

[PDF] Trust Us, We're Experts: How Industry Manipulates Science And Gambles With Your Future

Sheldon Rampton, John Stauber - pdf download free book

Books Details:

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Description:

Fearless investigative journalists Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber (and) are back with a gripping exposé of the public relations industry and the scientists who back their business-funded, anti-consumer-safety agendas. There are two kinds of "experts" in question--the PR spin doctors behind the scenes and the "independent" experts paraded before the public, scientists who have been hand-selected, cultivated, and paid handsomely to promote the views of corporations involved in controversial actions. Lively writing on controversial topics such as dioxin, bovine growth hormone, and genetically modified food makes this a real page-turner, shocking in its portrayal of

the real and potential dangers in each of these technological innovations and of the "media pseudo-environment" created to obfuscate the risks. By financing and publicizing views that support the goals of corporate sponsors, PR campaigns have, over the course of the century, managed to suppress the dangers of lead poisoning for decades, silence the scientist who discovered that rats fed on genetically modified corn had significant organ abnormalities, squelch television and newspaper stories about the risks of bovine growth hormone, and place enough confusion and doubt in the public's mind about global warming to suppress any mobilization for action.

Rampton and Stauber introduce the movers and shakers of the PR industry, from the "risk communicators" (whose job is to downplay all risks) and "outrage managers" (with their four strategies--deflect, defer, dismiss, or defeat) to those who specialize in "public policy intelligence" (spying on opponents). Evidently, these elaborate PR campaigns are created for our own good. According to public relations philosophers, the public reacts emotionally to topics related to health and safety and is incapable of holding rational discourse. Needless to say, Rampton and Stauber find these views rather antidemocratic and intend to pull back the curtain to reveal the real wizard in Oz. This is one wake-up call that's hard to resist. --*Lesley Reed*

From Publishers Weekly Recent surveys show that "national experts" are the third most trusted type of public figure (after Supreme Court justices and schoolteachers). Hard-hitting investigative journalists Rampton and Stauber (*Toxic Sludge Is Good for You!*) ask whether that trust is misplaced. They assert that, with highly technical issues like environmental pollution and bioengineered foodstuffs, "people are encouraged to suspend their own judgment and abandon responsibility to the experts." The authors examine the opinions of many so-called experts to show how their opinions are often marred by conflicts of interest. Peering behind the curtain of decision making, they catch more than a few with blood money on their hands. From spin doctors with dubious credentials to think tanks that do everything but think and scientists who work backwards to engineer desired experimental results, Rampton and Stauber present an astonishing compendium of alleged abuses of the public's willingness to believe. Particularly sobering is their summary of the historical use of "experts" by the tobacco and mining industries, which, they reveal, have suppressed and manipulated information in order to slow industrial reform. Their allegation that industry flaks may be purposely clouding the current debates swirling around "junk science" and global warming issues should provoke readers to reexamine these matters. Rampton and Stauber's impassioned call for skepticism goes beyond rhetoric. They also offer practical guidelines for separating propaganda from useful information. Agent, Tom Grady. (Jan. 2) Forecast: The authors' gloves-off approach, which is effectively signaled by the pointed and irreverent cartoon-style jacket, will appeal to fans of Bill Moyers, Jeremy Rifkin and Barbara Ehrenreich (who all blurbed the book).

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