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Daniel Brackman Melcher March 30, 2019

Who Will Defend Our Minds?
The Male Hero of 1960s Film and the Battle for American Autonomy

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Abstract

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The 1960s represent the pinnacle of Cold War tensions in America. The Berlin Crisis and Bay of Pigs Invasion both took place in 1961 and Cold War tensions were driven to an all-time peak with the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Although President John F. Kennedy helped avert a nuclear holocaust, the fear of communism and imminent global destruction left a lasting impression on the collective American psyche. As these seminal events were unfolding on the global stage, at home forces such as suburbanization, consumerism, the growth of corporate America, and the perceived threats of subliminal advertising posed a threat to traditional American masculinity and fueled fears that the average American was vulnerable to two forms of subversive mind control, communist mental manipulation and capitalist subliminal influencing aimed at fortifying cultural conformity.

This paper will show that 1960s Cold War-era films, which enjoyed success in American box offices, particularly ones from the genres of the Spy Thriller and Western, worked to counteract growing societal concerns regarding the potential for external infringement on American autonomy. Relying on a stoic, moral and strongminded archetype of masculine heroism whose narrative journeys mirrored the trauma and triumph of the heroic American World War II fighting man, these films conveyed the message that American masculinity was still capable of overcoming significant psychological threats. I aim to illustrate how Cold War films of the 1960s served to

reimagine and assert a powerful brand of the American man, capable of rising to the terrifying psychological challenges of this modern age. brainwashing.

While the majority of the paper will study how films from this period and genres helped convey the notion that masculine heroism was capable of defending American autonomy, I will devote the epilogue to analyzing how the model of masculinity set forth by these films was eventually coopted by America's capitalist machine to were ultimately mobilized to perpetuate conformity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Movies are widely celebrated for their ability to distill the culture and outlook of the society that consumes them.[1] Films capture the anxieties and preoccupations of the cultural zeitgeist and bring to life narratives that help their audiences process challenges and fears which are widely relatable. They are cultural texts that incorporate historical memories, contemporary struggles, and societal values to produce tapestries that detail who we were as a society, who we currently are, and what we are to become. In the 1960s, the cinematic genres of the Spy Thriller and the Western provided a particularly compelling format for packaging and disseminating these themes. Drawing from the American values of freedom, autonomy and justice; recent historical memory of the trauma and triumph of World War II; the Cold War fears of mental manipulation; and faith in the power of masculinity, these films set forth compelling narratives of continued American triumph in the age of the Cold War and post-World War II cultural conformity. These 1960s-era Spy Thrillers and Westerns repeatedly used masculine protagonists whose narrative journey resembled the trauma and triumph trajectory of America's fighting men during World War II in order to quell anxieties about the ability of American autonomy to survive within a rapidly evolving world.

For the American man, World War II represents both the depths of his suffering and sacrifice and the pinnacle of his triumph. Provoked by Japan's devastating December 7th, 1941 aerial attack on American naval base, Pearl Harbor in Hawaii,

[1] McVeigh, Stephen. "The Western and the Cold War: The Gunfighter, Heroic Leadership and Political Culture." In The American Western, 76-139. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0b1pw.9.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt quickly procured a declaration of war from Congress and electrified the nation with patriotic fervor exclaiming, “No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.”[2] When the debris cleared in Pearl Harbor it was revealed that nearly 2,500 Americans had been killed and over 1,000 had been wounded.[3] This enormous loss of life on American soil was deeply shocking and traumatic for the nation. America had suffered its first cutting trauma of World War II, yet the nation’s collective response was one of resolve, defiance and confidence in the infallibility of American principles such as justice, freedom and liberty. The ordeal of Pearl Harbor established a pattern of America responding to searing trauma with renewed conviction and determination to defeat the enemies of freedom and democracy.

As the Second World War commenced, the American fighting man’s pattern of trauma and triumph became the refrain. The day after the United States declared war on Japan, the fascist governments of Germany and Italy responded by supporting their allied Japan and declaring war on America. The United States found itself in opposition to a global alliance of governments that aimed to cripple American democratic principles. Dictatorships led by Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and Hirohito embodied the autocratic and totalitarian principles that so deeply contrasted with the American system of democratically elected representation. Over the course of the four years following the Japanese invasion of Pearl Harbor, approximately 16 million American

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[2] Roosevelt, Franklin Delano. "Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation." Speech, Washington D.C., December 8, 1941.
[3] History.com. "Pearl Harbor." History.com. October 29, 2009. Accessed February 21, 2019. https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/pearl-harbor.

men were deployed overseas to wage war against this "axis of evil" which presented a fundamental threat to the American way of life. These brave men faced the unimaginable strife of a global war which took unprecedented lives and permanently scarred countless soldiers, civilians, towns and nations.[4] Despite facing extreme trauma and combat with over 100,000 casualties including the Battle of the Bulge in France and the Battle of Iwo Jima in Japan's Pacific Islands, these American soldiers of the Second World War persevered through unimaginable pain, loss and suffering in order to ultimately triumph over their enemies.[5]

On May 8, 1945, once Nazi German forces in Europe finally all submitted to unconditional surrender, President Harry Truman delivered a landmark speech, *The Surrender of Germany*, announcing America's triumphant yet painfully earned victory. In this address he stated,

> This is a solemn but glorious hour… General Eisenhower informs me that the forces of Germany have surrendered to the United Nations. The flags of freedom fly over all Europe… Our rejoicing is sobered and subdued by a supreme consciousness of the terrible price we have paid to rid the world of Hitler and his evil band. Let us not forget, my fellow Americans, the sorrow and the heartache, which today abide in the homes of so many of our neighbors – neighbors whose most priceless possession has been rendered as a sacrifice to redeem our liberty.[6]

Truman's words illustrate the national sentiments of both celebration and remorse: the pride of having upheld America's founding principles, but also the recognition of immense physical and emotional suffering, weathered in varying degrees by nearly every American.

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[4] Jarvis, Christina S. The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010.
[5] World War II (1939-1945). Accessed February 21, 2019. https://www2.gwu.edu/~erpapers/teachinger/glossary/world-war-2.cfm.
[6] "Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum." Surrender of Germany Broadcast. Accessed February 21, 2019. https://www.trumanlibrary.org/ww2/veday.htm.

The masculine heroes of World War II instantly became enduring symbols of the glorious potential for the American man to endure hardship in order defend goodness and impose positive change. In Tom Brokaw's book, *The Greatest Generation*, he profiles this legendary generation of American heroes who answered the call to defend the nation during World War II. He contends that "Millions of men… were involved in this tumultuous journey through adversity and achievement, despair and triumph."[7] This legacy of valiant, trauma and triumph, American masculinity has been immortalized through a variety of images and narratives depicting the desperate struggles and glory of World War II which live on in American's collective memory. Images such as Joe Rosenthal's *Raising the Flag On Iwo Jima* have come to represent, for countless Americans, this chapter of masculine struggle and eventual triumph. (See Image 1) This emblematic photo captures the devastation of the war by memorializing these soldiers' posture of determination and hard-fought triumph, with their uniforms soiled and tattered, the rubble of destruction beneath their feet. With the stars and stripes raised in this iconic moment, the principles of freedom and democracy are vindicated. Through the narrative of masculine struggle conveyed in the image, America's dearest values have been preserved.

Following the costly yet glorious victory of World War II, America enjoyed a period of great affluence, optimism and growth. But as the era of the Cold War and cultural conformity progressed, new anxieties came to threaten the sense of heroism and valor that the American male had won in the course of combat and triumph. As the nation rejoiced in victory by starting families, businesses and acquiring an abundance of

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[7] Brokaw, Tom. The Greatest Generation. New York: Random House, Paw Prints (imprint of Baker & Taylor Books), 2010.

consumer goods such as cars, radios, televisions, and kitchen appliances, a great rivalry of superpowers began to brew between capitalist America and the communist Soviet Union.[8] The former World War II allies held fundamentally contrasting visions of how to distribute societal resources and the increasingly fanatic consumerism of the United States further distanced the nation's two economic approaches. For leaders of both superpowers, the dramatically differing economic system of their rival was viewed with deep mistrust and both governments took steps to spread their economic visions for the world while working to contain the opposing economic system. Beginning in the 1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union competed for global influence by supporting groups aligned with their respective beliefs. These "proxy wars" created a climate of intense antagonism between the two global powers which would set the stage for the dramatic standoffs of the early 1960s.[9]

In 1961, Soviet-American tension reached a fever pitch when tanks from the two powers were aimed at one another for the first time after the Soviet-supported East German army constructed the Berlin Wall overnight to prevent the steady stream of refugees from leaving the Soviet Union. A year later, in 1962 another moment of global tension was instigated when the Soviet Union attempted to deliver nuclear missiles to Cuba in order to be within striking range of the United States. In both cases, outright aggression was avoided between the rivals, however the episodes made apparent the

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[8] Cuordileone, K. A. 2000. "'Politics in an Age of Anxiety': Cold War Political Culture and the Crisis in American Masculinity, 1949-1960." The Journal of American History 87 (2): 515–45. https://doi.org/10.2307/2568762.

[9] "Postwar United States - American Memory Timeline- Classroom Presentation | Teacher Resources." Library of Congress. Accessed February 21, 2019. http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/postwar/.

seemingly irrevocable divide between the nations and inspired deep fears amongst Americans regarding the potential for communist intrusion on their way of life.[10]

As the ideological antagonism between these two countries grew more intense, there developed in the United States a widespread fear that communist mind-control techniques could be capable of eroding the principles and values of American capitalists. Journalists concocted narratives of ancient Chinese "brainwashing" tactics, quasi-scientists claimed to understand the science of communist mental manipulation and even the American government made moves to protect against and/or repurpose communist psychological subversion tactics.

While the fear of communist mental manipulation spread across the country, another more internal threat to American autonomy emerged having to do with the United States' postwar culture of consumerism. It was widely perceived that postwar developments including suburbanization, consumer culture, the growth of mass-media and the middle-class had ushered in an era of cultural conformity. These fears inspired a flood of discourse surrounding the idea that the postwar American did not enjoy the same level of autonomy, within this new culture of conformity, as their parents and grandparents. These separate, yet intertwined fears centered around an anxiety that not only communism, but also aspects of American capitalism were capable of surreptitiously influencing the American mind and reducing its powerful autonomy.

As fears of communist mental manipulation and capitalistic consumerist subversion proliferated leading up to and during the 1960s, Americans turned to their cinemas for help processing their modern predicaments. 1960 Spy Thriller and Western

[10] Kempe, Frederick. Berlin 1961: Kennedy, Khruschev, and the Most Dangerous Place on Earth. Penguin Books, 2012.

films worked to ease societal anxiety regarding threats to the psychological autonomy of Americans by tacitly sending the signal that the modern American man could help his nation withstand and conquer these contemporary threats, just as the previous generation of American men persevered to triumph over their enemies during World War II.

Spy Thriller and Western films, which enjoyed popularity in America during the 1960s, were produced in a number of nations, including Britain and Italy. Regardless of their origin, all are unified in their engagement with widely-held fears regarding the sanctity of the American mind from external influence as well as recent historical memory of World War II. All of these films leveraged masculine protagonists whose perseverant natures and autonomous minds *mimicked* the legend of World War II-era American masculine trauma and triumph, thereby rendering them capable of overcoming contemporary psychological threats to their independence, much like they overcame physical and emotional threats during the Second World War.

In the first chapter of this thesis we will explore the discourse inspired by the Cold War and the potential for communist actors to infiltrate and influence the American capitalist's brain, linking these societal fears to the 1960s Spy Thriller. In the second chapter we will focus on the manner in which America's increasingly, consumer-driven culture threatened the American spirit and compromised the nation's values of individuality, autonomy and freedom, linking these fears to the Western film of the 1960s.

This thesis will chronicle both of these dimensions of America's growing anxiety around mental manipulation and illustrate how popular films during this period engaged with these parallel strains of anxious discourse. It will demonstrate how 1960s

Spy Thrillers and Westerns engaged with contemporary fears concerning both communist and capitalist mental manipulation and did so using a popular archetype of resilient, mentally-capable and physically-dominant masculine protagonists. These figures mirrored the legendary narratives of trauma and triumph lived by America's World War II masculine heroes, thereby sending the implicit signal that the American man was capable of enduring and overcoming contemporary challenges, much like the World War II generation surmounted the challenges of their time.

2. The 1960s Spy Thriller and the Fear of Mental Manipulation

In the 1960s, a Communist threat loomed over Americans as an implicit but constant reminder of its unprecedented threat to the security and status of the nation. During this tumultuous Cold War period, the American outlook, defined by the potent doctrines of freedom, justice, and equality of opportunity, faced one of its most direct threats in the form of global communism, led by the Soviet Union. The communist belief in equal compensation for unequal work and a state-controlled economic system stood in diametric opposition to the American value system and therefore represented an ever-present threat to the prestige and worldview of the United States. During this period political figures such as Senator Joseph McCarthy leveraged the cloud of uncertainty to sow fear that communist sympathizers existed within America and posed an imminent danger, distinct from the communists half a world away.[11] Within this climate of intense societal fear, a wave of panic swept the nation regarding the hazard posed by the possibility of communist psychological manipulation of American capitalists to compromise their core principles through covert psychological interference.

