# **Talk:Psychological manipulation**

WikiProject Psychology (Rated C-class, Mid-importance)

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С	This article has been rated as C-Class on the project's quality scale.
Mid	This article has been rated as <b>Mid-importance</b> on the project's importance scale.

# Copyright

I understand the copyright issue but was it really necessary to throw the baby out with the bathwater ? There are well over 100 references in Wikipedia to "psychological manipulation" and manipulation in the psychological sense. It seems extremely surprising that a psychological manipulation article had not been done before. I also included about 6 See alsos and Wiki categorization which have been lost by deleting the article. I was poised today to develop the text i had already written and would have probably resolved any copyright issues anyway. Also i was intending to include material today derived from a variety of other sources that i would have thought were unlikely to have copyright issues. I dont even have a copy of what was there yesterday so i can develop it. Was it really necessary to completely delete the whole article ? The article is just a stub. Yesterday I just threw a few essentials together to get the article in place as i had limited time. I was intending to develop it properly today and over the next few days.--Penbat (talk) 13:17, 27 September 2009 (UTC)

# Underhanded, unfair tactics

Underhanded and unfair are words that will eventually receive the comment: Grow Up. If there is an apparent advange in the use of a somewhat devilish, demonish, or specific louse tactic then someone, somewhere will use it. Louse tactics create underlaying social unrest, termites eating at foundations, and is an indication of a not so decent mind (not honorable). When louse tactics go too far, they become criminal. There are laws made to counter louse tactics but those laws are somewhat difficult to apply. Many an individual would recommend having de-lousing spray handy.

I don't know what the issue with copyright was but for what it is worth: Copyright is really no issue when you quote the source and do the references as per bookreport style. It becomes an issue when you quote a whole book verbatum. Just keep in mind that many a book mongerer wrote and writes books to survive, even if they don't really make a living. Wikipedia is free. That there will be complaints due the form that a million monkeys will not so randomly type on a million typewriters, should be taken with a shrug. The facts of life are such that you can read a book, memorize that book, then quote that book either in writing or through speach with absolutely no references given except your own memory. As if that could be patented and/or copyrighted. Now, to be correct, the statements due Wikipedia that by interacting with wikipedia you loose your legal copyright or left protection due law is incorrect. When you print in wikipedia you do not loose that protection but you give wikipedia the rights to 'commercialize' your work through the processes inherent in wikipedia, Fair Use, while still retaining your own rights to commercialize your part of that work on your own. Electronic interactions in this manner are not legally binding agreements and never will be. You have your own liability, independant of the liability of wikipedia, and that liability can not be transferred. (Fractalhints (talk) 21:46, 5 January 2010 (UTC))

Advertising uses psychological manipulation. -mattisse (Talk) 15:25, 3 February 2010 (UTC)

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#### Needs improved references

The two books used primarily for references are pop psychology books. They are not research-based. Nor do they reflect the opinion of academic and scientific psychology. The article does not fulfill WP:V and WP:RS. Also, the See also section is too long and is misleading as it contains many unrelated or only peripherally related links. Regards, —mattisse (Talk) 15:23, 3 February 2010 (UTC)

Both main refs are books by qualified and respected practicing psychologists. Braiker in particular identifies in some detail the underlying solid psychological theory which is reinforcement and the work of B. F. Skinner. The problem I have is that the reinforcement article is too technical for a non-academic, although i have made an effort to improve it. But this angle needs to be developed further. Also Psychological manipulation is firmly a type of social influence. I rather resent your homing in on this article when around 30% of Wikipedia psychology articles dont have a single citation of any sort and quite a few more are seriously lacking citations. Also if you start stripping away "pop psychology" citations from Wikipedia psychology articles, even fewer will have citations. I have included some academic references in the Further reading list and in fact both the Simon and Braiker books have some academic citations which i didnt include as i thought it would break the flow up but as you are making such a fuss about it i might as well put them back in. Braiker refers to Burstens work and i list "Bursten, Ben Manipulator: A Psychoanalytic View (1973)" and some academic articles. More are to be found in Google scholar. The work of psychologist David Buss is also cited by Braiker. If some body wants to get hold of the Bursten book etc and develop this article then they are welcome. It is poor me who has done all the work here and i dont see why i should have to do it all. The reinforcement article is clearly too academic and this article (which is closely related) is criticised for being too pop - you just cant win. Wikipedia is seriously short of academic psychology editors. --Penbat (talk) 16:06, 3 February 2010 (UTC)

