessed smoking by the press during the Easter Day Parade in New York. This was possible due to his creative persuasion. Bernays reputation and wealth grew as various corporations requested his assistance. After the war, the term Public Relations was born as a way to separate his intentions from the unwelcomed post-war idea of propaganda. Bernays was finally able to work with the public in ways that the world had yet to see. The power of Bernays' Public Relations evokes self-motivation for humans to achieve the highest standard of living. Humans are not animals of reason but that of emotion, therefore their reactions merely based on feelings.

Edward Bernays created the basis of a concept that was later published in the 1980's. The Two-Way Symmetric model of Public Relations illustrates the necessity for understanding the public, or as Bernays described it, the masses. Bernays was exceptionally good at knowing how the public would react to any given situation. The Two-Way Symmetric model explains that research is used to understand how the public

perceives the organization and to then determine the consequences the organization may experience through various actions (p. 57).

Although though some strategies may have altered, Public Relations as a concept that remained consistent. Richard Edelman, CEO of Edelman Worldwide comments, "Public engagement is a reflection of public relations" (p. 36). Not only is this statement relative in the present, it is virtually identical to Edward Bernays' era. Engaging the public, or the masses, by giving them the ability to make decisions solely on emotion is the basis of Public Relations. This concept began in the 1920's and continues to be the structure of today's world. This idea parallels Coca Cola's intentions in their past commercial entitled "Have You Ever Asked Yourself Who Will Go To Your Funeral?". The underlying selling technique that Coca Cola used in this commercial was to appeal to generation X, those that did not wasn't to use their parent's products. Coca Cola utilized individualism within the commercial by engaging all types of people into the cheerful funeral parade. Coca Cola was not sold to generation X by factual statements but by the underlying message that this product will bring joy to all individuals regardless of their character. This emotional technique stemmed from Edward Bernays' early concepts of propaganda and is still relative in today's environment.

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