

Impact Statement

Mena Apisarnthanarax, Grade 8.

Duality, 2022.

Digital art, 11 x 14 Inches.

Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart, Bellevue, WA

Unsung Hero: Hedy Lamarr

I found my topic through the list of pre-approved unsung heroes. After researching each person on the list, I decided on Hedy Lamarr. I chose Hedy Lamarr because I found the impact of her invention (frequency hopping technology) and the way she utilized it by undermining the telecommunication of the Nazis inspirational. The way she managed the task of being both a Hollywood actress and an inventor was something I also found admirable. I also chose Hedy Lamarr because as a growing woman, I would like to bring light to powerful yet overlooked women who have used their brilliance to make their mark in history.

I researched Hedy Lamarr by exploring a variety of articles that discussed her and her accomplishments. While researching, I found that Hedy Lamarr was born on November 9th, 1914, in Austria. She was an inventor and an American Hollywood actress best known for her starring role as Delilah in the 1949 film Samson and Delilah. Her acting career began around when she was hired as a script girl. After playing extras and minor roles, she was eventually cast in the play called The Weaker Sex. The producer, Max Reinhardt was impressed by her skills and brought her with him to Berlin. Although she never ended up working with Reinhardt, she was eventually cast as the leading role in the 1932 film, No Money Needed which led to her fame. Not only was she an actress, but she was also the inventor of frequency hopping spread spectrum, also known as (FHSS) is the frequent change of the carrier signal during radio transmissions. This is meant to avoid any interruptions or interferences. FHSS can also be used to gain access to Code-division multiple access (CDMA), which is a way to distribute information through one single channel. Hedy Lamarr's brilliant invention is even used in today's modern technology, such as Bluetooth, GPS, and Wi-Fi.

My art piece depicts a movie set with Hedy Lamarr's acting chair along with a notebook on a side table flipped open to a page containing the blueprint of her brilliant frequency hopping invention displayed in the front. In the background, a filming crew is seen capturing Hedy Lamarr in a gorgeous blue gown along with co-star George Brent from the 1944 film Experiment Perilous. My artistic representation of Hedy Lamarr shows her duality of being both an actress and an inventor.

My takeaway from this project and experience is the sad reality of how women who have greatly impacted history and today's society are often underrepresented. Unfortunately, Hedy Lamarr is just one of many unrecognized female contributors in history. These women work extremely hard, yet their work isn't acknowledged. Young girls and those growing into womanhood like me deserve to learn about and be influenced by these amazing women. They deserve to be reminded that they too can make their mark in the world. I will share my project to my community by educating and informing them about Hedy Lamarr, who she is, what she did, why she was significant, and other overlooked women through texting or a face-to-face conversation.

In conclusion, I encourage others to research other important women in history and inform their own community members. These women have been ignored for long enough, it's time to raise their voices and finally shine the spotlight on them.