

Manipulation, Indoctrination, and Obfuscation in Contemporary Storytelling

An Anarcho-Capitalist Analysis of Statist Heroes and Heroines

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Abstract

This study examines contemporary storytelling in movies and novels as a mechanism for manipulation, indoctrination, and obfuscation, promoting statist and collectivist ideologies while marginalizing anarcho-capitalist principles like voluntarism and non-aggression.

Focusing on James Bond and Black Widow (Natasha Romanoff), it critiques their portrayal as state agents whose coercive and unethical actions—violence, murder, extortion, deception, seduction—are justified as serving the "greater good," embedding semiotic myths that glorify government (Eco, 1979). "Enemy within" twists and redemption arcs (e.g., Winter Soldier) frame corruption as individual, not systemic, further reinforcing and propagating state legitimacy and action over individual initiative (Dyer, 2017). Erotic hypocrisy, where promiscuity undermines traditional and empirically functioning values, serves dysfunctional leftwing agendas, ignoring societal risks like decadence and STIs, while families yield better outcomes (Heckert & Cleminson, 2011; McLanahan et al., 2013). Bond's luxury (e.g., high end sports cars and haberdashery) links to corporatism and globalist agendas, while Romanoff's "feminist" arcs advance Marxist narratives and identity politics, inverting both characters from their original cold war anti-communist stances.

Anarcho-capitalism, lacking lobbies or heroes, remains fringe, as media favors simplistic left/right solutions over complex economic literacy (Kayser, 2025). Cross-cultural comparisons, including Chinese texts like *Outlaws of the Marsh*, reveal limited resistance to statism (Idema, 1998). U.S. media dominance overshadows global voices, stifling an-cap potential amid crises like inflation and dependency (web:15). The study advocates counter-narratives and media literacy to foster autonomy, asking: Can storytelling overcome centuries of statist indoctrination? It contributes novel an-cap media critiques, urging reevaluation of cultural icons.

Keywords: Statist indoctrination, anarcho-capitalism, James Bond, Black Widow, semiotic analysis, infotainment, erotic hypocrisy, identity politics.

Introduction

Storytelling, from ancient oral traditions to modern media, embeds semiotic structures to convey specific messages and values, functioning as "infotainment" that blends entertainment with ideological dissemination to make propaganda palatable (Barthes, 1957; Ellul, 1965). Fairy tales caution against treachery while extolling virtues like selfless honesty; fables moralize through allegory; novels and films dramatize human struggles. These narratives are passed on through books, comics, curricula, television, and cinema, shaping worldviews due to their educational role. While some stories are purely fictional—like Alexandre Dumas's *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844), exploring revenge and justice—others draw from history, such as Robin Hood or characters in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Luo Guanzhong, 14th century), which glorifies imperial loyalty and collectivist hierarchies amid civil war

(Chapman, 2000). Chinese literature offers counterpoints: Outlaws of the Marsh (Shuihu Zhuan, Shi Nai'an, 14th century) depicts outlaws, oppressed by governmental injustice, forming a hierarchical society at Mount Liang with brotherhood codes and collective justice, seeking imperial amnesty rather than anarchy or anarcho-capitalist ideals like life, liberty, and private property (Idema, 1998). Similarly, Pu Songling's *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio* (1766/2006) subverts statist norms through supernatural tales, with Daoist principles of non-coercive harmony prefiguring anarchist thought (Graham, 1989). Styles vary widely: comically exaggerated like Warner Bros.' Speedy Gonzales or Bugs Bunny, or grounded like Michael Connelly's Harry Bosch novels. Genres span sci-fi, thrillers, rom-coms, fairy tales, and animations, with heroes and villains from monsters to vigilantes, lawyers, students, princes, amazons, and widows. Essential to a plot is a hero's struggle to overcome seemingly insurmountable difficulty or injustice, the monumental task that births the role model, often idealized to inspire but sometimes distorted to serve hidden agendas (Fisher, 2009). This distortion is evident in historical epics like the *Iliad* (Homer, ~8th century BCE), where heroic ideals reinforced societal hierarchies, or in Roman gladiatorial tales that glorified imperial power while masking exploitation (Kyle, 1998).

This study interrogates these narratives' messages, values, marketing entities, and societal impacts on individuals and critical thinking, examining contemporary storytelling's statist agenda and marginalization of anarcho-capitalist values like voluntary exchange and non-aggression (Mises, 1949; Rothbard, 1974). It contributes to libertarian media studies by analyzing how movies and novels promote pro-governmental and collectivist ideologies, conditioning audiences to endorse state monopolies on violence (Kayser, 2025). Central are James Bond (JB) and Black Widow (Natasha Romanoff, NR), spies transitioned from print to screen with significant investment and cultural influence. Bond, created by Ian Fleming in 1952 (*Casino Royale*, 1953), combats communists and global threats for MI6 (Lycett, 1995). Romanoff, introduced in *Marvel's Tales of Suspense* #52 (1964), defects from KGB abuse to S.H.I.E.L.D., a secretive U.S. agency (DiPaolo, 2011).

Both undergo military training, exhibit moral flexibility in violence and deception, and serve as state-sanctioned assassins—glorified psychopaths justified by the “greater good” (Eco, 1979). Dehumanized as “007” or “Black Widow,” they weaponize sexuality, often fatally, in missions. Plots feature “enemy within” twists, portraying infiltrators as corrupting otherwise noble institutions, rationalizing ruthless tactics to preserve order (Dyer, 2017). Redemption arcs for opposing agents (e.g., KGB defectors in Bond's *The Living Daylights* or Hydra's Winter Soldier in *Marvel*) humanize foes while upholding the protagonist's system as superior. From an anarcho-capitalist lens, JB and NR are unsuitable role models—not critical thinkers but brutal killing machines serving governments, embodying coercive violence over voluntarism (Rothbard, 1982).

Erotic hypocrisy lures audiences, undermining morality via a leftwing agenda attacking conservative values (Heckert & Cleminson, 2011). Bond, a taxpayer-funded dandy destroying visionary villains' empires, reflects Fleming's fantasies and immature escapism (Lycett, 1995; Eco, 1979). His non-productivity—free-riding on culture and technology—contrasts villains' entrepreneurial feats, biasing against private creation. Romanoff, seductive and destructive, defects to another state, her “feminist” arc advancing Marxist identity politics in *Marvel* adaptations (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020; DiPaolo, 2011). This portrays promiscuity as unproblematic, ignoring societal needs for discipline; promiscuity fosters decadence and health risks like venereal diseases (CDC, 2024; WHO, 2024). Anarcho-capitalism views sexuality as private (Rothbard, 1982), but families outperform promiscuity in outcomes like child well-being, adult mental health, personal happiness, and success (McLanahan et al., 2013; Senn et al., 1992; Vaillant, 2012). Romanoff and female spies like Lorraine Broughton (*Atomic Blonde*, 2017) may harm young audiences by glamorizing violence and promiscuity as empowerment while setting unattainable standards in fitness, beauty, and sexuality—essentially setting

teenagers up for failure (Brode & Deyneka, 2012; Lindsey, 2020). Hollywood's action heroines often perpetuate these ideals through "male gaze" tropes, where women are depicted with hyper-sexualized bodies and superhuman strength, reinforcing body dysmorphia and unrealistic expectations (Tasker, 2015; Looch, 2017). For instance, critiques of films like *Atomic Blonde* highlight how such portrayals serve as "male fantasy" rather than genuine empowerment, contributing to societal pressures on women to conform to impossible physical and sexual ideals (Hillsdale Collegian, 2017). The very idea a fit 60 kg female could physically dominate a fit 120kg man is not only beyond ridiculous – it's dangerous, ignoring physiological facts like power, momentum, and strength disparities, which studies show favor men by 40-60% in upper-body strength even at comparable training levels (Bohannon, 2015). Meritocratic ideals are most dear to libertarian and anarcho-capitalists, but that shouldn't lead to illusions dismissing physical facts like power, momentum and strength, regardless of gender.

Statist portrayals extend to firearms: JB and NR as licensed experts imply civilians should defer to authorities, undermining self-defense (Kopel, 2015). Comparative correlations include Captain America as a state apologist and Robin Hood, per Rand (1957), reclaiming extorted wealth for original owners (farmers, merchants—today's middle class), a loyal rebel rather than anti-statist. Global media conglomerates (e.g., Disney/Marvel's military ties; Boggs & Pollard, 2006) amplify these narratives, eroding autonomy. In recent years, TV series like *The Equalizer* (2021 remake), *FBI* (2018–present), and *FBI: Most Wanted* (2020–present) have repeatedly portrayed libertarians, anarchists, and "sovereign citizens" as violent right-leaning terrorists, often linking them to domestic extremism without nuance (e.g., sovereign citizens in *FBI* episodes as anti-government threats; web:19, web:21, web:22). European mainstream media similarly depicts them as far-right dangers, disregarding their peaceful dissent against governmental overreach (web:3, web:4, web:6). Sovereign citizens, for instance, are classified by the FBI as domestic terrorists due to some armed confrontations, but this overlooks that many are non-violent challengers of state authority, rooted in interpretations of common law and constitutional rights (web:18, web:5). Libertarians and anarcho-capitalists emphasize non-aggression and voluntarism, yet media frames them as threats to justify surveillance (Rockwell, 2015). While the EU has no true freedom of speech laws anymore—since the introduction of the Digital Services Act (DSA) in 2022, which mandates platforms to remove "illegal content" including hate speech, leading to over-censorship and chilling effects on dissent (web:33, web:35, web:38)—in the USA, the First Amendment should protect the right to voice dissent as libertarians do, safeguarding expression even for unpopular views like those of anarchists or sovereign citizens (web:68, web:70, web:74). However, even in the US, sovereign citizens face legal challenges, with the FBI labeling extremists among them as terrorists, though core principles align with protected speech (web:72, web:75). Anarcho-capitalism's absence reflects its fringe status, lacking lobbies or media support (Kayser, 2025, DOI: 10.62891/5457b20f). From there another angle of exploration will be the question, whether it is pure suppression or the market's disinterest in anarcho-capitalist ideals, that keep on perpetuating collectivism without creating alternative heroes and role models. Or, in other words, would the world be open to an an-cap style icon, if only Hollywood did its best in looks, design and sophistication? As Fisher (2009) argues, "capitalist realism" in media obscures alternatives, making non-statist visions seem impossible, potentially due to both market dynamics and institutional biases (Rockwell, 2015).

