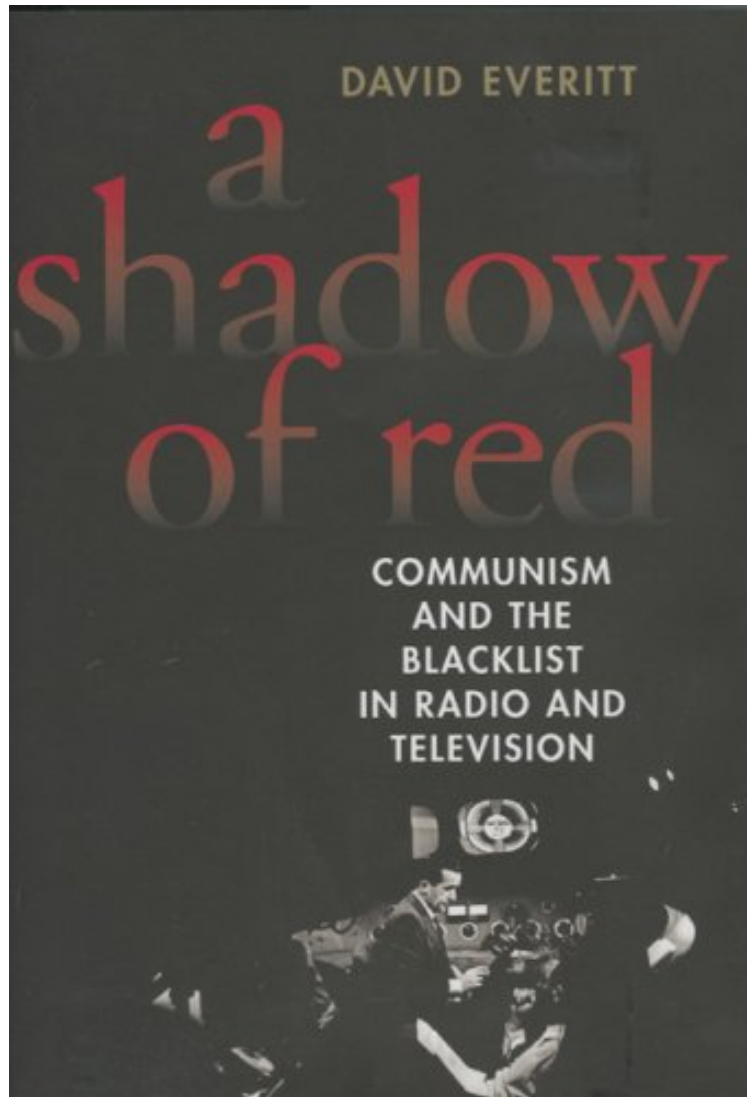


[Free download] A Shadow of Red: Communism and the Blacklist in Radio and Television

A Shadow of Red: Communism and the Blacklist in Radio and Television

David Everitt

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David Everitt : A Shadow of Red: Communism and the Blacklist in Radio and Television before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Shadow of Red: Communism and the Blacklist in Radio and Television:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Objective and interesting By James D. Crabtree Unlike many works on this topic, which run on the assumption that there were in fact no communists in the broadcast industry, Shadow of Red is an objective look at the actual involvement of the CPUSA in radio and television, as well as those employees

who were involved in front organizations cobbled together by communists. Everitt puts the so-called "witch-hunt" in context, discussing the outbreak of the Korean War as a factor in America's attitudes towards communists who openly and vocally supported the same people killing Americans in Asia. Another issue, also not always addressed, was the disillusionment with communism many leftists had after the flip-flops of the 1930s and 1940s towards fascism and African-Americans. Acceptance of the party line meant believing that Finland in 1940 was an actual threat to the USSR and not a victim of aggression. Acceptance of the party line meant hating refugees from the Baltics because they were escaped enemies of the Soviet Union. Acceptance of the party line meant believing Americans were using biological warfare in Korea. People who could be duped into these beliefs were in a position to effect broadcasting at home. But this book is hardly a homage to the anticommunists of the day. As Everitt points out, the lists produced in Red Channels were based on good information but using an inconsistent yardstick. One person might be on the list simply because they worked on a pro-Soviet movie during WWII, while others with more solid leftist credentials might be missed because they were not radio or TV personalities. And in some cases there were mitigating circumstances or even errors... but no real process to sort out those wrongly accused or to even prevent innocent people from being accused. The author also points out that the so-called blacklisting was not a government phenomena (although HUAC sometimes did play a role) but rather an attempt by the industry to self-regulate. Most broadcasters just wanted to provide non-controversial entertainment and had no use for anyone wanting to use their microphone as a red pulpit or to justify their politics via their celebrity status. In the blacklist they found a way to avoid these problems, which were bad for business. One of the best books I have read on the so-called Red Scare. Definitely better than the political pity party pieces which normally cloud the issues. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Tough read but interesting tale. By Gaudilady. Interesting at times and boring at others. I read it twice to get a better understanding of the time line and all the many characters, all well before my time. Sometimes reading became tedious but the story is intriguing. So many of these books written about the Communist threat after WWII are one sided. Guess because it involved so many writers, etc. Hard for them to be impartial. No exception here. He obviously doesn't like the 5 characters he writes about so objectivity missing. He has assumed much as to their actions which may never be provable, as time passes. And he glossed over some rather intriguing revelations about documents released after the Soviet fall. But the story is a good one and the tale needs to be explored and exposed more. Worth reading for a reader. If your not a reader, move on. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars. By Vanda Writer. It has open a whole new way of thinking. Thank you.

