

Film for Festival: *Time Life Machine*



Option 1: Imagine that *Time Life Magazine* has finally created a time machine. Now people can go on a vacation to any time in history. You are an advertising man on QVC given the task to sell vacations to the 1950s & 1960's. Create a 2-5 minute infomercial selling the 1950's &/or 1960's. Use some of the propaganda techniques you have learned to cover & explain some of the main texts and ideas discussed in class this year.

You Should Cover Some of the Following: (Be sure to clearly show you understand these works/concepts!)

1. *Key Concepts*
 - a. *Dominant American Values*
 - b. *Propaganda Techniques*
2. *Skills Learned*
 - a. *Active Viewing Strategies/“Peeling Back the Layers of Film”*
 - b. *Essay Writing*
3. *Texts Covered*
 - a. The Cold War: Your “Atomic” Book (*Fahrenheit 451*, *Alas Babylon*, etc), *Fail-Safe*, “Duck & Cover”, “The Red Nightmare”, “The Last Night of the World”
 - b. The American Dream
 - i. Belief in the American Dream: “*The Fifties: Selling the American Way*”, “*The Fifties: Let’s Play House*”, *I Love Lucy* &/or *Father Knows Best* (TV’s Golden Age)
 - ii. Dissolution of belief in the American Dream: *Death of a Salesman*, *Abstract Expressionism* (your artists), “A Perfect Day for Bananafish”, *The Zoo Story* &/or “The Wayfarer”, *The Celluloid Closet* &/or “Sex Symbols”, “The Fifties: A Rage Within” &/or “Dream Deferred”, *Peyton Place*, *The Feminine Mystique*, *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, *The Invisible Man*, “Empire of Signs”
 - c. Coming of Age: *Flamingo Rising*, *Rebel without a Cause*, *Sinister Adolescents*, *Beautiful Brains* article, *Teens: Genetics, Peers, Parents?*, *Cyclists’ Raid/The Wild One*
 - d. Beats: “The Source”, “*On the Road*”, *America*, *Howl*, *The Graduate*
 - e. Vietnam: *Chronicles of War Video*, “*On the Rainy River*”, *Full Metal Jacket*, *Goodnight Saigon*, *Vietnam Vet Interview*, “*The Things They Carried*”, *Platoon*, *MASH*
 - f. Counter-culture: *Slaughterhouse V*, “*Magic Trip*”, *EKAT: Black Shiny FBI Shoes*, *Plugging In Video*, *Folk Music Lyrics*, *Hair*, *Hell’s Angel’s Thompson Article*, *Punk Video* & articles, *Welcome to Death Row Records Video*
 - g. Corporate Culture: *Pop Art*, *Being There*, *Network*

Dominant American Values

Adapted from Robin M. Williams Jr., *American Society: A Sociological Interpretation* 3rd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960) 396-470

