**Winning in 2018…. Breaking the Rules**

**How can the Democrat’s assure victory in November? Or for that matter the Republications.**

**Take this as a communications and marketing lesson rather than as a political statement.**

**As I look upon the political landscape, I see (my opinion) how Donald Trump is a master of manipulation of the masses. The roots of his political success are in the stories of propaganda and public relates.**

**(see the work of Edward Bernays for more on the subject of propaganda)**

**The essence of Trump’s success is to twist the rules of critical thinking in his favor. From the bandwagon effect to ad hominum attacks, the slippery slope to false reasoning … all of the rules of critical thinking can be used to gain a position in the minds of the voters. And Donald Trump has been a master at creating arguments that resonate with the voters.**

**Among the rules of critical thinking that can be manipulated to gain agreement and consent include:**

**1. Infer causation from simple correlation. We might be able to show a correlation but to say it is the cause between two phenomena is tricky and often not accurate.**

**2. Band wagon effect …. Discuss how everyone else is doing something so it must be right**

**3. Ad homium….. attack the person in order to attack an issue or policy**

**4. Slippery slope … just because we advocate for some gun control does not mean we want to take away all guns. But some people will want you to believe it.**

**5. Ambiguity and vagueness…. Keep things vague or with possible double meanings so that you can always have an argument**

**6. False premise … build your arguments and conclusions on false premises or false assumptions, even though you present them as fact**

**7. False analogy … compare one thing to another more appealing thing to gain approval**

**8. In group … show how your idea is part of a group that others will want to join; be a part of the in-group**

**9. Proof or evidence … sources can often be questionable; consider a study you present as proof that might have been funded by a group that is on our side of the arguemtn.**

**10. Small sample size … poll or sample a small group in a biased fashion to get the results you want to present**

**11. Red herring … you have an argument and position and to gain acceptance you bring up other matters that are agreeable totally off the subject., yet still agreeable**

**12. Stick a name on it…. Call a situation with an inflammatory name in order to gain support for your side; in the debate about abortion, pro-life infers that the opposition is pro-death**

**13. False dilemma … create a false situation or emergency that distracts from the original arguments**

**14. Appeal to emotions… you can quickly gain from making the discussion overly emotional**

**15. Perfect solution fallacy… meaning that there is no perfect solution to a situation so we might as well leave it alone**

**16. Ad populi which means towards the people, or similar to the band wagon idea that an argument should be acceptable since everyone else is doing it**

**17. Questionable Authority Fallacy means we might have a spokesperson like Michael Jordan who we ask to support a family values issue (his family values have been questioned)**

**18. Questionable statistics or lying with statistics or the presentation of statistics which is very easy to do**

**19. Omission of important information when it is known to you and is material to the discussion**

**20. Do the reasons support the conclusion**

**21. Citing false data or making false claims**

**Trump has mastered many of the preceding ways to argue for support of his issues and his party. And it has worked on a public that appears to be somewhat incapable of being a critical consumer of such information.**

**While Obama said when they go low, we go high … but, that may not be the winning strategy for 2018.**

**Jeff Heilbrunn**

**August 5, 2018**