Literature Review

This section surveys existing research on manipulation, indoctrination, and obfuscation in media, focusing on storytelling's role in propagating ideologies amid digital and global shifts. Key themes include propaganda in Hollywood, such as military-backed films like *Top Gun* (1986), where the

Department of Defense influenced scripts to boost recruitment, a practice continuing in blockbusters like *Captain Marvel* (2019) with Air Force partnerships (Secker & Alford, 2017; Boggs & Pollard, 2006). Collectivist narratives in novels feature in dystopias like Ayn Rand's *Anthem* (1938), which critiques statism through a protagonist's rediscovery of "ego," contrasting with Orwell's *1984* (1949) on surveillance states, both highlighting media's potential to warn against or normalize totalitarianism (Peikoff, 1991; Gottlieb, 2000). Cultural critiques range from conservative alarms over cultural Marxism in entertainment (Scruton, 2000); leftist deconstructions of neoliberal hegemony (Jameson, 1991); to libertarian exposés on media as state enablers (Rothbard, 1974).

The review notes that statist-slanted storytelling transcends time and cultures, as seen in ancient works like *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Luo Guanzhong, 14th century), which embeds pro-imperial values through tales of strategic alliances and loyalty, inspiring modern adaptations in video games and films that perpetuate hierarchical ideals (Ng, 2003). This echoes Indian epics like the *Mahabharata* (~400 BCE–400 CE), where dharma (duty) justifies state warfare, reinforcing collectivist ethics (Brockington, 1998). Contrasting Chinese examples include *Outlaws of the Marsh* (*Shuihu Zhuan*)—depicting 108 outlaws who, after enduring governmental injustice, corruption, and oppression under the Song Dynasty, band together at Mount Liang to form an alternative society with a structured hierarchy of leaders (e.g., Song Jiang as chief), ranked positions, and a code of brotherhood emphasizing loyalty, collective retribution against officials, and eventual pursuit of imperial amnesty to serve the state, rather than advocating outright anarchy or anarcho-capitalist ideals centered on individual life, liberty, and private property rights—and Pu Songling's *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio*, which subtly subvert statist norms by portraying outlaws and supernatural elements that question authority, with Daoism offering early anarchist-like ideas of non-coercive order, as in stories of foxes critiquing Qing bureaucracy (Zeitlin, 1993; Graham, 1989). The Western tradition shows a dearth of researched anarchist heroes, potentially more pronounced than in Chinese lore, where supernatural subversion allows indirect dissent, unlike the overt state heroism in Shakespearean plays like *Henry V* (1599), glorifying monarchical conquest (Greenblatt, 1985).

Libertarian analyses, such as Rothbard's *Anatomy of the State* (Rothbard, 1974), provide foundational critiques of government as coercive, extended to media by scholars like those at the Mises Institute, who link entertainment to the "deep state" narrative of perpetual intervention (Woods, 2009). Discussions of "capitalist realism" in works like Mark Fisher's (Fisher, 2009) highlight how media obscures alternatives to statism, a concept amplified in postmodern critiques of hyperreality (Baudrillard, 1981). Anarcho-capitalist-specific works are sparse but include essays on agorism and media as state advertising (e.g., Konkin, 1980, proposing underground economies as plot devices for resistance). Expanding on erotic and ideological elements, Umberto Eco's semiotic dissection of Bond novels reveals a Manichean structure where Bond embodies beauty and virility against impotent villains, yet this masks the hypocrisy in portraying sexual liberation as heroic while ignoring societal costs, including gender imbalances in modern adaptations (Eco, 1979; Tasker, 2015). Similarly, James Lindsay's work on identity politics critiques Marvel's use of characters like Black Widow to advance "cynical theories" of gender and feminism, framing them as tools for Marxist-inspired division that exploit #MeToo sentiments for corporate gain (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). Analyses of Bond villains emphasize their entrepreneurial vision, often building vast empires only to be dismantled, underscoring a bias against private innovation that parallels critiques of crony capitalism (Dyer, 2017; Hoppe, 2001).

Gaps are identified: while general propaganda studies abound (e.g., Ellul, 1965, on "integration propaganda" in democratic societies), explicit anarcho-capitalist dissections of modern heroes like Bond and Widow are limited, often confined to blogs or podcasts, due to ideological gatekeeping in mainstream academia (Kayser, 2025). This review positions the study as bridging these gaps with fresh examples from post-2010 media, including deeper explorations of erotic hypocrisy and leftwing

agendas, incorporating feminist media theory (Lindsey, 2020) to examine how "empowerment" narratives reinforce statism.

Theoretical Framework: Anarcho-Capitalism and Media Semiotics

This theoretical framework delineates anarcho-capitalist principles as a critical lens for examining statist indoctrination in contemporary storytelling, integrating semiotic analysis to unpack how narratives embed and obfuscate ideological values. Anarcho-capitalism, as articulated by key thinkers like Murray Rothbard, Hans-Hermann Hoppe, and David Friedman, posits a society without a coercive state, where all interactions are governed by voluntary agreements, private property rights, and the non-aggression principle (NAP)—the ethical axiom that no individual may initiate force against another's person or property (Rothbard, 1982; Hoppe, 1989; Friedman, 1973). Rothbard, building on Lockean self-ownership and Spooner's anti-statist writings, views the state as a predatory entity deriving power from theft (taxation) and violence monopolies, advocating for market-based alternatives in all spheres, including law and defense (Rothbard, 1974; Spooner, 1870). Hoppe's argumentation ethics further bolsters this, arguing that defending statism self-contradicts the non-aggressive basis of discourse, proposing covenant communities and private arbitration (Hoppe, 2001). Friedman, adopting a utilitarian stance, models stateless societies with competing protection agencies, emphasizing efficiency and innovation absent central planning, drawing from historical precedents like medieval Iceland's thing system (Friedman, 1989; Long, 1993). These principles contrast sharply with collectivist ideologies, where state intervention is normalized, and provide a benchmark for critiquing media's glorification of coercion.

Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, is integrated to analyze how media narratives construct meaning, drawing on Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* (1957), which deconstructs cultural artifacts as "myths" that naturalize dominant ideologies, such as consumerism or nationalism. Barthes posits that signs operate on denotative (literal) and connotative (ideological) levels, where a hero's uniform denotes protection but connotes state legitimacy, obfuscating underlying power dynamics (Barthes, 1972). Extending Saussure's foundational semiotics (1916/1983)—where signs comprise signifier (form) and signified (concept)—media plots forge arbitrary links: a spy's gadget signifies innovation, but in context, it embeds state superiority over private ingenuity. Umberto Eco's structuralist refinements view narratives as "codes" with oppositional structures (e.g., order vs. chaos), where Bond's world reinforces Manichean binaries favoring the state (Eco, 1979). This semiotic lens reveals how storytelling mythologizes coercion as heroism, aligning with anarcho-capitalist critiques of media as a "soft power" tool for state hegemony (Nye, 2004).

To enrich this integration, a systems, chaos, and complexity thinking approach is incorporated, recognizing culture's immense impact on societal dynamics. Systems theory, pioneered by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968), views society as interconnected systems with feedback loops, where media narratives act as inputs amplifying ideological outputs—e.g., statist heroes create positive reinforcement for collectivism, perpetuating cycles of dependency (von Bertalanffy, 1968). Chaos theory, via Edward Lorenz's "butterfly effect" (1963), suggests small cultural perturbations (a popular film) can lead to large-scale shifts, like normalized surveillance post-1984 adaptations (Lorenz, 1972; Gleick, 1987). Complexity science, as in Mitchell Waldrop's analysis (1992), examines emergent behaviors from simple rules: media's repetitive "enemy within" motifs emerge as cultural norms justifying state expansion, unpredictable yet patterned (Waldrop, 1992; Holland, 1995). This resonates with Andrew Breitbart's dictum that "politics is downstream from culture," implying cultural narratives shape political realities—e.g., Hollywood's leftist leanings foster progressive policies (Breitbart, 2011; Meyers, 2011). Breitbart, in *Righteous Indignation* (2011), argued conservatives must contest culture to influence politics, a view echoed in conservative media strategies (web:0; web:1). However, this study

finds it intriguing but argues for mutual amplification: politics influences culture (e.g., government subsidies for films like *Top Gun* embed militarism; Suid, 2002), and culture reinforces politics through semiotically enhanced storytelling, creating bidirectional loops where signs (heroes) amplify state power while policy (censorship) shapes narratives (Hall, 1980 on encoding/decoding; Appadurai, 1996 on cultural flows). In complexity terms, this forms "strange attractors"—stable patterns like statist myths—resistant to disruption unless countered by alternative inputs (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984).

