Hidden Among Us:
Analyzing Public Reaction to the Secret Use of Nazi Scientists by the United States Government

Authored By: Justin Kretz
University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire
Department of History

Cooperating Professor: Dr. Terresa Sanislo

Capstone Submitted to Dr. Joe Orser
December 2022
Abstract:

Between the years of 1945 to 1959, following the conclusion of World War II, the United States government brought roughly 1,600 Nazi scientists to America. Done out of “national interest,” these scientists would assist and make major contributions to their respective fields such as involvement in the Apollo 11 moon landing, advancement of medicine, and aircraft engineering. This was done in secret, codenamed “Operation Paperclip,” and later aroused much controversy amongst the American public. By engaging with various academic journals, political cartoons, and newspaper articles from 1946 through the present, this paper analyzes the public reception of the United States government using ardent Nazis to advance multiple aspects of society. Research suggests that the public was disappointed in the fact that the United States government used and forgave Nazis, looking past noteworthy achievements in multiple fields.
## Contents

Abstract.................................................................................................................................................. 3

Introduction............................................................................................................................................. 4

Review of Secondary Literature............................................................................................................. 8

Research:

Initial Reactions (1944-1947)................................................................................................................ 15

Influence of the Cold War on Public Reactions (1948-1977).............................................................. 22

More Recent Reactions (1978-Present).................................................................................................. 32

German vs. Nazi .................................................................................................................................... 37

Conclusion.............................................................................................................................................. 39

Bibliography........................................................................................................................................... 44
Introduction:

On May 8, 1945, Germany had announced its surrender and World War II came to an end in Europe. People flooded the streets around the world to celebrate the news of the war’s conclusion. Shortly after the joyous occasion, the world was faced with a question: what do we do about the surviving Nazis? The answer was simple for the citizens of the allied countries. To find them and hold them accountable for their crimes. The Nazi party was responsible for the mass extermination of roughly six-million Jewish people based on the party’s antisemitic ideology. Most agreed that those remaining needed to face the punishment for this atrocity and would see such justice through the Nuremberg Trials carried out between 1945 and 1949.

The answer was not that simple for the United States government.

In 1944, the United States formed a top-secret mission, codenamed “Operation Alsos,” headed by particle physicist Samuel Goudsmit and bacteriological warfare experts Bill Cromartie and Fred Wardenberg. The aim of Operation Alsos was intel; the three scientists and their accompanying team of soldiers raided the apartment of Dr. Eugene Haagen in Strasbourg, France. Haagen was a virus expert and was a key developer in the Nazi biological weapons program. The United States wanted to know the types of weapons and technology that Nazis had developed during the war. The discovery was concerning for the U.S government. The Nazi party had developed a wide-array of weapon technology that was far more advanced than the western countries had developed including the famous V-2 rockets and a biological chemical that

---

1 The name “Operation Alsos,” was not discussed in any of the findings of the research. The reason for the name or the meaning is unknown in terms of fact. “Alsos” is Spanish for “Also.” With “Also” being defined as “in addition to,” I would speculate the name comes from the U.S Government searching for additional information on the Nazi program and their science.
had the ability to kill a man within minutes with the tiniest particle touching their skin.\(^2\)

Despite the death of Adolf Hitler and the surrender of Germany, the United States was still concerned with the advanced technology of the Nazis. The United States wanted to know how such technology could be developed in secret and wanted to develop similar weapon technology for its own usage. This desire would be amplified due to a new emerging threat to American democracy, Communism. Rising tensions between the communist state of the Soviet Union and the United States paved the way for United States to stoop down to a level that many believed to be unethical. The United States formed the Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency (JIOA) and the U.S Army’s Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) in 1945 to hunt down and interrogate the remaining top Nazi scientists who had largely been responsible for the development of such weapons and technology. Upon the capture of said scientists, the United States faced the grim realities of these technological advancements. Much of the research done to build these weapons, had been done through human experimentation taken place across the various concentration camps scattered throughout Europe. In addition, much of the physical weapons themselves, such as the V-2 rocket, had been built through slave labor in the concentration camps and throughout various hidden laboratories in Europe during the war.\(^3\)

The scientists being interrogated by the United States were guilty of various war crimes such as forced human experimentation, forced slave labor, and the direct murder of thousands of Jewish people in concentration camps. However, the United States still believed its own scientific programs could benefit from these interactions with the scientists and felt that the


nation could as well. The need for better weapons and technology in the face of the developing Cold War led the United States to simply look away from these heinous crimes. The United States formed “Operation Paperclip,” which aimed to secretly bring roughly 1,600 Nazi scientists to the United States and put them under military contracts where they would assist in various scientific fields. Many of these scientists were not people who had simply been following orders or were forced into the Nazi party; many of these scientists were ardent Nazis who had firm beliefs in the party’s harmful ideology. A number of the scientists were high ranking officials in the Nazi regime, and some were even a part of Hitler’s inner-circle of trusted advisors. The list includes Otto Ambros, chemist for the Nazi party and co-discoverer of the nerve agent powerful enough to kill a man with single drop who also managed a slave labor factory in Auschwitz and a poison gas facility and would later go on to work for the U.S Chemical Corporation W. R. Grace and the U.S Department of Energy; Reinhard Gehlen, Hitler’s senior intelligence officer, who was later hired to run a group to gather intelligence on Soviet spies; and Wernher von Braun, Hitler’s technical director of the V-weapons who would later be hired as chief architect of the Saturn V launch vehicle, which propelled Americans to the moon. 4 Wernher von Braun is often celebrated as an American hero and even made an appearance in Walt Disney’s Man in Space, 5 despite his involvement with the various slave labor factories across Europe.

The list of ardent Nazis that were hired by the United States is long and extensive, but all were hired with the same intention of advancing science and weaponry to ensure America was safe from the rising threat of the Soviet Union and communism. Through research done in the


1950s by a journalist for the *Boston Globe*, Paperclip scientist Kurt Blome was tied to human experimentation done in Europe during World War II which helped reveal Operation Paperclip to the public.⁶

Through analyzing newspaper articles, political cartoons, and academic journals, this study looks to understand how the public reacted to Operation Paperclip. The research will look at early reactions to Operation Paperclip, analyze the influence of the Cold War on the public’s reaction, and engage with more recent sources in hopes to create a consistent basis of how the public reacted to Operation Paperclip. Results from the study show various reactions. Most would demonstrate a negative reaction which contributed to the thesis of this paper being a consistent negative reaction to Operation Paperclip. However, breaks in consistency occur with some discussions of the positives of Operation Paperclip.

