

Reasons of political corruption in michael rogin's make my day!

[Government](#), [Corruption](#)



Make My Day!

In “‘ Make My Day!’: Spectacles as Amnesia in Imperial Politics” by Michael Rogin, Rogin’s main argument is that secret operations, political spectacles, amnesia, and racism have caused the political corruption of the post-modern American empire. Rogin vividly explains the significance of the causes of American political corruption throughout the article. He discusses Ronald Reagan and George Bush as key presidents of secret operations. He also discusses racial demonology in America and its effects and brings up key events such as World War II and the oppression of the Japanese. The reasons as to why covert operations are committed are also explained throughout the article. Additionally, the author’s use of various primary and secondary sources help to support his argument.

Covert operations and political spectacles are huge causes to the political corruption of America. Covert actions were a response to popular looseness. They may also serve particular corporate interests and the operations are often hidden from national subjects who may hold them to political account (Rogin 116). Furthermore, covert actions, obscured by disinformation, require the state to lie (Rogin 116). Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush are notable for making covert operations. For example, Reagan informed on his coworkers to the FBI and helped to organize the anti-Communist blacklist whose existence he denied (Rogin 100). Second, he negotiated the exemption for Music Corporation of America that allowed it alone among talent agencies to produce movies and television shows and simultaneously to represent actors (Rogin 100). In Bush’s case of covert

action, he had a relationship with the CIA (Rogin 101). He brought in Team B to politicize intelligence judgements, to exaggerate the extent of the Soviet military and political threat to the United States, and thus to lay the groundwork for the huge military buildup and expand covert operations that together defined the Reagan Doctrine in foreign policy (Rogin 101). Bush denied that he knew dictator Noriega was trafficking in drugs even though that was commonplace information in the CIA when he was in charge of it (Rogin 102). The Bush/Reagan relation to covert operations introduces a third form of power, the power of amnesia (Rogin 102). The phrase "Make my day!" is an example of amnesia in America. This phrase was familiar to many Americans but they were not familiar with the meaning primarily because they had not seen Clint Eastwood's *Sudden Impact*, the movie in which that phrase originated from (Rogin 105). President Reagan uses the phrase "make my day!" to aspire to Eastwood's power (Rogin 103). He used this phrase to target woman and blacks, particularly through the tax cuts that disemboweled their welfare-state benefits and that he was defending when he said "Make my day!" (Rogin 105). More importantly, this phrase declares an aggression that traces back to American culture of racial and sexual inequality, even though many who used this phrase were unaware of its filmic source or historical meaning (Rogin 105). As the phrase entered the common culture, the roots of the phrase disappeared, thus creating amnesia throughout the nation (Rogin 105).

The author discusses two kinds of amnesia that have an effect on American politics. Historical amnesia allows counterintelligence and race to continue to

construct American politics by separating modern practices from their historical roots (Rogin 106). On the other hand, political amnesia works not simply by burying history but also representing the return of the repressed (Rogin 106). Amnesia is similar to spectacles as well. A spectacle is the cultural form for amnesiac representation (Rogin 106). Spectacle displays are superficial, short-lived, and repeatable (Rogin 106). In addition, political spectacles display threats to the subject and state to comprise as well as to enjoy them (Rogin 107). Covert spectacles were prominent during the Reagan Era and they displayed state-supported American heroes in racial and violent combat (Rogin 107). An example of covert spectacles can be indicated in the film *Rambo*, which begins, "A covert action is being geared up in the far east" (Rogin 107). A scene in this film, in which the camera pulls back to reveal that it was showing the crease inside the hero's elbow rather than female private parts, is an example of a covert spectacle (Rogin 107). Additionally, World War II laid the structural foundations for the modern American empire (Rogin 114). World War II celebrated the undercover struggle of good against evil, and thus prepared the way for the covert spectacle (Rogin 114).

Racial issues are also a major cause of American political corruption. The author describes race entering in three ways. The first way is most subjects of American intervention being people of color as well as the racial history of the United States making it easier to dehumanize them (Rogin 108). The second way is American political culture coming to define itself in racist terms (Rogin 108). The third way he describes is categories beginning in

racial opposition being imposed on political opponents therefore creating an American political demonology (Rogin 108). The author uses an example from Jonathan Kwitny's *Endless Enemies* to support his three points. On May 19, 1978 Broadcaster Walter Cronkite began the CBS news with this statement: "The worst fears in the rebel invasion of Zaire's Shaba province reportedly have been realized. Rebels being routed from the mining town of Kolwezi are reported to have killed a number of Europeans" (Rogin 109). This "worse fear", according to Kwitny, makes it better to kill blacks rather than whites (Rogin 109). The author refers back to his first point of his argument that colored deaths do not count the way that white deaths do. He then refers back to his second point, inferring that imaginary racial massacres make colored people disposable and indispensable (Rogin 109). The fantasy of racial violence, Rogin states, defines the imperial imagination (Rogin 109). Racial conflict linked freedom to expansion in nature rather than to social unity (Rogin 109). He finally refers back to his last point, the impact of racial history in America transcending race and soiling America's political culture (Rogin 110). The conflict of race is a political issue as well. Political and racial demonology are often linked (Rogin 110). The author mentions World War II and how it was a historical moment when America seemed innocent of the charges of racial and political demonology (Rogin 110). World War II justified demonology and Nazism had a definite and negative impact on postwar politics (Rogin 110). Additionally, America proved to be politically corrupt when American leaders called for extermination of the Japanese (Rogin 112). The bombing of Hiroshima, which killed 80,000 to 100,000 Japanese on a single night, is an example of America's corruption and hostility (Rogin 112).

Lastly, the primary sources that the author refers to in this article are movies such as Sudden Impact and Murder in the Air, which both deal with amnesia in America. The book the author uses, Endless Enemies by Jonathan Kwitny is also a primary source. The secondary source that the author uses is the movie Rambo.

Overall, Michael Rogin's argument is vivid and well-supported throughout the article "' Make My Day!': Spectacles as Amnesia in Imperial Politics." He clearly discusses covert operations and political spectacles. He mentions presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush and how they play roles in secret operations and political corruption. Additionally, he discusses the power of amnesia, and how Clint Eastwood's popular phrase " Make my day!" has been misunderstood and how the phrase had a negative meaning to it. Lastly, Rogin mentioned racial demonology and its negative effects it had on modern America. Furthermore, the use of numerous primary and secondary source that the author uses in his article surely help to support his argument.