This framework emphasizes the utterly unnecessary intelligence apparatus in a stateless society, highlighting the blatant failure of government through misuse of taxpayer money. Secret services epitomize statist insanity by leveraging criminal behavior against citizens and foreign entities without oversight, exempt from accountability under the guise of "national security," often merely to topple other governments or suppress dissent—contrasting sharply with anarcho-capitalist visions of private, voluntary defense mechanisms like insurance-based security or decentralized arbitration (Friedman, 1973; Hoppe, 2001). Historical precedents, such as privateers in the Age of Sail or modern private military companies, illustrate viable alternatives, though media distorts them as chaotic (Singer, 2003). In chaos terms, state intelligence creates unpredictable "bifurcations" (crises leading to more control), while anarcho-capitalist systems self-organize into stable equilibria (Kauffman, 1995).

Collectivism is contrasted with individualism, showing how stories justify state violence—for instance, taxation as "necessary" civic duty versus anarcho-capitalist views of it as theft, violating property rights (Rothbard, 1974). Austrian economics, pioneered by Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich Hayek, critiques how plots obscure economic realities: inflation, often villainized as corporate greed, stems from central bank monopolies, not markets, with media reinforcing this through "regulatory hero" tropes (Mises, 1949; Hayek, 1976; Salerno, 2008). In complexity, these distortions create "path dependencies" where cultural acceptance of intervention locks societies into inefficient systems (Arthur, 1994).

This framework applies to dissecting how Bond and Widow embody dark triad traits sanitized for state service, with redemption arcs reinforcing systemic benevolence. Psychological studies link dark triad (narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy) to manipulative behaviors in spies, glamorized in media but detrimental in reality (Jonason et al., 2012; Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Further, it addresses erotic hypocrisy as a semiotic tool: Bond's philandering attacks traditional values, promoting leftwing permissiveness that ignores decadence risks, while Romanoff's seductive feminism advances identity politics agendas critiqued by Lindsay as tools for division (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). Villains' visionary entrepreneurship is undermined, portraying creation as evil to justify destruction—e.g., Bond's demolitions symbolize state triumph over innovation (Eco, 1979; Dyer, 2017). While anarcho-capitalism views sexual proclivities as private matters between consenting adults without interest in regulation or moral argumentation (Rothbard, 1982), it notes that family as a societal nucleus has been empirically superior to promiscuity in terms of social outcomes (McLanahan et al., 2013), and the risks of venereal diseases in lifestyles like those of JB and NR are worth mentioning (Senn et al., 1992). Additionally, portraying JB and NR as expert firearms users serves statist propaganda by implying that only licensed state agents should bear arms, while civilians must defer to authorities—this fosters dependency, critiqued as a semiotic myth of "expertise monopoly" (Kopel, 2015; Halbrook, 1984).

In systems thinking, these elements form feedback loops: erotic lures amplify cultural permissiveness, which downstream influences political tolerance for state expansion, mutually reinforcing through chaotic cultural shifts (Breitbart, 2011; von Bertalanffy, 1968). By weaving these approaches, the framework reveals storytelling's role in sustaining statism, advocating for narratives aligned with anarcho-capitalist emergence and non-coercive order.

Case Studies: Analyzing Statist Heroes and Heroines

Subsection 4.1: James Bond – The Licensed Killer

James Bond, the iconic British spy codenamed 007, represents a pivotal figure in the evolution of espionage narratives, transitioning from a staunch Cold War anti-communist in Ian Fleming's novels to a modern globalist operative combating transnational threats in contemporary films. This evolution mirrors broader geopolitical shifts: Fleming's original novels, beginning with *Casino Royale* (1953), positioned Bond as a product of post-World War II anxieties, frequently pitted against Soviet agents and communist proxies in a bipolar world dominated by U.S.-U.K. alliances versus the Eastern Bloc (Lycett, 1995). Early films like *Dr. No* (1962) and *From Russia with Love* (1963) retained this focus, with villains tied to SPECTRE often serving as stand-ins for communist intrigue, reflecting the era's fears of nuclear escalation and ideological warfare (Chapman, 2000). By the late 1980s, as in *The Living Daylights* (1987), Bond's role began adapting to the thawing Cold War, incorporating defectors and internal KGB conflicts, foreshadowing the franchise's pivot post-1991. In the Daniel Craig era (2006–2021), Bond confronts globalist villains involving cyber-terrorism (*Skyfall*, 2012), surveillance states (*Spectre*, 2015), and bioterrorism (*No Time to Die*, 2021), embodying a post-9/11 world where threats are diffuse and non-state actors dominate, aligning with neoliberal globalization critiques (Dodds, 2015). This adaptability ensures Bond's enduring appeal, grossing over \$7.8 billion worldwide across 25 official films, but it also perpetuates a narrative where state-sanctioned violence evolves to meet new "enemies," always justifying expanded intelligence powers (Box Office Mojo, 2023; web:0 from Bond box office search, aligned).

The plots consistently justify espionage, killing, and deception in service of MI6, framing these as moral imperatives against existential threats. Bond's "license to kill" symbolizes unchecked state power, where morally dubious acts—torture, seduction for intelligence, or collateral damage—are rationalized as pragmatic necessities for the greater good (Eco, 1979). Emphasis on "enemy within" twists portrays institutional corruption as isolated anomalies, implying governments are inherently noble but vulnerable to rogue elements, thus obfuscating systemic flaws like bureaucratic overreach or unaccountable spending. In *The Living Daylights*, this is exemplified through KGB General Georgi Koskov's staged defection, initially presented as a genuine escape from a revived "Smert Shpionam" (Death to Spies) policy, only to reveal Koskov as the manipulator profiting from arms deals with American dealer Brad Whitaker. General Leonid Pushkin, initially suspected as the policy's enforcer, proves innocent and allies with Bond to expose Koskov, while cellist Kara Milovy, mistaken for a sniper, becomes Bond's romantic ally after realizing Koskov's betrayal. These redemptions of "the other side"—Koskov's ruse leading to cross-ideological alliances—justify "fight fire with fire" tactics, humanizing select enemies while upholding Western superiority, a narrative device that distracts from the Cold War's proxy wars and mutual atrocities (Dyer, 2017).

Comparisons to real spies like Sidney Reilly, the "Ace of Spies," illuminate Bond's mythologized persona. Reilly, a Russian-born operative for British intelligence in the early 20th century, conducted daring missions against Bolsheviks, including the 1918 Ambassadors' Plot to overthrow Lenin, using aliases, seduction, and multilingual skills—traits Fleming drew upon for Bond (Lockhart, 1932). Reilly's hedonistic lifestyle, affairs, and anti-communist fervor mirror Bond's, though Reilly's execution by the OGPU in 1925 adds tragic realism absent in Bond's invincibility (Cook, 2004). Fictional counterparts like Jason Bourne offer contrasts: Bourne exposes CIA corruption in amnesiac quests for identity, critiquing state brainwashing rather than glorifying it, though both rely on violence (Ludlum, 1980). The critique is stark: Bond glorifies the state's monopoly on force, dismissing private security or voluntary defense as viable alternatives in a stateless society, where disputes resolve via arbitration and market-driven protection (Friedman, 1973). In anarcho-capitalism, no intelligence agencies with a

"license to kill" are needed, as private firms handle defense without coercive taxation, preventing abuses like covert regime changes (Hoppe, 2001). Certainly, such agencies wouldn't promote luxury brands like Tom Ford suits (worn by Craig's Bond since *Quantum of Solace*, 2008) or Aston Martin cars (iconic since *Goldfinger*, 1964) as semiotic associations making government "sexy," virile, and above the law—elements that glamorize privilege through product placement, generating millions in revenue while embedding aspirational consumerism (Nitins, 2011). This plays a significant role in leftwing fantasies of privilege, where Bond's elite, unaccountable lifestyle—seducing women in bespoke attire while wielding state power—appeals to desires for permissive authority, critiqued as a colonial relic masking misogyny and imperialism (Funnell & Dodds, 2017). Despite progressive claims, Bond's allure often embodies a paradoxical left-of-center elitism, where "licensed" transgression excuses excess (Tomasky, 2008).

Even parodies of Bond fail to dismantle these core statist elements, highlighting the depth of cultural entrenchment. Mike Myers' *Austin Powers* trilogy (*International Man of Mystery*, 1997; *The Spy Who Shagged Me*, 1999; *Goldmember*, 2002) lampoons Bond's tropes—exaggerated gadgets (e.g., shark lasers), absurd villains (Dr. Evil as Blofeld parody), and over-the-top promiscuity ("shagadelic" catchphrases)—grossing over \$676 million by affectionately spoofing the genre's excesses (Box Office Mojo, 2023; Corliss, 1997). Myers, drawing from 1960s spy films like *Our Man Flint* and Bond's Sean Connery era, creates a time-displaced agent whose clumsiness and outdated machismo highlight the absurdity of Bond's suave invincibility (Chapman, 2000). However, while *Austin Powers* mocks the superficial—e.g., Powers' dental hygiene or Evil's mini-me clone—it does not question the obvious immorality of statist abuse of taxpayer money to entertain delusions of grandeur. Powers, like Bond, operates under a British ministry with unlimited resources for outlandish missions, never critiquing the fiscal waste or ethical void of state-sponsored killing; instead, the parody reinforces the fun of espionage without challenging its foundational coercion (Nitins, 2011). This omission is telling: even in satire, the state's "license" remains unchallenged, perpetuating the myth that government extravagance is harmless entertainment. From an anarcho-capitalist view, this failure exemplifies how cultural products, even humorous ones, sustain statism by deflecting from systemic critiques, aligning with Breitbart's notion that culture shapes politics downstream—yet here, the parody amplifies rather than subverts (Breitbart, 2011; Meyers, 2011). Critics note that *Austin Powers* thrives on nostalgia, commodifying Bond's imperialism without irony on its political underpinnings, thus indirectly endorsing the original's worldview (Funnell & Dodds, 2017).

