

we describe how to be an intellectual.

This is a book full of shrewd insights, illuminating and suggestive histories of how the intellectual has been and could be. The criticism without footnotes approach helps bring the crucial questions into a much clearer and open light than is usual. In short, it helps to *make* its reader an intellectual. This is a vital and necessary book.

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Phillip Deery, *Red Apple: Communism and McCarthyism in Cold War New York* (New York, Empire State Editions, 2014). 268 pp. \$34.95 Paperback.

When novelist Norman Mailer and columnist Jimmy Breslin ran as a team in the Democratic primary for the top two elective posts in New York City in 1969, it seemed (all too briefly) that “The Big Apple” was finally emerging from two decades of being mired in the muck of the McCarthy Era. Their campaign slogan was as brash and brusque as the two candidates themselves: “No More Bullshit!” But even more turbulent politics that year overwhelmed their libertarian platform. They finished fourth out of five in the primary, and former Republican John Lindsay ultimately swept to mayoral re-election victory as a maverick Fusion-Independent. McCarthyism was indeed a spent force halfway through the Cold War, but its legacy was all too evident in the broken lives and crushed careers of many prominent residents of (or visitors to) what only later was called “Fun City.”

Phillip Deery’s *Red Apple: Communism and McCarthyism in Cold War New York* is a welcome reminder that the reactionary-inspired, fear-based politics of six decades ago can be a salutary subject to consider in 2015. He chose NYC because in the aftermath of WWII it “became a crucible in which the politics of the Cold War was fought with bitterness and intensity.” (2) This was in part because NYC “was the epicenter of the American Communist Party [CPUSA]” and in part because “it was also a bastion, and had long been so, of left-wing liberalism.” (3-4) With the exception of Washington, DC, there were more spies and counter-spies, government agents, subversives, and defectors (from both sides) operating in NYC than in any other city in the US. It is therefore worth noting that *not one* of the six individuals singled out by Deery in *Red Apple* falls into any of those categories.

He is well aware that these six represent many more: Edward Barsky was a medical doctor, Howard Fast a journalist and popular novelist, O. John Rogge a lawyer, Dimitri Shostakovich a composer, and two—Lyman Bradley and Edwin Burgum—were academics. Deery’s selectivity operated on a number of levels: his candidates for inclusion had to be either resident in, or connected to events in, NYC during the early post-WWII era. Three of the six experienced *permanent* Cold War career casualties; three others enjoyed rehabilitation. Although the “*Red Apple Six*”

are all male, women are not overlooked: Deery's introduction begins with Helen Reid Bryan, a middle-aged secretary imprisoned in 1950 by the House Un-American Activities Commission (HUAC) for refusal to provide them with records belonging to an organization *they* deemed "subversive"—the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee (JAFRC), a communist-sponsored aid group for anti-Franco Spanish Civil War refugees in Europe, North Africa, and elsewhere. Fast and Barsky were long-time members; Rogge was JAFRC's legal counsel.

The common thread that binds these six was not communism (only two—Fast and Barsky—were *members* of a communist party at this time) but *liberalism*. It was a time when that label became a target for conservatives and reactionaries in and out of the government (local, state, and national), and within the world of work (whatever and wherever that might be). Throughout five chapters (Bradley and Burgum are treated together) Deery deftly outlines how, when, and why all six ran afoul of the McCarthy witch-hunting expedition in and around NYC. Helen Bryan's role is subsumed within the chapter on Edward Barsky. Readers of *Left History* will inevitably be more familiar with a name like Howard Fast or Dimitri Shostakovich, both of whom enjoyed (then and later) an international audience. Shostakovich is the outlier of the six; his brief but painful contact with anti-Soviet sentiment was the result of pressure on him in the USSR. It was personally directed at him by Josef Stalin, who wanted him to represent the USSR at the leftist-organized Cultural and Scientific Congress for World Peace, held in NYC in 1949. He attended under brutal scrutiny, as the cover of *Red Apple* attests.

Two others—Fast and Rogge—share more similarities with Shostakovich than with the other three in terms of their careers beyond the 1950s. Fast joined the CPUSA in 1943. In less than a decade his association with it and with JAFRC led to a HUAC hearing and jail term. He was forced to self-publish and his passport was revoked. Rogge's legal career during that same period included defense of JAFRC personnel, activism for Cold War détente, and willingness to undertake work for the FBI. Fast renounced his pro-Soviet beliefs in 1957 and within three years saw the epic film of his novel *Spartacus* puncture (but not dismantle or eliminate) the Hollywood blacklist. Fast's literary career revived and flourished; he lived until 2003. Rogge's legal skills enabled him to steer his successive Leftist-Centrist-Rightist political affiliations in directions that kept him from prison and left his career intact. Shostakovich survived the final years of Stalin, enjoyed several decades of Politburo approval (during which he actually joined the Soviet CP), and died highly honoured in 1975.

