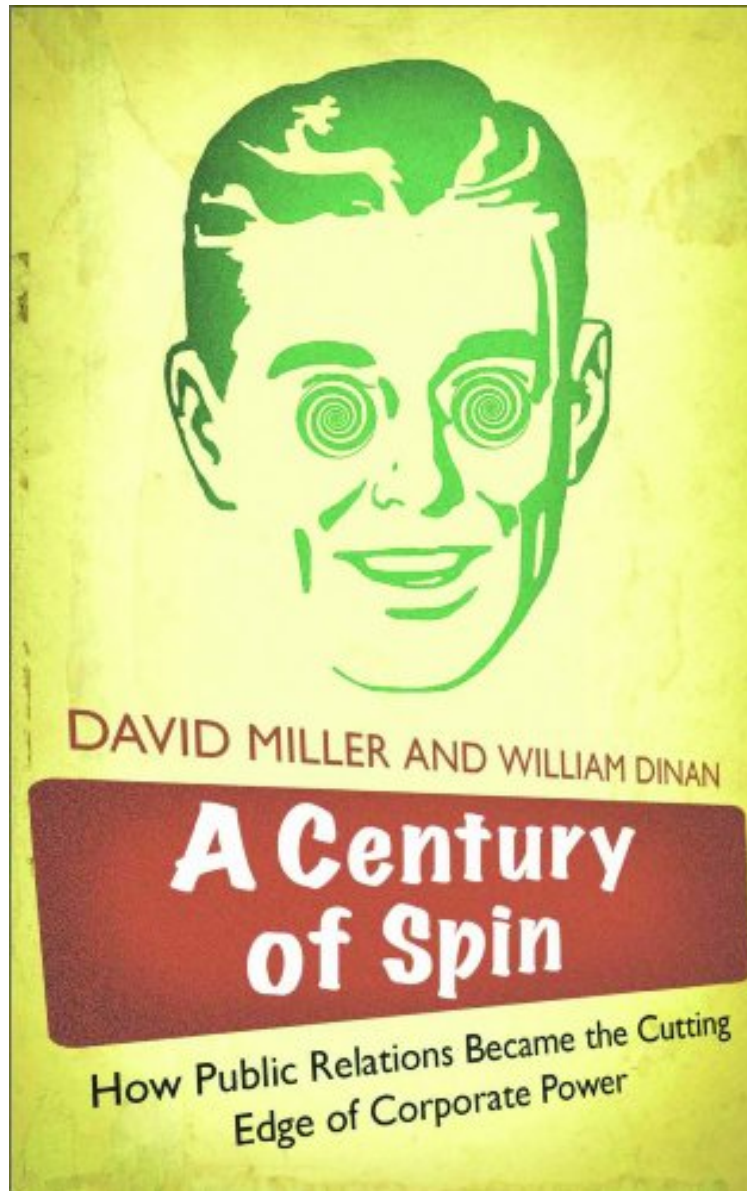


[Download] A Century of Spin: How Public Relations Became the Cutting Edge of Corporate Power

A Century of Spin: How Public Relations Became the Cutting Edge of Corporate Power

David Miller

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David Miller : A Century of Spin: How Public Relations Became the Cutting Edge of Corporate Power before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Century of Spin: How Public Relations Became the Cutting Edge of Corporate Power:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Enemies of Democracy By S Wood The fact that a good many