Expanding on erotic hypocrisy, Bond's promiscuity undermines morality as a deliberate lure, attacking conservative values through behaviors reflecting leftwing desires to reshape society permissively, ignoring risks like societal decadence and health crises (Heckert & Cleminson, 2011). As a taxpayer-funded dandy, he indulges in luxury without production—driving Aston Martins and donning Tom Ford—beloved by intellectuals like Eco for his Manichean appeal, where virility triumphs over "impotent" foes (Eco, 1979). Villains, as entrepreneurs building empires (e.g., Whitaker's arms dealing), are visionaries whose creations Bond destroys, an unbelievable portrayal given their achievements, underscoring anti-innovation bias (Dyer, 2017). While anarcho-capitalism views sexual proclivities as private matters between consenting adults without interest in regulation or moral argumentation (Rothbard, 1982), it notes that family as a societal nucleus has been empirically superior to promiscuity in terms of social outcomes (McLanahan et al., 2013), and the risks of venereal diseases in lifestyles like Bond's are worth mentioning (Senn et al., 1992). Bond's expert firearms use propagates that only state-licensed agents should arm themselves, while civilians call authorities, reinforcing dependency over self-defense (Kopel, 2015).

In a stateless society, the very concept of a "license to kill" evaporates, as private defense agencies operate on contractual, non-aggressive terms, preventing the abuses inherent in unaccountable state

espionage (Friedman, 1973). Bond's glamour—promoting brands like Aston Martin (over \$100 million in placements across films) and Tom Ford (suits symbolizing elite sophistication)—serves as semiotic bait, making government appear sexy, virile, and above the law, a fantasy that ironically appeals to leftwing imaginaries of privileged rebellion against norms (Nitins, 2011; Funnell & Dodds, 2017). This commercial semiotics not only boosts sales (Aston Martin's DB5 revival post-Goldfinger) but ideologically elevates the state as aspirational, contrasting anarcho-capitalist markets where brands compete without taxpayer-subsidized heroism (web:28). Ultimately, Bond's "licensed" existence exemplifies the franchise's role in normalizing state exceptionalism, a critique amplified by Reilly's real-life failures, where espionage led to execution rather than triumph (Cook, 2004).

Subsection 4.2: Black Widow – The Redeemed State Agent

Natasha Romanoff, known as Black Widow, embodies a complex narrative arc in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), evolving from a KGB-trained assassin and defector to a loyal operative for S.H.I.E.L.D., a fictional U.S. government agency tasked with global security. Introduced in *Iron Man 2* (2010) as an undercover agent posing as Tony Stark's assistant, Romanoff's backstory unfolds across multiple films, revealing her origins in the Red Room—a Soviet program that indoctrinated young girls through brutal training, sterilization, and psychological conditioning to become perfect spies (DiPaolo, 2011). Her defection in *The Avengers* (2012) marks a pivotal shift, where she escapes KGB control only to align with S.H.I.E.L.D., trading one state's apparatus for another's, without embracing true independence or anarchism. This arc peaks in her standalone film *Black Widow* (2021), set between *Captain America: Civil War* (2016) and *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018), exploring her family ties and Red Room trauma, culminating in her sacrifice in *Avengers: Endgame* (2019) for the Soul Stone—a redemptive death that underscores her loyalty to the collective "greater good" over individual sovereignty (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). Romanoff's journey, portrayed by Scarlett Johansson, leverages her acting prowess and undeniable sex appeal to humanize a character rooted in Cold War stereotypes, making her one of the MCU's most enduring figures despite the franchise's broader challenges (web:21; web:25). Johansson's performance, blending vulnerability with lethality, contributed to *Black Widow*'s relative success, grossing \$379.8 million worldwide amid the COVID-19 pandemic and simultaneous Disney+ Premier Access release, though it fell short of pre-release expectations of \$400–500 million due to streaming cannibalization and global theater closures (web:0; web:1; web:3).

A core focus is how Romanoff's femininity is weaponized for state goals, transforming personal attributes like allure and agility into tools of deception and combat. In MCU films, her "Black Widow" moniker evokes a seductive predator, using form-fitting catsuits and flirtation to infiltrate enemies, as seen in *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014) where she poses as a civilian to extract data (Funnell & Dodds, 2017). This moral ambiguity—killing without remorse while grappling with past sins—highlights the franchise's portrayal of state service as redemptive therapy, obfuscating the ethical costs of espionage. The "enemy within" trope is prominent in *The Winter Soldier*, where Hydra's infiltration of S.H.I.E.L.D. exposes corruption as isolated treason rather than inherent to bureaucratic structures, allowing the "good" state to purge and rebuild (Dyer, 2017). Redemption arcs further humanize "the other side" while upholding state superiority: Bucky Barnes (*Winter Soldier*), brainwashed by Hydra but ultimately reclaiming his humanity through friendship with Steve Rogers, exemplifies how compromised agents are "saved" by aligning with the "right" government (*Captain America: Civil War*, 2016). Similarly, Clint Barton (Hawkeye), mind-controlled by Loki in *The Avengers* (2012), is redeemed via Romanoff's intervention, rationalizing ruthless methods for the greater good and portraying state institutions as forgiving families (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020).

Comparisons to other heroines underscore Romanoff's statist leanings. Wonder Woman (Diana Prince), an Amazonian warrior in DC films like *Wonder Woman* (2017), serves as a statist icon, allying with Allied forces in World War I and later the U.S. government, her immortality and compassion weaponized for "just wars" that reinforce imperial narratives (Tasker, 2015). Katniss Everdeen in *The Hunger Games* series (2012–2015) leads a collectivist rebellion against the Capitol, her archery and survival skills symbolizing grassroots resistance, yet the story culminates in a new hierarchical order, critiqued for romanticizing revolutionary statism over true anarchy (Collins, 2008; web:40 from Hunger Games search, but aligned). The critique is clear: Romanoff's arc obfuscates indoctrination as empowerment, rejecting anarcho-capitalist self-ownership by tying her agency to state validation, where personal growth serves collective security rather than individual liberty (Rothbard, 1982).

Her seductive hypocrisy lures audiences, promoting leftwing attacks on tradition via promiscuity, paralleling statist expropriation's decay (Heckert & Cleminson, 2011). Non-productive, she destroys after escaping one state only to serve another, her "widow" moniker evoking loss without creation. Marvel's feminist angle advances Marxist identity politics, per Lindsay, using Romanoff to push grievance-based empowerment that divides rather than unites (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). While anarcho-capitalism views sexual proclivities as private matters between consenting adults without interest in regulation or moral argumentation (Rothbard, 1982), it notes that family as a societal nucleus has been empirically superior to promiscuity in terms of social outcomes (McLanahan et al., 2013), and the risks of venereal diseases in lifestyles like those of JB and NR are worth mentioning (Senn et al., 1992). Romanoff's expert firearms proficiency reinforces statist messaging that arms are for licensed experts, not civilians who should dial emergency services (Kopel, 2015).

In contrast to James Bond films, which have captured audiences through semiotic sophistication—with exquisite fashion (e.g., Tom Ford suits) and interior designs (e.g., modernist villain lairs by Ken Adam) elevating espionage to high art, blending mid-century modernism with luxury to make statism aspirational (Nitins, 2011; web:51)—Marvel's far too many overproduced movies rely mostly on special effects, often criticized for VFX overload that sacrifices storytelling for spectacle (web:57; web:59; web:60). This reliance has led to industry backlash, with VFX artists reporting abusive workloads and declining quality in MCU projects (web:58; web:62; web:63). However, Scarlett Johansson's sex appeal and acting skills made *Black Widow* one of the more successful movies in Phase Four, leveraging her charisma to draw viewers despite the film's formulaic plot, though it underperformed relative to expectations amid pandemic disruptions (web:18; web:21; web:22; web:26). Lost in political on-the-nose-messaging—such as overt feminist themes critiqued as forced diversity—Marvel's movies are increasingly failing at box offices, with post-*Endgame* entries like *Eternals* (2021, \$402M global vs. \$200M budget) and *The Marvels* (2023, \$206M vs. \$275M) underperforming due to audience fatigue, oversaturation, and perceived "woke" agendas (web:37; web:38; web:39; web:41; web:42; web:44). The old moniker that sex sells is actually long disproven, with marketing studies showing overt sexualization can alienate audiences, reduce brand recall, and backfire in modern contexts emphasizing authenticity over objectification (web:9; web:10; web:11; web:12). With lacking in style, substance, and zeitgeist, *Black Widow* relies solely on showing girls how awesome they should be, which is simply unrealistic and damaging, adding to the many mental health issues of an already lost generation exposed to idealized media images that exacerbate body dissatisfaction, anxiety, and depression (web:27; web:28; web:29; web:31; web:33; web:34). Research links such portrayals to increased self-harm behaviors and suicidality among adolescents spending over three hours daily on media promoting unattainable standards (web:27; web:33). In an era of socialist revival among pampered youth facing job scarcity, these films' messaging risks fostering disillusionment, as unrealistic empowerment clashes with economic realities (web:40; web:41).

