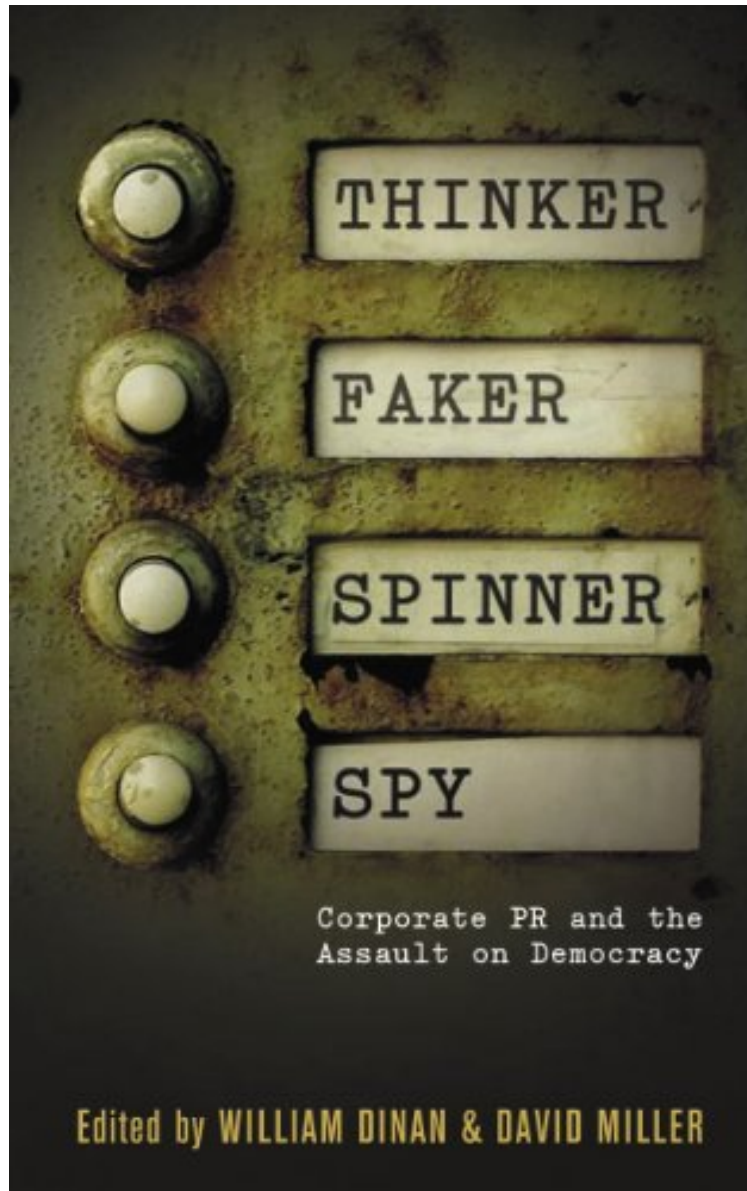


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Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy: Corporate PR and the Assault on Democracy

David Miller, William Dinan

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David Miller, William Dinan : Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy: Corporate PR and the Assault on Democracy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy: Corporate PR and the Assault on Democracy:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. very academic readBy IvanThe book is wordy, and very academic. It

