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## Dismantling Communism in the Early Cold War: Themes in Children's Media

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DISMANTLING COMMUNISM IN THE EARLY COLD WAR: THEMES IN  
CHILDREN'S MEDIA

An Undergraduate Honors Project Presented

By

Jennifer Lilly

To

The Department of History

The School of Arts and Sciences

Rhode Island College

2019

### *Abstract*

This paper analyzes the messages found in American children's visual media during the early years of the Cold War. Many producers in the film and television industry took to the screen to express concerns about possible Communist infiltration. These fears had grown over several decades of political and international instability, beginning in the early twentieth century and the first Red Scare. Thus, the explosion of the Cold War prompted producers to create media intended to socialize children around American ideals which would challenge the growing threat of Communism. The events which led to production of this media will be interpreted and connected to the messages presented in the media itself. The ideals promoted to children in visual media such as film and television will be analyzed to demonstrate American values and how they were intended as a means to socialize children to prevent the spread of Communism.

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### *Introduction*

The timeless success of the visual media industry has created an awareness of its effective ability to shape public opinion. Such inventions as film and television have captivated the American public for decades. The ability of media to influence thought has been both a threat and an ally to the United States government, which has made several attempts over time to silence the industry when threatened, as well as use the industry to its advantage to produce propaganda. This was especially true during the Cold War, which immediately followed the end of World War II. Primarily fought between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Cold War was an ideological battle between the contested superiority of two different economic and political systems: free-market Capitalism protected by a democracy and Communism's command economy under a totalitarian regime. The growing popularity of film and television in the American home, therefore, presented a perfect opportunity for producers to advocate for the Cold War cause, sometimes more discreetly than others. However, to understand how the United States arrived at this point, connections between the Cold War and earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century events must be made.

This paper will be split into two main sections. First, it analyzes the Cold War's background, connecting earlier events of the first Red Scare and wartime instability to the larger Red Scare, and ultimately, a Cold War. The 1920s faced what would be the first Red Scare, the fear that Communism would pervade U.S. ideology as a result of the successful Communist revolution in Russia. Traditional gender roles and family norms were developing at this time, placing emphasis on the domestic sphere, and as a result, the socialization of children. These events are closely connected to the initial

investigations of the film industry, revealing the relationship between ideological fears and the power of popular media. This Red Scare found its way into the motion picture industry, leading to scrutiny of what was being said in film, and as a result, monitoring what would be screened, policymakers fearing who might be swayed by the inflammatory attitudes of producers. The film industry then pulled back, as did the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as the Second World War approached. Although the motion pictures experienced a lull in scrutiny, following the end of World War II, investigations quickly started again as the second Red Scare emerged. The chronology of such circumstances will show how the film industry would once again come into the spotlight with the rebirth of such fears, as well as new ones. The importance of confronting these fears, for the protection of America's youth and Christian family ideals, which will also be explained, is related to the production of media, which would be released in the Cold War's early decades. The fear of Communism was translated into film censorship in this new Red Scare, as the emergence of television as popular media led to its almost immediate scrutiny. In addition to such monitoring, the media industry became heavily focused on producing Cold War commentary and ideology.

The second section involves mainly primary source analysis, focusing on the film and television programming which was released during the 1950s and 1960s. Much of the popular media at this time was not without some sort of political message intertwined within its contents. Children's media, of course, was no exception. Ideas frequently presented in youth programming centered around themes of heroism, family, and Christianity, creating a very specific image of who Cold War children should look up to, and who they should aim to be themselves. Outside of youth television and film, even

media directed towards more mature audiences had much to say concerning the role of youth and family in a Cold War climate. As a result, much of the early Cold War's media had ideas for both parents and their children to hear about American values which should be embraced. These ideals were often directly related to challenging the threat of Communism. These primary source analyses, along with support from other historians' interpretations, will focus on how such ideas neatly fit into seemingly "ordinary" television programs. These analyses of various producers, actors, mediums, and genres demonstrate the widespread effects of Cold War mentality across the industry, rather than simply being limited to a specific group within society. From science fiction to Disney animation, no producer was safe from the anti-Communist attitudes which inspired the reinforcement of common themes. Due to the vast influence of the Cold War mentality, it is difficult to interpret the large quantity of sources. As a result, this paper will take a look at a few of the many films and television programs affected by the hysteria, focusing particularly on the themes outlined above. Therefore, this paper will provide a cohesive analysis of the many factors at play and will explain how the early Red Scare and film industry crackdown would later transform into a larger Red Scare known as the Cold War. The media industry found new ways of using film and television to continuing enforcing the socialization of children through American ideals as a way to combat the Communist threat.

Part I

*The First Red Scare*

Communism, although an economic concept developed in the nineteenth century, was generally not a concern for United States citizens in the early twentieth century. Though its collectivist ideas challenged the laissez-faire economics of the U.S. capitalist system, Communism was generally seen as no more than an idea.<sup>1</sup> However, the successful creation of a Communist Soviet Union following the 1917 Russian Revolution<sup>2</sup> led to a new fear of these ideologies finding their way to the United States. These fears were not arbitrary but rather based on a sense of already growing intolerance which was developing in the 1920s, particularly towards immigration. Although it was previously favored for “A tradition of laissez-faire labor mobility,”<sup>3</sup> in which movement for monetary gain was encouraged, a combination of postwar attitudes and anti-Communist Red Scare politics turned to discourage such practices. Labor unions were targeted, as they frequently consisted of migrant workers deemed likely to hold Communist beliefs. For example, the reputation of the Industrial Workers of the World Union and its Leftist political nature “Sent chills through the hearts and outrage through the souls of upper and middle-class Americans.”<sup>4</sup> Labor Unions, particularly the IWW,

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<sup>1</sup> Leftist ideologies were frequently dismissed by the U.S. government as Conservatism flourished, particularly during World War I. While more conservative unions were able to make agreements with the government, left-leaning unions were frequently excluded from peacemaking to prevent labor violence. As a result, socialist groups were often subjects of repression, the government unwilling to recognize their political ideologies. See: Paul F. Lipiold ““Striking Deaths” at Their Roots: Assaying the Social Determinants of Extreme Labor-Management Violence in US Labor History—1877–1947,” *Social Science History* 38, no. 3-4 (2014): 556-7. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/90017047>.

<sup>2</sup> The 1917 Russian Revolution occurred after decades of frustration with the Romanov dynasty and its inability to represent and provide for the people. Bolsheviks who embraced the Communist ideologies of Karl Marx established a regime based on these collectivist ideologies in its place, which discouraged free-market Capitalism and instead created a totalitarian government. See: William Henry Chamberlin, “The First Russian Revolution,” *The Russian Review* 26, no. 1 (1967): 4, 12. doi:10.2307/126860.

<sup>3</sup> Mae M. Ngai, “Nationalism, Immigration Control, and the Ethnoracial Remapping of America in the 1920s,” *OAH Magazine of History* 21, no. 3 (2007): 11. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25162123>.

<sup>4</sup> Paul L. Murphy. “Sources and Nature of Intolerance in the 1920s.” *The Journal of American History* 51, no. 1 (1964): 62.

challenged the norms of American capitalism with demands for better treatment. Especially since these expectations came from immigrants, they were immediately delegitimized and dismissed as originating from socialist standpoints, and therefore directly confronted American societal norms. The IWW challenged the notion in American society that workers had to earn fair treatment, instead demanding these privileges immediately, therefore alarming capitalists that their way of life could be at stake.<sup>5</sup> Between the threat of World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution, the IWW became known as a “subversive menace,”<sup>6</sup> in need of suppression.

These fears, generally rooted in labor unrest, were then transferred to government officials through connections with business owners. Almost immediately following the Russian Revolution, several states passed legislation prohibiting the spread of ideas that could challenge America’s economic and political systems,<sup>7</sup> in other words, Communist ideas. Therefore, the fear of Communism spread from the private sector of business into a larger public sector. Now, not only were individual businesses in danger, but potentially the entirety of the United States’ free-market economic system and politics were at risk. Additionally, the 1920 Palmer Raids reflected the beginning of government assault against Communism. On multiple occasions between 1919 and 1920, A. Mitchell Palmer, the U.S. Attorney General, led attacks against those deemed to be leftist threats. Thousands were prosecuted during these raids, some even deported, for their radical beliefs. These raids, alongside strict legislation against immigrants,<sup>8</sup> indicated the U.S.

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<sup>5</sup> Murphy, 62.

<sup>6</sup> Patrick Renshaw, "The IWW and the Red Scare 1917-24," *Journal of Contemporary History* 3, no. 4 (1968): 63-72, 65.

<sup>7</sup> Murphy, 65.

<sup>8</sup> The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 enforced immigration quotas which reduced the number of migrants to about one-fifth of the previous one million coming to the U.S. per year. The act demonstrated favoritism towards immigrants from Western European nations such as Great Britain, while discouraging the

government's intolerance for Communist ideology spreading on American soil, but also the disdain for those not seen as "true" Americans. Russian immigrants were particularly targeted, thousands being arrested and searched on arbitrary grounds, or no grounds at all.<sup>9</sup> Although these raids were quickly shut down,<sup>10</sup> they indicated a growing hostility for those perceived to have ideas which challenged American norms.

A growing attitude of what was "American" began to emerge at this time, and would ultimately influence later attitudes concerning issues of family and youth. White, middle-class women rarely participated in the labor force until the 1940s, often as a result of gender expectations.<sup>11</sup> Although their duties to the home were decreasing at this time due to advancing technology, instead, women were focusing specifically on raising children instead. Rather than serving society by entering the workforce, women were expected to improve the quality of personal relationships within the family by spending more time raising children.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, increased attention to children at this time reinforced gender roles of men in the workforce, women in the home, and the shifting focus toward raising families. Additionally, societal expectations of the nation's youth were frequently at odds with the culture emerging at the time, and this culture was thought to impact the future.<sup>13</sup> As a result, ensuring that the nation's future would be

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admittance of migrants from Eastern Europe and especially Asia. In other words, those who came from nations with similar political ideologies to the U.S. were preferred. See: Ngai, 12-13.

<sup>9</sup> Allen Pusey, "Precedents: Jan. 2, 1920: Palmer Raids Target Immigrants," *ABA Journal* 101, no. 1 (2015): 100.

<sup>10</sup> Pusey, 100.

<sup>11</sup> In 1920, approximately six percent of white women participated in the workforce, making it significantly male-dominated. See: Elliot W. Brownlee, "Household Values, Women's Work, and Economic Growth, 1800-1930," *The Journal of Economic History* 39, no. 1 (1979): 200-1. [www.jstor.org/stable/2118920](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2118920).

<sup>12</sup> Brownlee, 203.

<sup>13</sup> Changing youth attitudes towards fashion, relationships, and other popular topics caused strained relations between the nation and its young population, therefore creating a greater need for control. Thomas E. Bergler, "Youth, Christianity, and the Crisis of Civilization, 1930-1945," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 24, no. 2 (2014): 260. doi:10.1525/rac.2014.24.2.259.

raised with the proper attention from mothers present in the home would help retain traditional American attitudes. With an emerging youth culture frequently challenging typical fashions, and an economic movement challenging America's Capitalism, redirecting children back to the dominant ideology of family, tradition, and democracy would appear in the scrutiny of the also-popular film industry.

### *Film in the First Red Scare*

The film industry encountered several significant ups and downs over the course of the early twentieth century which would set the stage for censorship during the early days of the Cold War. The first series of investigations started following the initial Red Scare of the 1920s. Such scrutiny highlighted the growing class conflict within the United States, which was translated into films that focused on pressing issues such as labor unrest. As a result, fear of increased labor discontent transforming into a Communist uprising emerged through the initial Federal Bureau investigations. The concern that Lenin and Trotsky had numerous supporters within the United States inspired the Labor Film Service to subdue the powerful messages film could relay to frustrated working-class citizens. Prominent actors, for instance, Charlie Chaplin, had demonstrated sympathy towards Communism, creating a larger concern for others in the industry that could potentially hold similar beliefs.<sup>14</sup> As a result, policymakers felt compelled to look

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<sup>14</sup> Several of Chaplin's films challenged American norms by focusing on the stories of working-class and immigrant characters who frequently challenged those above them. Chaplin was also known for openly supporting Communist leaders in the U.S. within his film work as well as outside. Therefore, Chaplin's activity confirmed that Communist activity was alive in the U.S., however, policymakers such as Hoover would allow this presence to amplify their fears and take extreme action towards removing it. Discouraging sympathy towards working-class immigrants was vital to enforcing America's contentment with traditional values of successful, Capitalist families embraced at this time. Exposing children to Communist ideas when the youth was already depicted as radical and in need of control therefore made censorship of works like

closely at the ideas presented in upcoming movies. In the 1920s, film censorship took the form of monitored screening and prevented viewings of specific films.

The film industry hired numerous minority groups during this period of high immigration. These immigrant workers in the industry were often among those targeted by the U.S. government in labor disputes. They brought many concerns over labor and class into their films, thus sparking fears for what was perceived to be Communism and a need for censorship. J. Edgar Hoover, who would later become director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was especially wary of the messages that were potentially hidden in film. As a result, a variety of film-related organizations were established to keep an eye on the content of Hollywood's productions. In 1927, Will Hays, head of the newly established Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, created a list of eleven themes deemed unacceptable to present in film. Though politics were not specifically forbidden, commentary on domestic and foreign affairs was off-limits,<sup>15</sup> reflecting the fear of Communist activity discreetly being slipped into film without actually saying its name. That ideology did not have to be explicit for the public to catch on and adopt such ideas, instead relayed through subversive messaging, drove the fears of the American government.

The 1930s saw a decline in film censorship as attention focused elsewhere, particularly on the emerging Second World War. The FBI's loss of power to monitor films led to self-censorship through private film organizations rather than federal institutions. Many left-leaning filmmakers gave up due to a lack of funding and the

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Chaplin's crucial. See: John Sbardellati, *J. Edgar Hoover Goes to the Movies: The FBI and the Origins of Hollywood's Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 17-18.

<sup>15</sup> Larry Ceplair, "The Film Industry's Battle against Left-Wing Influences, from the Russian Revolution to the Blacklist," *Film History* 20, no. 4 (2008): 403. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27670743>.

increased attention they received from the Labor Film Service and others closely monitoring them.<sup>16</sup> In the 1930s, the Production Code Administration began reading and revising scripts before they were taken into the production stage,<sup>17</sup> therefore hindering the possibility for Communist ideology to make it into film unnoticed, and instead altering the messages to better serve the administration's conservative interests. Although monitoring was still ongoing behind the scenes, the lack of federal intervention gave the film industry some peace during the interwar years.<sup>18</sup> However, it would become a major target once again following the end of World War II. The Soviet Union's existence continued to make United States politicians uneasy with the idea of a Communist nation becoming a world power. This rocky relationship between the U.S. and the Soviet Union would be demonstrated through many interactions during and after World War II.

### *Foreign Relations During World War II*

Remaining a world power was a major concern for the United States. The Great Depression in particular had brought a sense of unease to Americans regarding their economic security, therefore serious political thought was put into these matters following the recession. Previous to the Great Depression, Communism was less of a global concern. The idea of "Right" and "Left" would not emerge until the cultural

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<sup>16</sup> Sbardellati, 17.

<sup>17</sup> Ceplair, 403.

<sup>18</sup> Fears of Communism did not disappear at this time, rather, they were redirected to other parts of American society which were thought to be a larger concern. For instance, the Works Progress Administration and Worker's Alliance of America, organizations which emerged from the Great Depression, frequently faced accusations and searches for Communist activity. The frequent disagreements between the government and its frustrated workers resulted in a greater need to subdue the Communist rhetoric of the Worker's Alliance. See: Chad Alan Goldberg, "Contesting the Status of Relief Workers during the New Deal: The Workers Alliance of America and the Works Progress Administration, 1935-1941," *Social Science History* 29, no. 3 (2005): 348-9, 353. [www.jstor.org/stable/40267880](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40267880).

change of the 1930s that resulted from the Depression and risk of war.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, while fears of Communism were certainly present as a result of the first Red Scare, they did not create the global stratification in the 1920s that would emerge later in the Cold War.

