"Social disorder in any age breeds such mystical suspicions" (The Crucible, 228): The Effects of McCarthyism and Anticommunism on 1950s American Literature.

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More than fifty years after its accepted decline, McCarthyism still appears to be a hot topic. Investigations into the social and political long-term effects of the anticommunist purges are easy to find, with many writers agreeing that the behaviour of certain authorities - especially the behaviour of Senator Joseph McCarthy, the politician whose name was given to the entire movement - being almost universally derided. It is even possible to find books by authors seeking to prove that the movement's main protagonists were right to conduct their hearings for the sake of national security, a view which is not, it seems, commonly shared. Writers like Ellen Schrecker, David Caute and Haynes Johnson argue their cases with articulation and fervency. Yet their attention has been firmly fixed on the politics of McCarthyism, the main instigators of policy and the long-term effects of such a movement on the American political system today.

It was not, however, a movement effecting only politicians and civil and federal employees. American writers, screenwriters, directors and actors alike were dragged into hearings, forced to defend actions committed years, sometimes decades before. These men and women were in many cases caused to suffer their works being censored, their names blacklisted, their careers ended. Yet this area has only lightly been touched upon in critical writing, and the lasting ramifications for the American literary tradition are barely hinted at.

For many years now the idea of McCarthyism has interested me. The notion that Communism, an ideology belonging to a far-away land, could cause so much fear, disgust and hatred in the United States was, for me, confusing. As I aged I came to understand, through both research and through a greater sense of the world around me, just how the anticommunist purges came into being and why, yet something still bothered me as a student of literature; with all the propaganda, the questionings of authors, artists and film makers, just what (if any) effect did McCarthyism have on literature? This is the question I hope to answer in the course of this research.

Many writers and professionals were affected personally by the McCarthyism movement; this much is documented in countless books and articles. Playwrights, poets, screenwriters and novelists alike were called before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to
explain their attendances at conferences or meetings for the American Communist Party decades previously, or to defend works written years before when they were ideological students or twenty-somethings. Despite this personal and involuntary involvement in the questionings conducted by the HUAC, investigations into the effects of such involvement on literature seem to be few and far between; as stated above, criticism focuses on the political or social ramifications, rather than the literary. For this reason I intend to undertake this investigation; through examination of several authors' works, I hope to confirm the following hypotheses:

1- That there will be a marked difference in American Literature before circa 1950 and after.
2- This difference will be more clearly seen in literature (poetry, prose and drama) written by those blacklisted/questioned (those who were closely and unwillingly involved) than in those who were not persecuted.
3- This difference will be seen in choice of subject matter, imagery etc
4- I expect there to be more instances of paranoia and/or persecution in the later works by each author than in the earlier.

To enable this research, I intend to investigate Arthur Miller's plays and Langston Hughes' poetry and short stories. I will also examine Richard Matheson's novels from the same time period. This will allow me to compare the themes and language used by the authors in the earlier works with those in the later, after McCarthyism kicked into high gear. Through this comparison, it should be evident whether these writers' works and styles actively changed; if all three authors show a marked variation between their earlier and later works, this can be explained as a direct effect of McCarthyism on American literature.

The reason for choosing Miller and Hughes is simple; both men were heavily questioned, held under suspicion of earlier involvement in the ACP; Miller's biographer makes continual references to Miller's FBI file and its contents. Matheson's inclusion is more general - he seems to have avoided any contact with the HUAC and therefore he may act as a control, demonstrating whether any changes in theme and style were localised, restricted to those directly affected.
Matheson may demonstrate that McCarthyism caused a nationwide disruption on a country-wide basis, that American Literature as a whole was affected. Through analysis of these three authors I hope to be able to demonstrate that McCarthyism had the effect on literature that I propose in my above hypotheses, especially the third, regarding subject matter. With these reasons in mind, I will be looking at the following works by each author: for Arthur Miller, I will be examining *All My Sons* (1947) and *The Crucible* (1953); for Langston Hughes I will be analysing a selection of his poetry; for Richard Matheson I intend to look at a selection of his early short stories (published between 1950 and 1953), and the novel *I Am Legend* (1954). These works from all three authors span the decade between 1948 and 1958; hopefully this time span, corresponding roughly with McCarthyism's beginnings, peak and decline, will allow for an accurate evaluation of the effects of McCarthyism on these authors and, perhaps, on American Literature as a whole.