---

Review of Secondary Literature:

Although not much has been written specifically about public reaction to Operation Paperclip, there has been a fair amount of writing produced on Operation Paperclip as a whole. This is the set of sources that will be analyzed first here. Following the analysis on the sources that discuss Operation Paperclip as a whole, I will be analyzing sources that discuss the ethical use of Nazi science. Although public reaction is not explicitly discussed, one could argue that the debate over the ethics of using Nazi science can fall under the classification of public reaction.

Figure 1.1.: Image of some of Nazi Scientists brought over in Operation Paperclip. Photograph from Maro Margaritoff, Summer 1947, Inside Operation Paperclip, America’s Secret Program That Employed 1600 Nazi Scientists in Its Lab, Allthatisinteresting.com, https://allthatisinteresting.com/operation-paperclip.
Those who argue against the use of Nazi science are portraying a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip, with those who argue that the use of Nazi science is ethical portraying a more positive reaction to Operation Paperclip.

Annie Jacobsen’s book, *Operation Paperclip: The Secret Intelligence Program That Brought Nazi Scientists to America*, acts as the foundational research on Operation Paperclip. Jacobsen outlines how the project began, the process of recruiting scientists, and provides in great detail how some of the most important scientists were being used by the United States government. Jacobsen uses a collection of declassified documents provided to her by the government, personal journals from both members of the United States military and the Nazi scientists, interviews with family members of the scientists, and a substantial collection of monographs and journals written on the various fields that these scientists contributed to, in order to create the most accurate and detailed of Operation Paperclip to date. For example, Jacobsen provides an in-detail description of the recruitment of many of these scientists such as the JIOA speeding up the process of obtaining visas to enter the United States and how final clearance was granted for these individuals.7 However, the only place that Jacobsen lacks detail is in the immigration process. She discusses the obtaining of visas and clearance being granted to specific individuals but does not state how these scientists entered the country. One chapter many of these scientists are hiding in Germany, then they encounter a United States military official, then they are in the United States in the next chapter. This creates a gap of information in her literature.

---

This gap is then filled by Monique Laney. In her article in, *A Nation of Immigrants Reconsidered: U.S Society in an Age of Restriction, 1924-1965*, Laney outlines how these Nazi scientists entered the United States. Laney explains that the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 paved the way for entry. This Act would grant fifty percent of visas to immigrants that the Attorney General deemed urgently needed because of their higher education. Since all these scientists had degrees from respectable universities across the world, they fell into this category. Laney also explains what the physical process was like for entering the United States. She explains that the United States had set up consultants at the borders of both Mexico and Canada. The scientists would then be escorted by a military official wearing civilian clothes, both would meet the consultant, and entry would be granted as resident alien status as per immigration law in the United States.⁸

This article by Laney is able to fill the gaps left open by Jacobsen’s work. When combining their work, one can fully understand how Operation Paperclip unfolded and how these Nazi scientists were able to enter the country and begin working for the United States government. The remaining sources that will be analyzed will be regarding the ethical use of Nazi science, which is more on-par with public perception.

The analysis of sources will begin with the work of Robert Holub. In the journal article titled, “Dichter, Denker, Nazis: Nazi Germany in the American Mind,” Holub argues that the use of Nazi scientists weakened the United States’ relationship with rest of Eastern Europe. Holub relays

---

the message that the growing Soviet threat was overestimated, and the use of these scientists was not necessary. The basis of this argument comes from the idea that by using these scientists despite their involvement with the Nazi party, undermined the government’s credibility because of the blatant disregarding of the ethics surrounding the use of war criminals. Holub is arguing that the entire usage of Nazi scientists was unethical and rather the United States should have played a bigger role in holding these people accountable for their actions.  

The idea that the use of Nazi science being unethical is supported by Gershon Grunfeld. In the Journal of Medical Ethics, Grunfeld is replying to a colleague discussing the role of ethics in the medical field. In this reply, there is a section titled, “Ethics of Using Nazi Research” where Grunfeld not only discredits much of the research done by Nazi scientists, but also explicitly states, “In light of the above, any use or presentation of ‘data’ from the Nazi experiments as scientific facts is unethical.” Although Grunfeld is more concerned with the actual science component than Holub, both would seemingly agree that the usage of Nazi science and scientists should be classified as unethical based on their overall involvement in the Nazi party.

Use of Nazi science being deemed as unethical continues to gain ground in a published special issue of Bioethics. The special issue is titled, “Bioethics and the Legacy of the Holocaust,” and contains an article written by Herwig Czech, Paul Weindling, and Christiane Druml. In their article, “From Scientific Exploitation to Individual Memorialization: Evolving Attitudes Towards Research on Nazi Victims’ Bodies”, the three authors are analyzing a shift in policy at the international level over the usage of Nazi science obtained through human experimentation. The

---


authors explain how following the Nuremberg Trials, a new emphasis would be placed on medical ethics and the usage of humans in their experiments. They state that the language in the multiple medical codes of ethics allowed continuous usage of human cells and tissues obtained through Nazi experimentation. They continue to elaborate how a renewed interest in Nazi crimes in 1980s, forced a reevaluation of medical ethics and contributed to the overall understanding that the use of Nazi science obtained from human experimentation should be considered unethical because it “harms the posthumous rights of the victims and constitutes a moral harm to society at large”11 based on the disregarding of the human the science came from. Their study explains how attitudes have changed on the usage of such science, and ultimately allows them to conclude that the usage of bodies and the science obtained from these bodies by Nazi scientists should be considered unethical.12

Majority of scholars have agreed that the usage of Nazi science in any fashion should be considered unethical, which would result in a largely negative reaction over the usage of Nazi scientists and Operation Paperclip. Where there is a divergence in thought comes from the work of Edward Zukowski. In his journal article, “The ‘Good Conscious’ of Nazi Doctors”, Zukowski is analyzing the claim that these Nazi scientists and doctors who conducted research were not acting out blatant evil, instead they were exercising good conscious out of the hopes of bettering their nation. Zukowski is not defending the Nazi scientists and is by no means condoning their work. Instead, what he is arguing is that their research should be looked at through a new lens,

12 Ibid, 517.
one that understands why they were carrying out these experiments and ultimately what came out of them. This would suggest that based on the notion that the doctors were using “good conscious”, their work should not be scrutinized as harshly because they believed to be doing good. One could suggest that Zukowski is condoning the use of their research because it is deemed as ethical since it was done out of the “good consciousness.” 13

Zukowski’s work then, is contradictory to the rest of the scholars mentioned in this section. Holub, Grunfeld, Czech, Weindling, and Druml, all unanimously agreed that the usage of Nazi science and scientists should be classified as unethical, despite all researching different aspects of the usage of Nazis. Zukowski then complicates this picture in stating that these Nazis were acting out of good faith for the overall betterment of their country, so their research should be looked at in such a hard lens, demonstrating a far-less negative reaction to the usage of Nazi science and Operation Paperclip.

