I. Manufacturing Consent

“The study of society (social theory) could be a tool by which a technocratic elite could establish social control and serve the interests of vested power.”

A. Origin of the Term

1. Walter Lippmann

2. Edward Bernays

B. Walter Lippmann “Public Opinion”

1. Influence: Le Bon, Comte, Tarde
2. “democratic realist” = “democracy for the few, by the few, and of the few”
3. Mass democracy

i. average individual

thought process: common fictions

content: euphemisms, platitutes

ii. governance

scientific elite

“bureau of experts”

make policy decisions

iii. social control

“manufacture consent”

“understanding and controlling subjective life

of the public”

iv. means: mass media

“Mass media as a mechanism could shape and control public discourse in ways that surpassed even the coercive powers of the state.”

C. Edward Bernays (Public Relations meet Political Theory)

1. Edward Bernays: “Propaganda” “The Engineering of Consent”

a. Father of public relations

b. Le Bon

c. Bernays and Lippmann

2. Techniques of PR/Propaganda

a. appeals to unconscious: emotions, dreams, values

b. third person technique

i. front groups

ii. experts

iii. think tanks

c. focus groups

d. media “events”

C. Politics and PR: WWI and the Manufacture of Consent

1. WWI and U.S. Public Opinion

2. Creel Commission or Committee on Public Information

3. Goals

4. Means

5. Success

D. Politics and PR: Gulf Wars and the Manufacturing of Consent

1. Nayirah

a. “the story”

b. media events

c. Nayirah

d. focus groups

2. Weapons of Mass Destruction

a. “the story”

b. third person: anonymous sources

c. media events: Colin Powell

3. Saving Pvt Lynch

a. “the story”

b. third person: anonymous sources

c. media events: Combat Camera

4. Saddam’s Statue

a. “the story”

b. psychological operations aka PsyOps

1. third person