Well, reliable sources are important. This article appears to be using primary sources sources, as it seems that the authors of these books collected the information themselves, and the editors of this article have combined the info in the books. This can be seen as original research and synthesis. The goal is no original research using preferably secondary sources. Also, psychology is an empirically-based field, and psychology articles should seek to follow a guide such as WP:MEDRS. There must be scholarly sources on this subject. Regards, —mattisse (Talk) 16:58, 3 February 2010 (UTC)

Ref "the authors of these books collected the information themselves", isnt that what all authors do ?

I think you were partly misled by the title of one of these books "Whos Pulling Your Strings? How to Break The Cycle of Manipulation" - only a relatively small part of the book is self-help and advice. I have avoided the self-help and advice aspects of the books and concentrated on the meatier theoretical parts.

The books such as Braiker do a great job at introducing important but complex psychological concepts to a non-academic audience. They are very much rooted in proper established psychology. The core theory behind manipulation is reinforcement - reinforcement explains why manipulation works. The type of reinforcement also provides a useful classification system for individual manipulation techniques (positive, negative, partial and intermittant as per B. F. Skinners work). Other important theoretical aspects are also covered such as locus of control, personality disorders, defense mechanisms, cognitive distortion.

If you were arguing that the theoretical underpinnings of the article were incorrect and could point me to a source that supported that view, then I would have been sympathetic to your view. As previously mentioned, "Bursten, Ben Manipulator: A Psychoanalytic View (1973)" sounds like the best source I know of (and also referenced by the Simon book) but I havent managed to get hold of a copy but I can see no evidence that it would undermine the theoretical basis of the article anyway. I may manage to get hold of a copy one day.

Reinforcement and locus of control presumably conform to WP:MEDRS but they are written at the level of an academic reader. While a non-academic reader should be able to understand psychological manipulation, I think the eyes of most non-academic readers will glaze over if they follow the links from psychological manipulation to reinforcement and locus of control. The Braiker book actually contains a very useful laymans explanation for reinforcement and it would probably be a good idea to use it to provide a non-academic introduction at the start of reinforcement. --Penbat (talk) 17:38, 6 February 2010 (UTC)

#### **Contradiction?**

So "doctors try to persuade patients to change unhealthy habits". Yes, they have "no qualms about causing harm to the victim if necessary." This is just one example of contradictions in this article. —Preceding unsigned comment added by Schnarr (talk • contribs) 11:52, 2 March 2010 (UTC)

### **Examples in art?**

I was wondering if it would be worth adding some references in art for this article? For example, I recently watched a movied called *Whipped* and and I couldn't help but notice striking traces of Psychological manipulation by the character played by Amanda Peet, which seems to go on pair with the *basic manipulative\_strategy of a psychopath* proposed by Hare and Babiak. --Pinnecco (talk) 19:52, 29 June 2010 (UTC)

This is probably a better home: Fictional portrayals of psychopaths --Penbat (talk) 19:55, 29 June 2010 (UTC) I notice Whipped (film) --Penbat (talk) 19:57, 29 June 2010 (UTC)

#### **Basic manipulative strategy of a psychopath**

I think this whole section should be removed. Psychological manipulation is a type of behavior that most people can and will perform - I mean, which child has never tried nagging in order to persuade an unwilling parent to agree with something? So this section is out of place. Please discuss! Lova Falk talk 16:58, 12 July 2010 (UTC)

i dont agree. Yes we all manipulate to some degree but psychopaths take it to another level, combining it with sheer ruthlessness. Psychos are often masters of manipulation and it is their modus operandi. The mechanics of manipulation is basically the same (in terms of reinforcement etc) for psychos and non-psychos.--Penbat (talk) 17:43, 12 July 2010 (UTC)

#### Advancing only the interests of the manipulator?

I don't think the claim that psychological manipulation always only advances the interests of the manipulator is accurate. Such broad, sweeping generalizations just don't always work in the real world. For example, I can see many cases where the manipulator is doing what he/she is doing to advance someone ELSE's interests. There are many possible variations. Gringo300 (talk) 21:19, 13 September 2010 (UTC)

I think you are missing the point. Even if the manipulation is always in the manipulators interests, it could still be in the manipulators interests to help the target for example "doctors can try to persuade patients to change unhealthy habits".