As America's collective conscience was struggling with this daunting threat to the autonomy of its citizens, the nation's movie-houses screened Cold War Spy Thriller films which featured heroic, male protagonists. These masculine figures counteracted fears about the threats of communist mental manipulation by overcoming arduous struggles, traumas and the specific threat of mind control to uphold American values of freedom

[11] "Cold War History." History.com. October 27, 2009. Accessed February 21, 2019. https://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/cold-war-history.

and justice. By engaging with contemporary discourses of communist mind control and featuring resilient and ultimately successful masculine figures, the 1960s Spy Thriller film reminded Americans that the masculine prowess deployed so heroically by the World War II generation was still capable of overcoming the dangers posed by a communist subliminal psychological threat during the Cold War.

Behaviorism and the Seeds of Fear

By the dawn of the Cold War a significant thread of scientific and cultural discourse had emerged which focused on the potential for subliminally manipulating the human mind in order to wield control over the behavior of another. Psychologists working in the early twentieth century established the field of Behaviorism which provided scientific backing for the idea that humans and their behavior could be conditioned through the use of stimuli which would reward or punish particular behavior. The roots of societal concern for the susceptibility of American minds to subliminal manipulation by both foreign, communist and totalitarian regimes can be traced back to the scientific discourse of the behaviorists. The work of psychologists such as Ivan Pavlov, John Watson and B.F. Skinner entered the sphere of American popular culture and influenced the way Americans thought of many aspects of their lives, from how they raised their children to why they engage in superstitious practices.[12] However, one of the most fundamental ways the behaviorists impacted American cultural discourse was by providing the scientific backbone for what would become the

[12] "The True Story of Brainwashing and How It Shaped America | History | Smithsonian." n.d. Accessed November 26, 2018. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/true-story-brainwashing-and-how-it-shaped-america-180963400/.

widespread Cold War-era societal fears that communist mental manipulation was capable of stripping Americans of their autonomy and imposing communist consensus.

Ivan Pavlov, a highly-regarded Russian scientist, laid the groundwork for the study of implicit psychological manipulation in his often-cited, Noble-prize winning studies, *The Work of the Digestive Glands* (1897) and *The Experimental Psychology and Psychopathology of Animals* (1903). In these papers, Pavlov revealed his experimental findings regarding the "classical conditioning" of dogs. He found that his animals could be trained to salivate at the sound of a bell if they were conditioned to associate the sound with food.[13] Pavlov's results showed that the mind was susceptible to external conditioning that could train it to behave in a particular way. His discoveries regarding the potential for subliminal psychological conditioning represented a major breakthrough in the field of psychology and established a field of research into subliminal psychological interference which would help shape the public's understanding of the communist threat to American autonomy and values.[14]

Inspired by the revolutionary findings of Ivan Pavlov, John B. Watson, an American, took up the study of psychology at the University of Chicago during the turn of the twentieth century. By 1913 Watson had founded the discipline of Behaviorism. In that year, he published his manifesto, "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views it," an article which outlined his understanding of the scientific field which he was establishing. He saw behaviorism as the best way to study psychology because he argued that studies of behavior offered what studies of consciousness could not: verifiable results. Watson

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[13] Ibid.
[14] "The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1904." NobelPrize.org. Accessed February 21, 2019. https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/medicine/1904/pavlov/biographical/.

dedicated his life to psychological study within the framework he set forth in this 1913 article and he succeeded in leaving behind a wide array of significant contributions to the field of study. He spent a great deal of time applying Pavlov's conditioning studies to human infants in order to develop an understanding of how human behavior could be altered through conditioning. In one particularly infamous study called the "Little Albert experiment," (1920) Watson showed that a baby could be conditioned to display a fear response to a rat, which he at first displayed no emotion towards, if he was struck by a rod every time, he saw the rat. This behaviorist study which revealed the potential for conditioning on humans, helped to shape the views he set forth in his 1928 book, *Psychological Care of Infant and Child*. In the book, Watson outlined his views that humans were defined much more by how they were nurtured then their inherent nature and argued that parents' interactions with their children shape their child's behavior for the rest of their lives. Watson claimed that "all of the weaknesses, reserves, fears, cautions, and inferiorities of our parents are stamped into us like sledgehammer blows."[15] (Watson) He therefore passionately advocated for parents to not "over-mother" their children, spoiling them with love and kindness and also famously believed that he could mold twelve different children into twelve different career paths by altering his treatment of each of the children.[16] Watson made countless contributions to the field of psychology, however, his impact may be more of a cultural one. In establishing the school of behaviorism and applying his scientific research to the child-rearing process, Watson's work seeped into the American public's understanding of how

[15] Watson, John. Psychological Care of Infant and Child. New York: Arno Press, 1972.
[16] Herman, Ellen., and NetLibrary, Inc. *The Romance of American Psychology Political Culture in the Age of Experts*. 1st Pap. ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

children must be correctly nurtured in order to become successful adults and that human beings and their behavior are products of their collective interactions with others. Watson established the idea that American minds may not be free to develop on their own accord without external interference, an idea that would only gain acceptance and attention as the twentieth century progressed.

While Watson founded the school of behaviorism, it was another American psychologist, B.F. Skinner, who made significant contributions to the discipline and ultimately has come to be remembered as the most eminent psychologist of the 20th century by the American Psychological Association. Fascinated by the revelations of Ivan Pavlov and John Watson, Skinner conducted further research on psychological conditioning. His findings led him to divide behaviors into two distinct categories, "respondent" and "operant." Respondent behaviors included the classical conditioning of Pavlov and Watson's experiments and entailed behaviors that are elicited by a particular stimulus which triggers the respondent behavior. Operant behaviors on the other hand are behaviors which are not triggered by a stimulus, but instead are behaviors reinforced by positive or negative stimuli. Skinner was determined to study this operant behavior, however, he needed an apparatus with which he could perform experiments testing how animals would react to the positive or negative reinforcement of their operant behaviors. The result was the "Skinner Box," an ingenious creation which featured a lever or button in a cage containing either rats or pigeons. When this lever or button was activated, Skinner would trigger a response mechanism that was either positive (food and water) or negative (electric shocks or disorienting lights) that would provide reinforcement to the animals' operant behaviors. Skinner then could record the frequency of an animals' operant behaviors given various types of

reinforcements in order to develop significant conclusions regarding the psychology of animals. Skinner's work yielded deep insight into human behavior as being directly tied to the external stimuli either preceding or following a behavior.[17] These deeply influential conclusions regarding humans' inherent lack of free will and dependence on external reinforcement were packaged for the Cold War-era American public to consume in his immensely popular books, most prominently, *The Behavior of Organisms* (1938) and *Verbal Behavior* (1957).[18] His obituary notes that he once stated, "Fascism and other authoritarian political systems are capable of applying the new technology of behavior modification."[19] The views he set forth deeply impacted the American populous' conception of psychological science and contributed to a societal sense of despair founded in the new understanding that the American mind was not independent but instead was at heightened risk of external subliminal manipulation in this time of global ideological pressures.

The collective work of these three behavioral psychologists played an outsized role in defining the twentieth century American public's understanding of the inner-workings of the mind and the foundation of behavior. These highly regarded thinkers established key avenues of scientific thought anchored around the core insights that behavior is determined through external stimuli interacting with the mind. Shocking as this revelation may have been in the early twentieth century, the idea that human behavior could easily be altered through strategic conditioning only became more

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Keehn, J. D. Master Builders of Modern Psychology : From Freud to Skinner. London: Duckworth, 1996.
[19] Sobel, Dava. "B. F. Skinner, the Champion Of Behaviorism, Is Dead at 86." The New York Times. August 20, 1990. Accessed February 21, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/20/obituaries/b-f-skinner-the-champion-of-behaviorism-is-dead-at-86.html.

explosive as the tumultuous century progressed. Ultimately, during the onset of the Cold War the collective work of the behaviorists was used as scientific evidence to justify the largely unsubstantiated fear that communist mind-altering practices posed a direct threat to the sanctity and autonomy of American minds.

The 1960s would see a strong wave of societal panic regarding the potential for communist mind persuasion techniques to turn autonomous Americans into the mentally manipulated Pavlovian dogs and Little Alberts which behaviorists had proven to be vulnerable to subliminal influence. This climate of deep fear for the sanctity of the mind played out in various genres produced by both Hollywood and the cinemas of other Western nations, however, one genre which engaged with these topical themes perhaps more than any other was the Spy Thriller.

The Spy Thriller or Political Thriller genre has long been a popular genre in American and Western cinema. It typically features exhilarating narratives set within the contemporary political landscape. These types of films allow for unique engagement with salient topical issues, often oriented around the perspective of a spy, military or political protagonist who struggles to assert positive morality on a dangerous or precarious situation, typically instigated by an antagonist who stands against societal values. As Castrillo and Echart argue in their article, "Towards a Narrative Definition of the American Political Thriller Film," "The political thriller is a film genre of unique relevance in the United States, often acting as a reflection of the fears and anxieties of its historical times… [focusing] on a victim or threatened individual as its protagonist… and historically grounded antagonists."[20] It is within these parameters that numerous Spy

[20] Castrillo, Pablo and Echart, Pablo. "Towards a Narrative Definition of the American Political Thriller Film." Communication & Society 28, no. 4 (2015): 109-23. doi:10.15581/003.28.4.109-123.

Thrillers of the 1960s engaged with contemporary societal discourses of anxiety regarding the potential for communist encroachment on the American mind. The conventions of this genre provided the ideal conditions for heroic male protagonists of the 1960s to defeat the brainwashing plots of communist and fascist antagonists, thereby glorifying America and its capitalistic way of life.

Two films serve as particularly poignant examples of how these societal fears seeped into the Spy Thriller genre, which enjoyed popularity in the 1960s United States. These are the American film, *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962) and the British/American co-production, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969). These two works demonstrate how the Spy Thriller engaged with the threat of communist psychological manipulation and conveyed both the dangers and vulnerabilities of this surreptitious threat. They also demonstrate how the Spy Thriller genre helped to quell these anxieties by featuring a particular archetype of a physically and mentally sturdy masculine figure capable of overcoming extensive personal traumas and the significant threats presented by mind control. Such a hero was capable of thwarting the evil applications of mental manipulation and reasserting American morality and ideology. To understand the messaging of these films we must first comprehend the pervasive Cold War-era societal fears regarding the threat of mental manipulation.

The Communist Threat of Brainwashing and Mental Manipulation

As the Cold War period progressed, a pervasive fear that communist psychological manipulation was capable of compromising the value system of ideologically pure American capitalists emerged. This anxiety gained significant momentum as the Cold War progressed. This coincided with the ever-increasing

ideological and para-militaristic intensity of the Cold War. The concept of "brainwashing" was first introduced in 1950 by a fervently anti-communist American journalist, Edward Hunter, in an article he wrote for the Miami Daily News in September of that year entitled "Brain-washing Tactics Force Chinese Into Ranks of Communist Party."[21] The article came two months after the opening of hostilities in the Korean war between western-aligned United Nations forces against communist Chinese-backed North Korea and one month before the Chinese military mobilized against the western coalition. Hunter's piece asserted that Mao Zedong's ruling structures leveraged traditional Chinese mind-control practices to subliminally impose their communist world-view on their subjects. Hunter's explanation of an imperceptible but all-powerful subliminal force being the driving force behind communism's penetration of China and Southeast Asia pinned racialized narratives on the Asian enemy. His narrative involved an oppressed Chinese underclass being controlled by evil communist actors using ancient Chinese brainwashing witchcraft. However, the article also stoked significant fear regarding the implicit danger posed by communist brainwashing capability on the autonomy of Americans, particularly that of the American man which had come to symbolize American agency and power.[22]

In December of 1952, an outlandish and shocking confession from an American Colonel captured and imprisoned by the communist China-aligned Viet-Cong forces helped convert pervasive societal anxiety regarding subliminal interference to a deep-seeded, hysterical fear of communist brainwashing. Colonel Frank H. Schwable arrived

[21] Hunter, Edward. "Brain-washing Tactics Force Chinese Into Ranks of Communist Party." Miami Daily News, September 24, 1950.
[22] Melley, Timothy. "Brainwashed! Conspiracy Theory and Ideology in the Postwar United States." New German Critique, no. 103 (2008): 145-64. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27669224.

in Korea on April 10, 1952 assigned to serve as the Chief of Staff in the First Marine Aircraft Wing in Korea. He was subsequently captured by communist powers and on December 6, 1952, Schwable signed a statement which claimed that the United States engaged in a campaign of bacterial warfare against their Korean foes. In his account, Schwable asserted that, "The B-29s from Okinawa began using bacteriological bombs in November 1951, covering targets all over North Korea in what might be called random bombing." The explosive allegations were met by vehement denials from United Nations forces' commanding General Mark W. Clark which invoked the societal perception of a deep-rooted Chinese brainwashing tradition, introduced by Edward Hunter, in an effort to explain the alarming claims by claiming that "too familiar are the mind-annihilating methods of these Communists in extorting whatever words they want." Schwable's statements which threatened to damage American prestige and sense of moral supremacy received coverage in the American press which tended to follow the precedent of framing the episode as a manifestation of the subversive power of communist mind-control, established by Clark, rather than a display of American immorality. After Schwable was released from communist control in 1953, he refuted the claims he made as a P.O.W. and contended that he was tortured by the communist Koreans into making the statements.[23] The story of Colonel Frank Schwable, paired with that of the over twenty American soldiers who, after the war, refused repatriation and remained in communist North Korea, helped to spark and fuel a national fervor regarding the seemingly imminent threat of communist brainwashing and the corrosive

[23] "Bugs and Bombs." n.d. Accessed October 22, 2018. http://www.umsl.edu/~thomaskp/schwab.htm.

power of subliminal interference on the resolution of ideologically-pure American capitalists.