The review of secondary literature connects to the larger thesis of this paper in several ways. First, Laney and Jacobsen allow me to fully grasp Operation Paperclip and its entirety. Understanding how the program unfolded and who was a part of it is critical for understanding why the public has reacted in the way it has. Second, after reviewing the literature I see a continuous theme of a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip. Apart from Zukowski, much of the literature written on the topic of Operation Paperclip and the usage of Nazi science supports the overall thesis of this paper, being that there was a consistent negative public reaction to Operation Paperclip. This provided me with a basis of thought. Scholars are reacting negatively to Operation Paperclip, which led me to believe that much of the public would follow this trend.

Most of the negativity was based on the question of ethics in using Nazi science and with multiple scholars holding this view, it shows that this is not a view being held one specific person or a group of people. This is evident in a negative reaction being persistent across time. Each of the journal articles mentioned above is from a different year, meaning that a negative reaction has been held persistent amongst scholars. Circling back to the theme of paper, I was able to infer that the public would likely follow this trend and would react negatively to Operation Paperclip. Research would then suggest this to be true, reaffirming the thesis of this paper being a consistent negative reaction to Operation Paperclip.

Original Research:

The remainder of this paper will be dedicated to understanding how the public has reacted to Operation Paperclip. For research purposes, I have separated the public reactions into three segments, each marked by a period of time. The first section will look at how the public initially responded to Operation Paperclip between the years of 1944 to 1947. The second of these sections is going to analyze whether or not the Cold War affected how the public was viewing the use of Nazi scientists. The Cold War section will use sources immediately following the period of initial reaction from 1948 up to 1977. The final section will look to understand how the public has reacted to Operation Paperclip more recently and will use sources from 1978 through the present. The primary sources of information used in the following sections will be newspaper articles and a political cartoon with secondary scholarly sources supporting general ideas portrayed in the writing. I will be looking at the language used in each of the newspapers and explain how each source contributes to a public reaction, allowing me to reach a conclusion
of whether the source portrays a positive or negative reaction to Operation Paperclip. Essentially, research will be treated as a primary source literature review.

There must be an operational definition of “public” before beginning the research. *Marriam-Webster Dictionary* defines public as, “The people as a whole.”¹⁴ This definition would work for the research; however, because this was a government run program and the government was responsible for Operation Paperclip, I want to exclude them from the definition. The definition of “public” for this paper will go as follows, “The people of a state or nation, as a whole, excluding the government and government workers.” This definition allows me to include the views of ordinary citizens, newspaper writers, organizations, authors, scholars, and former government officials. This is a fair number of individuals allows me to generate a general consensus of what was being said about Operational Paperclip by people outside of those directly responsible for it.

**Immediate Reactions (1944-1947):**

The thesis of this section shows that initial reactions to Operational Paperclip would be classified as negative. The language used suggests an overall shock and disappointment by the public over the use of Nazis and Nazi science.

The first of these sources comes from the *Shamokin News-Dispatch* ran out of Pennsylvania. In 1944, syndicated columnist Walter Winchell lays the foundation for a negative public reaction nationwide. In the closing remarks Winchell states, “Remember this: It’s taking us longer to get rid of the Nazis in America than it will take us to lick both Germany and

---

Japan.” Since Operation Paperclip did not begin until 1945, Winchell is not discussing Operation Paperclip. He is discussing the struggles that America will face with trying to weed out Nazi sympathizers from not just the public, but from high-ranking government spots as well. The foundation of a negative reaction is still be laid by Winchell being clearly upset with the presence of Nazis and Nazism in America and even goes as far to call people “idiots” earlier in the article for not recognizing the Nazi problem earlier. Looking at this language, it is easy to infer that Winchell and the readers of the Shamokin News-Dispatch would be upset over the use Nazi scientists when they do reach American soil. Even though Operation Paperclip is not directly mentioned in this article, you can still see a negative public reaction to mere presence of Nazis in America.

The following source comes from an early December 1946 issue of the New York Times. In an article titled, “Nazi Scientists Aid Army on Research”, you can better see public reaction to specifically Operation Paperclip. This article outlines how Operation Paperclip is unfolding for the general public and explains where these scientists are being placed and what they are contributing to. The article explains how there are already eighty-six scientists at the military research center in Wright Field, Ohio at the time of publication. Where this article portrays a slightly negative reaction is in the wording used near the end of the article. Author Frederick Graham says, “The former pets of Hitler on whom millions of marks (German currency) were lavished to carry on their work now live atop a small knoll within Wright Field”. This portrays

16 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
a negative reaction through the demeaning manner in which the scientists are regarded. Referring to the scientists as “pets of Hitler” strips them of their individual personalities and achievements and rather focuses on the fact that these scientists were Nazis who worked directly under Hitler. Outside of the demeaning name calling, the rest of the article is written in neutral view of Operation Paperclip.

However, this neutral view in the *Times* article should not go unanalyzed. At the very beginning of the article, there is an indication that the original date of publication was set for November 19, 1946. The near-month delay is explained in the following line where it says, “Delayed for clearance by War Department.” This means that War Department ultimately had final say in what was said in the article about the usage of these Nazi scientists. In her book, *Operation Paperclip: The Secret Intelligence That Brought Nazi Scientists to America*, Annie Jacobsen explains this clearance process. “Each week that passed brought more focus on the subject. The public was growing increasingly outraged with the notion that an ex-Nazi general and alleged war criminal was still living in the United States.” What this quote does is explain why the War Department of the United States wanted final clearance on the article. The public reaction to Operation Paperclip was growing increasingly negative, so the War Department looked to curve some of that negative reaction by ensuring this article portrayed the usage of Nazi scientists in Operation Paperclip in a neutral view. It also explains why no specific names are mentioned in the *Times* article. Jacobsen’s quote is specifically speaking on scientist Dr. Walter Schieber. Schieber acted as a commander for the S.S (Schutzstaffel), the Nazi’s military police unit used to carryout various mass atrocities through executive force without any regard

---

for legal restraint.\textsuperscript{20} Since there was already a considerable amount of negativity in the public attitude towards Operation Paperclip, one can infer that the War Department felt the need to limit what was being said in the \textit{Times} article to help curve some of the negativity.

The following source complicates the thesis of this paper being a consistent negative reaction to Operation Paperclip. In a 1947, an associated press article published by \textit{New York Times} article titled, “German Scientists’ Help Said to Save Us 10 Years,” there appears to be a more positive reaction to Operation Paperclip. In this short article, explains how the importation of over three-hundred German scientists has helped the United States advance fields of research ahead of schedule by up to ten years. The article continues to describe these scientists as volunteers working for anywhere between five-to-ten dollars per day.\textsuperscript{21} This article seems to be portraying a positive reaction to Operation Paperclip; however, this image to be more complicated than that.