It goes on to say "Social influence is not necessarily negative. For example, doctors can try to persuade patients to change unhealthy habits. Social influence is generally perceived to be harmless when it respects the right of the influenced to accept or reject it, and is not unduly coercive. Depending on the context and motivations, social influence may constitute underhanded manipulation."

So it already says it may not be at the other persons expense and it may be in the interests of the manipulator to benefit the target for example parents sometimes use reverse psychology to make children behave.--Penbat

(talk) 21:49, 13 September 2010 (UTC)

Thinking about it some more, getting rid of the word "only" would probably be helpful. --Penbat (talk) 08:27, 14 September 2010 (UTC)

Parenting is a very good example. A brief examination of manipulation within common techniques used by parents or teachers might improve the article.108.8.48.47 (talk) 08:30, 17 July 2011 (UTC)

### "According to Simon"

Uh, what? Who's Simon? And who's Braiker? This article is badly written. —Preceding unsigned comment added by 99.163.22.236 (talk) 10:50, 15 November 2010 (UTC)

Try looking at the references.--Charles (talk) 13:47, 15 November 2010 (UTC)

Simon is mentioned further up the article and his name is linked. I've added Braiker's first name. Jim Michael (talk) 20:33, 23 February 2012 (UTC)

#### Manipulation of dependent/vulnerable persons

1. The article mentions elder abuse, but not psychological manipulation of children, developmentally delayed persons, or persons who are vulnerable/subordinate by reason of being forcibly held against their will (hostages, slaves, etc.), and similar situations where the abilities and circumstances of the victim substantially impair their ability / opportunities to resist or escape.

2. None of the lists of victim responses to psychological manipulation includes well-founded (or not) fear of escalating the psychological manipulation with the attendant increased risk of psychological traumatization, or of physical (including) sexual abuse. Worst case, this is the state of being terrorized.

3. Relatedly, the list of the "too"s, in effect, passes judgement on qualities sometimes seen in persons who have experienced or are vulnerable to experience psychological victimization. These qualities should rather be presented as victim selection criteria used by manipulators, and psychological characteristics that afford specific manipulative opportunities - rather in the way that glass affords breaking and plastic affords scratching. 68.149.154.238 (talk) 18:05, 1 February 2011 (UTC)

# It's called the process of selling

"Once the psychopath has identified a victim, the manipulation phase begins. During the manipulation phase, a psychopath may create a persona or mask, specifically designed to 'work' for his or her target. A psychopath will lie to gain the trust of their victim. Psychopaths' lack of empathy and guilt allows them to lie with impunity; they do not see the value of telling the truth unless it will help get them what they want."

**Translation:** Once the seller has identified a potential buyer, the advertising phase begins. During the advertising phase, a seller may create a brand image, specifically designed to 'work' for his or her target audience. A seller will make exaggerated claims to gain the trust of their potential buyers. Sellers' lack of individual concern for their customers allows them to exaggerate their wishes with impunity; they do not see the value of telling the truth about what they want (to customers) unless it will help get them what they want (i.e. money and/or what they plan to get from it).**siNkarma86**—Expert *Sectioneer* of Wikipedia

<sup>86 = 19+9+14 + karma = 19+9+14 + talk</sup> 09:22, 29 May 2011 (UTC)

yes it also says somewhere that a sociopath views everybody in terms of what they can get from them- (a con man views every person as a possible mark) in the same way my sales teacher pointed out that everyone is a potential customer (called a prospect). There are a lot of similarities between sales, cons and so called sociopaths. I personally doubt a lot of what is believed about sociopaths/psychopaths and I DON'T believe that every conman is a "path" nor that every "path" is a conman. I think this article heavily confuse three separate concepts- psychopaths/sociopaths,

con-men, and manipulation. There is a lot of good info but ultimatly, it's not a very good article on the subject of manipulation (nor do I think it's very npov). Also, more and better information should be listed about "buttons." This information falls short and the list is really not composed of separate things. Rather it is a description of a person who seems highly open to scamming/manipulation divided up into a list of buttons. ANYBODY can be manipulated and everybody has buttons that can be pushed- guilt, anger, pride- usually anything that can be used to create stress and discomfort. Sorry for the rant but I definitly see a need for a nonbias, focused clean up.

