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# H-Diplo

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Introduction by Christopher Endy

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Introduction by Christopher Endy, California State University, Los Angeles

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Did anti-communism really create a conformist mass media in post-1945 America? According to most textbooks, the period from 1945 to 1960 stands as the age of Joseph McCarthy, when Americans embraced militant anti-communism and censored dissenting views. Beginning in the 1980s, historians began calling this anti-communist consensus ‘Cold War culture.’ Scholars of Cold War culture tended to emphasize the synergistic, interlocking power of the anti-communist consensus. Repressive anti-communism held so much power in the United States because it served the needs of diverse groups: politicians, military leaders, clergymen, business executives, and even anxious suburban parents.<sup>1</sup> With so many constituents, anti-communism grew into a potent, self-reinforcing cultural and political structure. By the 1990s, scholarship on Cold War culture evolved by showing how anti-communism could bring progressive, not just repressive effects, especially in aiding the African American civil rights movement.<sup>2</sup> Yet even these works underscored how deeply the anti-communist consensus had penetrated American life. If the Cold War could lead white politicians to abandon Jim Crow, then surely militant anti-communism was a powerful domestic force.

But within the last decade, the notion of a sweeping Cold War culture has generated something of a historiographic backlash. In her influential synthesis of U.S. politics and society, Lizabeth Cohen saw fit to stress that “much of importance in America’s postwar history happened outside the Cold War frame.”<sup>3</sup> Other scholars questioned the power of the anticommunist consensus by adopting bottom-up methods or postmodern notions of decentralized power. These historians emphasized that ordinary Americans often took little interest in waging the Cold War in their daily lives. Instead, average Americans frequently responded to the Cold Warriors’ calls to arms with apathy or resistance. The 1950s, these new scholars suggested, was not as conformist and stifling as is often depicted in textbooks or popular memory.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Notable examples include Lary May, ed., *Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Age of Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); and Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers’ Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 8. For another declaration of independence from Cold War culture, see Vanessa R. Schwartz, *It’s So French! Hollywood, Paris, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> See for instance Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946–1965* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); and Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). For essays elaborating on this theme, see Peter Filene, “‘Cold War Culture’ Doesn’t Say it All,” in

Andrew Falk's excellent book contributes to this recent generation of scholarship on Cold War culture. Falk emphasizes the persistence of progressive dissent in television and film throughout the supposed age of McCarthy. As the reviews in this roundtable note, *Upstaging the Cold War* draws on careful research into both the culture industry and the U.S. government's anti-communist machinery. The book's ample evidence, along with a sophisticated conception of power inspired by Michel Foucault, allows Falk to delineate both the extent and limits of Red Scare repression.

Richard Fried observes that Falk is at his most original in the beginning and end of his book. Falk's middle chapters convey the more familiar story of anti-communist pressures in Hollywood, but his early and later chapters most clearly challenge the myth of Cold War conformism. Early on, Falk shows how progressive internationalism, especially the 'One World' vision of 1940 Republican presidential nominee Wendell Willkie, inspired many television and film writers well after World War II. In his later chapters, Falk argues that European audiences embraced progressive American screenwriters. European enthusiasm for progressive American culture in turn led the U.S. government to reverse course and incorporate once-blacklisted writers, such as Dalton Trumbo in U.S. public diplomacy efforts.<sup>5</sup> In these ways, Falk challenges simplistic descriptors such as the age of McCarthy. The cultural politics of the 1940s and 1950s proved much more complex.

All of the reviewers endorse Falk's overall argument and approach, and they admire his attention to subtle political distinctions. Donna Alvah offers special praise for Falk's efforts at tracing audience reception, an elusive subject that so often frustrates cultural historians. The reviewers' critiques point to smaller complications caused by Falk's dedication to nuance and political detail. Alvah observes that it can be hard to keep straight the multiple ideological labels that Falk applies to screenwriters and producers such as Rod Serling. Falk's reply in the roundtable suggests that this confusion is a necessary price to pay for complexity, given the postwar era's "fluidity of allegiances." In his review, Fried offers a detailed challenge to Falk's narrative on Wendell Willkie's political decline. Fried argues that "the Willkiean moment" ended in 1944. In that year, Willkie failed to win a second Republican presidential nomination, and Democratic progressives such as Henry Wallace suffered their own political defeats. In contrast, Falk maintains that Willkie's vision of multilateralism and anti-colonialism continued to inspire Americans through the late 1940s, especially in Hollywood. In the end, this disagreement between Fried and Falk

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*Rethinking Cold War Culture*, eds. Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 156-74; Laura McEnaney, "Cold War Mobilization and Domestic Politics: The United States," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), vol. 1, 420-441; and Christopher Endy, "Power and Culture in the West," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War*, eds. Richard H. Immerman and Petra Goedde (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Falk's argument on the opportunistic character of U.S. public diplomacy parallels that of Penny M. Von Eschen's study of the State Department's work with jazz musicians. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2004).

revolves around how we define “the Willkiean moment.” If it refers to Willkie’s personal political power, Fried’s argument makes perfect sense. If it stands for the more general appeal of progressive internationalism, then Falk is correct to stress the vision’s endurance after Willkie’s death in 1945. After all, the demise of idealistic one-world organizations such as the United World Federalists did not occur until 1950.<sup>6</sup>

The roundtable also raises an important methodological question: what accounts for change in the mass media? As Seth Offenbach asks, was Hollywood “responding to changing political pressure” or was it “responding to the changing tastes of its consumers who might have had a reinvigorated American patriotism?” In Falk’s book, this debate centers on the decline of “anthology dramas,” or television series that featured a new storyline and set of characters with each episode. In television’s early years, anthology dramas emerged as a home for progressive internationalist writers. So why did the genre decline in the late 1950s? In *Upstaging the Cold War*, Falk emphasizes two reasons: anti-communist ideology, and television executives looking to cut down on expensive drama productions. In his review, Fried offers a third explanation. As television became more popular in the 1950s, TV viewing shifted from an elite urban activity to a heartland America pastime. Anthology dramas, Fried suggests, simply did not fare as well with the newer, mass audiences.

