

# Politics and Film

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## POL 128 Midterm Review

### History

- Politics comes from the greek word 'polis'
- Greeks invented the earliest idea of democracy
  - People must be involved in politics (though 'citizens' were very selected people)
  - Greeks believed a person cannot be fully a person if you do not participate in community affairs

### Definition

1. Decision making mechanisms
2. A system for conflict resolution
3. Authoritative allocation of values
  - How are items/wealth (taxes) distributed
4. The search for a just society
  - How much should the government have to do? i.e. babysitting (daycare)

### 2 Different Methods

#### Empirical

- Fact based, then draw conclusions
- Looks at the world 'as it is'
- Realistic
- Aristotle, Machiavelli wrote 'The Prince' and Stats Canada

#### Normative

- Fact based + morals
- Looks at the world as it 'ought to be'= change
- Idealistic
- Plato (do things best suited for), Karl Marx (communism)

### The Concept of Power

- The ability to get what you want, regardless of what others want
- Power is relative and depends on what you are comparing x to

- Can be expressed through:
  1. Influence- works through persuasion (to/not to do something)
  2. Coercion- works through force
  3. Authority- people do what they have to do

#### Sources of Authority by Max Weber

1. Traditional- divine right, such as king, inheritance
2. Charismatic- personality compels others, people listen to you
3. Legal-rational- power through office, voting, going through appropriate laws

## State, Nation and the Government

### State: Institution

- Has a monopoly of force on the people (forced to sell land for airport)
- 4 Components
  1. Population- size does not matter
  2. Territory- people must be able to claim the land they live on
  3. Sovereignty- must be able to govern themselves
  4. Government

### Nation

- Based on common identity
- A bond shared amongst people
- Concept of nationalism: physiological feeling of being attached to a nation
  - Ethnic- emphasizing ethnic and racial difference
  - Civic- binded together through political beliefs and symbols
- Canada's identity- has no identity
- The U.S- the American dream

### Government

- They look after the people
- The government can change but the state remains the same

## Mass Media

- Print - Books, newspapers; destroyed the power the catholic church held, science advanced
- Electronic - Telegraph, cinema, tv; took off when electricity was discovered
  - Telegraph was the first form of instantaneous communication
- Digital - computer and social media
- Functions of media
  - Inform
  - Entertainment
  - Socialization - learning the values and norms of a society

## Theories of Media

- Liberal: believe in freedom, and that news companies should be privately owned
- Social responsibility: created because media is controlled by a few companies
  - Government ensures they act responsibly
  - 1) Government can own the company
  - 2)) Regulation through the CRTC which regulates what can be broadcasted
  - 3) Subsidies to make film and programming
- Authoritarianism: this happens when the government is mildly undemocratic
  - They somewhat control media (Russia)
- Marxist: mass media feeds into capitalism
  - 1) Accumulation: makes us think/belive we need it and must have it (ads)
  - 2) Legitimization: makes us think we are living in a great society, false consciousness and awareness

## Why 'X' Gets Produced and Not 'Y'

Economic filter- who owns media?

- Private entities: will only produce what makes the greatest profit
- Government: will make quality media without prioritizing profit

Legal regulatory filter

- Censorship- now limited, but once was harsh, then courts said it cannot be banned unless it damages mental makeup
- Governments require x hours of Canadian production or they can lose their licence

Technological filter

- JPM- x amount of jolts are needed to keep people interested

Ideological filter - the public gets brainwashed

- Hitler brainwashing into thinking Jews needed to be exterminated
- The Quiet America (questioning CIA) did not come out until much after 9/11
- B. Clinton was about to be impeached so he bombed Afghanistan and bombed Sudan so he saw an increase in his polls
- The justification can be faked
  - invasion of Iraq, Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction
  - Bin Laden was not connected to Hussein but the media went along with it
- Jessica Lynch- she was part of a medical team, her shit went over and when she was being rescued, it was being recorded
- She came out to say later that she was never in danger and the Iraqi gov, took better care of her than they did of their own
- Hussein had a statue in the middle of Baghdad which was knocked down
  - An officer paid men to knock it down for media coverage

## Film and its History

Eadweard Muybridge (1878)

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- Given credit for the first moving picture
- Stanford asked him to see if there was a point when a horse had all legs in the air

Jules Marey (1885)

- Came up with a refined camera
- And came up with the idea of using a strip of film
- When you ran a film through a projector, the picture was unsteady, Dickson solved this