American politics indicated that a need for an open global market was necessary to preventing another economic downturn.<sup>20</sup> In other words, total access to resources would ensure America could retain its position as a superpower and maintain the success of its capitalist system. The alternative would be increased government intervention regarding trade.<sup>21</sup> This greatly threatened the idea of laissez-faire Capitalism in which the market flowed freely, instead inching closer to a command economy which echoed of Communism. These concerns would be reflected in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union during World War II.

Interactions with the Soviet Union during World War II would set the stage for a climate of fear following its conclusion. The United States and the Soviet Union were both part of the Allied forces during the war, however, this alliance was quite uneasy. Their unity was more strongly based against a common enemy than it was on similar ideology. President Roosevelt followed a policy throughout the war of continued maintenance of economic and military affairs as a method of keeping U.S. superiority above the Soviet Union, thus creating the ability for the U.S. to place more influence on relations between these two nations.<sup>22</sup> The United States remained quite wary of the

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<sup>19</sup> Sbardellati, 40.

<sup>20</sup> Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*; 10th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 10.

<sup>21</sup> LaFeber, 10.

<sup>22</sup> Roosevelt's distrust of the Soviet Union shaped his war policy. By refusing to share information and economic support with the Soviet Union, he hoped to maintain the U.S. position of having the upper hand over the Soviet Union, therefore allowing him to dictate future interactions between the two nations if necessary due to more economic and military power. See: Barton J. Bernstein, "The Uneasy Alliance:

Soviet Union throughout the duration of the war, both nations taking issue with several political decisions the other made. Many of the concerns the U.S. had toward the Soviet Union revealed subconscious fears about the spread of Soviet power, and therefore, Communism.

For instance, the Soviet Union's demands for the other nations of the Allied Forces to recognize its control over Eastern Europe proved to be a major challenge to the United States' postwar ideals. President Roosevelt was reluctant about this recognition, as it meant cutting off part of Europe from free trade, therefore challenging his hopes for American democracy to reign supreme globally.<sup>23</sup> However, refusal to acknowledge the Soviet Union's claims also threatened their uneasy alliance, thus setting the two nations up to be rivals. Furthermore, "If Stalin got away with building his own sphere in Europe, Churchill, de Gaulle, and others might try to rebuild their blocs."<sup>24</sup> If the U.S. recognized the Soviet creation of a Communist regime in Eastern Europe, this form of government would be seen as legitimate. The success of this empire could then inspire other western nations to follow in Stalin's footsteps and establish new Communist governments in place of democracy, making the Soviet Union the dominant world power. This meant Roosevelt's desire to stay ahead of the Soviet Union was essential to implementing his goals for worldwide democracy.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the recognition of Communism's legitimacy was a major point of contention during World War II, which strained U.S.-

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Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Atomic Bomb, 1940-1945," *The Western Political Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (1976): 203. doi:10.2307/448105.

<sup>23</sup> LaFeber, 14.

<sup>24</sup> LaFeber, 14.

<sup>25</sup> The U.S. saw itself as an empire, as Gaddis refers to it, "Roosevelt's 'grand design.'" Therefore was the only nation equipped to stop the Soviet Union's spreading Communism which threatened the supremacy of Capitalism. See: Bernstein, 203, and John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 32.

Soviet relations. Roosevelt's eventual refusal to recognize the Soviet Union's claims would consequently lead to further tensions for many years to come.

As a result, this made the Soviet Union a threat, as the U.S. did not expect that a Communist nation could rival a democracy due to its totalitarian nature. Democracy was seen as the supreme form of government, and the Soviet Union's success in maintaining a Communist system threatened such supremacy. Thus, a second Red Scare developed as staunch Capitalists feared an increase in Communist supporters across the United States. The Red Scare was a wound, constantly healing and reopening. It was initially formed during the first Red Scare, healed during the Interwar years, then reopened following World War II, making way for the second Red Scare, or the Cold War.<sup>26</sup> The Red Scare was always present, yet amplified during periods of instability. With the development of the atomic bomb underway, ensuring that the Communist Soviet Union, although an ally, did not gain access to such technology, deepened U.S. concerns about maintaining superiority. An exclusionist policy<sup>27</sup> was implemented as an attempt to keep the science of atomic weaponry a secret to other nations. However, Roosevelt's death and replacement by President Truman would alter this plan, as Truman's decision to detonate the bomb would mean no longer keeping atomic weaponry a secret.

### *Growing Fears and the Rising Cold War*

The United States development and success of the atomic bomb introduced a plethora of new feelings for Americans. First, it brought a sense of euphoria. They were quite enthusiastic about the bomb, as it solidified the United States' power and

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<sup>26</sup> Renshaw, 63.

<sup>27</sup> Bernstein, 229.

capabilities for war. Following the initial bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the atomic bomb was viewed in good faith, as it could be used to prevent potentially dangerous nations from pursuing imperialist aggression and therefore defend democracy against totalitarianism. Overall, there was a general consensus that the atomic bomb's purpose was to keep peace.<sup>28</sup> Americans saw the possession of an atomic bomb as a way to maintain its advantage, giving a sense of U.S. control over world affairs.

Consequently, they disliked the idea of another country or the United Nations having the capability to create a similar weapon, or even have access to those in U.S. possession. In 1945, a poll indicated that seventy-three percent of the American public wanted the bomb to remain a secret.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, Americans were strongly attached to the idea of their nation being a world superpower, with a goal of maintaining peace, and did not want to lose this power to other nations.

Although the atomic bomb initially brought an air of positivity, a sense of fear lurked beneath the veil of good faith. While citizens wanted to believe the bomb would only be used for just causes, they had seen and heard of its capabilities, and the thousands of innocent citizens affected by its overwhelming power. The physical effects of the bomb's radiation on Japan's civilian population opened American eyes to the potential danger. Written stories of birth defects, cancers, and other atrocities faced by those exposed to the bomb's radiation forced Americans to realize the humanity of those affected by attacks. Realizing that they, too, could face these physical deformities and stresses if a bomb were ever to drop on the United States brought a strong sense of

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<sup>28</sup> Alan Winkler, *Life Under a Cloud: American Anxiety About the Atom* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 62.

<sup>29</sup> Winkler, 45.

unease to American citizens. While they liked the sense of being in control and having the power of the bomb, they could not ignore the responsibility of using a weapon with such destructive potential. Additionally, the televising of the later hydrogen bomb explosion further contributed to this fear, making an immediate threat apparent. The idea of “species annihilation”<sup>30</sup> became realized as Americans pondered the possibility of being wiped out by nuclear weapons.

Americans had two major fears concerning the effects of nuclear weapons on civilian populations. The first was radiation, as it was unknown just how much humans could tolerate exposure to. They were initially quite eager to support U.S. tests of the nuclear weapons to see exactly what the effects of radiation could be. As more tests were conducted to discover answers to these questions, Americans closely followed the news for more findings.<sup>31</sup> The other major concern that developed and became a defining part of the nuclear fear in the 1950s was the fallout that occurred from the bombs. The idea of nuclear debris penetrating the atmosphere and interfering with daily life caused fallout to become known as the “silent killer.”<sup>32</sup> For instance, the existence of high strontium levels in milk brought to light a major fear of how nuclear war could affect children, and therefore America’s future. Family was of the utmost importance during the 1950s with the rise of the Baby Boom, which greatly influenced efforts to protect it. Focusing on the idealized American household of a working father and a stay-at-home mother, ensuring

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<sup>30</sup> Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003) 8.

<sup>31</sup> Winkler, 91.

<sup>32</sup> Winkler, 108.

that a family would be around for the mother to raise made nuclear weapons a major threat.<sup>33</sup>

These fears manifested a variety of responses to the potential of an all-out nuclear war. The civilian fear of fallout and the possible effects it could have on public health forced national defense to become closely intertwined with nuclear power, and few opposed building up an arsenal of weapons. The government put effort into several programs to inform citizens and create a sense of safety while the threat of war continued to loom. "Duck and Cover" campaigns provided information on how citizens could respond in the event of a nuclear attack, and were frequently taught to school children.<sup>34</sup> Informational pamphlets were also distributed, and the government regularly encouraged citizens to build up defenses of their own if possible. Moreover, "Those who could afford neuroses,"<sup>35</sup> would go so far as buying emergency shelters, however, not even these shelters could guarantee survival. In the Cold War's early years, as much as 76 percent of people interviewed thought another World War would be likely within the next five years.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the United States government was instrumental in contributing to the Cold War culture of fear as it encouraged citizens to prepare for the worst case scenarios. Its efforts to inform and prepare citizens only solidified the fear that total nuclear war could become a reality.

There were also several differing opinions on how to address the controversy of the bomb. Scientists were most wary of the bomb's capabilities, as they had designed it

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<sup>33</sup> Donna Alvah, "'I Am Too Young to Die': Children and the Cold War," *OAH Magazine of History* 24, no. 4 (2010): 25.

<sup>34</sup> Winkler, 115. This will be discussed in a later section.

<sup>35</sup> Winkler, 122.

<sup>36</sup> Tom W. Smith, "Trends: The Cuban Missile Crisis and U.S. Public Opinion," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (2003): 267, 277. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3521635>.

and therefore had more insight on the potential dangers. Therefore, they were also the strongest advocates of limiting nuclear power and control, and saw a need to contain the weapon.<sup>37</sup> Many scientists took it upon themselves to lobby against the creation of the hydrogen bomb, calling for tighter control over nuclear affairs, fearing that possession of such weapons would be dangerous for the United States.<sup>38</sup> An article published in *The Science Newsletter* in 1948 revealed a common sentiment of the scientific community to relinquish U.S. control of the bomb. The article advocates for removing the atomic bomb from military control, fearing the possibility of unwarranted use by ill-prepared military commanders acting on a whim which would lead to greater international conflict.<sup>39</sup> Niels Bohr, who had worked on the Manhattan Project to develop the bomb, also saw a need to cooperate with other nations such as the Soviet Union to ensure as much nuclear control as possible. Bohr's plea to use the bomb as a method only for peacekeeping during the war was ignored, as were those comments by many other scientists. After World War II, scientists lost much of their say on how nuclear weapons were to be used as staunch Cold Warriors took control in policymaking.

As it progressed, the threat of nuclear power would continue to cause national crises on several occasions. Money was a frequent concern but a seemingly necessary evil to ensure the U.S. could maintain a lead in nuclear power. The U.S. government found itself continually having to justify allocating more money to nuclear development, as it was seen as the only effective form of defense. Debates over the necessity of warning systems for a nuclear attack were also prominent, and as technology continued to

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<sup>37</sup> Winkler, 35.

<sup>38</sup> LaFeber, 183.

<sup>39</sup> "Control of Atomic Bomb," *The Science News-Letter* 54, no. 3 (1948): 36. doi:10.2307/3925153.

improve, the warning times for citizens to take cover greatly decreased as well. American faith in the bomb, although strong at first, wavered as fear replaced euphoria. Several nuclear scares would also further heighten American fears. Local populations lost the feeling of security due to nuclear incidents, despite the U.S.'s growing defensive arsenal. Additionally, later incidents such as the Cuban Missile Crisis under the Kennedy administration,<sup>40</sup> made Americans truly believe nuclear war would unfold, and ensured that fear was continually a defining part of Cold War culture throughout the many decades.

The Soviet Union was America's largest concern regarding the development of nuclear weapons. Even before such research began, United States politicians were wary of the Soviet Union's political intentions. President Truman, quickly after entering office, asserted a need to "Stand up to the Russians."<sup>41</sup> Although the United States was the first to successfully develop and detonate the atomic bomb, this did not ensure its supremacy.<sup>42</sup> The Soviet Union was also in the process of developing nuclear weapons, but their progress was well-hidden and even kept a secret, when Soviet scientists had met success- it was discovered by an outside source.<sup>43</sup> At this point, the U.S. had to accept it was no longer the dominant power. There was serious reluctance to do so at first, as many outright refused to believe the Soviet Union was capable of creating such technology. The U.S. saw the successful detonation as an accident or a fluke, a mistake that the Soviet

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<sup>40</sup> The Cuban Missile Crisis was considered to be America's closest encounter with nuclear war. A confrontation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union concerning the discovery of nuclear weapons in Cuba led to several days of negotiation, leaving Americans uncertain about the potential for nuclear conflict. Although resolved without going to war, the crisis created a resurgence of fear towards nuclear war which had been slowly decreasing. See: Smith, 277.

<sup>41</sup> LaFeber, 18.

<sup>42</sup> Winkler, 61.

<sup>43</sup> The initial detonation of the Soviet atomic bomb was not announced, rather, it was discovered by an Air Force plane. Winkler, 67.

Union would not be able to replicate more than once.<sup>44</sup> When it was clear the Soviet Union's technology was no accident with subsequent detonations, the U.S. found itself forced to address its new nuclear rival.

Policymakers looked to the development of more nuclear weapons in order to ensure the U.S. would maintain the upper hand. This began the nuclear arms race of the Cold War, in which American politicians felt compelled to gear up for a war the nation was unprepared to fight, for the sake of staying in control and maintaining a feeling of national security.<sup>45</sup> Thus, the development of the Hydrogen Bomb began in the U.S., which was expected to have even more destructive capabilities than the original atomic bomb. Another article from *The Science News-Letter* revealed that American policymakers anticipated the Soviet Union would also be developing a more powerful nuclear weapon like the H-Bomb.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, it was crucial that the U.S. stayed ahead in its technological advancements. The model of the H-Bomb intended to mimic the nuclear fusion which occurred on the sun,<sup>47</sup> meaning the U.S. would have a significantly powerful weapon which mimicked the energy of the sun if this creation was successful.<sup>48</sup> The development of NSC-68 in 1950 further demonstrated American policymakers' solution to this growing problem by advocating for a serious build-up of U.S. military and political power. The document includes suggestions to implement air warning systems and other defensive programs connected to the military, anticipating that the

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<sup>44</sup> Gregg Herken, "'A Most Deadly Illusion': The Atomic Secret and American Nuclear Weapons Policy, 1945-1950," *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 1 (1980): 52. doi:10.2307/3639304.

<sup>45</sup> Winkler, 60.

<sup>46</sup> "Hydrogen Bomb Question," *The Science News-Letter* 57, no. 5 (1950): 69. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25172559>.

<sup>47</sup> "Hydrogen Bomb Question," 69.

<sup>48</sup> The hydrogen bomb would be one thousand times more destructive than the original atomic bomb, its reach 100 times greater than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. See: Robert F. Bacher, "The Hydrogen Bomb: III," *Scientific American* 182, no. 5 (1950): 12. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24967451>.

Soviet Union would continue building up its atomic arsenal to attack the U.S.<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, maintaining an advantage over the Soviet Union and building up defenses were crucial to American foreign policy.

Another policy which the U.S. embraced was containment. In addition to advancing a domestic arsenal through increased military weaponry and defenses, U.S. policymakers searched for preventative solutions to the Soviet Union's military buildup. Ernest R. May analyzes the many documents produced by George F. Kennan, director of the State Department in 1948. Documents such as the "X" Article and NSC 20/4 asserted a need to prevent Soviet expansionist policies by limiting international influence, supported by an increased U.S. military to enforce this containment.<sup>50</sup> This policy would once again appear in NSC-68, advocating for the increase of U.S. foreign intervention as a way of preventing expanding Soviet influence. NSC-68 suggested policies which would build up other western nations, assist developing nations such as Korea, and prevent trade between Eastern and Western nations.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, promoting free-market policy in both developed and developing nations would prevent Soviet Communism from finding its way there first. Similarly, Eisenhower's "New Look" strategy enhanced the importance of containing other nations while building up U.S. power in a more cost-effective way.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> "NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security," in *American Cold War Strategy*, ed. Ernest R. May (Boston: Bedford Books, 1993), 55.

<sup>50</sup> Ernest R. May, *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1993) 7.

<sup>51</sup> "NSC 68" in May, 48.

