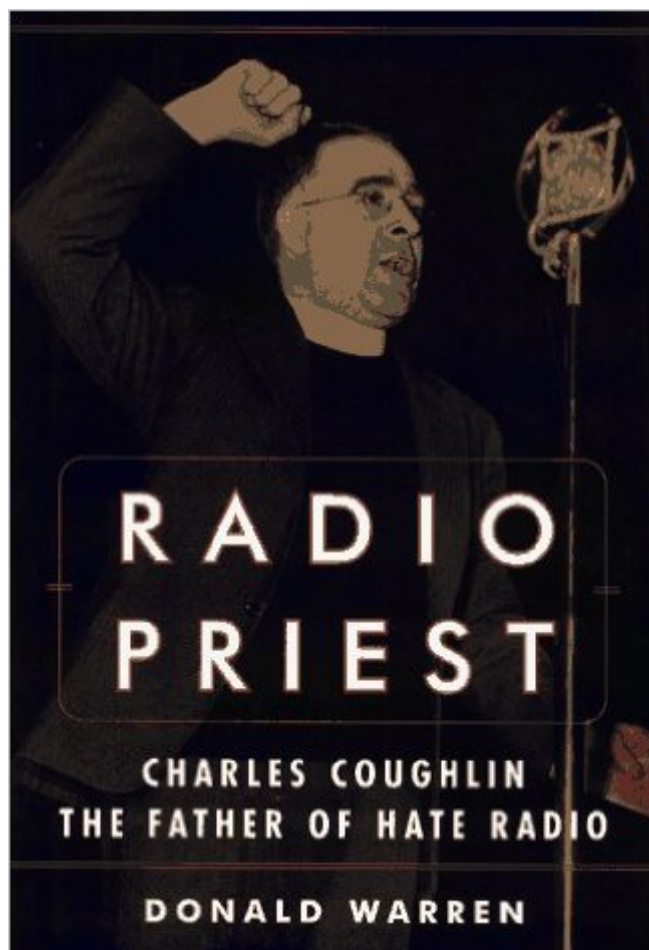


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Radio Priest: Charles Coughlin, The Father Of Hate Radio



Synopsis

Chronicles the life and times of Father Charles Coughlin, the famed "Radio Priest," whose program in the mid 1930s, "The Hour of Power," let him share his controversial oratory with the masses. 10,000 first printing.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Radio Priest" is meant to remind people the author fears have both forgotten Father Charles Coughlin and may be unwisely underestimating those eager to apply his brand of media manipulation in the age of the internet. From the depths of the depression until shortly after America's entry into WWII, Coughlin, a Detroit Priest had become a political force of nature. Using his radio show and "Social Justice" his newspaper, he spread his message across the nation - a message that grew progressively overt in anti-Semitism and Fascist advocacy. With the severity of the depression destroying lives across the world, the time was ripe for many to question democracy - as they had across the world, the popularity of socialism and fascism flourished across America. Though many figures grew out of the clash of these movements, Coughlin stood out - mostly because his position as a priest but mostly because of the eloquence with which he gave his fans the message they wanted to hear. He even possessed his own trademark accent, with its distinctive rolling rrr's. Coughlin attacked banking interests and politicians - codewords for the Jews and those they were thought to have bought. Confronted with growing reports of Germany's anti-Semitic repression, he claimed sympathy for the Jews, but attributed Germany's conduct to a natural response to Jewish Bolshevism. Ostensibly adhering to a religion which had suffered religious

intolerance, Coughlin adopted the same penchant for mass hysteria as those who had victimized other Catholics. Though war with fascism forced him into a sort of hiatus, Coughlin's decline had actually begun with the 1936 Presidential Elections.

Every cursory study of the Great Depression and the New Deal includes a brief reference to Catholic priest Father Charles Coughlin whose radio broadcasts savaged FDR and his advisors, but especially attacked the Jews and perpetuated the myths of Jewish conspiracies. Always, Coughlin is mentioned in passing and then the text moves on. Donald Warren's "Radio Priest" gives Coughlin and his times the attention and thoughtful analysis they deserve. Warren asserts that Coughlin was more than a priest who used his radio pulpit to spread his anti-semitic beliefs, but also as the father of hate radio. Warren connects Coughlin's career as a broadcaster in the early twenties to late thirties to today's radio and television commentators who champion racism in the name of fair-mindedness. In times of great poverty, Warren says, those who feel disenfranchised and powerless need to be part of the system or need to tear it down. The Great Depression and Coughlin seemed made for each other, and the priest definitely used the anger of the working class to propel himself to fame and eventually notoriety. Coughlin eventually alienated himself from the government and his own Roman Catholic superiors and accepted an enforced silence to avoid possible federal prosecution. Warren amply explores the Catholic Church's growing discontent and embarrassment of its priest, and eventual plan to silence him. For those who always wondered why his superiors didn't stop Coughlin sooner, this book explains it in detail, including the Church's fear that Coughlin would resign and take his "radio flock" with him. He also discusses how the federal government conspired with Coughlin's bishop to stop the renegade priest.

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