Although initial research would suggest this being a positive reaction, this could be a sort of manipulation of the narrative to help curve some of the negative reactions toward Operation Paperclip. The article itself contains quotes from the American Army Headquarters, War Department, and Department of Commerce, all of which are government-run agencies. One could infer from the usage of government agencies in this article, that they had a considerable amount of input on this article. “German Scientists’ Help Said to Save Us 10 Years” was written merely six months after the publication of “Nazi Scientists Aid Army on Research”.


to be a considerable shift in mood since Graham’s article, demeans these scientists by calling them “pets of Hitler”, and now this Times article seems to be portraying these scientists as heroes for advancing our technology.

Another important aspect to note is that this Times article does not refer to these scientists as Nazis, it calls them German. This is an idea that will be explored further in a later section of this paper. This again could be done in hopes of creating a more positive public image for Operation Paperclip. Given that all sources thus far have contributed to a negative reaction and multiple secondary scholarly works such as Jacobsen’s book have portrayed how negative the public reaction was, one could assume that this article was likely an attempt to help relieve some of the negative press going towards Operation Paperclip.

February 1, 1947, a group of America’s top scientists met with President Truman in New York City. The group of scientists were representing the Federation of American Scientists. The Federation of American Scientists was founded in 1945, after the dropping of the atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The group is concerned with the use of science for malice and created the group to commit and advocate for the use of science and technology for the benefit of humanity. The group expressed their concerns over Operation Paperclip to President Truman by saying the program was a,

“drastic step in the search for military power. … Certainly not wishing to jeopardize the legitimate needs of national defense, and not advocating the policy of hatred and vengeance toward our former enemies, we nevertheless believe that the large-scale importation of German scientists … is not in keeping with the best objectives of American domestic and foreign policy.


… Certainly, any person who can transfer loyalties from one ideology [sic] to another upon the shifting of a meal ticket is not better than Judas!”

The delivery of this message from Federation of American Scientists to President Truman in the form of a speech portrays a negative public reaction by the group of scientists stating that these are still in fact ardent Nazis, and they should not be forgiven. They are claiming that the Nazis are still Nazis, and they are merely shifting their ideology on the basis that the United States is housing, feeding, and employing them. The Federation of American Scientists is condemning the usage of these Nazi scientists, demonstrating a negative public reaction from what would be considered America’s scientific elite.

The questioning of morals of the government by the scientific elite continues in a January 1947, public opinion article. In this article, it is shared that Albert Einstein is against the government program. “Albert Einstein and other American scientific groups have already registered sharp protest.” This demonstrates a negative public reaction in numerous ways. Einstein is arguably one of the most famous and influential scientists in history. His disapproval and protest of Operation Paperclip marks a major historical figure with world-renowned scientific contributions being directly against Operation Paperclip. Through his social status, Einstein’s disapproval can be seen as a more impactful figure of the public being opposed to Operation Paperclip.

The same article contributes to the trend of negative writing about Operation Paperclip. As the author continues to write, they weigh in themselves on the opinion of the use of Nazi


scientists. “To deny all hope of American citizenship to any scientist who is proved to be a Nazi or even a Nazi sympathizer is the only way to show we are aware of the importance of such convictions and hold men who followed them alone worthy of American citizenship.”26 This translates into a negative reaction because the author is saying that the only way for Operation Paperclip to be accepted by the public is by denying these individuals citizenship based on their deeds during World War II. They are marking Operation Paperclip as an unfair forgiveness of these individuals and do not want them to be granted citizenship.

The findings of this section would suggest that the initial public reaction to Operation Paperclip would be considered negative. The foundation of a negative reaction is laid in the Shamokin News-Dispatch article through the author calling the public “idiots” for not recognizing the Nazi problem and stating it will take longer to rid America of Nazis than it will take to win the war; you see it in Graham’s New York Times article through the demeaning language of calling these Nazi scientists “pets;” it is also evident in the New York Times article through possible government tampering; and finally it is evident through the condemning of the usage of Nazi scientists from the Federation of American Scientists and Albert Einstein. From the inclusion of the disapproval from the Federation of American Scientists and Albert Einstein, we see highly regarded members of the public expressing their direct disapproval to Operation Paperclip. When you pair these powerful statements with the writings from members of the public in newspapers, there is a fair amount of evidence contributing to the idea that the public reacted negatively to Operation Paperclip. Outside of one New York Times article, every source has portrayed a negative reaction through the language used to describe the Nazi scientists themselves, or the usage of these Nazi scientists brought over in Operation Paperclip. Thus, the

---

evidence in the period of initial public reaction between the years of 1944 through 1947 has created reason to believe there was a negative public reaction to Operation Paperclip initially.

Influence of the Cold War on Public’s Reaction (1948-1977):

It would be impossible to discuss the public reaction to Operation Paperclip without discussing whether the Cold War had any influence on the way the public viewed Operation Paperclip. Much of the recruitment of scientists occurred on the basis of trying to keep these scientists out of the Soviet Union’s hands, as the Soviet Union was running a recruitment operation of their own. The “national interest” that the government quoted as their reasoning for bringing over these scientists was based on ensuring that the United States was more advanced technologically, militarily, and medically than that of the Communist state of the Soviet Union. The research in this section was dedicated to answering the question of whether a new common enemy for the public in the form of Communism, affected the way the United States public saw the use of these Nazi scientists. The concerns over the USSR still applied in the previous section of initial reactions, but this section looks to directly answer if these concerns guided the way the public reacted to Operation Paperclip. For research purposes the dedicated dates in this section fall between the years of 1948 to 1977. The findings of this section are more complicated than the previous section. While there is still a fair amount sources that would depict negativity towards Operation Paperclip, there are sources that seem to support the idea a common enemy in the Soviet Union has changed public perception of Operation Paperclip.
The first of the sources analyzed in this section to portray a negative reaction is in a political cartoon from *The New York Times* published on February 8, 1948. The cartoon is meant to portray the relatively easy stance the United States has taken on “de-nazifying” the scientists.

![Political cartoon depicting America’s denazification process](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1948/02/08/issue.html)

**Figure 2: Political cartoon depicting America’s denazification process**


This article\(^\text{27}\) portrays a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip in several ways. It depicts the unhappiness of the general public in the way that the United States is dealing with

these former Nazis. The first of image depicts the Nazi scientist having just committed a murder. His hands are bloody, with a dead body and a bloodied knife laying next to him. This is a reference to the many murders that the Nazi party themselves committed during the course of World War II and is a reference to the murders that these scientists and doctors committed themselves while conducting human experimentation. The next images of the scientist show him picking up the soap and washing his hands clean of the crime. The image is captioned, “American soap and an English towel to wash these little hands.”

