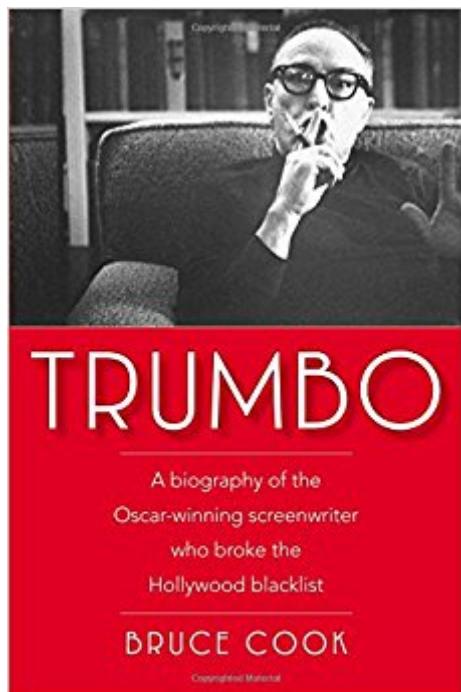


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TRUMBO



Synopsis

ONE OF BUSTLE'S BOOKS TO READ BEFORE OSCAR SEASON IS OVERThe true story that inspired the major motion picture starring Bryan Cranston and Helen Mirren. Dalton Trumbo was the central figure in the "Hollywood Ten," the blacklisted and jailed screenwriters. One of several hundred writers, directors, producers, and actors who were deprived of the opportunity to work in the motion picture industry from 1947 to 1960, he was the first to see his name on the screen again. When that happened, it was Exodus, one of the year's biggest movies. This intriguing biography shows that all his life Trumbo was a radical of the homegrown, independent variety. From his early days in Colorado, where his grandfather was a county sheriff, to Los Angeles, where he organized a bakery strike, to bootlegging, to Hollywood, where he was the highest-paid screenwriter when he was blacklisted (and a man with constant money problems), his life rivaled anything he had written. His credits include Kitty Foyle, The Brave One, Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo, Spartacus, Lonely are the Brave, and Papillon, and he is the author of a power pacifist novel, Johnny Got His Gun.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Let me end by again stressing how wonderful this book is. If you have any interest in Hollywood history, the postwar communist witch hunts, screenwriting or the art of biography, you should grab this new paperback of TRUMBO."  The Washington Post"TRUMBO the biography, is fascinating... The book, first published in 1977, is a great example of how a biographer can take readers by the hand and lead them on a journey through the subject's life."  The Oregonian

Bruce Cook (1932-2003), veteran critic, journalist, and author, wrote this biography with Dalton Trumbo's full cooperation in 1976. Under the name Bruce Alexander, Cook wrote eleven mystery novels featuring the real-life historical figure Sir John Fielding, magistrate of the Bow Street court during the latter half of the eighteenth Century. Under both names Cook wrote a total of 23 books, both fiction and nonfiction; they include a crime fiction series featuring Los Angeles private detective Chico Cervantes. Cook's last completed novel, *Young Will: The Confessions of William Shakespeare*, was published posthumously. Born in Chicago, Bruce Cook lived in Los Angeles and Paris with his wife, the violinist Judith Aller.

This is an excellent biography. Cook not only lays out the biographical facts of Dalton Trumbo's life but he also delves into the character and personality that made the controversial screenwriter such a fascinating figure. To achieve this depth, the author includes recreations of some of his research interviews with various individuals whose lives intertwined with Trumbo's--people who knew Trumbo as a boy in Colorado, family members and other members of the "Hollywood Ten", who were blacklisted in the 1950s for refusing to answer questions before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Cook keeps his subject at the forefront and in so doing offers as clear an explanation of the blacklist and its impact on American culture as I have ever read. Trumbo was a man of contrasts--a Communist who loved to live well, a talented writer who abandoned literature for the money he could make in Hollywood and a political figure who refused to back down from his beliefs. I haven't seen the new movie based on Cook's work, but I look forward to it and I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the era of the Great Fear or anyone who enjoys biographies of people of conviction and integrity.