Fried’s analysis on the decline of anthology dramas takes us back to the broader problem of assessing anti-communism’s importance in post-1945 America. Fried, like Lizabeth Cohen and others, provides an argument for recognizing the limits of the Cold War’s cultural influence. Falk’s book follows the same overall route, assuming an intelligent and balanced position that emphasizes the often blurry line between conformity and dissent in Cold War America. Falk’s book will not be the last history on this topic; historians can still dive deeper into U.S. audience reception and especially into reception outside the United States. But it is hard to imagine future historians surpassing Falk’s even-handed and sophisticated approach to the history of repression and dissent in the post-1945 mass media.

### Participants:

**Andrew J. Falk** earned his Ph.D. in history from the University of Texas at Austin and is associate professor of history at Christopher Newport University in Virginia. He is the author of *Upstaging the Cold War: American Dissent and Cultural Diplomacy, 1940-1960* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), which received Honorable Mention for the Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, and a portion of this work was published in the journal *Diplomatic History*. His current project examines the activities of private humanitarian organizations engaged in overseas relief operations from the 1920s to the 1980s.

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<sup>6</sup> On the United World Federalists, see Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels against War: The American Peace Movement, 1933-1983* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 199; and Wesley T. Wooley, *Alternatives to Anarchy: American Supranationalism since World War II* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 60.

**Christopher Endy** is professor of history at California State University, Los Angeles, and is the author of *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill, 2004). He is now writing a book on the global politics of multinational corporations and business ethics since the late 19th century.

**Donna Alvah** is associate professor and Margaret Vilas Chair of U.S. history at St. Lawrence University in northern New York. She is the author of *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965*. She specializes in cultural and social aspects of U.S. foreign relations. Her current projects focus on children in the Cold War.

**Richard M. Fried** is the author, most recently, of *The Man Nobody Knew: Bruce Barton and the Making of Modern America* (Ivan R. Dee). He has taught for forty years at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he is Professor Emeritus.

**Seth Offenbach** is a Substitute Assistant Professor at Bronx Community College, City University of New York. His research focuses on the many ways in which U.S. foreign policy influences domestic policy. His article "Defending Freedom in Vietnam: A Conservative Dilemma," will be published in the forthcoming anthology *Decades of Transformation: Contesting the Future of Conservatism in the 1960s*. He has served as a List Editor for the H-Diplo listserv since 2009 and Review Editor in 2012.

Review by Donna Alvah, St. Lawrence University

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In examining domestic and international political aspects in the creation and reception of American film, television, and theater between World War II and 1960, Andrew J. Falk seeks to correct the “traditional narrative” that depicts anticommunist zealots as successfully stifling dissenting perspectives by 1950 and keeping them suppressed until the end of the decade (4). He persuasively demonstrates that the story is more complicated, and more remarkable, than this. Interweaving explanations of union politics and labor-studio relations, profiles of various personages, and content analysis with examination of shifting domestic politics and foreign relations, Falk adeptly shows that those marginalized in film, television, and theater found ways to air viewpoints that challenged idealized depictions of American society and of the United States’ role in the early Cold War world that conservatives and anticommunists hoped to promulgate.

The first two chapters focus on the World War II period and its immediate aftermath. With guidance from the U.S. Office of War Information, which “primarily encouraged rather than dictated” film content, Hollywood films promoted Allied politics and policies, including the alliance with the Soviet Union against Germany (26). Idealized renderings of American society during the war (for example, in the 1944 film *Since You Went Away*, which follows the travails courageously endured by the wife and daughters of a man at war) contrasted with films offering starker looks at the hardships of war such as the 1946 Academy Award-winning *The Best Years of Our Lives*, a three-hour drama that follows veterans struggling with social alienation, disability, a tough job market, alcoholism, and domestic problems. Romanticized pictures of the nation as unified and wholehearted in meeting challenges at home and abroad competed with characterizations of an imperfect American society in need of reform to define the “national identity” during and beyond the war (12).

Although the United States and the Soviet Union were allies in World War II, entrenched anticommunism, distrust of the Soviets, and adherence to U.S. sovereignty caused unilateralists to envision the United States’ postwar role as the leader in a bipolar world. A different internationalist-minded group, however, championed a model of cooperation among nations as advocated by liberal Republican Wendell Willkie, a figure admired by many in Hollywood. Influenced by Willkie’s widely read 1943 book, *One World*, “Universalists sought to promote several general principles in foreign and domestic contexts: humane capitalism, anticolonialism, self-determination, civil liberties, and impartiality in dealing with all nations” (47). Films made during and after the war represented these competing visions of the postwar world. As the Cold War emerged, the rival visions espoused by individuals and groups in the film industry, politicians, and U.S. government officials came to be perceived not simply as debatable alternatives for governing international relations in the postwar world. Rather, liberal and conservative anticommunists (including members of President Truman’s administration, and other Democrats, as well as organizations such as the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, which “distributed the Screen Guide for Americans written by Ayn Rand,” (98) who had worked for the Hollywood studio RKO), saw progressives as not only espousing an unrealistic world view, but even one that, translated

into policy, could endanger the United States' and its allies' security by furthering communist expansion. Anticommunists attempted to characterize those who called attention to social problems in American society and who favored multilateralism over unilateralism and bipolarity as Hollywood "radicals" (64). They were facilitated by press accounts of labor disputes with studios, and by writers' and others' former or present affiliations with left-wing organizations, and the support of progressive politicians such as Henry Wallace who advocated peace with and non-intervention in Soviet activities abroad.