The scientist is able to wash away the crime by using the American soap, this is inferring that the United States is forgiving these scientists very easily. By adopting American culture and helping the advancement of various scientific fields, the Nazi scientists brought over in Operation Paperclip are seemingly being forgiven for the mass atrocities they have committed. This is where the negative reaction is being depicted. The image is suggesting that the United States is taking an easy stance of denazification and is simply forgiving these Nazis because they are helping advance their scientific fields. The public is using this image to express their displeasure with the stance on denazification being taken by the United States’ government by portraying it as simple as washing hands. Therefore, this image represents a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip by portraying the denazification process as a mere handwashing rather than ensuring a serious shift in ideology has occurred.

Opposition and negative reaction continue through Eleanor Roosevelt. In her newspaper column titled, “My Day” published in the United Feature Syndicate, the former first lady urges

---

the government to suspend the visas of these Nazi scientists and asks the question, “why are freeing so many Nazis?” This article supports the idea of a negative public reaction by Eleanor Roosevelt calling for the government to suspend the visas of these scientists and questioning the governments ethics in using these scientists. The request to revoke their visas is directly stating that she is against the use of these Nazi scientists, which portrays a negative public reaction to Operation Paperclip. The questioning of ethics in the use of these Nazi scientists in the quote also portrays a negative public reaction through stating that these scientists were still Nazis who committed serious war crimes and they should be treated as such.

The next source comes from a newspaper published one month after the New York Times article previously analyzed, in Anniston, Alabama. The article is looking to describe the leaders of the Soviet Union, outside of Stalin. While discussing this matter, author Alfred Burkert mentions how it was relatively easy to know the leaders of the Nazi party when they were in power. Through making this comparison of the Soviet Union and the Nazi regime, the author places both parties in the same light. He is marking them both as enemies of the United States. Language such as, “forcing 200 million people to hate the United States and the principles for which we stand” portrays a negative reaction by making a clear separation of the United States and the people attacking the values of the United States. The public reaction is this article is evident in the quote above and the classification of both the Soviet Union and the Nazi regime in the same designation also allow one to see a negative reaction. The Soviet Union was the new

---


30 Alfred Burkert, “Backgrounds of Red Leaders are Described: Men Behind Stalin in ‘Cold War’ Not Too Well Known,” Anniston Star (AL), March 14, 1948, 29.
enemy of the United States public; by classifying Nazis with the Soviet Union, it marks both as enemies rather than relieving of the Nazis of the enemy diagnosis.

Burkert’s article is not the only time that Nazis and the Soviet Union have been put into the same light by the American public. In their journal article, “Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930’s-1950’s”, authors Les Adler and Thomas Paterson explain how the American public came to view Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany.

“In the early months of the Cold War, Herbert L. Matthews of the New York Times posed some disturbing questions. ‘Should we now place Stalinist Russia in the same category as Hitlerite Germany? Should we say she is Fascist?’ He answered affirmatively, as did many Americans in the post-World War II era. President Truman himself remarked in 1947 that ‘There isn’t any difference in totalitarian states. I don’t care what you call them, Nazi, Communist, or Fascist.’”

This quote and article support the previous idea of Nazis and Soviet Russia being placed in the same category of detest by the American public and even by the nation’s president. This then can be applied to the public reaction to Operation Paperclip, marking a negative reaction to the presence of Nazis in America, despite the emergence of a new enemy in Soviet Russia and Communism.

The following source continues to show a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip. In the section titled, “Gossip of the Nation” in the Philadelphia Inquirer, author Walter Winchell displays a great deal of negativity towards Operation Paperclip. The article is discussing the lack


32 Walter Winchell was a syndicated American newspaper columnist and radio host.
of action from the Marshall Plan, then Winchell turns his attention to the presence of Nazis in America. He first designates Germany as “Nazi-land”, uses the terms “infested with Nazis”, then directly mentions “Nazi singers coming over”. The clear detest in the language used by Winchell is what is portraying the negative reaction. By designating Germany as “Nazi-land”, he is marking the entire German public as Nazis, strips them of their individual characteristics, and marks Germany as only being remembered for their dark past. Operation Paperclip had been occurring for five years at this point, Winchell still is referring to these scientists in a negative fashion by refusing to call them anything but Nazis. Winchell’s disgruntled view on Germans and Nazis mark a negative public reaction by using the term “Nazis” to demean Germany as a whole. The language demonstrates clear opposition to Germans entering the United States, meaning this is a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip.

The following sources calls for an end to Operation Paperclip not based on the ethical usage of Nazi scientists as many of the sources before having used, but under the reasoning of economic practicality. In their letter to the editor titled, “Marshall-Lovett Arms Program Termed an End to ‘Operation Paperclip”, authors Joseph and Stewart Alsop analyze an argument being made by Secretary of Defense George Marshall and Under-Secretary Robert Lovett that the money going into Operation Paperclip should be placed elsewhere. The article comes shortly after Communist China committed to backing Korea during the United States involvement in the Korean War. George Marshall and Robert Lovett are saying that too much money is being put into Operation Paperclip, and that money would be better spent on actual military technology

33 Initiative to provide foreign aid to Western Europe beginning in 1948.
under the gloomy lurking of a possible third World War. “Now Marshall and Lovett have
demanded an end to ‘Operation Paperclip’ and a completely new start. … Any fool can see that
the American armed forces must have at all costs the wherewithal to fight and eventually to win
such war.” This continues the trend of negative public reaction through the direct calling to end
Operation Paperclip. The basis of this argument is using different evidence, that being money
should be poured into the strengthening of the United States military, however the reaction
remains in the same in the sense that is negative.

Where reactions begin to differ from the created norm of a negative reaction is in two
articles from the same 1958 paper. The first of which, “Top Scientists Taken from Russian
Grasp” was published on February 22, 1958, and describes the recruiting efforts done by
Lieutenant John O’Reilly. The title alone would suggest a turn in attitude regarding Operation
Paperclip, but this idea of a shift away from negativity is supported by the language used. As the
article continues to outline Lt. O’Reilly’s interaction with a German petroleum chemist, the
closing remarks state, “Mission accomplished. One more German from Adolf Hitler’s enormous
pool of scientific brain power had been spirited into the U.S zone and started on his way to a new
life in America. This operation was the most rewarding snatch of live bodies in American
history.” This article is seemingly welcoming the recruitment of this German scientist, despite
his former relationship with Nazi leader Adolf Hitler. Stating that this mission was one of the
most rewarding recoveries of people in history means that this would be classified as a positive
reaction to Operation Paperclip. With the title being “Top Scientist Taken from Russian Grasp,”

35 Joseph Alsop and Stewart Alsop, “Marshall-Lovett Arms Program Termed an End to ‘Operation
Paperclip,’” Des Moines Tribune (IA), Nov. 20, 1950, 20.

it would also suggest that this a case of the public changing their opinion on the usage of Nazi scientists based on tensions with the Soviet Union.