<sup>52</sup> The Truman Administration had advocated for a serious increase in government spending for the purpose of building up military strength. Eisenhower's New Look strategy sought to continue this build-up of more nuclear weapons at a lower cost. This strategy revealed American policymakers' expectation that nuclear war was possible, and therefore preparation and proper defensive build-up was necessary. While Truman's spending reached a high of \$80 billion, with as much as \$50 billion allocated to military spending, Eisenhower lowered the budget his first year in office to about \$64 billion total by ending the Korean War. His strategy proposed simply producing more nuclear weapons as the best defensive strategy. See: Rosemary J. Foot, "Nuclear Coercion and the Ending of the Korean Conflict," *International Security* 13, no. 3 (1988): 92-5. doi:10.2307/2538737, John W. Sloan, "Eisenhower, Humphrey and Neustadt: A Note

The special attention the U.S. paid to peripheral nations such as Korea revealed the need to prevent the Soviet Union's reach from expanding, and this problem would certainly grow as other nations' new policies would indicate similar threats.

The establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, a new Communist regime, meant another reason for the U.S. to be nervous. For the first half of the twentieth century, the U.S. had an unrealistic idea of China, overemphasizing the foreign relations between these two countries.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, when the U.S. was unable to support Chinese Nationalists against the Chinese Communist Party<sup>54</sup> and Mao Zedong emerged victorious, this establishment of Chinese Communism destroyed international relations. The U.S. would no longer willingly support Chinese operations, seeing the successful Communist regime as a major "loss" to U.S. foreign relations and influence. Chinese Communism now meant another enemy in creating a free world based on the principles of democracy, and this threat would appear in the growing Korean conflict.

Chinese intervention in the Korean War would also significantly strain the relationship with the United States. The Korean War began on June 25, 1950 when approximately 75,000 North Korean soldiers crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel into South Korea. Korea had been divided at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel between U.S. and Soviet control at the end of World War II. The United States led U.N. forces in a bid to re-secure the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. On September 27, 1950, U.N. and U.S. forces crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and advanced to the

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on the Battle of the Budget for FY 1958," *The Western Political Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (1989): 693, doi:10.2307/448649, and Paul G. Pierpaoli, "Truman's Other War: The Battle for the American Homefront, 1950-1953," *OAH Magazine of History* 14, no. 3 (2000): 16. [www.jstor.org/stable/25163359](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25163359).

<sup>53</sup>Ellen Schrecker. *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994) 66.

<sup>54</sup> Schrecker, 66-7.

Yalu River at the Chinese border.<sup>55</sup> This brought the People's Republic of China into the War. This confrontation made the threat of Communism much more real, as China was making efforts to spread its influence throughout Asia alongside the Soviet Union. This presented the question of just how far these nations were willing to spread their ideas, sparking anxieties about the possibility that they would bring them to the U.S. Although Secretary of State Dean Acheson claimed China's interests in Korea<sup>56</sup> were not at risk, China was now wary of the United States' intentions, and in turn made the U.S. more uncertain towards it.<sup>57</sup> Many U.S. policymakers saw a necessity to become vigilant against the growing conflict and what it could mean for the spread of Communism, which seemed to be aggressively pervading the globe.

The Korean conflict presented the struggle of the U.S. to contain Communism abroad, while avoiding becoming too entangled in a possible nuclear conflict. The fears Americans had about revolutions were due to the commercial and political impacts it could have on their own nation.<sup>58</sup> Revolutions that threatened America's stability were a large concern, and given that Communism strongly opposed the Capitalist values which upheld American society, there was a need to shut down Communist revolution in the East.<sup>59</sup> Continued interference by the Communists into these revolutions indicated that

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<sup>55</sup> General MacArthur advanced U.S. troops across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel into Communist North Korea, wanting to strike down its Communist forces, and expecting that the People's Republic of China would not get involved despite previous warnings. PRC forces hiding in the mountains of the Yalu River indeed crossed this parallel as well, encircling American troops, who would barely escape. The PRC intervention ultimately resulted in a stalemate and armistice on July 27, 1953.

<sup>56</sup> China considered Korea to be within its sphere of influence, therefore making U.S. interference a major hindrance to its goals.

<sup>57</sup> LaFeber, 124.

<sup>58</sup> LaFeber, 157.

<sup>59</sup> Communist movements in nations such as Korea and Vietnam were threatening to U.S. visions of worldwide democracy. These national liberation movements indicated the people's desire for a Communist state, which contradicted U.S. ideology which advocated for democracy as the strongest form of government to represent the people. Such support of Communist regimes gave the Soviet government more legitimacy, therefore, U.S. involvement often centered on the need to strike down such movements by

such movements were an immediate threat on a global level, and therefore needed to be contained.<sup>60</sup> If too little action was taken, the future of China's expansion of Communism would be up in the air, and the threat of it reaching the U.S. loomed ahead. This raised the concern of how to fight these ideological conflicts. The conventional warfare that took place in Korea and ended in a stalemate indicated the risk of too much involvement.<sup>61</sup> However, the need to contain Communist revolutions preventing their global success was significant to U.S. foreign policy.

### *Children and Family Values*

The nationwide growth of a young population known as the Baby Boom during the 1950s led to significant thought on how to address expanding families. The growing number of children in families was not necessarily the result of peace brought by World War II's conclusion, but rather a response to the fears it presented for the future.<sup>62</sup> Family was a core value emphasized following World War II's end as the flourishing economy welcomed the possibility of more children. Houses were more easily purchased, building up middle-class suburbs where the American family could thrive, and "For many Americans, their ability to have a barbeque in the backyard surrounded by friends,

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supporting the opposition to Communist regimes as a method of hindering Soviet global influence. Hunt also asserts the American attitude towards Asian nations which regarded them as "children" needing guidance, unable to stand on their own. See: Harold D. Gallagher, "Combat Support in Wars of National Liberation," *Naval War College Review* 25, no. 1 (1972): 3-4. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44641350> and Hunt, 197.

<sup>60</sup> Hunt, 214.

<sup>61</sup> LaFeber, 158.

<sup>62</sup> Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008) 130.

neighbors, and kids proved they were living the American dream.”<sup>63</sup> Therefore, the concept of community developed significantly during the Cold War era, redefining what was truly “American” and placed family at its center. Producing children meant an opportunity to raise them the American way to preserve their nation’s honor and maintaining such values as community. Therefore, families began having children in larger numbers to continue this legacy. Raising children was embraced as a way to reach fulfillment, while refusal to have children was seen as choosing a selfish lifestyle.<sup>64</sup> Because there were more children around, fiercely protecting them from outside influence and maintaining American ideology became far more important.

As mentioned before, the Soviet Union was seen as the primary threat to the United States during the early Cold War. With a prominent focus on the protection of the nation’s youth and future, propaganda therefore shifted against the Soviet Union through the use of children as well. Nuclear war significantly threatened to tear apart the communities that were forming. As a result, the protection of the family served as an excellent motive for Cold Warriors to build up military strength.<sup>65</sup> The nation now had many more children to protect, who represented the future, therefore it was necessary to reflect this through increased power. Letting the Soviet Union build up a stronger arsenal of nuclear weapons meant jeopardizing the future of the nation’s youth, who would be susceptible to attacks.

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<sup>63</sup> Mary Brennan, *Wives, Mothers, and the Red Menace: Conservative Women and the Crusade against Communism* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2008). Accessed June 11, 2019. ProQuest Ebook Central, 24.

<sup>64</sup> May, 132.

<sup>65</sup> This served as another justification for policies such as containment and Eisenhower’s “New Look”- not only was increased military and political power necessary to protecting the democracy of the free world, but also the domestic sphere to preserve family values supported by democracy. See: Margaret Peacock, *Innocent Weapons* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 23.

Soviet children were frequently compared to American children as propaganda to encourage nuclear buildup, presenting American children as superior, just like every other aspect of the U.S. in comparison to the Soviet Union. This narrative needed an “other” child to present the nation’s child in a better light, and both the United States and the Soviet Union utilized these tactics.<sup>66</sup> The U.S. painted Soviet children to be victims of their state. U.S. attitudes indicated that while the children themselves were good by nature, the Communist government corrupted them to become robots targeted by totalitarianism.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, the issue was not the children, but the form of government itself which left them inferior to the American children. Families could be comforted by the idea that their children had significantly more freedom and rights under the American democracy, making the U.S. the superior nation.

Family in the Soviet Union was virtually non-existent. Following World War II, Soviet children faced serious hardships relating to family as their mothers and fathers were torn from them to serve the state.<sup>68</sup> Although Soviet propaganda placed this blame on the German invasion during the war,<sup>69</sup> the U.S. saw the crumbling Soviet family as a result of the lasting Communist dictatorship, not the consequence of a war-ridden nation. Soviet children represented the failed family, desolate and torn apart by the nation’s policies, which cared little for them.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, children in the U.S. were depicted as much safer, protected by the values of family which were strongly enforced.

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<sup>66</sup> Peacock, 41.

<sup>67</sup> Peacock, 52.

<sup>68</sup> Juliane Fürst, "Between Salvation and Liquidation: Homeless and Vagrant Children and the Reconstruction of Soviet Society," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 86, no. 2 (2008): 236. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25479198>.

<sup>69</sup> Fürst, 237.

<sup>70</sup> Peacock, 53.

Yet the image of a child in danger still promoted the Cold War cause, indicating that America's children were at great risk and needed to be protected. Benjamin Spock, a popular advocate of children's needs, addressed the growing anxiety felt by American children as the Cold War progressed. He maintained that as many as fifty percent of children feared the reality of nuclear war, which would bring the possibility of losing their families to fallout or other tragedies.<sup>71</sup> The massive contradiction existed in which American children, while depicted as far better off than Soviet children, were still viewed as being in danger.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, American children were still necessary to advocate for Cold War buildup, creating a need to continually present the Soviet Union as a threat. Spock also asserted the necessity to properly inform children of the Soviet Union and PRC's aggressive nature, as depicting Communists as having the upper hand would significantly hinder youth confidence in the future.<sup>73</sup> Ensuring that children would continue to have their democratic rights protected from the evils of Communism made the increase of military power necessary. Therefore, while the United States demonstrated its commitment to protecting its children, it presented the Soviet Union as willingly exploiting its youth for selfish purposes.

The fear of Communism during the Cold War was significantly reflected through the changes in schooling which took place. Public education itself became a site of anti-Communist propaganda, curriculums laced with such ideals. Public schooling traditionally faced constant scrutiny as to what the appropriate methods of education

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<sup>71</sup> Benjamin Spock, "The Cold War and Children," *The Journal of Nursery Education* 19, no. 2 (1964): 104. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42717133>.

<sup>72</sup> Peacock, 79.

<sup>73</sup> Spock, 104.

were, facing debates on topics ranging from integration to funding.<sup>74</sup> Many of these schooling topics were seen as breaching the line of socialism, naturally causing them to come to the forefront with these fears, once again being amplified by the Cold War. As a result, influential organizations used many propaganda campaigns advocating against public education. For instance, Allen Zoll's National Council for American Education distributed pamphlets claiming public education had Communism as its "Number one objective,"<sup>75</sup> demonstrating the clear mistrust towards government control over public thought. Zoll took great advantage of the unease stirring in the general public over the Soviet Union to promote his staunch anti-Communist ideals.

The House Un-American Committee, which would play a major role in the film scrutiny of the late 1940s and early 1950s, also found its way into schools with chairman Harold Velde in 1952. Alongside U.S. senator and staunch anticommunist Joseph McCarthy, Velde played a role in the dismissal of about one hundred, if not more, teachers who had refused to comply in the hearings and were therefore thought to be Communists.<sup>76</sup> The solution to such problems was to implement loyalty pledges to the state, which teachers were most commonly expected to take.<sup>77</sup> Failure to testify before HUAC or take such pledges resulted in job loss for several hundred teachers suspected of holding Communist beliefs.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, the reinforcement of American patriotism was vital to ensuring children were socialized correctly.

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<sup>74</sup> Stuart J. Foster, "Red Alert!: The National Education Association Confronts the "Red Scare" in American Public Schools, 1947-1954," *Education and Culture* 14, no. 2 (1997): 1.

<sup>75</sup> Foster, "Red Alert!" 2.

<sup>76</sup> Foster, "Red Alert!" 3.

<sup>77</sup> Schrecker, 72.

<sup>78</sup> Foster, "Red Alert!" 4, and Schrecker, 72-3.

Therefore, protecting children from being potentially infected with Communist ideologies was another element of Cold War hysteria, which not only cost several famous screenwriters their careers, but also everyday American citizens such as teachers. With such scrutiny over who was teaching and what, many found themselves greatly refining curriculums and avoiding controversial subjects. Teachers were particularly at risk when it came to job loss, as they were seen to hold relatively low social status and the majority had no tenure, therefore to even consider teaching Communist ideology would threaten their livelihood.<sup>79</sup> Progressive education was seen by many Cold War advocates as a product of Communism, and therefore took the blame for any perceived Communist infiltration. As a result, the public was highly in-tune to what was unfolding in the school districts, fearful of what rhetoric their children were susceptible to, whether or not this threat actually existed.<sup>80</sup>

Raising children the “right” way became a significant part of creating an ideal American family grounded in democratic ideals. Having both parents who were actively involved in raising their children, without being overbearing or going against traditional gender norms, ensured that children would become respectable members of society rather than delinquents.<sup>81</sup> Both fatherhood and motherhood were equally important to raise a child, reinforcing the idea of a traditional marriage between a man and a woman. Fatherhood was associated with masculinity, and was essential to balancing out the mother’s influence while raising her children.<sup>82</sup> Although the mother was certainly

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<sup>79</sup> Stuart J. Foster, "Chapter II: The Power and Ubiquity of the Red Scare in American Post-War Culture," *Counterpoints* 87 (2000): 19.

<sup>80</sup> Foster, "Chapter II," 20.

<sup>81</sup> Peacock, 86.

<sup>82</sup> May, 139.

designated to manage the domestic sphere, too much mothering with no father would result in excessive femininity, which had dangerous connotations.<sup>83</sup> Gender roles were enforced through organizations such as the Boy Scouts, where young men were taught the values of a “masculine” capitalist system which kept order where the effeminate Communist system could not.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, patriarchal notions were continually enforced in the United States, and tied to the success of democracy. Men, who were seen as heads of the family, were therefore leaders of a successful Capitalist nation which actively led the crusade against Communism. Therefore, these gender roles were enforced to raise the youth to actively participate in waging the Cold War.

Just as enforcing masculinity was a significant part of maintaining order in the U.S., women also had a role to play in the ideal family that developed. Women who strongly advocated against Communism often channeled their beliefs through efforts that would most significantly affect their families and home lives. Joining community organizations such as school and library boards allowed mothers to have input towards what went on in their children’s lives.<sup>85</sup> Therefore, anticommunist sentiments from Cold War mothers would influence the ideas children were exposed to in school, and as a result develop them into the active Cold Warriors society hoped they would be. The attitude towards children faced significant changes as the 1950s progressed. Previously seen as helpless and in danger, children instead were presented as having the power to stop Communism themselves. Teaching children the importance of democracy and

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<sup>83</sup> Excessive femininity was associated with homosexuality, which in turn meant a lack of God. Godlessness was of course, relative to Communism, which was also often portrayed as “feminine” for these reasons. Therefore, it was imperative that the man was not excluded from the domestic sphere entirely to prevent children from adopting too much femininity, and therefore, choosing anti-democratic lifestyles.

<sup>84</sup> Peacock, 106.

<sup>85</sup> Brennan, 72.

capitalist ideals as a way to ensure American superiority simultaneously taught them to discourage Communism and drive it out of society.<sup>86</sup>

The threat of Communist takeover in the United States was a strong argument from female activists looking to ward it off. Women's anticommunist organizations frequently preached the idea that if nothing was done to address Communism in the U.S., it would become "too late," as the U.S. lost its prized values such as freedom and democracy to the Red Menace.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, women relied on American principles strongly to support their fight to maintain their families. Women saw their duties as the "homemaker," responsible for raising their children, as a reason for them to be active in the Cold War and protecting the nation's core values. Political activism became synonymous with housework for women's anticommunist groups, citing a necessity to "keep things clean."<sup>88</sup> Therefore, women's traditional duties of housework were glorified in order to promote the idea of "sweeping" Communism out of the nation in order to protect families. As leaders of the home, it simply made sense that women should be involved in shaping an environment which encompassed American traditional values and discouraged the evils of Communism in order to create the best lives for their children.