The subsequent paper will take the following format; focussing on the anticommunist aspects of the movement, Chapter One will expand on what, for the purpose of this paper, McCarthyism is understood to mean. The chapter will also contain critical opinions of McCarthyism and conclusions from other researchers regarding both the ideology and Senator McCarthy himself who, while not the only guilty party, was certainly the movement's most heard and fervent enthusiast. It is important to state that my native language is British English, while many of the sources I will use are from American writers; this may mean that there are occasional spelling discrepancies between the sources and the thesis itself. Chapter Two will begin the analysis of the three authors, with Arthur Miller featuring first. Chapter Three will expand on this with Langston Hughes' works, followed by Richard Matheson in Chapter Four. The conclusion will bring the analyses together in light of the stated hypotheses, to see if McCarthyism indeed had the expected effect on American Cold War Literature.

*McCarthyism and anticommunism in 1950s America*
While this thesis aims to look at the effects of McCarthyism on contemporary American literature, there is some disagreement over what, exactly, McCarthyism is - and exactly what its effect on diverse areas of society was. Some, like Alan Levine, downplay both anticommunism as a whole and Senator McCarthy's role in it, calling it "Cold War hysteria" (Levine, 3) and arguing that "if McCarthyism was the worst thing about the 1950s, they cannot have been all that bad" (Levine, 41); Levine even has a chapter entitled "The Myth of McCarthyism". Others, like Ellen Schrecker, refer to a "political chill that settles over the United States" making "many Americans hesitate to criticize the government or join any organizations to the left of the Democratic party" (Schrecker, Crimes, xiii). There are critics who treat McCarthyism as the project of its namesake, others who argue that it began (and ended, although some argue it has not ended) outside of the senator's political career, that he was merely "following a well-trodden path" (Morgan, 377). Due to these disagreements in critical analysis of McCarthyism, it is necessary to define the movement as it will be dealt with in the following pages.

For the purpose of this thesis, 'McCarthyism' will be understood to mean the anticommunist movement which began before Senator Joe McCarthy became Wisconsin senator in 1947. Although Senator McCarthy obviously features within this movement and understanding of the movement, he was not the only person involved; while he certainly was the focus of enough media attention to give his name to anticommunism, "the dishonesty, opportunism, and disregard for civil liberties that he practised were commonplace within the rest of the anticommunist network" (Schrecker, Crimes, 265). Therefore McCarthy will not be the main focus of this thesis; rather than the actions of one man, it is the intention to focus on the effects of the anticommunist movement and its purges on three prominent American writers. Two of the three writers, Arthur Miller and Langston Hughes, had personal connections with the movement as they were questioned under suspicion by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, or HCUA (also written asHUAC). Analysis of the authors will be mainly in relation to the effects of political context on their writing.
This definition of McCarthyism as political anticommunism rather than the work of one man seems to fit with the view of critics generally. Although in the public eye the opposite is the case, Ted Morgan quotes newspaper publisher Edward Lamb as saying that "to blame it all on McCarthy... is like blaming the temperature on the thermometer" (Morgan, 525). Senator McCarthy focused mainly on state employees and governmental figures, while other industries such as journalism, universities and the sciences were equally affected; film industry persecution in particular began in 1947, three years before McCarthy began his crusade. Even Alan Levine, who seeks to prove that the 1950s were not as dreadful as public belief holds, admits that McCarthyism was "a particular sort of extremism" practiced not only by the Senator but by other anticommunists; Levine argues that Communism was a legitimate concern rather than the prejudice of one man.