Following the article on Lt. O’Reilly, the same 1958 newspaper continues to shed light on the positives of Operation Paperclip. Author Jim O’Connor writes, “There are now 84 former German and Austrian scientists employed at the Wright Air Development Center here. They include the designer of the first successful jet airplane engine, the designer of the first guided missile, experts in every phase of aerodynamics. They include specialists for whose services the Russians would pay almost any price.” Two articles in a row now have explicitly mentioned that these scientists were being recruited by the Soviet Union but have now instead been transported to the United States. The mentioning of their accomplishments and demonstration of their value can be marked as a positive reaction because they are being built up by the author. These articles can be paired together as breaks in the pattern of negativity and show more acceptance to these Nazi scientists on the notion that they are better here in the United States helping its government compared the Soviet Union.

In January 1961, a group of Nazis was stoned by a large group of the public who had been waiting for them outside of a theater in Boston. The events are captured in the New York Times article titled, “American Nazi Stoned in Boston”. The public held signs condemning the Nazis for their actions and “surged forward a few minutes after Rockwell (Nazi) arrived, hurling stones and eggs at him.” The Nazi being stoned was an American born citizen and is a leader of an American Nazi Party. This then cannot be classified as a reaction to Operation Paperclip.

However, it does still show a reaction. The public is reacting negatively towards a Nazi in America, but not one from Operation Paperclip. It is likely the term, “Nazi” generating this reaction rather than accounting this as a reaction directly to Operation Paperclip. This specific article and the exploring of the idea the word “Nazi” inciting a negative reaction will be discussed later in this paper. This still does show that Nazis were not necessarily excused from the public’s eye during the period of the Cold War.

“The full disaster of German denazification was never grasped by the American public. They do not know that the ‘major Nazi offenders’ were never tried by denazification tribunals but reclassified into ‘lesser offender’ categories by the Americans and ‘amnestied’ as such. Americans are unaware that Congress enforced this by threatening to cut the Army budget.”

This quote appears in the August 31, 1965, edition of the New York Times. This quote is directly speaking on the scientists involved in Operation Paperclip. The author appears to be writing from a view of disbelief. Author Frederick Wallach is trying to inform the public that this program happened, and many Nazi war criminals are walking free in the streets across the United States. This depicts a negative public reaction through the usage of tone and the language used. The tone of disbelief is read throughout the article which can be interpreted as a negative reaction because of the unexpectedness of the American public for their government to recruit and hire Nazi scientists. Deeming the denazification process of these individuals as a “disaster” continues to paint a negative public reaction because it is putting the process in a negative light.

Despite a return to negativity toward Operation Paperclip in 1965, this 1972 article again shows a positive reaction to Operation Paperclip. Author Charles Lasby is writing on the impact

Operation Paperclip had on the Cold War. He explains how the program was built on the fears of a long, costly war with Japan, but the recruitment and use of these scientists led to the creation of the atom bomb and won a new credibility in the Cold War. The article continues to portray Operation Paperclip as a saving grace, but is reinforced through the quote, “The Air Force estimated their savings alone due to ‘Paperclip’ at $2 billion. Joseph Stalin allegedly told one his Army commanders after the war: ‘We defeated the Nazi armies; we occupied Berlin and Peenemunde; but the Americans got the rocket engineers. What could be more revolting and inexcusable? How and why was this allowed to happen’ The answer was ‘Operation Paperclip.’”

Similar to the last articles that portray positivity to Operation Paperclip, the author is focusing on all of the positives that came out of the government program. From saving us billions of dollars, to keeping them out of the Russians hands, this article portrays Operation Paperclip as a necessary measure taken by the government to ensure the safety and status of the United States.

“Vince, we did it! We made history!” These words of victory were spoken by Tony DeVito to his colleague Vince Schiano. The two attorneys had just successfully ordered the extradition of one of fifty-nine known Nazis in residing in Texas because of Operation Paperclip. Hermine Braunsteiner Ryan would face charges for murders committed in one of the Nazis concentration camps. DeVito and Schiano’s celebration help portray a negative reaction through their excitement. They are celebrating that one of the Nazis brought over are going to be facing trial for the crimes committed during World War II. This portrays a negative reaction because their emotions of holding Ryan accountable for her crimes would suggest that they are against

---


the use of these Nazis. By celebrating and ensuring that Ryan is being held accountable, both
men are showing opposition to Operation Paperclip, the usage of Nazi scientists, and suggesting
that further action be taken in holding all the Nazis accountable for their crimes. Their reactions
are different than the sources above given the context, but their reaction supports a negative
reaction.

The results of the study of this period are inconclusive. While there is still evidence that a
large portion of the public demonstrated negative reactions toward Operation Paperclip through
writings in newspapers, political cartoons, convictions, and a former first lady speaking out;
there were multiple articles that speak lightly on the program. These articles complicate the
findings and suggest that there was a portion of the public who did look past the idea that these
scientists were former Nazis because the necessity to have them given the context of the Cold
War. I cannot conclude on a set type of reaction to Operation Paperclip in this period but can
conclude that there were mixed reactions. Some of the public calling for the ban of these
scientists, while others welcome them with open arms out of fear of a war with the Soviet Union.

**More Recent Reactions (1978-Present):**

The final section of original research will be analyzing more recent reactions to
Operation Paperclip. The years of the documents presented will range from 1978 up to the
2000’s. The main point of research in this section was to see if time could heal all wounds. Now
that Operation Paperclip is concluded and public knowledge through a mere internet search, have
reactions changed now that we have seen or experienced the outcomes? Or has the public
remained consistent with a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip. Despite a number of years
passing and achievements, there seems to be a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip.
In the April 26, 1978, edition of the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, author Andrew Tully is discussing whether freedom of speech should be granted to a group of Nazis residing in Skokie, Illinois. Tully is very explicit with his language used. Throughout the article, Tully uses language such as, “little-boy like satraps” and “nasty little band of storm troopers”. The persistence of negative and demeaning language used throughout the article suggest two things. First, author Andrew Tully is disappointed in the fact that Nazis are being granted free speech through the United States’ Constitution. Second, his language would suggest that he is upset over the presence of Nazis in America. Since the language is so negative, this article can be seen as another negative reaction to the presence of Nazis in America. Operation Paperclip is not directly mentioned in this article, however the reaction towards Nazis or Nazi ideology being in America can be seen as negative.

