

AMERICANS, UGLY AND BEAUTIFUL  
 HONR 493201 – Senior Seminar  
 Boston College, Spring 2018

Prof. Martha Bayles  
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 Email: martha.bayles@bc.edu  
 Office Hours: By appointment  
 Class Meeting: Mondays 6:30-8:50 PM in Stokes 203S

*COURSE MATERIALS WILL BE IN A VARIETY OF FORMATS,  
 INCLUDING VIDEOS AND READINGS (ATTACHED AND ON E-RESERVE)  
 ASSIGNMENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE*

### OVERVIEW

This course is not about “hard power,” meaning coercive military or economic action. Instead, it is about “soft power,” meaning attraction, persuasion, the power of example. Despite today’s constant refrain of decline, America’s image and influence still permeate the world, conveyed through every media platform and taking such different forms as news reports, entertainment, face-to-face interactions, and “public diplomacy” (government efforts to cultivate goodwill among overseas populations). How did these different modes of communication work in the past? How do they work today? What messages should the people of the United States be sending to the 95 percent of humanity who are not American? What messages are we in fact sending? These questions will be explored historically, thematically, and by region.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### READING NOTES

To promote a fruitful discussion, you are required by 6 PM EACH SUNDAY to email me ONE SINGLE-SPACED PAGE of notes on the reading to be discussed in class that Monday. Please keep to this length: the goal is to be both comprehensive and concise. Please write your notes as a document, save the document, and email it to me as an attachment. The notes will be graded and handed back after each class.

Your notes should be serious, meaning they should demonstrate a genuine effort to wrestle with the substance of the assigned materials, in response to a prompt provided by me. The style can be informal, but make sure you proofread your notes. Errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mechanics will be marked down. Likewise, if your notes just parrot the readings, omit some part of the assignment, or make no sense to the reader, they will be marked down. It is OK to quote the reading, but only briefly, and not as a substitute for putting things into your own words.

#### CLASS PARTICIPATION

I will take attendance and mark down for tardiness and absence. Active participation in class discussions is a course requirement and will affect your grade. You cannot just sit through this course!

## FINAL EXAM

The final will be take-home and involve writing short essays on assigned questions. You may quote the readings, but only briefly. The finals must be proofread, typed, and double-spaced, with proper citations for all quotations and references. Errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mechanics will be marked down. You may use your class notes as a study aid and reference, but do not reproduce them as a substitute for answering the questions. I consider that plagiarism.

*ALL WRITTEN WORK MUST BE HANDED IN ON TIME.* I do not give extensions except under unavoidable circumstances. Late papers not given an extension will be penalized one grade level per 12-hour period. That means if an "A" paper due at 6 PM misses the deadline but comes in before ^ AM, it will be graded "A minus." And so on.

I take very seriously academic integrity and intellectual property rights. Cheating, plagiarism, and misuse of sources will result in a failing grade and referral to the dean of students. For more information on BC's policies, see: <http://www.bc.edu/integrity>

### GRADES WILL BE BASED ON:

- 50% Notes on reading
- 25% Class participation
- 25% Take-home final exam

### SYLLABUS

CLASS 1 / Jan. 22 – Fischer on Liberty and Freedom

NOTES ON THIS PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, JAN. 21

CLASS 2 / Jan. 29 – Propaganda and World War II

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, JAN. 28

### READINGS:

John Brown, Readings on Propaganda (2006-7)

Joseph Goebbels, "Thoughts on Propaganda" (1934-1945)

Ralph Block, "Propaganda and the Free Society" (1948)

### VIDEOS:

*Der Ewige Jude* [The Eternal Jew] (Nazi "documentary")  
<http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/eternal-jew/>

*Why We Fight* (US Army training films, 1942-1945)  
Ch. 1, "Prelude to War," and Ch. 2, "The Nazis Strike"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KniXvfsBavM&list=PLue4rhsHxp6-h5AO9Az-gdo7sq\\_m5roBm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KniXvfsBavM&list=PLue4rhsHxp6-h5AO9Az-gdo7sq_m5roBm)

CLASS 3 / Feb. 5 – Culture and Cold War

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, FEB. 12

READINGS:

George Kennan, "Long Telegram," State Department Communiqué (1946)

Martha Bayles, "The Struggle for Hearts and Minds," from *HEDGEHOG REVIEW* (2014)

Nicholas J. Cull, "Crusading with Culture."  
from *THE COLD WAR AND THE UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY* (2008)

VIDEOS:

"Willis Conover: Making of a Jazz Ambassador" (VOA tribute):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hd4NmDbzwS4>

Press conference after Khrushchev-Nixon "Kitchen Debate" (July 24, 1959):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRgOz2x9c08>

"Lou Reed & Plastic People of the Universe" (1990 interview and concert):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcAvtuuAe5E>

CLASS 4 / Feb. 12 – Hyperpower for a Day

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, FEB. 11

Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?," from *National Interest* (1989)

Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," from *Foreign Affairs* (1990-91)

Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," from *Foreign Affairs* (1993)

Monday, Feb. 19 / NO CLASS

CLASS 5 / Feb. 26 – Hegemony and Hollywood

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, FEB. 25

Stephen Vaughn, "Morality and Entertainment,"  
from *Journal of American History* (1990)

U.S. Motion Picture Production Code (1930)

