

UGS 303

Difficult Dialogues: Anti-Americanism

Unique Number: 62240
MWF 9-10 AM, GEA 114
Instructor: Sabine Hake (BUR 332, Hake@austin.utexas.edu)

Anti-Americanism has never been more widespread than today. Meanwhile, the process of Americanization continues unabated—namely as globalization. But what does Americanization actually mean? What are the characteristics of anti-Americanism? What makes “America” both a wish dream and a nightmare for the world? And how does the world’s love-hate relationship with America affect foreign policies, economic relations, cultural exchanges, and so forth?

We will address these important and difficult questions by considering the function of “America” as a projection screen for the hopes, fears, and desires produced by modernization, massification, and globalization. Focusing on Europe, the course retraces the long history of the European engagement with America as a real and imaginary place and then focuses on the Americanization of Europe in the twentieth century and beyond. Materials to be examined range from the images of America in art, literature, and film to historical analyses and political commentaries on the causes and effects of Anti-Americanism; this includes sections from Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*, Kafka’s *America*, and Baudrillard’s *America*.

As a Difficult Dialogues course, this course is designed to teach students how to engage with difficult material—material that includes political polemics against America (e.g., as a country and culture) and that thrives on anti-American stereotypes and clichés. To interpret these patterns, the course begins with contemporary definitions of anti-Americanism as a prejudice and a projection. These definitions are followed by a more detailed discussion of the origins of anti-Americanism and the European infatuation with all things American in the nineteenth century and the Americanization of European industry, culture, and society in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We will study the transatlantic relationship in its past and current problems, paying special attention to the dynamics of self and other that continues to fuel the prevailing fantasies and stereotypes. Including at a wide range of analyses, we will examine the current antagonisms as part of a long-standing pattern of infatuation and resentment and connect this complicated dynamic to larger questions about modern democracy, mass society, nation identity, and global capitalism.

Class format/ method of instruction: The class has a seminar format with brief introductory lectures and discussions. Of special interest to students in European Studies, American Studies, History, Sociology, and Government.

As a signature course, the course engages various skill sets such as critical reading, information literacy, and written and oral communication. It introduces students to the impressive resources at UT (i.e., so-called Gems), including libraries, archives, and visual collections (e.g., Blanton Museum), and incorporates relevant campus lectures and performances (TBA).

The course fulfills the Global Cultures Flag. The Global Cultures Flag means that a significant amount of the material will deal with cultures outside the US—in this case Europe (Germany, France, Italy, Austria) and, more specifically, the relationship between Europe and America.

Course Objectives

The main objectives of the course are to

- examine anti-Americanism in its various political, economic, social, and cultural manifestations;
- offer an overview of the history of European anti-Americanism and its counterpart, the preoccupation with all things American; and
- connect both phenomena to the Americanization of Europe in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- develop strategies for reading the kind of political, philosophical, historical, and cultural texts typical of their respective academic disciplines;
- analyze texts about America, including films and works of art, in their historical, cultural, and political contexts; and
- gain a better understanding of the political, economic, and cultural effects of anti-Americanism, including its ethical dimensions.

Grading

20% Attendance and active participation

20% individual in-class presentation (10%) and group presentation (10%)

20% midterm essay exam

40% writing assignments: a 2-page description of a university lecture (10%), a 2-page summary of an assigned reading (10%), and a 5-page critical analysis (20%) of a particular aspect addressed in at least two of the class readings (or viewings).

Required Readings

Ash, Timothy Garton. "The New Anti-Europeanism in America." In *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership*. Ed. Tod Lindberg. Chapter 7 (121-33).

Baudrillard, Jean. *America*. London: Verso, 1988. "Astral America" (51, from "There is nothing to match flying" to 73).

Berman, Russell. *Anti-Americanism in Europe: A Cultural Problem*. Stanford: Hoover Institution, 2004. Chapter 2 (31-54).

Diner, Dan. *America in the Eyes of the Germans: An Essay on Anti-Americanism*. Trans. from German by Allison Brown Preface Sander L. Gilman Princeton: Marcus Wiener, 1997. Chapter 1 (1-27).

Gelernter, David. *Americanism: The Fourth Great Western Religion*. New York: Doubleday, 2007. Chapter 1 (1-20).

Grazia, Victoria de. *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through 20th-Century Europe*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2005. Chapter 8 (376-415).

Hollander, Paul, ed. *Understanding Anti-Americanism: Its Origins and Impact at Home and Abroad* (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 2004). Introduction (3-14).

Ilf, Ilja and Petrov, Evgeny. *Ilf's and Petrov's American Roadtrip*. Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007. (15-26).

Joffe, Josef. *Überpower: The Imperial Temptation of America*. New York: Norton, 2006. Chapter 4 (95-126).

Kuisel, Richard F. *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. Chapter 9 (212-230).

Koepfen, Wolfgang. *Journey through America*. Trans. Michael Kimmage. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012. (from "the sky was improbably" on 91 to "had been tested" on 106)

Kroes, Rob. *If You've Seen One, You've Seen the Mall: Europeans and American Mass Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996. Chapter 1(1-42).

Markovits, Andrei. *Uncouth Nation: Why Europe Dislikes America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. Chapter 1 (11-37).

Nolan Mary. *The Transatlantic Century: Europe and America, 1890-2010*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Chapter 6 (154-90).

PEW Research Center. *Global Opinion 7: The Spread of Anti-Americanism* (2005).

Revel, Jean-Francois. *Anti-Americanism*. San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2000. Chapter 7 (143-70).

Ross, Andrew. "The Domestic Front." In *Anti-Americanism*. Ed. Andrew Ross and Kristin Ross. New York: New York University Press, 2004. 281-300.

Rubin, Barry and Judith Colp. *Hating America: A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. Chapter 3 (45-99).

Stam Robert and Ella Shoat, eds. *Flagging Patriotism: Crisis of Narcissism and Anti-Americanism*. London: Routledge, 2007. Chapter 1 (1-11).

Wagnleitner, Reinhold. *Coca-Colanization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994). Chapter 5 (128-49).

Required Films (chronologically)

The Oyster Princess (1919, Ernst Lubitsch, 100') YouTube

The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr West in the Land of the Bolsheviks (1924, Lev Kuleshov, 77'), YouTube and Amazon Prime

A Foreign Affair (1948, Billy Wilder, 88'), YouTube

One Two Three (1961, Billy Wilder, 104'), DVD 1992

Apaches (1973, Gottfried Kolditz, 120'), Kanopy and YouTube

Stroszek (1977, Werner Herzog, 107'), DVD 640 and YouTube