

## **History 600: History of Propaganda**

Prof. Christine Evans

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MW 2-3:15 Holton 341 or TBD based on pandemic conditions!

Office hours Tuesdays 1-3 in Holton 329 or videoconference by appointment

“Propaganda” in contemporary American English is typically used pejoratively to refer to the promotion of ideas or agendas that are presumptively false, harmful, even evil. But in many times and places, including socialist Eastern Europe in the 20th Century or the Catholic Church in the 17th Century, propaganda was a neutral or even positive term, referring to practices of influencing and persuading people that were understood to be moral and just. Moreover, even if most people agree that “propaganda” is bad, we are surrounded by efforts to persuade, mobilize, and convince us. Can better understanding the history of “propaganda” help us achieve shared goals and protect ourselves and our society against manipulation and lies? In this capstone seminar, we will explore the history of “propaganda” as a concept and practice. Students will conduct research on past efforts to persuade and mobilize groups of people, using primary sources from the UWM libraries’ archival and digital collections, and from digital collections around the globe.

**Course Objectives:** After taking this course, students will be able to:

- Define “propaganda” and tell others how the meaning and practice of propaganda varies across time and place.
- Identify propaganda and interpret it using the tools historical research gives us.
- Be able to uncover, document, and share stories about the past, including being able to:
  1. Conduct effective research in both primary and secondary sources and develop research procedures that enable them to complete a 15-20 page research paper
  2. Analyze primary and secondary sources
  3. Formulate good historical questions from encounters with sources. Students should be able to support interpretations with evidence.
  4. Be able to use appropriate citation formats
  5. Develop and use the skills to properly document their research and correctly attribute the sources of quotations, paraphrases, arguments, and specific references used.
  6. Be able to create a useful, broad-based bibliography
  7. Manage their time effectively and employ strategies to break a large project into pieces
- Write an original, 15-20 page historical research paper based on primary sources

### **Required readings**

All course readings and assignments will be available via the course Canvas site. No readings required for purchase.