Falk identifies numerous agents in the struggle to define the national identity for consumption at home and abroad: 'Hollywood executives,' 'studio executives,' 'studio heads,' 'moguls,' 'producers,' 'screenwriters,' 'talent,' 'Hollywood conservatives,' 'Hollywood radicals,' 'progressives,' 'dissenters,' 'liberals,' and 'policymakers.' Some of the historical actors fall into more than one category. At times, it can be difficult to ascertain or recall the difference (if any) between one category and another: not simply because there are so many people and organizations examined in this book, but also because the reader might be unfamiliar with the various functions of people in the film, television, and theater industries. Moreover, the political leanings of many individuals seemed to shift over time, and their professional and political activities could cross ideological lines. For instance, Daryl Zanuck, "the mogul behind the progressive themes in *Wilson* (1944) and *One World* [an 'unproduced motion picture' about Willkie's book]" (180, 254) supported the liberal Republican Willkie. And producer Dore Schary, who one might perceive as progressive in his views on racial and ethnic intolerance and other problems in American society, and who Falk describes as "promoting progressive themes for America" (61), is later characterized as "a liberal who felt compelled to collaborate with anticommunists despite years of chiding their Red-baiting" (117).

In subsequent chapters, Falk provides evidence that despite the political and economic pressure on those who promulgated images of the national identity in films, television programs, and plays to adhere to prettified depictions of American society for domestic and international audiences, progressives found ways to continue to work, and to disseminate perspectives that reflected their convictions. Falk follows the "migration of dissent" from Hollywood films, to television, and finally to Europe and Mexico (177). Playwrights such as Arthur Miller and Lillian Hellman who criticized anticommunist efforts to censor and blacklist saw their plays well received in Europe and Latin America. Nevertheless, U.S. government officials (such as ambassador to Italy Clare Boothe Luce) worried that representations of an imperfect American society would undermine the idealized productions that they preferred. They pursued and at times harassed progressives residing in or disseminating their works in other countries, and attempted to obstruct production of their work. U.S. agents also prevented or put conditions on the travel of some progressive cultural producers who attempted to go abroad.

Moving beyond the imprisonment or shunning of writers, actors, and others who challenged conservative and anticommunist politics and thinking of the 1950s, Falk shows that by the end of the decade, many who had defied prevailing attitudes (including some blacklisted) saw their works reemerge as representations to the world at large of American creativity, tolerance, and democracy endorsed by the U.S. government. One

example is writer Paddy Chayefsky's *Marty*, first produced as a television drama in 1953, that Falk describes as "a celebration of American mediocrity over the heroic" (167). Americans relished seeing on television, and later in the film version (which won the 1955 Academy Awards for Best Picture and Best Screenplay), characters that embodied their own ordinariness. Despite the popularity of *Marty* and the critical acclaim it received, Falk finds in "recently released" sources from the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) that anticommunists distrusted its depictions of Americans as flawed, regular people (168). Yet regardless of the State Department's preference for exporting films displaying American national superiority and idealized illustrations of American life, *Marty* was also popular among European audiences who appreciated the realistic portrayal of Americans, and the movie's mirroring of their own commonplace existences. For the 1959 American Exhibition in Moscow (famous for the Nixon-Khrushchev "Kitchen Debate"), the State Department selected *Marty* for the cultural exchange program, and Paddy Chayefsky to serve as a "goodwill ambassador" (207). Falk tells us that Soviet officials assumed that *Marty* would undermine idealized depictions of American life, but instead "common Russians 'were absolutely enthralled that a butcher could have so much, his own house, a room for his mother and aunt, a phone that worked'" (208). Thus we are reminded of the polyvalence of cultural texts.

Falk's discussion of the content of films and television programs produced in this period is enjoyable to read, and insightful. One example is his examination of anthology dramas that appeared in the early years of television, before HUAC and other anticommunist groups caught on to their potential for raising doubts about government policies and social institutions. In these popular "fiefdoms of progressive thought," screenwriters like Rod Serling could probe and question various forms of social intolerance, capitalism, the arms race, and nuclear weapons testing (169). In an endnote, Falk explains that "I purposely have resisted engaging in more textual analysis because, as recent conference panels, plenary sessions, and journal roundtables will attest, traditional diplomatic historians have criticized practitioners of cultural history for finding in cultural texts whatever themes serve their purposes" (218, n. 15). His approach is valid, and he indeed has achieved a fine balance of 'traditional diplomatic history with cultural history' in this book, although scholarship that places more emphasis on textual analysis than does Falk is worthwhile as well, despite traditionalists' apprehensions. Mindful not to engage in too much textual analysis (and no doubt aware of the trend of publishers limiting monographs to approximately 200 pages), Falk provides little to no information on content for some television programs and movies such as the blacklisted writer Dalton Trumbo's 1956 *The Brave One*, which according to the Internet Movie Database is about a Mexican boy and his pet bull. Under the pseudonym "Robert Rich," Trumbo won the Academy Award for best original story. Presumably, for anticommunists in the U.S. government and film industries who wanted to silence Trumbo (who along with other members of the "Hollywood Ten" had spent time in prison for refusing to testify before HUAC), it was the writer who was the problem, not necessarily what he wrote.