As scientific legends made psychological breakthroughs which illustrated the shocking potential for external influence and control over human behavior throughout the early twentieth century, other, more quasi-scientific figures such as Joost Meerloo and William Sargant gained notoriety for connecting the psychological breakthroughs of Pavlov, Watson and Skinner to the raging societal fears of communist brainwashing that were introduced by the article of Edward Hunter and episode of Colonel Frank Schwable. Joost Meerloo, a Dutch-born psychiatrist who became a naturalized American citizen in 1950, made a colossal impact on the collective American cultural understanding of the communist brainwashing threat by explicating how the subliminal influence methods studied by Pavlov, Watson and Skinner were wielded by communists in the form of brainwashing to mold the minds and behaviors of free-thinkers. In Meerloo's shocking 1956 publication *The Rape of the Mind*, he implements the early-twentieth-century psychological findings of reinforcement guiding behaviors into a narrative of communist militarized exploitation of the human mind's susceptibilities.[24] He described how a complex series of strategically orchestrated positive and negative reinforcements could be wielded by communist powers in order to alter a subject's personality, behavior and ideology to the point that "The conscious part of the [American P.O.W. in Korea's] personality no longer takes part in the automatic confessions. The brainwashee lives in a trance, repeating the record grooved into him by

[24] Meerloo, Joost A. The Rape of the Mind the Psychology of Thought Control, Menticide, and Brainwashing. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1971.

somebody else."[25] In this quote, Meerloo employs verbiage that echoes a previously mentioned quote from the founder of behaviorism, John Watson, in which he described how parents' traits are "stamped into us like sledgehammer blows" to illustrate how communist powers leverage psychologists' insights into the mind to wage psychological warfare against Americans during the Cold War. Meerloo's provocative account of communist and authoritarian usage of brainwashing to manufacture ideological and political consensus was largely anecdotal and theoretical rather than being based in actual research and facts, however, the shoddiness of his methodology did not prevent him and his book from becoming an American popular sensation. His book enjoyed significant popularity and he enjoyed the status of a legend for his contributions to the collective American conscience which he helped sculpt to his sinister, if unsubstantiated, vision of America's endangered position given the potency of the communist brainwashing threat.[26] This vision of the Western world facing the scientifically-proven threat of subliminal brainwashing was reasserted for British audiences by William Sargant in 1957, a year after Meerloo's book was published in the United States. Sargant's book, *The Battle for the Mind*, echoed the arguments of Meerloo and further stoked both American and British fears that their ideologies of freedom and democratic liberty were endangered by the threat of subliminal communist brainwashing.

As the American public was reeling from the swiftly expanding discourse surrounding the ever-increasing danger posed by the possibility surreptitious communist manipulation of the mind, top American law-enforcement officials were also

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[25] Ibid.
[26] Melley, Timothy. 2008. "Brainwashed! Conspiracy Theory and Ideology in the Postwar United States." *New German Critique*, no. 103: 145–64.

impacted by these concerns and moved to directly confront this set of threats. The heads of both the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover and CIA, Allan Dulles, conveyed their deep appreciation for the imminence of the communist subliminal manipulative threat in different yet equally profound ways. In 1958 J. Edgar Hoover published, *Masters of Deceit*, his complete account of the communist threat. The dust-jacket note claimed the book offered "the startling facts about the major menace of our time, *communism*: what it is, how it works, what its aims are, the real danger it poses, and what loyal American citizens must know to protect their freedom."[27] In the following pages, Hoover laid out for an ignorant but wary American public, his understanding of a pervasive and surreptitious communist threat which he had cultivated through his twenty-five years of experience as the Director of the Bureau of Investigation. Hoover's stirring, influential and comprehensive analysis of the powers and tactics of an evil global communism force captured the imaginations of the American public and shaped the collective understanding of the threats wrought by this newly imposing oppositional force. Using incendiary and alarming language, Hoover made it a refrain throughout the book to warn of the subversive and manipulative mind control tactics of communists. At one juncture, late in the book, after describing how the "communist mentality [represents] a systematic, purposive, and conscious attempt to destroy Western civilization and roll history back to the age of barbaric cruelty and despotism," (Hoover, 319) he shifts his focus to validating Americans fears regarding the possibility for Soviet mental manipulation of Americans. Hoover claims that "communist thought-control, in all its various capacities, has spread the infection, in varying degrees, to most phases of

[27] Hoover, J. Edgar. 1958. *Masters of Deceit*. Henry Holt and Company.

American life." (Hoover, 319)[28] Here, through the use of simultaneously vague and broad language, Hoover capitalizes on the mounting cultural terror toward the phenomenon of communist mind control in order to fortify his rebuke of communism and make his appeal to the American people for help in fight against global communism more compelling. As the head of the FBI vocalized widely-held fears of communist psychological subversion, the director of the CIA, Allen Dulles also engaged with these deeply-seeded societal concerns in the form of one of the most controversial and secretive research programs in American history.

Troubled by the increasingly popular narrative that communists were skilled in the practice of psychological manipulation, in 1953 Allen Dulles ordered his Central Intelligence Agency to begin testing mind control techniques with the hope of matching the supposed mental manipulative prowess of global communists. This top-secret research program, called MKUltra, quickly began conducting tests in which unwilling subjects were exposed to drugs such as LSD, sleep deprivation, hypnosis and other abuses. These largely immoral and often illegal experiments were designed to provide the American government with insights into the practice of mind control and were motivated by a broader Cold War-era desire to match and exceed the militaristic and scientific capabilities of the Soviet Union in order to maintain the upper-hand in the volatile conflict. The CIA's mind control program was active from 1953-1973 but remained a government secret until 1977 when a Freedom of Information Act request resulted in the release of thousands of top-secret documents related to the program

[28] Ibid.

which have formed the basis of our understanding of the program.[29] MKUltra represents a surreptitious effort from the top-levels of the American government to engage in a space/arms-race style competition against global communists for supremacy in the arena of mind-control. The shocking program illustrates the lengths to which the American government was influenced by the contemporary discourses which represented communist subliminal manipulation tactics as one of the most dominant threats to American liberty.

By the dawn of the 1960s an expansive thread of communist mind control discourse had captured the American imagination and became one of the most central fears Americans held regarding their communist adversaries. According to Matthew Dunne's book, *A Cold War State of Mind*, "During the 1950s widespread reports that the Communist enemy had drained American soldiers of their personalities and turned them into pawns of the Communist state infused the Cold War with a new psychological dimension and encouraged Americans to believe that their own mental autonomy might be at risk."[30] Grounded in the behaviorist scientific tradition of Pavlov, Watson and Skinner, societal anxiety about the subliminal communist threat gradually reached a fever pitch. Incited by Edward Hunter's introduction of the term "brainwashing" to describe a supposed ancient Chinese mind control tradition, Colonel Frank Schwable's experience with communist psychological manipulation, the quasi-scientific work of Joost Meerloo and the writing of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, Americans living in the lead up to the 1960s were bombarded from all directions with rhetoric of communist

[29] Melley, Timothy. 2011. "Brain Warfare: The Covert Sphere, Terrorism, and the Legacy of the Cold War." *Grey Room*, no. 45: 19–40.
[30] Dunne, Matthew W. A Cold War State of Mind: Brainwashing and Postwar American Society. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013.

"brainwashing" posing an imminent and direct threat to the American way. These constant reminders that played prominently in 1950s American cultural discourse resulted in an internalized fear of the communist psychological threat for most Americans.

The Spy Thriller and Fears of Cold War Mind Control – The Manchurian Candidate

The Manchurian Candidate, directed by John Frankenheimer and released on October 24, 1962 has become an enduring cultural memento of this Cold War-era mindset of fear towards the possibility of mind control. Starring the icon of American masculinity, Frank Sinatra, the film's narrative revolves around a fictionalized platoon of American soldiers who were taken captive in Korea and transported to China to be held by the communist Chinese. After a few days, the platoon is returned to the United States military with the exception of two soldiers. All of the surviving platoon members credit Staff Sergeant Raymond Shaw for saving the majority of his men and when asked about Shaw's character they all answer identically with, "Raymond Shaw is the kindest, bravest, warmest, most wonderful human being I've ever known in my life." This description seems suspect because, in the beginning of the film, Shaw is portrayed as a disagreeable outsider who is alienated from the rest of his platoon. Despite this peculiar juxtaposition, he ultimately is awarded the Medal of Honor on the suggestion of the platoon's commander, Captain Bennett Marco, played by Frank Sinatra. Back in the United States, Marco begins having nightmares in which he sees his platoon sitting hypnotized in a brainwashed trance back in China. In these vivid nightmare sequences,

Marco recalls seeing a mentally manipulated Shaw kill the two missing members of his platoon at the command of a high-level Chinese communist, who is displaying his new brainwashing method to a gathering of communists. Rattled by these episodes of apparent recall, Marco decides to investigate. Once he corroborates his account with another member of the platoon who has experienced identical nightmares, he convinces Army Intelligence to assist him in his investigation. As Marco pursues the truth, the film slowly reveals that Shaw has indeed been brainwashed by global communist operatives and is now a sleeper agent. When activated by seeing the Queen of Diamonds while playing Solitaire, Shaw becomes capable of committing horrible deeds without knowing what he is doing or remembering his actions. His American handler is revealed to be his own mother, Eleanor Iselin, who plays the role of an evil mastermind puppeteer maneuvering her husband, John Iselin's political career into the top positions of American power. Initially a senator, his devious wife concocts an illicit strategy to propel him to the White House. Eventually, we learn that she has formed an alliance with global communists who provide her with a brainwashed subject whom she can manipulate to carry out her evil plot to seize totalitarian power over the United States. After compelling Shaw to carry out a double murder of political rivals, she orders him to assassinate a presidential candidate in order to elevate her husband, who is running as the candidate's vice-president, to the role of the party's presidential nominee. Her plan was to leverage the commotion surrounding the assassination to win emergency powers which will allow her to mold the nation to her will. However, Marco uncovers Shaw's manipulation by his mother and identifies that his trigger is related to the deck of cards. Marco is able to replace the deck with a trick deck containing only Queens of Diamonds and thereby successfully breaks the spell of Shaw, compelling him to acknowledge the

numerous murders he carried out under the subliminal influence of global communists and his mother. Ultimately, after a heart pounding climax Marco is successful in dismantling Eleanor Iselin's evil plot for authoritarian rule over America by snapping Shaw out of his trance. After being awoken by Marco, Shaw kills his mother and step-father, John instead of his intended target, the innocent and democratically selected presidential candidate.

In numerous ways the film explicitly connects the mind control which it depicts to the contemporary discourse surrounding the phenomenon which stoked so much anxiety and fear amongst the American public. The clearest connection between the film and real-world anxieties about mind control can be seen in how *The Manchurian Candidate* echoes the narrative of Colonel Frank Schwable and the American P.O.W.s in Korea. In 1952 the American public was shocked by Schwable's confessions of American war atrocities which were confirmed to have been elicited by communist Chinese torturous mind control techniques. This societal alarm was exacerbated by Edward Hunter's explosive 1950 article, which coined the phrase "brainwashing" and introduced a narrative of Chinese racialized tradition of mind control. In Frankenheimer's acclaimed film, the director echoes both of these contributions to societal fear of mind control. The film's narrative is driven from a nearly identical circumstance as the one faced by Schwable and other American P.O.W.s, however, the dramatized version leaves no doubt as to the racialized use of mind control for evil.

In an early scene, we find the platoon of imprisoned soldiers sitting in a semi-circle around a bald, mustached Chinese communist figure who displays his brainwashed American soldier specimens to an auditorium full of communist leaders. The film stereotypically portrays this character, Yen, with a cackling, evil laugh, standing

beneath banners of communist figures, Mao Zedong and Josef Stalin. Yen proclaims to his comrades, "I am sure you have all heard the old wives' tale that no hypnotized subject may be forced to do that which is repellant to his moral nature, whatever that may be. Nonsense, of course." This figure echoes Edward Hunter's article about Chinese brainwashing being used on American soldiers in order to corrupt their core morality.