The effects of anticommunism on various areas of society are well researched; the fact that many people in differing industries and institutions were questioned as to their political affiliations is undisputed, as is the fact that a high proportion of those questioned lost their jobs. Ellen Schrecker cites research into Hollywood, saying that "Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund estimate that only 10 percent of the people forced out of the film industry ever returned to work... The ones who did found their careers seriously damaged" (Schrecker, Crimes, 364). Her analysis is backed up by David Caute, who theorises that "what most enraged the conservatives in Congress was Hollywood's unabashed love affair with Russia during the war" (Caute, 490). He suggests that the making of pro-Russian films during World War Two, when the two countries were officially allies, was then used a decade later as proof of 'un-American' activities in the fifties. The fact that many of those who lost their jobs in the Hollywood anticommunist purges never regained their former careers suggests that the stigma of anticommunism stayed with those accused for a long time, if not for the rest of their working lives. Caute notes that for some screen writers the only way to regain their livelihoods was to grovel, name names and humiliate yourself; "the career benefits for people in the film industry of confessing, repenting and informing can be simply illustrated by listing the credits, during the 1950s, of those who confessed, repented and reformed" (Caute, 512).
Universities also did not escape unscathed. Despite a brief period of increased radicalism among students after the Second World War, "the political atmosphere changed; left-wing activities - and then individuals - came under attack" (Schrecker, *Ivory Tower*, 84). Many of the students and faculty members who, after World War Two had tried to find a political ideology they could relate to, found their affiliations to be no longer tolerated. "There was considerable pressure to rid the nation's colleges and universities of politically undesirable teachers" (Schrecker, *Ivory Tower*, 93). Whole student political clubs were closed down or banned outright, the students themselves were not ousted as the membership lists were often kept from faculties. Lecturers and professors were not so fortunate. Even university speakers were finding it difficult to find work; Schrecker notes that "Harvard, to its credit did not apparently prevent anybody from speaking. Many other schools were less solicitous of civil liberties and not only imposed speaker bans, but on occasion used the incidents that sometimes accompanied such bans as opportunities to discipline student radicals" (Schrecker, *Ivory Tower*, 90). Academic freedom became more and more restrictive for those who wished to keep their positions.

Ivy League universities were also implicit in the dismissal of teachers; they became so paranoid that professors could be fired simply for refusing to answer questions about their political beliefs, even if there was no evidence that they had ever been affiliated with the American Communist Party. Although many of the dismissals were later investigated by the AAUP and found to be illegal, this was of course too little, too late for those who had lost their jobs and been unable to find another. Schrecker sees these incidents as evidence of the pervasive nature of McCarthyism. "That so many respected educators should resort to such furtive behaviour - at the same time... as they were imposing an obligation of candor upon the rest of the academic community - suggests how seriously the nation's colleges and universities had been compromised by their collaboration with McCarthyism" (Schrecker, *Ivory Tower*, 264). The heads of universities responsible for firing so many previously respected professors were themselves academics - Schrecker clearly believes that the lasting effects of McCarthyism on the universities of America were problematic. The purge
on academics would have a knock-on effect, resulting in less professors in universities to impart their knowledge and experience, and those who were left teaching felt less able to speak freely in the classroom; this would continue to affect academia for years after the anticommunist movement relaxed its requirements.

Yet it was not just the film industry and academia that was affected; David Caute notes that "so few scientists were admitted to the land of the free that one international conference after another had to be cancelled" (Caute, 12). Anticommunists in positions of power were able to use espionage as an excuse for their paranoia; cases like that of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg seemed only to prove that there was a need to keep suspected communists or communist sympathisers out of jobs where they could leak important information. As Ted Morgan argues, "McCarthy was tapping a well of resentment, and in a way, he was right by analogy, for the secrets of the bomb had been stolen" (Morgan, 385). As espionage cases like that of the Rosenbergs and of Alger Hiss were successfully completed, with convictions and (in the case of the Rosenbergs) executions, it became easier for proponents of anticommunism to argue that the problem was nationwide and ongoing, covering many fields. The sciences were especially affected by distrust to the point where "physicists did not want to work for the government" (Schrecker, Crimes, 371); Schrecker also notes that, in the Army Engineering laboratories, "replacements were hard to find and a panel of outside scientists investigating the situation in 1955 warned that... its laboratories might actually be 'incapable of carrying out their assigned missions'" (Schrecker, Crimes, 370). This lack of workers in such an important field, especially when combined with the loss of many university professors (thus reducing the amount of students taught) would have stymied scientific and technological developments for the long term.