### Expanding Christian Influence

Another core value of America which strongly conflicted with Communism was the significance of God in society. Christianity appeared as a means to ward off

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<sup>86</sup> Peacock, 106.

<sup>87</sup> Brennan, 75.

<sup>88</sup> Brennan, 76.

Communism as early as 1934.<sup>89</sup> Devout Catholics took initiative to form coalitions against the Communist activity taking place in America at the time. This theme of Christian vigilance would continue throughout the early Cold War. Its presence in the HUAC trials, and later McCarthyism, in which hundreds more were accused of Communist activity, demonstrated the link between Christian vigilance against Communism in the United States.<sup>90</sup> Senator Joseph McCarthy saw an absence of God as a lack of Americanism, and therefore a connection of Communism must have existed. Although his methods were ridiculed by the mid-1950s, they demonstrated the significance of purging potential Communists in the name of God and protecting this core American value. McCarthy felt that failure to remove the Communist threat in America would do the “Godly nation”<sup>91</sup> an injustice, putting its values at risk.

Christianity in particular has been emphasized in American culture, however in the 1950s it was seen as central to the American family and its values. An early 1951 piece asserted that Christianity was the solution to combatting Communism in Asia, “By substituting faith for knowledge or deeming it higher than healthy skepticism, the power to reason and thus forge a rational weapon against Communism is being denied by Christianity not only to the people of the West but also to those of the East.”<sup>92</sup> Christianity had the ability to keep Communism out of the United States, placing faith in God above all other thought. Not only that, the use of Christianity in Asian nations was a

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<sup>89</sup> Robert L. Frank, "Prelude to Cold War: American Catholics and Communism," *Journal of Church and State* 34, no. 1 (1992): 39.

<sup>90</sup> Jason W. Stevens. *God-Fearing and Free: A Spiritual History of America's Cold War*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010) 117. ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>91</sup> Stevens, 117.

<sup>92</sup> Kurt F. Leidecker, "The Natural Antidote to Communism in Asia," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors (1915-1955)* 37, no. 4 (1951): 705.

way to combat the spreading Communist revolutions as well. Christianity was the core value which could supposedly save the world from the Communist menace.

The mentality of Christianity as a saving grace to Asian nations was promoted by other prominent figures, particularly Thomas Dooley. A doctor completing humanitarian work in Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam and Laos, Dooley became a champion of creating democracy in the name of Christianity. His stories would appear frequently in *Reader's Digest*, the most popular magazine publication worldwide at the height of the 1950s.<sup>93</sup> The frequent exposure of Dooley's work in Southeast Asia, not just within the U.S., but on a global scale, glorified Christianity as the solution to the emerging Communist crisis. In his book *Deliver Us From Evil*, Dooley recounts his many experiences with Communists in Southeast Asia and their connection to God. He discusses watching a "re-education" process performed by Communist forces, drawing a conclusion that those who were spiritually enlightened, such as priests, were the biggest targets of Communists.<sup>94</sup> This would reinforce the belief that Communism, as a Godless institution, directly sought to silence Christianity. However, Dooley then reinforces his belief that "It is difficult to take men whose lives had been dedicated to belief in God and straighten them out... most of them proved unconquerable."<sup>95</sup> While Dooley asserts Communism as a major threat to Christian faith, he reinforces the idea that complete devotion to God would overcome any attempts by Communists to erase believers' faith, encouraging Americans to keep their faith. Although Dooley's work would later be

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<sup>93</sup> Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 129.

<sup>94</sup> Thomas A. Dooley, *Deliver Us From Evil* in *Dr. Tom Dooley's Three Great Books* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1956) 100-1.

<sup>95</sup> Dooley, 101-2.

forgotten as the Vietnam conflict intensified, his success during the earlier years of the Cold War reflects the resurgence of Christianity, particularly Catholicism, as an antidote to the growing Communist problem in Asia the U.S. sought to address.<sup>96</sup>

Dooley was one example of several Catholic figures who promoted their faith as a solution to a growing problem of Communism's godlessness. Fulton Sheen, a well-known bishop of the Catholic church, appeared in many radio and television programs to promote Catholic ideals. He also published several works discussing religious ideology. In *Lift Up Your Heart*, Sheen directly references what he considers to be the evils of Communism as a way to instead advocate for Christianity. He discusses the importance of fear in Christian faith, however makes a specific distinction that it does not mirror the fear held towards a Communist dictatorship, but rather reflects a desire to commit to God by acting only in a way that would honor God's will.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, Sheen's belief revealed that Communism instilled fear which forced its subjects to do as it said, while Christianity inspired its followers to act in a just way out of their own will and reverence to their God. In his television series *Life is Worth Living*, he frequently referenced Communism and compared it to Christianity. In one episode, "Communism and the Church," Sheen immediately makes a comparison, asserting Communism as an authoritarian regime which rested on fear and destroyed freedom of thought, qualities which were conversely embraced and protected by the Church.<sup>98</sup> Sheen's role as a media

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<sup>96</sup> The Vietnam conflict in the 1960s led to a declining faith in God which was reflected in the downturn of Catholic church attendance following a previous surge in the 1950s. While the early days of the Cold War brought promise of defeating Communism through renewed faith, the lack of progress by the 1960s left many to believe God was no longer there to remedy conflict in Southeast Asia. See: Michael Hout and Andrew M. Greeley, "The Center Doesn't Hold: Church Attendance in the United States, 1940-1984," *American Sociological Review* 52, no. 3 (1987): 326. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2095353>, and Jacobs, 140-1.

<sup>97</sup> Fulton J. Sheen, *Lift Up Your Heart*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950), 250-1.

<sup>98</sup> *Life is Worth Living*, episode 7, "Communism and the Church," presented by Fulton J. Sheen,

personality allowed him to promote Christianity as the answer to the problems created by Communist regimes.

Communism's godless nature was a major threat to the predominantly Christian America of the 1950s. The early days of the Cold War led to a resurgence of church attendance, about 65% of the population belonging to a Christian denomination.<sup>99</sup> Other data indicates that church attendance hit as high as seventy-two percent weekly, its highest percentage between 1950-1960, coinciding with the early days of the Cold War.<sup>100</sup> However, it is crucial to make the distinction that this increase in attendance occurred primarily in Catholic churches. While Protestant weekly church attendance consistently remained within thirty-six to thirty-nine percent within the same time period, Catholic attendance was overall higher and faced steeper increases.<sup>101</sup> This reinforces the primarily Catholic cause to advocate for Christianity as the antidote to Communism, as faith was significantly more observed in Catholic churches than other religious sectors.<sup>102</sup> Figures such as Dooley and Sheen, who were frequently creating commentary about the Communist threat, often belonged specifically to Catholic denominations.

The perception of Communism's inhumanity, which stripped away human freedom and treated people as nothing more than parts of a machine, challenged God's divine order.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, the freedoms and rights given by God were synonymous with

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aired 1952-1957, on DuMont and ABC, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eczvanhRegw>, 0:16-0:35.

<sup>99</sup> Leilah Danielson, "'It Is a Day of Judgment': The Peacemakers, Religion, and Radicalism in Cold War America," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 18, no. 2 (2008): 215. doi:10.1525/rac.2008.18.2.215.

<sup>100</sup> Hout and Greely, 326.

<sup>101</sup> Hout and Greely, 326.

<sup>102</sup> Catholics such as Tom Dooley and Fulton Sheen saw their duty as Catholics to spread the word of God as a method to eradicate Communism. The large percentage of church membership indicates that Catholic families held similar beliefs and brought their children to church to continue passing along these ideas.

<sup>103</sup> Frank, 47.

those provided by a democracy, making Communism a significant threat by discouraging God. In other words, Christianity was imperative to maintaining a democracy,<sup>104</sup> and allowing Communism to spread would eliminate Christianity and its institutions to uphold American society. Additionally, the close ties between anticommunism and Christianity, Catholicism in particular, meant that a stronger Cold Warrior was a more faithful Christian.<sup>105</sup> Thus, Christianity was vital in waging the war against Communism to protect American ideals and for citizens to present themselves as the best Christians they could be.

Overall, these core American values would become emphasized in U.S. popular media during the Cold War. The glorification of family, heroes, religion, and more would be reflected through various characters and themes common in emerging popular media such as movies, television, and even books. However, before this rising sense of Americanism could appear in these industries, producers of media would once again come under fire of the FBI. Film, along with the newly popular invention of Television, found itself being closely monitored and censored due to perceived Communist ideas thought to threaten American ideals. Although these fears had transformed from those of the original Red Scare, they represented the culture of anti-Communism that characterized America in the Cold War.

### *The Rebirth of Film Scrutiny and the New Threat of Television*

This second Red Scare could once again be seen in the film industry as censorship and scrutiny of producers increased. Several well-known filmmakers and actors were

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<sup>104</sup> Frank, 47.

<sup>105</sup> Frank, 50.

forced into testimony following accusations of being Communist affiliates and for producing movies with hidden Communist propaganda. Hollywood became the central battleground in the domestic Cold War as the FBI and the House Un-American Activities Committee came together for these hearings.<sup>106</sup> J. Edgar Hoover in particular was deeply paranoid about Communism, which was heavily projected into these hearings, as “Hoover’s fears were America’s fears.”<sup>107</sup> Hoover felt that despite the small size of the Communist party, the ability to go so far as to overthrow the U.S. government was a real danger. In his testimony before HUAC, he asserts the consistent presence of the Communist party dating back to the 1920s, stating that the values remained present despite name changes and appearances.<sup>108</sup> Therefore, no matter what form Communism took, Hoover saw it as a consistent threat. Through the hearings of other subjects, removing those thought to have Communist ideologies was the easiest approach. The FBI could not monitor scripts themselves nor find significant evidence in film for Communist ideology.<sup>109</sup> Therefore, removal of suspected Communists through these hearings was the most practical way for the FBI and HUAC to remove the perceived danger.

Some of those who were brought under scrutiny of the FBI were much more sympathetic and willing to cooperate during the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings. Those who worked with the FBI were often staunch Cold Warriors themselves, making attempts to pull Communists out of Hollywood through their own organizations. One particular ally of the FBI during these hearings was Ronald Reagan, at

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<sup>106</sup> Sbardellati, 5.

<sup>107</sup> Sbardellati, 12.

<sup>108</sup> J. Edgar Hoover, testimony, House Committee on Un-American Activities, *Hearings on H.R. 1884 and H.R. 2122*, 80<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 26 March 1947 in Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994) 114.

<sup>109</sup> Sbardellati, 152.

the time a quite famous actor who would later become president in the 1980s. The Cold War pushed Reagan from the left into a strong advocate against Communism.<sup>110</sup> During his testimony, Reagan's commitment to keeping Communists out of the film industry was demonstrated through many of his responses to the questions asked. Throughout the hearing, he maintained that there was certainly a small group of Communists within Hollywood (although did not mention any names), and made the point that he despised Communist rhetoric.<sup>111</sup> Instead, he drew attention to focusing on ways to reinforce democracy, stating he would "Hesitate to see any party outlawed based on ideology."<sup>112</sup> Therefore, while Reagan made his distaste for Communism clear, he also expressed his commitments to democracy, making efforts to assist the FBI while neglecting to expose any potential Communists he may have known.

Ayn Rand, a Russian-American writer, was another instance of a "friendly" witness during the HUAC hearings. Rand made clear she had cut ties with her former home, the Soviet Union, stating that she had been given permission to leave in 1926, and had never gone back. Unlike Reagan, Rand mentioned specific films and names that she believed to be sympathetic to Communist ideologies. One such example she mentions is the 1944 film *Song of Russia*, which she believes to be Communist propaganda, although potentially unintentional. She argues that the film presents the Soviet Union in an unrealistic light, as a much happier place than it truly was. Rand maintained that the U.S. should not deceive its citizens of the reality of the Soviet Union.<sup>113</sup> Therefore, Rand was

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<sup>110</sup> Sbardellati, 111.

<sup>111</sup> Eric Bentley, *Thirty Years of Treason: Excerpts from Hearings Before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, 1938-1968* (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), 147.

<sup>112</sup> Bentley, 146.

<sup>113</sup> Bentley, 116.

an example of a more aggressive anti-Communist, arguing that propaganda was commonly used by the Communist party to paint itself in a better light.

Not all who testified in front of the HUAC were compliant. Instead, some refused to testify at all, insisting that their First Amendment right protected their words and actions in the film industry. These ten notable figures became known as the “Hollywood Ten” after they were imprisoned for failure to testify in front of Congress. Those part of the Hollywood Ten found their work blacklisted, therefore preventing the U.S. public from accessing any of their films. Such blacklisting often meant the end of a producer’s career as his name faded from memory. In the *Waldorf Statement* of 1947, the actions of the Hollywood Ten were condemned, claiming their defiance was well within their legal rights, however, it greatly hindered the progress of seeking out Communism within the film industry.<sup>114</sup> While invoking one’s Constitutional rights was permitted, there was a clear stigma around doing so, as it was perceived as a hindrance to the progress of removing Communism. Although those part of the Hollywood Ten such as John Howard Lawson would question the ability for HUAC to ask personal questions relating to political ideology,<sup>115</sup> the lack of involvement by federal courts to protect unfriendly witnesses before HUAC<sup>116</sup> demonstrated the bias within American government institutions towards those charged with Communist beliefs.

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<sup>114</sup> *The Waldorf Statement*, 3 Dec. 1947 in Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994) 215.

<sup>115</sup> John Howard Lawson, testimony, House Committee on Un-American Activities, *Hearings Regarding Communist Infiltration of the Hollywood Motion Picture Industry*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 27, 28, 30 Oct. 1947 in Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents*. (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994) 204.

<sup>116</sup> The Supreme Court ultimately failed to involve itself in issues of firings over political ideologies. Much of the damage caused by these firings would be irreversible, especially concerning the refusal of federal judges to acknowledge the blacklist until later years of the Cold War. See: Schrecker, 79.

The rising popularity of television during this era of McCarthyism subjected it to almost immediate scrutiny. With Hollywood under fire for its alleged Communist ties, Television instead became the center of attention during the early 1950s. However, it too was prone to suspicion. The presence of a “Witchhunt atmosphere”<sup>117</sup> existed around television, concerning who and what was okay to watch on TV. Certain stations became titled “Red Channels” which were thought to be Communist-run.<sup>118</sup> These Red Channel listings often consisted of misinformation, as a result affecting those both within and outside any Communist organizations.<sup>119</sup> Therefore, a formalized method of censorship took place in which the public was instructed which channels were deemed “acceptable” to watch. Any channels that held unconventional ideas, or ones that challenged the norms of American society, were assumed to be Communist-run, and therefore blacklisted, whether or not these claims were true.

In television, the messages of the programming were less important than who was involved. The process for blacklisting television personalities was quickly refined, leaving those blacklisted unsure of how they ended up on the list or how to get off.<sup>120</sup> The procedure was also done quietly, behind-the-scenes, to keep as little attention as possible on those blacklisted. Like cinema, the “witch hunt” deeply affected individuals presumed to be Communist, despite their actual beliefs and had the ability to shatter careers. There was a clear distinction between what was appropriate and inappropriate to be broadcast on television. Parents often did not concern themselves with what their children watched, as it seemed they had faith that the programs broadcasted would have more positive

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<sup>117</sup> Doherty, 3.

<sup>118</sup> Doherty, 24.

<sup>119</sup> Schrecker, 218.

<sup>120</sup> Doherty, 36.

effects than negative consequences.<sup>121</sup> It was seen as a family medium,<sup>122</sup> therefore, individuals trusted broadcasters to deliver appropriate content based on the notion that it was family-oriented. This left broadcasters to determine what was appropriate and what could be seen as possible subversion. The television industry's careful attention to presenting specific programming resulted in serious scrutiny of what would be aired beforehand and was demonstrated through policies such as Red Channels.

