Anxiety, Atomic Bombs, and Armageddon:

How the Cold War Affected 1960s Film and Culture

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honors
in History

ROLLINS COLLEGE
Winter Park, Florida

5/2/2017

Acknowledgments

I'd like to thank my advisor, Dr. Jim Norris, for successfully guiding me through the last four years at Rollins. I'd like to thank my thesis committee, Dr. Norris, Dr. Cummings, and Dr. Chambliss, for making the time and effort to offer their advice and criticism of my work. I'd also like to thank Dr. Layne Karafantis, her assistance in the early stages of this project were much appreciated. I'd also like to acknowledge Mr. Robert Bernard, who sparked my academic interest in both history and the Cold War in particular. I owe a debt of gratitude to my best friend and `mum, Wendy Hernandez, for her consistent encouragement and optimism in the face of my many stressed and depressed monologues, and I'd like to thank my siblings for their unconditional love and support. I'm forever grateful to Hannah Strickland, Sofia Diez, Kirin Upadhyay, Karina Andujar, and Ilaff Tamli for their support and unwavering faith in my ability to complete this project.

Most importantly, I could not have completed this project without the sage wisdom of my thesis director, Dr. Julian Chambliss, who acted as the Yoda to my Luke this past year. I'd like to thank him for his endless patience in managing my stress-induced snarky attitude, and thank him for being with me every step of the way. The fact that he wrote back within the hour to reassure me after I emailed him on a Friday night two days after Christmas hysterically questioning the core of my entire paper demonstrates an impressive level of dedication. Dr. Chambliss challenged me to create my best work, and has helped me to grow as an academic simply by refusing to cut me slack, and by always holding me to a higher standard. He has acted as my biggest cheerleader throughout this entire paper, and while I often entered his office feeling overwhelmed, I always left his office feeling heartened. The outcome of this thesis is as much a testament to my skill as a writer and a historian as to his skill as a professor and mentor.

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Introduction:

In *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol,* the renowned pop artist wrote, "What's great about this country is that… you can be watching TV and see Coca-Cola, and you know that the President drinks Coke, Liz Taylor drinks Coke, and just think, you can drink Coke, too."[1] Warhol's quote highlights two important trends of the 1960s, namely, the rise of a consumer society, and the rise of a celebrity culture. This was the period of John F. Kennedy, the photogenic President who was pals with Frank Sinatra. It was a period symbolized by Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, and Muhammad Ali, all of whom had reached a new level of cult celebrity status, helped along by the growth of mass media and advertising. The early 1960s were bright and exciting, glossy and glamorous, and yet, they were also fraught with tension.

Domestic anxiety shadowed the rise of the "scandalous" counterculture, which emerged as an aspect of the broad political movement dubbed the New Left. Political activism and racial tension were ripe in the 1960s, as peaceful sit-ins and marches were often met with violence. Looming large over all of this was the specter of Communism and the ideological struggle of the Cold War raging against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The knowledge that the Soviets could spy with their satellites, could conquer space, and could wipe out the entirety of the population with nuclear warheads, was knowledge that every American in the 1960s had to live with. The anxiety created by these Cold War fears led to a 1960s culture that was very politically aware. Americans eagerly consumed information on each fresh Cold War crisis and followed international events closely. For example, a 1963 survey taken immediately after the Cuban Missile Crisis asked Americans how the Kennedy Administration was doing at winning

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1 Jason Kottke, "Andy Warhol on Coca-Cola," *Kottke.org,* Oct. 18, 2010. http://kottke.org/10/10/andy-warhol-on-coca-cola

the cold war with Russia, 25% felt it was doing a very good job, and 44% felt it was doing a fairly good job.[2]

The increased Cold War anxiety and political activism of the 1960s created a very open and critical cultural space in which Americans began to offer fresh and bold takes on the perilous time in which they were living. Hollywood was one such space. The Cold War films that were released in the 1960s differed from those of previous decades, largely because Hollywood was no longer rigidly censored by the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in its depictions of Cold War inspired politics. This new freedom meant that filmmakers could break with the HUAC-imposed trends of the 1950s, and thus, the enemy as depicted onscreen in the 1960s was often the Cold War itself, rather than the Soviets.

According to the filmmakers, the anxieties and fears of the period were to blame for creating such a politically dangerous environment. Many of these new Cold War inspired films contained warnings about the nature of the Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) strategy, automated retaliation, the arms race, accidental nuclear war, and the tension between the military and the civilian leaders. Therefore, the films of the 1960s act as mirrors that reflect the concerns plaguing Americans as they contemplated the consequences of Cold War ideology and action. In this paper, I will analyze selected Cold War films and demonstrate how they related to a significant crisis of the 1960s, the Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC). I will argue that these films can be used as historical sources that demonstrate how the Cold War influenced American culture and film in the 1960s.

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2 Opinion Research Corporation. Voters Appraise Dimensions of Kennedy Leadership Survey, Mar, 1963 [survey question]. USORC.63KENNEDY.R06C. Opinion Research Corporation [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Mar-30-2017.

The literature reviewed for this paper covers the intersection of the Cold War and popular culture in the United States. The major literature featured in the first three chapters set the stage for my later analysis and contain a discussion of American culture and politics. John Lewis Gaddis' *The Cold War: A New History* described the dueling politics and ideology of the US and the USSR that so characterized the conflict, as well as the security dilemma that drove the arms race. *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* by J. Hoberman, looked at the rising celebrity culture that accompanied the Kennedy administration. His work discussed how Kennedy used the media to his advantage, and how Kennedy inspired several films of the period. Margot A. Henrikson's *Dr. Strangelove's America* was used quite extensively. Henrikson explored deep cultural trends that appeared in the 1960s such as the shelter craze, bomb anxiety, black humor, civil defense, and the youth culture, and analyzed how they affected average Americans. Robert A. Jacobs' papers, "There Are No Civilians; We are All at War," and "Atomic Kids: Duck and Cover," offered a closer look at the civil defense phenomenon in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Jacobs analyzed survival narratives, the shelter morality debate, and argued that civil defense affected the youth of the 1950s psychologically, which caused their intense political activism in the '60s.

The literature contained in chapters four and five mainly dealt with film, and film history. Rather than using the methodology of film scholars when analyzing these films, I use the approach taken by the scholarly journal, *Film and History*, which examines how films respond to contemporary pressures, and how contemporary pressures respond to films, and argues that it is this interaction that tells us something about history. Robert Rosenstone's *History on Film/Film on History* was useful in providing a framework for historians looking at films as historical sources. *Atomic Bomb Cinema* by Jerome Shapiro traced the history of nuclear bomb films from

the 1950s through to the 1960s, as well as their influences. Dan Lindley's teaching guide to Dr. Strangelove, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie," covered topics like MAD, deterrence, security dilemmas, and civil-military relations and analyzed how they played out in the film. "Bomb Media, 1953-64," by Tristan Abbott traced the evolution of civil defense films, and talked about how the civil defense materials were full of misinformation. I also used Jonathan Kirshner's work, "Subverting the Cold War in the 1960s," in which he analyzed Dr. Strangelove as a film that attacked the very idea of the Cold War itself, rather than simply choosing an enemy out of the right or the left, as had been done before.

My approach to film in this study should be understood as distinct from film studies practices that emphasize theories, critical approaches, and technical aspects of film production. This is a historical analysis, and I approach film as a historian hoping to utilize film as a historical source from which I can further understand the anxieties and fears of the American people of the 1960s. I chose specific films because I believe they explore significant themes historians have articulate define the Cold War and the Cuban Missile Crisis. These films reflect one aspect of the complex 1960s popular culture narrative in the United States, and can thus be utilized to support my historical analysis of the period.

I have divided this paper into five chapters. The first chapter, "Cold War: The Preview," explores the Cold War as an ideological conflict between the USSR and the US, and discusses the political and military impact of the nuclear bomb. Chapter two, entitled, "Cold War: The Opening Act," dives into McCarthyism and the foreign policy of the 1950s. Chapter three, "Cold War: Life as Theater," talks about the domestic anxiety regarding the bomb, and the evolution of the Civil Defense program. I also discuss the rise of the counterculture and the foreign policy of the Kennedy administration, including the Cuban Missile Crisis. In the last two chapters, I

analyze the major themes of five films of the 1960s, and how they reflect broader ideas about the Cold War held by Americans during the 1960s. Chapter four, "Nuclear Anxiety and Accidents in 1960s Film," discusses the new direction of the Cold War films of the 1960s, and explains how film history can be useful to the historian albeit in different ways than that of written history. *A Gathering of Eagles* (1963), *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), and *Fail-Safe* (1964), are all analyzed in this chapter. The final chapter, "Military Hawks and Spies in 1960s Film," is devoted to analyzing *The Bedford Incident* (1965), and *Topaz* (1969). While numerous other works were used, the ultimate implication of the thesis is that the culture of the Cold War influenced the films of the 1960s, which in turn influenced and were influenced by the public's reactions to the events of the Cold War. This implication rests on my analysis of these films as windows on the anxieties, fears, and criticisms that were held by Americans during the 1960s, and that can thus be treated by historians as valuable historical sources.

Chapter One: The Cold War Preview

Part One: The Post-War Scene 1945-50

The emergence of the Cold War did not allow any respite from hostilities following the end of the Second World War. After the victorious powers sat down at Yalta to discuss their visions for a post-war world, it became clear that they were imagining two incompatible futures. According to Melvyn Leffler, "most scholars looking at Soviet documents now agree that Stalin had no master plan to spread revolution or conquer the world. He was determined to establish a sphere of influence in eastern Europe where his communist minions would rule."[3] In contrast, the United States hoped for a collective security system in which international cooperation, free trade, and the balance of power were the order of the day.[4] Neither vision could prevail whilst the other existed, and thus a battle of ideologies was born. It was in this battle that the roots of the Cold War existed, for the Soviet Union believed that communism would eventually triumph just as the United States believed in the supremacy of capitalism and democracy. Although their ideologies were vastly different, the mindsets of the USSR and the US during the Cold War were roughly the same. It was, as authors James Blight and Janet Lang explained, akin to, "Our system will triumph in the end, not yours; your people are the aggressors, not ours; you better watch your step or we will raise the ante all over the world…"[5] Thus, at its most fundamental level, the Cold War was an ideological war.

Several postwar problems contributed to the inevitable ideological war brewing between the Soviet Union and the United States. Those problems included the occupation of defeated

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3 Melvyn Leffler, "The Cold War: What Do 'We Now Know'?" *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 2 (April 1999): 508. http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2650378.pdf

4 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 27.

5 James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, *The Armageddon Letters: Kennedy/Khrushchev/Castro in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2012), 47.

enemies, the spheres of influence that had been created, and the atomic bomb.[6] Each problem in

turn became a point of public spectacle that added to the all-consuming nature of the Cold War

landscape. The occupation of Berlin, for example, became a useful propaganda tool in which the

actual implementation of the ideologies of communism and capitalism could be compared side

by side. Western newspapers often indulged their readers in such comparisons, usually

attempting to illustrate the superiority of West Berlin. For example, the August 8, 1953 headline

of the *Illustrated London News*, read, "The Berlin Food Distributions: US and West German

Generosity to East Germany Meets with Eager Acceptance."[7] These comparisons to the thriving

West Berlin hurt the ability of the Soviet propaganda machine to persuade East Germans that

communism was the better economic system, because, as John Lewis Gaddis notes, "The

western-occupied parts of Berlin became a permanent advertisement for the virtues of capitalism

and democracy in the middle of communist East Germany."[8]

The postwar situation encouraged and legitimized thinking about the world in terms of

spheres of influence. After all, much of Europe was already under certain spheres of influence,

depending on occupations and alliances. The Second World War had only left two countries

standing; they became, rightly so, the two superpowers. Each became obsessed with expanding

their spheres of influence as if to prove the emergence of one "super" power.[9] For Stalin's part, a

sphere of influence was necessary for national security and economic reconstruction. Indeed,

historian Walter LaFeber notes that, "Stalin's thrusts after 1944 were rooted more in the Soviets'

desire to secure certain specific strategic bases, raw materials, and above all, to break up what

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6 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 26.
7 "The Berlin Food Distributions: US and West German Generosity to East Germany Meets with Eager Acceptance," *Illustrated London News*, (London, UK) August 8, 1953, The British Newspaper Archive. http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0001578/19530808/050/0018?_=1490624001108
8 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 112.
9 Fred Inglis, *The Cruel Peace: Everyday Life and the Cold War* (New York: BasicBooks, 1991), 428.

Stalin considered to be growing Western encirclement of Russia."[10] Creating a sphere of influence proved especially difficult for the Soviet Union, because while the creation of fear ensured domestic power, it did not encourage the people of Europe to choose communism.[11] The United States, in contrast, did not need to rely on fear tactics to demonstrate why democracy and capitalism were better. According to John Gaddis, "the basic ideological asymmetry" rested on this point.[12] In the long run, the people in the U.S. sphere of influence, flushed with consumer goods and freedom of speech, chose democracy and capitalism.

Nonetheless, the United States was determined to both spread its sphere of influence, and to contain that of the Soviet Union. This strategy of containing communism was born from George Kennan's 1946 analysis of Soviet intentions, dubbed the "long telegram." In his 8,000-word telegram, Kennan, the American charge d'affaires in Moscow, had cautioned the State department that what was needed was a, "long term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies."[13] Containment became the driving force behind much of the United States' foreign policy from 1946 until the end of the Cold War. Along with containment, the National Security Council Paper No. 68 also became a significant part of Cold War policy for the United States. This document, a top-secret review of American policies created in 1950, recommended that the US, "strike out on a bold and massive program of rebuilding the West's defensive potential to surpass that of the Soviet world, and of meeting each fresh challenge promptly and unequivocally. Such a program must have the United States at its political and material center with other free nations in variable orbits around it."[14]

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10 Walter LaFeber, America, Russia, and the Cold War (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc, 1967), 23.
11 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 99.
12 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 98.
13 Ibid, 29.
14 Ibid, 76.

These ideas were inherent in the Truman Doctrine, which "established that the United States would provide political, military and economic assistance to all democratic nations under threat from external or internal authoritarian forces."[15] The Truman Doctrine established a precedent for foreign intervention that the US would follow for the entirety of the Cold War. For example, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the creation of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were all directly justified as necessary measures to prevent communism from spreading. Likewise, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) actions in countries such as Afghanistan, Greece, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Cuba, to name just a few, were largely undertaken in the name of ensuring that their national leaders were firmly anti-communist.[16] Likewise, the Soviet Union assisted communist movements in China, North Vietnam, and North Korea in the names of anti-imperialism and spreading a global worker's revolution. Thus, according to LaFeber,

> "By the mid-1950s, each superpower believed that the future vitality of its ideological, economic, and strategic systems depended upon 'winning' the third world…the United States and Russia were expansive forces, and had been so in many areas since at least the 19th century. The Cold War sharpened these drives, allowing each side to intensify its dynamic, historic expansion with the defensive terms 'anti-Communism' or 'anti-Imperialism.'"[17]

As John Lewis Gaddis explained, even while the US was going on the *offensive* through economic incentives like the Marshall Plan, containment was paramount as a *defensive* measure to counter Soviet expansion. After all, in 1949 alone, Mao and the communists had taken China, West Berlin had been blockaded, a communist East German state was created, and the Russians had exploded their own atomic bomb. A year later, the North Korean communists, backed by the

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15 "The Truman Doctrine," Office of the Historian, US State Department, 2017.
https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/truman-doctrine
16 Steve Kangas, "A Timeline of CIA Atrocities," Global Research News, May 17, 2016.
http://www.globalresearch.ca/a-timeline-of-cia-atrocities/5348804
17 Walter LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War (New York: Joh Wiley and Sons, Inc, 1967), 173.

Soviet Union and China, invaded democratic South Korea. From President Truman's point of view, the menace of the communist threat was everywhere.[18]

Containment was a matter of national security, and it reflected the fact that the Cold War was an enormous security dilemma, or a "situation in which one state acts to make itself safer, but in doing so diminishes the security of one or more other states, which in turn try to repair the damage through measures that diminish the security of the first state."[19] The security dilemma built within the Cold War is what fueled the arms race and the nuclear buildup. After the Soviets saw what had occurred at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they raced to create an atomic bomb of their own to ensure their national security against the Americans. Once they had succeeded in doing so, the Americans raced to create a more powerful bomb, the H-bomb, to ensure their national security against the Soviets, and so on. Due especially to the deep mistrust of one another's intentions, the United States and the Soviet Union had no chance of reversing the deep spiral they were caught in. The Cold War, "a zero-sum situation in which any nation's gain" was the other loss.[20] Therefore, U.S. leaders had to consistently make gains abroad and guard against losing the public confidence at home. The complexity of balancing these perspectives was made more complex by the escalating danger in the period. For all the promise of national security, the entire human race could now be wiped out with the push of a button. The reality of the nuclear bomb shaped American politics and culture during the Cold War.

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18 Fred Inglis, *The Cruel Peace: Everyday Life and the Cold War* (New York: BasicBooks, 1991), 111.
19 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 27.
20 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 665. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558

Part Two: Introducing the Bomb

The bomb shaped policy and public awareness of the danger posed by the Cold War.