2602:306:CE64:1EF0:B564:CDA3:5C5C:5F72 (talk) 03:27, 10 September 2012 (UTC)amyanda2000

# Unwarranted juxtaposition and overall biased perspective

The article seems to group disparate analyses each with too little independent qualification. For example, Braiker's manipulation techniques seem more objective and general than Simon's, which seem to be addressing how a victim might practically recognize manipulative behavior more than providing an explanation of what fundamentally constitutes such behavior. It is appropriate to include the different viewpoints, but they should each be granted more unique focus and explanation or they merely confuse the reader by countering each other's usefulness. One very basic question that should be answered of each perspective is in what context it is addressing psychological manipulation. Both Braiker and Simon wrote works intended to deal with manipulation. Kantor's work is probably more appropriate for such an article as it seems to be a more academic study of manipulation rather than a practical guide.

In the introduction, the article recognizes that psychological manipulation may not always have a negative influence, but otherwise the article seems engineered (understandably so, given the sources) to address avoiding or mitigating manipulation. It places large focus on the psychopathology of manipulation, but there are plenty of situations in which psychological manipulation is very normal. There is a lot of room for expanding the scope of this article, and I think that that step is necessary for it to become very useful. As the article is now, it constitutes what seems like an okay section for a basic outline of what manipulation consists of, in terms of low-level interpersonal interaction. I realize that there are many other articles on topics in psychological manipulation, but this article should roughly attempt to delineate its scope at all levels. Some research should certainly be included in fields like cognitive science, military/police tactics, advertising, security, and political science.

It would also be good to include some section addressing exemplary instances of manipulation and the way it has been viewed in certain historical and philosophical contexts. In literature, *Demian, Nineteen Eighty-four*, several works by Mark Twain, *Wuthering Heights, Hamlet*, and many others provide interesting and varied studies of psychological manipulation. Movies like *Good Will Hunting, Minority Report*, and *Star Wars* reflect society's ideas about psychological manipulation and the ethics associated with it. I would like to add some information myself, but I am only here because I just began studying the subject. I don't really feel comfortable with my own understanding, but I found this article a great deal less interesting than I had hoped.108.8.48.47 (talk) 08:15, 17 July 2011 (UTC)

Can I mention that the word "he" is used a lot in this article? There are also females that psychologically manipulate. Could we potentially change it to a gender-neutral term such as "manipulator" to avoid bias? Just a thought - doesn't HAVE to be enforced. 76.235.182.216 (talk) 22:18, 31 July 2011 (UTC)

"It", "they", or any English non-pronoun that you can attribute to any single human being. Those are your choices in the English languages (approximately). You may have better luck in other languages, or even other types of English which I'm not well versed in, which are, in this respect, superior. Have a great day!siNkarma86—Expert Sectioneer of Wikipedia

86 = 19 + 9 + 14 + karma = 19 + 9 + 14 + talk 21:42, 1 August 2011 (UTC)

# **Psychological conditions**

Regarding the POV tag, I feel the current claim needs to be more clearly attributed as a point of view of a self-help book, and balanced by views on how such conditions do not necessarily or at all involve manipulation, which there's a fair bit of research on and attempts to combat the stigma about. I can only see some of the claims made, via Google books, so I'm not sure how to address each condition. There's also the issue of turning the tables, re the validity of these diagnoses, and re how people with such diagnoses are treated (or excluded) by services/society etc, and the labelling of them as manipulative, is itself sometimes alleged to be manipulative. Finally I noticed the book seems to include drug addicts incl. alcoholics in its list of manipulators but the section here currently omits that. I'll try to make some additions in due course, and think there's good points made in sections above too which it would be good to get collaboratively reflected in this interesting article. Every (talk) 17:32, 8 January 2012 (UTC)

# Columns

It is my opinion that columns (which unfortunately don't show up in all browsers) make an extended see also list visually neater. Andrewaskew (talk) 23:19, 7 June 2012 (UTC)

