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Exclusive: Is 'Consumer Reports' Engaging in Healthcare Fraud?

by [PETER GADIEL](#) September 29, 2009



Most of us understand that a careful, unbiased analysis of facts or ideas and presentation of findings is vastly different from propaganda. The latter is designed to further a cause regardless of facts. At its crudest, it is Fidel Castro or Hugo Chávez ranting to an audience fearful of offending the Maximum Leader. However, propaganda can be far more sophisticated, thus more effective and much more dangerous.

The first-rate propagandist knows to include enough truth in his campaign to establish his credibility, while hiding whatever works against his cause. He disguises his work as an unprejudiced appraisal by carefully picking facts that support his thesis and suppressing those that undermine it. It may sound like unbiased analysis, but it's still salesmanship, still propagandizing to sell an idea.

Manufactured goods, as much as ideas, can be the subject of unbiased evaluation and testing or, alternatively, the subject of propaganda – of sales campaigns. The skills developed in peddling toasters and weed whackers, floor wax and nose drops are transferrable to the world of ideas and politics, thus the prominence of advertising firms in political campaigns. These days, when we see a campaign ad we know of the involvement of the propagandist, the ad agency, and most of us try to allow for the fudging of truth that is the result.

There is another kind of institution that is far more dangerous than the typical Madison Avenue copywriter who sells his skills to the producer of toothpaste. That more dangerous institution is the "neutral observer," the "unbiased public interest group" that has become a propagandist for a particular political philosophy. I'm not speaking here of those self-described "public interest groups" that make no attempt to conceal their alliance with political causes: Southern Poverty Law Center, ACORN, Center for American Progress, etc. The fact that they are merely sales agents for a political philosophy, in this case the far left, is well known and informed people discount their claims either partially or entirely.

The propaganda organizations of greatest concern are those which, at one time, were truly neutral and established a reputation for neutrality, but which have abandoned that neutrality and still trade on their former reputations in order peddle a political philosophy inimical to those whom they claim to serve. Of course, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) is one that first comes to mind. Its sellout of seniors on the issue of socialized Obama healthcare is now too well known and is suffering the deserved fate of public embarrassment and loss of membership.

There is another group which has long claimed to be ultimate consumers' advocate, protecting Americans from defective products but which now has, like the AARP, sacrificed its standing as a

neutral party in order to fully endorse President Obama's proposed nationalization of medicine. That group is Consumers Union, publisher of *Consumer Reports*.

The lies that Obama and his allies have uttered about his nationalization plan are too many to be properly recounted here. It is also unnecessary, since they have been so well exposed in so many analyses. For the purposes of this column, let us merely remember that candidate Obama expressed his commitment to "single payer" (socialized medicine). Let us remember that he has, as President, lied about driving private insurance companies out of business and thus our ability to retain our own plans; lied about the privacy dangers and Fourth Amendment violations of the feds putting our private health records on databases available nationwide; lied about health care rationing. Lied, lied and lied again.

Let us here not bother to re-examine in detail all the lies from the likes of Sen. Chris Dodd (a "lying weasel" [according to the New Haven Register](#)), of the late Ted Kennedy, of ACORN, Hillary and the rest of that crowd promoting the Obama plan.

Let us instead examine how an allegedly neutral, so-called "consumer advocacy group," Consumers Union, has chosen to ignore any dangers from ObamaCare and unqualifiedly endorsed Obama's health care nationalization.

Let us go to the [Consumers Union website](#) and click on the "Health Care" link.

Here you will find links that take you to the Congressional Democrats' sales pitch for ObamaCare (HR3200) but NO links to any site which expresses an [opposing viewpoint](#).

CU's healthcare link also has hundreds of stories from Americans, *every one of whom* denounces our existing system, and *not one of whom* has anything good to say about it, even though [national polls](#) demonstrate that more Americans would rather Congress do nothing than pass President Obama's healthcare plan (Did you know Americans unanimously supported socialized medicine? I didn't; at least, I didn't until *Consumer Reports* told me so.)

Apparently CU [couldn't find a single person](#) who wants the government kept out of their personal medical decisions. (The comment I sent them, opposing the Obama plan, wasn't included. Perhaps others were ignored as well?)

CU has an [archive](#) of 70 of its articles supporting ObamaCare. Nowhere in this long list will you see anything good to be said of American medical care. In fact, you can [learn from CU](#) how Britain's socialized medicine wins "hands down" over the U.S.

Until recently, and perhaps somewhere still in all of this, you were linked to – imagine it – the president's own White House web page. How's that for unbiased info from Consumer Reports?(By the way, the archives page provides a handy link to that most interesting authority on health care, the Daily Kos!)

Well, the menu of propaganda from "Consumer Distorts" goes on, and on....and on.

But in the end, it comes down to this: Whatever your view on socialized medicine, even if you think that the Obama plan does not inevitably lead to socialized medicine, the undeniable fact is that Consumers Union has abandoned impartiality, while still pretending to present an unbiased, careful analysis of ObamaCare.

Could it be that *Consumer Reports* is engaging in consumer fraud?

And this leads to a question: if *Consumer Reports* is so willing to propagandize an issue of such fundamental importance to the individual health, including life vs. death, of the people of the United States – an issue which will fundamentally alter the entire character and balance of political power in our Nation, tilting it forever in favor of federal bureaucrats - if Consumer Reports is so willing to engage in a campaign that is so *obviously* biased on such an issue, then what does that say of its impartiality on those many day-to-day objects which it claims it judges without an axe to grind? After all, if a company like General Electric, so clearly in President Obama's pocket, produces a widget that competes with one produced by Brand X, a company publicly opposed to socialized medicine, which one do you think "Consumer Distorts" will rate as the better widget? And what about the cars of the company that took the government bailout (GM), versus the one that snubbed its nose at a takeover (Ford)? Will *Consumer Reports*, so clearly a supporter of federal government dominance and power, honestly report on the merits of government-produced cars as opposed to those produced by private enterprise?

The answer, made obvious by *Consumer Reports* itself, is that the Consumers Union’s judgment, reliability and neutrality – whether on toasters or floor wax, health care or hair gels – are definitely “unacceptable.”

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