American policy was based upon the strategist, Bernard Brodie's statement, which held that,

"Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its

chief purpose must be to avert them."[21] From this statement came the policies of deterrence and

Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), that would characterize the rest of the Cold War. One of

the very scientists who had worked to create the atomic bomb, Eugene Rabinowitch, warned in

The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, "The invention of atomic weapons has made another total war

the suicide of civilization… there is no defense against the bomb."[22] Before the bomb, politicians

and generals contemplated the death of troops, and the loss of land. After the bomb, they were

forced to contemplate the decimation of the world's population. Therefore, concern about how to

prevent Soviet expansion now that the atomic bomb had changed the dynamic around war

created a public debate about America's new role in the Cold War world order. Historian Denise

Bostdorff writes,

> "An editorial in *Newsweek*, for example, opined, 'If Greece is lost, a Communist scythe will
> curve around the head of Turkey, which already has Communist bayonets at its back. Russia
> would, or could, control the Eastern Mediterranean.' In his March 7 commentary, ABC's Earl
> Godwin told listeners that 'somebody has got to do something and they're all looking at your
> Uncle Sam.' A *New York Times* headline went so far as to declare, 'Survival of Western
> Civilization is held to depend on our actions.'"[23]

Clearly, then, Americans felt the urgency of the Cold War conflict, and recognized their

country's responsibility to contain communism; however, like their policymakers, they were not

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21 Bruce Kuklick, "Book Review of Gregg Herken's the Winning Weapon: the Atomic Bomb in the Cold War 1945-50," in *American Historical Review* 87, no. 1: (Feb 1, 1982), 285.
22 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 94.
23 Denise M. Bostdorff, *Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine: the Cold War Call to Arms*, (Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 10.

advocating using the nuclear bomb to do so. There were no benefits to engaging in a war when both sides had nuclear weapons, because, "for the first time in history no one could be sure of winning, or even surviving, a great war."[24] Thus, it was of vital importance for the survival of humanity not to *use* nuclear weapons. However, it was of equal importance to both the United States and the Soviet Union to *have* nuclear weapons, both to deter the enemy and to assuage the fears of the public. In a 1952 survey, when asked, "If we did get into a big war with Russia, do you think we should use the atom bomb right away, or should we use it only if they use it first?" 70% responded that the US should use the atom bomb right away.[25] Likewise, when Americans were asked in 1953, "If the US should get into another world war, do you think the hydrogen bomb would be used against this country?" 67% said yes.[26] Clearly, then, Americans viewed the bomb as a military advantage that could be utilized, and "The problem now was not so much how to defeat an adversary as how to convince him not to go to war in the first place."[27]

The arms race was causing nuclear stockpiles to grow at alarming rates, on a scale literally dubbed, "overkill." This scale, "measured how many times the United States could kill the entire Soviet population and the world, plus how many times the Soviets could do the same. By the end of the 1960s, the overkill factor was well above 10 and perhaps as high as 50."[28] In the midst of this arms race, American Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara came up with the idea of MAD, or Mutually Assured Destruction. MAD was a theory that assumed that if one

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24 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 262.
25 National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago. Foreign Affairs Survey, May, 1952 [survey question]. USNORC.520325.R08. National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Mar-30-2017.
26 Gallup Organization. Gallup Poll (AIPO), Jan, 1953 [survey question]. USGALLUP.53-510.QK10B. Gallup Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Mar-30-2017.
27 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 62.
28 Ronnie D. Lipschutz, *Cold War Fantasies: Film, Fiction, and Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2001), 85.

party initiated a nuclear attack, the other party would naturally retaliate in kind, which would mean mutually assured destruction for both parties involved, making the initiation of a nuclear attack a completely mad, or insane, action. McNamara essentially believed that nuclear weapons would never be used, because no one was that stupid or suicidal.[29] A 1956 *New York Times* article reported a speech given by General Maxwell Taylor, the Army Chief of Staff; according to Taylor, "'it was increasingly improbable' that any nation would deliberately embark on an atomic war… 'because the danger of suicide is too great for any country to take its existence upon the dubious results of such a war.'"[30] This reasoning was still the basis upon which US foreign policy was founded in 1965, when a *Life* article wrote of the theory, "In the nerve-racking game of nuclear deterrence, the stakes are, quite literally, national survival…So that the men in the Kremlin shall have no doubt about the consequences of nuclear war, secretary of Defense Robert McNamara has wisely publicized the extent of US power."[31]

While a great number of people did accept McNamara's theory, one of the most celebrated nuclear strategists of the day, Herman Kahn, had a different theory. While McNamara believed that there were no winners in a nuclear war, Kahn did believe victory was possible, depending on acceptable casualty levels.[32] In his book, *On Thermonuclear War,* Kahn offers an explanation, "If one says that it is not true that everybody is killed but that only 50 million are, this does not mean that the speaker is implying that 50 million people are a small number, but

29 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 80.
30 "Gen. Taylor Calls Atom War Unlikely," *New York Times* (New York, NY), October 28, 1956. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1956/10/28/90752091.html?action=click&contentCollection=Archives&module=ArticleEndCTA&region=ArchiveBody&pgtype=article&pageNumber=48
31 Dr. Ralph E. Lapp, "The Nuclear Power of China," *Life*, May 28, 1965. https://books.google.com/books?id=8FIEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA90&dq=mcnamara+deterrence&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiRx93ZpYPTAhXGMSYKHSyuBi0Q6AEIKDAD#v=onepage&q=mcnamara%20deterrence&f=false
32 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 664. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558

that 50 million people are much less than 150 million."[33] *Time* reviewed Kahn's book in 1961,

writing, "Herman Kahn's ponderous shocker, *On Thermonuclear War,* frequently mentions a

weapon whose purpose is to end all human life: the Doomsday Machine. Kahn discusses its

political uses as calmly as if it were a bug killer, but he gives few technical details."[34] Despite the

macabre thoughts contained in Kahn's reasoning, his book sold more than fourteen thousand

copies in its first three months.[35] Kahn's line of reasoning was dangerous because it accepted the

deaths of millions as collateral damage.[36] In fact, "nuke speak," the cold and death-ridden

terminology used by nuclear strategists to discuss apocalyptic scenarios, was blamed by anti-

nuclear activists for making the annihilation of entire populations seem normal and justifiable.

The American astronomer and anti-nuclear activist, Carl Sagan, said of the nuclear arms race,

> "Imagine a room awash in gasoline, and there are two implacable enemies in that room. One of them has nine thousand matches. The other has seven thousand matches. Each of them is concerned about who's ahead, who's stronger. Well that's the kind of situation we are actually in. The amount of weapons that are available to the United States and the Soviet Union are so bloated, so grossly in excess of what's needed to dissuade the other, that if it weren't so tragic, it would be laughable. What is necessary is to reduce the matches and to clean up the gasoline."[37]

Both McNamara and Kahn agreed that the strategy of deterrence was essential in the

nuclear age. Deterrence is the practice of deterring your enemy from attacking you, through the

implicit threat of retaliation if they did attack. As Dan Lindley explains, "Whether one can

produce enough fear to prevent an attack depends not just on one's own capabilities and resolve,

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33 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 203.
34 Nov. 24, 1961 Time Magazine, Science: fy for Doomsday
http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/printout/0,8816,828877,00.html
35 Louis Menand, "Fat Man," *The New Yorker*, June 27, 2005.
http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/06/27/fat-man
36 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 664.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558
37 Carl Sagan, "Nuclear War and Deterrence Panel following the Television Movie, The Day After," ABC News Viewpoint, November 20, 1983. http://todayinsci.com/S/Sagan_Carl/SaganCarl-Nuclear-Quotations.htm

but also on the adversary's values and emotional state. Deterrence is impossible if the enemy

fears nothing and does not mind being dead and destroyed."[38] Both the United States and the

Soviet Union engaged in deterrence by issuing public threats to one another. This deterrence

strategy was successful; however, it also had an unfortunate side effect. The threats of nuclear

tests, long range missiles, and belligerent rhetoric produced such an intense and anxious

environment for the normal citizenry that they became genuinely afraid that a nuclear war was

almost inevitable: a Gallup Poll in 1964 revealed that when asked to respond to the question,

"No matter what the US does, the Russian leaders won't risk launching a nuclear war," 29% of

Americans agreed, 52% disagreed, and 19% were unsure."[39]

Disregarding this, American strategists sought to strengthen the MAD concept by

automating retaliation and by decentralizing nuclear command control. Lindley writes that in this

scenario, "ruling out human meddling is crucial because one must make credible the incredible

threat of suicide."[40] Thus, even if a first strike wiped out every human capable of initiating

retaliation, the attacker would still be doomed because the machine would immediately initiate

retaliation itself. Likewise, retaliation would occur even in the event of an accidental launch

because a machine would not recognize a mistake, thus, in disposing human judgment,

automated retaliation made nuclear warfare more likely. Similarly, in decentralizing nuclear

command control, strategists made nuclear warfare more probable. Lindley notes, "If the enemy

does not know who controls the bombs and under what circumstances authorization for their use

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38 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 663. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558

39 Institute for International Social Research. Hopes And Fears, Sep, 1964 [survey question]. USGALLUP.633POS.Q37F. Gallup Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Mar-28-2017.

40 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 663. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558

"devolves" to lower levels of command, perhaps they would not initiate combat in the first place."[41] Thus, the politicians of the era had to think in suicidal terms, talk in threats, and create fear, in an ironic attempt to protect humanity.

The risky political strategies nuclear deterrence necessitated created an environment in which espionage was essential. In a world where miscommunication or misinformation could lead to the death of humanity, intelligence became currency. In his book on Eisenhower and space espionage, Phillip Taubman explores how the Eisenhower administration embarked on a program with the science and defense industries to create hardware that would allow the US to spy on the Soviets. Out of this program came weapons such as nuclear powered submarines, spy satellites and planes, and intercontinental ballistic missiles. Eisenhower relied heavily on the intelligence collected by these new systems. The program that he developed meant that he was usually one step ahead of the Soviets and two steps ahead of the American public. Taubman asserts that, "The ambition of Dwight Eisenhower's espionage endeavors was exceedingly high- to overcome a terrifying blindness that left the nation vulnerable to surprise attack and to defeat an acute fear of the unknown threatening to disfigure American society. He succeeded."[42]

This, then, was the age of satellite reconnaissance and U2 overhead flights, a new age of transparency where weapons could not be concealed and surprise attacks could not be waged.[43] The U2 fell under the jurisdiction of the CIA, which was created in 1947 from the remnants of the OSS. The agency quickly became a major element in US Cold War foreign policy, because in a world where war could dissolve into a nuclear apocalypse, and where diplomacy was

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41 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 664. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558
42 Phillip Taubman, *Secret Empire: Eisenhower, the CIA, and the Hidden Story of America's Space Espionage,* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003), xvi.
43 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 262.

ineffective, covert action was the increasingly preferred third option.[44] The CIA intervened in the governments of Guatemala (1954), Iran (1953), Haiti (1959), Congo (1960), Dominican Republic (1961), South Vietnam (1963), Brazil (1964), and in Chile (1973), usually in the form of coups or assassinations. Overthrowing governments was just one of the many things the CIA did in the name of winning the Cold War for America. Propaganda, reconnaissance, wiretapping, turning agents, stealing secrets, and gathering information were all part of the game as well. As the 1960s went on, the power of the CIA grew as the government relied more heavily on the agency. The scope of the CIA's actions was so vast that, according to John Lewis Gaddis, "By the end of the 1950s, it had an almost mythic reputation throughout Latin America and the Middle East as an instrument with which the United States could depose governments it disliked, whenever it wished to do so."[45]

Covert activity had never been looked upon kindly in the United States, and despite its contributions in the Cold War, it still wasn't. Espionage was a shadowy, morally gray area- it wasn't particularly noble or glamorous to crouch in the dirt and spy on people for hours on end. Americans, however, rationalized this behavior in large part because the Soviet intelligence agency, the KGB, was engaging in it. In the minds of the Americans, if the Soviets were playing dirty, then they would have to play dirty as well.[46] When Americans were asked if they generally approved or disapproved of the United States operating spy ships to pick up messages from inside Communist areas, 73% responded that they approved.[47] Clearly, then, "as the Cold War

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44 Ronnie D. Lipschutz, *Cold War Fantasies: Film, Fiction, and Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2001), 57.
45 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 166.
46 Lipschutz, Ronnie D. Lipschutz, *Cold War Fantasies: Film, Fiction, and Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2001), 59.
47 Louis Harris & Associates. Harris Survey, Feb, 1968 [survey question]. USHARRIS.021068.R2. Louis Harris & Associates [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Mar-29-2017.

wore on, they went from regarding these compromises as regrettable to considering them necessary, then normal, and then even desirable. A kind of moral anesthesia settled in."[48] For all of its faults, the CIA had garnered some big achievements. One *New York Times* series noted that the CIA's successes included, "its precise prediction of the date on which the Chinese Communists would explode a nuclear device; its fantastic world of electronic devices; its use of a spy, Oleg Penkovskiy, to reach into the Kremlin itself; its work in keeping the Congo out of Communist control…"[49] Due to the nature of the Cold War, the Central Intelligence Agency was dubbed a national security necessity, and regardless of its reputation, it was here to stay.

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48 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 180.
49 Tom Wicker, John W. Finney, Max Frankel, E.W. Kenworthy, "The C.I.A.: Maker of Policy, or Tool? Agency Raises Questions Around the World," *New York Times* (New York, NY), April 25, 1966.
https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1966/04/25/80004358.html?pageNumber=20

Chapter Two: The Opening Act of the Cold War

Part One: The Fifties Scene 1950-59

The 1950s was a decade fraught with foreign policy dangers, and yet Eisenhower's America was the *picture* of calm serenity. The reigning attitude of the United States in the 1950s was one of conformity, because drawing attention to yourself could get you labelled a communist. Alan Nadel argues that this type of conformist political domestic containment was a form of social control, and was, "congruent to and commensurate with the American foreign and domestic policy of containing communism."[50] Hence, Americans tried to follow the carefree attitude of their smiling president, who advised them that, "everybody ought to be happy every day. Play hard, have fun doing it, and despise wickedness."[51] Eisenhower resisted public worry about events like Sputnik or the Soviet ICBM program, refused to increase defense spending, and rejected the idea of a nationwide system of fallout shelters. Ryan Boyle argues that, "by appearing unworried about Sputnik he hoped to reassure the public that there was nothing to worry about. This time, though, he was the only one who was not worried. *Newsweek* proclaimed the satellite, 'a defeat in three fields: In pure science, in practical know-how, and in psychological Cold War.'"[52]

Indeed, although many Americans appeared content in the 1950s, they were incredibly anxious about the Cold War environment in which they were living. Jules Masserman, a psychiatrist, warned in 1947 that in the shadow of the nuclear bomb, "no sentient man or woman

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50 Alan Nadel, *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 117.
51 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 89.
52 Ryan Boyle, "A Red Moon over the Mall: The Sputnik Panic and Domestic America," *Journal of American Culture* 31, no. 4 (October 29, 2008): 373-382. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2008.00684.x/full

can really find peace of mind and body."[53] This anxiety was not helped by civil defense films,

which tried to induce a measured level of panic in order to combat the disdain Americans held

towards preparing for the nuclear apocalypse.[54] Lars Nowak explains how civil defense

propaganda tried to:

> "mold the population's emotional response to nuclear weapons in a way that would avert them from two extremes. On the one hand, overwhelming terror and a fatalistic attitude that could result from it had to be overcome… On the other hand, the civil defense rhetoric could not completely ignore the population's anxieties about nuclear weapons but had to acknowledge them in some way…Civil defense officials… felt that people would only follow their advice if they were convinced of the necessity to do so."[55]

Civil defense films implored Americans to become afraid and distressed about the

nation's lack of preparedness. One civil defense cartoon showed a man suffering from

"nuclearosis," an affliction in which the affected could "only think of the awfulness of the

nuclear bomb."[56] Paul Boyer points out that while generalized anxiety about nuclear war was

still significant, after the H-Bomb test in 1954, Americans also began fearing radioactive fallout.

"A *McCalls* article warned of 'Fallout, the Silent killer.' The title of a *Saturday Evening Post*

article minced no words: 'Radioactivity is Poisoning Your Children.'"[57] Boyer also discusses the

prevalence of nuclear fears in 1950s science fiction, mentioning films like *Hiroshima Mon*

Amour, which featured footage of Hiroshima after the A-bomb attack, and *On the Beach*, which

provoked a cabinet meeting on how to contest the film's frightening message.[58] Likewise, in a

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53 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 92.
54 Ibid, 111.
55 Lars Nowak, "Images of Nuclear War in US Government Films from the Early Cold War," in *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought, and Nuclear Conflict, 1945-90*, ed. Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 262.
56 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 107.
57 Paul Boyer, "Sixty Years and Counting: Nuclear Themes in American Culture, 1945 to the Present," in *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought, and Nuclear Conflict, 1945-90,* ed. Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 79.
58 Ibid, 79.

1956 Gallup Poll, when Americans were asked if they thought their family would be likely to live through an atomic war, 39% responded no, and 33% responded that they didn't know.[59] Surrounded by this culture of nuclear fear, Americans turned to the home to escape from the worries and perils of the outside world. They sought the warmth of domesticity in an alienating and terrifying age. This idea of "domestic containment," as articulated by Elain Tyler May, held that, "the self-contained home held out the promise of security in an insecure world."[60]

Many Americans were insecure and fearful due to the destructive anti-communist campaign dubbed McCarthyism. Joseph McCarthy, the Wisconsin Senator who, in 1950, infamously claimed to have a list of 205 State department employees who were members of the Communist Party, was not the first nor the only politician to endorse a radical anticommunist agenda. Anti-communism had always been prevalent in American society.[61] The latent anti-communist feelings of society turned into the very real policies of McCarthyism in large part due to the anti-communist atmosphere created by the Cold War. Leaders like J. Edgar Hoover took advantage of the Cold War tension, and presented the anticommunist agenda to the government as a necessary security measure.[62] Once the government was convinced, it used the entire power of the state to combat the very *possibility* of domestic communism. In practice, this meant loyalty screenings, FBI investigations, criminal prosecutions, and congressional hearings.[63]

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59 Gallup Organization. Gallup Poll (AIPO), Jun, 1956 [survey question]. USGALLUP.56-566.Q021. Gallup Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Apr-1-2017.

60 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 1.

61 Nick Fischer, *Spider Web: The Birth of American Anticommunism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), xiii.

62 Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), xv.

63 Nick Fischer, *Spider Web: The Birth of American Anticommunism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), xv.

The Hollywood Blacklist, the House on Un-American Activities Committee, the Rosenberg trial, and the Internal Security Act were all examples of the pervasiveness of the red purge within society. The lives, careers, and institutions of thousands of liberal or left-wing Americans were destroyed as McCarthyism dominated the political landscape of the 1950s. Ellen Schrecker writes of McCarthyism, "The political chill that settled over the US during the late 1940s and 1950s made many Americans hesitate to criticize the government or join any organization to the left of the democratic party."[64] A Gallup poll taken in July of 1954 demonstrates that Americans chafed at this restrictive and vindictive atmosphere, with 49% of Americans holding an unfavorable opinion of Senator McCarthy some 6 months prior to his censure by the Senate.[65] McCarthyism was meant to destroy the dangers of communism, but its policies became far more dangerous to American citizens than domestic communism ever was.[66] Ironically, in trying to eradicate the ideology of the Soviet government, the American government acted similarly to the Soviet government it claimed to be so very different from. Anti-communist leaders used the powerful apparatus of the state to "turn dissent into disloyalty," creating an atmosphere in which conformity and silence were fortified by fear.[67]

Anti-communism was at the heart of both domestic and foreign policy for the U.S. government. Just as McCarthyism was born out of paranoia about the spread of communists within the US borders, policy makers were also concerned about the spread of communism worldwide. Eisenhower articulated this fear of global communist domination with the 1954

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64 Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), xiii.
65 Gallup Organization. Gallup Poll (AIPO), Jul, 1954 [survey question]. USGALLUP.54-534.Q23. Gallup Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Apr-1-2017.
66 Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), xi.
67 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 92.

domino theory: "You have a row of dominos set up, you knock over the first one, and… the last

one… will go over very quickly. So you could have… a disintegration that would have the most

profound influences."[68] The domino theory justified US intervention in countries that chose

communism or that were influenced by the Soviet Union. Walter Lafeber argues that because

Eisenhower viewed the Soviet threat as an ideological one, he viewed it as a united and global

threat.[69] The solution to this problem became the Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957, which was a

declaration, "to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence of such

nations, requesting such aid against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by

international communism."[70]

By 1958, the United States had obligations to defend 43 countries from attack through

treaties, besides its prominent role as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO).[71] America's rush to cement alliances perhaps had to do with the many worrisome

foreign policy events that occurred late in the decade. The Soviets shocked the world with the

1957 launch of the Sputnik satellite, which meant that Americans had to contend with the

frightening prospect of the Soviets spying on the US from orbit. The *New York Times* wrote of

the event, "If the spirit of arrogance and vindictiveness were not already in the Russian

Communists the sputnik helped to put it there."[72] President Eisenhower responded by creating

the National Air and Space Agency (NASA) in 1958, starting the space race, one of the most

expensive competitions of the Cold War. In 1959, the Cuban Revolution occurred, with the

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68 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 123.
69 Walter Lafeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1967), 151.
70 "The Eisenhower Doctrine, 1957," *The Office of the Historian*, U.S. Department of State.
https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/eisenhower-doctrine
71 John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, The Soviet Union, and The United States: An Interpretative History* (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc, 1978), 221.
72"Sputnik Diplomacy," *New York Times* (New York, NY), October 13, 1957.
https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1957/10/13/96960759.html?action=click&contentCollection=Archives&module=ArticleEndCTA&region=ArchiveBody&pgtype=article&pageNumber=190

communist-leaning Fidel Castro seizing control of the island only miles off the coast of Florida.

Americans were surrounded by fierce anti-American rhetoric, an increasingly powerful Soviet

Union, and thanks to Cuba, the looming threat of communism had never seemed closer.

Part Two: Survival and Shelter

"The Thirty-Six Hour War," *Life,* November 19, 1945.