# **Psychopaths lie**

It is absolutely not true. To lie you need to think very clearly that is the condition for a person to be judged not psycopath. It is logic that: to lie for manipulation you have to think clearly and very cleverly. So if someone lies to manipulate is not psycopath. — Preceding unsigned comment added by 82.55.155.214 (talk) 21:10, 29 July 2012 (UTC)

What you've said is not the case. Psychopaths are typically habitual liars, who only tell the truth when it suits them. They very often use psychological manipulation to make people do what the psychopath wants. Frequent psychological manipulation is usual with Cluster B people. Psychological manipulation is used by most people sometimes, but psychological manipulation for selfish reasons is habitual in psychopaths/antisocials. Manipulation does not require intelligence, and is not always planned. Threats, violence and lies do not need intelligence. Psychopaths can be of any level of intelligence and education, and vary from chaotic, uneducated, impulsive, reckless, heroin-addicted homeless idiots right up to the high-functioning, cunning, intelligent, well-educated planners. Harold Shipman was an example of the latter. He had a successful career whilst concealing his true self from the world until he was in his fifties. He killed hundreds of his patients during a period of many years until it was discovered that he was a serial killer. Jim Michael (talk) 14:18, 9 January 2014 (UTC)

# Victim

This article does not explain the strengths of the victim and the eventual end to the predatory game. Please add. — Preceding unsigned comment added by 117.214.201.160 (talk) 09:51, 7 November 2012 (UTC)

#### Psychopathic personality is a popular term, not used in clinical psychology

This article is a jumble of pop psych taken from a few popular books. The clinical term is Antisocial personality disorder. Star767 03:15, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

Yes psychopathy is not in the DSM but it is a robust concept widely studied by academics for many years. Antisocial personality disorder is a relatively recent attempt by the DSM to cover the ground of psychopathy but it isnt the same. You cant possibly dismiss psychopathy gurus such as Robert D. Hare as peddling pop psychology. Apart from academic research, the concept of psychopathy is enshrined in various state criminal and legal contexts.--Penbat (talk) 20:21, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

I agree with your sentiments. Psycho'analytic' teachings (often found in "pop psychology") are way past their prime. They belong to the past, just like humorism and phrenology do.siNkarma86—Expert Sectioneer of Wikipedia <sup>86 = 19+9+14 + karma = 19+9+14 + talk</sup> 14:10, 3 September 2013 (UTC)

# Criticism of this article

This article most certainly is psychology and is underpinned in depth by the work of B. F. Skinner on reinforcement. At least one of the refs in this article (Braiker) acknowledges this underpinning.--Penbat (talk) 20:01, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

#### **Reply to Penbat**

But Skinner was strictly a follower of Behaviorism and Psychological behaviorism.

From Psychology:

**Psychology** is an academic and applied discipline that involves the scientific study of mental functions and behaviors.

This article should follow WP:MEDRS and WP:MEDMOS if it's on psychology.

The opening sentence of this article is inaccurate:

**Psychological manipulation** is a type of social influence that aims to change the perception or behavior of others often through underhanded, deceptive, or even abusive tactics.

The book you reference is a pop psychology book published in 2004 and is called *Who's Pulling Your Strings? How* to Break The Cycle of Manipulation, not "psychological manipulation". In fact, none of the references appear to use "psychological manipulation" in their titles. Some use "Psychopathic manipulation", not the same thing.

In fact, this article confuses "psychopathic manipulation" and "psychological manipulation". It quickly diverges into what a psychopath is. A psychopath is a term used for manipulative people, who have traditionally been characterized as having certain traits, per Robert Hare etc. But these are not the "difficult people" we find in everyday life, and their behavior is not synonymous with "psychological manipulation".

George K. Simon, although he may have a PhD in clinical psychology, has no academic credentials per WP:MEDRS which psychology is supposed to follow. Rather, he is "a bestselling author and frequent weblog contributor". Who is Harriet Braiker, and what are her credentials?

Martin Kantor's book is called *The Psychopathy of Everyday Life: How Antisocial Personality Disorder Affects All of Us.* Now Antisocial personality disorder is a valid clinical diagnosis per DSM, the diagnostic manual. It's not the same as ordinary manipulative persons. A teacher or a parent uses "psychological manipulation" to teach and discipline kids. A man uses "psychological manipulation" when he gives flowers to a woman; a woman uses "psychological manipulation" when she listens to a man talk, etc. etc. When we do things to please others we are using "psychologically manipulation".