1. **Achievement and Success:** In our competitive society, stress is placed on personal achievement. This is measured by accomplishments, such as economic ones. Success emphasizes rewards. Success is involved with activity; failure is often assigned to character defects. Success is often equated with bigness and newness.
2. **Activity and Work:** Americans value busyness, speed, bustle, action. The frontier idea of work for survival is still with us, as in the Puritan work ethic of work before play. Work becomes an end in itself. A person's worth is measured by his or her performance.
3. **Moral Orientation:** Americans think in terms of good and bad, right and wrong- not just in practical terms. Early Puritan ideas of working hard, leading an orderly life, having a reputation for integrity and fair dealing, avoiding reckless display, and carrying out one's purposes still hold weight.
4. **Humanitarianism:** Much emphasis is placed on disinterested concern, helpfulness, personal kindness, aid and comfort, spontaneous aid in mass disasters, as well as on impersonal philanthropy. This emphasis is related to equalitarian democracy, but often it clashes with our value of rugged individualism.
5. **Efficiency and Practicality:** Germans refer to our "Fordisms" or belief in standardization, mass production, and streamlined industrialism. We like innovation, modernity, expediency, getting things done. We value technique and discipline in science. We enjoy short-range adjustments in immediate situations. Practicality again means active interest in workability.
6. **Progress:** Americans look forward more than backward. We resent the old fashioned, the outmoded. We seek the best yet through change. Progress is often identified with the Darwinian idea of survival of the fittest and with the free enterprise system.
7. **Material Comfort:** Americans enjoy passive gratification- drink this, chew that, take a vacation. We enjoy happy endings in movies. We enjoy consumption, and our heroes before 1920 were more from social, commercial, and cultural worlds of production. After the 1920's the heroes came more from the leisure-time activities of sports and entertainment. Yet Americans also enjoy culture and engage in do-it-yourself hobbies and vacations.
8. **Equality:** Our history has stressed the equality of opportunity, especially economic opportunity. We feel guilt, shame, or ego deflation when inequality appears. While discrimination exists, much lip service is paid to formal rights, legal rights. Equality is not a pure concept but is largely two-sided: social rights and equality of opportunity.
9. **Freedom:** Americans also seek freedom from some restraint, having confidence in the individual. Freedom inters into free enterprise, progress, individual choice, and equality. It has not meant the absence of social control.
10. **External Conformity:** Americans also believe in adherence to group patterns, especially for success. Economic, political, and social dependence and interdependence call for some conformity. If all people are equal, each has a right to judge the other and regulate conduct to accepted standards.
11. **Science:** Americans have faith in science and its tools. Science is rational, functional, active. Science is morally neutral. IT adds to our material comfort and progress.
12. **Nationalism-Patriotism:** Americans feel some sense of loyalty to their country, its national symbols, and its history. Foreigners observe how we value our flag and our national anthem, how we believe that America is the greatest country in the world.
13. **Democracy:** Americans have grown to accept majority rule, representative institutions, and to reject monarchies, aristocracies, and dictatorships. We accept law, equality, freedom.
14. **Individual Personality:** We protect our individualism by laws and by the belief in one's own worth.
15. **Racism and Group Superiority:** This is a deviant theme, not central, but still widespread. This value takes its form in racial, religious, ethnic, and sexual discrimination.

The 13 Evil Propaganda Techniques

Sophistry to overcome any audience

1. **Bandwagon/Snob Appeal:** Join the crowd or “Only for a special few”. Example: “The few, the proud, the Marines.”
2. **Transfer:** If you like/dislike that, then you have to like/dislike this too. Example: “Do you like death? Do you like it when babies die in the streets? Then how can you be for the war in Afghanistan?”
3. **Bargain/Exigency:** I’ll give you a good deal/Do it now or else! Example: “This may very well be our last chance to bring peace and democracy to the Middle East. We must take advantage of it!”
4. **Slippery Slope:** Predicts a series of bad results stemming from one choice. **Example:** “If you change the language and make [marriage] about love, there is no answer to that. When it comes to incest the answer is well you couldn’t procreate... ..so if you got fixed and your sister got fixed, why couldn’t you get married?” ~Glen Beck
5. **Flag-waving:** If you don’t do this, you are not an American. “Why does Barack Obama refuse to wear a flag pin?”
6. **Name-calling:** Attack the person, not the idea. Example: “Obama’s foreign policy can’t be good for America, the man is a liberal *community organizer*.”
7. **Just Plain Folks:** I’m just like you so believe me. “I’m not a witch... ..I’m you.”
8. **Testimonial/Wise-Man Fallacy:** Just because someone famous says it, doesn’t mean it is true. Example: “Arnold Schwarzenegger says that ‘the war in Iraq is absolutely necessary.’ Are you going to go against the terminator?”
9. **Oversimplification:** Either/Or fallacy. Example: “*Either* we fight the war in Afghanistan, *or* we fight the war in New York City.”
10. **False cause-effect:** Mistakenly believing that one thing leads to another (speaker knows it is not true) Example: “It’s a fact that drowning in the U.S. increases dramatically at the same time that ice cream sales increase dramatically. There is only one possible conclusion to draw from this- ice cream kills.”
11. **Card-Stacking:** Only tell your side of the story. Example: “We know that there are terrorists working right now to kill Americans. We know that Bin Laden has helped these terrorists in the past. We know that people are suffering in Afghanistan and that we can help them by overthrowing their repressive government. There is nothing more that we need to know.”
12. **Repetition:** If you keep repeating and referring to something you said before then the audience will assume that it is true. Example: “Saddam Hussein has nuclear weapons.”
13. **Glittering Generality:** Use words or phrases that sound great but are so general that no one can’t pin down exactly what is being promised. Example: “It’s time for a change! Let’s kick out those fat cats in Washington. I will usher in an era of peace and prosperity through creative and realistic solutions.”

