

Impact Statement

David Mahan, Grade 12.

Hedy Lamarr's Impact, 2016.

Digital art, 13.5 x 21 Inches.

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Unsung Hero: Hedy Lamarr

I chose Hedy Lamarr as my unsung hero for several reasons. First off, I am extremely interested in the history of technology, and how past inventions are used as stepping stones for future advances. Secondly, I used to be an amateur inventor. I have competed in several invention competitions like the Invention Convention, and I am the head of my school's robotics team. So I have gained an appreciation for the amount of work, lack of sleep, and frustration that goes into inventing even the most simple mechanisms. Lastly, as an American, I respect her for her service to the Allies, and the contributions she made to the War effort.

With the aid of Photoshop, I have tried to create an image that represents the Second World War before Lamarr's Spread Spectrum Technology was created, and life after her technology was released. On the left side of the picture, I used images of soldiers preparing for, walking into, and fighting in a battlefield to represent the war before Lamarr's technology. The focal point, Hedy Lamarr, has newspaper clips and headings covering her face to show the impact that she had, even though her technology wasn't implemented in its full capacity until the nineteen sixties. The American flag that overlays her hair was added because she created the communications system to be used by the U.S. Navy. Her eyes are composed of Wi-Fi symbols to symbolize Hedy looking into the advances of the future, and the impact that she had on our life. On the right side of the picture, I included images of people, both young and old, enjoying the technology that was created based off of Lamarr's Spread Spectrum Technology. I also used images that represent the improved system of transmitting information that came as a product of Hedy Lamarr's work.

Since Hedy created her Spread Spectrum Communication Technology during the Second World War, I felt that an older theme would be appropriate. To form the face, I put the newspaper images on either overlay or luminosity to create an aged, slightly faded look. Then I used the warp tool to carefully fit the image to the shape of the face. For the newspaper clips that extended over the shape of the face, I deleted any excess. For her hair, I also employed the use of the warp tool to wrap the flag around the general shape of her head. Then I deleted any extra strands of hair that radiated from her general hair flow. The images on the right and left of the image were all placed under an overlay, multiply, or luminosity filter. For the images that were near Lamarr's face, I used the warp tool and the erase tool to ensure that her face was well defined. Instead of keeping her eyes as they were, I substituted her pupils for WIFI symbols to closer relate the project to the future she had a large part in creating.

While researching Hedy Lamarr and creating this project, I have learned several useful lessons that could have an effect on my life far after my high school graduation. In the 1940's, it was rare to find a woman who was working in the same capacity as, or one higher than, a man. And, given that she was well known for her acting career, it is not hard to imagine the struggles she

faced while working with men in a military environment. To work through these conflicts she had to display a certain level of confidence and perseverance. These qualities are great character-building tools, and the example that Hedy set will be used as a template to follow throughout my life. Hedy also was a great example for my life because she understood the importance of her work. She worked hard, knowing that she could have a significant impact in surroundings. This type of thinking is necessary to have a voluntary impact in my community, and one that I wish to carry with me.