

Propaganda
CMST 3168
Fall 2014
LSU
Coates 111

Instructor: Stephanie Houston Grey, Ph.D.
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Course Objectives:

Propaganda has shaped human consciousness since people gathered into tribal units. When larger city states arose during the classical period, public leaders became increasingly aware of the need to control state coinage and histories. As we have entered the modern age, it can be argued that propaganda is the glue that holds the modern nation-state together. While the word “propaganda” may have negative connotations, we must stop to consider its role and function in our culture. This class will explore the function and nature of propaganda over the past century. We will explore its dynamics as well as address certain ethical issues associated with its use. By the end of the semester we will achieve the following goals:

- Understand the key ethical questions that define the use of propaganda
- Understand the ways that propaganda shape group consciousness
- Understand the ways that propaganda can be used to both assert and contest state apparatus
- Interrogate the way that you as an individual have been shaped by propaganda
- Explore the role the way that new media will change the nature of propaganda in the future

Readings:

Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*. New York: IG, 1928.

Bob Carruthers, *Third Reich Propaganda*. Stratford: Coda, 2012.

Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Transformation of Men's Attitudes*. New York: Radom House, 1973.

David Welch, *Propaganda, Power and Persuasion: From WWI to Wikileaks*. London: British Library, 2013.

Assignments:

Exams: You will have three short essay exams. Each will be worth 200 points.

Short Paper (5-7 pages): You will have a short paper applying one of the theories examined in class to a piece of propaganda (200 points).

Final Debate: We will complete the course with an in-class debate following parliamentary format. We will debate a series of the key ethical issues facing the modern practice of propaganda (200 points).

Final Grade Breakdown:

901-1000 = A

801-900 = B

701-800 = C

600-700 = D

000-599 = F

Attendance and Participation:

You are expected to attend class and discuss readings and respond to in-class lectures. You are allowed one absence. After that point 20 points will be deducted from your grade for each additional absence. You are also expected to follow the student conduct guidelines outlined in the student handbook.

Disability Services and Plagiarism:

LSU takes these issues very seriously. See these LSU portals for more information about policies. I will provide necessary accommodation to students in need. I will pursue concerns about academic integrity in keeping with stated procedures. Please familiarize yourself with the information below.

<http://www.disability.lsu.edu>

<http://saa.lsu.edu/Plagiarism.html>

Schedule

August 27: Introduction to Class

September 3: The Rise of Propaganda and the PR Model: Read Bernays Chapters 1-6.

September 10: Propaganda in Motion: Read Bernays Chapters 7-11 & Welch Chapters 1.

September 17: The Third Reich: Examine the images in Carruthers.

September 24: The Allies Respond: Read Welch Chapters 2 & 4.

October 1: **Exam I**

October 8: Propaganda as Site for Political Contest: Read Ellul Chapter 1.

October 15: Information Campaigns and the News: Read Ellul Chapters 2-3.

October 22: The Darker Side of Manufacturing Consent : Read Welch Chapters 7, 11, 12.

October 29: **Exam II**

November 5: Propaganda in the Post 911 World: Read Welch 13-15.

November 12: Living in a Culture of Lies: Read Ellul Chapters 4-5.

November 19: Final Lecture and Debate Preparation. **Short Paper Due**

November 26: Thanksgiving

December 3: **In Class Debate**

Final Exam TBA