The effects of anticommunism on journalism and journalists is also documented, notably by Edward Alwood in Dark Days in the Newsroom. Alwood states that "McCarthy was incensed by the Post's characterisation of his hearings as a pretext to conduct an 'intense interrogation' about editorials that were critical of him" (Alwood, 74). This anger prompted a wide-scale investigation
into news stories, with journalists questioned as to their sources, notes and working practices as well as the more common (during the 1950s) inquiries into individual journalists' political present views and backgrounds. Alwood clearly argues that these investigations had long-term repercussions; he describes at length the imprisonment of Judith Miller in 2005 for refusing to reveal her sources in connection with the public naming of CIA agent Valerie Plame (Alwood, 1-3). Alwood likens this imprisonment to the kind of accusations and incarcerations which occurred during McCarthyism fifty years or more before, stating that "by 2006 more than half of Americans believed that the F.B.I and other federal agencies were 'intruding on privacy' in the effort to fight terrorism" (Alwood, 139). In other words, judicial processes established during anticommunism's heyday has had long-term negative implications for journalism in the twenty-first century.

The view of anticommunism's long-term effects is supported by Joel Kovel. Arguing that "the United States may avoid the black hole of anticommunism... We do not claim that the United States has overcome anticommunism" (Kovel, 237), Kovel argues that certain aspects of the 1950s' attempted purges linger even in 1994, when Red Hunting in the Promised Land was published. Although Kovel remains optimistic, the twenty years since his writing have perhaps soured this positivity. Kovel suggests that "however powerful the national security state and its CIA remain, there is reason to expect that its grip will be loosened in the time ahead" (Kovel, ). Twenty years later, with current media sources erupting over the NSA monitoring scandal and Edward Snowden's whistle blowing and subsequent flight abroad, it can be argued with some success that nothing much has changed since 1954's censure of Senator Joseph McCarthy.

The lasting effects as detailed by critics are indicative of the influence such a movement has had on American society as a whole. There is, however, a dearth of research into the effects of such a movement on literature. One such study was reported in Twentieth Century Literature in 1975, written by Ruth Prigozy. It focuses on five authors from the McCarthy era and examines the presentation of 'the liberal' in political novels by each of the authors. She argues that "the popular
novel because it seeks to 'reassure rather than disturb the reader's belief in the normal democratic American system' did not, except in a few isolated cases, use McCarthyism as its subject" (Prigozy, 254). She concludes that each of the five novels analysed is unsuccessful at portraying "the liberal's response to McCarthyism" (Prigozy, 254-5), and attempts to discuss "the aesthetic, social and moral conflicts that arose in the post-Second World War years" (Prigozy, 255) with emphasis on the effects of McCarthyism on literature. This aim is almost the same as that for this thesis; however, Prigozy does not go into great detail for each of the five authors, giving rather a summary of the novels' plots and an explanation of each's failures. This thesis, as stated previously, will look more closely at each author, using works from before the anticommunist movement kicked into high gear and works from the movement's height. Through analysis of themes and language, this thesis, as explained in the hypotheses included in the introduction, will analyse and hopefully further prove the effects touched upon in Prigozy's paper. As the writer of The Crucible, personally effected by the questionings into his background, it is expected that Arthur Miller's works will show most obviously the effects of anticommunism; therefore, analysis will begin with All My Sons and The Crucible.

Arthur Miller's "All My Sons" and "The Crucible"

Arthur Miller was a strong candidate for one of theHUAC's potential victims. As a young man, he had been interested in socialism and financial equality, spurred by his family's financial losses during the 1930s Depression; his once reasonably well-off family lost most of their worth after the Wall Street Crash in 1929. Money forms the basis for much of All My Sons' plot; the main characters are a wealthy family, and enjoy living off the money gained by father Joe Keller's long-established business. However, they also deny the conflicts arising from that business during World War Two, as it is revealed that Keller and his company are responsible for the deaths of twenty one
pilots due to faulty parts that Joe convinced his business partner to sell on, knowing they might cause accidents. Although Keller has gotten away with the crime, it is common knowledge that Keller sacrificed his business partner and lied to avoid punishment; "Everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail" (Sons, 94). His bluster and self-confident manner have allowed him to continue to live in the neighbourhood where his children have grown up, but knowledge of his crime causes his older son Larry to commit suicide, a fate that also awaits Keller after Chris is forced to acknowledge the truth.