Martha Bayles, "The Washington-Hollywood Pact,"  
from *THROUGH A SCREEN DARKLY* (2014)

David Page and William Crawley, "Introduction,"  
from *SATELLITES OVER SOUTH ASIA* (2000)

\*\*\*\* SPRING BREAK – MARCH 3-11 \*\*\*

CLASS 6 / March 12 – Hollywood and Bollywood

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, MARCH 11

READINGS:

Martha Bayles, "How the World Perceives the American Dream,"  
from *ATLANTIC* (2015)

Government Of India, Board Of Film Classification Guidelines

Danny Bowe, "10 Things You Should Know About Indian Cinema,"  
from *INDIEWIRE* (2013)

"Bollywood Comes To Nigeria,"  
from *SOUTH ASIAN MAGAZINE FOR ACTION AND REFLECTION* (2003)

Anupama Chopra, "Terah Ta Kees: The DDLJ Phenomenon" (2002)

VIDEOS:

DILWALE DULHANIA LE JAYENGE (1995)

"The Brave-Hearted Will Take the Bride," available with English subtitles at:  
<http://www.einthusan.com/movies/watch.php?tamilmoviesonline=Dilwale+Dulhan+Le+Jayenge&lang=tamil&id=488>

HUMPTY SHARMA KI DULHANIA (2014)

"The Bride of Humpty Sharma," available with English subtitles at:

[https://www.amazon.com/Humpty-Sharma-Dulhanian-English-Subtitled/dp/B00YOYR5ZQ/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=instant-video&ie=UTF8&qid=1469645965&sr=1-1&keywords=Humpty+Sharma+Ki+Dulhanian+2014?\\_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&linkCode=ur2&tag=netfli-20](https://www.amazon.com/Humpty-Sharma-Dulhanian-English-Subtitled/dp/B00YOYR5ZQ/ref=sr_1_1?s=instant-video&ie=UTF8&qid=1469645965&sr=1-1&keywords=Humpty+Sharma+Ki+Dulhanian+2014?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&linkCode=ur2&tag=netfli-20)

CLASS 7 / March 19 – Hollywood and Beijing

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, MARCH 18

READINGS:

COMMUNIQUE ON THE CURRENT STATE OF THE IDEOLOGICAL SPHERE,  
Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (2013)

Ben Fritz, "For Hollywood, Not All Box Office Dollars Are Equal,"  
from WALL STREET JOURNAL (2014)

Martha Bayles, "Dream Factory or Propaganda Machine?"  
from CLAREMONT REVIEW OF BOOKS (2018)

VIDEOS:

Zhang Yimou, TO LIVE (1994):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB7HYhUpDz8>

Zhang Yimou, THE GREAT WALL (2017)

CLASS 8 / March 26 – Skewing the News

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, MARCH 25

Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel, Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1,  
from THE ELEMENTS OF JOURNALISM (Third Edition, 2014)

MEDIA OLIGARCHS GO SHOPPING,  
from Reporters Without Borders (2016)

Martha Bayles, "Will the Media Be Crushed?", from BOSTON GLOBE (2017)

CLASS 9 / April 2 – Is Big Brother Growing?

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, APRIL 1

READINGS:

“Do social media threaten democracy?” and “How the World Got Trolled,”  
from ECONOMIST (2017)

“China’s Digital Dictatorship,” from ECONOMIST (2016)

VIDEOS:

“Nosedive,” from BLACK MIRROR, Season 3, Episode 1

“Life Inside China’s Total Surveillance State,” from WALL STREET JOURNAL  
<http://www.wsj.com/video/life-inside-chinas-total-surveillance-state/CE86DA19-D55D-4F12-AC6A-3B2A573492CF.html>

Class 10 / April 9 – Hearts, Minds—and Drones

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, APRIL 8

Rufus Phillips, “Counterinsurgency in Vietnam: Lessons for Today,”  
from FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL (2015)

Thomas E. Ricks, “Foreword,” and Lt. Col. Jim Crider, “Inside the Surge,”  
Report for Center for a New American Security (2009)

James Rogers, “Drone warfare: The death of precision,”  
from BULLETIN OF ATOMIC SCIENTISTS (2017)

VIDEO:

EYE IN THE SKY (2016)  
<https://www.amazon.com/Eye-Sky-Helen-Mirren/dp/B01GPQPBYM>

Monday, April 16 / NO CLASS – Patriots’ Day

CLASS 11 / April 23 – The Fate of Academic Freedom

NOTES ON THESE READINGS  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, APRIL 22

Elizabeth Redden, "China's 'Long Arm',"  
from INSIDE HIGHER ED (2018)

Martha Bayles, "Academic Freedom in an Era of Globalization,"  
from THE AMERICAN INTEREST (2017)

Christian Smith, "Higher Education Is Drowning in BS,"  
from CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION (2018)

CLASS 12 / April 30 – Americans, Ugly and Beautiful

NOTES ON THIS ASSIGNMENT  
DUE 6 PM SUNDAY, APRIL 29

William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, "Nine Friends" (chapter 3);  
"The Ugly American and the Ugly Sarkhanese" (chapter 18);  
and "Senator, Sir" (chapter 20),  
from THE UGLY AMERICAN (1958)

FINAL EXAM DUE DATE TBA

**\*\*\* *THERE IS A LIFE AFTER BC!* \*\*\***