

# **Propaganda: The Definitive Guide**

**by  
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**2017 Edition**

## Preface to the First Edition (October, 2006)

December 2006 marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Propaganda tournament. It was held during the Christmas holidays at Mount Carmel Academy in New Orleans LA and I was there. Robert Allen, co-author of *Propaganda* (with the actor Lorne Greene), and Larry Liss, Bob's assistant at the National Academic Games Project, came to New Orleans to conduct a tournament in the game of *Equations*, which students from Mount Carmel had taught to students from other Catholic high schools in the city. In addition, Bob and Larry chose to teach us the brand-new game of *Propaganda* and have a competition in it as well. The rest, as they say, is history. The game has undergone some significant changes (primarily the introduction of the Bold/Cautious choices for answers). However, the six sections remain the same after 40 years.

I had the idea for this *Guide* in the spring of 2005. The "Author's Opinion" for tournament examples was often disputed. The manual in the *Propaganda* game kit gives skimpy information about many techniques and cannot settle some questions. So I resolved to write a guide for *authors* of questions so that they would gain more consistency in constructing examples. The guide will also help *panelists* who review examples before they are included in tournament sets.

However, the *Guide* was never intended to be a private document for authors and panelists. It is available to all coaches so that they can use it to (a) deepen their own understanding of the techniques and (b) improve their teaching of the techniques.

Even with 40 years experience with *Propaganda*, writing this *Guide* has deepened my understanding of some techniques and revised my perception of others. One reason for this gain in depth and breadth was access to *Thinking Straighter*, the 1966 textbook by George Henry Moulds that formed the basis for the game. The text revealed nuances about several techniques that were not covered in the Game Manual. I am thankful to Jim Davis for loaning me his copy of the book.

As with all publications dealing with academic games, this is a work in progress. *Propaganda* is too rich a game to be captured in any document (despite the word *Definitive* in the title). Guidelines will be revised and expanded year-by-year as they are used and further questions arise. Consequently, your questions and suggestions are welcome.

The author has many people to thank. First of all, thanks to Larry Liss, AGLOA Executive Director and friend for 40 years. Larry was a major contributor to the *Propaganda* game and an excellent sounding board who made numerous positive suggestions.

Diana Wieberg made many helpful suggestions for Elementary Division. Thanks also to Kelly Zeltmann, an excellent example writer who gave her opinions on interpretations of numerous techniques. John Aloï, another fine question contributor, also proofread the document.

Thanks to the entire AGLOA Board of Directors who gave encouragement and authorization for this project. I trust they are pleased with the final product.

I hope this *Guide* enhances the understanding of *Propaganda* in leagues across the country. I don't expect it to remove all controversies and would be disappointed if it did. At least we have a document to refer to when example answers are questioned.

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## Introduction to the *Guide*

### Format of Each Technique Discussion

The discussion of each technique in this *Guide* generally has this framework

1. **Game Book Definition:** Quotation from the explanation of the technique in the booklet in the Propaganda game. These explanations are invariably taken from *Thinking Straighter* by George Henry Moulds.
2. **From *Thinking Straighter*:** Additional quotations from *Thinking Straighter* that elucidate the technique.
3. **Expanded Definition:** More comments to explain the technique further.
4. One or more examples of the technique.
5. Discussion of various forms of the technique with examples of each variation.
6. Comparison and contrast of the technique with other techniques of this section (or occasionally other sections), along with examples sharpening the distinctions between the techniques.
7. Criteria that make an example No Technique rather than the technique under discussion – with examples.
8. Each technique begins on a new page. This creates “white space” where you can write your own notes or additional examples.

### Some General Principles

1. **No Technique will mean that the example does not exemplify any technique of the section being played or any other section.** In other words, each “No Technique” example will illustrate sound thinking or will come from poetry, Scripture, or other sources where techniques are acceptable.
2. If an example involves multiple techniques, only one technique should be from the section being played.
3. I do not recommend you give this document as is to new players in any division or even to younger veteran players. Instead, you should distribute notes that provide an introduction to each technique without delving into all the nuances that this *Guide* covers. The *Propaganda Guide* CD includes sets of notes for distribution to players. Since the notes are *Word* documents, you can tailor them to fit your students.