In November of 1945, *Life* magazine ran a piece entitled, "The Thirty-Six Hour War,"

which described in detail what the next war would look like, complete with pictures like the one

above. The piece read, "In spite of the apocalyptic destruction caused by its atomic bombs, an

enemy nation would have to invade the U.S. to win the war… By the time enemy troops have

landed, the U.S. has suffered terrifying damage. Some 40,000,000 people have been killed and

all cities of more than 50,000 population have been leveled."[73] This article demonstrates how the

American public began to wrestle with the sobering reality of atomic warfare. In the aftermath of

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73 "The Thirty-Six Hour War," *Life,* November 19, 1946.
https://books.google.com/books?id=6UsEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA27&dq=the+thirty+six+hour+war&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi_pIP964XTAhXMZiYKHUrMCsgQ6AEIHDAA#v=onepage&q=the%20thirty%20six%20hour%20war&f=false

the blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many scientific organizations began exposing the

American public to the horrors of nuclear blasts. For example, the American Federation of

Scientists screened an Army Signal Corps film of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, entitled, *A Tale of*

Two Cities, for free at a theater in Baltimore.[74]

This "scientist's movement" successfully established civilian control over nuclear policy,

created the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), and worked to educate the American public

about the dangers of atomic weapons.[75] A 1948 *Life* issue demonstrated the way in which

scientists interacted with the public by featuring the article, "Atomic Show Put on Road," a

scientific road show created by the AEC and the Brookhaven, NY atomic laboratory that

featured lectures and demonstrations on atomic energy.[76] Some Americans seemed to appreciate

the work that the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) was doing. One man wrote to the *New*

York Times: "The superb work of the Atomic Energy Commission…has been thoroughly

impressive. The men in the Commission have dedicated themselves to public service with self-

sacrifice."[77] When Americans were asked how important a job being head of the AEC was, 84%

responded that it was very important.[78] This steady wave of information about the dangers of

nuclear weapons stimulated the civil defense initiative, as Americans realized how unprepared

they were to survive such a blast.

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74 Robert A. Jacobs,"'There are No Civilians; We are All at War': Nuclear War Shelter and Survival Narratives
during the Cold War," *Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 4 (2007): 413.
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2007.00618.x/abstract
75 Ibid, 412.
76 "Atomic Show Put on Road," *Life*, January 26, 1948.
https://books.google.com/books?id=p0gEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA29&dq=atomic+energy+commission&hl=en&sa=X
&ved=0ahUKEwizi7qb8YXTAhWCwiYKHe_FCEcQ6AEIJDAC#v=onepage&q=atomic%20energy%20commissi
on&f=false
77 S. Stanwood Menken, "Letter to the Times," *New York Times* (New York, NY), April 27, 1948.
https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1948/04/27/issue.html
78 Gallup Organization. Gallup Poll (AIPO), Feb, 1947 [survey question]. USGALLUP.47-391.QKT02B. Gallup
Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL
[distributor], accessed Apr-2-2017.

Civil defense first became a matter of urgency in 1949, just after the successful Soviet

atomic explosion. The Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) was established by

President Truman in 1950; following that year, the debate over civil defense would fluctuate

depending on Cold War tensions.[79] Three peak periods of intense civil defense activity in the US

were as follows: the first period was in late 1949, following the Soviet atomic bomb test. The

second period was from 1952-54, when both the Soviets and the Americans developed hydrogen

bombs. The last period was from 1961 to 1962, incited by a panicked speech by President

Kennedy and continued until the end of the Cuban Missile Crisis.[80] Historically, sudden attacks

or all out warfare were never something that Americans had to worry about, due to peaceful

neighbors and geographic isolation. However, Civil Defense forced Americans at home to adjust

to operating under the looming threat of annihilation in this new age of atomic bombs.[81]

Thus, as the backyards of average Americans became the front lines of the Cold War, so

too did average Americans become the soldiers of the Cold War. According to Robert Jacobs,

"Their personal survival had become emblematic of the survival of the nation."[82] Civil defense

narratives drove home the idea of citizens as soldiers. In his book, *Fallout Shelter: Designed for

Civil Defense in the Cold War*, David Monteyne argues that, "Part of the message directed at US

citizens was that the Cold War, like all twentieth-century wars, was a total war premised on total

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79 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 92.

80 Robert A. Jacobs, "'There are No Civilians; We are All at War': Nuclear War Shelter and Survival Narratives during the Cold War," *Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 4 (2007): 402.
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2007.00618.x/abstract

81 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 92.

82 Robert A. Jacobs,"'There are No Civilians; We are All at War': Nuclear War Shelter and Survival Narratives during the Cold War," *Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 4 (2007): 401.
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2007.00618.x/abstract

mobilization of the populace: civilians on the home front were no less exposed to attack than those servicing in the military."[83]

Civil defense rhetoric framed the Cold War as something that could be won solely by the constant vigilance and the ultimate survival of Americans. Unfortunately, vigilance does not protect from radiation, and a huge divide between useful information and civil defense misinformation emerged. Simply put, civil defense narratives could not portray the effects of a nuclear blast accurately whilst still maintaining that survival was possible. Authorities had two options: they could tell the truth- that everybody would die if an atomic bomb should be dropped- or, they could lie. Dee Garrison explains their dilemma in this way. She writes,

> "How can a government accept the possibility of nuclear war without making some effort-real or pretended- to protect its citizens, or at least some of its citizens, from the destruction of blast and fallout? If it does not do so, how can it possible convince a significant number of its citizens to risk nuclear war? And unless a significant portion of its public agrees to accept the risk of deterrence, then how can a proclaimed deterrence policy be made credible to the enemy?"[84]

The American government chose to lie, giving Americans false hope that if they were prepared, they could emerge from a nuclear blast unscathed. Survival was the main point of discussion in civil defense booklets; the finer points of nuclear warfare, or of the aftermath of the explosions was never talked about. This reasoning was actually quite sound- authorities linked the survival of individual citizens to the survival of the United States as a nation. If Americans could survive an atomic bomb, then so could America.[85] A 1955 civil defense pamphlet reinforced this idea. It read, "Learn and practice civil defense preparedness in your home, your

83 David Monteyne, *Fallout Shelter: Designing for Civil Defense in the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), xiv.

84 Dee Garrison, *Bracing for Armageddon: Why Civil Defense Never Worked* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5.

85 Robert A. Jacobs, "'There are No Civilians; We are All at War': Nuclear War Shelter and Survival Narratives during the Cold War," *Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 4 (2007): 414.
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2007.00618.x/abstract

neighborhood, your community. Then, no matter what happens, you and your family- and the Nation-will be ready."[86] Likewise, President Kennedy, "emphasized the connection between individual civil dense preparation and national survival in his introduction to the September 1961 issue of *Life* magazine devoted to fallout shelters, stating that to 'protect yourself' was to 'strengthen your nation.'"[87]

(Photograph of the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization exhibit at a
local civil defense fair. ca. 1960. National Archives Identifier: 542102.)

Still, this narrative was deeply flawed in that it completely ignored the horrific realities of the potential attack for which they were allegedly preparing citizens. Science fiction films of the period addressed this vacuum with a series of mutant creature films such as, *Them!, The Creature from the Black Lagoon, The Incredible Shrinking Man, Attack of the Crab Monsters,* and *Godzilla,* all of which, Paul Boyer points out, featured mutants who were, "the product of exposure to an atomic blast or nuclear radiation."[88] These films, borne out of the fears surrounding the nuclear bomb, contradicted the official civil defense line regarding the possibility of survival. Images of nuclear apocalypse and utter annihilation were common within

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86 Robert A. Jacobs, "'There are No Civilians; We are All at War': Nuclear War Shelter and Survival Narratives during the Cold War," *Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 4 (2007): 404.
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2007.00618.x/abstract
87 Ibid, 405.
88 Paul Boyer, "Sixty Years and Counting: Nuclear Themes in American culture, 1945 to the Present," in *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought, and Nuclear Conflict, 1945-90*, ed. Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 82.

the popular culture of the 1950s and 1960s, and yet civil defense authorities refused to engage with the authentic aftermath of an atomic attack. Instead, Civil Defense films downplayed the dangers of nuclear attacks, portraying them like the air raid attacks of the Second World War.[89] Even in ignoring the true dangers of nuclear bombs, historian Tristan Abbott points out the futility of civil defense, "assuming that everything worked according to plan during a nuclear exchange, by the government's own projections more than half of the United States population would be wiped out in the first few days of a nuclear war."[90] Nonetheless, the FCDA continued with their strategy of raising public awareness of the danger of nuclear war while downplaying the danger enough to convince the public that they could survive nuclear war.[91]

The results produced by the Civil Defense authorities ended up somewhere between educating and panicking the public. Their strategy of bombarding Americans with alarming messages about their inevitable doom backfired and many Americans viewed civil defense with apathy and disdain.[92] For example, in 1951, after a Los Angeles county board ordered the construction of a $80,000 bomb shelter, it was denied due to a city ordinance that required a permit for construction costing over $50. A *New York Times* article wrote of the situation, "Amid conflicting authoritative advice, a wave of 'bomb shelteritis' swept over Southern California and other parts of the Southwest this week, leaving in its wake more confusion than tangible civil defense preparations."[93] Similarly, in 1955, the Air Force ordered an attack imminent warning for Oakland after spotting unidentified bombers. Although sirens were wailing, the Survey

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89 Tristan Abbott, "Bomb Media, 1953–1964," *Postmodern Culture*, 18, no. 3 (May 2008): 3. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/261323
90 Ibid, 10.
91 Ibid, 4.
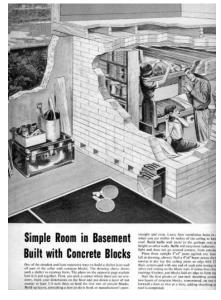92 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 97.
93 "Bomb-Shelteritis Shakes California," *New York Times* (New York, NY), January 28, 1951. "https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1951/01/28/issue.html?action=click&contentCollection=Archives &module=ArticleEndCTA&region=ArchiveBody&pgtype=article

Research Center found that only three out of 20 people thought that it was a real attack and not a

drill. It turns out that they were correct, the bombers belonged to SAC; it was a false alarm.[94]

"Fallout Shelters," *Life*,
September 15, 1961.

For all the apathetic Americans, there were a good number of citizens who were

genuinely frightened, and according to popular press articles, devoured civil defense information.

Life magazine ran articles with headlines such as, "Facing the Fallout Problem," (1955) "The

Compelling Need for Nuclear Tests," (1958) "Their Sheltered Honeymoon," (1959) "A Spare

Room Fallout Shelter," (1960) and "Everybody's Talking about Shelters," (1962). Celebrities

such as Orson Welles and Ozzie and Harriet appeared in FCDA promotional materials, and New

York City spent $159,000 on 2.5 million dog tags for children to identify their bodies in a

possible nuclear explosion.[95] Films like *Bert the Turtle* taught children to duck and cover in

classrooms, and FCDA information discussed topics like basic home preparation, or stocking

fallout shelters. According to Elaine May, "Numerous realtors across the country noted that rural

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94 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 104.

95 David Greenberg, "Fallout Can Be Fun: How the Civil Defense Programs Became Farces," *Slate*, accessed April 2, 2017. http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/history_lesson/2003/02/fallout_can_be_fun.html

sales had increased dramatically, in some places as much as 100%, and that buyers frequently

wanted to be far from a city- at least 50 miles from any likely nuclear target."[96] Families who

could not move to the countryside to avoid a potential nuclear attack, they built shelters.

President John F. Kennedy was one of the most ardent supporters of fallout shelters. With

his July 25, 1961, speech discussing the Berlin crisis, Kennedy jumpstarted the final and most

intense peak period of civil defense craze. He warned, "In the event of an attack, the lives of

families which are not hit in a nuclear blast and fire can still be saved- if they can be warned to

take shelter and if that shelter is available."[97] The FCDA began conducting disaster drills, and

instructing families on how to supply a bomb shelter, or how to perform first aid.[98] Along with

the work of the FCDA, civil defense-minded companies sprang up. Businesses like Surviv-All

Inc, Peace-O-Mind Shelter Co, and Nuclear Survival Corp all made money selling the possibility

of survival.[99] They advertised products tailored to the tastes of consumers, "from a '$13.50

foxhole shelter' to a '$5,000 deluxe suite with telephone, escape hatches, bunks, toilets, and

Geiger counter.'"[100] Magazines such as *Time* and *Life* offered articles on making shelters usable

in normal life, and gave shelter decorating tips. Americans with shelters were widely

interviewed. An Illinois farmer kept his cattle in his large steel shelter, and a Florida millionaire

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96 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 103.

97 Robert A. Jacobs, "'There are No Civilians; We are All at War': Nuclear War Shelter and Survival Narratives during the Cold War," *Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 4 (2007): 401. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2007.00618.x/abstract

98 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 101.

99 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 206.

100 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 102.

had a shelter with an elevator and a pool table. With the encouragement of President Kennedy, the media, and the FCDA, fallout shelters became an everyday part of American culture.[101]

Fallout shelters provided hope for survival in a world in which the threat of death was omnipresent. Survival narratives became essential to the American consciousness; stories about people emerging from shelters after a nuclear war were common in the popular culture of the period. Films like *Panic in the Year Zero, Five, The World, the Flesh, and the Devil, It Came from Beneath the Sea,* and *Rocketship X-M* all feature characters who survive radioactive monsters, or nuclear blasts. In *Atomic Bomb Cinema*, author Jerome Shapiro notes that these films, "reveal how deeply concerned Americans are about the bomb and its impact on the struggle for survival."[102] A Gallup poll in 1961 found that 61% of Americans had given thought to what life would be like when they came out of a fallout shelter after a nuclear war.[103] Survival narratives reassured Americans that the world would go on after a nuclear war thanks to those few fatalistic survivors camped out in their bunkers with shotguns.[104] One such "survivor" was J. Carlton Adair, a civil defense leader of Las Vegas. In 1961, he proposed the development of a 5,000-man militia to repel the Californians who would come seeking shelter after a nuclear attack. Likewise, Keith Dwyer, the civil defense coordinator of Beaumont county advised residents to pack a pistol in their survival kits in case citizens from Los Angeles came looking for help after an attack.[105] As Kenneth Rose reasons, "With large numbers of Americans

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101 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 208.

102 Jerome F. Shapiro, *Atomic Bomb Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 6.

103 Gallup Organization. Gallup Poll (AIPO), Nov, 1961 [survey question]. USGALLUP.61-652.R035. Gallup Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Apr-2-2017.

104 Robert A. Jacobs,"'There are No Civilians; We are All at War': Nuclear War Shelter and Survival Narratives during the Cold War," *Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 4 (2007): 414. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1542-734X.2007.00618.x/abstract

105 Ibid, 409.

seemingly both willing to fight a war with the Soviets and convinced that such a war would occur in the near future, it seems reasonable that these same Americans would be taking steps to protect themselves from the results of such a war."[106] The shelter craze soon ended with increasing scientific evidence that fallout shelters would not protect from the intense radiation created by the hydrogen bomb, and from then on, most Americans preferred to talk about how to prevent nuclear war rather than how to survive it.

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106 Kenneth D. Rose, *One Nation Underground: The Fallout Shelter in American Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 10.

Chapter Three: Cold War Theater as Life

Part One: Now Showing-The Kennedy Years 1960-63

The political scene of the Sixties was rocked by the rise of the New Left, defined by John McMillian as, "a loosely organized, mostly white student movement that promoted participatory democracy, crusaded for civil rights and various types of university reforms, and protested against the Vietnam War."[107] Although the New Left would fade in the 1970s, Macmillan notes that, "a much larger constellation of social protest activity that either grew out of the New Left (e.g., gay liberation, radical feminism, and the hippie counterculture), or influenced and inspired the New Left (e.g., the civil rights and black power movements)."[108] The New Left was in large part founded by the Baby Boomers, the Atomic kids that had been raised on 1950s civil defense pamphlets and nuclear annihilation films.[109] Cynical about the nuclear bomb, mindful of the dangerous Cold War status quo, and hopeful about a better future, the members of the New Left were vocal critics of mainstream politics and culture. Now college students, their politics in the 1960s were formed by their childhood experiences of living with the ever-present threat of nuclear death. These were the children that were taught in school to duck and cover, and that had been told by the FCDA that they would probably die in a fiery blast.[110] Paul Boyer relates how several publications of the period addressed this issue, writing,

> "*Life* flippantly suggested that generation weaned on *Flash Gordon* would be unfazed by the atomic bomb; but within days of Hiroshima, the *New Yorker* reported this moment among children at play in Manhattan: 'We watched a military man of seven or eight climb onto a seesaw…and explain the changed situation. "Look," he said, "I'm an atomic bomb. I just go 'boom.' Once. Like this." He raised his arms, puffed out his cheeks, jumped down from the

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107 John McMillian, "'You Didn't Have to Be There': Revisiting the New Left Consensus," in *The New Left Revisited*, ed. John McMillian and Paul Buhle (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), 5.
108 Ibid, 6.
109 Bo Jacobs, "Atomic Kids: Duck and Cover and Atomic Alert Teach American Children How to Survive Atomic Attack," *Film and History* 40, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 40. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/379545
110 Ibid, 31.

seesaw, and went "Boom!" Then he led his army away, leaving Manhattan in ruins behind him.'"[111]

Children were clearly aware of the bomb, then, and in response to this worrisome trend in which kids were hyper aware of their own mortality, in 1962, a pamphlet was created by the Child Study Association and the National Institute of Mental Health, entitled, *Children and the Threat of Nuclear War.* The pamphlet begins, "We prepared this pamphlet because parents and educators asked for it. They said that children ask about nuclear weapons and the danger of war- and that it is difficult to respond in ways that are truthful as well as helpful."[112] For example, one such atomic kid, the Pulitzer prize winning author, Richard Rhodes, wrote this haiku when he was in the fifth grade, "Look up in the sky. See the pretty mushroom cloud. Soon we will be dead."[113] One New York psychologist, Sibylle K. Escalona, decided to interview some 300 children ages 10-17, asking them, "Think about the world as it may be ten years from now. What are some ways it might be different from today?" 70% of the children discussed war in their answers, and the majority were doubtful about the future.[114] *Atomic City*, a 1952 film, portrayed the fatalistic sense of self held by most children of the period. Two children are playing near their mother, and one asks the other, "What do you want to be if you grow up?" His mother quickly corrects him, "When you grow up, not if, when!"[115]

Constantly living in fear of annihilation psychologically affected the youth growing up in the early Cold War. According to Margot Henrikson, young Americans became cynical towards

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111 Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 16.
112 Sibylle Escalona, *Children and the Threat of Nuclear War* (New York: Child Study Association of America Inc., 1962), 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015065431556;view=1up;seq=3;size=175
113 Bo Jacobs, "Atomic Kids: Duck and Cover and Atomic Alert Teach American Children How to Survive Atomic Attack," *Film and History* 40, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 36. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/379545
114 Ibid, 37.
115 Ibid, 35.

the government, towards nuclear policies, and towards the everyday peril they were living in.[116]

It was these atomic kids that published the founding document of the New Left, the Port Huron

statement of 1962. In the document, the activists of the New Left explained why they would

stand against racism, nuclear warfare, and the Vietnam war, "The enclosing fact of the Cold

War, symbolized by the presence of the Bomb, brought awareness that we ourselves, and our

friends, and millions of abstract "others"… might die at any time…our work is guided by the

sense that we may be the last generation in the experiment with living."[117]

It was also these atomic kids that made up the youth counterculture that so defined the

rebellious nature of the 1960s. They created a youth culture of dissent that, "broke through the

crust of apathy and conformity to challenge the ruling standards and values of the American

system."[118] Black humor became a powerful way to subvert the system as well as to incite a new

cultural consciousness regarding authority. One such critic was Lenny Bruce, who, according to

Ronald Collins,

> "was the most controversial comedian of his day… He dared to speak the unspeakable. His MO
> was to reveal the hypocrisies that lay at the base of establishment mores… And by his satirical
> comedy, Lenny Bruce intended to expose the naked truth about religious hypocrisy, political
> corruption, race relations, sex, drug use, and homosexuality."[119]

Satire, cynicism, and black humor made light of the madness of anti-communism, power

hungry leaders, and death by nuclear bomb. Books like *Catch-22*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's

Nest*, and *The Manchurian Candidate* exposed the dark side of taking the Cold War too

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116 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 110.
117 Bo Jacobs, "Atomic Kids: Duck and Cover and Atomic Alert Teach American Children How to Survive Atomic Attack," *Film and History* 40, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 40. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/379545
118 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 294.
119 Ronald K.L. Collins, "Comedy and Liberty: The Life and Legacy of Lenny Bruce," *Social Research* 79, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 65. http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=746c6907-a040-459a-84cd-2726571abcb3%40sessionmgr102&vid=1&hid=123

seriously.[120] The films based on these books were box office hits, proving that among consumers of both high and low culture, this narrative had hit a nerve. Buoyed by popular support, the members of the youth counterculture took their Cold War critiques to the next level and began questioning America's nuclear arsenal, and civil defense.