I got the book because I had seen the trailer for the movie and wanted to know more about Trumbo. I'd known quite a bit about the Hollywood Ten and those times through other histories of the time. I was able, while I was in law school, to meet a few of the attorneys who had represented people in that period. So I started out interested. Then when it came out I read Kirk Douglas book about the making of *Spartacus*..I'd give it 5 stars, but there were a couple of issues with the book that kept it from the highest rating. First, I just couldn't get interested much in Trumbo's early life and that took the first third of the book. Second, instead of writing in a strictly chronological fashion Cook make side trips into the present (well his present) to report on his interviews with his sources, almost like a magazine article. But once the book got to what I consider the meat of the matter, Trumbo's time as

a radical and screenwriter and under the black list the story took over. Either the writing got tighter and better or the story itself was so compelling that it just took over. The latter two thirds of the book was so well written I could hardly put it down. I highly recommend it.

Bruce Cook's *Trumbo* is being re-released in time for the movie (Fall 2015) starring Bryan Cranston, Helen Mirren and John Goodman. Cook's *Trumbo* is a timely and thought provoking look into liberty, free speech and values; as relevant in the 1950s as today. The Hollywood Ten had everything to lose and only their self respect to maintain. The only reason one chooses jail is morals. What I found most interesting in Cook's *Trumbo*, was that Dalton Trumbo and the Hollywood Ten could have pleaded the Fifth Amendment to not incriminate themselves when hauled before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Rather, they plead the First Amendment: Free Speech. Cook pulls apart this time in American history telling readers that Trumbo was a pacifist, as many Americans were after World War I. Cook describes Trumbo's association with the Communist party in Hollywood. We learn that Trumbo fulfilled his patriotic duty during World War II as a war correspondent even working closely with high-ranking Navy officials on war propaganda; including a film project. However, Trumbo did not reach out to these high level government contacts to testify on his behalf; nor did they step up to vouch for Trumbo on their own. Trumbo went to jail and was blacklisted to protect his First Amendment rights. Others - men with lesser morals - were not even willing to make a call on his behalf. You will thoroughly enjoy this book. I am looking forward to the movie adaptation.

Very interesting, he manage to capture a depth of character and great background information. Crazy time in our countries history, not unlike today. We need a Dalton Trumbo to cut through the nonsense today.

Trumbo-(Movie Tie In Edition by Bruce Cook) touches on various parts of *Trumbo*'s personal and professional life such as in Chapter Two titled Colorado (starts on page 24) where it discusses *Trumbo*'s father Orus Trumbo, *Trumbo*'s family colonial origins in Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky as well as how the Trumbo family name actually traced back to Switzerland. Pages 70 and 71 touch on *Trumbo* being a ghostwriter for an Austrian nobleman living in Hollywood named Baron Friedrich Von Reichenberg and what Dalton was grappling with in terms of bringing in more money for him and his wife and children, while his wife Maud Trumbo was doing the best she could working as a

seamstress for Hollywood dressmakers and special jobs for movie actresses such as Norma Talmadge and Constance Bennett.

I've studied the Black List history for 20 years. This is the ultimate book that closes the subject as Trumbo was a member of the Hollywood 10 and also broke the Blacklist. Cranston is brilliant in the title role! Overall an unbeatable historical perspective as we now enter another period where fear in our country makes people overreact.

Everyone knows that Dalton Trumbo broke the blacklists. Yet few know the details of a life that mixed Hollywood hustling and idealism, hack writing and first-rate scripting, and high living and bankruptcy. Cook catches the moral and political ambiguity of Trumbo's career as both cocktail-party Communist and a principled patriot. An incomparably fascinating life!

Great book that shows a complex and flawed man which is used against him by the 1950s witch hunters of the Un American committee. He stood for his beliefs and paid the price by going to jail. Interested by the movie trailer and now to see it adapted from the book.

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TRUMBO

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