

ogy's collective colonized mind learned not to see" (Price, 342). That is a tall order indeed, but one worth pursuing, as both Price and Peace have done.

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Robert M. Lichtman and Ronald D. Cohen, *Deadly Farce: Harvey Matusow and the Informer System in the McCarthy Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

This is a brilliantly told story of a most unique informer, the figure with the conscience to repudiate his own charges, face down the institutional inquisition now directed toward himself, and try to make up for sins during the rest of his life. On the American scene, perhaps no one but Mrs. Rice, erstwhile anti-communist savant of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU) but later an avid supporter of the farmworkers, carries quite so much weight. Several prominent radicals-become-CIA-pets in the Congress for Cultural Freedom during the 1950s and early 1960s returned to something like radicalism during the Vietnam War — Dwight Macdonald and Mary McCarthy most prominently — but could not or would not deal with the public meanings of their quietly funded success. Harvey Matusow did, and we now know how and why.

The larger scope of this story is the institutional operation of the domestic Cold War, something with more relevance today than at any time during the last 30 years or so. As scholars of the blacklist know so well, no "investigating committee" ever really intended to turn up facts, and every committee knew how slim the likelihood was of any "subversives" presently giving away supposed secrets to America's enemies. The FBI had placed its informers so expertly in myriad organizations that every name, every activity had been tracked before the investigation opened. The point of hearings and further FBI activity was, then, simply to shut down the Left and to warn liberals (along with the general populace) that loyalty would always be in question, and a failure to offer open approval of US global operations could bring the sudden end to a career and assorted rights, perhaps citizenship itself. The authors make the point that the Justice Department was behind it all, more sinister than J. Edgar Hoover's operation because its officials made the key decisions to indict and imprison.

The lesser scope but also inevitable center of the story is the pathetic creature, Harvey Matusow. Born into a middle-class Bronx neighborhood in 1926, he came along too late for the glory days of the Depression struggles. He moved toward the Left in the inauspicious year of 1946, joined the Party the fol-

lowing year, and faced the crushing defeat of Henry Wallace's candidacy one year further. As the Popular Front milieu disintegrated and frustrated Communist leaders turned to heresy-hunting — motivated in part by the feeling that Fascism was coming and weaker comrades needed to be unloaded — he was accused of “white chauvinism” and dumped from a minor post. Amidst a crumbling marriage, with no career prospects, he made the decision to become a paid informer.

In later years, Matusow was to give widely varied and often contradictory reasons for his decision, and his quasi-career of paid testimony over the next half-decade. Robert Lichtman and Ronald Cohen discern the main reasons that he did not, like the vast majority of ex-Communists disillusioned by the Soviet Union or other factors, simply drop out. Lacking a real career, he was happy to take the money, but put most simply, he craved the attention. He was coached by other FBI informers as the exemplar of erstwhile Communist “youth,” a heretofore overlooked category — most curiously so, since the corruption of innocent American youth had long been laid to an ever-changing but always somehow similar combination of black-based culture (“jungle music”) and “foreign” ideas such as atheism.

Matusow's widely publicized testimony sometime seems, in retrospect, unintended comic relief in the grim era. He told the Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee that he had tried to infiltrate the Boy Scouts but had apparently been turned back. (The Boy Scouts' chief executive quickly ordered a security check of all potential applicants, an order that must have seemed akin to the regular digital check of former Cub Scouts for testicular irregularities.) But the harm done was real, including the bookings of the Weavers, the threats against student protests of all kinds, the defense of Senator Joseph McCarthy from discredit and potential electoral defeat, and the attack upon the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, one of the Left unions expelled by the CIO in 1949.

His value as an informer quickly reached an apex and dissipated. By 1953, Matusow was both alone and broke. He began offering journalistic accounts of a partial recantation, but respectable papers (i.e. *The New York Times*) declined to use the information. After the Army-McCarthy hearings, he tried harder, with great hopes that recantation would produce a new career opportunity, but perhaps also with a sense that he had done something terribly wrong. At any rate, his recantation was a sensation, a discrediting of the paid political informer. Fair-weather civil libertarians like Murray Kempton, who had brushed aside the effects of the Hollywood Blacklist as the trivial loss of no-talent hacks, now saw their chance to regain momentum from the Right. The FBI practice of coaching potential witnesses, helping them to fill in (or invent) details before testifying was thrown into doubt. A grand jury indictment against Matusow for perjury followed — not for his original testimony but for repudiating it!

By 1960, when a term in prison on this charge ended, he was a mere 33. A half-decade or so later he became a successful exile in London, leader of Harvey Matusow's Jew's Harp Band and then Naked Software, i.e. hipsters who encouraged London's youth in the direction of the counter culture (thus a successful "corrupter" of youth after all). Returning to the US, he joined a commune, later became active in children's theater, still later running a kitchen for the homeless in Arizona. Near the end of his life, he worked in public access television.

What was the meaning of it all? The authors do not push the envelope far in their speculations. But with scrupulous research and personal sympathy for Matusow, they explore a life of a young rebel corrupted, ruined, then partly redeemed. What could a Harvey Matusow have been and done in a world going a different direction in 1947? We will never know.

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Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner, *Hide In Plain Sight: The Hollywood Blacklistees In Film and Television, 1950-2002* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

This is the fourth study of Hollywood, the blacklist, and the Left that Paul Buhle has published with Dave Wagner: *A Very Dangerous Citizen: Abraham Lincoln Polonsky and the Hollywood Left* (2001), *Radical Hollywood* (2002), and *Blacklisted: The Film Lovers' Guide to the Blacklist Movie* (2003). He has also combined with Patrick McGillian in compiling interviews of many of those blacklisted, *Tender Comrades: A Backstory of the Hollywood Blacklist* (1997). It might appear that after all of his research and thinking about the subject, there could be little that Buhle has not covered, or that could be challenged. Yet there has been considerable controversy concerning his research and interpretations; indeed, virtually all of his recent publications have been questioned by those who disagree with his political views and/or seemingly questionable research. I would argue, however, that he and his co-authors have greatly enhanced and enriched our understanding of the American Left and its trials and tribulations following World War II, in Hollywood and elsewhere. In *Radical Hollywood*, Buhle and Wagner thoroughly documented the (often subtle) political influences of left-wing movie writers, directors, actors, and producers into the 1940s, although this was usually denied, then and subsequently. *Hide In Plain Sight* follows the story through the dark age of blacklisting, when most of those purged somehow managed to survive and even influence popular culture until