The involvement of politicians in Television also heightened Red Scare politics and the presence of anti-Communist rhetoric. The introduction of live television was much more attractive to the general public, the ability to see something as it was happening. Political hearings and debate became a popular American pastime to watch. The televising of Senator Joseph McCarthy was one such example of the medium's ability to make or break careers. McCarthyism became "A household word"<sup>123</sup> following the initial interrogations led by McCarthy of hundreds suspected participants in Communist activity. The televising of McCarthy's political endeavors created public opinion which was now critical towards his actions, despite past American support. Therefore, the search for Communists within society did not go without criticism. The televising of political interactions presented the opportunity for the public to see through the acts of many notable politicians.<sup>124</sup> Although there was a limit, for even off the screen, being critical of McCarthy's methods was seen as dangerous. Many Democrats chose not to speak out, fearing they would be seen as Communist sympathizers.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Vincent M. Rue, "Television and the Family: The Question of Control," *The Family Coordinator* 23, no. 1 (1974): 76. doi:10.2307/582528.

<sup>122</sup> Doherty, 4.

<sup>123</sup> May, 9.

<sup>124</sup> Doherty, 211-12.

<sup>125</sup> An overall agreement between both Democrats and Republicans to remove the dangers of Communism was known as the Cold War consensus. The space to express any disagreement with U.S. tactics to expose

However, instances such as McCarthyism revealed that unbridled accusations of Communism led to hysteria beyond reasonable control. Despite this, more refined methods of searching for Communists and producing anti-Communist rhetoric successfully made it past the constant public scrutiny.

While many film and television figures were ostracized for their ideas and perceived threats to the stability of American society, many more emerged during this time which characterized the ideal way of life. Producers such as Disney strongly supported the Cold War and presented anticommunist ideas in their work, while reinforcing American ones. Aimed primarily at families and children, they were significant examples of the cause to socialize children for American society.

Additionally, actors such as John Wayne represented the ideals and heroism championed in American culture. These are few of the many examples of how Communist fears shaped a media culture which felt the need to influence children with American Cold War ideals.

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Communism considerably shrank as a result of punishing unfriendly witnesses such as the Hollywood Ten for their refusal to cooperate. Although both liberal and conservative attitudes advocated to remove Communist influence from American politics and culture, liberal attitudes were significantly less aggressive, sometimes leading them to be seen as “soft.” See: Foster, “Chapter II,” 14, and Schrecker, 61 and 235.

Part II

*Disney and Cold War Commentary*

Popular media became a notable source of propaganda for advocating both against Communist ideals and for democracy, often keeping children in mind. Walt Disney's media was notorious for promoting traditional American values as a form of fighting Communism. Walt Disney was closely tied to the United States government during World War II and would continue to exercise his influence during the Cold War years. The U.S. Treasury willingly used Disney animation during the 1940s to exercise greater social control over public thought.<sup>126</sup> Disney is a strong example of the government's attempts to promote democratic ideas, which would later be a response to the threat of Communism.

Walt Disney was also actively involved in the HUAC hearings which brought many film producers under scrutiny. As a friendly witness, Disney served a crucial figure who aided seeking out Communism.<sup>127</sup> His participation in the Motion Picture Alliance revealed his commitment to keeping Communism out of Hollywood while preserving American values. Disney had close ties with J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI and saw his filmmaking as a method of promoting Americanism.<sup>128</sup> As a result, many of these ideals could be seen in the vast array of films and television programs he produced. Disney frequently monopolized the idea of childhood innocence as a way to appeal to the masses and promote certain ideas. Not only did innocence represent the imaginative nature of childhood, it was also vital to promoting conservative ideas dedicated to protecting such

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<sup>126</sup>Eric Smoodin, *Animating Culture: Hollywood Cartoons from the Sound Era* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 137.

<sup>127</sup> Smoodin, 160.

<sup>128</sup> Smoodin, 162.

innocence.<sup>129</sup> Therefore, much of Disney's media contained ideas which hinted at increased defense to protect this childhood innocence.

Walt Disney strongly advocated nuclear development and the continued production of the atomic bomb, making him an ideal candidate to work with the U.S. government for propaganda purposes. *Victory Through Air Power* and "Our Friend the Atom" are among the educational materials Disney produced in favor of U.S. militarization, meticulously laced with pro-democratic and anti-"other" ideas. Disney advocated in various ways for frequent military expansion during both World War II and the Cold War following it, remarking on his ability of "Convincing every school child that atomic energy was central...to preparing them for a future that would be dominated by the United States."<sup>130</sup> Therefore, not only did Walt Disney advocate for increased consumer spending,<sup>131</sup> he spoke in favor of increased military expansion as well in order to keep the ideas of democracy enforced through U.S. firepower.

Although produced during the midst of World War II in 1942, Walt Disney's *Victory Through Air Power* reveals the emergence of his intense support for increased American militarism. Based on Major Alexander Seversky's book, the film strongly endorses his advocacy for increased air power. The film begins with a tribute to General Billy Mitchell, a veteran of World War I, who had been a strong advocate for increasing air power. Mitchell is referred to as one of the "Men of vision and courage, who opened

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<sup>129</sup> Henry A. Giroux and Grace Pollock, *The Mouse that Roared: Disney and the End of Innocence* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010) 34. ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>130</sup> Giroux and Pollock, 139.

<sup>131</sup> Disney strongly believed in the consumer culture as a great example of American democracy, and utilized such ideology to his advantage when promoting his work, thus creating a culture of materialism rather than independent thought. See: Giroux and Pollock, 52.

our minds and showed us the way out of confusion.”<sup>132</sup> Courage and a commitment to fighting for one’s country, protecting the values of democracy, is a recurring heroic theme which is continually idealized and celebrated throughout the duration of the Cold War. This image of heroism is again revisited at the film’s conclusion. An eagle, symbolic of freedom in the United States, is seen fighting off the enemy. The enemy is depicted as a dark, looming figure, an octopus, and at the end, is killed by the eagle, which then sits atop the flagpole where the American flag flies.<sup>133</sup> The presentation of such imagery is vital to the reception of the film, as it removes the often horrific reality of fighting a war,<sup>134</sup> instead emphasizing the overall ideology of democracy’s triumph for freedom. Therefore, symbolism frequently appeared in this film to promote American ideals long before the start of the Cold War, creating a connection between the events of World War II and how they transformed into the Cold War at the end.

The film’s primary goal is to convince the audience of the United States’ need to greatly increase its military power, particularly air power. A recurring theme throughout is the idea of staying ahead and in control of the battlefield. It makes a point that America must destroy all other enemy nations before it is destroyed, advocating for a need to obtain undisputed control of the sky.<sup>135</sup> The film advocates for the buildup of airpower over land and sea power, delegating those responsibilities to other nations such as Britain and France. Instead, it urges for a need to build up a massive fleet of fighter planes, which are frequently glorified as part of the film’s imagery, as having control of the air,

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<sup>132</sup> Walt Disney, *Victory Through Air Power*, dir. By James Algar, Clyde Geromini, Jack Kinney, and H.C. Potter (1943: United Artists, 1943), Film, 1:26.

<sup>133</sup> *Victory Through Air Power*, 1:04:00.

<sup>134</sup> J.P. Telotte, "Animating Space: Disney, Science, and Empowerment," *Science Fiction Studies* 35, no. 1 (2008): 51. [www.jstor.org/stable/25475105](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25475105).

<sup>135</sup> *Victory Through Air Power*. This coincides with ideas discussed by Gaddis, the importance of retaining the U.S. empire.

according to Disney, meant having the upper hand entirely. Therefore, focusing resources to maintain dominance in the skies meant the United States holding superiority over other nations. According to Major Seversky, who narrates portions of the movie, there would “Not be a single spot on the face of the Earth immune from air attacks.”<sup>136</sup> Although the atomic bomb had not yet been dropped, this message would resonate more strongly with Americans following its success, due to the climate of fear which emerged. Therefore, the risk was universal to the entirety of the U.S. population. Disney advocated for the buildup of an air force not only for the nation to keep the upper hand, but also because the fate of citizens rested on military protection. Leaving space for enemy attacks meant room for an attack on the domestic sphere, threatening the lives of families and children.

The film argues that several things must be done to ensure the United States maintains the upper hand. First, an arsenal of weapons would be needed in order to build up the U.S. army and air force in order to smother enemy forces. These supplies, the film argues, would need to be continually produced and delivered to allies, as this was the only way to ensure victory.<sup>137</sup> Therefore, this film advocates for increased military spending in the name of defending democracy. Additionally, it campaigns for the production of long-range air bombers, arguing that they would shorten the war<sup>138</sup> and that they would give the U.S. the ability to wage war without the need to rely on overseas bases.<sup>139</sup> Furthermore, advocating the increase of bomb sizes and destructive power revealed Disney’s favoring of atomic weaponry in particular. Although these arguments

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<sup>136</sup> *Victory Through Air Power*, 22:00.

<sup>137</sup> *Victory Through Air Power*, 36:57. These themes would later be reflected in the significant budget increases by the Truman and Eisenhower administration.

<sup>138</sup> *Victory Through Air Power*, 51:00.

<sup>139</sup> This self-reliance would reinforce U.S. superiority, and leave other nations to depend on America instead.

were rather idealistic, they demonstrate Walt Disney's belief in militarism and the defense of democracy and the American public.<sup>140</sup>

Walt Disney continued to show his support for increased military power following the end of World War II as the United States entered the Cold War. "Our Friend the Atom," produced in 1957, was an episode of Disney's weekly television program. This episode argued in favor of the new "Atomic Age" that was emerging. The majority of the episode appears to be purely educational. It provides a detailed history of the atom's discovery and the new discoveries made as time progressed, starting as far back as ancient Greek times. It discusses the initial discovery of radiation and such elements as radium and uranium and their importance to creating atomic weaponry. With anxieties about the impact of nuclear weapons still in the minds of many Americans, the scientific explanations serve to eliminate the possible ignorance to the nature of such energy.<sup>141</sup> This information is covered over about three-quarters of the episode's duration, however all builds up to its main message, which is covered within the last ten minutes or so. Walt Disney's continued advocacy of atomic energy can be observed in these last few minutes, as he argues for the potential of several advances to be made with these discoveries.

The first argument Disney makes for the use of atomic energy involves the growing need for power. In order to advance modern civilization, atomic energy could replace other energy sources such as coal and oil, allowing those resources to be

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<sup>140</sup> Disney's work was consistently directed to a family audience, therefore, despite themes of war, children would have been exposed to such ideology through this film.

<sup>141</sup> While fear of the bomb constantly rested in the minds of Americans, atomic energy was frequently monopolized in the consumer culture of the 1950s, thus contributing to the "Atomic Age" label sometimes given to the era. See: Mona Hadler, "The Bomb in the Postwar Era: From the Sublime to Red Hot Candy," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 21, no. 1 (2001): 42. [www.jstor.org/stable/23206974](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23206974).

delegated elsewhere.<sup>142</sup> This atomic energy, could eventually be used to fuel ships, submarines, and jets. Therefore, these resources would ultimately be delegated to military advancement, implying the need for it just as in *Victory Through Air Power*.<sup>143</sup> Another argument Disney makes for atomic energy is that it could help improve food and medical advances, resulting in higher, better quality food production, and the cure of certain diseases. Interpretations refer to the metaphorical use of the genie in the film to grant the wishes of humanity, among them power, health, and peace. The film notes atomic energy for both its creative and destructive tendencies, choosing to advocate for its creative powers as a method of maintaining peace.<sup>144</sup> This demonstrates Disney's belief in the United States as a world superpower, bettering the quality of life for domestic populations worldwide. Here, the title is brought into the film, as the atom is constantly referred to as a "friend" and that it is something for mankind to make full use of, rather than fear.<sup>145</sup> While Americans feared the power of atomic energy, Disney reinforces the ability to harness such energy and use it only for just causes.

Overall, this film demonstrates Walt Disney's continued support of increased U.S. power throughout the duration of the Cold War. He frequently used his well-regarded platform to promote his ideas to strengthen America's power in the world. Although the film comes off as primarily for educational purposes, with its extensive history of the atom's discoveries presented through its largest segment, his tendencies as a Cold Warrior show in the last few minutes. Through the advocacy for atomic weaponry as a

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<sup>142</sup> *Disneyland*, Season 3, episode 14, "Our Friend the Atom," directed by Hamilton Luske, created by Walt Disney, aired January 23, 1957. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PwllA-CyJU>.

<sup>143</sup> Released not long after Eisenhower's "New Look" strategy, Disney's approach to increased atomic power in the military mirrors the increased production of nuclear weapons.

<sup>144</sup> Sybil DelGaudio, "If Truth Be Told, Can Toons Tell It? Documentary and Animation," *Film History* 9, no. 2 (1997): 190-1. [www.jstor.org/stable/3815174](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3815174) and Hadler, 39.

<sup>145</sup> "Our Friend the Atom", 47:00.

means to better society, it is clear that as the Cold War developed throughout the 1950s, Walt Disney idealized a superior American society that would eventually change the whole world with its discovery of atomic energy. Therefore, Walt Disney's company was not simply about entertaining in the 1950s, but it sent direct messages about how he felt the U.S. should be and its role in the world.

### Disney's Cinematography and American Ideals

Disney was also responsible for creating the *Davy Crockett* series which aired on television throughout the 1950s. Davy Crockett became a notable figure admired by many American television consumers as a result of Disney's success in creating this idealized character.<sup>146</sup> Although anti-Communist, militaristic ideas appear less clearly in this series, many characteristics of Davy Crockett are given special attention to represent him in a heroic light. These depictions indicate the cultural notions of heroism during the Cold War, presenting a very specific idea of the qualities children should look up to and aspire to hold themselves. Additionally, the iteration of other American values such as family and religion reveal Disney's not-so-subtle agenda of promoting these specific ideals. *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, is among one of these movies that showcases Walt Disney's agenda.

One of Davy Crockett's most notable qualities which continually appears throughout the film is his commitment to justice. In the film, placed in the early

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<sup>146</sup> The movie was originally released in three separate episodes before it became one cohesive movie. The initial releases of the second and third episodes were estimated to have 60 million viewers, which author Merck asserts was more than a quarter of the U.S. population at the time. See: Mandy Merck. "Davy Crockett." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 40 (1995): 186. [www.jstor.org/stable/4289397](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4289397).

nineteenth century, there is an ongoing dispute with the indigenous people, particularly over the issue of land. Although many American settlers completely disrespect the indigenous people and their claim to land, Crockett consistently takes it upon himself to defend their rights, even if it meant defying orders. This is shown at the film's start, when the Americans are engaged in war with the indigenous people. Against his superior's orders, Crockett makes his way into enemy territory, attempting to reason with the natives and even engaging in their preferred warfare. When Crockett overpowers the enemy's leader, rather than take their land, he chooses to make peace with them.<sup>147</sup> Similarly, he puts a stop to other American leaders who failed to respect treaties made with the indigenous people. He also stands up to Bigfoot Mason and becomes the town magistrate in his place, indicating that righteousness prevails. Therefore, this ongoing pattern of almost vigilante justice sent a message to young viewers to take action and stand up for what is right, particularly when it relates to protecting the rights of others.<sup>148</sup> This coincides with the Cold War notion that emerged in the latter half of the 1950s to raise children to be active members of their society and enforce American principles such as freedom, just as Crockett sought to protect the rights of the natives.

Crockett's heroism is particularly highlighted during the film's final part at the Alamo. Disney's representation of Crockett at the Alamo was not entirely grounded in reality, however, he successfully sells the story of Crockett's heroism at the Alamo to the public. For instance, "The image of Parker's Crockett swinging his flintlock rifle at

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<sup>147</sup> A sentiment held by several American policymakers and presidents, the goal of America's global power was not to dominate, but to establish a sense of peace across nations. Respecting the will of the indigenous people was crucial to Crockett's character, just as the U.S. advocated for democracy's ability to protect the will of the governed.