The Manchurian Candidate also evokes the rhetoric of Ivan Pavlov and other behaviorist psychologists and quasi-psychologists, such as Joost Meerloo, to strengthen its connection to the topical concerns involved with mental manipulation. In a pivotal scene later in the film, Marco breaks the communist's control over Shaw and, through further mental manipulation, coaxes his subconscious to reveal his experiences as a brainwashee. Shaw reveals that the platoon was "worked on by a team of specialists from the Pavlov Institute in Moscow. They developed a technique for descent into the unconscious mind, part light induced and part drug." Here the film draws an explicit connection between the mind control it features and the influential psychological conditioning work of Ivan Pavlov. The reference also positions the film's portrayal of mental manipulation into the larger behaviorist discourse, which so deeply molded the public's understanding of both the human mind and its susceptibility to external intrusion. The quote and scene further evoke a reference to Joost Meerloo, who described the mind control tactics of communists in his book, *Rape of the Mind*. Shaw's mannerisms, when activated by the Queen of Diamonds card, certainty fit Meerloo's description that, "the brainwashee lives in a trance, repeating the record grooved into him by somebody else." When activated, Shaw's eyes remain wide open without blinking and he speaks like a thoughtless robot that simply reacts to commands. The film's grounding in the cultural discourse surrounding fears of psychological manipulation is

evident. Due to the explicit connections between the film and contemporary mind control-related anxieties, the narrative served as a distinct commentary on the phenomenon for Cold War-era audiences. As a result, the success of the film's strong masculine hero, Captain Bennett Marco, in disrupting Eleanor Iselin's evil plot conveyed to viewers that intelligent, capable and ideologically-pure masculine figures were capable of saving America from the veiled threat of subliminal manipulation.

Engaging with widely-held contemporary anxieties regarding the threat of communist mental manipulation, *The Manchurian Candidate* uses the struggles and ultimate success of Sinatra's Bennett Marco to echo the narrative trajectory of America's fighting men during World War II. By evoking this legacy, the film implicitly reminded Americans of the greatness and reliability of American masculinity, even in the face of this modern brainwashing threat. The narrative is advanced by Marco's traumatic nightmares, in which he recalls how his platoon was brainwashed and how Shaw was manipulated to kill his peers. These deeply upsetting and disorienting nightmares take a definitive toll on Marco and we see, in numerous moments, the corrosive effect that these episodes have on him. In one sequence, Marco gets dizzy while a tremor in his hands prevents him from lighting his cigarette. Frustrated, he then stumbles away, knocking over tables and chairs in a stupor. The character's inability to execute simple actions illustrates the tremendous levels of stress and trauma that he is struggling through as he attempts to understand the plot against him and against American democracy. Later in the film, Marco's boss relieves him of his duties because, with Marco's claims of brainwashing unsubstantiated, it seems as if he has gone insane. Deeply wounded and isolated by the humiliation, Marco briefly turns to drinking and

smoking to ease his weary mind. Despite these numerous episodes of trauma and discomfort, Marco remains resolute in his quest to thwart the brainwashing plot.

Ultimately, Frank Sinatra's character overcomes daunting psychological struggles to dramatically save the day through the power of his masculine agency. This heroism enables him to take control of the situation and reassert the doctrines of freedom and democracy in an America which came very close to being corrupted by evil and communism. Throughout the narrative, Marco is a force for good that works to identify and eliminate the profoundly sinister psychological manipulation that occurs. In the beginning, it is Marco's poignant memory of him and his platoon's brainwashing and his deep commitment to his country which motivate him to investigate what really occurred while he was a P.O.W. After deciding to inspect the circumstances surrounding his platoon's captivity, it is Marco who convinces the Army to assist in his inquiries. Then finally, at the film's conclusion, it is Marco who unlocks the secret conditioning mechanism that is the Queen of Diamonds and uses his discovery to neutralize the communist brainwashing threat and restore order to a tumultuous period in America. Frank Sinatra's character works towards defusing the mind control threat throughout the narrative and ultimately proves that his robust masculine agency is capable of overcoming the significant threats posed by subliminal psychological interference.

Frankenheimer leverages the film's mise-en-scene and camera work to draw attention to Marco's experience of physical and emotional trauma giving way to nation-saving, heroic triumph. This plot structure which evokes that of the American man's intrepid World War II legacy, is illustrated visually in an important scene towards the end of the film. After Marco is placed on leave from his position within Army Intelligence and accumulates a pattern of bruises from a fight with Shaw's butler, he

soon travels to Shaw's home to question him. With a large wound beneath his right eye and a bandaged cut above it, Marco begins to fill Shaw in on his nightmare. Quickly, Shaw interrupts Marco and tells him that another member of their patrol had shared with him that he too suffered from the same recurring traumatic dream as Marco. After hearing affirmation which validates his own experience, the battered and deeply traumatized Marco is shown looming over a kneeling Shaw in an attempt to coaxe out more information. Despite, the fact that Shaw is dramatically taller than Marco, Marco looms over Shaw in this shot. (See Image 2) The resulting sequence illustrates how Marco pushes through his pain and injuries in order to occupy the central role in coaxing the truth about the brainwashing threat from Shaw's corrupted subconscious. Eventually Marco uses this realization to corroborate his account of the nightmares and regain credibility in the eyes of his superior officer. This scene represents a crucial turning point in which Marco pushes forward, through his episodes of struggle towards his eventual success in helping to save the American way of life and restore its system of government.

While the character of Raymond Shaw can also be read as a heroic figure, it is telling that the character who best personified the popular archetype of American masculinity and its immense power to overcome and triumph was played by an American icon such as Frank Sinatra. Known for his vibrant singing voice, his womanizing, his good looks and easy charm.[31] By mobilizing him in the heroic role of Captain Bennett Marco, director John Frankenheimer offered a distinct answer to the pressing societal question, "Who can save the American way from the pervasive threat of

[31] McNally, Karan. 2015. "Sinatra's Films Shattered the Postwar Myth of the White American Male," December 11, 2015.

mind control?" The subtext of *The Manchurian Candidate* communicates the message that strong and dynamic American masculinity was the antidote to the terrifying threat of mental manipulation.

Ultimately, the narrative trajectory of Frank Sinatra's Bennett Marco mirrors the legendary WWII history of masculine trauma and triumph, while also incorporating contemporary communist mind control discourse. In so doing, the film offers the message that the American man's capacity for perseverance and accomplishment would be effective in overcoming a perceived communist subliminal threat.

The Spy Thriller and Fears of Cold War Mind Control – Her Majesty's Secret Service

Another spy thriller that enjoyed deep popularity in the United States, despite being a British film, utilized a similar formula to engage American audiences and ease the fears of communist mind control threat. *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969), the seventh installment of the James Bond series, mimicked the precedent set by *The Manchurian Candidate* of implicitly echoing elements of prevalent societal discourse related to the fear of implicit psychological manipulation. The film opens with Bond on a Portuguese beach saving a beautiful young woman, Contessa Teresa di Vicenzo, from killing herself by drowning in the ocean. The Contessa's distant expression and apparant insanity mimics the spell of a brainwashee and Bond's heroic rescue foreshadows the masculine icons' eventual triumph over the threat of mind control. After saving di Vicenzo, Bond finds himself kidnapped and transported to the residence of a leading European criminal, Marc-Ange Draco. Draco reveals that he is the father of di Vincenzo and offers Bond important intelligence on SPECTRE (the fictitious evil, criminal

organization of the Bond series) if Bond agrees to marry his suicidal daughter. While Bond initially refuses the proposition, he soon becomes infatuated with di Vicenzo and they plunge into a romance. Ultimately, di Vicenzo learns of her father's arrangement with Bond to give him information if they marry. Horrified, she forces her father to tell Bond the intelligence by threatening to never speak to him again. Draco reveals to Bond that the super-villain head of SPECTRE, Ernst Stavro Blofield, has been in communication with the top geneticist at the London College of Arms, Sir Hilary Bray. Blofield wants Bray to confirm his claim to a noble title and invites him to his snowy and remote, Swiss alpine lair. Bond, with the help of British Intelligence organization, MI6, arranges to stand-in for the respected geneticist on a mission to Blofield's hideaway with the intention of coaxing him out of Switzerland where he cannot be arrested, due to Swiss neutrality.

Once at Blofield's headquarters, Bond slowly begins to uncover the villain's plot to end the world through the use of brainwashing. As soon as Bond arrives at the mountaintop compound, he meets a group of twelve beautiful women who are patients at what Blofield refers to as "his allergy research center." In typical Bond fashion, it does not take long before he seduces one of the women. After sleeping with one of Blofield's subjects, Bond witnesses the sleep hypnosis and brainwashing tactics which Blofield is using to mentally manipulate his twelve patients, nicknamed the "Angels of Death". Bond quickly realizes that Blofield plans to use his psychological control over the women in order to promote the release of toxins that would kill all of Earth's living creatures. After escaping Blofield's compound Bond finds di Vicenzo and, after agreeing to get married, the couple attempts to flee Switzerland. However, before they can escape, Blofield captures di Vicenzo. In order to save his new fiancée, Bond organizes an assault

on Blofield's lair, ultimately destroying his operation, including his mind manipulation capabilities, seemingly killing him in the process. After Bond's gallant victory in saving the world from Blofield's apocalyptic brainwashing threat, he marries di Vincenzo and all appears resolved. However, in the final sequence of the movie, an injured but still alive Blofield, drives by the newlyweds' car and kills Bond's bride as they embrace.

The film's narrative structure echoes numerous aspects of contemporary discourse surrounding societal fears of mental manipulation. Like *The Manchurian Candidate*, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* evokes the shocking episode of Colonel Frank Schwable and the American P.O.W.'s in Korea who betrayed their national interest by signing false confessions after being exposed to communist psychological manipulative tactics. The Bond film chronicles the condition of twelve beautiful Western women who show no outward signs of subversive behavior yet are mobilized as weapons to destroy the world through Blofield's mind control. By paralleling the events surrounding Schwable's brainwashing, the film inserts itself into the real-world fear of psychological interference. Another concrete way the film engages with contemporary discourse surrounding the threat of brainwashing is by echoing the work of both the behaviorists and Cold War-era quasi-psychologists in how the act of brainwashing is executed. In two distinct moments of the film, the curtain is raised on Blofield's mental manipulation operation. The first explicit representation comes after Bond has seduced an "Angel of Death" and she has fallen asleep. As the pair sleeps, Bond is awoken by a series of psychedelic lights which hypnotize the sleeping woman. Once she is in her hypnotic state, Blofield's voice enters the room and issues directions to the now-receptive female subject. This visually-bold series of curated stimuli are the triggers which activate the conditioned minds of Blofield's subjects. The colorful flashing lights

echo the reinforcing stimuli which the behaviorists argued could be used to condition the mind. Quasi-psychologists, like Joost Meerloo, contended that lights such as these were being used by communists to manipulate the minds of free-thinking capitalists.

Despite Bond's ultimate triumph over Blofield's brainwashing plot, the legendary icon of masculinity endures a cutting emotional tragedy, thereby adding loss and trauma to the narrative's trajectory. This dimension of suffering evokes emotions involved with American memory of WWII. Towards the end of the film, Bond and his new bride, di Vincenzo are canoodling in their car as it overlooks a picturesque ocean landscape. Bond has just helped the world avert Blofield's brainwashing plot to extinct humanity and he is now enjoying his success with his loved one. Suddenly, a car passes Bond's parked vehicle and it is revealed to be Blofield who quickly shoots at the couple as he drives by. Bond looks over to the passenger seat and sees a slain di Vincenzo besides him. His grizzled masculinity is tested while emotion appears on his face as the film ends. While his reaction is restrained, it is clear that this is a shockingly personal loss for the seemingly unflappable Bond. This theme of grave loss which emerges in the final moment of the narrative would have struck a personal cord with many Americans who had suffered through loss en route to America's eventual victory in WWII.

The character of James Bond, since his debut in *Dr. No* (1962), has become one of the most pervasive and universal symbols of potent masculinity for much of the Western world. Inspired by the novels of Ian Fleming published between 1953-1966, the British secret-agent has left an enduring impression on the collective American understanding of heroic masculinity. At the time of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*'s release, the iconic figure has been only portrayed by Sean Connery. Connery, a legendary Scottish actor, initially brought to life James Bond and his ideal masculine

blend of intelligence, athleticism, sexuality, sophistication and appetite for danger. In *On Her Majesty's Secret Service,* George Lazenby debuted in the role of Bond, a figure of increasing significance in 1960s culture.