From an anarcho-capitalist standpoint, Romanoff's trajectory exemplifies the rejection of self-

ownership, where her "empowerment" is co-opted by state structures, perpetuating cycles of violence and dependency rather than fostering voluntary associations (Rothbard, 1982). Her arc, while visually compelling through Johansson's performance, underscores Marvel's shift toward effects-driven spectacle over substantive critique, contributing to the franchise's post-*Endgame* decline amid audience fatigue (web:37; web:38; web:42). Ultimately, Black Widow's redeemed state agent reinforces collectivist hierarchies, masking indoctrination as heroism in a medium increasingly criticized for prioritizing politics over entertainment.

Subsection 4.3: Comparative Analysis with Broader Characters

This subsection extends the analyses of James Bond and Black Widow by conducting cross-comparisons with a wider array of fictional and real-world figures, illuminating consistent patterns of statist indoctrination while underscoring the scarcity of genuine anarcho-capitalist representations in media. Drawing on the anarcho-capitalist framework (Rothbard, 1974; Hoppe, 1989), these comparisons reveal how narratives propagate governmental values through mechanisms like "fight fire with fire" justifications, redeemable enemies, and the marginalization of libertarian alternatives. The Marvel ensemble, for instance, exemplifies collectivism in the Avengers team, where diverse heroes unite under quasi-governmental oversight (e.g., S.H.I.E.L.D. or the Sokovia Accords in *Captain America: Civil War*, 2016) to combat threats, portraying internal betrayals—such as Tony Stark's pro-regulation stance versus Steve Rogers' individualism—as fixable flaws within a redeemable system (DiPaolo, 2011). This contrasts sharply with potential individual entrepreneurs like Stark, whose innovative arc is co-opted into team dynamics, reinforcing hierarchy over solitary self-reliance. Twists like Hydra's infiltration (*Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, 2014) depict corruption as purgeable, not inherent, echoing the "enemy within" trope that absolves institutions while justifying expanded controls (Dyer, 2017).

Historical fictions provide further parallels, such as Robin Hood's legend, often romanticized as stealing from the rich to give to the poor—a narrative of redistributive "justice" that, from an anarcho-capitalist view, violates property rights by endorsing theft under moral pretexts (Rand, 1957). Yet, as Ayn Rand clarified, the original folklore positioned Hood as reclaiming extorted taxes from corrupt sheriffs (representing King John's tyranny) to return them to rightful owners like farmers and merchants—akin to today's middle class burdened by overregulation—making him a reformist rebel loyal to the "true" king (Richard the Lionheart) rather than a full anti-statist (Knight, 1994). This dilution of radicalism highlights media's tendency to frame resistance as temporary fixes within existing power structures, not systemic dismantlement.

Animations offer lighter but revealing contrasts, such as Bugs Bunny in Warner Bros. cartoons (e.g., *What's Up Doc?*, 1950 series), whose chaotic, trickster anarchy—outwitting hunters like Elmer Fudd through clever improvisation—embodies a form of individualist rebellion against authority figures, often portrayed as bumbling or oppressive (Jones, 1989). Bugs' "anarchy" is playful and non-violent, aligning loosely with voluntarist self-defense, yet it lacks depth in promoting private property or markets, serving more as comic relief than ideological challenge. This scarcity of structured libertarian heroism in Western animation underscores a broader cultural void, where chaos is entertaining but not aspirational.

Real figures like Edward Snowden further exemplify media's statist bias. Snowden, the NSA whistleblower who in 2013 exposed mass surveillance programs like PRISM, is often portrayed in mainstream narratives as a traitor rather than a hero, with films like *Snowden* (2016) by Oliver Stone offering sympathetic views but broader media framing him as a national security threat (Greenwald, 2014). This depiction humanizes "enemies" only if they align with state redemption, while true

dissenters like Snowden—who revealed Orwellian overreach—are vilified, reinforcing the theme that challenging the system from outside is disloyalty, not principled individualism (Poitras, 2014).

Themes across these comparisons consistently propagate governmental values: "fight fire with fire" justifications allow morally ambiguous acts (e.g., Avengers' vigilantism under UN oversight) as necessary for order, while redeemable enemies (e.g., Winter Soldier's brainwashing arc) suggest flaws are personal, not structural, rationalizing state resilience (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). Rare libertarian exceptions exist in dystopian literature, such as George Orwell's *1984* (1949), where protagonist Winston Smith rebels against an omnipresent intelligence apparatus like the Thought Police, exposing totalitarianism's soul-crushing surveillance rather than serving it, a stark warning against state overreach that influenced modern critiques of NSA programs (Orwell, 1949; Gottlieb, 2000). Similarly, Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged* (1957) features heroes like John Galt who withdraw from a collapsing statist economy, embodying rational self-interest and innovation against regulatory parasitism, though not strictly contemporary storytelling, it serves as a timeless counter-example to collectivist decay (Rand, 1957; Peikoff, 1991). Other potential anarcho-capitalist leanings appear in El Zorro, the noble Mexican rebel created by Johnston McCulley in 1919, acting alone against Spanish colonial oppression to aid the underprivileged without state allegiance—though Zorro is not truly an anarchist but a reformist vigilante who targets specific tyrants to restore just governance under hierarchies like the Spanish crown, aligning more with populist anti-tyranny than a rejection of all authority or advocacy for stateless voluntarism (McCulley, 1919; web:75). Similarly, elements in Batman and Green Arrow suggest individualism and private justice: Batman (Bruce Wayne) funds vigilantism through personal wealth, inventing gadgets to combat crime without full state reliance, though recent adaptations like *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012) twist him toward socialist themes of wealth redistribution (DiPaolo, 2011). Green Arrow (Oliver Queen) critiques corporate corruption, but collaborations with police dilute anti-statist potential, often portraying him as a left-leaning reformer (web:80). In contrast, characters like Catwoman (Selina Kyle) or Penguin fail anarcho-capitalist values entirely, with Catwoman's theft violating private property despite her independence, and Penguin's criminal enterprises harming innocents for gain, embodying cronyism over ethical entrepreneurship (web:82; web:85). The Western scarcity of such heroes, compared to Chinese traditions like the Water Margin outlaws' brotherhood or Daoist subversion in Pu Songling's tales, warrants further research, as Eastern lore often incorporates collective resistance with hints of non-coercive order, potentially due to Confucian influences versus Western Enlightenment statism (Graham, 1989; Idema, 1998).

Incorporating erotic and ideological expansions, comparisons highlight how hypocrisy serves leftwing agendas, with villains' entrepreneurial destruction mirroring statist economic flaws—e.g., Avengers dismantling innovative threats like Ultron, symbolizing regulation over creation (Fisher, 2009). The portrayal of heroes as armed experts further embeds statist views on firearms licensing, implying civilians lack competence for self-defense, a narrative critiqued for undermining Second Amendment rights and fostering dependency (Kopel, 2015). This consistent bias against libertarianism stems from anarcho-capitalism's inherent challenges, as per Kayser (2025), which argues the ideology has no lobby and no audience, no heroes and no villains in popular media. Kayser's analysis posits that anarcho-capitalism's fringe status arises from its refusal to promise "free stuff" funded by expropriating "others"—typically labeled the "rich" but in practice burdening the middle class through inflation and taxes—or because it demands substantial economic education and understanding, unlike simplistic ideologies (Kayser, 2025, DOI: 10.62891/5457b20f). It is so much easier to be radically left or radically right, where clear and simple solutions and culprits are offered, making for great elevator pitches and beer hall speeches that resonate with emotional crowds (web:90; web:91). Leftwing narratives promise equity via redistribution, scapegoating capitalists, while rightwing ones emphasize national purity, blaming immigrants or elites—both leveraging binary "us vs. them" rhetoric for mass appeal (Hoffer, 1951; Arendt, 1951). Anarcho-capitalism, requiring grasp of concepts like spontaneous

order (Hayek, 1973) and polycentric law (Friedman, 1973), lacks such simplicity, explaining its absence in media heroes who embody easy moral dichotomies (Kayser, 2025). As Kayser notes, "Anarcho-capitalism lacks the cultural machinery—Hollywood heroes, news endorsements—that sustains collectivist ideologies," perpetuating a void where no an-cap icons emerge (Kayser, 2025). This scarcity, compared to abundant statist or collectivist figures, warrants research into whether it's deliberate suppression or market disinterest, as media favors narratives promising quick fixes over educated individualism (Rockwell, 2015).

Subsection 4.4 – Comparative Character Analysis with Anarcho-Capitalist Lens

This subsection provides a tabular comparative analysis of selected fictional and real-world figures to further illuminate the study's critique of statist indoctrination in contemporary storytelling. Drawing on the anarcho-capitalist framework (Rothbard, 1974; Hoppe, 1989), the tables dissect key attributes—vices, constructive actions, creativity, tastes in art/literature/philosophy (rated on a 0-10 scale for each category), moral values, motivations, traumas, hobbies, pet connections, and approximate percentage of anarcho-capitalist overlap. This overlap is estimated based on alignment with core principles such as the non-aggression principle (NAP), voluntaryism, individual sovereignty, private property rights, and rejection of state monopolies on violence (Rothbard, 1982; Friedman, 1973). Low overlap indicates strong statist leanings, where characters justify coercion for the "greater good," while higher overlap reflects individualistic or anti-authoritarian traits, albeit often diluted by hierarchical or collectivist elements.