By the 1960s, Americans knew that nuclear war was un-survivable, and in this atmosphere, the youth dissenters began a subversive anti-nuclear dialogue. In a 1959 letter to the *New York Times* addressing the upcoming summit between the US and the USSR, one reader wrote, "Not 'taxation without representation,' but 'radiation without representation.' People all over the world should shout this new protest loud enough so that those at the summit will hear them and represent them."[121] When Americans were asked in 1964 whether they were concerned a great deal, a considerable deal, not very much, or not at all about controlling the use of nuclear weapons, 59% replied that they were concerned a great deal.[122] They questioned the rationality of pursuing more nuclear weapons rather than pursuing peace.[123] They criticized hawkish cold warriors for gambling unilaterally with America's future and safety. According to David Steigerwald, peace activists criticized American Cold War policy as having,

"assumed a momentum of its own and was spinning out of the control of misguided leaders who had set it in motion but who were no longer able or willing to arrest it. The Cold War had become sheer madness, played for stakes far out of proportion to what was necessary in the normal game of diplomacy. Only a society enmeshed in a false sense of technological security, only a people who had become morally numbed by the combination of superficial affluence and personal meaningless, would permit such a game to be played in their name."[124]

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120 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 245.
121 John Khanlian, "To the Editor of the New York Times," *New York Times* (New York, NY), April 1, 1959. "https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1959/04/01/83441045.html?action=click&contentCollection=Arc hives&module=ArticleEndCTA&region=ArchiveBody&pgtype=article&pageNumber=36
122 Institute for International Social Research. Hopes And Fears, Oct, 1964 [survey question]. USGALLUP.637POS.Q19V. Gallup Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Apr-6-2017.
123 Tristan Abbott, "Bomb Media, 1953–1964." *Postmodern Culture*, 18, no. 3: (May 2008), 9. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/261323
124 David Steigerwald, *The Sixties and the End of Modern America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 106.

According to Leroy Ashby, rebellion and subversion of the status quo emerged as a common theme in the 1960s.[125] David Steigerwald writes, "In a nation increasingly preoccupied with the behavior of youth, the protesters offered a twist on the popular image of young rebels: they certainly were rebels, but theirs was a true rebellion, aimed not at upsetting the older generation but at transforming the United States."[126] The 1960s were indeed a decade obsessed with youth, from fashionable Mod clothing and miniskirts, to President John F. Kennedy and the First Lady, to new dance crazes like the Twist, the Woodpecker, and the Hitchhiker- all were symbols of a culture fascinated by youth.[127] As Peter Braunstein argues, "Youth in the mid-1960s, a resplendent entity bathed in media attention and suffused with such attributes as energy, ingenuity, and idealism, was the driving force behind American pop culture."[128]

Presidential candidate John F. Kennedy brought youth, stardom, and style to politics in the fall of 1960. Voted "handsomest member of the House of Representatives" in 1952, Senator Kennedy was already well known for his PT-Boat adventures during the war, and for his Newport wedding to Jacqueline Bouvier, which was heavily profiled by *Life* magazine.[129] Norman Mailer, observing Kennedy at the Democratic Convention, wrote that he was, "unlike any politician who had ever run for President," and described him as, "a great box office actor," with the "deep orange-brown suntan of a ski instructor...One could vote for glamor or for ugliness, a staggering and most stunning choice."[130] Thanks to the prevalence of television,

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125 Leroy Ashby, *With Amusement for All: A History of American Popular Culture since 1830* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2006), 348.
126 David Steigerwald, *The Sixties and the End of Modern America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 44.
127 Peter Braunstein, "Forever Young: Insurgent Youth and the Sixties Culture of Rejuvenation," *in Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s,* ed. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (New York: Routledge, 2002), 246.
128 Ibid, 249.
129 J. Hoberman, *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 7.
130 Ibid, 21.

image mattered more than ever in politics, as Richard Nixon learned during the first televised presidential debates, when he was described by journalist Theodore White as, "tense, almost frightened, at turns glowering and, occasionally, haggard-looking to the point of sickness."[131] Kennedy understood that performance, and showmanship could greatly sway his television audience, and it did. According to David Steigerwald, "Kennedy was unlike any previous politician in his instinctive embrace of the new medium or, rather, its embrace of him."[132]

When he took office, Kennedy continued to use television to his advantage, appearing in American living rooms quite frequently to give speeches or press conferences. The White House reporter at *Life* magazine, Hugh Sidney stated, that, "no official face has ever become so much a part of America's consciousness."[133] JFK was a movie star in his own right, and the Kennedy years inspired several movies based upon the excitement of the Cold War challenges he had to deal with as president. Movies like *Seven Days in May*, *Dr. Strangelove*, *Fail-Safe*, and *The Manchurian Candidate* became incredibly popular. They reflected the anxieties and criticized the politics of the 1960s, such as the assassination of the president, the powerful military-industrial complex, and accidental nuclear war.[134] In fact, according to Elizabeth Haas, Terry Christensen, and Peter Haas, "a number of political films of the 1960s mark the beginning of a period during which American filmmakers more willingly criticized the dominant values of their society."[135] For Kennedy's part, he preferred to be compared to James Bond, according to J. Hoberman. He was a friend of Ian Fleming, and he screened *From Russia with Love* (1963) at the White House when it was released.

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131 David Steigerwald, *The Sixties and the End of Modern America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 10.
132 Ibid, 10.
133 J. Hoberman, *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 55.
134 Ibid, 44.
135 Elizabeth Haas, Terry Christensen, and Peter J. Haas, *Projecting Politics: Political Messages in American Films* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 157.

The First Lady was also a celebrity in her own right, a fashion icon who drew adoring crowds wherever she went. Realizing his wife's immense popularity, on a state visit to France, Jack introduced himself as Jackie's husband.[136] The Kennedy years were ones of glamor and anxiety. Icons such as Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, and Elvis Presley dominated the news cycle just as frequently as the crises of the Cold War did.[137] A *Life* magazine in 1963 demonstrated this typical cognitive dissonance in which the people of the 1960s were just as obsessed with movie stars as they were with fighting communists. The magazine featured a cover story entitled, "In Color: The Vicious Fighting in Vietnam," but also featured stories on Marilyn Monroe's death, Joe Kennedy's fortune, and Princess Grace of Monaco.[138] Meanwhile, Kennedy bounced dangerously from Berlin to Cuba to Vietnam, playing dangerous games in a world where one wrong move meant Armageddon.

Part Two: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Cuba

Anxiety regarding the foreign policy events of the Kennedy administration was constant during the early 1960s. The Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC) created so much anxiety that many films of the decade took inspiration from the experiences, real and imagined, surrounding the crisis. However, the Cuban Missile Crisis was not the only crisis of the early 1960s, with Thomas G. Paterson noting that, "Crisis was the norm rather than the exception in the Kennedy Administration."[139] Indeed, according to Theodore Sorensen, "'Foreign affairs…occupied far

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136 Clint Hill, *Mrs. Kennedy and Me* (New York: Gallery Books, 2012).
137 J. Hoberman, *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 8.
138 *Life*, January, 25, 1963.
https://books.google.com/books?id=EEgEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA93&dq=marilyn+monroe&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ah
UKEwi2j9S9yI3TAhXGWSYKHVr2Ab4Q6AEIIDAB#v=onepage&q=marilyn%20monroe&f=false
139 Thomas G. Paterson, "Introduction," in *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963,* ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 7.

more of his time and energy as President.'"[140] Kennedy's soft realist foreign policy was dubbed "flexible response" and Kennedy used the armed forces as a foreign policy tool more so than any other postwar President. His administration recorded 39 instances (or roughly 13 per year), compared to 35 (or 4 per year) for Harry S. Truman, or 57 (or 7 per year) for Eisenhower.[141] Thomas G. Paterson writes, "In all cases, Kennedy strove to win- the Cold War, the allegiance of the Third World, the space race… Kennedy also infused the races with unusual energy, personal commitment, impatience, and a sense of immediate peril that demanded action."[142]

JFK articulate this sense of immediate peril in his very first State of the Union address, saying, "Each day the crises multiply. Each day their solution grows more difficult. Each day we draw nearer the hour of maximum danger, as weapons spread and hostile forces grow stronger."[143] This solemn statement captured the President's first 100 days all too accurately. On April 12, the Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space, a sound defeat for NASA in the space race. Kennedy was further embarrassed two days later with the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion.[144] Then, on August 13, 1961, the city of Berlin woke up to see a freshly erected wall separating the East and West. Khrushchev followed this coup by detonating a series of nuclear bombs despite the moratorium on nuclear testing that had been in place since 1958.[145] Thus, JFK's first 100 days in office were marked by a series of foreign policy humiliations, to

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140 Richard J. Walton, *Cold War and Counterrevolution: The Foreign Policy of John F. Kennedy* (New York: The Viking Press, 1972), 4.
141 Thomas G. Paterson, "Introduction," in *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963,* ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 5.
142 Ibid, 7.
143 "State of the Union Address, John F. Kennedy, Jan. 30, 1961," *TeachingAmericanHistory.org,* 2017. http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/state-of-the-union-address-149/
144 J. Hoberman, *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 46.
145 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 201.

which Kennedy responded by becoming more extreme in his Cold War policies.[146] "'There are limits to the number of defeats I can defend in one twelve-month period,' Kennedy once told his aides."[147] The Kennedy administration would be characterized by the danger and tension of the Cold War, and yet, most Americans stood by their President. When asked in 1963 if they approved of the way Kennedy was handling foreign policy, 64% approved.[148]

One of the largest foreign crises Kennedy had to deal with was the Berlin situation, and dealing with Berlin meant dealing with the unpredictable Soviet premier, Nikita Khrushchev. Khrushchev had become Soviet premier in 1958, and although he wanted peaceful coexistence, this did not stop him from repeatedly threating the West with nuclear warfare.[149] Likewise, while Kennedy was fiercely opposed to communism, he, too, desired peaceful coexistence, "If freedom and communism were to compete for man's allegiance in a world at peace, I would look to the future with ever-increasing confidence."[150] Despite the tension between their countries, they established a rapport that would eventually serve to pull the world back from the brink of nuclear war. Sorensen writes of Kennedy, "At the height or close of every crisis- in Berlin, Southeast Asia, and Cuba- he sought to be in touch with Khrushchev, to return to the path of accommodation, to prevent violence and distrust from reproducing themselves."[151]

For most Americans, the crisis of greatest concern during Kennedy's administration involved Cuba. A mere 90 miles from Key West, the rise of Fidel Castro had brought the Soviet

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146 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 194.

147 Alan Brinkley, *John F. Kennedy: The American Presidents Series: The 35th President, 1961-1963*, ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Sean Wilentz (New York: Times Books, 2012), 81.

148 Gallup Organization. Gallup Poll (AIPO), Feb, 1963 [survey question]. USGALLUP.63-668.R002A. Gallup Organization [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPOLL [distributor], accessed Apr-10-2017.

149 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 70.

150 Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965), 515.

151 Ibid, 515.

threat to the doorstep of the United States, and the American public's anxiety was nothing short of extreme. For example, on June 2, 1961, Castro made the cover of *Life*, featuring an editorial entitled, "We Must Win the Cold War," and a photo essay called, "The Menacing Spread of Castro-ism."[152] While Fidel Castro's overthrow of the Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista, had initially been lauded by the New Left, American goodwill quickly faded as Castro began to lean heavily towards the Soviet Union, and condemned "Yankee imperialism." Many of the Cuban elites fled shortly thereafter, primarily to Miami, where they tried to assist the CIA in eliminating Castro so that they could "take back" their country. The faulty intelligence of the Cuban exiles and the poor planning of the CIA resulted in the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion, which only confirmed Castro's suspicions that the U.S. was trying to overthrow his regime. In fact, a 1992 Havana symposium among former members of Cuban, Russian, and American policymakers concluded that, "Kennedy's policy of isolation, harassment, and intimidation… forced Castro to turn to the Soviet Union for protection, ultimately in the form of nuclear weapons."[153]

The Cuban Missile Crisis was the closest thing humanity has ever come to nuclear annihilation, with JFK estimating a one in three chance of nuclear war.[154] On October 24, 1962, the *New York Times* wrote, "In the streets of New York the public reaction was a curious compound of 'It's about time we took strong action on Cuba' coupled with dread of the consequences. Stocks broke sharply in late trading under near panic Wall Street conditions. But

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152 *Life,* June 2, 1961.
https://books.google.com/books?id=AFIEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA81&dq=castro&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj09p
CslJDTAhWIRCYKHRndA5oQ6AEIQDAJ#v=onepage&q=castro&f=false
153 Richard D. Mahoney, *The Kennedy Brothers: The Rise and Fall of Jack and Bobby* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011), 177.
154 Jonathan Kirshner, "Subverting the Cold War in the 1960s: Dr Strangelove, the Manchurian Candidate, Planet of the Apes." *Film and History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 31, no. 2 (2004): 40.
https://muse.jhu.edu/article/400700

nationwide press comment on the President's action was overwhelmingly favorable."[155] The

respective leaders of each country had their own unique motives for doing what they did to lead

the world to the brink of nuclear war. For his part, Khrushchev was worried about the security of

his fellow comrades in Cuba, and reasoned that defensive nuclear missiles should act as a

deterrent from further American aggression.[156] From Kennedy's perspective, the shipment of

long range missiles to Cuba had upset the balance of power and was a blatant act of aggression

towards the United States.[157] Fidel Castro, meanwhile, was convinced that the American

imperialists were dead set on invading his country, and eagerly pressed Khrushchev to nuke the

Americans as soon as they invaded Cuba.[158]

The course of events began in August of 1962, with Khrushchev and Castro reaching a

secret deal to supply Cuba with offensive missiles, despite Khrushchev's promise to the US that

the Soviets would only send defensive weapons. Of course, Kennedy learned of the secret deal

on October 16th when he was presented with photographs of Soviet missiles in Cuba taken from

U-2 spy planes.[159] Kennedy immediately created ExComm, a committee of advisors to figure out

how to respond to this revelation. By October 18th, the group was split between a blockade and

an air strike. For several days the advisors debated, with the hawks of the group, led by Bundy,

Acheson, Dillion, McCone, and Taylor, eagerly advocating for an invasion or an airstrike.[160]

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155 "The Major Events of the Day: Cuban Crisis," *New York Times* (New York, NY), October 24, 1962.
https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1962/10/24/issue.html
156 "Memorandum of Conversation between Castro and Mikoyan, November 5, 1962," *Wilson Center Digital
Archives*, found in Russian Foreign Ministry archives, provided by Phillip Brenner, translated by Aleksandr
Zaemsky, (Washington DC: Cold War International History Project, 2017).
http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/110980
157 John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005), 77.
158 James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, *The Armageddon Letters: Kennedy/Khrushchev/Castro in the Cuban
Missile Crisis* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2012), 90.
159 Richard D. Mahoney, *The Kennedy Brothers: The Rise and Fall of Jack and Bobby* (New York: Arcade
Publishing, 2011), 200.
160 Ibid, 206.

The tension between the civilian leaders and the military generals was palpable during the crisis. The generals had been preparing for war with Cuba, and were pushing for a military strike.[161] They saw the crisis as their big opportunity to finish Castro once and for all, and the Joint Chiefs immediately began moving bombers and fighters towards Cuba under the guise of "war games," only to have Robert McNamara, "remind them that this was no game and that there was civilian rule in the American system of government."[162] Even when President Kennedy decided to enact the quarantine, the generals continued to criticize his decision. The words of Air Force Lieutenant General David Burchinal offers an example of the criticism Kennedy faced from his own people after he had successfully steered the world away from nuclear war,

> "It was totally missed by the Kennedy administration, they did not understand what had been created and handed to them, our politicians did not understand what happens when you have such a degree of superiority as we had, or they simply didn't know how to use it. They were busily engaged in saving face for the Soviets and making concessions when all we had to do was write our own ticket."[163]

During the Cuban missile crisis, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara actually slept in his office to ensure that the hawkish Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't circumvent the chain of command. This did not prevent them from attempting to push through an ExComm vote for an air strike whilst the President was out of town, which Robert Kennedy swiftly stopped. Likewise, when President Kennedy decided that he wanted to pull the line of interception back from 800 to 500 miles off the coast of Cuba to give Khrushchev more time, McNamara relayed the order. However, according to scholars such as Graham Allison, the Navy did not obey the President's order to move the blockade line at all.[164]

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161 Richard D. Mahoney, *The Kennedy Brothers: The Rise and Fall of Jack and Bobby* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011), 202.
162 Ibid, 202.
163 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 666. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558
164 Ibid, 209.

The decision to enact the blockade was covered in the November 2nd issue of *Life*. It included the U-2 pictures of the offensive missiles, and maps of Cuba. The article read, "The Cuban blockade is a major turning point in the 17-year Cold War. The US has dramatically seized the initiative. We have taken a risk involving the possibility of actual shooting in the Western Hemisphere. That is a new fact of the first magnitude."[165] On October 22nd, Kennedy wrote a secret letter to Khrushchev, asking to him to pay special attention to his television speech, and then addressed the nation, announcing the discovery of offensive missiles in Cuba,

> "This secret, swift, and extraordinary buildup of Communist missiles… is a deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country, if our courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted again by either friend or foe… To halt this offensive buildup, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships of any kind bound for Cuba from whatever nation or port will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back."[166]

After a series of secret letter exchanges with Khrushchev, Kennedy placed US forces at DEFCON 2. On October 25th, all three major news networks were camped out at the White House. Other programming has been suspended, and at 10:30 am, intelligence reported that by some miracle, the Soviet ships carrying missile cargo stopped dead in the water. On October 26th, Khrushchev proposed a deal- the Soviets will pull out the offensive missiles if the US pledges not to invade Cuba,

> "This indicates we are sane people, that we understand and assess the situation correctly. Only lunatics or suicides who themselves want to perish and before they die destroy the world, could do this. But we want to live and by no means do we want to destroy your country."[167]

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165 Richard Oulahan Jr., "Step by Step in a Historic Week," *LIFE magazine* 53, no. 18 (November 2, 1962, Time Inc), 42.
https://books.google.com/books?id=n0oEAAAAMBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false
166 "President John F. Kennedy's Speech Announcing the Quarantine Against Cuba, October 22, 1962," *Documents Relating to American Foreign Policy*. https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kencuba.htm
167 James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, *The Armageddon Letters: Kennedy/Khrushchev/Castro in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2012), 104.