Falk skillfully draws upon a vast assortment of fascinating evidence to support his analysis, such as audience cards and surveys and other measures of the reception of films in the United States and Europe, as well as the papers of cultural producers (using Rod Serling's

college papers to trace his thinking as a young man is one noteworthy example). *Upstaging the Cold War* is a valuable contribution to the historiography on Cold War culture, domestic politics, and foreign relations. He has succeeded in crafting “A history detailing the persistence of dissent in culture industries [that] challenges a collective memory of the 1940s and 1950s as a period noted for domestic conformity and global bipolarity” (212).

This is a worthy rumination on contending visions of America's role in the post-World War II world. It combines the worlds of *machtpolitik* and *machtkultur*, of the National Security Council and the Hollywood Democratic Committee, of President Dwight Eisenhower and screenwriter Dalton Trumbo. Several recent works have examined U.S. government efforts to project official American cultural values abroad during the Cold War.<sup>1</sup> But Andrew Falk seeks to peer past this official project, to bring into view instead an alternative vision of the American global role that arose at the end of World War II; how it was rejected; and how victims of and dissenters from the official culture nevertheless managed to offer alternatives to it and to survive despite it. Both moderate and more outspoken foes of the Cold War consensus "helped shape American foreign relations in supportive and critical ways, in the context of their scripts and from behind the scenes, at home and abroad." (2) For the author, this was a challenge, the historical equivalent of a triple jump.

For this reader, it is a bit of a problem that the most fulfilling parts of *Upstaging the Cold War* are the beginning and end: the immanence, then demise, of "universalist" themes in public discourse shortly after World War II; and then the story of how blacklist victims and near-victims managed to survive, often in exile, and to alleviate (for themselves and their audiences) the pall of the era's inhibited culture. The pressures that led to the blacklist stifled a *zeitgeist* that Falk labels "One World" thinking, borrowing the title of Wendell Willkie's report of his 1942 global junket. While the purge of the entertainment industry's Left is the spring that drives the plot, this more-than-twice-told tale—the book's middle—sometimes deflects focus from the best parts of story.

The first of these touches on what one might call the Willkiean moment. Franklin D. Roosevelt termed it a "Godsend" when Republicans nominated Willkie for president in 1940. Willkie preached the evangel of bipartisan interventionism, more or less removing foreign policy from the campaign.<sup>2</sup> His greatest *éclat* came, however, with his 1943 best-seller *One World*, which recounted his round-the-world trip at FDR's behest to visit America's allies in 1942. It was a simple account, which may have partly explained its popularity. He called not just for a foreign policy of engagement but for heeding the needs and desires of all the world's peoples. If peace was to be sustained after the war,

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<sup>1</sup> See Nicholas Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006); Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 174.

imperialism and colonialism would deservedly die; but Willkie further warned that “we have our domestic imperialisms” that also needed correcting.<sup>3</sup>

As Falk notes, Willkie occupied the idealistic end of the spectrum, distant from ‘realists’ like Walter Lippmann. But the postwar future would treat his vision unkindly, and so perhaps the extent of his earlier influence needs some discounting. Indeed, Willkie’s views received rough treatment even before the postwar he did not live to see. Falk says Willkie died “at the moment of his greatest influence” (50). Not so: that influence had peaked a good year earlier and was fading. His authority in his own party, always limited, had ebbed. Party leaders took positions collectively and individually that fell short of his expectations. Many Republicans found him a pain in the neck. One, a former friend, introduced him at a luncheon as “America’s leading ingrate.”<sup>4</sup>

Publication of his book in 1943 marked Willkie’s apex. It sold two hundred thousand copies in its first week; when supplies failed, the publisher took out ads to apologize. In seven weeks sales topped one million. Multiple editions sprouted, and over a hundred newspapers ran excerpts. The same year, Vice President Henry A. Wallace offered his own broad roadmap for the postwar, *The Century of the Common Man*; amid a hail of charges that he wanted to supply “a quart of milk for every Hottentot,” its moment expired quickly.<sup>5</sup> And in 1943 Hollywood, as Falk reports, issued a film biography of Woodrow Wilson, martyr of the internationalist cause. *Wilson* played to large and rapturous audiences.

In that year public sentiment crystallized in favor of U.S. involvement in a postwar international organization, and Willkie’s GOP rivals did have to triangulate their foreign-policy positions in his direction. But 1944 was the end of the line for Willkie and Wallace. Wallace got muscled off the Democratic ticket; the GOP rejected Willkie. A June 1943 headcount of House Republicans’ presidential preferences left Willkie in fourth place, well behind Governors Thomas E. Dewey and John W. Bricker and General Douglas MacArthur. In a Gallup Poll that month, voters ranked Willkie second, still behind Dewey.<sup>6</sup> Harold Stassen, a rival for party leadership, published a review of *One World* that taxed Willkie for his “understatement of the evils of communism.”<sup>7</sup> Stassen’s anti-communism would prove to have more political durability than Willkie’s idealism. Indeed, *One World* had flashes of the naivete that marked some wartime treatments of the Soviets. At their first meeting,

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<sup>3</sup> Wendell L. Willkie, *One World* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1943), 185.; Robert A. Divine, *Second Chance: The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II* (New York: Atheneum, 1967), 72.

<sup>4</sup> Steve Neal, *Dark Horse: A Biography of Wendell Willkie* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1984), 290.

<sup>5</sup> Divine, *Second Chance*, 79, 105, 119-20; Neal, *Dark Horse*, 264.