The comparisons extend the analyses in Subsections 4.1–4.3 by juxtaposing James Bond and Black Widow with analogous figures: male spies/vigilantes (Bond vs. Jason Bourne vs. Batman), female operatives (Black Widow vs. Catwoman vs. Lorraine Broughton from *Atomic Blonde*), and real-world historical spies (Vladimir Putin vs. Mata Hari). These tables highlight how narratives obfuscate systemic state flaws through "enemy within" tropes and redemption arcs, while erotic hypocrisy lures audiences into endorsing collectivist values (Eco, 1979; Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). For instance, promiscuity and violence are glamorized as heroic when serving the state, ignoring societal risks like venereal diseases (CDC, 2023; WHO, 2025) and empirical advantages of family structures over decadent lifestyles (McLanahan et al., 2013; Senn et al., 1992). Villains' entrepreneurial creativity is demonized, reinforcing anti-market biases (Dyer, 2017). Firearms expertise is portrayed as a state privilege, undermining self-defense rights (Kopel, 2015). By visualizing these traits, the tables underscore the scarcity of true anarcho-capitalist heroes in media, advocating for counter-narratives that champion voluntary exchange and non-coercive order, a challenge exacerbated by anarcho-capitalism's lack of institutional lobbies or media support (Kayser, 2025).

Table 1: Comparison of Male Spies and Vigilantes (James Bond vs. Jason Bourne vs. Batman)

This table contrasts Bond, a quintessential statist agent, with Bourne (a rogue exposing state corruption) and Batman (a private vigilante), revealing gradients of libertarian potential. Bond's low anarcho-capitalist overlap exemplifies state glorification, while Batman's higher score hints at individualist justice, though tempered by no-kill rules, political donations, and mentoring hierarchies that echo collectivist structures (Rand, 1957; DiPaolo, 2011).

Aspect	James Bond	Jason Bourne	Batman
Known Vices	Heavy drinking (alcohol	Violence (extensive	Violence (brutal

(drug/alcohol abuse, promiscuity, violent/abusive behavior)	abuse), smoking, promiscuity (numerous liaisons), violence (killing enemies without remorse, justified by duty)	killing as assassin, though often in self-defense or mission-driven), no prominent drug/alcohol abuse or promiscuity	fighting, though adheres to no-kill rule), no drug/alcohol abuse or promiscuity; occasional abusive behavior toward allies due to emotional detachment
Constructive Actions	Protects global security, combats terrorism and threats (e.g., saving the world from villains), mentors agents	Exposes CIA corruption (e.g., Treadstone/Blackbriar programs), protects innocents, seeks redemption by helping others	Protects Gotham City, funds philanthropy via Wayne Foundation, mentors sidekicks (Robins, Batgirl), invents crime-fighting tech
Creativity	Improvises with gadgets and strategies in missions, adapts to high-stakes scenarios	Master of improvisation in combat and escapes (e.g., using everyday objects as weapons), quick tactical thinking	Highly inventive (creates Bat-gadgets, vehicles like Batmobile), strategic planning for contingencies, detective ingenuity
Interest in Art/Literature/Philosophy (0-10 scale)	0/0/0	0/2/0	10/10/10
Moral Values Supported/Expressed	Patriotism, courage, loyalty to MI6; flexible morals (ends justify means, killing for greater good)	Justice, atonement for past sins, protection of innocents; anti-corruption, personal integrity	Strict no-kill rule, justice over vengeance, protection of the innocent; anti-corruption, moral code against firearms
Motivations	Pretense of patriotism, loyalty and friendship but possibly only thrill seeking adrenalin junkie	Discovering lost identity, redemption from assassin past, exposing government wrongs	Vengeance/justice for parents' murder, preventing crime, protecting Gotham, orphan charity and youth support
Traumas	Orphaned young (parents' death in climbing accident), emotional detachment from losses	Amnesia from brainwashing/shooting, family killed (in books), betrayal by CIA	Parents murdered in front of him as child, leading to lifelong grief and isolation
Hobbies	Gambling, fast driving, solitary sports (skiing, diving, swimming), high-stakes pursuits	Survival training, evasion tactics; no leisure hobbies prominent	Training/exercising, detective work, brooding; occasional high-society events as

			Bruce Wayne, charity
Connections to Pets	None prominent	None mentioned	Symbolic bats (Batcave), but no personal pets; affinity for nocturnal animals
Approximate % of Anarcho-Capitalist Overlap	10% (State agent glorifying government monopoly on violence, minimal emphasis on voluntaryism or private property)	40% (Exposes state corruption, seeks personal freedom and redemption, but relies on violent means without full non-aggression)	70% (Private vigilante, individual philanthropy, anti-corruption without state reliance, though hierarchical mentoring dilutes pure individualism)

Analysis: Bond’s profile embodies statist hypocrisy, where vices like promiscuity are erotic lures undermining traditional values (Heckert & Cleminson, 2011), and destruction of entrepreneurial villains is celebrated (Eco, 1979). His dark triad traits—narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy—are sanitized for MI6, with betrayals (e.g., Vesper Lynd in *Casino Royale*) fostering a jaded cynicism rather than true nihilism, as he clings to duty despite personal voids (Tasker, 2015). Bourne’s amnesia-driven quest critiques state brainwashing, aligning partially with anarcho-capitalist anti-corruption themes (Rothbard, 1974), with Treadstone mirroring real CIA programs like MKUltra (Estes, 2019). However, his violence violates NAP. Batman, as a self-funded innovator, approximates private defense mechanisms (Friedman, 1973), yet his no-kill ethic, alliances with police, and political donations to reformist figures like Harvey Dent dilute anarcho-capitalist purity, reflecting media’s marginalization of libertarianism (DiPaolo, 2011).

Table 2: Comparison of Female Operatives (Black Widow vs. Catwoman vs. Lorraine Broughton)

Focusing on female figures, this table examines Black Widow’s statist redemption against Catwoman’s anti-authoritarian theft and Lorraine Broughton’s self-serving espionage (*Atomic Blonde*, 2017, based on Johnston & Hart, 2012). It highlights how “feminist” angles propagate identity politics while ignoring promiscuity’s risks (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020; Senn et al., 1992).

Aspect	Natasha Romanoff (Black Widow)	Selina Kyle (Catwoman)	Lorraine Broughton (Atomic Blonde)
Known Vices (drug/alcohol abuse, promiscuity, violent/abusive behavior)	Violence (killing as assassin, though reformed), promiscuity (seduction in missions), no drug/alcohol abuse	Theft (stealing), violence (fighting), promiscuity (romantic liaisons), occasional abusive relationships	Alcohol abuse (vodka on rocks), smoking, promiscuity (sexual relationships in missions), extreme violence (brutal fighting/killing)
Constructive Actions	Joins Avengers, fights global threats, seeks redemption, mentors	Protects East End (as anti-hero), aids Batman, helps	Completes spy missions, retrieves critical intel (though self-serving)

	others (e.g., Yelena)	underprivileged/animals	
Creativity	Expert spycraft, improvisation in combat, gadget use	Master thief (elaborate heists), acrobatic escapes	Improvises weapons/fights (e.g., high heel as weapon), tactical deceptions
Interest in Art/Literature/Philosophy (0-10 scale)	4/2/3 (Ballet as art form; minimal literature references; pragmatic spy philosophy on redemption and loyalty)	7/3/4 (Jewels/art theft and feline aesthetics; occasional strategic reading; survival and anti-authority philosophy)	3/0/1 ('80s pop music and fashion; no literature; ends-justify-means pragmatism)
Moral Values Supported/Expressed	Redemption, loyalty to team/family, atonement for past; rejects totalitarianism	Self-interest with altruism (helps poor/abused), anti-authority; flexible morals (thief but heroic)	Self-preservation, ends justify means; loyalty to mission (but double agent)
Motivations	Atonement for Red Room past, building team (Avengers), protecting world	Survival/thrill of theft, protecting vulnerable (e.g., cats, East End), independence	Duty/survival, retrieving intel; personal gain (as double agent)
Traumas	Red Room indoctrination/torture, sterilization, loss of family	Abusive parents/poverty, juvenile detention, betrayal by allies	Spy life losses (lover's death), constant betrayal/violence
Hobbies	Ballet, training	Caring for cats, high-society events (as Selina)	Smoking, drinking; no leisure prominent
Connections to Pets	None prominent	Multiple cats (as companions/protectees)	None mentioned
Approximate % of Anarcho-Capitalist Overlap	20% (Defects from state but joins another collective team; redemption arc hints at individualism but prioritizes group protection over non-aggression)	50% (Anti-authority thief with individualistic independence and altruism toward vulnerable, but theft violates private property rights)	30% (Self-serving spy with tactical individualism, but mission-driven violence and double-agent loyalty undermine voluntaryism)

Analysis: Black Widow's arc reinforces state redeemability through "fight fire with fire" tactics, leveraging seductive feminism to advance Marxist ideologies (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). Catwoman's independence offers libertarian counterpoints, but property violations contradict Rothbardian ethics (Rothbard, 1982). Broughton's vices, including alcohol abuse, mirror real-world spy decadence, obfuscating health risks from promiscuous lifestyles (WHO, 2025; CDC, 2023), and her lack of evident education or philosophical depth renders her a flat MI6 tool (Tasker, 2015).

Table 3: Comparison of Real-World Historical Figures (Vladimir Putin vs. Mata Hari)

Shifting to reality, this table parallels fictional spies with Putin (a modern statist leader) and Mata Hari (an executed dancer-spy), exposing how historical narratives glorify authority while marginalizing voluntaryist alternatives (e.g., Daoist non-coercion in Chinese literature; Pu Songling, 1766/2006).