you can wade through that, it does have interesting ideas. Also, I appreciate the extensive list of footnotes, which I enjoy because I like to see source materials. The ideas presented in the book are positively scary!! This book won't promote your trust in government. 2 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Some useful insights, especially about the EU's spinners. By William Podmore. Dinan and Miller are sociologists at Strathclyde University. This collection of essays is by 16 academics and journalists, 11 British, one Australian, two Dutch, one German and one American. They look at the context and role of spin, corporate spin by oil firms, biotechnology firms and food firms, various networks of influences - the US empire, the EU, the Stock Exchange, the Labour Party, and finally at how to counter spin. PR is largely by and for corporations, using deception, subverting debate, its 'ethical' activities subordinated to corporate strategy, and with a key role in the Thatcherite counter-revolution. PR businesses' annual turnover is pound;6.5 billion. Four corporations own more than half the global market in advertising, marketing, PR and lobbying. They use front groups, third party advocates and celebrities. Aeron Davis looks at the special case of financial PR, where the Stock Market sells stocks, and itself, yet investors would have been better off putting their money in a high interest bank account. Other essays explore the EU's attack on public service broadcasting and study the pro-US, pro-EU, pro-capitalist group Demos. An excellent piece by Olivier Hoedeman tells us that the EU has more than 15,000 full-time lobbyists, over 70% representing corporations, the EU's substitute for democratic input. LibDem leader Nick Clegg is with the lobbying firm GPlus Europe. His rival Chris Huhne is a member of the European Parliamentary Financial Services Forum which lobbies for the big banks; it weakened EU laws against funding terrorism and money-laundering. Neoliberal hardliner Peter Mandelson supports the European Services Forum, a lobby of European services firms set up in 1999 by the European Commission to get the World Trade Organisation to privatise public services and open up economies across the world. The employers' federation UNICE and the European Round Table, composed of the CEOs of Europe's 45 largest firms, have stopped all social initiatives until the EU has become the world's most competitive economic bloc. In 2004, the EU agreed to introduce 'business impact assessments' for all EU policies. Gerald Sussman has a useful piece on US and EU 'democratic assistance' to Russia, Ukraine, Georgia and the Czech Republic, openly backing Yeltsin, Yushchenko, Saakashvili and Havel, interfering in sovereign states' internal affairs. But the collection also includes some quite wrong-headed essays like Andy Rowell's piece on what he calls 'anti-climate activity'. And the presence of PR does not automatically devalue what is being promoted. PR for the MMR vaccine does not make it unsafe, or mean that it is unsafe; the same goes for nuclear power and GM foods. Too many of the contributors seem to oppose science, industry, pesticides, nuclear power and GM foods.

-- This book unmasks the covert and undemocratic world of corporate spin -- 'Corporate Spin is one of the great toxins of democracy and a free society. This is a foundational book to educate us about this sleazy realm and equip us to do battle with it.' Robert W. McChesney, author of 'Communication Revolution: Critical Junctures and the Future of Media' 'Essential reading for anyone concerned with the rise of corporate power and with seeing the world as it really is.' Mark Curtis, journalist and author of 'Unpeople: Britain's Secret Human Rights Abuses' The public relations industry is not just about celebrity gossip. This book shows how, whenever big business is threatened, spin doctors, lobbyists, think tanks and front groups are on hand to push the corporate interest, often at the public's expense. Written by leading activists and writers, this book reveals the secrets of the PR trade including deception, the use of fake 'institutes', spying and dirty tricks. The impact can be devastating -- when the public is denied access to the truth, the results are rising inequality and environmental catastrophe. The authors expose the misdeeds of famous companies including Coca Cola, British Aerospace, Exxon and Monsanto. They also reveal startling new information about the covert funding of various apparently independent think tanks and institutes. What can we do about it? The authors offer a guide to campaigns that can help us roll back corporate power and resist deceptive PR. Published in association with Spinwatch (www.spinwatch.org).

'Corporate spin is one of the great toxins of democracy and a free society. Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy is a foundational book to educate us about this sleazy realm and equip us to do battle with it' -- Robert W. McChesney, author, Communication Revolution: Critical Junctures and the Future of Media 'Essential reading for anyone concerned with the rise of corporate power and with seeing the world as it really is' -- Mark Curtis, journalist and author of 'Unpeople: Britain's Secret Human Rights Abuses' (2007) About the Author William Dinan is Lecturer in Sociology in the Department of Geography and Sociology at Strathclyde University, specialising in corporate PR and lobbying. He is a co-founder of www.spinwatch.org.