The James Bond of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, portrayed for the first and only time by George Lazenby, ultimately plays the part of the hero, using his robust masculine agency to endure trauma and save the world from an apocalyptic brainwashing threat. Bond's character plays the crucial role of moving the narrative forward through his ingenuity, determination and robust masculine sexuality. Early in the film, it is Bond's status as Britain's most eligible bachelor that leads Draco to provide Bond with crucial intelligence on SPECTRE. After using his masculinity to unlock this lead, he pursues SPECTRE's leader, Blofield to his villanous lair. Later, Bond unlocks the truth behind Blofield's apocalyptic brainwashing plot, again, through the use of his masculine sexuality. Gaining entrance to an Angel of Death's locked room under the pretenses of seduction, Bond witnesses Blofield's sinister plot firsthand as the villain carries out his nightly hypnosis and conditioning of the women. Finally, toward the end of the film, Bond organizes and spearheads an operation to destroy Blofield's brainwashing capabilities and deliver the world from the imminent apocalyptic mental manipulation threat. In a thrilling sequence of a large explosion and a ski/bobsled chase, Bond foils Blofield's evil plot and reasserts Western morality on a world which so nearly descended into total destruction.

Throughout the film, mise-en-scene and cinematography are utilized to amplify Bond's masculine heroism and his importance in overcoming Blofield's brainwashing threat. Bond's centrality to saving the world is expressed relatively early in the film. Undercover as genealogist Sir Hilary Bray, Bond arrives at Blofield's mind control lair

and soon is introduced to twelve women. The strikingly beautiful ladies are clad in alluring, colorful outfits and soon surround Bond. As Bond lectures the women on the field of genealogy, intercut closeups of the glamorous beauties buzzing with excitement and wide shots of the women assembling around Bond, convey the centrality of his potent masculinity to the gorgeous ensemble of women. We soon learn how these women are Blofield's brainwashing victims and are being conditioned to execute his apocalyptic plot. This early scene places Bond at the center of the group of brainwashees and frames him as leader within their community due to his good looks and vigorous masculine sexuality. (See Image 3) Bond later employs this sway which his sexuality affords him over these women to help foil Blofield's evil brainwashing scheme.

The Manchurian Candidate and *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* are two prime examples of how 1960s Spy Thriller films drew from contemporary cultural discourses surrounding communist mental manipulation. Both of these films offer the commentary that powerful masculinity, crafted in the mold of the America's WWII heroes, was capable of defeating to this widely perceived threat. While the masculine figures in the two films employ their distinctly unique styles to express their agency, both ultimately communicate the message that strong, perseverant masculinity was capable of saving the masses from the profound 1960s threat of implicit psychological interference. This underlying message is communicated repeatedly in various forms, throughout the 1960s in a number of other Spy Thriller films which enjoyed commercial success in the United States. These include, an American/British co-production featuring leading men, Richard Burton and Clint Eastwood, *Where Eagles Dare* (1968) as well as the British films, *The Ipcress File* (1965) starring Michael Caine and a succession of Bond sequels

with Sean Connery including, *Dr. No* (1962), *From Russia With Love* (1963), *Goldfinger* (1964), *Thunderball* (1965) and *You Only Live Twice* (1967).

3. The 1960s Western and the Fear of Cultural Conformity

In the previous section, it was suggested that the Spy Thriller films of the 1960s offered the American people the reassurance that masculine agency could fight and overcome the threat of communist brainwashing. In this section we address a simultaneous, but equally insidious anxiety that was increasingly perceived by Americans. While the postwar technological and social advances were widely celebrated and enjoyed by a majority of the population, there was also a dark side to these advances. The rise of consumer culture, with its accompanying advertising machine and the growth of the corporation, with its associated organizational monotony, led to a widespread sense of discontent and fear that even the fruits of capitalism were serving to compromise American values and rob the people of their spirit of individuality, creativity and autonomy.

In the post-World War II years, the ascendance of a stable middle class, suburbia, consumerism and the advertising agency stoked fears that Americans faced an additional threat to their sacred autonomy, capitalism's brand of brainwashing: cultural conformity. These worries of cultural uniformity and a loss of individuality helped to propel fears that American men of the 1960s were becoming soft, bland, ineffectual and wholly incapable of defending their nation in a moment of global tension. As K.A. Cuordileone puts it in her article, "Politics in an Age of Anxiety Cold War Politics," "the concern had crystallized into a recognizable refrain: American males had become the victims of a smothering, overpowering, suspiciously collectivist mass society – a society

that had smashed the once-autonomous male self."[32] Western films from the Cold War-shrouded 1960s responded to these refrains of anxiety by featuring a brand of masculine hero who was capable of overcoming trauma and the threat of mental subversion in order to assert American values. Unhampered by what many perceived as the emasculating constraints of postwar American society these heroes provided an illustration of the potent power of American masculinity, modeled in the image of America's World War II fighting men. This type of man was not a disempowered cog in the system. He was instead capable of weathering pain, loss and the threat of mental compromise in order to assert his just principles.

As Americans feared that capitalist and consumerist culture was eroding the autonomy of the individual and weakening the robustness of American masculinity, they increasingly turned to films that presented a more encouraging perspective. The Western genre of the 1960s, in particular, engaged with contemporary discourse around conformity and masculine softening by setting forth strong masculine protagonists. These Western heroes served as examples of powerful masculinity, capable of overcoming trauma, combatting the societal threat of cultural conformity and upholding traditional American values.

The Postwar Years and Anxieties of Conformity

The fifteen years following the 1945 conclusion of the Second World War formed about as stark a contrast with the fifteen years prior to 1945 as could possibly be

[32] Cuordileone, K. A. 2000. "'Politics in an Age of Anxiety': Cold War Political Culture and the Crisis in American Masculinity, 1949-1960." The Journal of American History 87 (2): 515–45. https://doi.org/10.2307/2568762.

imagined. Where the years between 1930 and 1945 brought economic strife and global warfare, the postwar years offered a respite from extreme poverty and the horrors of a world war. Soldiers returning from combat in Europe and the Asian-Pacific were greeted by two welcome developments: women who had come into contact with an extremely low number of eligible bachelors during the interwar years and a churning economy which had been fully mobilized to facilitate the war effort. These victorious soldiers quickly got to work with the former to produce America's largest generation, the baby boomers and thanks to the latter were able to find well-paying jobs to support their new families. With the recent creation of the interstate highway system, many of these newly comfortable American families moved to suburban regions where middle-class uniformity ran rampant. As the number of stable American families with disposable income grew, a trend of capitalistic consumption, with help from the burgeoning advertising industry, swept across the nation. The confluence of these trends in the postwar period helped to cultivate a period of unprecedented comfort and serenity. However, they also helped to inspire a deep and fundamental societal fear that this newly domesticated, suburbanized and consumerized American man was losing the powerful masculine agency which had forever defined American masculinity and had so recently helped America win World War II. Moreover, this period following the Second World War saw the proliferation of anxieties that American society had become increasingly conformist, thereby reducing the autonomy and individuality of all its citizens. As argued by Matthew Dunne in his book, *Cold War State of Mind*, "After the Korean War ended an outpouring of academic works, novels, films and television shows depicted the rigid conformity of the postwar age in terms that echoed the more severe interpretations of Communist psychological warfare and likened the methods and

culture of American corporate and social institutions to propaganda, indoctrination, and even brainwashing."[33]

A cultural text which captured the climate of anxiety surrounding the contemporary American trends of suburbanization and conformity was Malvina Reynolds' 1962 song *Little Boxes*. Reynolds crafted the song in response to the increasing societal uniformity which she saw throughout suburban California. She wrote the song's lyrics as she drove by the tract housing developments in Daly City, California. From the elevated vantage point of her car as it passed the suburban town on the highway, Reynolds was struck by the sweeping uniformity of the houses. Dubbing the suburban dwellings "little boxes," she then connected the homogeneity of the residences to the dull sameness which had descended on American society in the postwar years. Claiming that the "little boxes on the hillside… all look just the same," she continues by stating, "the people in the houses all went to the university where they were put in boxes and they all came out just the same… and the boys go into business and marry and raise a family in boxes made of ticky tacky and they all look just the same."[34] Reynolds' startling indictment of American society resonated with Americans and its message was amplified when her friend, Pete Seeger released a more commercially successful cover of the song in 1963. Together the two releases drew attention to the alarming levels of conformity which had come to diminish the autonomy of the American individual, historically a point of deep pride amongst Americans.

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[33] Dunne, Matthew W. A Cold War State of Mind: Brainwashing and Postwar American Society. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013.
[34] Reynolds, Malvina, writer. "Little Boxes." Recorded 1962. In Ear to the Ground. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

Two cultural texts released in 1955 focused on how the contemporary developments of conformity and standardization were eroding American masculine agency: bestselling novel, *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit* and hit film, *Rebel Without a Cause*. *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit,* written by Sloan Wilson, uses a masculine protagonist, Tom Rath, who served in World War II and has now returned to a job at the United Broadcasting Corporation. In this new role he quickly begins to see the downsides to the collectivist, corporation-based culture of postwar America. As his ties with his family are tested and he observes the destruction that corporate responsibilities have wrought on his boss' life and family, he decides to give up a high stress position in order to remove himself from this American corporate culture which is represented as sucking the life out of the American man.[35] In Nicholas Ray's legendary film, *Rebel Without a Cause*, the dangers that this emasculated American man presents to his family are made clear. The film centers around the son of a suburban, company man who is shown as being subservient to his wife. His son, Jim Stark (James Dean), becomes frustrated by his father's obvious lack of masculine agency gets embroiled in teenage delinquency. Stark's father Frank is framed as feminine throughout the film – at one point even appearing in his wife's woman-like apron. This framing is compounded by his repeated unwillingness to assert his power when his loved ones need him the most. At the end of the film, this father figure realizes the flaws in his ways and agrees to become a more masculine patriarch, thus communicating the widespread societal fear that American men were becoming soft.

[35] Wilson, Sloan. The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit. 1955, Mattituck, NY: Amereon House.

These two immensely popular cultural texts illustrate how 1950s American society was extremely anxious about a perceived decline in the quality of American masculinity. The novel, *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*, called attention to the dangers of a new corporate structure that infringed upon the rugged individualism of American masculinity. It further chronicled how corporations and the collectivist attitudes they cultivate, damage the American masculine spirit and clip the wings of American men. At the same time, *Rebel Without a Cause* illustrated how this corporate culture of uniformity and subservience fosters men who are incapable of being the powerful father figures that children need to grow properly. More generally, the film shows that the post-World War II developments of the suburban middle class, corporate compliance and consumerism have compromised the American man and turned him into an ineffectual weakling, incapable of controlling his own life — much less the complex world around him. These cultural icons served as deeply upsetting indicators of a trend that many could already feel, that the American man was no longer the masculine hero that had won World War II and asserted American exceptionalism. He was now weakened, confined, softened and profoundly disempowered. Societal discourse surrounding these concerns were further amplified in non-fiction pieces such as William Whyte's, *The Organization Man*.

In 1956, journalist William Whyte published a book that was ostensibly about business management, however it sold over 2 million copies because of the shocking assertion it made that the American man had traded rugged individualism for the safety and security of collectivism. *The Organization Man* featured interviews with CEOs of large American companies who made it clear that, in the aftermath of World War II, the psychology of these corporations' employees had shifted. The book warned that the

determined and capable spirit of American masculinity had been eclipsed and in its place was now an American man who believed that large conglomerates could make better decisions than individuals. The resulting portrait of American masculinity rendered by Whyte's book was one of increasing apathy and willingness to have decisions made for him by larger interests: an emasculated corporate man.[36] The book lay much of the groundwork for what would soon become pervasive societal worry about a degradation in the quality of American masculinity and a widespread notion that the glory won by the American man in World War II had now been replaced by an emasculating reliance on corporations. These concerns of lost masculine prowess would continue to mount in the wake of Whyte's impactful volume on the waning potency of American masculinity.

Some years later, in the early 1960s, an American psychologist, Stanley Milgram designed an experiment which tested the American man's capacity for following orders. His findings further illustrated the depths of this perceived new masculine softness and subservience. Milgram set up a simulated torture apparatus in which ten switches correlated to increasingly large voltages of electricity that would be sent as a current through an innocent man's body on the opposite side of a sheet of glass. Milgram brought paid men subjects to participate in his study and then set them up at the control panel of what was actually a fake torture system. He then commanded them to begin discharging shocks onto the innocent man nearby. Milgram overwhelmingly found that participants in the study would unconditionally follow his commands, even when they were told to unleash a supposedly lethal dose of electricity on the victim. These stunning

[36] Whyte, William H. Jr. The Organization Man. London, 1959.

revelations about the American man's capacity for mindless submission to authority were highly disturbing and, for many, confirmed their worst fears about the condition of American masculinity.[37] It was clear that there was something in this contemporary man that did not embody the glorious tradition of American masculinity which had conquered the Western frontier and won two world wars. Instead the American man revealed by the Milgram experiments was one that possessed little agency, but was instead eager to be subservient to a higher power, no matter how evil or immoral that power may be.