Aspect	Vladimir Putin	Mata Hari
Known Vices (drug/alcohol abuse, promiscuity, violent/abusive behavior)	No confirmed drug or alcohol abuse (maintains high fitness levels into later age); rumors of promiscuity (extramarital affairs) but no credible adultery scandals reported; authoritarian violence (via state policies, including military actions against other countries, though some provoked by external factors like NATO expansion)	Promiscuity (numerous lovers), exotic dancing (seen as vice in era); no confirmed drug/alcohol abuse (no evidence of opium or heavy drug use in historical records)
Constructive Actions	Strengthened Russia's economy and united a decaying country in free fall post-1990s, saved and stabilized its economy through reforms, severely reduced corruption in key sectors; infrastructure projects	Performed as exotic dancer for entertainment, self-reinvention as artist; no prominent societal constructive actions beyond cultural influence
Creativity	Political maneuvering, judo techniques; occasional painting	Exotic dance invention, self-reinvention as performer and spy
Taste in Art/Literature/Philosophy (0-10 scale)	6/8/7 (Appreciates classical art and occasional watercolors; deep interest in Russian literature like Dostoevsky; nationalism and historical philosophy)	5/2/3 (Exotic dance and cultural arts from Asia; minimal literature; survival pragmatism and independence philosophy)
Moral Values Supported/Expressed	Patriotism, nationalism, traditional values (e.g., family and discipline); moral certainty in actions for national strength	Survival, independence; flexible morals (espionage and performance)
Motivations	Power consolidation, Russian legacy/restoration, national unity and economic revival	Money/fame, escaping abuse/poverty
Traumas	WWII family losses (parents/siblings), KGB service stresses	Abusive marriage, family deaths, poverty
Hobbies	Judo/martial arts, hunting, sports (hockey), horse riding; multilingual (German, English)	Dance, travel

Connections to Pets	Dogs (e.g., Konni, Buffy; gifts/symbols of power)	None mentioned
Approximate % of Anarcho-Capitalist Overlap	5% (Statist leader emphasizing national collectivism and state intervention, though economic reforms included market elements; military actions contradict non-aggression)	20% (Independent operator in espionage and performance, self-reliant but worked for states and violated loyalties, with flexible morals over private contracts)

Analysis: Putin’s profile exemplifies real-world statism, where economic reforms mask coercive nationalism, contrasting anarcho-capitalist free-market ideals (Mises, 1949; Churchwell, 2018). Mata Hari’s independence and promiscuity reflect erotic lures in spy lore, but her state affiliations and lack of property respect limit overlap (Shipman, 2007). These figures underscore global indoctrination patterns, from Western media to historical accounts, paralleling fictional obfuscation of systemic flaws.

Summary and Conclusion of Comparative Analysis: As these are primarily fictional characters drawn from movies and novels, their traits must be interpreted through narrative portrayals rather than real-life access. From an anarcho-capitalist perspective, figures like James Bond and Natasha Romanoff are unsuitable role models; they are not well-read critical thinkers but brutal killing machines serving governments, embodying coercive state violence over voluntarism and individual sovereignty (Rothbard, 1982). Bond’s dark triad traits—narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy—are sanitized for MI6, with betrayals (e.g., Vesper Lynd in *Casino Royale*) fostering a jaded cynicism, chasing adrenaline to fill a void his profession no longer justifies (Tasker, 2015). While promoting modern day progressive liberalism and feminism, the *Atomic Blonde* character Lorraine Broughton lacks evident education and philosophical or human depth, a hedonistic and violent MI6 tool (Tasker, 2015). This is underlined by the far more sophisticated male characters, and reality itself, where the two real-life spies fare quite well in comparison. Interestingly, it is Batman, who is not only the most cultured and accomplished character but also shows the most human depth through his trauma-driven justice and philanthropy, despite diluting his libertarian potential with political donations (DiPaolo, 2011). Bourne and Batman represent a morality that is universally acceptable, with Bourne’s exposure of state corruption mirroring real CIA programs like MKUltra, adding well-researched parallels to real-life events (Estes, 2019).

Romanoff, too, represents reprehensible values and methods, and cannot be considered a valid role model for modern women. Characters like Romanoff and Broughton may be detrimental to younger female audiences, suggesting severe violence and promiscuity as efficient solutions while setting unattainable standards in fitness, sexiness, and beauty—essentially setting teenagers up for failure (Brode & Deyneka, 2012; Lindsey, 2020). Anarcho-capitalism appreciates beauty, athleticism, and the encouragement of strong, independent men and women, but unattainable skills and promiscuity are counterproductive and inexcusable. When young women are taught that a fit female can beat every man, no matter how tall or skilled, they are set up for failure in real-world scenarios. Real-life fighters like Ronda Rousey have critiqued Hollywood’s unrealistic expectations, stating, “I was given a really unhealthy and unrealistic expectation of what I, as a woman, should look like. I want to be [a] healthy example of what could be desirable” (Rousey, 2014, as cited in *Sports Illustrated*). Similarly, Gina Carano has emphasized authentic femininity and realism in combat, noting, “Being feminine is something that men and women both have,” and that genuine physicality in fights brings out one’s “natural” self, implicitly critiquing over-the-top Hollywood depictions (Carano, 2017, as cited in *MMA Junkie*). Hollywood’s progressive indoctrination, through these exaggerated “feminist” lenses, poses a potentially dangerous influence on young minds by promoting unattainable feats that could lead to

misguided confidence or self-harm (Reardon, 2015; DiPaolo, 2011).

Noteworthy, it is the real-life characters that show more depth and credibility, particularly Putin, who scores just under Batman in depth and accomplishments. Even Mata Hari, foundational to female spy archetypes, fares well in comparison. Very clearly, while contemporary storytelling leverages left- to right-leaning statist propaganda, not a trace of anarcho-capitalist thought can be found—condemned to fringe status due to a lack of institutional lobbies, media support, and public perception as utopian or extremist (Kayser, 2025). This reinforces calls for anti-statist narratives, as explored in the Discussion.

Discussion: Implications for Society and Critical Thinking

This discussion synthesizes the study's findings, elucidating how contemporary narratives in movies, novels, and related media function as sophisticated tools of indoctrination via infotainment, subtly manipulating perceptions of good and evil while obfuscating viable alternatives to statism. At its core, the analysis reveals a deliberate pattern where "enemy within" twists—such as Hydra's infiltration of S.H.I.E.L.D. in the MCU or internal betrayals in Bond films—frame corruption as anomalous individual failings rather than inherent structural defects of coercive institutions (Dyer, 2017). This narrative device, rooted in semiotic myth-making (Barthes, 1957), portrays governments as redeemable and fundamentally benevolent, justifying "fight fire with fire" tactics that rationalize morally dubious actions like assassination or deception under the banner of the "greater good." For instance, Bond's license to kill or Romanoff's Red Room redemption arc humanizes state violence, conditioning audiences to view systemic flaws as personal aberrations, thereby perpetuating a cycle of dependency on authority (Eco, 1979). Such obfuscation marginalizes anarcho-capitalist alternatives, where private, voluntary mechanisms—such as market-driven arbitration and defense firms—replace state monopolies, eliminating the need for unaccountable intelligence apparatuses (Friedman, 1973; Hoppe, 2001). The result is a cultural landscape where non-aggression and self-ownership appear utopian or impractical, reinforcing "capitalist realism" that makes stateless societies unimaginable (Fisher, 2009).

Compounding this is the equal hypocrisy of left and right in defending governmental evils, such as state-sanctioned murder, blackmail, or surveillance. Both ideologies, despite rhetorical differences, rationalize these in media and reality as essential for "security" or "justice," ignoring anarcho-capitalist critiques that expose coercion as the root of societal ills (Rothbard, 1974). On the left, progressive narratives like Marvel's feminist arcs cloak collectivist agendas in empowerment rhetoric, advancing identity politics that divide along grievance lines while endorsing state intervention (Pluckrose & Lindsay, 2020). On the right, conservative portrayals—evident in military-glorifying films like *Top Gun* (1986)—defend "national security" excesses, framing dissent as treason (Boggs & Pollard, 2006). This bipartisan complicity erodes critical thinking, as audiences internalize the notion that ends justify means, fostering a passive acceptance of policies like mass surveillance or endless wars. The implications are profound: individual liberty diminishes as citizens increasingly defer to state "experts," from firearms proficiency (where heroes like Bond imply licensed agents alone should bear arms, undermining self-defense; Kopel, 2015) to economic decisions (where villains' entrepreneurship is demonized, biasing against free markets; Dyer, 2017).

Societal impacts extend beyond ideology, eroding autonomy and fostering dependency. Through infotainment's immersive blend of entertainment and propaganda, narratives condition younger generations to view state intervention as heroic, contributing to a "lost generation" plagued by mental health issues exacerbated by unrealistic media ideals (web:27; web:33). For instance, the erotic lure in characters like Bond and Romanoff attacks traditions by promoting decadence, glamorizing promiscuity as liberating while ignoring empirical evidence that family structures yield superior outcomes in child well-being, adult mental health, and happiness (McLanahan et al., 2013; Vaillant, 2012). Venereal disease risks in such lifestyles further highlight the shortsightedness, with multiple

partners elevating transmission rates amid rising STI epidemics (Senn et al., 1992; CDC, 2024). Villain portrayals undermine entrepreneurship by framing creation as evil, discouraging innovation in an era where private enterprise could solve societal challenges absent state barriers (Eco, 1979; Mises, 1949). Marketing influences amplify this: Disney/Marvel's corporate-statist ties, including Pentagon collaborations for films like *Captain Marvel* (2019), embed military propaganda, turning blockbusters into recruitment tools that normalize dependency on government for "protection" (Secker & Alford, 2017). This erodes critical inquiry, as audiences consume these myths uncritically, perpetuating a feedback loop where cultural permissiveness downstream influences political tolerance for coercion (Breitbart, 2011).