The secret recruitment of Nazi scientists to work for the United States sounds like something out of a movie plot. Jack Anderson expresses this in his column of the *Mendo-Lake Advertiser*. Anderson explains how Operation Paperclip unfolded and as is the case of many of these articles, uses language that would suggest a negative reaction to the government program. “Unfortunately, the United States gave refuge to more than just the victims of Nazi brutality. Through the infamous Operation Paperclip, … American officials bent the immigration rules or looked the other way while dozens of Nazi scientists, many of whom performed inhumane experiments in concentration camps, slipped into the United States with their families after World War II.” Anderson is clearly showing a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip through

---


44 Ibid.
the words he is using to describe it. “Unfortunately” and “bent the immigration rules” are two pieces of evidence that show Anderson’s displeasure surrounding the program. The displeasure expressed in this article can be translated into another negative reaction to Operation Paperclip.

One of the most shocking elements of Operation Paperclip is the fact that the government tried to hide the fact that the scientists recruited were ardent Nazis and the crimes that these individuals committed. This shock is displayed in a San Bernardino County Sun article. Titled “Records Show U.S Hid Deeds of Former Nazis”, the article outlines Operation Paperclip, and the role the government played in ensuring that the public would not find out who these people were. Two powerful lines stuck out to me during my research. “American authorities knew that many of these specialists were ardent Nazis” and “The documents also show that among those hired for American research were several specialists who were later charged with war crimes at Nuremberg and one who was convicted and sentenced to 20 years in prison for medical experiments on prisoners at the Dachau concentration camp.”

These lines stood out to me because the article is choosing to focus on the fact that the scientists were ardent Nazis responsible for mass atrocities across Europe rather than the accomplishments the scientists were apart of once in the United States. This tells me that there is a great deal of displeasure held by the public. They are disregarding the advancements these scientists contributed to and holding on to the fact that these people were responsible for the death of millions, meaning that this would again be classified as a negative public reaction through the expression of the main points of the article.

Looking at a more recent *New York Times* article from 2010, there is a similar negative reaction to that of the past. Titled, “Nazis Were Given ‘Safe Haven’ in U.S, Report Says” the article displays a great deal of disappointment in the usage of Nazi scientists through Operation Paperclip.\(^{46}\) The article outlines the government’s attempt at keeping the information surrounding Operation Paperclip from the public’s eye and portrays evidence of disappointment through language used. This is best evident in the quote,

> “Perhaps the most damning disclosures come in Central Intelligence Agency’s involvement with Nazi emigres. … investigators learned that some of the Nazis ‘were granted entry’ to the United States even though government officials were aware of their pasts. ‘America, which prided itself on being a safe-haven for the persecuted, became – in some small measure – a safe haven for the persecutors as well.’”\(^{47}\)

The way the article discusses Operation Paperclip shows a level of disappointment through words such as the “most damning” and mentioning of America becoming a safe haven for Nazis as well. Both these phrases carry negative connotation, helping express the disappointment of the public, and displaying a more recent negative reaction to Operation Paperclip.

The final piece of evidence displaying a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip comes in the form of a debate. Every year, the Space Medicine Association hands out one of the most prestigious prizes in the field, the Hubertus Strughold Award. The award goes to a scientist for their outstanding work in aviation medicine and has been handed out since 1963.\(^{48}\) Controversy


\(^{47}\) Ibid.

begun to swirl when the past of the scientist the award was named after, Dr. Hubertus Strughold, was discovered. Strughold was one of the scientists brought over in Operation Paperclip, specifically to help the United States beat the Soviet Union to the moon, which he did. However, Strughold is also one of thirteen scientists listed to have participated in human experimentation, which often resulted in the death of the subjects at the Dachau concentration camp. As a response, there has been a debate on whether to continue to give the reward, rename it, or abandon it all together. The article that outlines the debate helps portray a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip by outlining the debate to either abandon or rename the award. The questioning of the award can be seen as a negative public reaction to Operation Paperclip because it is highlighting Strughold’s evil past and is trying to at least change the title of the award based on it. With Strughold being one of the key-players in Operation Paperclip, the negative reaction to Strughold can be applied to Operation Paperclip, resulting in a negative reaction to the program.

The findings of this section are closer to the finding of the “Initial Reaction” section of this paper. The more recent public reactions to Operation Paperclip have been overwhelmingly negative, especially given today’s ethical and moral standards of society. This is evident in the language used in various newspaper articles and in the field of aviation medicine. With negativity surrounding Operation Paperclip being persistent despite accomplishments of these scientists and the time that has passed since, the phrase, “time heals all wounds” can be seen as untrue regarding Operation Paperclip.

49 Ibid.
German vs. Nazi:

The study of public reaction to Operation Paperclip would be incomplete without considering and attempting to analyze where the reactions are being generated from. In all of the sources, reactions are coming from the author or speaker’s emotions, but what is driving the way these people feel about Operation Paperclip?

The answer is the term “Nazi.”

Majority of the sources that depict a negative reaction to Operation Paperclip refer to the former scientists as “Nazis” not as Germans. This could be the driving source for the emotion over Operation Paperclip given the clear hatred for Nazis from most. For example, the Nazis who were stoned leaving the movie theater.  

These individuals were stoned simply for their beliefs in Nazi ideology and for pledging their allegiance to the party through wearing their uniform. The protestors who threw the stones were also holding signs that condemned the Nazi party’s actions, further demonstrating the idea that this attack is a representative attack on the Nazi party as a whole. Other sources in this paper that demonstrate a negative reaction to Operation Paper mention the scientists as Nazis, then followed by some form of negative language. Take Fredrick Graham’s article for example. He refers to them as Nazis and “pets of Hitler,” and is expressing a clear negativity toward Operation Paperclip. Then shifting to the Journal-Herald, Jim O’Connor refers to them as Germans, and is demonstrating a much more...
positive tone towards the program. There seems to be correlation between Nazi and a negative reaction, and German and a positive reaction.

To support this idea of correlation between words and reactions, I analyzed more newspaper articles that use the term “German” to describe the scientists rather than “Nazi.” The first of which comes out of Baltimore, Maryland in 1946. The article states, “Germans’ work has ‘already put the United States ten years ahead of schedule in some fields of research and has saved millions of dollars in research costs.’”\(^\text{53}\) It is important to know two things. The first of which comes from the language used. “German scientist” was used instead of “Nazi scientist” and the article shares a more positive view on Operation Paperclip. The article explains how these individuals are helping the United States rather than focusing on the fact they were Nazis, which supports the idea of the term “Nazi” potentially driving most negative reactions. Second, this article was published in 1947. Until this article, every article from this time period (Initial Reactions: 1944-1947) would suggest a negative reaction. However, the use of German instead of Nazi seems to have allowed a different view on Operation Paperclip.

