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The good guys win : Ronald Reagan, Tom Clancy, and the transformation of national security



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2015-05

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between popular culture and policy. It argues that popular culture serves to make policy legible to a broad audience and exerts influence on policy makers themselves. It examines the way the administration of Ronald Reagan made use of the novels of Tom Clancy to build support for its national security agenda, how the public received the works, and in turn how the novels reinforced Reagan's confidence in his policy. The paper also explores how Reagan developed his political ideology and how his background informed the method in which he received, and then presented information. It argues that Reagan was the driving ideological force in his administration.

Department

History

Description

text

Subject

Ronald Reagan
Tom Clancy
Cold War
Civil-military
National security

URI

<http://hdl.handle.net/2152/32361>

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The dissertation examines how Ronald Reagan made use of fiction in developing his world view and grand strategy. It argues his use of narrative played an essential role in shaping his vision and in how he communicated with the American public. In particular, the works of Tom Clancy, westerns, and science-fiction novels provided synthetic experiences and creative space that helped Reagan contextualize information and imagine the near-future. Fiction also helped Reagan develop empathy for peoples behind the Iron Curtain leading to a nuanced policy that clearly distinguished the people from their It examines the way the administration of Ronald Reagan made use of the novels of Tom Clancy to build support for its national security agenda, how the public received the works, and in turn how the novels reinforced Reagan's confidence in his policy. The paper also explores how Reagan developed his political ideology and how his background informed the method in which he received, and then presented information. It argues that Reagan was the driving ideological force in his administration. Department. History.