



Trumbo: A Biography of the Oscar-Winning Screenwriter Who Broke the Hollywood Blacklist

Bruce Cook

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A central figure in the Hollywood Ten and one of the most successful screenwriters in Hollywood history, two of Trumbo's screenplays earned Oscars (*Roman Holiday* and *The Brave Ones*) while he was blacklisted and unable to receive public credit for his work. Trumbo was also the author of *Johnny Got His Gun*, winner of the National Book Award and one of the most powerful antiwar novels ever published. He epitomized the spirit of American capitalism, yet he went to jail refusing to talk about his membership in the Communist party.

As a result of his relentless fight for political freedom and the right to work for those blacklisted by the House Un-American Activities Committee beginning in 1947, he ended the blacklist era in 1960 by earning proper screen credit for his work on the blockbuster films *Exodus* and *Spartacus*. An extraordinarily complex character, he was, as author Bruce Cook states, "an exemplar of a certain set of American virtues: toughness, independence and persistence". 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.

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