

CMST 3168
RHETORIC OF PROPAGANDA
SPRING 2014

Lyman D. Hunt, Ph.D.
109a Prescott Hall
578-5989
lhunt@lsu.edu

OFFICE HOURS:
M,W,F: 11:30-12:20
W: 1:30-2:20

THE COURSE:

“The visionary lies to himself, the liar only to others.” – Friedrich Nietzsche

In this course we will examine the rhetorical strategies and tactics employed in (sometimes branded as) propaganda. To accomplish this task, we will engage communication theories, critical assessments, and case studies falling under the broad and often unstable genre “propaganda studies.” Along the way we will hop around a bit, tacking back and forth from theory to case study. Of course, the very word propaganda has become value laden. We often find the term used as a synonym for unethical persuasion. A core question will be whether there really is such a thing as propaganda. In other words, can we distinguish between propaganda and persuasion? Or is the difference really a function of which side one is on? Do we only label a message as propaganda when it comes from “them,” but deem it persuasion or truth when it is generated by “us?” Or can we clearly make judgements when we consider factors such as intent and strategy -- is it systematic? If the term propaganda does represent a useful and legitimate distinction, then is it all bad? Is there good (ethical) propaganda? In the main, I hope to approach the subject free from *a priori* conceptions.

THE TEXTS (*all required*):

- 1) Jowett G.S. & O'Donnell V. eds. (2012). *Propaganda and Persuasion* (5th). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 2) Goebbels, Joseph (1934). Speech at Nuremberg.
<http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/goeb59.htm>

THE SIMPLE MATH:	<u>PTS.</u>
Mid-Term Exam	300
Final Exam	300
Short Paper	300
Quizzes	100
Total	<u>1000</u>

THE GRADING SCALE:	<u>Letter Grade</u>
≥ 90%	A
80 - 89.99 %	B
70 - 79.99 %	C
60 - 69.99 %	D
≤ 59.99 %	F

THE ASSIGNMENTS:

Exams: Your mid-term and final exams will consist of multiple choice questions.

Quizzes: We will have 12 random quizzes during the semester. The quizzes will cover some lecture material but focus more so on assigned readings. *There will be no make-up quizzes under any circumstance.* To compensate for legitimately missed quizzes we will drop the two lowest quiz scores.

Paper: I will require you to select an artifact and analyze it as propaganda in a short paper. I want to see theory in application here. Your effort should be 7-8 pages in length and prepared in a generally accepted scholarly form. Additionally your work must reflect a rigor appropriate to a 3000 level class. The only way you can go wrong is to fail to follow the assignment criteria, rail us with asinine, unsupported assertions or fail to clearly articulate your ideas. Chapter six in the P&P text provides a systematic approach to the analysis of propaganda -- it is your guide -- follow it and this assignment will be a grade builder; don't and it won't. The end of week five will be the non-negotiable deadline for you to provide a paragraph on your topic and approach.

THE RULES:

I'm not going to insult your intelligence with a litany of specific rules. Rather, I simply expect decorum appropriate to a class at this level. I will expect you to be up-to-date with, if not ahead of, the reading schedule. Don't be surprised if I come to class and simply start asking you questions, expecting you to generate and energize our discussion of the material. Participation is important in any communication class. You are certainly going to find out what I think -- I want to know what you think as well. It is through such a dialectic that knowledge is sharpened, wisdom gained. My experience teaches me that two factors -- reading and attendance -- correlate tightly with the final grade earned by a student. Basically, if you fail to come to class and come prepared, you will fail the class.

FINALLY:

Communication Studies departmental policy requires that students obtain critical class materials from Moodle through their PAWS accounts. Failure to do so could adversely affect an individual's final grade. For information on your PAWS account contact the Computing Services Application Service Center at 578-0100 or use the PAWS link at www.lsu.edu.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, you must meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

THE SCHEDULE :

WEEK 1	Class and subject introduction, etc.
WEEK 2	Establishing the Parameters of Propaganda: C1
WEEK 3	C1 ctd.;
WEEK 4	History and Development: C2 C6 (read this chapter for your paper proposal)
WEEK 5	History and Development ctd.: C2 ctd.; <i>Paper Proposal Due</i> (One paragraph –topic/approach)
WEEK 6	History and Development ctd.: C3
WEEK 7	Social Scientific Foundations of Persuasion: P, C4
WEEK 8	Revisiting the Parameters of Propaganda: R, C1
WEEK 9	<i>Mid-Term Exam</i> : Psychological Warfare: C5
WEEK 10	Psychological Warfare ctd.: C5
WEEK 11	Psychological Warfare ctd.: C7
WEEK 12	Visual and Physical Influences
WEEK 13	Visual and Physical Influences: <i>Drop-Dead Paper Due Date</i> : 4/23 (or before)
WEEK 14	Visual and Physical Influences:
WEEK 15	Contemporary Implications: C8
WEEK 16	<i>Final Exam</i> * – Thursday, 8 May: 7:30am

***University policy requires that this exam be given during the scheduled final exam period. I will strictly adhere to this policy.**