

## ABSTRACT

Over the past forty years, Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove, or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964) has become an icon that suggests the dangers of nuclear holocaust. Stanley Kubrick adapted Peter George's *Red Alert* (1958) from a suspense novel into a "nightmare comedy," a satire about the threat of an accidental nuclear war. *Dr. Strangelove* mocked the military officials, politicians, and scientists who formed US policies for the war on communism and the machines they utilized in that war. Kubrick hoped that, amid their laughter, audiences would realize that the scenario was not far-fetched. He hoped that audiences would recognize the dangers of US nuclear policies and the risks taken by the nation's leaders. Although the film received mixed reactions and reviews, it inspired a debate about the worth of its message, the realism of Kubrick's celluloid world, and the soundness of US nuclear policies. Since the Reagan administration, *Dr. Strangelove* has enjoyed new life. Historians have utilized the film in their discussions and about cold war history. Critics of US nuclear policies, particularly the Strategic Defense Initiative, have invoked the film to conjure up images of a world driven to the brink of the apocalypse by men similar to the film's characters. *Dr. Strangelove*, which began as expression of a young director's concern about the possibility of nuclear war, has become a point of reference for the cold war and the nuclear dangers that have not subsided with its end.