<sup>6</sup> *New York Times*, June 12, 1943, 14, June 27, 1943, 9.

<sup>7</sup> *New York Times*, April 11, 1943, BR1.

Stalin beguiled his guest: “Mr. Willkie, you know I grew up a Georgian peasant. I am unschooled in pretty talk. All I can say is I like you very much.” Chou En-lai so charmed Willkie that he teetered on the edge of the “agrarian reformer” fallacy of which so many China Hands would be accused: if Chou typified Chinese Communists, “their movement is more a national and agrarian awakening than an international or proletarian conspiracy.”<sup>8</sup>

The Willkiean moment was over. His campaign in Wisconsin’s 1944 presidential primary garnered zero delegates, ending any hope he might again lead his party; that summer, he was not even invited to address its convention. In October he died, having endorsed neither FDR (who made overtures to him about a combined political demarche) nor Dewey. As one reporter noted, with his book, as with his other efforts, Willkie made “more friends outside than inside the Republican party organization.”<sup>9</sup>

Some pondered making *One World* into a movie—and perhaps casting Spencer Tracy in the lead.<sup>10</sup> But it is telling that the project came to naught. Indeed, Willkie’s greatest impression on Hollywood seems to have been in that corner of it inhabited by studio bosses, producers and directors (51). They may have been inspired by Willkie’s global perspective; they were also, as Falk shows, driven by visions of a global market for their products. Hollywood, Willkie or no Willkie, needed a foreign policy of its own. That required federal government aid, which partly explains the speed with which the movie industry crawled behind the blacklist.

Willkie’s decline does not lessen the usefulness of Falk’s effort to trace his impact on the broader culture, or at least Hollywood’s. One would have liked more evidence of Willkie’s influence on Tinseltown’s rank and file—homage to him at gatherings of the Hollywood Democratic Committee and other left groups the author examines. Indeed, it might have been profitable to subject the expression “One World” to the sort of search analysis Wendy Wall applied to the phrase “American Way” book on that theme.<sup>11</sup> Falk does cite Edward Dmytryk’s remark that he and others of the Hollywood Ten drew inspiration from “the speeches of the late Wendell Willkie” (111). Certainly the Hollywood Left and Willkie shared ideas and language on such matters as racial justice. The Hoosier’s critique of colonialism is worth recounting. But Willkie was an unlikely poster boy for the ultra-New Deal they desired.

The postwar developments Falk describes are gloomy. A different sort of internationalism from that preached by Willkie held sway. The Cold War came, anti-communists patrolled

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<sup>8</sup> Willkie, *One World*, 84, 138.

<sup>9</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom, 1940-1945* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), 511-12; *New York Times*, May 9, 1943, E10 (W.H. Lawrence).

<sup>10</sup> Neal, *Dark Horse*, 266.

<sup>11</sup> Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the “American Way”* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 15.

the home front, and the blacklist was born, driving into the shadows many in the entertainment industry who endorsed a more 'universalist' outreach by the United States. The unhappy outcomes of this part of the story are, of course, familiar: clear-eyed films like those by the Hollywood Ten give way to 1950's fluff, whose esthetic line was offered in burlesque by Ayn Rand's *Screen Guide for Americans*.

Still, in some of the efforts of the Hollywood Left to grapple with the issues that emerged just after the war, the author finds rewarding waypoints in the morass. In one intriguing episode at the UN's founding conference, screenwriter Dalton Trumbo was summoned to San Francisco to draft a speech for Secretary of State Edward Stettinius. Within two years, the invited ghostwriter would find himself a blacklisted member of the Hollywood Ten (and would *perfect* the art of writing as a ghost). The fact that Trumbo's San Francisco speech draft got "the shaft" (58) in 1945 suggests that the ironic contrast between these two events was not all that profound.

Even more interesting is Falk's expectant glance at television's early years. Some network executives had idealistic hopes for the medium—it would enlighten, not just stupefy and sell, and would convey "progressive" messages. His soundings in the papers of NBC, industry leaders, and writers of TV's "Golden Age" bolster his claim that for a time TV gave expression to "many of the very same positions advocated by Wendell Willkie and the Hollywood Left" (136). In 1949 CBS televised coverage of UN General Assembly meetings--a striking public-service "coup," grumbled their NBC competitors. Yet might such coverage have had a different, un-Willkiean value? It filled hours, and cheaply, that the networks, given TV's voracious appetite for material in its early years, had to scramble to program. More convincingly, Falk argues that TV's drama anthologies gave space for progressive messages. He also draws attention to the sensitivity of television executives to the need to edit out racial and ethnic stereotyping. One might interject that the groups to whom offense was (more or less) avoided had leverage to protest that TV was compelled to heed. Thomas Doherty has made this argument and also offers collateral appreciation of TV's messages of inclusiveness and tolerance.<sup>12</sup>

While Doherty recounts heroics that ran through the 1950s, for Falk 1950 marked the point at which the networks, more than coincidentally, fell in with Cold War strictures. This was the same span in which NSC 68 became America's fundamental Cold War text. George Kennan grimly recalled the year as one wherein policymakers' thinking rigidified. (146). In the age of NSC 68, the policy elite more consciously took up culture as a weapon. Paul Nitze steps in as a heavy at this juncture--yet some of his opinions excerpted here sound oddly like those of Kennan in his "Mr. X" article (151). It was a grim year: given events in Korea, some grimness in the councils of government was to be, if not welcomed, certainly expected.