Through these secret letters and a back channel between Bobby Kennedy and the Soviet

Ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin, Kennedy and Khrushchev were able to reach an agreement

regarding a missile trade. The US would pull their missiles from Turkey, and agree not to invade

Cuba, if the USSR pulled their missiles from Cuba and agreed to a UN inspection. The hawks of

ExComm hated this plan, as did Fidel Castro, who refused to allow the UN to inspect the missile

sites. Thus, despite Kennedy and Khrushchev's best effort, by October 27th, the tension reached

its climax when Castro shot an American U-2 pilot out of the sky. McNamara simply wrote of

this day, "There was tremendous pressure… for military action."[168] Once again, Kennedy

refused to resort to military action, saying, "It isn't the first step that concerns me, but both sides

escalating to the fourth and fifth step- and we don't go to the sixth because there is no one

around to do so."[169]

The crisis technically ended on October 28th, with Khrushchev announcing on Radio

Moscow that a deal had been reached. However, the crisis dragged on well into November due to

Castro's refusal to submit to inspections. A November 3rd *New York Times* headline read, "SAC

Keeps Planes on Maximum Alert While Crisis Eases."[170] Kennedy couldn't lift the quarantine

until Khrushchev allowed inspections, but Castro wouldn't allow inspections until Kennedy

lifted the quarantine, and thus, Kennedy and Khrushchev were forced to work together to put

pressure on an increasingly difficult Castro. They finally succeeded in doing so, agreeing that the

inspections should be conducted via U-2 overhead flight. On December 10th, Nikita Khrushchev,

[168] Richard D. Mahoney, *The Kennedy Brothers: The Rise and Fall of Jack and Bobby* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011), 212.
[169] Ibid, 212.
[170] Richard Witkin, "SAC Keeps Planes on Maximum Alert While Crisis Eases," *New York Times* (New York, NY), November 3, 1962.
https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1962/11/03/90584906.html?pageNumber=1

giddy with the notion that he and Kennedy would have some six more years together to work towards peace, wrote to Kennedy,

> "Within a short period of time we and you have lived through a rather acute crisis. The acuteness of it was that we and you were prepared to fight and this would lead to a thermonuclear war. We took it into account and, being convinced that mankind would never forgive the statesman would not exhaust all possibilities to prevent catastrophe and agreed to a compromise."[171]

In the aftermath of the crisis, *Newsweek* published an article, entitled, "Lessons Learned," and wrote, "Now the world can reflect on the profound and palpitating experience of what it is to be involved in the Cold War, where miscalculation can lead to thermonuclear war…Instinctively, the world felt it had been close to the nuclear brink, and that now was the time to seek paths to peace."[172] Kennedy and Khrushchev realized that their narrow escape of nuclear war had not been because of their negotiation skills, but rather because of their fear at what would follow negotiation failure.[173] The two leaders, sobered by the incident, began working to ease Cold War tensions, with Khrushchev, especially, hoping that together, they could end the Cold War.[174] Their first steps were to ensure that something like the Cuban Missile Crisis would not happen again. June of 1963 saw the establishment of the Washington-Moscow hotline, and in August of that same year, the atmospheric test ban treaty was passed. In October of 1963, both countries agreed to abide by the UN resolution banning nuclear weapons in space, and the US sold 250 million tons of wheat to the USSR to help their low crop yield.[175]

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171 James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, *The Armageddon Letters: Kennedy/Khrushchev/Castro in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2012), 226.

172 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 237.

173 John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, The Soviet Union, and The United States: An Interpretative History* (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc, 1978), 240.

174 James G. Blight and Janet M. Lang, *The Armageddon Letters: Kennedy/Khrushchev/Castro in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2012), 224.

175 John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, The Soviet Union, and The United States: An Interpretative History* (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc, 1978), 224.

By and large, the American public supported Kennedy in these moves, as they, too, had been severely shaken by how close the world had come to nuclear warfare. The films of the following years would prove just how deeply this anxiety had scarred the public's psyche. Many filmmakers chose to explore the topics that emerged from this incident in depth, and the movie screens of the 1960s were filled with images of nuclear explosions, military generals, anxiety, and the US President and the Soviet Premier talking on the phone to avoid accidental Armageddon. Still, although Kennedy and Khrushchev appeared to be committed to détente, they were still surrounded by cold warriors in their administrations, and they were still sitting upon massive stockpiles of nuclear weapons. The Cold War mentality of containing communism was still very much alive after the crisis, and thus official policy did not change at all.[176] Therefore, while the Cuban Missile Crisis may have changed two of the players, Kennedy and Khrushchev, it did not change the game they were playing. "In retrospect, the clearest lesson of the crisis is that neither Kennedy nor Khrushchev was seriously ready to risk a nuclear war… the real danger was the cold war itself, with its underlying assumption that the whole world was a zero-sum game: blind man's ideological bluff with megaton weapons."[177]

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176 Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 307.

177 Cyndy Hendershot, "The Bear and the Dragon: Representations of Communism in Early Sixties American Culture," *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures* 23, no. 4 (01/01/2000), 68. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1537-4726.2000.2304_67.x/epdf

Chapter Four: Nuclear Anxiety and Accidents in 1960s Film

Part One: History on Film

The filmmakers of the 1960s recognized the filmmaking opportunities present in the real life Cold War events they were living through. They took inspiration from the excitement, drama, anxiety, and glamor of the Kennedy crises, and thus the films of the period reflect the events and trends of the period. Melvyn Stokes writes, "For historians, who, like myself, study historical films, movies are cultural products reflecting the broader social and cultural context of the time in which they are made and received. They speak to the values and sometimes the anxieties of their period."[178] The films of the 1960s broke with the hyper anti-communist and ultra-nationalist movies of the fifties, such as *Strategic Air Command* (1955), or *My Son John* (1952).[179] Filmmakers like Sidney Lumet, Stanley Kubrick, and Norman Jewison emerged from outside of the major studio system of Hollywood, and directed some of the most successful films of the 1960s. Sidney Lumet made his name as a prolific television and stage director before eventually directing *12 Angry Men* (1957) and *Fail-Safe* (1964).[180] Similarly, Stanley Kubrick began as a photographer for *Look* magazine and directed several low-budget self-financed films before he began creating major films such as *Paths of Glory* (1957), *Spartacus* (1960), and *Dr. Strangelove* (1964).[181] Like Lumet, Norman Jewison started in television as a writer and director

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178 Melvyn Stokes, *American History Through Hollywood Film: From the Revolution to the 1960s* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013), 6.

179 Tony Shaw, "The Russians are Coming, The Russians are Coming, (1966): Reconsidering Hollywood's Cold War 'Turn' of the 1960s," *Film History: An International Journal* 22, no. 2 (2010): 236. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/383698

180 James Monaco, *The Encyclopedia of Film*, ed. James Pallot (New York, Perigee Books, 1991), 341.

181 Ibid, 309.

known for his technical skills before finding success as the director of *The Cincinnati Kid* (1965)

and *The Russians Are Coming* (1966).[182]

Unconstrained by the conservative studio system of old, these younger directors began

producing more politically unorthodox films that questioned American politics and subverted the

idea of the Cold War for their audiences.[183] This subversive work was only possible because

Hollywood had undergone a significant transformation in the 1950s. Paul Monaco describes this

transformation, writing,

> "During the 1930s and 1940s, seven major Hollywood studios had been responsible for producing two-thirds of the movies in the United States…The decline of the Hollywood studio system during the 1950s; however, appeared to reverse this trend. By 1958, half of the features produced in the United States were 'independent.' Two years later, two-thirds of the feature films being produced in the United States were attributed to 165 different production entities."[184]

George Axelrod, who produced *The Manchurian Candidate* with Frank Sinatra in 1962,

elaborated on the freedom this independent filmmaking system afforded artists by stating,

"They'd never see a script…We were allowed to do wild things."[185]

Films that dealt with nuclear warfare were especially popular in the sixties, with the

average number of bomb films per year at 16 between 1963 and 1979.[186] Jerome Shapiro

explains which films are considered "bomb films," writing that the term describes, "films where

the bomb is an explicit part of the *mise en scène* (the set or environment), theme, context, and/or

the narrative."[187] By the sixties, bomb films treated nuclear warfare as inevitable and un-

survivable and portrayed the world after a nuclear blast as a savage apocalyptic wasteland. The

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182 James Monaco, *The Encyclopedia of Film*, ed. James Pallot (New York, Perigee Books, 1991), 283.
183 Tony Shaw, "The Russians are Coming, The Russians are Coming, (1966): Reconsidering Hollywood's Cold War 'Turn' of the 1960s," *Film History: An International Journal* 22, no. 2 (2010): 236. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/383698
184 Paul Monaco, *History of the American Cinema: Volume 8: The Sixties: 1960-1969* (Berkeley: University of California, 2001), 24.
185 Ibid, 25.
186 Jerome F, Shapiro, *Atomic Bomb Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 142.
187 Ibid, 10.

films of the sixties echoed the popular antinuclear movement of the sixties by questioning the necessity of the bomb, especially in the wake of the real-life events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis.[188]

The filmmakers of the 1960s raised the same questions as the atomic kids were by protesting nuclear weapons on their college campuses. Having grown up surrounded by the civil defense films of the fifties, the young directors of the sixties *subverted the intentions* of civil defense films by adopting their stylistic presentation and subject matter and criticizing the morals and messages they espoused.[189] These new anti-nuclear bomb films subverted both US policy during the Cold War and the Cold War itself, a radical risk to take considering the Hollywood Blacklist was still painfully fresh for many in the film industry. The politically subversive films of the sixties did not appear to be extremely rightist or extremely leftist; rather, their brilliance lay in their apolitical nature. As Johnathan Kirshner has argued, "They did not take sides, but instead ridiculed both and trivialized their conflict, asserting that the differences between them were meaningless."[190] The films of the sixties and their departure from the Cold War militarism and anticommunism that had so defined the 1950s is a significant reflection of how Americans viewed the Cold War during this period.

Historians can thus treat the Cold War films of the 1960s as historical sources that demonstrate how Americans in the 1960s thought about the Cold War. James Chapman explains this approach, "The notion of film as a historical source attaches a very different evidential value to film than aesthetic: in this approach the value of film is not to be found in its artistic or

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188 Jerome F, Shapiro, *Atomic Bomb Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 148.

189 Tristan Abbott, "Bomb Media, 1953–1964," *Postmodern Culture*, 18, no. 3 (May 2008): 2. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/261323

190 Jonathan Kirshner, "Subverting the Cold War in the 1960s: Dr Strangelove, the Manchurian Candidate, Planet of the Apes," *Film and History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 31, no. 2 (2004): 40. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/400700

formal properties but in what it reveals about social and historical conditions at the time at which it was made."[191] Likewise, Warren Sussman writes that, "Historians also use films as a vital source of information on what people believed, their basic interests, values, and concerns at a particular moment in time. Films become an index to the key problems of a period and even more importantly, the way those problems were perceived."[192]

Film is a valuable tool for historians precisely because it does not abide by the same set of rules as that of written history. Rather than holding that medium to the same standards of written history, it is important that historians create standards specific to the practices and demands of film.[193] "The basic element of the medium, the camera, is a greedy mechanism which, in order to create a world, must show more precise details… than historical research could ever fully provide."[194] Thus, historians must not expect history films to do what history books do. Films will never be able to provide enough background information, unbiased character portrayals, or completely accurate plotlines.

Indeed, this is one of the criticisms of film as history. Historian Phillippa Levine elaborates on this issue, arguing, "The brevity of a film necessarily compresses… the price we pay for the driving narrative and grand intensity that are so often the delight of a movie. Film, I would argue, tends to rely on the visceral."[195] Jack Davis acknowledges this problem inherent in the medium, but reminds his reader that, "Popular film is less suited as an 'intellectual medium,'

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191 James Chapman, *Film and History* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 73.
192 Warren I. Sussman, "Film and History: Artefact and Experience," in *Hollywood and the Historical Film*, ed. J.E. Smyth (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1.
193 Robert A. Rosenstone, *History on Film/Film on History* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 30.
194 Ibid, 161.
195 Phillippa Levine, "The Trouble with Film," *Perspectives on History*, American Historical Association, March 2010. https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/march-2010/the-trouble-with-film

like a history book, than as an emotional one."[196] He argues that a filmmaker's job is to "convert critical ideas into engaging visual moments…with the idea that the emotional will have a more lasting impact than the intellectual."[197] Rosenstone, too, argues that films aren't meant to be an exact replica of the past; they are meant to add something to our understanding of the past. A film can infuse the past with drama, emotion, and color. A film allows its audience to connect visually with the humans onscreen in a way that a book could never do; it allows its audience members to feel as if they are actually there experiencing the event being shown onscreen.[198]

A movie about the 1960s may change Kennedy's dialogue, but it also may do a brilliant job at conveying the glamor, style, and fame that *characterized the public's perception* of his persona. Metaphoric truths and representational themes are often used by films to comment on a moment in time in a way that is far more powerful than actual facts.[199] Films also allow filmmakers to provide commentary on the past; they are able to challenge and revise the written history of conventional historians. They ask the same questions as historians do; however, they can arrive at different answers because they are telling the story in a different way. Historical films often portray the past in new or unfamiliar ways, which forces their audiences to rethink their previous understanding of the past."[200]

Melvyn Stokes writes, "Determining how accurate and original the filmic view of history is can only be done through research in other historical sources. Yet part of the fascination of historical films is also to do with how and why they present the view of history they do at the

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196 Jack E. Davis, "New Left, Revisionist, In-Your-Face History: Oliver Stone's Born on the Fourth of July Experience," *Film and History* 28, no. 3-4 (1997): 10.
197 Ibid, 10.
198 Robert A. Rosenstone, *History on Film/Film on History* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 37.
199 Ibid, 8.
200 Ibid, 118.

time they are produced."[201] Historical films ultimately have, "an effect on the way we see the past," and are thus worth engaging with for a more complete picture of one of the most famous events of the 1960s, the Cuban Missile Crisis.[202] In the following sections, I analyze five fictional Cold War films produced in the 1960s and reveal how they operate as historical sources in that they contain important information about how the Americans of the 1960s viewed the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Cold War environment within which they were living.

Part Two: Analysis of *A Gathering of Eagles* (1963)

A Gathering of Eagles is a film that demonstrates several significant Cold War themes. It explores the immense responsibilities of the Strategic Air Command, which essentially served as the meat behind the bones of the United States' nuclear deterrent policy. SAC was responsible for the command and control of US strategic nuclear strike forces, and was expected to have a lightning fast response time, should the Soviets ever strike first. The film also portrays the hawkish personalities so common among the military high command, and captures the debilitating anxiety that had become a fact of life for most Americans living in the nuclear age. The film was released in color by Universal Pictures in 1963. Directed by Delbert Mann, known for light comedy, and produced by Sy Bartlett, the film was heavily supported by the Air Force.[203] Starring Rock Hudson, and produced with considerable assistance from General Curtis Lemay, who was hoping to promote a positive image of the American military, the film was shot on location at a variety of different air force bases; therefore, the film's setting was incredibly

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201 Melvyn Stokes, *American History Through Hollywood Film: From the Revolution to the 1960s* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013), 6.
202 Robert A. Rosenstone, *History on Film/Film on History* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 5.
203 Rob Nixon, "A Gathering of Eagles," *Turner Classic Movies*. http://www.tcm.com/this-month/article/138980%7C0/A-Gathering-of-Eagles.html

accurate, which helped to ground the film's tired Civil Defense message in reality, giving it a

legitimacy and immediacy that the FCDA films sorely lacked.

The film's plotline focused on the persistent anxiety and vigilance expected of the

American Air Force by their hawkish generals, and hence the message was essentially that

constant danger should be met with constant preparedness. Hudson plays Colonel Caldwell, who

is offered the prime position of wing commander of the Carmody Air Force Base. The position

had become available after the old wing commander was fired by General Kirby for failing to

adequately complete a no-notice operation inspection and wartime simulation drill. Caldwell,

very aware that General Kirby wants the base to improve their operational readiness times,

begins making a series of harsh decisions and taking the job to the extreme. He fires a well-liked

pilot close to retirement for drinking too much, after which the pilot tries to kill himself.

Caldwell's wife is furious with him, asking,

> "You smash a man's life without one word of warning?"
> "In this job, you don't get warning."
> "Is the job everything? Don't people matter at all? What's happened to you? I didn't know you could be so callous."[204]

Caldwell continues his reign of callousness, obsessed with impressing General Kirby, who will

eventually come to the base to "test your readiness to launch aircraft and missiles in a maximum

of fifteen minutes."[205] He tells the maintenance men, who are already averaging 70 hours a week,

that they can't sleep until they check every B-52 for problems. Then, rather than keeping men on

alert for three days and three nights, he decides to keep the men on a seven-day cycle alert. His

friend Colonel Hollis warns him against this decision because it is bad for morale, but Caldwell

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204 *A Gathering of Eagles*, directed by Delbert Mann (1963; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 2015), DVD.
205 Ibid.

ignores this, just as he ignores his wife, Victoria, when she expresses concern as well, saying that

this new alert system will hurt the families. Caldwell replies:

> "I know what the alert does to families and I am sorry, but I can't consider their feelings at this
> point. There is too much at stake. When you are a wing commander the pressure is never off."[206]

Caldwell's relations with both Victoria and Hollis are very strained at this point, and come to a

head when Caldwell fires Hollis, who is extremely well liked, because Hollis is "too busy

making friends." Eventually, General Kirby comes to the base in the middle of the night for a

surprise ORI, or operational readiness inspection, and Caldwell isn't at the base. Hollis takes

over and directs the drill, which they pass successfully. Victoria forgives her husband, and says:

> "It's not just you it's everyone in SAC. A man in the hospital didn't ask for his wife or kids, he
> asked about his plane. I met his wife, she doesn't think he is callous, she understands. I wish I
> had."[207]

At the end of the film, words scroll onscreen that read, "Dedicated to the officers, airmen,

and wives of the 456th strategic aerospace wing of the Strategic Air Command."[208] Clearly made

with the approval of the military, this film highlights several key aspects of military life in the

Cold War. Caldwell must always carry a red phone with him in his house, and be able to answer

it within six rings. Victoria's storyline reveals the tremendous sacrifices women and families on

the base must deal with. She mentions the FSP (Family Services Program), in which wives and

mothers work together to handle their childcare and household duties when the men are on alert.

The efficiency of the American military, and the stress that comes with perfection, are really the

main points of the film. As it reveals, SAC must always be ready to launch missiles or aircraft

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206 *A Gathering of Eagles*, directed by Delbert Mann (1963; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 2015),
DVD.
207 Ibid.
208 Ibid.

within fifteen minutes and has planes in the air at all times. The film has two different ORI drills, demonstrating the organization, speed, and precision of the military. These sequences show hundreds of men in army fatigues waking up in the middle of the night, sprinting to their places, fueling and checking planes, and taking off in synchronized perfection in mere minutes.

For the American audiences watching, it is an impressive and reassuring sight, knowing that at the height of the Cold War, their men could retaliate with nuclear weapons within the hour. Despite this, the film also emphasizes the constant threat of the Cold War and what the anxious atmosphere can do mentally to the men defending the country. The generals consistently ask for faster operational readiness drills, and each surprise ORI takes about 15 hours, involving practice mission runs and bomb tests- an intense and tiring experience for the men. The generals make it seem as though each drill could very well be the real thing, and the men take it as such, while also understanding that if they fail they could get demoted or fired. Caldwell's arc demonstrates how damaging the stress and anxiety of being a part of the military command can be to a man's personal life, and the film paints him as a tragic hero figure.

A Gathering of Eagles was released after the Cuban Missile Crisis, and it attempted to *accurately* demonstrate what many of the SAC and Air Force Bases would have experienced during those fateful days in October. The American military was on high alert during the CMC, and many bombers were transported to Florida in case they were needed to invade Cuba at a moment's notice. Likewise, General Kirby was the stand-in for many of the hawkish, extremely right wing military generals of Excomm who were itching to go to war during the CMC, such as National Security Adviser Mac Bundy, former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Maxwell Taylor. The very term "doves and

hawks" is often traced back to ExComm during the Cuban Missile Crisis, with the hawks pushing for an air strike and the doves advocating for a blockade.[209]

In the film, Kirby's consistent push for improved operational readiness was a direct result of his sincere belief that war was inevitable, and that the men should be prepared and eager to fight. This reasoning was remarkably similar to that of the hawks of ExComm during the Cuban Missile Crisis. They believed that in the Cold War environment, they'd eventually end up fighting the Soviet Union anyway, and the crisis was an opportunity to get a jump on the Soviets. *A Gathering of Eagles* was a straight forward unapologetically pro-military film that depicted the men in uniform as good guys sacrificing for their country. A *Variety* review of the film noted this, writing, "Though scenarist Robert Pirosh and director Delbert Mann have been hemmed in by formula, within the narrow dramatic horizons of the story design they perform their tasks quite commendably. The familiar post-war air force situations are dramatized about as well as could be expected."[210] Likewise, the *New York Times* gave the film a lackluster review, taking issue with the film's accuracy. The reviewer argues that the personal drama, "does not seem to relate realistically entirely to the scientifically exact world of the highly specialized warriors of SAC despite the obvious striving for authenticity in this production… One hopes that the actual SAC brass are steadier in the heart, the mind and in the cockpit."[211] The review also notes that, "despite an awesomely topical theme, the distinct impression gained from 'A Gathering of Eagles,' is one of familiarity rather than the decidedly unusual, complex responsibilities facing the airborne military in a nuclear age."

