

# I Married a Communist

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In an eloquent novel set against the turbulent backdrop of the McCarthy era, radio actor Iron Rinn, an idealistic Communist, marries beautiful actress Eva Frame, but their private relationship becomes a national scandal when Eva publicly betrays her husband's politics to a gossip columnist. 150,000 first printing.

Iron Rinn (né Ira Ringold) is a self-educated radio actor, married to a spoilt, rags-to-riches beauty, silent-film star Eve Frame (née Chave Fromkin). He is a Communist, and a "sucker for suffering," locked into the cycle of violence from which he has emerged. She has risen by assiduous imitation of what is "classy"--which seems to include a wide swathe of anti-Semitism--and ultimately denounces her husband as a Soviet spook. And who would be the narrator of this McCarthy-era meltdown? None other than Philip Roth's longtime alter ego, Nathan Zuckerman, who learns the full tragedy several decades later, owing to a chance encounter with Ira's brother: "I'm the only person living who knows Ira's story." 90-year-old Murray Ringold tells Nathan, "you're the only person still living who cares about it."

Characteristically, Nathan also discovers that his own story was bound up with the blacklistings and ruined careers of the immediate postwar period. It seems that he had been tainted by his association with the Ringolds--Murray was in fact his high-school teacher--and was denied the Fulbright scholarship he deserved. "They had you down for Ira's nephew," Murray tells Nathan. "The FBI didn't always get everything right." Roth's acerbic style and keen eye for emotional detail goes to the heart of this moment of high tragedy in which the American dream was damaged beyond repair. --Lisa Jardine  
I Married a Communist is the story of the rise and fall of Ira Ringold, a big American roughneck who begins life as a teenage ditchdigger in 1930s Newark, becomes a big-time 1940s radio star, and is destroyed, both as a performer and a man, in the McCarthy witch hunt of the 1950s.

In his heyday as a star -- and as a zealous, bullying supporter of "progressive" political causes -- Ira marries Hollywood's beloved silent-film star, Eve Frame. Their glamorous honeymoon in her Manhattan townhouse is short-lived, however, and it is the publication of Eve's scandalous bestselling expose that identifies him as "an American taking his orders from Moscow".

In this story of cruelty, betrayal, and revenge spilling over into the public arena from their origins in Ira's turbulent personal life, Philip Roth -- who Commonweal calls the "master chronicler of the American twentieth century" -- has written a brilliant fictional portrayal of that treacherous postwar epoch when anti-Communist fever not only infected national politics but traumatized the intimate, innermost lives of friends and families, husbands and wives, parents and children.

#### Other Books

Hollywood's America, Fully revised, updated, and extended, this compilation of interpretive essays and primary documents teaches students to read films as cultural artifacts within the contexts of actual past events. A new edition of this classic textbook, which ties movies into the broader narrative of US and film history Ten new articles which consider recently released films, as well as issues of gender and ethnicity Well-organized within a chronological framework with thematic treatments to provide a valuable resource for students of the history of American film Fourth edition includes completely new images throughout

Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ . Gabler . Neal . An Empire of Their Own : How the Jews Invented Hollywood . New York: Crown, 1988. Goldman, Eric A. The American Jewish Experience through the Lens of Cinema. New York: American Jewish Committee, 2008. Rogin, Michael Paul."