This idea of terminology driving reactions is continued in another 1947 article titled, “German Savants Save Millions for U.S Army.”\(^\text{54}\) While no new information regarding Operation Paperclip is presented in this article, it continues to demonstrate a more positive reaction towards Operation Paperclip. The article again focuses on the positives of the program and refers to them as German scientists, not Nazis. This provides another example of the term “German” being linked to a more positive reaction to Operation Paperclip.

\(^{53}\) Paul Patterson, “U.S Imports 350 Reich Scientists for Research,” Evening Sun (MD), May 17, 1947, 4.

\(^{54}\) “German Savants Save Millions for U.S Army,” Los Angeles Times (CA), May 17, 1947, 5.
The third piece of evidence between a potential correlation between “German” and a positive reaction takes it a step further and suggests that these scientists should even stay in the United States after their work is done. In a December 1946 article titled, “Wright Field Reveals ‘Operation Paperclip,’” we see a complete shift in attitude regarding Nazi scientists. “Once their work at Wright Field\(^55\) is completed, and should they remain in the United States, it’s very evident they will have no trouble finding positions elsewhere.”\(^56\) Articles from the same year mentioned earlier in the paper that call these scientists Nazis call for the expulsion of these people from America. This article refers to them as German and discusses how marketable and valuable they are to the science industry. There is clear difference between the attitudes, marking it more probable that the term “German scientist” produces a more positive reaction than “Nazi scientist.”

This is a topic that can be explored in its own research paper. I have merely provided three pieces of evidence that may suggest that there is a correlation between terms used to describe the scientists and the type of reaction accompanying said description. I cannot make any foundational claims, however, there does some seem to be an existing correlation.

**Conclusion:**

Public reaction and perception of Operation Paperclip has always been a question of whether the good of the program outweighs the evil committed by many of these scientists. As

\(^{55}\) Military Base in Ohio where majority of these scientists were housed near and worked.

expressed in the introduction, these were not simply just scientists who found themselves working for the wrong person at the wrong time. Most of these men were ardent Nazis and responsible for terribly horrifying things. Before discussing this idea further, I feel as if it is important to offer some disclaimers on the research.

To begin, it is important to note that Operation Paperclip was not the only Nazi recruiting program to be done following World War II. Britain and Russia both ran a very similar program to Operation Paperclip. Many of the Nazi scientists knew this, so they would use this as a bargaining tool for higher salaries, nicer places of living, or other luxuries. This research does not discuss how their publics reacted to their programs, nor does it explain how those programs unfolded. These elements were not particularly valuable to this research, so they were not included nor explored.

Second, the main sources of this document are newspaper articles. I felt this was the best way to capture how the public reacted to Operation Paperclip for several reasons. Since Operation Paperclip was a classified government program, sources directly relating to Operation Paperclip are tightly regulated, so newspapers offer more opinions on the program than other sources would share. Additionally, using various newspapers from across the nation provided a more well-rounded consensus of how the public felt. If I were to just use one specific newspaper one could argue that it is not providing a general view held by the public, it is only discussing the views of the writers of that one paper. I felt incorporating multiple newspapers added more validity to the argument. Taking my definition of “public” for this research, newspaper article authors would still fall under the classification of the public. This means their writings not only
represent the people and communicate messages to the people of the nation, but also demonstrate reactions to the programs themselves.

Returning to the conclusions of research, there is a clear and consistent negative reaction to Operation Paperclip. When research began, my initial thought would be that public reactions would change as time moved forward. I believed that the accomplishments of Operation Paperclip would outweigh the fact these people were participants in the Nazi party. For example, the United States beating the Soviet Union to the moon is a key moment in the nation’s history and helped affirm the United States’ position of a superpower with the rising threat of the Soviet Union and Communism. After researching and seeing the actual characters of Operation Paperclip and what they were responsible for, it is easy to see why the public reacted in a negative fashion in some cases.

Between the years of 1944 and 1947, classified in this research as “Immediate Reactions”, the negative reaction of the public began. Through using various newspaper articles and supporting secondary work such as Annie Jacobsen’s book,\(^57\) I was able to suggest the initial reaction to Operation Paperclip was negative. Frequent appearances of negative language regarding Operation Paperclip and through protests of both the Federation of American scientists and Albert Einstein would indicate there was a negative public reaction.

The following section aimed to answer if a common enemy could unite the public and allow them to forget the fact that the scientists being used were Nazis. The documents in this section were from 1948-1977 and aimed to understand if the Cold War influenced public

perception in any way. However, research showed that some of the public was not so willing to forget the fact Nazis were being used. Using the language presented in newspapers, including one authored by a former first lady,\(^{58}\) I was able to generate that some of the reactions to Operation Paperclip during the Cold War was still negative. This idea was further supported in the journal from the *American Historical Review*\(^ {59}\) which explained that the public classified Nazis and Soviets into the same category as an enemy. However, multiple sources that speak of Operation Paperclip positively, would support the idea that the public understands that the use of Nazi scientists was being done to counter efforts of the Soviet Union. Thus, results from this section are inconclusive based on a lack of consistency either way.

Finally, the last section looked to answer if there has been a recent change in the way the public viewed Operation Paperclip, with dates ranging from 1978 to the present. There was no shift in attitude regarding Operation Paperclip. The negative language remained persistent in newspapers whenever Operation Paperclip was discussed and one of the remaining pieces of Operation Paperclip being a scientific award, is being challenged based on the history of the individual it is named after. This would mean that more recent reactions to Operation Paperclip have remained negative.

Overall, the public’s reaction to Operation Paperclip is complicated. I cannot say whether there is a strict way the public reacted to Operation Paperclip. The “Initial Reaction” and “Recent Reaction” sections would suggest that the public likely reacted negatively to the program, but the

\[58\] Eleanor Roosevelt, see footnote 24.

findings of the “Influence of the Cold War” section would suggest that reactions were different, depending on how Operation Paperclip is viewed. It would seem that focusing on the idea that these scientists were Nazis would lead to more a negative reaction, while understanding the role of the Soviet Union and the use of “German scientist” instead of “Nazi” may contribute to a more positive reaction.
Bibliography:

Primary:


“German Savants Save Millions for U.S Army.” Los Angeles Times (CA), May 17, 1947.


**Secondary:**


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFXza9RH7-E.


https://www.jstor.org/stable/23559618?seq=27#metadata_info_tab_contents