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209 Michael Dobbs, "The Original Hawks and Doves," *Foreign Policy*, October 11, 2012. http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/10/11/the-original-hawks-and-doves/
210 "Review: 'A Gathering of Eagles,'" *Variety,* December 31, 1962. http://variety.com/1962/film/reviews/a-gathering-of-eagles-1200420451/
211 A.H. Weiler, "Screen: Airborne Military: 'A Gathering of Eagles' Opens at 4 Theaters," *New York Times* (New York, NY), July 11, 1963. http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9D03E3DE123CEF3BBC4952DFB1668388679EDE

This is perhaps a reference to another pair of films in production that were also looking at the military in the nuclear age, *Dr. Strangelove*, and *Fail-Safe. A Gathering of Eagles* had actually been created as a public relations attempt on the part of the Air Force to get ahead of these two widely anticipated anti-nuclear, anti-military films. Air Force General Curtis Lemay became heavily invested in the production of *A Gathering of Eagles* precisely in order to ensure that *Dr. Strangelove* and *Fail-Safe* would not undermine the public's image of the military. Ever the war hawk, Lemay was concerned because losing public support for SAC meant losing money for the military. Likewise, the General understood that the tide of public opinion had been turning against nuclear weaponry and aggressive Cold War politics ever since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Thus, he treated this film as a chance to remind the American people that the military was not their enemy, a view that was becoming increasingly popular with the rise of the New Left and the anti-war activism of the 1960s.

Part Three: Analysis of *Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964)

Unfortunately for Lemay, *Dr. Strangelove* and *Fail-Safe* were massively popular, in large part because both films directly attacked military men like Lemay, whose hawkish comments during the 1960s gave them plenty of material to sink their teeth into.

> General Curtis Lemay: "If I see that the Russians are amassing their planes for an attack… I'm going to knock the shit out of them before they take off the ground."
> Robert Sprague: "But general Lemay, that's not national policy."
> Lemay: "I don't care, it's my policy, that's what I'm going to do."[212]

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212 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 665. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558

Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb, was a black and white film released in early 1964. The film was directed and produced by Stanley Kubrick, and distributed by Columbia Pictures. The script was loosely based on the book *Red Alert,* written by Peter George, who had worked in RAF (Royal Air Force) intelligence.[213] The screenplay was co-written by Kubrick, George, and Terry Southern, and was changed from a thriller to a comedy after conducting research with the game theorist Thomas Schelling, and the military strategist Herman Kahn. *Dr. Strangelove* engaged with an abundance of complex Cold War topics through satire and parody. The film addresses issues such as accidental nuclear warfare, and the power struggle between the military generals and civilian leaders, both of which were serious problems during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Similarly, the film lampoons military hawks, the flawed premise of automatic retaliation, and the nonchalantly macabre nature of the nuclear dialogue so often spoken by the generals and military strategists of the period.

Dr. Strangelove plays out in three settings: Burpelson Air Force Base, the War Room, and the cockpit of a B-52 plane. The basis of the plot is that General Jack Ripper has seemingly gone mad, placed the air force base on red alert, and sent his B-52 squadrons carrying nuclear weapons to attack the Soviet Union. His insanity is revealed when he tells his men about a theory involving communist infiltration, fluoridation, and bodily fluids. Captain Mandrake attempts to get General Ripper to call off his order, but Ripper refuses, saying, "War is too important to be left to the politicians."[214]

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213 Dan Lindley, "What I Learned since I Stopped Worrying and Studied the Movie: A Teaching Guide to Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove,'" *Political Science and Politics* 34, no. 3 (Sep. 2001): 666. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1353558
214 *Dr. Strangelove Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, directed by Stanley Kubrick (1964; Culver City, California: Columbia Pictures, 2001), DVD.

Meanwhile, General Buck Turgidson is called into the War Room, where the US president asks him why Ripper was able to order a nuclear attack, as he had thought that that power lay solely with the president. Turgidson replies that there is an emergency war plan in place that allows commanders to order an attack, that it is impossible to recall the planes, and argues that this is the perfect opportunity to strike first, to which the President replies,

> "President Muffley: You are talking about mass murder general, not war.
> General Turgidson: I'm not saying we wouldn't get our hair mussed. But no more than 10 to 20 million killed, tops!"[215]

The President decides to call Soviet Premier Kissoff, on the direct "hotline" to explain the situation. The Premier then tells the Soviet Ambassador, who is in the War Room with the others, about the doomsday device, to which the ambassador mutters, "the fools, the mad fools!" He explains that the Soviets built a device that is designed to trigger itself automatically in the event of a nuclear attack.

> "We could not keep up with the expense involved in the arms race, the space race, and the peace race. We learned your country was working along similar lines. We were afraid of a doomsday gap!"[216]

The Soviets and Americans manage to work together to shoot down all the bombers except one. That lone bomber manages to drop their nuclear bomb, and the men in the War Room know it is only a matter of time before the doomsday device is activated. Dr. Strangelove, an ex-Nazi scientist, offers the idea of staying in deep mine shafts for 100 years, safely hidden from the radioactivity above. General Turgidson, however, is worried about the possibility of the Soviets stashing bombs or producing more children in their mineshafts, and argues, "We must not allow a mineshaft gap!"[217] The film ends with a mushroom cloud.

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215 *Dr. Strangelove Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, directed by Stanley Kubrick (1964; Culver City, California: Columbia Pictures, 2001), DVD.
216 Ibid.
217 Ibid.

Dr. Strangelove was released after the Cuban Missile Crisis, and it was clearly inspired by many facets of the crisis. The "hotline" used by President Muffley and Premier Kissoff in the film is one such example. The real "hotline" between the US President and the Soviet Premier was established in 1963 by Kennedy and Khrushchev immediately following the CMC, to avoid having to write letters to one another in future crises. Likewise, the idea of the "doomsday device" was surprisingly accurate. Kubrick made a conscious decision to feature this in the film, telling the New York Times, "There is an almost total preoccupation with a technical solution to the problem of the bomb. Our theme is that there is no technical solution… The only solution and defense lies in the minds and hearts of men."[218] Indeed, both the US and the USSR had taken steps towards automatic retaliation to strengthen the policy of deterrence. The New York Times reported on this phenomenon in 1958, writing, "Top officials say techniques are being perfected so that 1,500-mile ballistic missiles slated for Europe eventually will be able to retaliate ten minutes or so after a warning of an attack."[219] In the film, Dr. Strangelove explains this deterrence strategy, saying,

> "Deterrence is the art of producing in the mind of the enemy the fear to attack, and so because of the automated and irrevocable decision-making process which rules out human meddling, the doomsday machine is terrifying and simple to understand and completely credible and convincing."[220]

The parallels between the situation that President Muffley and Premier Kissoff were in, and the situation that Kennedy and Khrushchev were in during the CMC are striking. Both sets of leaders

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218 Grant B. Stillman, "Two of the MADdest Scientists: Where Strangelove Meets Dr. No; or, Unexpected Roots for Kubrick's Cold War Classic," Film History 20, no. 4 (2008): 490.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27670748.pdf
219 Richard Witkin, "Untried Missiles Need Count-down: Tested Weapons Can Get Off Sooner-Experts Act to Cut Retaliation Time," New York Times (New York, NY), February 6, 1958.
https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1958/02/06/82209466.html?action=click&contentCollection=Archives&module=ArticleEndCTA&region=ArchiveBody&pgtype=article&pageNumber=15
220 Dr. Strangelove Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb, directed by Stanley Kubrick (1964; Culver City, California: Columbia Pictures, 2001), DVD.

were forced to work together with their counterparts to avoid accidental nuclear war, and struggle to overcome the animosity and suspicion placed between them by the Cold War. In both the film, and in real life, no leader wanted nuclear warfare, and yet all were surrounded by men who were actively pushing for it.

The film captures the tension present between the politicians and the generals during the Cuban Missile Crisis. General Ripper remarks that he doesn't want to leave war to the politicians, and President Muffley continually rejects the advice of his generals to launch a nuclear attack, believing them to be war-hungry mass murderers. President Muffley is clearly not in control of his generals (Ripper ordered an attack without Muffley's knowledge), and Turgidson clearly does not respect the President. The tension between politicians and generals, borne out of the military's frustration with the fact that the power to declare war rested with the civilian leaders rather than with military leaders was palpable during the Cuban Missile Crisis. President Kennedy and his Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, consistently had to resist the loud cries for war that were coming from the ExComm generals.

The hard-right military hawks that President Kennedy continually had to deal with during the Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crisis were savagely lampooned in *Strangelove*. Kubrick had done his homework, and told one *New York Times* writer that, "it would be difficult and dramatically redundant to try to top the statistical and linguistic inhumanity of nuclear strategists."[221] Thus, many of the lines uttered by Generals Jack Ripper and Buck Turgidson are, if not verbatim quotes, eerily similar statements to the public pronouncements made by the upper military brass of the day, such as Dean Acheson and Curtis Lemay. Likewise, Dr. Strangelove is

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221 Grant B. Stillman, "Two of the MADdest Scientists: Where Strangelove Meets Dr. No; or, Unexpected Roots for Kubrick's Cold War Classic." *Film History* 20, No. 4 (2008): 492. http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27670748.pdf

clearly a parody of Edward Teller, the famed nuclear physicist known as the "father of the

hydrogen bomb," who opposed every attempt at arms treaties with the Soviets, and Wernher von

Braun, a Nazi aerospace engineer that later worked for NASA, who once said, "Once the rockets

are up, who cares where they come down? That's not my department."[222]

The characters in *Dr. Strangelove* often spout the blasé "nukespeak" of Henry Kissinger

and Herman Kahn.[223] James Naremore has actually compared quotes from the film to quotes by

Kissinger and Kahn, and he found that many of Turgidson's ideas can be found in Kissinger's

book, *The Necessity for Choice, Prospects for American Foreign Policy*.[224] Most of the

characters in *Dr. Strangelove* engage in the nuclear dialogue so common among the hard right

military hawks of the period, which Kubrick demonized so well. The film successfully attacks

the nuclear establishment, the men who control it, and the ways in which they spoke about it. *Dr.

Strangelove* is a hilarious parody; however, what lies beneath the humor is reality. Realistic

characters saying realistic things in realistic settings allow the film to function as a subversive

warning to its audience about what the cold war mentality could lead to.[225] Robert Kolker writes,

> "Dr. Strangelove is an unusual film that served the function of prophecy. In the early sixties,
> Kubrick perceived in the dominant political ideology certain modes of speech, figures of thought,
> and images of America's imagine place in the world that allowed him to set up a narrative of
> events so logical and unavoidable that the only possible result was the end of the world."[226]

Of course, Kubrick significantly exaggerates the events that lead to the end of the world

to great comedic effect. When the army storms Ripper's Air Force Base, it becomes a full-scale

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222 Paul Boyer, "Sixty Years and Counting: Nuclear Themes in American Culture, 1945 to the Present," in *Understanding the Imaginary War: Culture, Thought, and Nuclear Conflict, 1945-90,* ed. Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 80.
223 Robert Kolker, "Tectonics of the Mechanical Man, Stanley Kubrick," *A Cinema of Loneliness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 127.
224 Grant B. Stillman, "Two of the MADdest Scientists: Where Strangelove Meets Dr. No; or, Unexpected Roots for Kubrick's Cold War Classic," *Film History* 20, No. 4 (2008): 492. http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27670748.pdf
225 Jerome F. Shapiro, *Atomic Bomb Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 144.
226 Robert Kolker, "Tectonics of the Mechanical Man, Stanley Kubrick," *A Cinema of Loneliness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 120.

battle scene, albeit fought in the presence of an enormous sign that reads, "Burpelson Air Force Base: Peace is our Profession." Similarly, when General Turgidson begins physically brawling with the Russian Ambassador, the President yells, "Gentlemen! You can't fight in here; this is the War Room!" Kubrick's use of humor is poignant- the point of *Strangelove*, according to Fred Inglis, is that, "the Cold War is a MAD joke. No person of taste could permit herself to take it seriously."[227]

The film's humor rests on the insane actions of the people in positions of power, and yet, ominously, those fictional characters were based upon real-life counterparts.[228] American audiences realized this, with *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*, among others, applauding the satiric nature of the film, and the New York Film Critics voting Kubrick Best Director of 1964. Lewis Mumford wrote, "This film is the first break in the catatonic Cold War trance that has so long held our country in its rigid grip."[229] In a 1966 *New Yorker* interview, Kubrick demonstrated his awareness of this Cold War trance, saying, "When you start reading the analyses of nuclear strategy, they seem so thoughtful that you're lulled into a temporary sense of reassurance. But as you go deeper into it, and become more involved, you gain to realize that every one of these lines of thought leads to a paradox."[230] In another interview, he expanded on this idea, explaining why he chose to turn his film into a comedy: "After all, what could be more absurd than the very idea of two mega-powers willing to wipe out all human life because of an accident, spiced up by political differences that will seem as meaningless to people in a hundred

227 Fred Inglis, *The Cruel Peace: Everyday Life and the Cold War* (New York: BasicBooks, 1991), 21.
228 Jerome F. Shapiro, *Atomic Bomb Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 148.
229 Jonathan Kirshner, "Subverting the Cold War in the 1960s: Dr Strangelove, the Manchurian Candidate, Planet of the Apes," *Film and History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 31, no. 2 (2004): 43. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/400700
230 Maria Popova, "November 27, 1965: A Rare Recording of Stanley Kubrick's Most Revealing Interview," *Brainpickings*, accessed 4/8/2017. https://www.brainpickings.org/2013/11/27/jeremy-bernstein-stanley-kubrick-interview/

years from now as the theological conflicts of the Middle Ages appear to us today?"[231] Clearly

then, Kubrick's *Strangelove* was a bold indictment of the dangerous atmosphere the Cold War

created, and its popularity proved that he had hit a nerve in America.

Part Four: Analysis of *Fail-Safe* (1964)

The black and white film *Fail-Safe* came shortly after the release of *Dr. Strangelove*, in

1964. It was remarkably similar to *Dr. Strangelove*, in that it, too, featured the American and

Soviet presidents working together to prevent accidental nuclear warfare. Clearly, then, both

films were reactions to the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. This being said, the film

was overshadowed at the box office by *Strangelove*, which many critics seemed to prefer,

including *Fail-Safe*'s own producer, Max Youngstein. Lawrence Suid writes of Youngstein,

"The producer thought his company had turned out a 'good picture,' but conceded that Kubrick

had 'turned out a brilliant picture.'"[232] A Columbia Pictures film, *Fail-Safe* was produced by

Sidney Lumet and Max Youngstein, written by Walter Bernstein, and based on the 1962 book of

the same name.[233] The film was directed by Sidney Lumet, who was known for his camera-work

and his ability to get strong performances from his actors. Lumet's film took a much more

serious and realistic approach to its subject matter, yet consciously parodied the stylistic tone of

the 1950s Civil Defense documentaries. Suid notes that, "*Fail-Safe* purported to tell it like it was

in the guise of a pseudo-documentary. As a result, more than in *Dr. Strangelove*, the portrayals in

Fail-Safe called the military establishment onto the carpet and questioned its methods and

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231 Thomas Allen Nelson, *Kubrick: Inside a Film Artist's Maze* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 85.
232 Lawrence Suid, "The Pentagon and Hollywood," in *American History/American Film: Interpreting the Hollywood Image*, ed. John E. O'Connor and Martin A. Jackson (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 233.
233 "Fail-Safe (1964)," *Turner Classic Movies.* http://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/4556/Fail-Safe/

procedures in a way that few Hollywood military films had done up to that time."[234] The Cold War themes present in *Fail-Safe* overlap those of *Dr. Strangelove* on some level- both address accidental nuclear warfare. *Fail-Safe*, however, engages with the subject of automatic retaliation and the dangers of machinery in warfare more so than does *Strangelove*. The film also serves as a stark warning to the popular idea of pushbutton warfare, and its portrayal of the game theorists that treat Armageddon as a blasé topic is a poignant critique of the war hawks of the period.

The film opens with Professor Groeteschele at a dinner party explaining that in the event of a nuclear war, file clerks and criminals would be the only humans to survive because they'd all be underground. A political science professor, Groeteschele chuckles that it's fun to guess about what would happen. Another party guest admonishes him, "You make death an entertainment, something that can be played in a living room. You'd love to be the one to do it, to push that button."[235] At an air force base, several congressmen are getting a tour of the nerve center of SAC. A UFO pops up on the radar, which causes the bombers already in the air to fly to their fail-safe points, "fixed points in the sky on the perimeter of the Soviet Union which they will orbit until we order them to go in."[236] The general explains that they are unable to go to war without the express order of the President, and that this sort of thing happens often, usually it's a plane off course. Meanwhile, the professor is giving a lecture on limited war to the Joint Chiefs in the Pentagon. The professor is arguing with a general named Black, who is in favor of confining war to military targets, to avoid civilian casualties. The professor feels this is impossible, and states that there is no such thing as limited war anymore because of the bomb.

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234 Lawrence Suid, "The Pentagon and Hollywood," in *American History/American Film: Interpreting the Hollywood Image*, ed. John E. O'Connor and Martin A. Jackson (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 233.
235 *Fail Safe*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1964; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.
236 Ibid.

He says, mockingly, "The press would be interested- the military man who is the dove, and the civilian who is the hawk."[237] The General dismisses this, and presses the professor.

> General: Everything is going too fast, things are getting out of hand.
> Professor: We are all trying to make war more efficient. That's our job.
> General: And we are succeeding, we now have the capacity to blow up the whole world several times over.
> Professor: That doesn't mean we must do it.
> General: We won't be able to stop from doing it…We are setting up a war machine that acts faster than the ability of men to control it.[238]

Back at SAC headquarters, the men have determined that the UFO is not a plane, and are now worried that it may be a Soviet missile. Once they receive confirmation that the bombers have all reached their fail-safe points, the situation is moved to condition green. After having a plane follow the object, the UFO is identified as a commercial flight with power failure that had blown off course. The base attempts to recall the bombers at the fail-safe points, but the fault indicator machine at headquarters has malfunctioned. The malfunction caused the fail-safe boxes of one of the bomber groups to give the go-ahead order to attack. The pilots are confused and attempt to confirm the order via radio. Everything looks legitimate, so the crew opens their operational orders that say to attack Moscow. Scared and confused, they head towards Moscow.

The men at SAC watch as one of their bomber groups heads towards Moscow, and they immediately call the President to inform him of the situation. The base tries to make contact with the planes, but the Soviets are jamming radio interference. The General tells the President that the planes needs to be recalled within the next five minutes, because after that their orders are to disregard any verbal command as a precaution against the enemy. The General suggests the President give the order to shoot down the planes. The President calls the Secretary of Defense, who is in the lecture with the Joint Chiefs. Both the Secretary and General Black suggest

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237 *Fail Safe*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1964; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.
238 Ibid.

shooting the planes down quickly, while the professor thinks this is premature. The President

orders several fighters in the area to try to shoot the planes down, but the fighters are so far away

that they run out of fuel and die in the Arctic Ocean. Disregarding the professor's advice to do

nothing, and allow the planes to bomb Moscow, the President calls the Soviet Premier on the

hotline.