The Advertising Industry and the Subliminal Manipulations of Capitalism

While American popular culture was saturated with narratives of Americans who had surrendered their sacred autonomy in this era of cultural conformity, another phenomenon arose which further sowed societal alarm: advertiser's use of subliminal psychological interference to shape the desires of consumers. After American soldiers returned from the prolonged and destructive war in Europe and the Pacific, the American economy enjoyed a period of economic growth and tranquility. With the majority of the American male population returning home from war, countless newly reunited young couples settled down and began having children. This explosion in the birth rate resulted in the nation's largest generation, the Baby Boomers. As these Baby Boomers grew up in far more comfortable economic conditions than the ones their parents experienced, a culture of materialism and consumerism fundamentally transformed the nation. Industrialization had completely changed the contours of the

[37] Nicholson, Ian. 2011. "'Shocking' Masculinity: Stanley Milgram, 'Obedience to Authority,' and the 'Crisis of Manhood' in Cold War America." Isis 102 (2): 238–68. https://doi.org/10.1086/660129.

country and this paired with the disposable income many American families now enjoyed created demand for consumer goods like televisions, refrigerators and laundry machines. The capitalists who manufactured these goods quickly realized that their economic success hinged on their ability to sell Americans on this culture of consumerism and for this they turned to a new American institution: Madison Avenue. This bustling avenue on New York's east side became the home of the American advertising industry which exploded in the postwar years. The advertising agencies which set up shop in the 1940s and 50s on this avenue were tasked with selling Americans, not only products, but also the culture of consumerism that would come to define the nation. According to Lizabeth Cohen's book, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*, some economists from this period "lambasted the 'institutions of modern advertising and salesmanship' for 'crea[ting] desires—to bring into being wants that previously did not exist,' but [they] did nonetheless recognized how integral the growth of the advertising industry was… to [achieving] national prosperity."[38] As these agencies went about fulfilling their important role within an increasingly consumerism-oriented capitalistic society they stumbled upon deep controversy. Many respected Americans, fearing the loss of their autonomy in this new and unfamiliar society, raised the possibility that these institutions of advertising were capable of subliminally influencing consumers in order to implicitly dictate their behavior.[39]

[38] Cohen, Lizabeth. A Consumers Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America. New York: Vintage Books, 2004.
[39] Acland, Charles R. Swift Viewing: The Popular Life of Subliminal Influence. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

Societal fears toward the possibility of subliminal manipulation in advertising began with an innovation by adman, James Vicary in the mid-1950s. Vicary, a market researcher at the advertising agency, Dun & Bradstreet, came up with the idea to insert typed messages instructing viewers to purchase a particular product onto single frames of films or TV commercials. The intention of these sneaky messages, which could not be registered by a viewer's conscious mind, was to impact an audience member's subconscious in order to motivate a desired behavior without the conscious mind even realizing the impetus for an action. He claimed that he proved his strategy successful through a test in which he implemented messaging imploring viewers to purchase a Coca-Cola and popcorn into a showing of a 1957 film, which led to an increase in concession sales at the cinema which housed his experiment. While Vicary later admitted that he had fabricated the findings of his experiment and that, in fact, there was no science to back his method's effectiveness, his work nonetheless attracted a firestorm of attention and anxiety.[40] Vicary's experiment and extraordinary series of claims were chronicled in a September 12, 1957 article, "'Persuaders' Get Deeply 'Hidden' Tool: Subliminal Projection" which appeared in the publication, *Advertising Age*. The article described Vicary's belief that subliminal messaging could be used to fundamentally alter the behavior of consumers, stating that the new invention "will enable advertisers to flash sales messages on tv without the viewer being consciously aware of them. The messages will reach the audience subliminally—that is, 'below the threshold of sensation or awareness.'" This early article on the subject of subliminal messaging in advertising reserved explicit judgement on the ethical and social

[40] Sneddon, Andrew. 2001. "Advertising and Deep Autonomy." *Journal of Business Ethics* 33 (1): 15–28.

ramifications of Vicary's invention.[41] It served however to introduce the public to a phenomenon which would drive significant societal anxiety and fear.

After *Advertising Age* introduced the tactic of implicit psychological manipulation in advertising, a variety of other publications began featuring stories on the phenomenon, almost all of which explicitly drew attention to the immorality, danger and loss of autonomy associated with the marketing tactic. Norman Cousins, a prominent editor of the publication, *The Saturday Review*, was among the first voices to sound the alarm about the significant dangers and severe societal repercussions wrought by Vicary's invention. He offered a piercing rebuke of subliminally manipulative advertising technology in his weekly editorial published on October 5, 1957. In his article he compared the new invention to something out of the dystopian, totalitarian world of George Orwell's *1984*, a deeply influential novel which illustrated the dangers of manufactured societal consensus being leveraged by totalitarians to wield absolute control over society. The dark comparison led Cousins to facetiously proclaim that the only good use for the invention would be to "attach it to the center of the next nuclear explosive scheduled for testing."[42] Cousins was not alone in offering condemnation for the new phenomenon wrought by Vicary. A little over a month after Cousins' explosive criticism was published, another publication, *Sponsor*, published an article which chronicled the outrage toward subliminal advertising from the highest levels of the American government. The article described the horror felt by many congressmen regarding the newly popularized concept of subliminal advertising and

[41] Moore, Timothy E. 1982. "Subliminal Advertising: What You See Is What You Get." Journal of Marketing 46 (2): 38–47. https://doi.org/10.2307/3203339.
[42] Acland, Charles R. Swift Viewing: The Popular Life of Subliminal Influence. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

described investigations ordered by the Federal Trade Commission and the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters into the deeply controversial techniques.[43] These articles in the *Saturday Review* and *Sponsor* helped sow the seeds of profound societal worry regarding the autonomy of the American mind in this new age of consumerism and advertising. However, with the introduction of a popular book written by Vance Packard, these seeds would soon mature into full-fledged fear regarding the ability of marketers to intrude on and manipulate our minds.

The Hidden Persuaders (1957), Vance Packard's exposé on the phenomenon of subliminal advertising introduced the threat of manipulative advertising to the forefront of national discourse and became a best-selling book. The volume explored the numerous implicit psychological tactics employed by the advertising industry, including product placement and Vicary-style subliminal advertising, but went even further to explore psychologically invasive market research tactics, including measuring pupil dilation and brain function to test the effectiveness of ads. Packard chronicled how implicit psychological interference could be wielded to alter the behavior of consumers, while controversial market research techniques were enabling advertisers to unlock deep insights into the human psyche which they could use to manipulate their audiences. Packard's wide-ranging and deeply influential work delivered the clear message that advertisers were exploiting their consumer's subconscious to manipulate their tastes and behaviors.[44] His argument reached millions of Americans and played a

[43] O'Barr, William M. 2005. "'Subliminal' Advertising." Advertising & Society Review 6 (4). https://doi.org/10.1353/asr.2006.0014.
[44] Packard, Vance. The Hidden Persuaders: An Introduction to the Techniques of Mass-persuasion through the Unconscious. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1960.

pivotal role in shaping an apprehensive attitude toward the advertising industry.[45] The deep cultural resonance of Packard's work can be partially attributed to the contemporary discourse surrounding the threat of communist mind-control which stoked fears regarding the mind's vulnerabilities. Regardless of the reasons behind the success of *The Hidden Persuaders,* Packard leveraged its highly positive reception into speaking tours and a congressional testimony, which further stoked fears amongst both the American public and elevated governmental officials regarding the threat posed by the advertising industry's subliminal strategies.

The societal fervor that resulted from Packard's indictment of subliminal marketing worked to instill a sense of fear in the American people towards advertising's ability to reduce autonomy. The sense of outrage and disgust that was initially directed at James Vicary and his invention of a subliminal advertising technique, soon, with the help of respected journalists and Vance Packard, became a broad-based anxiety that all advertisements could influence a consumer without the conscious mind's awareness.[46] Paired with the ever-increasing societal fear of communist mind control, Americans in the late 1950s and 1960s became highly suspicious that their minds were under attack from two ideological directions, communist collectivism and capitalistic consumerism. Operating within this newly hostile and psychologically complicated world, Americans were forced to ponder questions such as, could the American way survive in the era of mental manipulation? And who would be capable of defending a vulnerable American public from the most implicitly dangerous threats they had ever encountered? The

[45] Acland, Charles R. Swift Viewing: The Popular Life of Subliminal Influence. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.
[46] Ibid.

1960s Spy Thriller and Western films which confronted these topical questions, enjoyed great success, largely because of how they framed the mind control threats of the age as maneuverable obstacles which autonomous male protagonists could overcome.

The Western – The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance

While Americans were grappling with anxieties about social conformity, deepened by the threat of surreptitious marketing, the cinematic genre of the Western offered an opportunity to engage with these concerns through the portrayal of rugged heroes of American masculinity. As Steven McVeigh claims in his book, *The American Western*, "no other genre is more American than the Western, more engaged with such fundamental American concepts as individualism, progress, democracy."[47] (McVeigh, 76) The Western's status as a quintessentially American genre, centered around the rugged individualism of the American frontier made it the perfect venue for Hollywood to engage with contemporary fears about American masculinity and reassert the powerful brand of autonomous masculine heroes of American legend. McVeigh continues by saying, "Approaching the Western as a product of a particular social, cultural and political climate unlocks the importance of the form for American society."[48] (McVeigh, 76) There are few films to better illustrate the deep linkages between the Western and the 1960s social, cultural and political climate than John Ford's, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962).

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[47] McVeigh, Stephen. "The Western and the Cold War: The Gunfighter, Heroic Leadership and Political Culture." In The American Western, 76-139. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0b1pw.9.
[48] Ibid.

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance was released on April 18, 1962 and instantly became a smashing success, resonating with an American public through its representations of potent masculine agency during a period of societal fear for the ineffectiveness of men. Earning $8 million against a production budget of $3.2 million, the film which dealt heavily in themes of masculinity clearly spoke to American audiences wary of the waning power of American masculinity. The film tells the story of attorney turned senator, Ranse Stoddard (James Stewart) and an unsung hero of rugged masculinity, Tom Doniphon (John Wayne). The narrative begins with an elder Stoddard returning with his wife, Hallie, to the fictional town of Shinbone for the funeral of Doniphon. Soon a flashback takes us back to years earlier when a young Stoddard is robbed and beaten by deplorable outlaw, Liberty Valance, who rules over Shinbone with authority that is unquestioned by nearly all citizens, including the town's Sherriff. The only person willing to stand up to the evil presented by Valance is a local rancher, Doniphon, who rescues Stoddard after he is beaten and left for dead by Valance. Once the pair arrive in Shinbone, they display their differing visions of justice and how to access it. An attorney, Stoddard elects to open a law office in town so he might use the law to defeat Valance. Doniphon, on the other hand, believes that the only way to stop Valance is through force and a mastery of guns, a trait that Doniphon repeatedly displays through impressive shooting. Later in the story, the residents of Shinbone are faced with a decision: they must nominate a representative to send to a statehood convention which will determine whether or not the territory becomes a state. Doniphon nominates Stoddard and Shinbone's residents rally behind Stoddard who advocates for statehood because of the potential benefits to infrastructure and the security it would provide against outlaws like Valance. Meanwhile, large corporate ranching operations

oppose statehood because it would hurt their business and they hire Valance to sabotage Stoddard's campaign for statehood. Valance then challenges Stoddard to a dual which Stoddard accepts because his deep belief in his principles of justice prevent him from being intimidated. At first, it seems like Valance will easily kill Stoddard as he shoots Stoddard's arm and mock him when he falls to the ground. However, right before Valance kills Stoddard, the young attorney suddenly draws his pistol and shoots at Valance who crumbles to the ground, lifeless. Stoddard instantly becomes a hero of the West and is hailed far and wide as "the man who shot Liberty Valance." He rides this fame into a nomination to become the territory's congressman, however, he feels deep guilt for compromising his principles by using force and guns to defeat Valance and begins to question his own fitness for this honorable office. At this moment, Doniphon reemerges and tells Stoddard that it was he, not Stoddard as the public believes, who killed Valance by shooting him from a nearby alley at the same time as Stoddard shot and missed Valance. Armed with this reassurance that he did not betray his core beliefs, Stoddard returns to the convention and claims the nomination, launching an illustrious political career.

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance engages with much of the discourse of anxiety surrounding the effect of conformity, consumerism and advertising on autonomy and masculinity during the post-World War II years. Tom Doniphon, the autonomous hero, defies the ineffectual masculine archetype outlined by books such as *The Organization Man* and the *Man in the Grey Flannel Suit* and films such as *Rebel Without a Cause*. Doniphon is only accountable to himself and his own principles. He is not a cog in a larger corporate machine and he certainly isn't the softened, effeminate masculine father figure in *Rebel Without a Cause*. Through his powerful demeanor

which commands respect and fear, Doniphon retains a persona of individualistic masculinity, a romanticized quality which was feared to be in short supply during the 1960s. He also demonstrates a strong moral and philosophical independence, another quality in demand during an era of widespread mistrust of advertising and its potential to subliminally infringe on psychological freedom. Because of Doniphon's strong brand of autonomous masculinity, he is able to effectively understand who and what is in line with his values of justice and equality, and act in accordance with these beliefs. Unlike the participants in Stanley Milgram's experiments, Doniphon is a man who is self-assured and unflappable. As a result, when Doniphon is confronted with the evil that is Liberty Valance, he does not cower or succumb to it, as popular belief regarding the conformist American man of postwar America may suggest. Instead he uses his masculine agency to rid the world of this evil. In the film, Doniphon exists as the antithesis of the contemporary construction of an ineffectual, weak man who has been softened by postwar America's consumer culture of conformity. Instead, he exists as a shining relic of what American masculinity was believed to once have been and could become once again.