The Cold War came to broadcasting in 1950. In that year, just as the Korean War was about to erupt, there appeared from a small publisher a booklet called Red Channels, which listed 151 suspected Communist sympathizers in broadcasting. Within months the blacklist in radio and TV began. The purge of the airwaves, distinct from the better-known blacklist in the movie industry, provoked one of the American media's great free-speech controversies. It affected scores of writers, directors, and actors, yet it was instigated by only a handful of anti-Red watchdogs: three ex-FBI agents, a former naval intelligence officer, and a grocer from Syracuse. A Shadow of Red follows the efforts of these five guardians of the broadcast media in a revealing history of the period, based on interviews, personal correspondence, FBI reports, and court transcripts. The conflict has routinely been portrayed as a simplistic morality tale of persecutors and the persecuted, the standard witch-hunt narrative of right-wing fanatics hounding political innocents whom they insisted were agents of the Communist devil. But, as David Everitt makes clear, the blacklists, though excessive and destructive, were not deluded hunters of an imaginary menace. Their crusade is best understood as the culmination of a long-standing ideological struggle in broadcasting, in which neither side would indulge its adversaries. Ultimately the conflict would be decided in a historic and dramatic libel trial that brought all the issues, and all the old grievances, into the open. A Shadow of Red is brilliant history, a cautionary tale about civil liberties in a time of emergency, and a vivid example of the polarized political battle over who controls the media, a battle that continues to this day.

From Publishers Weekly. On June 27, 1962, former grocer Laurence Johnson was found dead in a cheap motel just outside New York City. His mysterious death would have been unremarkable had Johnson not been the driving force behind the rabid hunt for Communists that gripped the radio and TV industry from the late 1940s through the 1950s. In freelance writer Everitt's deeply researched, highly detailed account of this sordid episode in American history, Johnson was the leader of a cabal of committed anticommunists who sought to eliminate what they saw as undue influence by Communists or Soviet sympathizers in the New York-based broadcast media. In 1947, with Johnson's support, a trio of FBI agents published "Red Channels," a newsletter devoted to exposing what they saw as growing Communist influence in radio and later television. The newsletter evolved into a de facto blacklist: an ad hoc compendium of writers, producers and performers who due to their association, real or imagined, with left-wing causes were effectively barred from work. Everitt's narrow focus, however, makes this more for the history buff or red scare aficionado than the general reader. (Apr.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Everitt has given us a thoughtful, considered look at the issue of Communism in American life . . .

with fresh, illuminating insights. (Stanley I. Kutler, author of *The Wars of Watergate and Abuse of Power*)A complex story of clashing perspectives and personalities that will provoke thoughtful reconsideration of the balance between free speech, protest, and boycott. (John Earl Haynes, author of *Early Cold War Spies*)Absorbing history. David Everitt's well-written account offers special insights into the protagonists whose actions shaped this sordid era. (Athan Theoharis, author of *From the Secret Files of J. Edgar Hoover*)Deeply researched, highly detailed account. (Publishers Weekly)A refreshingly objective study. . . . A highly readable chronicle of a tumultuous period during which the cause of anticommunism suffered from mistakes that clever enemies were quick to exploit. (Joseph C. Goulden *Sunday Times*)Generally excellent. (The Weekly Standard)A 'must' for any collection strong in media history or Cold War politics, especially at the college level. (Midwest Book)Readable and superbly researched. (New York Sun)The first book to deal evenhandedly with the origins and effects of the communist blacklist in American radio and television. (Joshua Cohen *Forward*)Layered and nuanced story . . . especially pertinent at a time when many of us are terrified of our own justice department again. (Dan Smith *Blue Ridge Business Journal*)Serious in intention and illuminating. (David Hajdu *Columbia Journalism)An extraordinary chronicle of the blacklist era. . . . A beautifully written and moving narrative. This is a landmark work. (Marcus Letter)The best modern study of the phenomenon, far enough removed from the people and events of six and more decades ago to provide some analytic judgment. (Communication Booknotes Quarterly) "It makes for fascinating, even gripping, reading, and is more than a bit chilling in places."*