Dishonesty, trickery, and deceit are all traits that rise alongside power. In the story Animal Farm, the intelligent pigs manipulate and distort the truth in order to control the other animals on the farm. Through the pig’s carefully weaved layer of lies, George Orwell shows the effectiveness of well thought out propaganda.

One of the most prevalent ways the pigs used propaganda was when convincing the animals of the farm to agree to their otherwise selfish rules. For example, the cruel ex-owner of the farm, Mr. Jones, was used frequently by the pigs as a threat if the other animals did not agree with their new rules. This can be seen when the pigs explain why they are allowed to sleep in the farmhouse beds: “You would not have us too tired to carry out our duties? Surely none of you wish to see Jones back?” (Pg. 35). This manipulative use of Mr. Jones is seen again when they argue “It is for your sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back!” (Pg. 18). The gullible animals wanting nothing to do with their old owner, believe them without a question every time. These Jones related threats continue throughout the story, and to the animals, every one is as convincing as the last.

Another way the pigs persuade the masses was through creating false propaganda about others to make their leader, Napoleon, look better. The first of many displays of this is when Napoleon steals his political adversary, Snowball’s, war accomplishments. The pigs tarnished Snowball’s achievement, determining that it was a “mistake” (Pg. 40) on their part for rewarding him with the title of “Animal Hero, First class,”. Although the animals were unsure of his claims at first, through the support of the other pigs, Napoleon was able to convince everyone that he had been the true hero of the Battle of Cowshed instead of the real hero, Snowball. Further into Napoleon’s reign over the farm, the pigs formed emotional speeches dedicated to “Napoleon’s wisdom” and “goodness of heart” (Pg. 46). These claims moved the animals so much so that “It had become usual to give Napoleon the credit for every successful achievement and every stroke of good fortune” (Pg. 46). Through a series of lies, the pigs were even able to turn murder into a situation that made them appear better. When the lead worker of the farm, Boxer, injured himself, the pigs, not wanting to feed an unworking body, told the other animals that he was being sent to the veterinarian when in actuality, the pigs sentenced him to the slaughterhouse. To further convince their naïve audience, the pigs deceitfully explained the “admirable care he had received, and the expensive medicines for which Napoleon had paid without a thought as to the cost.”. Throughout the story, the pigs were able to twist the truth to such an extent that they could convince every animal on the farm that they were the nothing less than superheroes.

The pigs were able to use their superior intelligence to gain great power on the Animal Farm; unfortunately, they fell victim to the chicanery that came with it. Through false propaganda and deceit, the pigs were not only able to justify any rule they imagined, they were also able to make themselves appear more grand as they did it. Premeditated propaganda is truly a power wielder’s most valuable and influential weapon.