



Freies Radio in den USA: Die Pacifica-Foundation, 1946-1965 (Free Radio in the USA: The Pacifica Foundation, 1946-1965) by Michaela Hampf

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at Harvard. The organization had been founded six years previously by A. Lawrence Lowell as an alternative to the detestable Ph.D. system, which Lowell believed drained the intellectual vitality of candidates. The society funded three years of original research on the condition that members abjure the Ph.D.—a ban that did not survive for very long as it handicapped fellows in the job market.

Schlesinger's poor eyesight disqualified him from military service in World War II, so he joined the Domestic Branch of the Office of War Information and then in 1943 the legendary Office of Strategic Services (OSS), forerunner of the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). In 1944 the OSS sent Schlesinger to London to edit a classified weekly research bulletin. In October 1944 Schlesinger wangled a transfer to Paris, where he provided military and OSS officers with secret political intelligence. Eyesight standards having been lowered, Schlesinger was drafted in 1945, losing his nominal rank of major but keeping his job—although now as an army private. By the time of his discharge in December 1945 Schlesinger had already made his reputation, *The Age of Jackson* having been published to critical acclaim in September.

This highly readable book demonstrates that Schlesinger has lost none of his skill as a writer and that he made the most of the numerous opportunities fortune put in his way when he was young. He also cultivated intelligent and gifted people, so many of whom are named in this volume that it would take a review just to list them. Historians will particularly appreciate Schlesinger's vignettes of his colleagues and those of his father. The book ends in 1950, just after Schlesinger published his political testament, *The Vital Center* (1949), and just before he became politically active, a calling that would take him to the Kennedy White House.

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Freies Radio in den USA: Die Pacifica-Foundation, 1946–1965 (Free radio in the USA: The

Pacifica Foundation, 1946–1965). By Michaela Hampf. (Munster: LIT, 2000. 206 pp. Paper, DM 39.80, ISBN 3-8258-4963-5.) In German.

Founded by pacifists and free-speech advocates after World War II as a true alternative to the corporate for-profit radio, the Pacifica Foundation's KPFA in Berkeley, California, became eventually the flagship station of the first nonprofit radio network in the United States that survived for more than fifty years. Today, Pacifica radio has five stations (in Berkeley, Los Angeles, New York, Washington, and Houston) and distributes several hours of programming daily to more than sixty community and public radio stations around the country. But just as several times in the past, recent internal conflicts and power struggles—this time between central decision makers at the foundation and local stations—have cast a shadow over the future of this radio network that is funded by its listeners.

Michaela Hampf has written a compelling history of Pacifica radio's first twenty years, its trailblazing role in broadcasting designed to present a diversity of truly educational programs for both adults and children, its successes in engaging its listeners, and its pioneering work in chronicling grass-root movements in the 1960s before becoming a voice of the antiwar movement (especially WBAI) and the counterculture. The author describes Pacifica radio's considerable problems during the red scare era, its struggle with the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) for its licenses, and its difficulties with FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) director J. Edgar Hoover, who overreacted to a critical program. In the process, Hampf brings to life the network's tireless efforts to counter the conformity and uniformity of commercial broadcasters by offering alternative, fresh, and more often than not provocative voices and approaches—among them one of the first experiments with call-in talk radio. Even during the years of Pacifica radio's existential struggle for free speech, broadcasters in for-profit radio and television, who were generally not shy in insisting on and glorifying the media's First Amendment rights, did not come to their beleaguered colleagues' defense.

Fortunately, Hampf presents the reader with more than a well-researched, well-written chronicle of Pacifica radio's formative years in that she puts this particular case into the larger context of the early years of radio. She describes this medium's successful take-over by corporate interests at the expense of other models, such as nonprofit, independent, listener-financed community and educational broadcasting or public radio (and later television) along the lines of the BBC in the United Kingdom. The pioneers of radio and television insisted that only broadcasting embedded in the free-market system would guarantee free speech and programming in the public's interest. Indeed, David Sarnoff considered naming his network "Public Service Broadcasting System" before settling on National Broadcasting Company (NBC). Considering the radio and television fare of the contemporary media monopolies, he made a prudent choice. But it is just as clear that the developments in the corporate media have increased the need for alternatives and that the subject of this interesting volume, Pacifica radio, could serve as one model.

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I Was a Communist for the FBI: The Unhappy Life and Times of Matt Cvetic. By Daniel J. Leab. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000. xii, 170 pp. \$28.00, ISBN 0-271-02053-9.)

The end of the Cold War has done little to stem the flood of Cold War studies. Indeed, the opening of new archives in the United States and the former Soviet Union has spurred the publication of hundreds of new books. Daniel J. Leab's slender study of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) informer Matt Cvetic, based on declassified bureau records, provides a small but fascinating addition to this literature.

Cvetic was one of a small army of FBI informers who infiltrated the U.S. Communist party during World War II. From 1943 to 1950, he held a number of mostly low-level

party posts in the Pittsburgh area. Quietly terminated by the bureau in early 1950, he nevertheless became a star witness before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, subsequently testifying in dozens of anti-communist trials, deportation hearings, and other quasi-judicial proceedings. His testimony helped crush what little remained of the Communist party in western Pennsylvania. A few party leaders were imprisoned for violating the Smith Act. Other members of the party and affiliated front organizations were fired or suspended, among them a violinist with the Pittsburgh Symphony, a high school English teacher, and a laborer for the city's parks department.

By almost all accounts, Cvetic was a miserable human being, a mentally unstable, womanizing drunk who beat his wife and assaulted his sister-in-law. He was indiscreet, boasting of his undercover assignment in local bars and betting parlors. He also played loose with the truth. A 1955 court of appeals opinion characterized his testimony as "evasive and conflicting," "hearsay," and of "no more value than the tattlings from a town meeting." A tireless self-promoter, Cvetic retailed increasingly fictionalized versions of his story to the *Saturday Evening Post*, which ran a three-part, ghost-written series entitled "I Was a Communist for the FBI," to Warner Brothers, which made a film by the same title, and to the Ziv Company, which produced a radio series starring Dana Andrews.

Fearing that Cvetic's increasingly erratic behavior would prove embarrassing, the bureau secretly fired him in early 1950. Agents closely monitored his subsequent career as an anticommunist celebrity, and top bureau officials surreptitiously intervened to end his employment as a government witness and to limit his public speaking and writing. Thus, the FBI, which helped create "Matt Cvetic," also conspired in his demise.

The Cvetic story is a microcosm of sorts for all of the issues that came to dominate the early postwar era. Leab threads his way through these issues carefully, if not always elegantly. He is especially successful in describing the way in which a network of local anticommunist politicians, reporters, and