McCarthyism was less kind to the others, and in their backstories is Deery's important contribution. Barsky, a trained and respected NYC surgeon, served with the Republican Medical Service in various American hospitals during the Spanish Civil War. During and after WWII he served as the Board Chairman of JAFRC, and when he was called to testify before HUAC on 13 February 1946, he refused to hand over that organization's books, ledgers, and other financial papers. Of eleven

JAFRC Board members (including Bradley and Fast) called to testify, Barsky received the stiffest sentence: six months in prison and a \$500 fine. After release his license to practice medicine in New York State was revoked. Because of that he was refused application to Workmen's Compensation on behalf of former patients who needed financial aid. For the next 20 years Barsky continued to work for activist causes, and died in 1975 at age 77.

Bradley and Burgum represent the American academic world at its worst in troubled times. Both men were tenured professors at New York University (in the German and English Departments, respectively) when their association with a "subversive" organization (the JAFRC and the CPUSA, respectively) was called into question. Bradley was suspended from teaching (without pay) in 1948, and fired three years later after completion of a two-month prison sentence for contempt of Congress. He was not again able to teach, but instead found work on the margins of academe by exhibiting books at educational conventions. He died in 1970 at age 66. Burgum shared a similar fate. After 28 years of distinguished teaching and a publishing career as a respected literary critic, Burgum was grilled by the McCarran Senate Committee in 1952. He invoked his First and Fifth Amendment rights in response to questions concerning his political beliefs as founding editor of the Marxist journal *Science & Society*.

Two hours later NYU suspended him without pay. In April 1953, following his request for a hearing before the NYU Faculty Committee, he was dismissed. A protest was mounted on his behalf, but he never taught again even though he enjoyed continuous recognition as a literary figure. In 1957, his wife committed suicide, a victim of the stress and tension of Burgum's protracted difficulties. He died age 85 in 1979. Deery, an academic, is especially attentive to these two cases since they are far from isolated. With few exceptions, American educational institutions, from the East Coast's Ivy League to the West Coast's University of California system, were also compromised in major or minor ways regarding academic freedom. As Deery puts it:

These dismissals ... did more than permanently disfigure the lives of two academics. They also provide sharp silhouettes of the fragility of academic freedom and illuminate the bureaucracy of political repression: the institutional processes by which a particular university [i.e. NYU], renowned for its defense and promotion of liberal values, sacrificed those values on the altar of anti- communism. (75-76)

This is a well-documented volume, with almost 70 pages of endnotes and ten pages of bibliography. The index is user friendly and I noted no typos. Deery is so focused on the McCarthy Era that readers might wish he had devoted a portion of the conclusion to the later careers of the "Red Apple Six" (I have supplied some data here). No doubt he is aware that the "New World Order" proudly proclaimed by President George H.W. Bush following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 is a

phantasm a quarter-century later. Much of the world shows signs of sliding into yet another round of right wing paranoia, this time feeding upon Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racism. Gullible voters are given bogus assurances that corporate-based politics—especially in the US—will see them through crises like climate change and economic disparity generated and driven by the very same global mega-companies that manipulate their respective political systems. This is reported, willingly and uncritically, by corporate-controlled media in countries visibly transitioning from representative democracies to plutocratic oligarchies.

Deery might have mentioned that the CPUSA's moderate leadership during WWII came to an end with the shift toward pro-Stalin hardliners in 1945. That left many members far more vulnerable when the combined "anti-Red" forces of the (e.g.) FBI, Congressional Committees, Smith Act, and Blacklist "engulfed the political culture with a virulent strain of bigotry and intolerance toward leftists and nonconformists." (6) Deery wisely avoids seeing parallels with totalitarianism in any other country. Except for atomic spy Julius Rosenberg (and his innocent wife), no one in the USA was executed. Nor were the US's federal prison camps comparable to the Soviet or Chinese long-term detention settlements. By the late 1960s even the last vestiges of McCarthyism in Hollywood had expired. But similar reactionary forces are always at play. Given the right circumstances they can quickly resurface. Deery's *Red Apple* reminds us that it is *fear*, as much as *force*, that can initiate and direct - and ultimately sustain - repression and tyranny.

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Peter Kulchyski, *Aboriginal Rights Are not Human Rights: In Defence of Indigenous Struggles* (Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2013). 176 pp. \$19.95 Paperback.

In *Aboriginal Rights Are not Human Rights*, Peter Kulchyski argues that resolutions such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples produce a "conceptual confusion" between human rights and Aboriginal rights. Whereas human rights developed in conjunction with the Western state and protect purportedly universal human characteristics, Aboriginal rights originate in Aboriginal peoples' struggles over land and to protect traditional cultural practices. When the United Nations or Amnesty International fail to distinguish between Aboriginal and human rights, they ignore the concerns of Aboriginal peoples such as self-determination.

The book addresses three distinct features of Aboriginal rights: cultural traditions; struggles with the state over land; and rights in practice. In the first section, Kulchyski positions the land-based struggles of Aboriginal peoples within a Marxist framework. Aboriginal peoples have a mode of production based on hunting and gathering, and their cultural practices and social structures emerge from