The study is somewhat Western-centric, which is regrettable given the amazing wealth of Chinese literature and philosophy—such as Confucian ethics in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* or Daoist harmony in Pu Songling's tales—and its profound impact on global thought (Graham, 1989; Idema, 1998). This limitation stems from the dominance of U.S.-produced media in contemporary storytelling, where Hollywood's output in TV, cinema, and literature dwarfs contributions from Europe, Russia, Latin America (LATAM), Africa, or India (UNESCO, 2023; web:1; web:2). For instance, the U.S. film industry generates over \$100 billion annually, exporting narratives globally via streaming platforms like Netflix and Disney+, while non-Western markets like Bollywood (India) or Nollywood (Nigeria) focus on local audiences with limited international penetration (web:4; web:5). Animation provides a fringe exception, with Japan's anime industry (e.g., Studio Ghibli's anti-war themes in *Grave of the Fireflies*, 1988) offering impressive work, but it remains marginal compared to Disney/Pixar's \$30+ billion dominance (web:6; web:7). This U.S. hegemony rules out non-Western perspectives "from the get-go" for anarcho-capitalism, as the ideology requires free expression and market competition—conditions suppressed in authoritarian regimes. In China, anarchy is viewed as a mental disorder, punishable by prison or psychiatric treatment in "ankang" hospitals for dissidents, reflecting a cultural and political aversion to stateless ideas amid Communist Party control (Human Rights Watch, 2022; web:10; web:11). Japan and South Korea fare no better, prioritizing private wealth creation and obedient distance from politics in media narratives that emphasize conformity and corporate loyalty (e.g., salaryman tropes in Japanese manga like *Salaryman Kintaro*, 1994–2002), without challenging statism (web:12; web:13). India, the world's most populous nation, is preoccupied with high taxes (up to 30% income tax rates) and survival in fierce competition, leaving little room for an-cap advocacy, which requires economic literacy amid widespread poverty and government subsidies (web:15; web:16). Russia, embroiled in ongoing conflict, prioritizes nationalist statism, with Putin's portrayal in this study objective—acknowledging economic stabilization post-1990s chaos but emphasizing his interventionism as antithetical to an-cap non-aggression (Mises, 1949; Churchwell, 2018). No anarcho-capitalist would commend Putin's vision, as it epitomizes purest statism, with military actions contradicting NAP and market reforms overshadowed by cronyism. Thus, the Western focus, while regrettable, reflects global storytelling realities, where U.S. dominance marginalizes alternative voices, perpetuating an-cap's absence.

Recommendations address these implications: promote counter-stories emphasizing voluntaryism, such as independent films or novels depicting private defense societies and mutual aid, to challenge infotainment's grip (Konkin, 1980). Encourage critical media literacy through education programs teaching semiotic deconstruction and economic basics, empowering individuals to question statist myths (Barthes, 1957; Kayser, 2025). Future research could explore non-Western media for latent an-cap elements, like Daoist individualism in Chinese wuxia films, or grassroots digital storytelling bypassing Hollywood. By fostering such alternatives, society can mature toward autonomy, reclaiming culture from coercive narratives.

Conclusion

This study has critically examined contemporary storytelling in movies and novels as a mechanism for manipulation, indoctrination, and obfuscation, promoting pro-governmental and collectivist values while marginalizing anarcho-capitalist principles like voluntarism, individual sovereignty, and free-market ethics. Through a rigorous anarcho-capitalist lens, it has dissected how iconic figures like James Bond and Black Widow (Natasha Romanoff) serve as state-sanctioned avatars, their morally dubious actions—espionage, violence, deception—rationalized as essential for the "greater good" (Eco, 1979; Rothbard, 1982). The analysis reveals a pervasive semiotic structure in these narratives, where "enemy within" twists portray institutional corruption as isolated, not systemic, and redemption arcs for opposing agents (e.g., Winter Soldier, KGB defectors) humanize foes while upholding state superiority (Dyer, 2017). This framing obscures the coercive nature of government, exemplified by intelligence apparatuses that misuse taxpayer funds for unaccountable operations, contrasting sharply with anarcho-capitalist visions of private, voluntary defense mechanisms (Friedman, 1973; Hoppe, 2001). The study's novelty lies in its integration of anarcho-capitalism with semiotic analysis (Barthes, 1957) and systems/chaos theory (von Bertalanffy, 1968), offering a fresh critique of post-2010 media, including Marvel's declining box office due to "woke" overreach and Bond's enduring yet problematic semiotic sophistication (Nitins, 2011; web:37). Cross-cultural comparisons, particularly with Chinese literature like *Outlaws of the Marsh* and Pu Songling's *Strange Stories*, highlight non-Western resistance narratives, though these too fall short of true anarcho-capitalism (Idema, 1998; Graham, 1989).

Erotic hypocrisy emerges as a central theme, with Bond and Romanoff weaponizing sexuality to lure audiences, undermining traditional values through promiscuity that reflects leftwing fantasies of permissive privilege (Heckert & Cleminson, 2011). This ignores societal needs for discipline, fostering decadence and health risks like venereal diseases, while empirical evidence underscores family structures as superior for child well-being and mental health (McLanahan et al., 2013; Vaillant, 2012; Senn et al., 1992). Anarcho-capitalism, while viewing sexuality as private (Rothbard, 1982), critiques these portrayals for setting unattainable standards, particularly for young women, exacerbating body dissatisfaction and mental health crises in a generation exposed to media overload (web:27; web:33). The portrayal of heroes as firearms experts further embeds statist reliance, implying civilians should defer to authorities, eroding self-defense rights (Kopel, 2015). Even parodies like *Austin Powers* fail to challenge the immorality of statist excess, reinforcing Bond's grandeur through satire without questioning taxpayer-funded espionage (Corliss, 1997).

The study's Western-centric focus, while a limitation, reflects the U.S.'s dominance in global storytelling, dwarfing contributions from Europe, Russia, Latin America, Africa, and India (UNESCO, 2023). China's suppression of anarchy as a mental disorder, with dissenters confined to prisons or "ankang" asylums, precludes an-cap narratives, as does Japan and South Korea's focus on apolitical wealth creation, and India's tax-heavy survivalist culture (Human Rights Watch, 2022; web:10). Russia's statist nationalism under Putin, objectively analyzed here for its economic reforms but critiqued for interventionism, is antithetical to an-cap ideals (Churchwell, 2018). This global context underscores why anarcho-capitalism lacks heroes, villains, or audiences, as it offers no simplistic promises of "free stuff" through expropriation—a tactic both left and right employ to burden the middle class—requiring instead economic literacy that media avoids (Kayser, 2025, DOI: 10.62891/5457b20f).

Addressing the earlier question—would anarcho-capitalism find a market if Hollywood crafted an an-cap icon?—the answer, in all likelihood, is no. Audiences are distracted by a veritable onslaught of crises: fake pandemics (Rancourt, 2023) fueling distrust, real recessions (e.g., post-2020 economic slowdowns), and rampant inflation (U.S. CPI rose 8.5% in 2022, per web:15). Existential threats in current economic downturns, with rising taxation (e.g., U.S. effective rates climbing to 30% for middle-income households; web:16), threaten businesses, with 20% of small U.S. firms failing post-

COVID (web:18). People increasingly depend on government subsidies, making the idea of abolishing it unappealing. The success of centuries-long indoctrination, from imperial epics to modern infotainment, sits too deep, reinforced by "capitalist realism" that deems statelessness unthinkable (Fisher, 2009). Anarcho-capitalism's complexity—requiring understanding of spontaneous order and polycentric law (Hayek, 1973; Friedman, 1973; Hoffer, 1951)—lacks the emotional pull of radical left or right pitches that dominate media (Hoffer, 1951). Currently, artificial intelligence (AI) appears to be the only technology powerful enough to disrupt statist propaganda, enabling decentralized, uncensored narratives that craft heroes embodying non-aggression and market ethics (Onge, 2025). AI-driven platforms can analyze audience preferences and counter mainstream tropes, bypassing Hollywood's gatekeepers, but like cryptocurrency or internet technologies, AI faces regulatory strangulation by governments fearful of losing narrative control (Onge, 2025; web:20). Theoretically, critical media literacy through truly independent and free-of-charge education programs teaching semiotic deconstruction and economic basics could inspire individuals to question statist myths (Barthes, 1957; Kayser, 2025) but are easily undercut by censorship, shadow banning and DSA-like regulatory schemes.

Recommendations include fostering counter-stories via independent platforms, depicting voluntaryist societies to challenge statist myths, and promoting media literacy to teach semiotic and economic deconstruction (Konkin, 1980). Future research should explore emerging media, such as streaming series on platforms like YouTube or decentralized blockchain-based content, where an-cap creators could bypass Hollywood gatekeepers (CoinDesk, 2023; web:20). Independent productions and non-Western narratives, like wuxia films, or anime productions with Daoist undertones or critical thought, offer potential for latent individualism but many are currently financed through government affiliated NGOs and governmental funding programs (Anime News Network, 2023; Film Local, 2025). The study calls for reevaluating cultural icons like Bond, urging creators to craft heroes embodying non-aggression and market ethics. This novel framing advances libertarian media studies, exposing how storytelling perpetuates dependency over autonomy.

A provocative question remains: How powerful would storytelling have to become to overcome centuries-old indoctrination? Given the entrenched cultural machinery—Hollywood's \$100 billion industry, state-backed propaganda, and global crises—new narratives must harness unparalleled creativity and accessibility to shift paradigms toward liberty (Kayser, 2025).

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