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<sup>12</sup> *Cold War, Cool Medium: Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

Television now grew more defensive. Among Falk's heroes are the young TV playwrights who managed both to avoid the blacklist and, in this frightsome time, to portray aspects of American society from a critical perspective. These Galahads, among them Paddy Chayefsky, Rod Serling and Reginald Rose, wove subversive themes into their dramas: chagrin at the sway of nuclear weapons, at aspects of the business culture, and at intolerance. The young lions complained that the networks both messed with their work and demanded "'more conventional' material" (155). Censors who once saved minority groups from offense now blue-penciled allusions in *Judgment at Nuremberg* to gas chambers lest they affront the sponsor, the American Gas Association. Still, one of Falk's heroes reminisced: "I was surprised I got away with the stuff I did" (153).

Alas, anthology dramas expired with the decade; Falk blames "anti-communists and capitalist cost-cutters" (169), but perhaps the shift owed more to demographics: as TV came to more and more places—the middling towns and truck-stop burghs of the great heartland—urban tastes had less leverage on network choices. The horses of television's posse of Westerns which stampeded through TV's "wasteland" may have owed more to the preferences of the sovereign "people" than to craven or penny-pinching execs. As James Baughman pointed out, the weaker ABC network, contesting with its stronger competitors in the late '50s, "deliberately targeted the anthology dramas" of NBC and CBS because of their "fragile ratings."<sup>13</sup> Did TV make us, as Falk implies in lamenting how "it stunted social change" (176)—or we, it?

While TV fails to bring a happy ending, a last chance comes with an account of the survival of victims of the blacklist. Some sold work through 'fronts.' Others moved to Europe or Mexico, where audiences applauded material distinct from the feel-good pablum that, says Falk, typified official American culture exports. Yet these exports may not have been as bad as he claims. While government leaders had their own sense of what these artists—jazz musicians, for instance—were to deliver, these cats themselves, as official ambassadors, found audiences both at home and abroad for their own takes on America's warts as well as its beauty spots.<sup>14</sup> And the film of *Oklahoma!*, while admittedly awash with smiling gals and cowboys and the urgent issue of whether "The Farmer and the Cowman can be friends," may deserve a kinder label than "foot-tapper" (192). After all, if Marty, in Paddy Chayefsky's TV drama of that title, merits the laudatory treatment he receives here, what about *Oklahoma!*'s 'Jud Fry,' who is a brooding, more sinister 'Marty' gone postal? The eventual blacklisted Howard Da Silva created the original Jud. The movie Jud was memorably played by Rod Steiger, who also delivered Chayefsky's original Marty on TV.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> James L. Baughman, *Same Time, Same Station: Creating American Television, 1948-1961* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 186ff. (quote on 187). Baughman also notes (188-89) that Rod Serling and Reginald Rose (two of Falk's lost good guys) were granted drama series, *The Twilight Zone* and *The Defenders*, that CBS maintained until 1965, when their welcome wore out.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., Penny M. von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> Disdaining to sign a long-term studio contract, Steiger turned down the role in the movie version.

The blacklist diaspora is a familiar tale. Falk freshens it with discoveries of the extent to which the red-hunters surveilled it and cultural exports. This went beyond McCarthy's assault on USIA libraries, the State Department passport office's obstructionism, or the prying and interventions of U.S. embassies (notably Clare Boothe Luce's in Italy). The House Un-American Affairs Committee (HUAC) and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee kept tabs on exiled or traveling dissidents, who functioned as unanointed cultural ambassadors. Still, many dissidents found foreign havens. Two of Hollywood's 'Ten' worked on a British series about Robin Hood. *Marty* was a sensation abroad and the State Department made Chayefsky a good-will ambassador; amusingly his film, by which the Soviets hoped to show America's sordid underside, portrayed surprising living standards for a butcher, and Chayefsky came to express outrage at "Communist manipulation and mendacity" (208). The last chapter is studded with other wonderful ironies, including Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev's discovery that, if on nothing else, they agreed on their dislike of jazz.

In a sense, Falk's Hollywood and U.S. government are like *Oklahoma's* Farmer and Cowman. Whether—and how—they would be "friends" is the deep theme here. At times the author tries, perhaps a bit too strenuously, to yoke these entities to the same "surrey with a fringe on top." No doubt Eisenhower and his lieutenants left fingerprints all over the nation's cultural presence, foreign and domestic, but Falk wrongly conflates Ike's recovery from his heart attack (1955) with his cameo role on David O. Selznick's TV extravaganza "Light's Diamond Jubilee" (1954), to underline the argument. At other points the connection is more convincing. But always the treatment is provocative.

Hollywood producer David O. Selznick peregrinates through the book, his appearances punctuating the postwar years. He comes almost to resemble Michael in *The Godfather*. As Michael is torn between the worlds of Harvard and the Mafia, Selznick steers between idealism and the claims of money and power; the latter forced accommodation with those who waged the Cold War. Once a semi-rebel, Selznick ends up producing TV's paean to the jubilee of electric light and cooperating with Ambassador Luce in Rome. From the other side, Eisenhower's administration came to "recognize the political value of exporting" the dissidents' works (208). The author concludes that "the persistence of dissent" in the nation's cultural life shows that "domestic conformity and global bipolarity" are not wholly accurate as a description of the era (212). Here he is on firm ground.