#### Star767 21:12, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

I take issue with your points but it would take a lengthy detailed reply. For now I will just say that it is unacceptable to amend sourced text to your unsourced views. It is already explained in the lead that "Social influence is generally perceived to be harmless when it respects the right of the influenced to accept or reject and is not unduly coercive." Incidentally here is Braikers CV: http://www.harrietbraiker.com/CV.htm --Penbat (talk) 21:27, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

I just did a search for the term "psychological manipulation" in the book you reference, and those words never appear together in her book. A few times in the same sentence, but never together, and more commonly in nearby sentences. Also her CV would probably fail WP:PROF, so she probably hasn't established an academic reputation as an expert in the field of "psychological manipulation". Star767

22:15, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

p.s. According to *The New York Times*, "she was a clinical psychologist and self-help author whose books touched on identity, resolving stress and the grief occasioned by the World Trade Center attacks".[1] According to the *Los Angeles Times*, she was a "psychologist, expert on stress management and best-selling author of self-help books, including *The Type E Woman* and *The September 11 Syndrome*.[2] Star767 22:24, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

Jesus you are annoying. Obviously this article is about "manipulation" but it cant be called that as manipulation has all kinds of meanings. The article could just as easily be renamed "manipulation (psychological)" or "manipulation (psychology)".--Penbat (talk) 22:33, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

Well, can't you think of another name? Manipulation (psychopathic), Psychopathic manipulation, or something? So I can forget about it? Please? Star767 23:49, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

Comment: Star767 has been blocked indefinitely as a sock puppet. Discussion closed. Lova Falk talk 08:16, 17 April 2013 (UTC)

#### **Possible copy/paste section**

And very close paraphrasing from Beware the techniques of the Sociopath <sup>[3]</sup> from June 2006. I checked in this article's history, and this material wasn't there as early as 2009 version: *This is an old revision of this page, as edited by Penbat (talk | contribs) at 20:42, 19 October 2009. It may differ significantly from the current revision.* Star767 22:51, 5 April 2013 (UTC)

This article was listed for investigation at Wikipedia:Copyright problems/2013 April 5. A comparison of the section with the 2006 blog <sup>[3]</sup> shows substantial similarity. Since the article clearly postdates the blog, this is an issue that must be resolved. I have blanked the section again and will relist the matter to permit editors a chance to verify license of the content or to rewrite it in accordance with our copyright policies (see also Wikipedia:Copy-paste.) I will check the history to make sure that the original contributor of the content was notified of the issue. --Moonriddengirl <sup>(talk)</sup> 14:50, 9 June 2013 (UTC)

Point of entry of content is here <sup>[4]</sup>. --Moonriddengirl <sup>(talk)</sup> 14:53, 9 June 2013 (UTC)

#### Multiple issues tag

Came across this article today, looked through the talk page, and had to tag it. 3 overused references, including self-help books (implying a particular perspective, agenda, and audience on the issue *which is valuable* but not sufficient), endless lists, some dubious information and connections ("Psychological conditions of manipulators" is kind of ridiculous as presented). Sections are on how it's done and what's exploited arranged in such a way that only makes sense in terms of self-help.... Happy to help improve when I have more time, but for now maybe people defending the use of the self-help books by talking about how they cite solid sources could just cite those sources directly (even Skinner, for example). --Rhododendrites (talk) 18:18, 16 October 2013 (UTC)

# So, how to deal with psychological manipulators?

This article describes (quite well) the techniques used by psychological manipulators and the definition of this, but it doesn't include any information about how to counter, how to deal with, and how to treat people that are psychological manipulators. --Waqqashanafi (talk) 04:35, 18 December 2013 (UTC)

# References

- [1] http://www.harrietbraiker.com/NYTimesObituary.htm
- [2] http://www.harrietbraiker.com/obituary.htm
- [3] http://toogoodtobereal.blogspot.com/2006/06/beware-techniques-of-sociopath.html
- [4] http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Psychological\_manipulation&diff=321572369&oldid=321363461

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