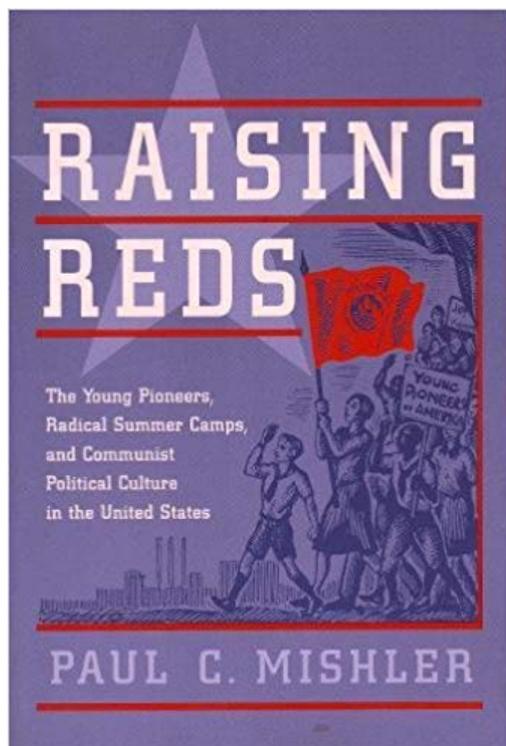


Raising Reds *by* Paul Mishler



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From the 1920s through the 1950s, American Communists established children's organizations, after-school programs, and summer camps with the aim of developing "revolutionary consciousness" in the minds of the younger generation. Mishler examines how radical parents' ultimate social and political goals--and their sometimes contradictory desires as parents--were reflected in the education and upbringing of their children.



Reviews of the *Raising Reds* by Paul Mishler

Aiata

Mishler gives us a fascinating tour of a part of recent American history many of us are unaware of. It helps make sense of the 20th century, and present-day society.

Keramar

It places the young Communist movement of the nineteen twenties and thirties in its social, economic, political and cultural contexts. Those of us who are old enough can relive some great moments, younger readers will learn that the left played an important role is creating much of the

American culture we now all take for granted.

Zetadda

This short book is a satisfactory addition to the vast library of books regarding the Communist Party USA. It focuses very sharply on a little-examined aspect of the historical record: the children's culture of the CPUSA and how it related to the bigger picture of the education and raising of children.

The development of the Popular Front period was a transformative point at many levels of the Party and movement, and the political and social culture of families and children in the party was no different. Mishler argues that the time prior to the Popular Front period was characterized by an emphasis on children's autonomy from parents, when parents within the family were in theory "oppressors" analogous to the capitalist class oppressors in the class system. Also, during this same time period, it was hoped that ethnic differences would give way to a more general "American" common identity.

Once the Popular Front line developed, family unity was emphasized, with the working class family now seen as a microcosm of the working class, rather than as a microcosm of the class system as a whole. Also, the efforts to minimize ethnic differences faded.

These are excellent and enlightening historical points that were new to me as a student of the Party's history. However, on the "down side," Mishler beat these themes like dead horses until I found myself saying, "yes, I get it, before and after Popular Front, microcosm of this, microcosm of that, okay, move on."

I disagree with the reader's review from November 2000 in that I felt Red Diapers was a much better read.

I agree with Mr. Wills' review of October 2001 in that I found the serious typographical errors extremely distracting. Editing was abysmal, and Columbia University Press should be embarrassed. An often-repeated typo was the use of zeros instead of o's, making a typ0 clear if y0u just l0oked at it.

superstar

"Raising Reds" must be read to help us understand how the new left evolved from the old left. The Communist Children's Movement was required to counterbalance conservative public schools and powerful conservative after school activities like the Boy Scouts. But it is a difficult book to read because the editing was obviously done by someone with a limited public school education. It is hard to believe a university press, Columbia University no less, would put this product on the street. I cannot imagine what kind of grade I would have received if I had turned in a term paper with this many errors. Parts of this book are almost incoherent. Those associates and the "anonymous reviewers" identified in the Acknowledgments that said they read and reviewed the book should be given lie detector tests.

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