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Persuasion and Influence in American Life

By Gary C. Woodward, Robert E. Denton Jr.



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As the authors note in the preface to the sixth edition, “The study of persuasion is not static. Any single edition is but a snapshot of a continuously changing landscape.” For over two decades, Gary Woodward and Robert Denton have blended a historical and rhetorical focus with social psychology to explore the dynamic and fascinating terrain of social influence. Persuasion in action is dissected through the fusion of theory and practice in multiple contexts—interpersonal relationships, politics, advertising, social movements, and speaking effectively in diverse settings. Rich illustrations drawn from the mass media, popular culture, and public relations illuminate the concrete skills necessary to become effective, ethical, and credible persuaders. Readers discover that persuasion is an interactive process, it requires willing and attentive participants sensitive to the effects of persuasion on others. The systematic thinking and knowledge essential to planning, composing, and delivering messages to influence others are equally useful in analyzing the ubiquitous persuasive efforts encountered daily. By highlighting the interplay of audiences and messages in every chapter, Woodward and Denton provide a solid foundation for becoming informed, responsible contributors to and consumers of persuasion. Not-for-sale instructor resource material available to college and university faculty only, contact publisher directly.



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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

"It is obvious that Woodward & Denton are passionate about researching and teaching persuasion. It is refreshing to use an up-to-date and well-crafted textbook that sparks interest and easily creates dialogue in the university classroom. Teaching persuasion can be a 'death in tall grass' experience unless you have an excellent text like this one. I highly recommend it." -- J. David Turner, Methodist University

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