

Course FA-22 PUBLICITY AND PROPAGANDA IN MASS SOCIETY

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45 CONTACT HOURS/3 SEMESTER CREDITS

THIS CLASS MEETS: MON/WED 11AM – 1PM

OBJECTIVES

Although Publicity and Propaganda are not new, there is no doubt that the Twentieth Century witnessed their explosive impact and development, to an unforeseeable extent, all of this linked with the no less spectacular development of the mass media in the field of communication, especially Cinema, the Radio, and, finally, Television.

In this sense, we consider that both Propaganda and Publicity are best understood as a specific kind of communication, the purpose of which may be set within the sphere of persuasive discourses marked by both economic and ideological aims.

While, as indicated, it is the Twentieth Century and, as matters stand, the Twenty-First, which provide Publicity and Propaganda with their unique framework, this Course will begin with a brief historical overview which will allow students to bring into focus this subject-matter and its contextualization.

Following on from this, a study will be made of the key discursive strategies by means of which both Publicity and Propaganda aim to make their objectives prevail. Within this section, what will be highlighted in the main is the exploration of the use made by them of metaphors, symbolic forms, myths, and religion as ways of empowering the effectiveness of their discourses.

Finally, consideration will be given to less usual, or indirect – and, therefore, more persuasive – manifestations of Propaganda, as seen especially in the form of Cinema and Literature, without forgetting Comic-books and TV Series.

Basically speaking, then, rather than the mere accumulation of information and unconnected data, this Course endeavors to be of use in stimulating students, as individuals, to reflect upon a key issue in the lives of modern men and women.

METHODOLOGY

This Course aims to counteract student passivity, especially as a result of the way in which its content impinges upon him or her as both a person and a citizen. In order to encourage active participation, the theoretical, explanatory classes will always be based on practical back-up: class debates, the screening of, and commentary on, documentaries

and movies, the *ad hoc* reading of texts linked to sessions of discussion and analysis, together with the reviewing of other texts and articles that will be brought to hand.

The actual back-up material to be used in practical sessions (keeping in mind the variations which might be introduced, when apt, as the Course develops) will include:

Videos and Movies (full-length or clips): *The Great Dictator* (C. Chaplin), *Cabaret* (B. Fosse), *Apocalypse Now* (F. Coppola), *Schindler's List* (S. Spielberg), *Triumph of the Will* (L. Riefenstahl), *Los Santos Inocentes* (M. Camus), *La lengua de las mariposas* (J. L. Cuerda), *El día de la Bestia* (A. de la Iglesia)

Books: *1984* (G.Orwell), *Fahrenheit 451* (R. Bradbury), *Animal Farm* (G. Orwell), *Zero and the Infinite* (A. Koestler), *All Quiet on the Western Front* (E. M. Remarque), *Qué me quieres amor* (M. Rivas)

SYLLABUS

1. Definition: the Discourse of Persuasion in Mass Culture.
2. Propaganda *vis à vis* Publicity: from Politics to the Marketplace.
3. From their Origins to Modernity
4. The Nineteenth Century: The Masses Gain Protagonism
5. The Twentieth Century: from the Russian Revolution to Globalization and the 'End of History'.
6. Publicity: from the Factual to the Symbolic.
7. The Ideology of Publicity, Ideology *in* Publicity.
8. Propaganda: Ideas, Convictions, and Blind Spots.
9. Myth, Religion, and Propaganda.
10. Other Forms of Propagands: Movies, Comicbooks, TV.
11. Literature and Propaganda.

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COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

- Movie screenings
- Visits to buildings which carry propagandistic markers (the Cathedral, Plaza de España, etc.)
- Attendance at concerts and other kinds of performance which carry a key significance as vehicles of meanings and values associated with national or patriotically-based identities.

ASSESSMENT

Two factors will be taken into account when grading. The first, the undertaking of two written exams. Secondly, when final grades are being allocated, the scores obtained in the examinations will be upgraded when account is taken of the extent of student participation in class sessions, together with the scores derived from assignments handed in (reviews, commentaries, etc.). The two written exams will make up 60% of the final grade, while the remaining 40% will be made up of the scores derived from practical assignments handed in (25%) and active participation in sessions (15%).