<sup>148</sup> Overall, there is still a "right" solution implied in Crockett's decision-making, as with democracy, however, it is disguised by the intent to protect the will of others.

onrushing Mexican troops became indelible enough to confuse even a few historians as to the actual events of 1836 Texas.”<sup>149</sup> Although Disney’s representation of Davy Crockett misconstrues significant details,<sup>150</sup> the narrative resonated strongly with its audience. In the film’s retelling of the events, there is immediately a disadvantage, as the large fortress, with two acres worth of walls, had only two hundred men to defend it against the massive Mexican army. Despite this serious disadvantage, Crockett remains positive, stating that “Half of any battle’s knowing you’re going to win.”<sup>151</sup> Therefore, Crockett played the vital role of keeping morale for the men at the Alamo, despite their unpromising circumstances. Part of his heroic qualities involved standing firm in the face of adversity, and as a leader, encouraging others to do the same. Meanwhile, the Mexican troops are frequently depicted as sinister, evil men, shooting at the Alamo at all hours, in the end breaking through the defenses and climbing over its walls.<sup>152</sup> Instead of discouraging them, the Mexican Army served as motivation for the Americans to stand strong and defend their fortress.

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<sup>149</sup> Christopher Sharrett, "The Alamo: Fact, Fiction and the Last Stand of History," *Cinéaste* 29, no. 4 (2004): 15. <http://www.jstor.org/ric.idm.oclc.org/stable/41689771>.

<sup>150</sup> Much of the Alamo’s story has been dramatized and altered in media to incite patriotism in Americans. For instance, common scenes of Crockett and his allies fighting to the bitter end until death have appeared in multiple films. However, there is limited evidence that the battle unfolded in such a way, instead pointing to the likelihood that many were unable to defend the fortress, dying rather unheroically. Perry McWilliams asserts the common theme of dramatized heroism in other media about the Alamo, however, these themes appear frequently in Disney’s adaptation as well. See: Perry McWilliams, "The Alamo Story: From Fact to Fable," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 15, no. 3 (1978): 221-33. doi:10.2307/3813977.

<sup>151</sup> Norman Foster, dir. *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier. 1955; Burbank, CA: Walt Disney Productions, 1955. Film, 1:14:00.*

<sup>152</sup> The depiction of the Mexican Troops closely resembles the attitude towards Communists, who were often seen as conniving and dishonest. Similar to how Hollywood Communists were perceived by institutions such as HUAC, the belief that Communists would use subversive, implicit messages to spread their ideas mirrors the deceitful, unfair tendencies of the Mexicans at the Alamo. Meanwhile, the Americans defending the Alamo refused to resort to such trickery, fighting honestly for the duration of the battle.

Crockett once again demonstrates his heroism in corralling the remaining men into one final stand against the Mexicans. The commander knows the chances of victory are bleak, and does not expect the men to want to stay and fight. However, when he draws a line asking for his men to cross if they are willing to do so, Davy and his partner Russell immediately cross the line, committed to fighting against all odds. Witnessing this courage, the remaining men are then inspired to do as well and fight until the end. Therefore, Crockett serves as a role model and leader to the other men, just as he was intended to be for the American youth. In the final battle, despite the Mexican troops consistently coming at the fortress, the men at the Alamo hold it until every last one of them is dead. The movie concludes with the catchy theme song, singing that the men will be remembered although they lost. The tune “As long as they remember the Alamo!”<sup>153</sup> reflects the American tradition of honoring heroes, particularly those who gave all to their nation. Therefore, Crockett is a model to children to be a leader in defending their home until the very end, exhibiting unbridled courage.

Crockett is also frequently depicted as a leader, breaking out of his comfortable role to become actively involved in the community, and later national politics. First, he replaces the old town magistrate and creates a much safer, happier environment, in which one of the townspeople reflects “Since Davy’s been magistrate, we can enjoy ourselves without a brawl.”<sup>154</sup> Therefore, Davy Crockett is regarded as a hero for his ability to restore order and lead the town in a way which makes its people much happier.<sup>155</sup> Later,

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<sup>153</sup> *Davy Crockett*, 1:32:30.

<sup>154</sup> *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, 42:00.

<sup>155</sup> As an established champion of democracy, the satisfaction with Crockett’s leadership indicates that the governed are happier under such leadership, as opposed to a suffocating dictatorship- just as American democracy was presented as favorable over Soviet totalitarianism.

he becomes a representative from Tennessee in the national legislature, and initiates significant actions to advocate on the behalf of the indigenous people. Although he did not initially feel politics was his place, his townfolks' urgency inspired him to make a difference and represent them, as well as those who did not have a voice, like the indigenous people. His constituents wanted him to represent them, clear favoritism to the democratic nature of government. This revealed cause-and-effect relationships in active political participation by the common man in Disney's adaptation,<sup>156</sup> giving viewers the incentive to actively participate in their government.<sup>157</sup> Therefore, having a sense of leadership and community was another idea presented to children to reinforce the American ideal.

Family and children are a recurring theme in the film as well, in which Crockett is extremely committed to their well-being throughout. While making peace with the natives at the film's start, his ability to go home to his wife and children are celebrated as a result of his negotiations. Crockett serves as "A shrewd emblem both of the Cold War and the domesticated family,"<sup>158</sup> committed to his wife and children, but for the larger cause of defending his country. His family eagerly awaits his return,<sup>159</sup> indicating that at the end of the day, coming home to a loving family is most important. Furthermore, when Crockett is asked to become town magistrate, his family is an immediate concern. Although he could have taken the responsibility as soon as it was offered, advancing his position in society, knowing where his wife and children would be, and who could

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<sup>156</sup> Stuart A. Stiffler, "Davy Crockett: The Genesis of Heroic Myth," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (1957): 139.

<sup>157</sup> It is important to note that this same liberty of political participation would not be welcome to the same degree in a Communist state.

<sup>158</sup> Sharrett, 15.

<sup>159</sup> "Maybe Pa will be back today." *Davy Crockett*, 19:30.

provide for them, was a priority.<sup>160</sup> Ultimately, however, he agrees to the position, again reasserting that the nation comes first. Later, Crockett loses his wife. In learning this, he is assured that his children have been taken in quickly, the letter stating that “Little ones need a mother.”<sup>161</sup> Therefore, significant gender roles and a two-parent household with both a mother and father figure is highlighted here.<sup>162</sup> The mother is seen as necessary to a child’s well-being, therefore it is critical that such a figure exists, as is it necessary to have a father figure to provide for the family. This strongly reflected the gender roles of the 1950s in which a father went to work for his family,<sup>163</sup> while the mother stayed home to raise the children, and therefore, the future.

One last American quality highlighted in this film involves the significance of God and religion. Crockett frequently makes references to these themes, making it clear the hero is a Christian man who strongly believes in what is outlined in the Bible. For instance, in the first dispute with the indigenous people, Crockett has the option to kill the leader when he overpowers him, however, he does not. Instead he states he follows a higher law, “Thou shalt not kill,”<sup>164</sup> referencing the Ten Commandments and indicating his commitment to following faith above all. Later in the film, when appearing at a Congressional hearing, Crockett asserts the need to “Be the nation the good lord made us

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<sup>160</sup> *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, 36:00.

<sup>161</sup> *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, 44:50.

<sup>162</sup> A common theme found in Disney films indicates that the loss of the mother was significantly more frequent than the loss of the father. This theme holds consistent as Crockett’s children, although secondary characters, suffer the loss of their mother. While this pattern has been addressed as coincidence, it mirrors the secondary role of the woman during the 1950s, where the loss of the children’s father would have been more detrimental to their livelihood, no longer having the male breadwinner to raise them. See: Ellen N. Junn, “Media Portrayals of Love, Marriage & Sexuality for Child Audiences: A Select Content Analysis of Walt Disney Animated Family Films,” April 1, 1997, 6. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED407118>

<sup>163</sup> Like other Disney films of this era, the *Davy Crockett* franchise follows themes of male heroism, with female characters playing mainly supportive roles, while the man is the center of the story. See: Junn, 5.

<sup>164</sup> *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, 29:00.

to be.”<sup>165</sup> Therefore, the attitude that God is directly related to the greatness of America is demonstrated here, showing children that in order to preserve America’s greatness, they must follow the word of God and consider what his idea of righteousness would be.<sup>166</sup> At the end of the film, at the Alamo, Crockett states his belief that holding down the Alamo for so long was not the result of luck, but instead, “The hand of providence.”<sup>167</sup> Therefore, Crockett was a Christian man who placed the entirety of his faith in God, believing that the fate of the Alamo, and all else, was in God’s hands, demonstrating to viewers that faith in God was the answer to victory. Also a common theme in driving out Communism, Christianity ensured that democracy reigned supreme and freedom would be protected for all, even those such as the natives, although often seen and depicted as barbaric. Therefore, this film discreetly promoted American ideals to its young viewers, presenting a very specific idea of what the hero should act like, and ultimately created a national phenomenon.

The heroism of Davy Crockett was heavily reflected in American culture of the 1950s, as a result of cinema which so frequently glorified him. Crockett became an American icon, representative of the adventure and possibilities offered by the freedom-filled nation.<sup>168</sup> His slightly unkempt nature contributed to the appeal, presenting an image of an ordinary citizen, a “self-made man,”<sup>169</sup> still making a difference. Davy Crockett serves as a reminder of “who we were,” and the roots of the American frontier.<sup>170</sup> Therefore, Crockett reinforces that in the face of a new enemy, the Soviet

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<sup>165</sup> *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, 1:01:15.

<sup>166</sup> As a result, God is directly related to the values of democracy.

<sup>167</sup> *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, 1:16:48.

<sup>168</sup> Paula Marks, "Davy Crockett, Texas, and Shared Identities," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (2002): 483.

<sup>169</sup> Stiffler, 137.

<sup>170</sup> Marks, 482.

Union and China (part of the global “frontier” which the U.S. sought dominance of), the U.S. would be able to stand firm in its values to protect the freedom of the American frontier, just as Crockett had done so against the indigenous people, and later the Mexicans at the Alamo.

The glorification of Crockett was evident from the significant amount of memorabilia marketed particularly to children in the 1950s. Cy Schneider, a past marketing executive of children’s products, describes Crockett as “A licensing gold mine.”<sup>171</sup> T-shirts, jewelry, and coonskin caps were among the ways Crockett was celebrated by America’s youth.<sup>172</sup> The coonskin cap in particular was the most popular, an iconic part of the television hero which made millions of sales. Davy Crockett’s lasting legacy presented by Disney brought in merchandise sales of over \$100 million within the first six months of release alone.<sup>173</sup> The phenomenon of Davy Crockett caught onto the American public swiftly, indicating not only the success of Disney’s programming, but also the public tendency to favor heroes as ordinary citizens who embodied American democratic and traditional ideals.

Walt Disney did not limit his production solely to filmmaking. During the 1950s and 1960s, a once-weekly television program ran, which varied by week. The names of these programs changed throughout the years- starting as *Walt Disney’s Disneyland* in 1954, then *Walt Disney Presents* in 1958, and finally *Walt Disney’s Wonderful World of Color* in the early 1960s until the show took a break at the end of the decade following Disney’s death. Though the names changed, the programs generally remained the same,

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<sup>171</sup> Cy Schneider, *Children’s Television: The Art, the Business, and How It Works* (Chicago: NTC Business Books, 1987), 127.

<sup>172</sup> Marks, 481.

<sup>173</sup> Schneider, 127.

but varied by week. Short, independent stories were sometimes played during this hour-long program, other times spin-offs of already established franchises were shown. Much of the material analyzed was originally part of this anthology series, for instance the *Davy Crockett* franchise. During these episodes, Disney's ideals and values were frequently reinforced and celebrated, contributing to the consumer culture surrounding the company during the 1950s. The series was quite popular among viewers, leading other television producers to follow suit in creating short films intended specifically for television.<sup>174</sup>

One episode, "Disneyland After Dark," features a look at the activity which took place in the theme park. It is a lively episode, filled with music, dancing, and performances displaying the events held at Disneyland, selling this appealing, lively theme park to its consumers.<sup>175</sup> A variety of popular performers are shown on-screen, for example Annette Funicello and Bobby Rydell. Disneyland's guests are constantly depicted as singing and dancing along, thoroughly enjoying themselves and swooning over the celebrity appearances. Overall, there is a consistent implication of Disneyland as a jovial, celebratory place, free from worries or the stress of everyday life. Much of the guests are frequent visitors-<sup>176</sup> there is a compelling desire to come back. Disneyland represents an ideal, happy place, encouraging people to come, spend their money, and celebrate life. Walt Disney also hosted the show himself, putting a face to the company

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<sup>174</sup> William Boddy, "The Studios Move into Prime Time: Hollywood and the Television Industry in the 1950s," *Cinema Journal* 24, no. 4 (1985): 33. doi:10.2307/1224894.

<sup>175</sup> The opening of Disneyland introduced the concept of a theme park, creating a stimulating environment with several messages within its design. Disney went beyond the traditional amusement park, adding lively music, dancing, and entertainment, creating this enchanting environment that consumers would find themselves constantly drawn to. See: Margaret J. King, "The Theme Park: Aspects of Experience in a Four-Dimensional Landscape," *Material Culture* 34, no. 2 (2002): 3. [www.jstor.org/stable/29764155](http://www.jstor.org/stable/29764155).

<sup>176</sup> *Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color*, Season 8, episode 26, "Disneyland After Dark," Directed by Hamilton Luske, created by Walt Disney, aired April 15, 1962. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Arh2doD46dg>.

which helped shape a 1950s culture. His presence is familiar, creating a sense of trust with the audience and therefore making them more likely to buy into the consumerism his show promoted. He is depicted at several different times signing autographs and chatting with guests, further asserting his image as a welcoming, community-driven person. He is glad to talk with his fans and be immersed in the festivities himself, overall creating a trustworthy image for the viewers and encouraging future support.

#### Film, Anti-Communism, and the Role of the Child

Although major figures such as Walt Disney frequently equipped the use of anti-Communist rhetoric in their work, they were far from the only producers providing commentary on Cold War affairs. Several films outside well-known corporate producers featured ideas which discouraged Communism while inspiring the protection of American ideals and values. These films presented characteristics of heroism, religious faith, and the importance of vigilance against an enemy. Additionally, they commonly addressed themes of family and the role children played in the scenarios they encountered, providing a consistent narrative of where children fit into the Cold War consensus. Among the films discussed in this section are *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Blood Alley*, and *The Blob*.

*Invasion of the Body Snatchers* was released in 1956, at the height of Cold War hysteria. Science fiction was a popular genre during the 1950s which reflected American fears through unnatural phenomena. Although the producer's intent is unknown, the film contains major themes which mirrored that of the hysteria surrounding Communism during this time. Based on author Jack Finney's 1955 novel *The Body Snatchers*, the

movie has a much more sinister take on the conclusion of the events. In the film, an unknown species suddenly appears on Earth one day. These aliens mimic humans precisely, eventually replacing them entirely. As a result, an emotionless society of aliens is formed, leaving no individuality, autonomy, or human life remaining. Although the film ends with the humans catching on before all of Earth was reached, the majority of the film builds up to the dangers of failing to confront intrusive forces.

Many interpretations of this film have emerged since its initial production. One particular interpretation considers the film a “social science fiction”<sup>177</sup> rather than ordinary science fiction, due to the lack of actual scientific thought backing up the film’s plot. The repeated focus on psychology and the characters’ thoughts indicates that the film seeks to address the influence of ideas on society. The film does not aim to address the science behind the imposters created and how it could have happened or why. Instead, it covers the overall social consequences of having these imposters find their way into an established society. This sentiment is appears in another analysis of the film, which places the psychological change as most significant.<sup>178</sup> When the real humans are replaced by their imposters, they undergo a change in thought processes, which are overall more important than their altered physical state. This is what made Communism so dangerous, the potential to change the socialization of an entire society, not just its outward appearance.

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<sup>177</sup> Arthur LeGacy, ""The Invasion of the Body Snatchers": A Metaphor for the Fifties," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (1978): 291.

<sup>178</sup> David Seed, "Constructing America's Enemies: The Invasions of the USA," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 37, no. 2 (2007): 80.

In the film, the alien threat is initially ignored<sup>179</sup>, being dismissed as hysteria by Dr. Bennell, the main character. Several townspeople are reported as believing their relatives have been replaced with an imposter, which is generally chalked up to them needing psychiatric help.<sup>180</sup> This similarly mirrors the initial attitude towards Communism, where figures such as McCarthy were eventually seen as delusional and lost respect from much of the nation. The film discusses this fear of these unknown imposters as a contagious “epidemic of mass hysteria,” a phrase which appears multiple times throughout the film.<sup>181</sup> Therefore, this theme of unexplained, irrational fear consistently reflects the similar attitudes of anti-Communism, for instance, McCarthyism, which was eventually dismissed for its hysteria.