The President tells the suspicious Premier that the situation was an accident, to trust him,

and that he hopes that they will be able to shoot down the bombers. Unfortunately, the Soviet

fighters aren't successful and when the President asks why the Premier hasn't counterattacked

yet, the Premier replies,

> "I am gambling that you are sincere. My generals are not so happy with me about this, as I'm sure your generals are not so happy with you. We can't afford not to trust each other."[239]

The Premier stops jamming the radios of the bombers so that the President can speak to the

pilots. The pilots ignore him, so the President tells the men at SAC to give the Soviets any

information that will help them to shoot down the bombers. The professor, meanwhile, is urging

a sneak attack.

> General Black: "You are justifying murder."
> Professor: "Yes to keep from being murdered. Those who can survive are the only ones worth surviving."[240]

The General at SAC is having trouble getting his men to cooperate with the Soviets,

because they feel as though they are helping the enemy. One colonel flat out refuses, as he still

thinks this is some sort of Soviet trap, and tells the General this is treason. He tries to knock the

General out and is taken away screaming that the General is a traitor. The General's Soviet

counterpart, who heard the entire exchange, tells him that he is having the same problem with his

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239 *Fail Safe*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1964; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.
240 Ibid.

own men. The President, realizing that one of the bombers has gotten through, orders that New

York City should be bombed as soon as Moscow is bombed. Speaking to the President, the

Premier says,

> "No human being did wrong. No one is to be blamed."
> President: We're to blame, both of us. We let our machines get out of hand.
> Premier: Still, it was an accident.
> President: Two great cities may be destroyed, millions of innocent people killed. What do we say to them, Mr. Chairman, 'Accidents happen?'[241]

The two men agree that they are responsible for what the machines have done, and that they will

work together to ensure that this does not happen again, despite all that stands between them.

As my summarization of the film exposes, *Fail Safe* featured many of the same themes as

Dr. Strangelove, but presented them in a different way to showcase the problems that Kennedy

and Khrushchev dealt with during the CMC. The US President and the Soviet Premier utilized

the hotline to try to solve the film's crisis directly, as in *Strangelove*. The difference, of course,

was that the characters were played straight and serious in *Fail-Safe*, whereas in *Strangelove* the

Premier was drunk and the President was weak. This comparison highlights the main difference

between the two films, while *Fail-Safe* was drama, *Strangelove* was satire. Unlike in

Strangelove, the characters in *Fail-Safe* behaved in ways that the audience would expect their

real-life counterparts to behave in such a dire situation; therefore on some level, *Fail-Safe* is the

more frightening film. It demonstrates that nuclear warfare can occur even when there are

capable and intelligent people in positions of power. One review from the *Chicago Tribune*

warns, "it is a depressing experience. Technically and dramatically the film is convincing…the

film can have a devastating effect on adults and I would certainly not recommend it for

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241 *Fail Safe*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1964; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.

children."[242] *Strangelove* is funny, but *Fail-Safe* is realistic- a mechanical failure is much more

likely to cause a nuclear war than is an insane general ranting about fluoridation conspiracies.[243]

Machines and technology are a big part of the narrative of *Fail-Safe*, much more so than

in *Strangelove*. The film serves as a warning to the audience that automating warfare and

replacing people with machines can have dire consequences. Although this wasn't the case in the

Cuban Missile Crisis, it was a definite theme of the period, something the military was

advancing towards as another step towards deterrence. Ann Markusen writes of this trend,

> "Ironically the evolution of an automated Cold War threat did not lower the number of people dedicated to war readiness. Instead, it pushed them back from the uniformed front lines into roles as mechanics and repairmen, computer programmers…the business of killing became more remote, and the deployment of an effective threat became predominantly an industrial and scientific undertaking."[244]

In one of the film's scenes, two older pilots complain, "The next airplanes, they won't

need us. After us, the machines… That's policy, it eliminates the personal factor."[245] Likewise, a

general at the SAC base explains to the congressmen receiving a tour,

> General: "The more complex a system is, the more accident prone it becomes."
> Congressman: "But humans are supervising the machines, they can correct the mistakes."
> General: "Not necessarily."[246]

Later on in the movie, another exchange takes place, emphasizing the danger of relying on

automated machines for nuclear warfare.

> Congressman: "Truthfully these machines scare the hell out of me."
> General: "Machines are developed to meet situations."
> Congressman: "Yes, but then they take over, they start creating situations."
> General: "We have checks on everything."
> Congressman: Who checks the checker? Who has responsibility?

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242 Mae Tinee, "'Fail Safe' is Chilling as Film, Too," *Chicago Tribune*, November 9, 1964. http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1964/11/09/index.html

243 Tristan Abbott, "Bomb Media, 1953–1964," *Postmodern Culture*, 18, no. 3: (May 2008), 12. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/261323

244 Ann Markusen, "Cold War Workers, Cold War Communities," in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, ed. Peter J. Kuznik and James Gilbert (Washington DC: Smithsonian Books, 2010), 40.

245 *Fail Safe*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1964; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.

246 Ibid.

Generals: (simultaneously) The president. No one.[247]

Consequently, in any reading of the film, *Fail-Safe* sees several problems with the contemporary idea of deterrence by automation, problems that *Strangelove* touched upon as well in its discussion about the "doomsday device." When warfare becomes automatic, accidents can occur more easily. Machines don't have the judgment of men, and therefore have no qualms or reservations about triggering a nuclear war. Likewise, machines absolve men of the responsibility of causing a nuclear war, making it a more likely possibility. "*Fail Safe* labels machines, and especially the machinery of war, as the enemy to be feared- not the Soviet Union. Humans, not wanting the moral weight of nuclear war on their shoulders, mechanize it."[248]

This point is important, because, like *Strangelove*, *Fail-Safe* does not take the side of the right or the left; instead, it targets the Cold War conflict itself. While *Strangelove*'s main target is the nuclear madness of the Cold War atmosphere, *Fail-Safe's* main target is the nuclear rhetoric that drives it. *Fail-Safe* effectively demonizes nuclear rhetoric, demonstrating how "the continued talk of nuclear war will make war an inevitability."[249] This strategy was a subversive one, in that rather than directly attacking the US government for what they were saying about nuclearism, *Fail-Safe* criticized the very ways in which they discussed nuclearism.[250] The film largely achieved this through the dialogue and behavior of just one character, Professor Groeteschele. Clearly modeled after Herman Kahn, the RAND military strategist and systems theorist who believed that nuclear war was "winnable," the professor is depicted as a hawk with

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247 *Fail Safe*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1964; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.
248 Cyndy Hendershot, "The Bear and the Dragon: Representations of Communism in Early Sixties American Culture," *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures* 23, no. 4 (Jan 2000), 68. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1537-4726.2000.2304_67.x/epdf
249 Tristan Abbott, "Bomb Media, 1953–1964," *Postmodern Culture*, 18, no. 3: (May 2008), 12. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/261323
250 Ibid, 10.

the ear of the military who relishes dreaming up hypothetical scenarios of nuclear apocalypse.

The professor is so steeped in nuclear discourse that he has become utterly detached from the

horrors that he is casually discussing. Even the generals of the military think he is frighteningly

nonchalant about suggesting nuclear warfare, it is as if he hasn't fully grasped the notion that the

casualty calculations he talks about are the deaths of actual people.

> Professor: "60 million is the price we should be prepared to pay in a war."
> Guest: "What's the difference between 100 million and 60 million lives dead? Are you saying 40 million lives isn't important?"
> Professor: "We are talking about war. Every war, including thermonuclear war, must have a winner and a loser."
> Guest: "In a nuclear war, everyone loses."
> Professor: "War isn't what it used to be."[251]

The generals increasingly ignore the Professor's suggestions as the crisis heats up

because, unlike him, they have actually experienced the realities of warfare and are not willing to

be held responsible for the deaths of millions due to a technical error. In fact, whereas at the

beginning of the film the Professor was lecturing the generals, by the end of the film he is treated

as an idiot who doesn't understand the magnitude of the situation. This underlies the civilian-

military divide that so rankled ExComm during the Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC), although in

that scenario, the hawks were the generals, not the civilians. Nonetheless, the Professor sees fit to

remind the generals of this divide, and of the ultimate power of the president in matters of

nuclear warfare,

> General Black: "We are talking about the wrong subject- we have to stop war, not limit it."
> Professor: "That's not up to us, General."
> General Black: "We are the ones who know most about it."
> Professor: "You are a soldier, General Black, you carry out policy, you don't make it."[252]

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251 *Fail Safe*, directed by Sidney Lumet (1964; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2000), DVD.
252 Ibid.

Finally, the decision the US President makes at the end of the film is a sober one. He decides to bomb New York to avoid a full out nuclear war with the Soviet Union. In killing some of his own people, he saves many Americans and Russians by preventing a nuclear war. This decision says volumes about the lengths to which leaders would go to avoid a nuclear war. In reality, Kennedy and Khrushchev both understood this idea of making difficult decisions before it was too late to stop the downward spiral towards war. During the Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC), Khrushchev chose to turn around and sail the offensive missiles home rather than engage with the US military blockade. He was ridiculed within his Party for his decision, which made the Soviets look weak; however, he understood that preventing a nuclear war was more important than saving face. Both civilian leaders had to make these decisions whilst everyone around them was clamoring for war, but they stood firm in steering their ships away from the brink of war. As President Kennedy said to an aid after a particularly heated argument with ExComm, "These brass hats had one great advantage in their favor. If we do what they want us to do, no one of us will be alive later to tell them they were wrong."[253]

Chapter Five: Military Hawks and Spies in 1960s Film

Part One: Analysis of *The Bedford Incident* (1965)

The 1965 black and white film, *The Bedford Incident*, showed the frustrated perspective of one of those hawkish "brass hats," and how he behaves when thousands of miles away from

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253 Richard D. Mahoney, *The Kennedy Brothers: The Rise and Fall of Jack and Bobby* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011), 207.

his civilian leader. The film was directed by James B. Harris, who had recently ended his film partnership with Stanley Kubrick. In fact, *The Bedford Incident* was Harris' first attempt at directing. Produced by Harris and Richard Widmark and distributed by Columbia Pictures, the film was based on the book by the same name, the rights to which cost Harris nearly $100,000.[254] Like the films discussed in the previous chapter, *Bedford* features accidental nuclear warfare and a military hawk itching to go to war, this time in the form of a Naval captain. The idea of constant anxiety and military readiness is also a main theme of the film, as is the Cold War as a dangerous game of chicken, literally played out onscreen here, between a Soviet submarine and a US destroyer. Finally, both the setting and the events of the film were clearly inspired by the naval quarantine of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The film follows Sydney Poiter's character, Ben Munceford, who is a journalist writing about life on an American destroyer, the USS Bedford. Ben meets the extremely gruff Captain Finlander, who tells him that the ship functions as both NATO defense and US defense. The relationship between the US and NATO is a complex one in this film, while it is clearly one of allies; there is tension present. Although the Captain, representing the US, defers to the orders of NATO, he does so rather begrudgingly, as if annoyed that he must obey orders when he knows that the US represents the bulk of NATO's enforcement power. His job is to track and hunt Russian submarines in the Denmark Strait, and he is convinced that the Soviets are recording and penetrating their technological defenses. Their current target is a sub with the codename Big Red, that is believed to be carrying nuclear torpedoes. They spot the submarine on sonar heading towards the ice. The Captain sounds the General Headquarters (GQ) alarm, causing the entire crew to run to their positions. The submarine has passed into Greenland's territorial waters,

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254 Peter Bart, "Nuclear 'Incident' at Sea," *New York Times* (New York, NY), August 8, 1965. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1965/08/08/98458991.html?pageNumber=329

violating international law, and so the Captain places ASROC (Anti-Submarine Rocket) on standby. Finlander contacts NATO, requesting permission to force the submarine to surface and withdraw. The NATO commander denies permission, and tells Finlander to wait due to a critical political situation. The hawkish Captain is extremely unhappy with this decision, anxiously pacing and cursing NATO for allowing the submarine to escape.

Afterwards, the Captain grants an interview to Munceford, who has been getting increasingly worried about how war-hungry the Captain seems. Munceford says he chose this ship after seeing the Captain give an interview after he had successfully forced a Russian sub to surface off the coast of Cuba.

> Munceford: "After the incident, everyone was very cautious except you. You were very outspoken and critical, you advocated using greater force. Do you believe the military should have greater say in government policy?"
> Finlander: "I'm proud to be an old-fashioned patriot, and I'd destroy any enemy if it meant saving my country."
> Munceford: "How far would you go?"
> Finlander: "All the way."
> Munceford: "Does that mean nuclear attack?"
> Finlander: "I didn't say that."
> Munceford: "You implied it."[255]

Finlander angrily explains that his purpose is to deter aggression and leaves. Munceford is worried that Finlander is "playing at war," and is also worried about the anxious state of the crew, who are constantly kept on alert. By now, the submarine has been under water for 20 hours, because the Bedford has refused to let it come up for air. The commander of the sub now decides to go under the ice to try to lose the vessel. The German NATO commodore advises the Captain to wait, as the sub can't have much air left. The Captain agrees and then speaks to his crew,

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255 *The Bedford Incident,* directed by James B. Harris (1965; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2003), DVD.

"I know you are all tired and disgusted that Big Red is making fools of us, and those commies are laughing at another humiliation, to add to the many endured by our country during this Cold War. I want every man to be so alert that this ship will tingle like an animal about to attack."[256]

A message comes from the NATO commander allowing the Captain to force the sub to the surface only if it is still trespassing in Greenland's waters. The Captain sees the submarine coming up for air, and decides to closely tail the sub to prevent it from coming up for any more air. At this point, one of his crewmembers starts to babble incoherently due to being overworked, but the Captain is much too excited about the prospect of forcing the sub to surface to notice.

The commodore reminds the eager Captain that the commander only gave permission for Greenland waters. The Captain says this is a matter of interpretation and that all he is going to do is challenge. The commodore argues, and the Captain says, "You consider me desperate?" to which the commodore responds, "No, I consider you frightening."[257] The Captain ignores this and commands the submarine to surface and identify itself, but it does not respond. Finlander, clearly thrilled that the sub disobeyed his orders, now decides to speed right over the submarine to antagonize the Russians further. The commodore says, "Stop this madness." The commodore and Munceford both beg the Captain to stop,

> Commodore: "Break off this action or you'll force him to fight!"
> Finlander: "You think he'll fire at us?"
> Commodore: "I would in his place, so would you!"[258]

It becomes obvious that the Captain knows this and is hoping that the submarine will fire at him so that he has an excuse to launch a full out attack. He tells his extremely wound up crew to arm the ASROC, while Munceford calls him an insane fool. The Captain, his eyes alight with glee, says, "Don't worry, we will never fire first. But if he fires one, I'll fire one."[259] An exhausted

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256 *The Bedford Incident,* directed by James B. Harris (1965; Culver City, California: Sony Pictures, 2003), DVD.
257 Ibid.
258 Ibid.
259 Ibid.

crewmember hears this as an order to "fire one," and proceeds to fire a torpedo. Shocked, the Captain realizes that the submarine has retaliated, and the film ends with the Bedford blowing up in a giant mushroom cloud.

Like *Strangelove* and *Fail-Safe*, *The Bedford Incident* ended with a mushroom cloud, a not so subtle reminder of what the last day on Earth would look like. Like the two previous films, *The Bedford Incident* predicted that nuclear war would occur because of an accident, and like *Strangelove*, it predicted that the accident would be caused by an overly hawkish, insane general. It should also be noted that in all three (American) films, it was the Americans that caused the accidental nuclear attack, never the Soviets. Captain Finlander is an excellent stand-in for the hawkish generals of the day, lamenting his inability to go to war without explicit permission from his civilian boss. From his point of view, it was incredibly frustrating knowing that he was missing a strategically perfect opportunity simply because his civilian boss, who was thousands of miles away, was thinking of the political ramifications. This, was, of course, the way that many of the US generals must have felt during the Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC).

The Captain also had an interesting backstory in that he was the man who had forced a Russian sub to surface off the coast of Cuba. This was clearly a reference to the Cuban Missile Crisis blockade, and it is eerily similar to one incident in particular. In the middle of the CMC, on October 27th, the USS Randall and 10 destroyers were tracking four Russians subs heading towards Cuba. The destroyers surrounded the subs and forced three of the subs to surface. The last sub, a B-39, stayed underwater. The sub's leader, Captain Savitsky, believed that they were actually under attack, as the sub had been out of contact with the USSR for several days. He decided to hit back with nuclear torpedoes and, following protocol, needed the go-ahead from two other officers aboard the sub to fire. The first officer of the B-39, Vasili Arkhipov, argued

against the decision, reasoning that they should first confirm that there was actually a state of war before firing. He persuaded the captain to surface, where they were able to establish radio contact with Moscow, which gave them the order to turn back. Vasili returned to the USSR to a hero's welcome, and at the 40th anniversary of the CMC, Robert S. McNamara agreed that Vasili had "saved the world."[260] Whether Captain Finlander's backstory was based on this incident or not, it is clear that the film was attempting a realistic portrayal of the dangerous games of "chicken" so common among the destroyers and submarines of the Cold War.

The naval quarantine, or blockade, imposed during the Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC) was perhaps the most dangerous game of chicken every played, with the Soviet and American ships sitting dead in the water, facing one another, and waiting for last minute orders to steam ahead towards war, or to turn back. Of course, Khrushchev made the wise decision to turn back, but it wouldn't be the last time the US and the USSR each dared one other to swerve while on a collision course. A Harvard strategist, Thomas Schelling, said at the time, "Cold war politics have been likened… the game of chicken." [261] Finally, like the film *A Gathering of Eagles*, *The Bedford Incident* depicted the psychological consequences of serving in the military during periods of heightened Cold War tensions. A *New York Times* article touched on this topic when it reported on the crew of the U.S.S. Ethan Allen, a new nuclear powered submarine capable of firing nuclear warheads. The idea of the submarine was that even if a nuclear war erupted on land, the men on the submarine would be able to stay underwater for weeks and wait out the fighting. The author makes it a point to reassure the readers of the psychological states of these

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260 "The Men Who Saved the World- Meet Two Different Russians who Prevented WW3," *Military History Now*, July 15, 2013. http://militaryhistorynow.com/2013/07/15/the-men-who-saved-the-world-meet-two-different-russians-who-prevented-ww3/
261 Ronnie D. Lipschutz, *Cold War Fantasies: Film, Fiction, and Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2001), 92.

crewmembers, saying, "It is natural to wonder how men can face the prospect of two solid months beneath the sea…They have been screened for such obvious limitations as claustrophobic tendencies, irritability and even excessive high spirits… they are notably stable personalities."[262] One can't help but wonder how these men were screened- determining what a man's psychological stability level will be during a nuclear attack is not something that can be truly tested.

Nevertheless, both films had several scenes in which the men with overzealous military commanders had to remain "on alert" for hours or days on end, which was extremely taxing physically. The role of the military during the Cold War was to be totally prepared for war, and then to wait for a war to occur, which was also extremely taxing mentally. During the CMC, one Air Force psychiatric officer "had characterized the mood on his base as one of exhilaration… The mounting tension, the constant simulation of combat preparedness finally gave way to an actual alert." [263] *The Bedford Incident*'s ending, in which the anxiety and exhaustion of the crew causes a nuclear attack, is thus a rather reasonable prediction to make given the realities of the job. Indeed, the *New York Times* published an article on this very topic, written by a retired British military officer. The author writes, "Inherent in this high state of readiness, however, is the risk of accident, either from technical malfunction or through miscalculation."[264]

Part Two: Analysis of *Topaz* (1969)

262 C.B. Palmer, "Voyage on 'Our No. 1 Deterrent," *New York Times* (New York, NY) April 8, 1962.
https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1962/04/08/issue.html
263 J. Hoberman, *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 91.
264 C.N. Barclay, "A Very Real Risk: War by Accident," *New York Times* (New York, NY) May 5, 1963.
Timeshttps://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1963/05/05/issue.html

While *The Bedford Incident* explored the naval quarantine of the Cuban Missile Crisis, *Topaz* explored the intelligence successes that played a vital role during the Cuban Missile Crisis. *Topaz* was a Universal Pictures color film released in 1969 based on a book by the same name, and produced and directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Based on the 1962 Sapphire Affair, in which a Soviet defector revealed that the Soviets had infiltrated the top ranks of French military intelligence, *Topaz* follows the events leading up to the Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC). The film opens in Denmark, 1962, with a Soviet officer and his family defecting to the United States with the help of the CIA. Once in the US, the Americans begin to interrogate the defector, Boris Kusenov, who is a deputy chief of the KGB and an authority on NATO.

