



# The Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays and the Birth of Public Relations

*Larry Tye*

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## **The Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays and the Birth of Public Relations** Larry Tye

**The Father of Spin** is the first full-length biography of the legendary Edward L. Bernays, who, beginning in the 1920s, was one of the first and most successful practitioners of the art of public relations. This book tells of Bernays's great campaigns, including: His precedent-setting work for the American Tobacco Company, climaxed by a parade of cigarette-smoking debutantes down Fifth Avenue on Easter Sunday that recast smoking as an act of liberation for women, helped convince a generation of women to light up, and made headlines from coast to coast. He transformed the color green into an American favorite to blend in with the green of the Lucky Strike package, and he convinced weight-conscious women that a cigarette was just the thing to substitute for a sweet. And he did it all without anyone knowing his client was behind it.

How he and his client the United Fruit Company helped engineer the overthrow of the socialist regime in Guatemala in the 1950s.

How he borrowed ideas from his uncle Sigmund Freud to push people to buy products they didn't need and to shape the way they perceived issues and the very way they believed.

And what Bernays did for tobacco and fruit peddlers, he also did for politicians, including Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover.

In **The Father of Spin**, *Boston Globe* reporter Larry Tye, drawing on interviews with primary sources and voluminous private papers, presents a fascinating and revealing portrait of the man who, more than any other, defined and personified public relations, a profession that today helps shape our political discourse and define our commercial choices.

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