Arthur LeGacy interprets the concept of imposters in a different light, drawing connections between the film and the HUAC hearings from just a few years prior. LeGacy asserts the investigations of HUAC as a method of sorting out the “imposters” in Hollywood.<sup>182</sup> The Communists hiding within the film industry were the imposters, attempting to persuade others to support their cause through the use of subversive film content. Therefore, it was up to the friendly witnesses of HUAC, the patriots, to expose these perceived Communists, just as the characters in the film sought to differentiate between the real and the imposters with evil intentions. Therefore, the hysteria of imposters among the humans in the film mirrors that of the HUAC trials seeking to differentiate Communists with ulterior motives from the honest American filmmakers. In

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<sup>179</sup> These “aliens,” which infiltrated society in the film, can also be tied to the threat of “alien” immigrants which were feared to bring foreign or Communist ideas into the U.S. during the high anxiety periods of the Red Scare.

<sup>180</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, directed by Don Siegel (1956; Allied Artists Pictures: 1998), DVD, 13:00.

<sup>181</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 16:00, 23:00.

<sup>182</sup> LeGacy, 289.

the film, however, the hysteria is eventually realized for its actual threat, whereas in American society, like McCarthyism, the HUAC trials eventually lose momentum as the threat seemingly disappears. As the film progresses, it proves that the dismissal of such fears is detrimental to society.

It is not until about halfway through the film when skeptics such as Dr. Bennell finally sense the danger of the body snatchers, actually seeing them for himself. The body snatchers emerge from a seed pod, resembling the person whose identity was stolen, however, without details.<sup>183</sup> The use of a seed serves as strong symbolism for the planting of an idea. As the body snatchers first appeared as harmless seed pods, what emerged out of them was much more dangerous. Similarly, once the seed of Communism was planted in American soil, its ideas would grow and have devastating effects on society. As a result, the need to destroy the seed pods in the movie becomes the main goal,<sup>184</sup> just as the seed of Communism was seen by vigilant Cold Warriors as in need of removal before its ideas could begin to spread.

The commentary on the state of the Soviet Union can be seen in various details highlighted about the body snatchers. As mentioned before, they have no details or unique features, for instance, they have no fingerprints.<sup>185</sup> This indicates a common attitude Americans held towards those in the Soviet Union- they were often seen as lacking individuality or autonomy due to the Communist system. As a result, they mirrored robots or aliens more closely than humans, victims of a system which allowed no personal freedom. Additionally, later in the film, the distribution of the seed pods is

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<sup>183</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 40:30

<sup>184</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 42:00.

<sup>185</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 21:40.

shown as the body snatchers, now mostly replicas of the original townspeople, gather at the center of the town. Intended or not, there is a striking similarity between this scene and the images of bread distribution commonly associated with the Soviet Union during its times of food shortages.<sup>186</sup> However, in this context, the distribution of the ideological seeds indicates more accurately the further spread of Communism. The overall takeover of the body snatchers and their distribution of the seed pods represents what was thought to be the outcome of allowing America to fall victim to Communist ideas. Marty Roth's interpretation of the movie presents the film as a "contemporary horror" in which "the monstrous is all too ordinary,"<sup>187</sup> in which the monster, Communism, lives right within society, yet cannot visibly be seen. The solution the movie presents is to burn the seed pods, to kill the invasion before it can spread.

Several points in the film have notable quotes which strongly reflect anti-Communist sentiments held by Americans. As the body snatchers have taken over the majority of the town, they are referred to as "A disease spreading through the whole country."<sup>188</sup> Just as the body snatchers were considered a disease, Communist ideas were often seen as having a similar effect which would poison the whole nation if action was not properly taken. As Dr. Bennell and his partner Becky become the only humans immune to the messages of the body snatchers, "Don't go to sleep,"<sup>189</sup> becomes the motto, otherwise the body snatchers would get them. This mimics the vigilance many

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<sup>186</sup> The early years of the Soviet Union faced significant food shortage due to Stalin's agricultural collectivization, resulting in frequent "bread lines" in which citizens, generally mothers, would wait for hours, even days, to receive food. See: Thomas Lines, "Two Agricultural Shocks in the Former USSR, 60 Years Apart," *Development in Practice* 21, no. 4/5 (2011): 757-9. [www.jstor.org/stable/41412997](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41412997).

<sup>187</sup> Marty Roth, "Twice Two: 'The Fly' and 'Invasion of the Body Snatchers'," *Discourse* 22, no. 1 (2000): 105-6. [www.jstor.org/stable/41389564](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41389564).

<sup>188</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 57:45.

<sup>189</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 59:00.

anti-Communists often encouraged Americans, to consistently remain aware of who was surrounding them. “Falling asleep,” or losing that vigilance for even a second could be seen as allowing Communists entry into American ideology. As Dr. Bennell finally escapes on his own, making his way to the highway, he discovers the body snatchers are on the move, but it is unclear whether or not the drivers are real or replicas. In this iconic scene, Dr. Bennell runs down the highway, screaming, “You’re next!”<sup>190</sup> The other drivers see him as insane, not yet aware of the danger. This sends the message that if Americans were not made aware of the Communist threat, soon they would become its next target.

Themes of family and children periodically appear in this film. Set in small-town America, the invasion threatens local communities,<sup>191</sup> and would grow into a large-scale societal threat if action were not taken. Therefore, protecting these small towns preserved the neighborly communities in which families could safely live in. If the invasion was not stopped, more communities would be torn apart by this insidious force, and eventually the whole nation. In one of the initial scenes, a young boy is depicted as the first to detect the body snatcher, believing his mother has been replaced with an imposter. The child cries out frequently, “Don’t let her get me!”<sup>192</sup> Therefore, this scene indicates the danger children were perceived to be in with the infiltration of Communism. The child was the first to pick up on the “Communist” body snatcher, seeing that something was not “right,” therefore indicating children were seen as knowing good from bad, and that the Communists were bad, causing great distress. Additionally, at the end of the movie, as

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<sup>190</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 1:18:00.

<sup>191</sup> Roth, 109-10.

<sup>192</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 9:50.

Dr. Bennell runs down the highway, he screams out, “They’re after us- your wives, your children!”<sup>193</sup> Therefore, he is calling on the need to preserve and protect family, just as anti-Communist rhetoric often employed the protection of children and family as a motivator to keep away the Red Menace.

The film’s end shows Dr. Bennell in another doctor’s office, perceived to be insane. However, as the other doctors see the seed pods- they can now see the danger, they believe the cries of Dr. Bennell and take action to get the authorities involved. The film demonstrates the necessity of believing the dangers of Communism, as they can then be easily stopped. The frequent references to the FBI as being the primary law enforcement to call in this emergency<sup>194</sup> indicate the prevalence of this institution at this time as the main defender against outside threats, just as J. Edgar Hoover often led crusades against perceived Communist infiltration. LeGacy’s interpretation of the movie also includes the notion that such institutions of authority, particularly the FBI, were the ultimate saving grace,<sup>195</sup> therefore, it is clear law enforcement was heavily relied upon for defense against outside evils. Overall, the movie presents a strong “Us vs. Them”<sup>196</sup> rhetoric, as Katrina Mann describes it, in which the aliens represent the Communists, often of foreign descent, perceived to be within the U.S. Rather than try to work with these outsiders, the only solution presented was to drive them out entirely, as there was no negotiating.<sup>197</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* presented an overwhelmingly obvious parallel between a science-fiction story and the feared reality of American society.

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<sup>193</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 1:18:00.

<sup>194</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 43:00, 1:19:00.

<sup>195</sup> LeGacy, 291.

<sup>196</sup> Katrina Mann, ""You're Next!": Postwar Hegemony Besieged in "Invasion of the Body Snatchers", " *Cinema Journal* 44, no. 1 (2004): 50.

<sup>197</sup> This is similar to how strained relations between the Soviet Union and the U.S. based on differing economic policies would make peace more difficult to reach as the Cold War progressed.

*Blood Alley* is another 1950s film that expresses concerns over Communism, while taking on a much more aggressive attitude. In *Blood Alley*, there is little use for an allegory, as it takes place in Communist China and provides frequent commentary demonstrating American distaste towards the regime.<sup>198</sup> John Wayne, a popular actor of the 1950s, stars in the film as the hero Tom Wilder, who saves a group of Chinese refugees from the evils of Communism. The film not only demonstrates the hostile attitude towards Chinese Communists, which were another new threat to Americans with the establishment of the regime in 1949, but also draws on heroic themes and the significance of religion in combating this evil.

The film rarely shies away from using inflammatory language directed towards the Chinese and Communism itself. Almost immediately in the film, Wilder confronts a Communist soldier, referring to him as “Comrade,”<sup>199</sup> however, he clearly does so sarcastically. His frequent use of this condescending language indicates the lack of respect Americans held towards Communist governments.<sup>200</sup> The word “comrade” is used purely in the form of mockery. Later, Wilder refers to himself as a “Guest of the Commies,”<sup>201</sup> another term used frequently to degrade the Chinese. “The Reds” is yet another phrase commonly used in the movie to describe Communists. Overall, the film has little issue using derogatory language toward the Chinese, indicating the hostility

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<sup>198</sup> Following the uneasy confrontations at the Yalu River and the armistice of the Korean War, the U.S. and China were no longer on the amiable terms once romanticized. This hostility represents the American uncertainty which emerged as a result of the new rivalry, as the U.S. now had yet another Communist enemy to contend with. See: Doherty, 6-7.

<sup>199</sup> *Blood Alley*, directed by William A. Wellman (1955, Warner Bros, 2005, DVD), 3:34.

<sup>200</sup> This reinforces the continued refusal of the U.S. government to recognize Communist states such as the Soviet Union and China.

<sup>201</sup> *Blood Alley*, 12:50.

towards those who threatened traditional democracy. Later in the film, the victims of the Communist regime are presented, but in an entirely different light.

The overall attitude towards the Chinese in general in the film indicates the clear racism towards Asian countries. Nearly all the Chinese characters in the film are presented as being extremely simplistic as compared to the Americans. They use fewer words, in broken English, and their overall personalities are significantly less developed than the Americans, even if they play a central role in the film. The Chinese are generally depicted as followers, taking orders, while it is the white, American main characters who lead the way to safety and freedom. This strongly reflects the attitude of the time which encouraged Americans to lead the less developed Asian nations towards democracy, as they were unable to do so on their own. Americans, seeing themselves as the world superpower, had a duty to fulfill to help less fortunate, misguided people in the periphery of the world. Therefore, there is a clear distinction between the “good” and “bad” Chinese- the Communists, of course, are bad, depicted as cold and militaristic, while the good are simply innocent and helpless. Furthermore, several scenes occur in which the Chinese, particularly the Communist forces, speak in Chinese, with no subtitles provided. This demonstrates the “unknown” of Communism- the viewer does not understand their conversations, just as Communism was often feared for its seemingly cryptic ideas which Americans could not understand. This makes it appear as more of a threat, as the Americans could not tell what they were planning, and therefore whether or not a danger existed to them. This unknown contributed to the increased anxiety of the Cold War.

Wilder’s heroic role is frequently played up in the movie as he leads the Chinese refugees away from an evil Communist government. He takes on the challenging task of

steering a broken-down steamboat down “Blood Alley,” a treacherous waterway with many obstacles.<sup>202</sup> The film also makes frequent references to God, contributing to the narrative of Christianity being the saving grace from Communism. Shortly into the film, Wilder is referred to as “One of God’s footsteps,”<sup>203</sup> in other words, a miracle. This phrase is repeated multiple times throughout, indicating it is a major theme. Wilder is seen as a holy man, doing God’s work and saving innocent people from a destructive, Godless system. Therefore, heroism is closely tied to Christianity. Furthermore, the Chinese refugees in the film seem to be converted Christians, and also repeat the phrase “One of God’s footsteps.” Meanwhile, the Communist forces exhibit no faith in God. This film reflects ideas held by many Americans that Christianity was needed in order to save people from Communism.

Lastly, this film reflects the effects of Communism on children under the regime, playing on the victim narrative. In multiple scenes, the children are depicted being taught in a school setting, in which they mimic exactly what they are taught. This presents the concept of no individuality and indoctrination Communism was thought to create. Although the children speak Chinese, at one point they recite a chant which clearly states the word “Mao,”<sup>204</sup> likely referring to Mao Zedong, who established the Communist regime in China. Therefore, these children are taught to mindlessly follow and honor their leader, unaware of the implications it has on their future. This is a clear example of

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<sup>202</sup> John Wayne frequently embodied similar heroic patterns through various characters in different films. *Blood Alley* is another example in which Wayne’s character was estranged from society after being captured by Communists, however, he ultimately is able to come out of this alienation by overcoming several difficult trials and victoriously saving the Chinese victims from Communism. See: Richard D. McGhee, “John Wayne: Hero With A Thousand Faces,” *Literature/Film Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (1988): 10. [www.jstor.org/stable/43796332](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43796332).

<sup>203</sup> *Blood Alley*, 10:10.

<sup>204</sup> *Blood Alley*, 30:45.

the indoctrination of Communism that Americans feared. There is a need in the film to save these children from such indoctrination, thus causing Wilder to steer the ship to safety.<sup>205</sup>

While on the ship, the children continue to act in unison, holding their chopsticks and moving exactly the same way when they fear it has been poisoned.<sup>206</sup> The children copy everything they see, because they have been taught to do so, to have no individual thought. The Chinese children, therefore, serve as a model to Americans as to what could happen to their own children if Communism were to permeate American society. Wilder then makes the point that “There is no poison, but the poison they put in our minds!”<sup>207</sup> This is a direct criticism of Communism and the thought that it would “poison” the minds of the people, particularly innocent children.<sup>208</sup> Therefore, Wilder, the hero, must save these people from a system which prevented free thought and will. Being indoctrinated, they do not have the power to do so themselves, reflecting the desire of Americans to lead Asian countries towards democracy, especially in order to save the children from a desolate future.<sup>209</sup> Overall, the film directly criticizes the Chinese Communist regime, reflecting the fear of its establishment in 1949. The confrontations at the Yalu River and the unknown intentions of the Chinese created a rivalry between China and the U.S.

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<sup>205</sup> Another heroic quality Wayne’s characters often embodied was family devotion (however not at the cost of national devotion, similar to Davy Crockett). Although Wayne’s character Wilder does not have an established family, the attention given to saving the childlike Chinese, and the children themselves, is an example of his heroism in the name of protecting family and the easily manipulated youth. See: Max Westbrook, “Flag and Family in John Wayne’s Westerns: The Audience as Co-Conspirator,” *Western American Literature* 29, no. 1 (1994): 25. [www.jstor.org/stable/43021269](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43021269).

<sup>206</sup> *Blood Alley*, 1:20:00.

<sup>207</sup> *Blood Alley*, 1:21:35.

<sup>208</sup> The children’s reluctance to touch their food out of fear of being poisoned also reinforces the notion that children were perceptive to the dangers of Communism, and therefore did not wish to take part in it.

<sup>209</sup> Wayne was committed to showcasing his Americanism in film, which is reflected in his consistent anti-Communist rhetoric in several of his films as a way of expressing his commitment to democracy. See: Westbrook, 31.

Therefore, *Blood Alley*, despite its frequent criticism of Chinese Communist propaganda,<sup>210</sup> is filled with many politically charged messages which criticize a Communist system and celebrates the American heroes, committed to their God and democracy.

*The Blob* is another example of commentary on the threat of Communism through science fiction film. It features the story of an unidentified mass which seemingly comes from space and begins consuming townspeople, growing larger each time. The depiction of the Blob itself reflects common Communist fears of the time.<sup>211</sup> It comes from space, as if it were an alien, reflecting the long-standing fear of immigrants and their uncertain political beliefs. The Blob coincidentally has a red coloration to it, relating to the fear of the "Reds" in particular, signifying the specific threat of Communism. Its consumption of the townspeople reflects the nature of Communism, which was thought to capture victims to spread its ideas. Once the Blob latched onto a victim, as initially demonstrated by the old man who discovered it, it became impossible to remove. Like Communism, once the idea was in the peoples' minds, it was seen as almost impossible to remove. As more fell victim, the Blob grew bigger, just as Communist ideas were feared to spread further, affecting more people. If the Blob was not stopped, eventually the Communist menace would consume entire towns with ideas, eventually killing all of them. In other words, Communism was a deadly, uncertain alien object which needed to be killed before it could kill.

