I. Theory of the Power Elite: C. Wright Mills

A. Influences

1. Weber: rationalization

a. social organization: bureaucratization

b. hierarchy, offices, specialized division of labor, application of

general rules to individual cases

c. efficiency, predictability, control

d. downside!

2. Marx: alienation, class

a. alienation/ Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts

b. class conflict/German Ideology

B. Power Elite

1. Power: capacity of group or person to achieve goals despite resistance

2. Elite: small group who hold significant positions relative to affecting power

3. Power elite: common goals, positions, means for achieving those goals.

C. Conditions which led to power elite gaining control

1. economy

a. size: bureaucratization

b. increasing concentration of ownership

c. eliminate class conflict: control labor

i. assimilation to consumerism

ii. ideological

social contract

welfare capitalism

iii. unions = socialism/communism

2. political system

a. size: bureaucratization

b. consensus between parties: what is good for corporations is good for America

i. subsidize industries

ii. support post-war American Empire

iii. permanent war economy

c. cold war: elimination of dissent

i. red scare

ii. legislation

iii. witch hunts

iv. elimination of viable third parties

d. campaign on television

3. military

a. Military industrial complex

i. military

ii. DOD

ii.. weapons contractors

b. arms race

c. Technology and progress: weapons of mass destruction

d. Eisenhower and the military-industrial complex

<https://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces/>

B. Theory of *Power Elite*

1. Triangle of Power

a. power elite come from these three institutional areas

i. political

ii. economic

iii. military

b. historically

c. present characteristics of each order

i. larger

ii. centralized

iii. bureaucratized

iv. technology

v. more integrated

d. 1950s military dominates triangle

i.military most essential org

ii.military leaders influence domestic and foreign policies

iii. determine distribution of resources: permanent war economy

iv. control population

culture of fear

control public discourse: patriotism vs dissent

2. Who make up the power elite?

a. command positions

i. political leaders: president, high level officials

ii. corporate leaders: CEOs and directors of large corporations

iii. highest level military leaders

iv. interlocking and overlapping

b. elite: cohesive w/ common world view

i. common economic interests: what’s good for GM. . .

ii. shared policy goals

iii. shared foreign policy goals: “American Interests”

iv. shared world view

c. make “trunk decisions”

i. major foreign policy and domestic decisions

ii. decisions frame debates and possibilities

iii. “public” debate functions within these “frames”

3. means of governance: manipulation

a. we the people

i. interests conflict

ii. fear, especially nuclear warfare

iii. poverty

iv. racism

b. resistance

i. social movements

ii. culture

Literature: “The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit,” “The Death of A Salesman,” “The Crucible”

Film: “Rebel Without a Cause” “The Day the Earth Stood Still”

Music: Rock and Roll

Counter-culture: Beat Generation

c. elite need to manipulate: manufacture consent

i. politically: manufacture consent

ii. culturally: manufacture consumers

d. institutions of manipulation

i. education

ii. television

(dis) inform

distract

advertising

4. success

a. alienated, apathetic and uninformed citizenry

b. preoccupied with consumption

c. morally insensible