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance features two examples of laudable American masculinity: Ranse Stoddard, played by James Stewart, is portrayed as a noble yet inauthentic hero, while Tom Doniphon, played by John Wayne exists as a true masculine legend of the American West, cast in the archetypal mold of resilient, capable and mentally-fortified masculinity. It is Wayne's character Doniphon who best personifies the spirit of rugged toughness and powerful agency which audiences longed for during the 1960s. One cannot overstate the significance of John Wayne's persona on popular conceptions of American masculinity. Starring in over 140 films over his prolific

50-year career, "The Duke" as he was nicknamed, personified the American man and his idealized powers. He became synonymous with the Western genre and then later used his iconic brand of masculinity to make distinctly political statements through war films. So influential was Wayne that many American men attributed their desire to serve in the military to him and military leaders claimed that he was their best recruiting tool. According to Tony Shaw's *Hollywood's Cold War*, even "One of America's most decorated soldiers, General Douglas MacArthur, once told Wayne at an American Legion convention that he represented the American serviceman better than the American serviceman himself."[49] John Wayne's trademark masculinity represented the man who his contemporaries aspired to be. Wayne's astonishingly influential masculine mold is on full display in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*.

During an age when Americans were preoccupied by anxiety regarding modernization's effect on the quality of their nation's masculinity, John Wayne's Tom Doniphon personified the self-sufficient American man that protected and defined America's greatness. As Shaw argues in his book, "In the genre he almost made his own, the Western, Duke Wayne came to embody the myth of the American frontiersman taming the world." This myth is on full display in *The Man Who Shot Liberty* when Doniphon claims "Out here [in the West], a man solves his own problems." In the film, Wayne offers one of his most iconic portrayals of Western masculinity as his Tom Doniphon perseveres through sharp emotional trauma to ultimately overcome the threat of moral corrosion wrought by Liberty Valance. In so doing, Wayne succeeds at reinstating the American principles of equality, justice and freedom.

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[49] Shaw, Tony. Hollywood's Cold War. Edinburgh, Great Britain: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

Doniphon's journey to heroism is peppered with traumatic loss and distress. While he ultimately perseveres, validating the principles of justice and equity for which he stood, the numerous emotional and physical injuries he sustains enrich his character and bind him to the narrative trajectory of America as it persevered and triumphed in World War II. Perhaps the deepest lost that Doniphon suffers during the course of the film involves a love interest. Early in the film we learn that Doniphon is in love with Hallie, a local blonde beauty who has been wooing for some time. However, once Doniphon brings Stoddard into Shinbone, Stoddard and Hallie begin to develop an affection for one another. As the narrative progresses, Stoddard and Hallie become increasingly obvious with their mutual attraction, to the point that it becomes abundantly clear to Doniphon. After Doniphon shoots Valance from the shadows, ceding credit for the killing to Stoddard, Doniphon looks with sadness at how Hallie nurses Stoddard's injuries with care, sensing his own loss of Hallie's heart. This jarring realization sends Doniphon into a rage and he turns to alcohol, getting extremely drunk at the town bar before returning home. In his drunken frenzy Doniphon sets fire to a recent addition he has made to his home, an extension he envisioned Hallie sharing with him once they got married. Consumed by anger and sadness in response to losing Hallie, Doniphon's episode of arson almost kills him and conveys the depths of his emotional response to his traumatic loss.

In the film, Doniphon perseveres through his deep emotional wounds to play a central, yet unacknowledged role in driving the narrative forward by protecting and defending the American value system of liberty and justice, personified by Ranse Stoddard. While Stoddard is the one who rises to fame and political power, this ascendance is facilitated almost completely by the unrecognized masculine hero played

by the icon of American masculinity, John Wayne. The narrative's impetus is Doniphon's death, which brings Stoddard back to Shinbone for his funeral. Early on in the flashback, Doniphon rescues Stoddard after he is beaten by Liberty Valance and brings him to Shinbone where Stoddard is able to begin his legal career. Later, Doniphon nominates Stoddard for the statehood convention which springboards his political career. Finally, Doniphon covertly kills Liberty Valance, saving Stoddard's life and in the process, elevating Stoddard to the status of a western legend. At each juncture, Doniphon is the unheralded hero who facilitates Stoddard's rise to national prominence. Given the viewer's privileged position within the narrative, however, we are able to fully appreciate the heroics of Doniphon and his centrality to the public success of Stoddard. While it is Stoddard who personifies the American principles of freedom and justice, it is Doniphon, a noble and unappreciated facilitator of Stoddard's rise, who makes a distinct statement about the centrality of rugged masculinity in fighting for and maintaining the American way of life.

The film's cinematography and mise-en-scéne echoes this message of the importance of male heroism in defending the American principles of liberty and justice. From the first scene of Doniphon riding on horseback as he carries Stoddard's beaten body into Shinbone for treatment, he is framed as a masculine icon of the American West. He sits tall and gallant atop his horse as he glides across the screen, his cowboy hat underscoring his rugged Western masculinity. Later, after Stoddard regains consciousness, he asks Doniphon his name. The camera then cuts to a slightly low-angle, medium shot of Doniphon, drawing attention to the gently time-weathered, but handsome face of John Wayne. The low-angle of the camera conveys Doniphon's imposing masculinity. This agency is echoed by Doniphon's statement to Stoddard after

introducing himself, “Liberty Valance is the toughest man south of the picket wire, next to me.” In the film’s climax, Doniphon narrates a flashback in which we see a new angle of the final gunfight between Valance and Stoddard. From this fresh vantage point we see Doniphon’s silhouette standing in dark shadows. This silhouetted angle allows us to see that Doniphon was the true killer of Valance. (See Image 4) What is really striking about the shot however, is the statement it makes about the role of Doniphon’s brand of masculinity. He shoots from the shadows and, without revealing himself, he fundamentally alters how events transpire in the light. This use of lighting and mise-en-scéne offers a compelling commentary on how American masculine heroics are not defined by recognition. Instead, true American heroes of masculinity are comfortable operating in the shadows, with no expectation of acknowledgement.

Tom Doniphon was a heroic character who personified the traits of World War II perseverant masculinity. As Americans were seeped in the narrative that contemporary constraints had resulted in their nation no longer boasting the powerful masculine icons who had made America great, Tom Doniphon was a perfect figure to resurrect American pride in their legendary brand of masculinity. Just as much a feature of the American West as cactus and dust, John Wayne showed Americans what an American man could still be: a bold, resolute and powerful champion of American ideals. In the old West, unconstrained by the dull comfort of the suburbs, consumerism and corporate hierarchies, Doniphon served as a shimmering reminder for the film’s audience of what the American man once was and could be again, if he was to embrace his rugged individualist spirit. Ultimately, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* tapped into an expansive cultural discourse surrounding the fear that America’s men were growing soft. The film not only engaged with this discourse. It also made a pointed statement about

the role American masculinity played in defending the American ideology of freedom and the enduring strength of the American brand of masculinity, despite contemporary challenges.

Overall, John Wayne's Tom Doniphon overcame harsh personal trauma and the threat of moral subversion in order to uphold American values and mirror the struggle and ultimate triumph of the American man in World War Two. In using Doniphon to echo the glorious narrative trajectory of American masculine military heroics, the film signals to audiences that the same brand of powerful masculinity that won the Second World War would be capable of navigating the United States through contemporary worries of capitalistic conformity and waning autonomy.

The Western – A Fistful of Dollars

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance was an American film through and through but, in fact, not all Westerns from the 1960s which struck a chord with American audiences came from the United States. Heralded Italian filmmaker, Sergio Leone, brought the genre to Italy and created iconic Westerns which resonated deeply with American and Italian audiences alike. Leone's first Western, *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), launched the career of the iconic protagonist of American masculinity, Clint Eastwood. The film, despite not being targeted exclusively towards American audiences, enjoyed significant success in the American market. Like *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, A Fistful of Dollars* provided a powerful and righteous masculine protagonist who served as a counterbalance to contemporary fears of a weakening in American masculinity.

The narrative follows Eastwood's ruggedly masculine character, "The Stranger", as he arrives in a fictitious town on the Mexican/American border called, San Miguel. In

San Miguel, two powerful but corrupt families jockey for supremacy: the Rojos and the Baxters. While the Baxters are a family of crooked law enforcement officers, the Rojos are a truly villainous gang of criminals led by the deplorable vagrant, Ramon. Early in the film it is revealed that Ramon has become obsessed with a local married woman, Marisol, and has kidnapped her, separating her from her husband and young son. The Stranger witnesses the startling mistreatment of this innocent and helpless family at the hands of the deplorable Rojos and begins to plot how he can play the two corrupt family powers against one another to help Marisol and her family, while reasserting proper morality to San Miguel. As the film continues, the Stranger works to ingratiate himself with the Rojos crime family. When the Rojos family massacres a regiment of Mexican soldiers in order to take a large quantity of gold, the Stranger finds an opportunity to outsmart both corrupt factions. After observing the carnage, the Stranger takes two dead Mexican soldiers and props them up in a local cemetery, making them appear to be alive. He then tells both the Rojos and the Baxters of the survivors' location. The Rojos rush to the cemetery to kill the surviving witnesses of their heinous crime, while the Baxters attempt to save the Mexican soldiers in order to have them testify against their rivals, the Rojos. Amidst the ensuing chaos, the stranger steals some of the gold from the Rojos' home. He also encounters Ramon Rojos' prisoner, Marisol, and frees her from captivity, ultimately giving her and her family the money which he took from the Rojos. He then helps them escape San Miguel. After liberating the innocent yet oppressed family, the Stranger faces torture from the enraged Rojos family. Despite this taking a deep physical toll, he escapes and hides until his health returns. Furious about the Stranger's getaway, the Rojos' decide to assault the Baxters, on the suspicion that they are harboring the Stranger. After the Rojos' murder the entire Baxter family, they

realize that the Stranger was not with the Baxters. Ultimately, the Stranger reappears and after toying with Ramon Rojos and his henchman, he uses his unparalleled quick draw and shooting skills to kill Ramon and his deeply evil family. After distributing justice and restoring justice and morality to San Miguel, the Stranger leaves the town, a true masculine hero capable of using strength, skill and smarts to protect the innocent and defeat the devious.

Sergio Leone's film, despite being produced in Italy, set forth a masculine protagonist which contrasted from archetypally softened and conformist masculine figures that were appearing in postwar American discourse. The Stranger is a sharpshooting icon, emblematic of the American West: independent, tough and cunning. He is a masculine figure who represents a sharp departure from the dependent, coddled man of the American corporation, as covered in books such as *The Organization Man* and *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*. He also deviates from the archetype of a weak, overly-feminine masculine figure set forth in *Rebel Without a Cause*. Finally, the Stranger deeply contrasts the construction of masculinity popularized by the Milgram experiments which purported to show that men were morally malleable and easily manipulated by authority, as he resists to adopt the evil which surrounds him in San Miguel. Clint Eastwood's potently masculine character exemplifies a self-assured man who is capable of rising above external forces and actualizing his image of a just world. In other words, it would be nearly impossible to envision the Stranger's mind and autonomous morality being compromised by James Vicary's subliminally manipulative advertising strategy.

A Fistful of Dollars enjoyed dramatic success amongst American audiences, in large part, due to the masculine hero portrayed by Clint Eastwood, a figure who would

be launched to international stardom through his work with director, Sergio Leone. Eastwood's "Man with No Name" possessed the very qualities many feared that postwar standardization and conformity had eroded in the American man. His character is deeply autonomous, ruggedly handsome, morally mature and wields a robust ability to control his surroundings through intelligence, marksmanship and strength. During that period, many Americans feared that their contemporaries, particularly the men among them, had lost their autonomy and wherewithal to protect the nation's values and principles. Therefore, Eastwood's dynamic character quickly became a shimmering reminder of the enormous potential of American masculinity to persevere and affect positive change, despite his appearance in an Italian production. Eastwood's portrayal of the Stranger throughout Leone's "Dollars Trilogy" made a lasting impression on American popular culture as his independent, autonomous and virile image has become inseparable from his star persona. Over the course of his nearly sixty-year career, which is still active, Eastwood has constructed a mold of potent American masculinity that is as legendary as it is influential.