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<sup>210</sup> *Blood Alley*, 54:00.

<sup>211</sup> Just as the Blob grew bigger with every victim, the growth of Communism was observed with horror as it spread to other nations. Particularly in nations such as Vietnam, where Communism was the government of choice by the people, the fear was felt, as these ideas were held by the people themselves, not enforced by a figurehead. Additionally, Sayre asserts the notion that although there was little strife when being consumed by the Blob, others were determined not to let it grow. See: Nora Sayre, "Watch the Skies," *Grand Street* 1, no. 2 (1982): 54.

The movie focuses particularly on a group of teenagers who have the most encounters with the Blob, reinforcing that children faced the biggest threat of Communism. They are frequently caught out late at night, sneaking around, a reflection of the fear of teenage delinquency that emerged in the 1950s. However, this group of teenagers are the only ones who have seen the Blob for themselves and recognize its danger. Despite frequent calls to the Police station, the teenagers are ridiculed by the police, their warnings continually dismissed and written off as an ongoing prank. At one point, one of the characters asks the question, “How do we get people to protect themselves from something they don’t believe in?”<sup>212</sup> This question reflects a common struggle Cold Warriors felt themselves facing in light of the Communist threat. Seeing Communist nations as a danger to American security, it was crucial that these threats were properly depicted to the public in order to protect them from the pervasive evil. The teenagers in the film are highly sensitive to watching the Blob consume its victims, exhibiting feelings of terror, disgust, and even anguish during these scenes.<sup>213</sup> Therefore, the teens’ awareness of the Blob’s terrifying power indicates that the nation’s youth was also aware of the horrors of Communism and its all-consuming tendencies over society.

Overall, this aspect of the film also highlights the narrative of making children aggressive Cold Warriors themselves. A common film trope of the 1950s reflected the idea of children as the saving grace. Nora Sayre asserts this in her evaluation of several 1950s science fiction films which held Communist fears within their storylines. She describes that “The child’s role is to alert others to the perils that prowl among us.

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<sup>212</sup> *The Blob*, directed by Vincent Yeaworth (1958: Paramount Pictures, 2000), DVD, 49:50.

<sup>213</sup> Bryan Senn, *Twice the Thrills! Twice the Chills! Horror and Science Fiction Double Features, 1955-1974* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company Inc., Publishers, 2019), 127.

However... children have great difficulty in being heard or understood... most adults refuse to realize that a crisis exists.”<sup>214</sup> The adults’ failure to recognize the threat indicates that the youth of America were most affected by the Communist threat. They could see it the most often and were the ones to bring the rest of the town’s attention to it. Therefore, this asserts the notion that children could be shaped into activists looking out for such dangers as the Blob, as they were most aware of it and threatened by it. The idea that children were the future and could “save” the world from a threat such as Communism appears through the teen protagonists of this film.

#### Television Programming and Children

Outside of popular science fiction film, other cinematography often promoted Cold War ideals. *Duck and Cover* was a short film, less than ten minutes long, used to teach school children how to react in the event of an atomic bomb explosion.<sup>215</sup> The need for such a production indicated the serious fear held by Americans that they were in danger of an attack. Although the film was intended merely as an educational piece for children, its contents reveal themes commonly repeated in addressing Cold War fears. One of its strongest messages is to remain vigilant at all times. The film advises children to always be ready for a bombing, as it could happen at any time. Although the intent was that people would be prepared for an attack, it was likely such a message would increase fears. Confirming to citizens that they were, in fact, in great danger of being wiped out by a nuclear weapon, and comparing its danger to that of car accidents or fires, indicated that

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<sup>214</sup> Sayre, 55.

<sup>215</sup> *Duck and Cover*, directed by Anthony Rizzo (Archer Productions, 1952). Film. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKqXu-5jw60>.

an attack was more likely to occur than not. To depict the importance of vigilance, the film goes to great lengths, repeating the phrase, “Duck and cover, and do it *fast!*”<sup>216</sup> indicating that children should always be ready. The film depicts a child riding a bike, who upon seeing the flash (the sign a bomb was exploded), he immediately jumps off the moving bike to get into the “Duck and Cover” position frequently repeated to children. Therefore, although meant as a purely educational video, *Duck and Cover* presented an intense need for vigilance for a seemingly inevitable attack.

A popular children’s program which began after the initial crisis of the Cold War, in the 1960s, was *Davey and Goliath*. Produced by the United Lutheran Church in America, the program aimed to teach the values of Christianity to children and reinforce a faith in God. Following the resurgence of Christianity in the 1950s, the production of this show revealed a desire to ensure America’s youth continued to keep America a country led by faith in God. The Lutheran Church, noticing the power over thought the media offered, took the opportunity to air this program to spread ideas of God.<sup>217</sup> Consistent throughout the episodes are themes of sharing, respect, and commitment to family. They are frequently introduced with a particular discussion about God, which becomes the topic once again at the end, reinforcing the theme of the episode and ensuring the message that God is above all is most remembered.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> *Duck and Cover*, 5:00.

<sup>217</sup> Stephen J. Lind, “Christmas in the 1960s: A Charlie Brown Christmas, Religion, and the Conventions of the Television Genre,” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 26, no. 1 (2014): 10.

<http://search.ebscohost.com.lic.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mlf&AN=2014100355&site=ehost-live>.

<sup>218</sup> James Martin’s review of the series also makes note of the reoccurring structure of each episode, which begins when Davey fails to heed his parents’ warning, then must experience a difficult situation. At the end, the situation is always resolved with family support, and Davey learns an important lesson relating to morality, and therefore, God. See: James Martin, “Of Many Things,” *America* 182, no. 14 (2000): 2. <http://search.ebscohost.com.lic.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=3013047&site=ehost-live>.

Family is a major theme reinforced throughout the television program, teaching children what it means to be part of one. In the episode, “The Big Apple,” the plot is initially introduced by Davey’s frustration about not spending enough time with his father, especially after seeing his friend do so with his father. The concept of a young boy needing a present, actively involved father figure is utilized here, and the father immediately takes the initiative, planning a camping trip for just the two of them. However, Davey has also promised his sister that they would go apple picking together. He keeps this promise, and while apple picking meets another young boy, Bill, whose family owns the orchard. It is then revealed that Bill does not have a father, to which Davey’s younger sister, Sally, states, “Let’s share ours!”<sup>219</sup> When Davey protests, Sally then reminds him, “God didn’t make daddy just for you!” Therefore, family is presented as something not limited to blood, but a shared relationship with others, as God wished. The message of unity and sharing is the most important here, and welcoming a neighbor into the family. Davey agrees to share his father, and he is equally as welcoming, taking both boys on the camping trip, where they do traditional American male pastimes like fishing. The episode concludes with, “The more we get together, the happier we’ll be, your friends are my friends, your dad is my dad!”<sup>220</sup> Therefore, the overall message here is to promote togetherness and community, indicating that is the key to happiness.

In another episode, “Sudden Storm,” another family outing is depicted,<sup>221</sup> this time with all of Davey’s family. Davey has a rather traditional family consisting of a

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<sup>219</sup> *Davey and Goliath*, Season 3, episode 30, “The Big Apple,” produced by Clokey Productions and United Lutheran Church in America, created by Art Clokey, Ruth Clokey, and Dick Sutcliffe, aired October 26, 1963. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4d1UGuwujHk>.

<sup>220</sup> Clokey, “Big Apple.”

<sup>221</sup> *Davey and Goliath*, Season 2, episode 26, “The Sudden Storm,” produced by Clokey Productions and United Lutheran Church in America, created by Art Clokey, Ruth Clokey, and Dick Sutcliffe, aired February 23, 1963. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11VFhpI6aeY>.

mother, father, and sister. Wolff comments on the nature of Davey's environment, noting that "Davey's early boyhood was spent in a conspicuously white, suburban neighborhood, as a member of a restrictively sex-roled, traditional nuclear family."<sup>222</sup> Davey and his family represent the ideal Cold War family, grounded in Christian values also reflected by his upstanding community. The family asserts the importance of love and spending time with each other, Davey's parents constantly teaching him lessons that will make him a kind, well-mannered member of society, whose ideals are based on the word of God. In this particular episode, Davey's father starts by discussing how he dealt with fear during the war, indicating he was likely a veteran of World War II- a quality greatly admired in society. He asserts that remembering God was the answer to fighting his fears. Later in the episode, Davey and a friend are on a boat when a storm suddenly hits. His father then ventures out into the storm to rescue them. After they have been saved, the family gathers back together and waits for the storm to pass. Here, the theme of God erasing fear reappears. Davey recalls that his father coming to rescue him made him less scared, just as God made his father less scared during the war. Therefore, the idea that God's love is above all and will chase away fears serves as a message for children to keep their faith and they will be safe from danger.<sup>223</sup> As the family sits around the fire, they sing a song about how the world is in God's hands.

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<sup>222</sup> R. Wolff, "Davey and Goliath," *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 18, no. 3 (1990): 112. <http://search.ebscohost.com/ric/idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=9103181872&site=ehost-live>.

<sup>223</sup> During a time when Communism was still seen as the enemy, though less threatening, the fear of nuclear war was still very much alive. Therefore, Christianity served as an antidote to these fears.

One last example of advocating for family is in the episode “The Runaway,” in which Davey becomes fed up with his home situation.<sup>224</sup> Tired of doing chores, he runs away to join the circus after being enamored by the performance his parents took him to shortly before. While Davey is at the circus, he finds that he dislikes the environment, being much different than what he anticipated. He meets Jody, a young boy whose father is a lion tamer. Jody asks Davey, “What’s it like to have a real home?” which makes Davey realize how lucky he was to have his family to always go home to. Therefore, this episode favors the ideal of a stable home situation, while also teaching children the different ways families can function, and to be grateful for what they have.<sup>225</sup> As a result, Davey realizes that while he enjoys the circus, it is not where he belongs. Therefore, having a sense of belonging and community is an important message for the program to relay to viewers, just as churches are often seen as communities. At the end, the idea that God will always be there is reinforced, whether or not he likes what Davey is doing. The message to children to keep their faith, as it will remain even when they do something wrong, is a recurring theme of *Davey and Goliath*.

### Conclusion

The lasting fears of the Cold War can be traced back to as early as the first Red Scare of the 1920s. The successful establishment of a Communist Regime in the Soviet Union brought uncertainty to the United States, now feeling its Capitalist system

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<sup>224</sup> *Davey and Goliath*, Season 2, episode 25, “The Runaway,” produced by Clokey Productions and United Lutheran Church in America, created by Art Clokey, Ruth Clokey, and Dick Sutcliffe, aired February 9, 1963. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S\\_-Du7R8t54](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_-Du7R8t54)

<sup>225</sup> Although Wolff initially asserts the idealized environment Davy grew up in, he follows up with by pointing out the network’s awareness to growing social issues such as race, gender, and even family dynamics. As a result, many of the episodes discussed indicate the United Lutheran Church’s response to teaching children about these social issues in a Christian way. See: Wolff, 112.

threatened by collectivism. Intolerance towards immigration and its connection to labor unions resulted in serious distrust of those from Eastern Europe seeking better treatment in the workforce, equating the frequent labor unrest to the work of Communists infiltrating the American system. Serious attacks were launched against those deemed a threat, particularly through the Palmer Raids of 1919-1920, however, this investigation spread into a deep cultural investigation as well. The initial scrutiny of film producers and introduction of censorship which began in the first Red Scare would set the tone for the next several decades as visual media became more popular, and therefore more threatening to the American way of life, as a machine used to promote Communist propaganda.

The fading fears of the initial Red Scare could not last long with economic insecurity and the threat of war looming overhead during the 1930s. These fears significantly distracted the United States government from regulating industries such as film, however, once the threat of war came and passed, it was unavoidable that the industry would be left alone due to the new fears that emerged. Now that the uneasy alliance with the Soviet Union had ended, a rivalry between the two nations grew as they fought to prove their political and economic systems would make them the dominant world power. The House Un-American Committee's hearings of several film producers and actors for perceived Communist activity in the industry reflected the growing fear of the Soviet Union's influence. This, paired with the establishment of a Communist regime in China, created a second, much larger Red Scare known as the Cold War.

While this new Red Scare reflected many of the same fears as the original one, regarding the legitimacy of Communism as a form of government, the significant

progress made in technology introduced new fears as well. Particularly, the successful explosion of an atomic bomb during World War II would be followed by a nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union to continue developing more destructive technology which would overpower the other. This nuclear power was still quite new, however, and therefore the full effect of its powers were unknown. While Americans strongly desired to maintain their superpower status, they feared the potential destructiveness of nuclear energy which threatened their lives, families, and futures.

Family was a core value of the Cold War, and therefore Americans worked to protect it under the threat of nuclear war. Mothers in particular took to waging the Cold War, determined to teach their children American values and keep Communism out of schools. Children were fiercely protected during the Cold War, frequently used as an argument to continue building up defenses. Allowing children to fall victim to the Communist menace and nuclear war greatly threatened their future, and as the future of the nation, it was imperative they were set on the right path. Therefore, a Cold War consensus was not only built on the protection of children, but also the need to shape them into active Cold Warriors themselves to prevent them from becoming defenseless victims. These values, paired with the resurgence of Christianity, were vital to keeping the U.S. above the Godless, inferior Communists.

With such a large discourse surrounding the Cold War and how to address the Communist threat, many of these pro-American ideals and themes found their way into the ever-growing media industry. In regards to children, there was much to say about their role in society, aimed at both them and their parents. Film and television frequently found ways to discreetly promote anti-Communist messages while informing children

and parents of the ideals they could embrace to stand up against these threats. Walt Disney's massive influence on a consumer culture allowed him to create films advocating for military and nuclear build-up even before the days of the Cold War. As it progressed, he continually used his platform to advocate for Cold War causes and relay to Americans a positive attitude towards nuclear energy, encouraging support rather than fear. His successful evening television program, *Walt Disney's Disneyland*, successfully survived several decades and produced many seasons which became enmeshed in American pastimes. The episodes of this series produced many famous characters and stories which embodied American tradition, for instance, Davy Crockett. Characters such as Crockett embodied the heroism encouraged in fighting a Cold War by demonstrating abilities that even an ordinary man such as Crockett could have to do what was right.

Outside of the Disney company's continued programming, several standalone films and television shows found their own way of promoting certain ideals for children to embody. Science fiction in particular addressed the pervasive fear of Communism in America and provided commentary on its possible effects. Films such as *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *The Blob* presented Communist infiltration in an allegorical method using "aliens" as representation, demonstrating a potential outcome if not handled correctly. These films point to a need to protect the American family and children, while enforcing the role they have in preventing such threats. Other films, such as *Blood Alley*, were significantly more straightforward with their attitudes toward Communism. Again, heroism was celebrated in this film as an everyman saves the less fortunate, especially the easily manipulated children, from the evils of Communism with God on his side. God is frequently depicted in these films mentioned as the saving grace for mankind. In

children's programming such as *Davey and Goliath*, God holds the answer to everything. Raising children in a Christian fashion is an imperative theme in early Cold War programming to stop the spread of Communism and protect America's ideals.

Therefore, the film and television industry's response to the Cold War was complicated, filled with many different approaches to a common issue. The themes which appeared in these films often reflected the concerns of current or past American politics which had set the stage for the Cold War. Commentary was far from limited to a single producer or genre. Each producer had his own attitudes towards Communism, and whether these were explicitly or intentionally revealed in their films, other representations of heroism, family, Christianity, and other American fundamentals demonstrated what qualities were to be embraced. As the Cold War progressed, attitudes continually changed and new ways to address the continuing problem of Communism were introduced. An evolving American culture would mean changing ideals, and therefore promotion or backlash through increased commentary relating to these new ideals. However, the overall theme of triumph over Communism would remain constant until the downfall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

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