countries, including all western countries, are ostensibly Democratic is a great source of legitimisation for our system of governance. There is much complacent back slapping around this issue, especially by those few in places of power in our country, those who can accurately be described as an Elite. Spinwatch website founders David Miller and William Dinan in their book "A Century of Spin: How Public Relations Became the Cutting Edge of Corporate Power" have cast some light on the reality of our Democratic system, with a particular focus on the Public Relations Industry of large Corporations and their influence on our Governments. The first half of the book is an excellent introduction to the History of Public Relations, itself a PR term for propaganda which was routinely used by the industry at its foundation until that term became pejorative especially after its systematic use by the Nazi regime in Germany (1933-45). It primarily focuses on the British and American experience which coalesced into an business after World War One and in which an astonishing amount of Military intelligence types were involved. PR was used by both Governments and Business in a systematic manner, the authors are particularly interesting on its use in Strike breaking and Union busting where in America the PR was backed up by violence at quite horrific levels in a number of cases. The Nazis were particularly impressed by the Allies propaganda during the World War One, studied it closely, consulted with American PR figures including one time PR guru for Rockefeller Ivy Lee who met with Goebbels. The second half of the book details the post World War Two experience. Public Relations gradually becomes an integral part of the structure of large Corporations, the function of lobbying and the funding of think tanks grows in scope and sophistication. The authors make a strong case for the attempt by Corporations to frame the policy agenda in favour of Corporations, form relations with the elected representatives of the countries they operate in, sponsoring groups and movements that conform with their interests. That these corporations have had a great deal of success in these efforts throws a shadow over the complacent celebrators of our Democratic superiority. There are particularly interesting accounts of the role of Corporations in the funding of the by now ubiquitous think tanks, organisations for the cosy networking of Politicians, Civil Servants and Businessmen from across the western world and the lobbying of politicians of whatever hue. The Labour party in its "New Labour" reincarnation (which is looking at the moment rather like a death mask) is served up as a particularly pungent case study of the PR industry at work. A left wing Party that around 25 years ago had a mass membership of active and vocal members which if not over the million mark the party claimed was certainly into the high hundreds of thousands has been turned into a party with a far smaller membership, where the main constituency appears to be the Corporate sector with the employees of PR firms litter every area of Government and the party itself. There is no way I can write a review to do adequate justice to Miller and Dinans book. It may be a short at 180 pages but there is more information in it, presented in a clear and crisp prose, than books three times the size. The primary focus of the text is the PR industry which is the facet of the Corporate sector which is closest to Government, indeed the two are often manned by the same people even occasionally at the same time. The industry on behalf and in the interest of its paymasters works to limit Democracy from below and this book lays the whole process before the reader with astonishing clarity. Totally recommended to anyone who is serious about Democracy and I'm looking forward to reading their other collaborative effort Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy: Corporate PR and the Assault on Democracy. Other books worth reading that cover similar issues from a different angle include Nick Davies Flat Earth News: An Award-winning Reporter Exposes Falsehood, Distortion and Propaganda in the Global Media, Noam Chomskys Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media and Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies (Pluto classic) and John Stauber and Sheldon Ramptons many books including Toxic Sludge is Good for You!: Lies, Damn Lies and the Public Relations Industry.

This book charts the relentless rise of the public relations industry and how it has transformed our society. Revealing the roots of the PR movement in the years leading up to the First World War, it shows how it became a key tool in the struggle to subordinate democracy to corporate rule. It is the first book to offer a history of the emergence of corporate propaganda on both sides of the Atlantic during the 20th century. The authors show how the origins of PR were always covertly political. Spin has been around for a long time and its anti-democratic potential is well known to all those who have made use of it. Based on extensive use of original archival material, the book presents a clear chronology of PR's development, culminating with a detailed examination of Gordon Brown and David Cameron's use of spin and how it relates to their connections with big business.

'Of all the transcendent powers that shape our modern lives, propaganda is the most powerful and insidious. This brilliant, original book reveals the secret truth about so-called public relations and should be required reading on every curriculum' -- John Pilger
About the Author David Miller is Professor of Sociology in the Department of Geography and Sociology at the University of Strathclyde. He has previously edited Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy (2007), Arguments Against G8 (2005) and Tell Me Lies: Propaganda and Media Distortion in the Attack on Iraq (2003) for Pluto Press. William Dinan is Lecturer in Sociology in the Department of Geography and Sociology at Strathclyde University, specialising in corporate PR and lobbying. He is the co-editor of Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy (2007). Both

David and William are co-founders of Spinwatch.