Mike, one of the CIA men interrogating Boris, leaves the compound to visit one of his colleagues, French intelligence agent Andre Devereaux. Andre's wife is clearly not fond of his occupation, saying, "Andre, you are French, you are not supposed to be mixed up in this Cold War between the Americans and Russians. You are supposed to be neutral," to which he replies, "No one is neutral."[265] When Mike arrives to tell Devereaux of the defector, Andre's wife scathingly tells them, "You two secret agents can sit down and be secret agents. Who do you think you are fooling?"[266] Meanwhile, Boris has told the CIA that there are Russian technicians in Cuba, 5,000 military and technical experts that came with "gifts" from Russia. Mike tells this to Devereaux, who suggests Mike find the leader of the Cuban government, Rico Parra, who will know of any agreement between the USSR and Cuba and the exact nature of these "gifts."

Mike and Devereaux fly to New York, where the Cubans are gathered to meet the UN assembly. Devereaux goes to the hotel where the wild Cubans, still in their army fatigues, are staying. He takes the agreement, is discovered while photographing the documents, and barely

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265 *Topaz*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock (1969; Universal City, California: Universal Studios, 2006), DVD.
266 Ibid.

escapes with his life. He then decides to fly to Cuba on behalf of the CIA. There he reconnects

with Juanita de Cordoba, who is the head of an underground network and the lover of both Rico

Parra and Andre. Juanita proves herself to be well versed in intelligence work, saying, "All of

my people are in hiding. The port is an unloading site for Russian missiles."[267] She sends her

contacts to get photographic proof of the missiles. They do so and store the film in a dead-drop

site, but are soon discovered by Castro's men, shot, and taken to prison. Meanwhile, Andre

attends Castro's rally, but is recognized as having been at the New York hotel. Rico Parra then

walks in on Juanita and Andre having dinner and informs them that he knows it was Andre who

took those pictures in New York; and he threatens Andre:

> "If it were not for her, you would disappear tonight. Your country would receive bewildered
> apologies, but you would never be heard from again. You are an intelligence agent… you need to
> be out of here tomorrow, and you will not be taking any information out of here, you will be
> searched completely."[268]

Juanita defends Andre, and Rico Parra allows him to stay rather than be driven to Havana that

night. Once Rico leaves, they hide the camera film in some razor blades and put the information

on the missile sites in a microdot so that Andre can smuggle it into the United States.

Unfortunately, the agents that had been captured taking said pictures finally succumb to the

torture they were receiving, and admit to their interrogators that they are working for Juanita

Cordoba. The next morning, Rico and his men storm Juanita's house. Rico is shocked and asks

her why she would do this, to which she replies, "Because you make my country a prison."[269] He

shoots her and learns that the men at the airport have let Andre board his flight, as they didn't

find anything suspicious on him. Once Andre lands, he learns that his wife has left him and that

Juanita has been killed.

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267 *Topaz*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock (1969; Universal City, California: Universal Studios, 2006), DVD.
268 Ibid.
269 Ibid.

He has also been recalled to Paris, because the Cubans have protested his activities to the Director General who had not authorized him to go to Cuba in the first place. Mike, the CIA agent, advises Andre against going to Paris. He brings Andre to see Boris, who informs him of where the leaks in Paris are coming from.

> "Topaz is a code name for a group of French officials in high circles that work for the Soviet Union… Now you are faced with the same problem I had, whether to obey your conscience or to obey your government."[270]

Having learned the mole's name from Boris, Andre flies to Paris. He is summoned to a room with five of his superiors, one of which he knows is the mole. He refuses to give them the information he learned in Cuba on behalf of the Americans because of the leaks in the French government. Andre then asks the men if they have heard of a spy ring called Topaz, a name he heard from Boris Kusenov. Jarre, the Topaz mole, panics and informs Andre that Boris has been dead for a while and that the Americans must have a double agent on their hands.

Andre, of course, knows that Boris is not dead, and offers Jarre a deal in return for information. Andre goes to Jarre's house, only to find Jarre dead, having been thrown out a window. Andre realizes that Jarre had been killed by members of Topaz, and that Columbine, the head of the spy ring, must have been there, too. Andre recognizes Columbine from a sketch as Jacques, their old friend from French intelligence. He then seeks out Mike, who has come to Paris with a US delegation to discuss the discovery of missiles in Cuba. He informs Mike that Jacques is running Topaz. Mike then insists that Jacques not be included in the delegation talks so that he will not pass on the information to his Soviet handlers. Jacques agrees, and Andre sees Jacques boarding a plane for the Soviet Union as Andre boards one for the United States.

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270 *Topaz*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock (1969; Universal City, California: Universal Studios, 2006), DVD.

The main French espionage plotline of *Topaz* played out whilst the Cuban Missile Crisis was unfolding. The film utilized screen shots of newspaper headlines to periodically let the audience know how much time had passed. For example, headlines included, "Capital's crisis air hints at development in Cuba; Kennedy TV talk is likely"; and "US considers action in Cuba"; and "Cuban missile crisis is over."[271] These headlines would have been extremely familiar to the audience watching the film and their incorporation was a clever way to inform the viewers of the larger political atmosphere surrounding the dangerous exploits of Andre Devereaux. The film also reminded the audience of the importance of espionage agents during the Cold War- in the film version, Andre's spy work literally provided the evidence that sparked the entire CMC. The film demonstrates how invaluable this type of morally grey intelligence work was during the Cold War. In fact, the reliance of the White House on the CIA was cemented in the 1960s, and, according to the CIA, it "informed the decision making that kept the Cold War from becoming a hot war." In 1962, the new headquarters building was completed, in 1963, the 24-hour CIA Operations Center was established, and in 1964, the President's Daily Brief officially began at the request of President Johnson.[272]

Espionage and intelligence played a significant part in the film *Topaz*, moreso than any of the other films discussed. Andre is an intelligence agent for France, Mike is a CIA agent, Boris is an ex-KGB agent, and Jacques and Jarre are both double agents working for French intelligence and the KGB. This was part of a larger spy craze that enveloped American popular culture during the 1960s. Television shows like *The Man from U.N.C.L.E* (1964), or *I Spy* (1965) were accompanied by Mad magazine's series, "Spy vs. Spy." Likewise, the exploits of James Bond

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271 *Topaz*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock (1969; Universal City, California: Universal Studios, 2006), DVD.
272 "Offices of CIA: History," *Central Intelligence Agency*, accessed 4/8/2017. https://www.cia.gov/offices-of-cia/intelligence-analysis/history.html

were massively popular, with the *Goldfinger* soundtrack knocking the Beatles out of the number one slot in the US in 1965.[273] Unlike the James Bond films that were so popular in the early sixties, *Topaz* doesn't celebrate or glamorize being a spy. Instead, like *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1965), *Topaz* presented a dark and realistic take on the shadowy world of espionage. Tony Shaw notes that many of the spy films of the later 1960s, "questioned not just the fundamental ethics of espionage, but also, more importantly, the very moral basis of intelligence establishments."[274] Martin Rubin further explains this "anti-Bond" trend, writing, "Another group of spy films sought to differentiate themselves from the Bonds by depicting espionage in a grimmer and more realistic light, although with a sense of irony and a lack of moral/patriotic certitude."[275] Thus, with *Topaz*, we can see the beginning of a trend in which disillusionment with the actions of intelligence agencies becomes prominent in film.

Topaz also demonstrates the how dangerous intelligence work is. Throughout the movie, Jarre is killed, Jacques flees, Boris flees, Andre loses his wife, Juanita is killed, and Juanita's agents are tortured. According to *Topaz*, being an intelligence agent is not a rewarding job and most agents spend their day lying, spying, fleeing, or dying in anonymity for some higher political purpose. The danger of double agents was also a prevalent theme in the film; after all, the title of the film is the name of the Soviet spy ring that infiltrated French intelligence. The Topaz spy ring was modeled after the real-life Sapphire affair in 1962, with the most infamous spy ring being that of MI6's Cambridge Five. In the film, the spy ring's safety begins to dissolve when Boris defects. Defection was a relatively common action in the Cold War, and often the

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273 Wesley Alan Britton, *Beyond Bond: Spies in Fiction and Film* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 109
274 Tony Shaw, "Cinema and the Cold War: An International Perspective," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Modern Warfare*, ed. George Kassimeris and John Buckley (New York: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010), 378.
275 Martin Rubin, *Thrillers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 133.

most jarring intelligence crises for the KGB or the CIA would come when an agent defected, compromising many of their former agency's secrets.

Topaz, mainly due to its focus on espionage, portrayed the Cold War as international in scope, rather than as a bilateral conflict. Andre was not an American agent, but worked closely with the CIA because France was an American ally and a member of NATO. NATO and the UN were both mentioned in the film, making *Topaz* the only film discussed that explored the Cold War roles of these international organizations in depth. A lengthy scene within which Andre takes pictures of Cuban documents at their hotel in New York was also historically accurate, as Castro did take a Cuban delegation to the United Nations in New York in September of 1960 to formally protest US covert activities against his country. The film accurately captured the comedic fashion in which Castro and his delegation had actually arrived in 1960. Much to the delight of the newspapers, Castro had refused to pay the Shelburne Hotel, and then stormed to the UN to complain to the Secretary General. The Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold, was informed by Castro that if he could not find a proper place for the Cubans, they would sleep in Central Park. "We are mountain people…we are used to sleeping in the open air."[276] Likewise, the Cuban rally that Devereaux attended in Havana also accurately imitated the excitement and passion that always seemed to accompany Castro's speeches in real life. The Cuba portrayed in *Topaz* looked like Cuba; the jeeps with men in army fatigues were driving around palm trees, beaches, and rolling green hills, and Havana was shown as a crowded and quaint city.

Finally, the film puts Andre, a French intelligence agent, at the forefront of discovering the offensive missiles in Cuba. This is not historically accurate, especially because Andre discovers the missiles through old fashioned spy work- taking pictures of documents, and taking

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276 Richard D. Mahoney, *The Kennedy Brothers: The Rise and Fall of Jack and Bobby* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011), 68.

pictures of missiles. It was actually the CIA and Air Force Intelligence who had discovered the

missile sites in Cuba thanks to their joint U-2 reconnaissance program. The U-2 pilots went on to

play a major role in the crisis, flying over Cuba multiple times a day to keep the President up-to-

date on the progress of the missiles' operational readiness. The U-2 flights also helped the

negotiations along by confirming that the Cubans were dismantling the missiles, because Castro

refused to allow UN inspectors on the ground.

Part Three: Cold War Films as a 1960s Trend

All five of these films, then, attempt to convey certain themes and ideas about what it was

like to live in the Cold War during the 1960s. "War cinema consistently reflects and shapes the

ways we see and understand war in the actual world, so that cinematic narratives of military

conflict need to be approached as being intrinsically related to US political involvement in actual

violent conflicts."[277] This is incredibly true of these films, seeing as the Cold War was an

inherently political war to begin with. All of the films are deeply entrenched in politics, and all

attempt to make some sort of statement about the nature, sanity, and wisdom of the events and

ideas influenced by and influencing the Cold War. While some of their facts and plots are not

historically accurate, they are nonetheless able to accurately capture the emotions, anxieties, and

feelings that Americans felt during the 1960s. Many of the films were engaging in topics that felt

immediate and contemporary to the audiences viewing them. The earliest film was released in

1963, and the latest was released in 1969. It is clear then, that the viewers of these movies would

have been able to pinpoint the characters, events, and moods that these films were portraying, in

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277 Elizabeth Bronfen, *Specters of War: Hollywood's Engagement with Military Conflict* (New Brunswick: Rutgers
University Press, 2012), 2.

large part because the viewers had experienced them themselves. Themes like MAD, anxiety,

hard-right military hawks, nuke speak, and espionage were all prevalent in both the newspapers

and the films of the 1960s. Ideas like nuclear accidents, hotlines, automated weapons, and events

like the Cuban Missile Crisis were all fresh memories for the audiences of the 1960s.

Most of the films focused exclusively on the people who had caused these events, such as

the President, the generals, the policymakers, and the leaders. The films dove into the decision-

making processes, the mental states, the personalities, the beliefs, the power relationships, and

the dialogue between the men of power in Washington. In exploring these interactions, many of

these films existed as poignant political statements about the nature of the Cold War itself,

serving as warnings about the military-industrial complex, nuclear warfare, and the authority

figures that were responsible for guiding the nation safely through the political minefield that

was the Cold War. Indeed, Elizabeth Bronfen argues that, "War films are about the transmission

of war. Its reenactment on the level of cinematic representation is a repetition that engenders

historical reality as a narration of past events to be re-conceptualized in a desire to find

redemption from them, but also- and more prominently- as a capacity for revisiting the past."[278]

Thus, we are able to fashion a rough tableau of what emotions and moods were prevailing

among Americans in the 1960s based upon what topics the filmmakers of the age felt were most

deserving of a full-length feature film. "The images and narratives that the motion picture

industry provides reconceive the past according to the cultural needs of the present."[279] Clearly,

the ideological conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States was an omnipresent fact

of life in the 1960s. In the 1960s, however, the threat seems to have been less about the Soviet

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278 Elizabeth Bronfen, *Specters of War: Hollywood's Engagement with Military Conflict* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 14.
279 Ibid, 2.

Union and more about accidental nuclear warfare as a product of Cold War politics. The nuclear bomb and the military were more often than not seen as threats themselves, rather than as the symbol of American might that they once claimed to be. The insanity of the MAD theory, of the cruel nukespeak, and of the war-hungry hawks were all highlighted in the films as dangerous products spawned by the Cold War atmosphere. The Cuban Missile Crisis also seemed to have had a marked impact on the filmmakers. It is no great leap to say that this would have been true of most Americans of the time period- it had almost resulted in Armageddon.

The films of the 1960s investigated big picture questions and attempted to provide answers for the audience. In portraying leaders as flawed humans capable of making mistakes in an extremely tense environment, the films opened up a cultural dialogue that allowed the American public to criticize their leaders. Similarly, the films of the 1960s were products of the cultural dialogue taking place in the 1960s. There was a give and take between the culture and film of the period, with the films inspiring and being inspired by the cynical, and politically active youth making headlines. According to Paul Monaco, "Antiheroes, special effects, a growing cinema of sensation, outsider stories played in tawdry milieus, increasing mixtures of highly romantic and highly cynical portrayals in the same movie, and a more pessimistic thematic bent in feature films were all legacies of the 1960s."[280] Movies engaging with and criticizing the Cold War were one such legacy of the 1960s inspired by the culture, and the directors were able to accurately portray real-life personas and real-life events in such a way that made their thematic arguments regarding the dangers of the Cold War all the more convincing. In making fictional films about the intrinsic nature of the Cold War and how these ideas

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280 Paul Monaco, *History of the American Cinema: Volume 8: The Sixties: 1960-1969* (Berkeley: University of California, 2001), 197.

contributed to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the directors of the 1960s provided Americans with critical commentary about the very dangerous environment they were living in.

Conclusion

Through the analysis of select films, we have seen how the Cold War affected popular cultural outputs such as film in the 1960s. In particular, the acquisition of the nuclear bomb by the Americans, and soon after, by the Soviets, led to many of the ideas that would define American foreign policy during the Cold War. These ideas included things like deterrence, MAD, nuke speak, covert action, and the arms race, all of which played a role in Cold War events like the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Berlin crisis, and the Cuban Missile Crisis. The nuclear bomb loomed large over all of these events, as Americans feared what would occur if these problems could not be solved through covert action, conventional military, or diplomatic means. The American people could not escape the bomb, as the government was all too keen on pushing their civil defense program. Fallout shelters were constructed, children were taught to duck and cover, and the paralyzing anxiety that accompanied this period created a new generation of "atomic kids," the children of the 1950s who grew up surrounded by civil defense.

In the 1960s, these kids had grown into rebellious, educated college students who were critical of the necessity of the nuclear bomb, and who questioned the very Cold War itself. The election of President Kennedy marked the early 1960s as an era that welcomed a culture shaped by the younger generation, and one that encouraged political activism and groups like the New Left. The open culture that thrived under the Kennedy administration stimulated criticism-criticism of the government, the nuclear bomb, and the Cold War environment. Thus, 1960s films were borne out of this new culture, and mirror the fears, anxieties, ideas, and emotions of

the American people living in the 1960s. No longer constrained by the conformist culture of the 1950s, the films of the 60s found inspiration in the freeing culture in which they were created. Filmmakers took advantage of this new environment to question the Cold War status quo, and to explore how and why contemporary events like the Cuban Missile Crisis had occurred.

There are several avenues of research mentioned in this paper that are worth exploring in greater detail. Information about how normal Americans reacted to the Cold War films mentioned in this paper is lacking, and while the reviews of contemporary critics are helpful, it would also be worthwhile to track down the responses of the average American as well. Another possible topic of interest would be that of the "atomic kids" mentioned by Bo Jacobs in his papers, paying special attention to how great of a role their civil defense childhoods would play in their later political activism. Similarly, an analysis of how the young or liberal Americans viewed these films as compared to their older or more conservative counterparts would be very interesting to supplement the idea of a generational clash occurring in the 1960s.

I came to several important conclusions after writing this paper, the most significant being that during the 1960s, the Cold War influenced American culture and film. I also identified the key themes that emerged in the films I analyzed. These themes represent what the people of the sixties would have been questioning and fearing most about the Cold War, as films capture and reflect the emotions and ideas of their contemporaries. I chose this particular group of films because they explored themes that were relevant to the crisis that caused the most domestic anxiety of the period, the Cuban Missile Crisis. Thus, this group of films taken together demonstrates how Cold War issues like anxiety and nuclear conflict were represented in American pop culture. After analyzing these particular films, one can conclude that the Americans of the 1960s no longer viewed the Soviets as their main enemy, but instead viewed

the very Cold War as their most dangerous enemy. Automatic retaliation, accidental warfare, nuclear dialogue, military anxiety, espionage, military/civilian tension, hawkish right-wing generals, and the President and Premier working together were all themes that emerged in a great many of these films. The last theme underlines this new form of thinking most poignantly- the US President and the Soviet Premier are often shown working together in these films to stop a dangerous situation that was created by the Cold War context. It is no longer an us versus them situation, but rather a mankind versus death situation, and for all of the propaganda circulating about the horrors of communism, the Soviets are still very much a part of mankind in these films.

My final conclusion is also the reason that this research paper is important- that it is critical to look at the interactions between culture and film as a symbiotic relationship. These films were a product of the Cold War culture, just as the Cold War culture was influenced by these films. The open and critical cultural sphere of the 1960s allowed the American people to seriously question what it was about the Cold War that had caused the Cuban Missile Crisis. The films of the 1960s are proof of this inquisitive environment, as they rushed to provide answers by focusing on the interactions between the leaders who had handled the crises. These interactions revealed the major themes discussed above, which were essentially products of the Cold War, and thus the films act as warnings about the dangerous consequences of playing the Cold War game too seriously. For the historian, the symbiotic approach to this information is valuable, as is the treatment of these films as historical sources. It is essential to recognize that these films influenced and were influenced by the culture of their time, and that they reflect the new, and bold lens the American public had begun to view the Cold War from. These films allow historians to understand how Americans contextualized the Cuban Missile crisis in the larger context of the international conflict, and to understand what 1960s Americans viewed as the

most dangerous characteristics of the Cold War. Their answer probably would have been

something akin to a *US Foreign Affairs* quote that read, "We may be likened to two scorpions in

a bottle, each capable of killing the other, but only at the risk of his own life."[281]

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281 "Cold War Quotations," *Alpha History*, http://alphahistory.com/coldwar/cold-war-quotations/

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