Despite the Stranger's ultimate success in outsmarting the Rojos and Baxters and restoring proper morality to the town of San Miguel, his hero's journey involves deep trauma which, for him, comes in the form of actual torture. After Eastwood's character outmaneuvers the Rojo family and uses their money to help their prisoner, Marisol, and her family flee San Miguel, he is captured by the Rojos. Led by Ramon Rojo, the Rojos family uses intense torture techniques in an attempt to corrode the Stranger's resolve and force him to reveal the location of the innocent fugitive family. The Stranger, though is tough and unyielding. He weathers the horrifying cruelty of the Rojos and survives long enough to execute a daring escape from the crime families' torture chamber. This

vivid depiction of intense pain works to humanize the prodigiously gifted Stranger and again mimics the World War II narratives of struggle and trauma being surmounted in the service of freedom and justice.

Eastwood's Stranger perseveres through trauma and is able to express his masculine potential by wielding control over the film's narrative trajectory and molding the morally decrepit characters and town of San Miguel to his more just vision. Early in the film, Eastwood's character coolly remarks, after a local barkeep details the rivalry between the Baxter and Rojos gangs and warns that anyone who remains in San Miguel winds up killed, "the Baxters over there and the Rojos there, me right in the middle… there's money to be made in a place like this." Here, the stranger foreshadows his daring plan to play the two rival, evil powers against one another. As the narrative continues, a self-assured and heroic stranger uses his cunning and skills with a gun to restore traditionally American values of equality and justice by outmaneuvering both the Baxters and the Rojos. He facilitates the emancipation of Marisol's innocent family which has been mercilessly oppressed by the Rojos family by diverting the criminal's attention and then generously giving the family the money necessary to escape San Miguel. Despite his status as an outsider, with no obligation to help the subjugated innocents of San Miguel, the Stranger, compelled by his core goodness and commitment to justice, accepts without hesitation the danger presented by the two notorious criminal gangs. Ultimately, through his robustly masculine combination of skills, he is able to rid San Miguel from its curse: the rival crime families who have made the small border town such an unsafe and lawless locale.

Just as in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, the cinematography and mise-en-scéne of *A Fistful of Dollars* works to communicate the centrality and importance of the

heroically masculine protagonist. From the first scene of the film, the Stranger is centrally framed within the shot as the camera pans up from the hooves of his trotting horse to reveal a well-postured Eastwood, clad in his character's trademark poncho and cowboy hat, along with his trademark chewed cigar dangling from his lips. The frame reveals the stranger's unique manifestation of his autonomous masculinity and also provides geographical context for the stranger as he rides in from the expansive frontier to the isolated border town of San Miguel. The effect of these early images is to cast Eastwood's Stranger as an independent roamer, self-assured in his powers of masculinity as he haplessly, yet fatefully wanders into cursed San Miguel.

Another sequence, later in the film, echoes the stranger's centrality to the positive change which occurs in the narrative through effective cinematographic and editing techniques. Towards the middle of the film, a standoff occurs in which the Baxters and Rojos exchange prisoners, Antonio Baxter, who had been captured by the Rojos for Marisol, Ramon Rojo's prisoner who is now in the custody of the Baxters. As the two prisoners are led onto the town square to be traded, a series of close-ups set the scene by identifying each character's role within the scene. The screen flashes between close ups of the oppressed and imprisoned Marisol, her depraved and vicious captor, Ramon Rojos and the unaffiliated but decent onlooker sitting on the porch of the local bar, the Stranger. Suddenly, Marisol's infant son rushes out of the bar and runs towards his wrongfully held mother and Marisol runs away from the Rojos to embrace him. Using a sudden zoom, the camera dramatically tracks to a close-up which draws attention to this tragic embrace between an unjustly separated mother and son. The Rojos are further vilified when a scowling Ramon commands his associates to kill Marisol's husband, Julio. A low-angle camera shot of a Rojos on horseback looming above on the helplessly

huddled family conveys the extreme power imbalance between the innocent family and the unsavory criminal enterprise. Just before the Rojos pulls out his pistol to execute Julio, the saloon owner emerges from the bar with a loaded shotgun and commands the Rojos associate to let Julio live. The shocking declaration heightens the already palpable tension and spurs a rapid series of cuts between close-ups of Rojos family members, the bar-keep and the stranger. One particularly telling cut occurs when a close-up of the Rojos atop his horse who has been ordered to kill Julio, cuts to a close-up of a glaring stranger who is standing behind the saloon owner. Another cut returns us to the Rojos associate as he moves his hand away from his pistol and softens his expression signaling his submission. The Rojos are not intimidated by the elderly saloon owner wielding a shotgun, instead the cuts make it clear that the gang is scared of the stranger and his extraordinary skills with a gun. (See Image 5) As a result, this scene again reinforces the stranger's identity as a powerful arbitrator in this rogue community, beholden to no one, feared by everyone and strongly committed to protecting the innocent.

Tom Doniphon and the Stranger share the ability to withstand trauma and endure the threat of moral corrosion but nonetheless perseveres to assert righteous American ideology. This resolve is what makes them masculine heroes in the mold of the World War II legends of masculinity. By aligning these masculine protagonists with the fabled heroes of World War II, these films signaled to American audiences that powerful American masculinity was capable of overcoming cultural conformity and its many evils, just as the nation's fighting force overcame global fascism a generation earlier. This essential underlying message is echoed, using masculine heroes, in a number of other 1960s Westerns which enjoyed American commercial success including, John Wayne's *True Grit* (1969), Clint Eastwood's *Hang 'Em High* (1968) and

Spaghetti Westerns, *Django* (1960), *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968) as well as the other two installments of Sergio Leone's Dollar Trilogy, *For a Few Dollars More* (1965) and *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly* (1966).

4. Conclusion

In Spy Thriller and Western films of the 1960s, an archetype of masculine protagonists emerged who were perseverant, moral, mentally-strong and cunning. These figures persisted through trauma, loss and various forms of mental manipulation, ultimately prevailing and validating American principles of freedom, justice and liberty. These narratives of struggle, endurance and vindication echo that of the United States during the Second World War. The nation endured deep traumas between the years of 1942 and 1945 which came in the form of 418,500 American casualties and the deep emotional toll this shocking loss exacted. However, the United States ultimately prevailed over the forces of evil embodied by the fascist leaders of Germany, Italy and Japan – Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and Hirohito was a lasting reaffirmation of the power and potency of America. More specifically, it was a reaffirmation of the legend of a strong and just American masculinity. Through evoking the narrative structure of America's painfully-earned yet decisive victory of World War II, these films from the 1960s reminded Americans of the masculine capacity for perseverance and triumphant vindication. In doing so, the films introduced a new generation of American boys to the mythologized vision of masculine heroism, an image which reflected the triumphs of their fathers during the Second World War. Using World War II's narrative arc of triumph to reinforce the recent legend of American masculine heroism, these 1960s films send the implicit signal that the American man was still capable of weathering strife and significant obstacles to defend the American values of liberty and justice.

The masculine protagonists of *The Manchurian Candidate*, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* and *Fistful of Dollars* all mirror the

trauma and triumph narrative of America's World War II fighting men in order to illustrate how strong men were still capable of protecting American autonomy in a postwar period where individualism was under siege. Through their arduous struggles and painfully-earned triumphs over threats to their psychological sovereignty, these figures are emblematic of the inviolable sanctity of the American mind. Whether they be faced with the surreptitious tactics of communist mind control tactics (Spy Thriller) or the American man removed from the conformist tides of the postwar period (Western), these heroes demonstrated for the 1960s American public that they could be more than passive and psychologically manipulated citizens within their increasingly turbulent world. But despite the intimated promise of autonomy and psychological independence that these 1960s Spy Thriller and Western films offered, these genres were eventually leveraged by the American consumerist machine to sell the public the consumerist lifestyle.

Eventually, the societal fears of communist brainwashing and cultural conformity began to fade as developments of the latter half of the twentieth century shifted the global and domestic landscapes. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November of 1989 represented a clear paradigm shift in the Cold War struggle and was followed two years later by the breakup of the Soviet Union. These two events ended the Cold War and offered the American people a respite from their near constant anxieties regarding the communist militaristic and psychological threat. Simultaneously, the 1980s and 90s were a time of waning resistance to the increasingly accepted trends of consumerism and conformity which had been so fervently protested throughout the 1960s and 70s. These two late twentieth century developments resulted in a fading of societal anxiety

surrounding the prospect of mental manipulation.[50] Still, the images and narratives of the masculine figures who quelled psychological intrusion anxiety during the 1960s did not disappear from popular culture. Ironically, these figures became instruments to further fuel capitalism and its consumer culture.

Ironically the Spy Thriller and Western genres, both of which extolled the value of psychological autonomy, ultimately came to be used to propel the growth of consumer culture within American society. *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* is part of the James Bond series, an epic cinematic franchise consisting of 26 Spy Thriller films spanning over fifty years. The character of Bond has enjoyed more universal appeal than nearly any other cinematic persona over his half century of existence, enjoying earth-shattering box office success on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. For Western audiences, the figure of Bond is emblematic of the autonomy which makes their societies superior to fascist and communist ones. However, the motifs of technologically-advanced gadgets, luxury cars and fine Vodka Martinis, "shaken not stirred," form a distinct contrast with this promise of autonomy. These consumer goods which are glorified by the Bond series illustrate how the films, instead of defeating brainwashing, ultimately promote capitalist consumerism and cultural conformity. (See Image 6) Likewise, the Western genre, which originally idealized the spirit of independence and freedom has long been leveraged by advertising giants to sell cigarettes, notably the Marlboro Man, a masculine, cowboy-hat clad figure on horseback with a Marlboro cigarette in his mouth. (See Image 7) This figure evokes the legacy of autonomous Western masculine protagonists, (i.e. Tom Doniphon and the Stranger) who are unaffected by the threat

[50] Dunne, Matthew W. A Cold War State of Mind: Brainwashing and Postwar American Society. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013.

conformity poses to their self-sovereignty, yet the figure ultimately uses this legacy of autonomy in an attempt to sell its audience on the American system of capitalistic consumption and conformity, ironically promoting addiction to a harmful habit.

Ultimately, the striking paradox of these two 1960s genres is that, despite depicting triumphs over psychological manipulation, they themselves were eventually used to subliminally influence the American masses towards accepting consumerism and conformity. This study reveals that the American capitalist machine gravitated towards cinematic narratives which melded contemporary anxieties, widely-held values and the recent historical memory of World War II in order to tout the agency of the individual in postwar society. However, this capitalist system then used these popular figures of autonomy to further the capitalist agenda of consumer-driven cultural conformity. In America, messages of individuality and autonomy can be very useful in manufacturing consumerist sentiment and selling products to the masses. While these filmmakers may have believed that they were telling stories that affirmed the independence of the individual, the gears of capitalism ultimately coopted their narratives. In the end, even the strong male protagonist is unable to resist the mental manipulation of the marketplace.

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Images

Image 1:

Joe Rosenthal's *Raising the Flag On Iwo Jima* encapsulates the World War II narrative of masculine trauma and eventual triumph.

Image 2:

Frank Sinatra's traumatized yet resilient, Bennet Marco coaxes instrumental information from the brainwashed Raymond Shaw in John Frankenheimer's *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962).

Image 3:

George Lazenby's James Bond is the center of attention in the midst of these beautiful brainwashees whom he will later save in Peter Hunt's *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969).

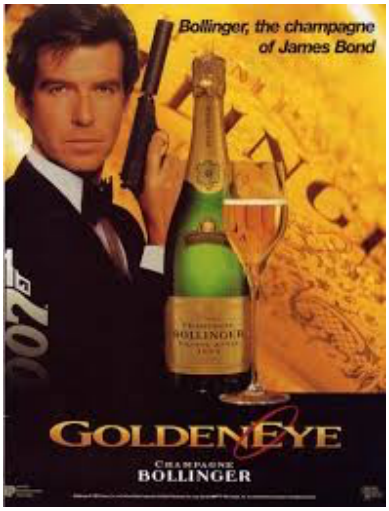
Image 4:

John Wayne's Tom Doniphon shoots from the shadows and vanquishes the evil Liberty Valance in John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)

Image 5:

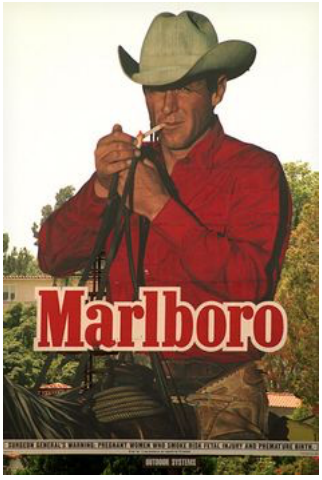
Clint Eastwood's Stranger supports the town's saloon owner and innocent but oppressed family from the tyranny of the Rojos family in Sergio Leone's *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964).

Image 6:



This 1995 advertisement showcases James Bond's consumerist side, the legend of autonomous masculinity eventually became an ambassador of capitalism and cultural conformity.

Image 7:



The Marlboro man is one of the most successful advertising motifs in modern history. These ads sell cigarettes, a dangerous component of cultural conformity, to consumers by invoking the autonomous nature of the Western hero.