Some of the most compelling dramas in movies and television often draw their plots and stories directly from real-life. These real life dramas often critique society while conveying a powerful political message. Discussions of international relations, national politics, and culture all influence the mass media. Andrew J. Falk's *Upstaging the Cold War* analyzes the political interconnectedness between the international Cold War and Hollywood. As Falk points out, throughout the twentieth century, American artists "sought ways to use their positions as purveyors of national culture to influence the American post-war character and foreign policy" (63). By focusing on the Hollywood and television elite, Falk brings the discussions of politics, internationalism, anti-communism (and communism), and American Exceptionalism out of the realm of staid elder statesmen and into the world of the cultural elite such as playwright Lillian Hellman, writer Rod Serling, Hollywood mogul Samuel Goldwyn, and actor Edward G. Robinson. By focusing on these non-official actors, Falk offers a new perspective on a thoroughly analyzed period in U.S. history.

Readers who pick up *Upstaging the Cold War* anticipating a close review of the anti-communist or patriotic undertones of U.S. films will be disappointed. Although Falk touches upon the messages of films and television, he primarily focuses upon the field of public diplomacy. Falk argues that when films, television, and Broadway plays have political messages (both the subtle and not-so-subtle kind), they constitute aspects of public diplomacy. This is especially true when the writers, directors, and actors have strong political opinions. Falk focuses his definition of public diplomacy on Hollywood and television during World War II and in the first decade of the Cold War. He presents a clear explanation of how the profit motive and the threat of censorship helped transform Hollywood. In the early Cold War years, many in Hollywood supported Wendell Willkie's ideas of *One World* internationalism, while opposing the basic notions of American Exceptionalism. However, as movie studios needed financial assistance in the form of the Marshall Plan, the industry began changing and focusing on supporting the normative notions of pro-American patriotism. Falk then repeats his story with respect to television, as it too moved from a place of liberal dissent to pro-American conformity.

In order to fully explain the story of how the media transformed from dissent into diplomacy, Falk relies heavily on archives from studios and the personal papers of the media elite. These sources provided a good understanding of how the media elite viewed its responsibility as the trend-setter of U.S. culture and policies. He also expertly employs traditional political sources from the National Archives system and the Library of Congress. This allows him to discuss the roles of policy makers as diverse as Congressman Martin Dies and Paul Nitze, who authored NSC 68. Nitze and NSC 68 are relevant aspects of Falk's work because NSC 68 was one of the clearest articulations of early U.S. policy in the early Cold War period and it included a focus on exporting US ideals through cultural works. Falk recognizes how political leaders worked with the studios to shape the patriotic message of America's mass media. The advantage of this two-pronged approach—focusing on the

political sources as well as the media's archives—means that he ably blends public and traditional diplomacy into one compelling narrative.

One of the more revealing and interesting sections of *Upstaging the Cold War* is Falk's close reading of NSC 68. In chapter 6, Falk—who rightfully implores historians to re-read NSC 68 frequently throughout their careers—argues that Nitze believed that culture was one of the important keys to winning the Cold War. Falk's analysis of this vital Cold War document demonstrates his capacity as a first-rate diplomatic scholar. He then goes on to demonstrate how American cultural leaders in television, on Broadway, and in Hollywood complied with government pressure.

Because Falk is describing a time when Hollywood joined an American society that was dominated by the rise of McCarthyism, the overall arch of *Upstaging the Cold War* describes a well-worn story. Nonetheless, Falk is able to provide historians with a new look at this old argument. Falk focuses his work on the various motives of the studio executives, actors, writers, and directors. These individuals believed they held an important place in helping to shape the public discourse and international diplomacy. Thus, Falk offers a new take on the role of different actors. He convincingly argues that the media elite believed that it was the guardian of American values, even as it advocated both a liberal-internationalist agenda as well as a pro-American patriotic agenda.

While Falk's work explains the changing culture in Hollywood, it would have been nice to see him offer a closer inspection of how the public interpreted those media productions. By giving the audience a greater voice in this work, Falk might have been able to truly push the analytic bounds of how effectively the media and political elite were in shaping U.S. and international culture. In many instances, I was left wondering if Hollywood was responding to changing political pressure, or whether it was responding to the changing tastes of its consumers who might have had a reinvigorated American patriotism. In short, was the tail wagging the dog, or was it the other way around? However, Falk focused his efforts where the sources are, which means that he still offers historians and readers a useful work about the history of film and television elite in the early Cold War years.

As the program for the 2011 SHAFR annual meeting indicates, cultural diplomacy and the role of non-state actors and individuals is an increasingly vibrant topic of scholarship within the academic world. I anticipate that many new books and articles will be published on the role of non-state actors in the coming months and years. Andrew Falk's *Upstaging the Cold War* is a strong addition to this historiography.

**Author's Response by Andrew J. Falk, Christopher Newport University**

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First, let me thank Tom Maddux and H-Diplo for organizing this roundtable on my book. I am grateful to Chris Endy and the three reviewers for their willingness to consider some of the points it raises. In my research for the book, I came across many pointed comments that critics aimed at the writers and activists I studied. Angry critics called them “Commies,” “no-talents,” and “hacks;” one dismissed Dalton Trumbo as a washed-up “punk” (178-179). I relieved to find that I fared considerably better in the eyes of these reviewers, and for that I am especially thankful. Each one, though, has raised substantive issues and, in the spirit of constructive debate, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to some of their comments.

One of my underlying goals in writing the book was to emphasize the foreign policy views and political activities of men and women living and working outside of Washington and the foreign policy establishment. Granted, David O. Selznick, Lillian Hellman, Rod Serling, and Arthur Miller were not common citizens; they were very influential individuals in the culture industries of motion pictures, television, and theater. Nevertheless, too often traditional narratives have viewed them and their contemporaries as minor participants in the Cold War drama, and in some cases as victims effectively silenced by the blacklist. Textbooks and documentaries continue to support a collective memory of the late 1940s and 1950s in stark terms, an era noted for its consensus, conformity, and containment. While acknowledging the persistence of the Cold War orthodoxy, Donna Alvah writes, “the story is more complicated, and more remarkable,” than the traditional narrative.

