

Tsephania Sanon

Alliance University

World Civilization 2

Lindell O'Hara

April 4, 2023

### Research & Writing

The Cuban Missile Crisis is the backdrop for Stanley Kubrick's 1964 comedy "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb" the madness of the military conflict and the nuclear menace. This essay will examine how the movie portrays the Cuban Missile Crisis utilizing network, hierarchical, and cultural frameworks.

#### **Networks**

The network of communication between political figures, military leaders, and nuclear experts is portrayed in Dr. Strangelove as chaotic and prone to mistakes. The movie's main character is an American Air Force General who launches a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union after becoming convinced that water fluoridation is to blame for the loss of his "precious biological fluids." (Higgins, 2018). The communication network failed despite the President of the United States' efforts to order the bombers to be recalled, and the aircraft continued to fly in that direction. The Soviet Union's doomsday weapon is activated in the meanwhile, assuring mutual devastation.

## **Hierarchies**

Dr. Strangelove portrays the military hierarchy as inflexible and unyielding. The paranoid, conspiracist attitude that may arise in a hierarchical military system is defined by General Jack D. Ripper in popular culture. Since Ripper believes the Soviet Union is attempting to infect Americans with communist propaganda via their "precious bodily fluids" he conducts a preemptive nuclear assault (Higgins, 2018). When Ripper utilizes force and intimidation to deal with a junior officer who disobeys his instructions, the authoritarian aspect of the military hierarchy is made very obvious. The military scale is shown in the film in a manner that highlights the perils of having a strong, authoritarian command system in a crisis. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union has bypassed thanks to the leaders` determination to compromise and negotiate.

## **Culture**

A satirical movie called Dr. Strangelove criticizes Cold War-era society. The film's exaggerated characters, ridiculous premise, and dark humor highlight the absurdity of the weapons race and the nuclear danger. Former Nazi scientists like Dr. Strangelove serve as a metaphor for the moral uncertainty of the time when erstwhile adversaries of the United States were hired to work on nuclear weapons projects. The movie's use of comedy to confront such weighty issues mirrors the time's cultural attitude, in which the fear of atomic war was constant but often dismissed or downplayed (Mooney, 2022). According to the film's parody of Cold War society, the nuclear threat may have been influenced by cultural attitudes and ideals in addition to geopolitical issues.

### References

Higgins, S. (2018). Purity of essence in the Cold War: Dr. Strangelove, paranoia, and bodily boundaries. *Textual Practice*, 32(5), 799-820.

Mooney, D. (2022). 282. Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (#67). <https://them0vieblog.com/2022/04/16/282-dr-strangelove-or-how-i-learned-to-stop-worrying-and-love-the-bomb-67/>