M. Dickson

- Came up with edges/perforation on the film strip
- Worked for Edison and created kinetoscope (you looked into a hole and saw a picture)
- Set up kinetoscope parlour in 1894 to see a short film

Lumiere Brothers

- Projected larger images on a larger screen
- 1895 was their first public screening

G. Melies

- He did 'tricks' on the screen where he made things disappear
- "Trip to the Moon" could be argued to be the first sci-fi film

E. Porter

- "The great train robbery"
- He used fading scenes and many different locations

Florence Lawrence could be thought of as the first movie star and became the first person whose name was used to promote a movie, Burlington ON

D.W Griffith

- 'Intolerance' and 'Birth of a Nation'
- Pioneered the idea of a spectacular feature film
- His movie was part of the reason the KKK were re-empowered
- Paramount made 220 in 1908, today they might be lucky to make 12

## **From NYC to Hollywood, CA**

- Cheap land in Hollywood to build huge sets

- The weather was dependable as it was usually sunny
- Southern California has a variety of terrain
- Cheaper labour in Hollywood
- Artists had 0 freedom in the studio system as they were being contracted
  - They then created United Artists
- Hollywood had a lot of mess going on so they self regulated
- Sometimes, to let their movie pass censor boards, they put extra vulgar scenes to reduce other scenes
- Warner Bro, MGM, ARK, Paramount, 20th century FOX
  - They used the mass production model to create movies
  - This was an **oligopoly (several)** one studio would be a monopoly
  - Only Disney broke into the group of 5

## External Shocks

- The great depression: revenues fell by 25%
- Price fixing was illegal so the U.S Government sued them
- WW2

## Miscellaneous

- 1st showing of a movie in Canada was in Montreal 1896
- Allen brothers started the first chain of movie theatres in 1907
- 1920s is when the middle classes started going to the movies
- 1930s movies was a mass medium
- 1952 is when movies hit its peak 263 million tickets
- What did they watch?
  - Nothing really Canadian
  - WW1 came from Britain + France 40%
- There were two movie industries
- 1960s late, the government realized it was a bad idea to not produce feature films, so they thought of providing assistance

- 1967 an agency was created to produce films and tv about Canada rather than look at movies about the U.S (Canadian Film Development Corp.)

## Film as a Big Business

- Disney - Disney - \$48.8 Billion - (ABC, Disneyland)
- 20th Century Fox - News Corp. - \$33.7 B - (Fox News)
- Warner Bros - Time Warner - \$29.7 B - (CNN)
- Paramount - Viacom - \$13.7 B - (CBS)
- Universal - Comcast - \$64.5 B - (NBS)
- Columbia - Sony - \$16.5 B
- **In the 1980s there were about 50 significant film/media companies**
- TIME bought a movie studio (TIME Warner) as it was struggling
  - AOL bought out TIME Warner for the biggest buyout at the time
  - AT&T offers to buy TIME Warner for 84 billion
  - **The U.S Government blocks it because they are researching if it is a good idea**
- Captain America - 1.153B, 35% domestic, 65% international
- Rogue One Star Wars - 1.042B, 51% domestic, 49% international
- Finding Dory - 1.028B - domestic, 47% domestic, 53% international
- Zootopia - 1.023B - 33% domestic, 67% International
- The Jungle Book - 966M - 38% domestic, 62% international
- **Most of these movies depend on international markets**
- **Most of the movies are either Disney or adventure**

## Other Ways to Make Money

- Ancillary markets/rights - Pay-per-view, leased to channels
- Product placements- 'promotion,' corona in fast and furious
- Cultural imperialism
  - American ideas (being powerful) sold to other countries

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- Half of the smaller bistros and cafes in France were shut down and were replaced by McDonalds, Subway, Pizza Hut etc.
- Indian kids want to act like American kids and devalue local culture

## **Why are American Films Successful if the U.S is Disliked**

- 1) Had a head start
  - WW1 and WW2 did great damage to film industries in Europe
- 2) Money and marketing, middle class appeared first in the U.S
- 3) Had a large and affluent market
  - American workers were the first 'workers' who spent money on entertainment
- 4) Audience in the U.S was very diverse
- 5) Organization -Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)
  - The studios cooperated to get a bigger market share
- 6) Collapse of communism
  - Western movies could not be shown in communist countries
- Global prosperity
  - Money has increased and people have more money than ever
  - People who were starving are now middle class, China and India
- 8) Movies are in English
  - Most people who are educated have some English knowledge
- 9) Something about American culture that is attractive
  - You see this image of freedom and being able to do whatever they want to do
  - Going from a corporate job to making flutes in a forest