I am pleased that the reviewers have recognized the value of this approach and appear to agree with my fundamental point that, when traditional outlets of political expression became severely constricted in the early Cold War period, private citizens carved out safe space for dissent and attempted to influence the course of American foreign relations. Many individuals in culture industries held a clear world view and articulated an alternative to Cold War bipolarity and consensus; they promoted instead superpower cooperation, anticolonialism, nuclear disarmament, civil rights and civil liberties, and humane capitalism. At a time when the national identity mattered most, when Washington constructed and exported a cultural weapon to win over the proverbial ‘hearts and minds’ of citizens, zealous anticommunists policed the stages, screens, and airwaves for signs of ‘subversion.’ Yet, dissenters proved adept at moving their controversial views and activities to hospitable outlets at home and abroad. Ultimately, when the Eisenhower administration recognized their appeal in the West and behind the Iron Curtain, the State Department sponsored many of the very same individuals as goodwill ambassadors representing the United States.

Though there is much agreement among us as to the flow of persistent dissent, I note a few areas of disagreement worthy of reply. In Professor Alvah’s perceptive review, she understands the difficulty of applying labels to identify groups of diverse people who hold complex ideas. Admittedly, the book exposes fault lines on the political left and observes shades of anticommunism across the political spectrum. In doing so, I am mindful that

historians who rely on labels must often balance acute precision with useful generalities. The labels I've employed, awkward as they may be at times, are meant to overcome monolithic terms like 'artists,' 'Cold Warriors,' and 'the government.' Richard Fried puts it succinctly and appropriately: "the blacklist stifled a *zeitgeist*" of One World ideology. Even so, Alvah rightly contends that "it can be difficult to ascertain or recall the difference (if any) between one category and another" because "the political leanings of many individuals seemed to shift over time...." I couldn't agree more. The fluidity of allegiances can only be understood in the context of the turbulent political environment of the early Cold War era. As the political winds favored zealous anticommunism, many liberals broke with radicals; some even collaborated to ensure their careers in politics and in the culture industries. Many who once had opposed congressional interference in Hollywood, for example, changed their tune after Congress held the Hollywood Ten in contempt in 1947. If it was confusing to former friends whose names 'were named' before congressional investigators, it should be no less disorienting for us today. For those who resisted anticommunist hegemony, and who dissented from the Cold War consensus and American containment policy, the 'true believers' consistently carried their dissent to other fronts.

One methodological goal of the book is to bridge the divide (a chasm, depending upon whom you ask,) between traditional diplomatic histories and those who apply a cultural approach. If readers come away with a strong sense of thesis, narrative, and the historical actors – and some of their generous comments suggest this is so – then I am pleased indeed. Alvah is right, of course, that a more-detailed manuscript could have engaged in a deep, textual analysis. But by dropping my anchor and swimming in the deep waters of a few examples – *Crossfire*, NSC-68, *Marty* – I believe I have allowed readers to enjoy the exercise without drowning in a sea of source material and theoretical jargon. Besides, the wealth of evidence out there leaves plenty of fish for other scholars to fry, though historians skeptical of the cultural approach will never be satisfied.

One common charge leveled at those of us who tack toward the cultural is the question of audience reception. In his thoughtful essay, Seth Offenbach asks for "a closer inspection of how the public interpreted those media productions." It's a fair criticism, especially as the book makes a significant claim that European audiences embraced American dissent and that tacit acceptance, in turn, prompted members of the Eisenhower administration to reevaluate their cultural diplomacy program. Professor Offenbach's worthy criticism is also one that I tried to anticipate by examining, in Alvah's words, "a vast assortment of fascinating evidence to support [my] analysis": audience surveys, public opinion polls, box office receipts, private organization newsletters, critical reviews, and more. To measure the government's perception of its own propaganda campaign around the world, I contrasted the findings of the Jackson Committee in 1953 with those of the Sprague Committee in 1960. There are other examples, to be sure. For me, the best approach is to paint a landscape by blending a variety of rich sources, and by combining textual analysis with more traditional documentation to corroborate the motives and reactions of historical actors.

In his detailed review, Professor Fried focuses much of his attention on Willkie's declining political fortunes by detailing the low polling numbers and the primaries (and Republican

friends) Wilkie lost along the way. But all of that is prelude to his eventual judgment that the book uses the “Willkie moment” as a device to clarify the above-mentioned ideological lines and to show the lasting influence of those ideas in the political discourse. ‘One Worldism’ – views the man shared with many others in other arenas – outlived the Indiana politician long after he died in 1944. In that way, I argue, Willkie died “at the moment of his greatest influence.” For instance, as a Truman appointee and lawyer for the Hollywood Ten, Bartley Crum owned several editions of *One World* and carried one when he traveled the world because, his daughter recalled, Crum valued it as a “talisman, like the crucifix he needed to have near him wherever he was, and which he never forgot” (86). Political cartoonists Bill Mauldin and Edwin Marcus, in another example, used the handy term “One World” in their drawings to symbolize a set of ideas and not a particular politician (78, 83,113). It is the set of ideas, then, that I seek to trace from Hollywood to television to Europe.

In writing *Upstaging the Cold War*, I had hoped to contribute to our understanding of the early Cold War period, to shed light on the intersection of politics and culture, and concepts of foreign and domestic, orthodoxy and dissent. I thank the contributors to this roundtable, once again, for reflecting on these themes, and I look forward to new studies that continue the discussion.

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