*All My Sons* illustrates the effects of war on America society; the war is an overshadowing theme of the play which has affected the characters personally, not just through the death of Larry but also through shaping Chris' personality and opinions. In the world of *All My Sons*, war has allowed capitalism free rein and businesses such as Joe Keller's have the ultimate say. Miller uses this world to pass comment on capitalism. Keller's position as the company head had allowed him to not only walk free from prison but to place the blame on his subordinates; "so he's a little man, your father, always scared of loud voices... So he takes out his tools and he - covers over the cracks. All right, that's bad, that's wrong, but that's what a little man does" (Sons, 82). Quite aside from the patronising manner in referring to Ann's father as a 'little man,' along with his omission of his own culpability, Keller's inference here is that the 'little men' in business, the ordinary workers, are more likely to commit crimes than the heads of companies. He also suggests with this throwaway comment that 'little men' make bad decisions, decisions their bosses should not or cannot be blamed for, even though in the case of Joe Keller himself, he is as responsible (if not more so) than the man who has been jailed for the crime. The fact that the decision to send on the faulty machinery was made during a time of war lets Keller lay blame not only on Ann's father but on a government concerned with emergency mass-production policies; "Every half hour the Major callin' for cylinder heads. They were whippin' us with the telephone" (Sons, 82). In a time when every government agency is screaming for product at an unsustainable pace, Keller's words suggest that it is normal to patch faulty mechanisms rather than to own up to the fault.
The war has also changed the average worker and the people who work in the factories. Keller, a self-proclaimed uneducated man who has worked his way up to owning a large, successful company, suddenly finds himself after the war inundated with veterans from a war he himself did not fight. "You go into our plant, for example. I got so many lieutenants, majors and colonels that I'm ashamed to ask somebody to sweep the floors" (Sons, 96). This is a rather tragic image; the war heroes have been forgotten only a couple of years after the war has ended and are now working piecemeal in an ex-aeroplane manufacturing plant - the very same plant that was, during the war, creating the machinery they themselves used to defend their country. Business has triumphed over war and there is no special place for the veterans except to make businessmen who escaped conscription richer. Another reason why this image is tragic is Keller's contempt for his workers; while he may be ashamed to ask them to sweep floors because of their war records, that does not stop him, just a few pages before, from referring to them as 'little men.'

Money (and by extension, business) is another main theme of All my Sons; it forms the basis for the family's good fortune, but also their guilt. Keller himself uses the money he earns to punish his wife for her blaming him for Larry's death; "I don't know what you mean! You wanted money, so I made money. What must I be forgiven? You wanted money, didn't you?" (Sons, 170). His wife's reaction, "I didn't want it that way" is revealing; deep down she has always known what happened to her son, but has been willing to put it out of her head and live off the money made on the deal until her younger son Chris and his fiancée Ann confront her with Larry's death and the proof of Keller's crimes. Larry's disappearance and its relation to the business was not something that was ever questioned by the family until Ann's return made it impossible to ignore. The play itself does not suggest that Keller's crimes and business practices are unusual - indeed, as Chris and George observe,

"GEORGE: He'd like to take every man who made money in the war and put him up against a wall.

CHRIS: He'll need a lot of bullets" (Sons, 109). As both characters are aware, many businesses and their owners did extremely well during the war and came out without a slur to their reputations. For
Chris, it is the fact that his father's behaviour endangered soldiers like himself and Larry that is the unforgivable crime, not the crime itself; Keller's indirect killing of twenty one pilots while his son Larry was one himself is what constitutes betrayal. "I was dying every day and you were killing my boys and you did it for me?" (Sons, 116). Business' triumph at the expense of young men's lives is what causes Larry to kill himself, Chris to reject his father and, ultimately, Keller's own suicide.

The play's indictment of business is interesting, written as it was during a time of great technological advances when consumerism was on the rise. Even Keller's factory, once a major producer of parts for war machinery, is now making "a little of everything. Pressure cookers, an assembly for washing machines," consumer driven manufacturing (Sons, 109). At the same time, Miller chooses to lace this capitalist family's success with the guilt of Keller's crimes committed under the company banner, allowing contemporary critics to argue that the play was 'anti-capitalist.' Keller himself stands as a representative of this; he himself explains, with regard to Chris, that "everything bothers him. You make a deal, overcharge two cents and his hair falls out" (Sons, 121). Chris is, according to his father, too innocent and honest to work in business, which is here equated to theft. Keller is annoyed about this side to Chris; he is also annoyed by Chris' problem with this seedy side to business, which Chris himself equates to "the land of the great big dogs. You don't love a man here, you eat him" (Sons, 124). All My Sons, in short, paints a picture of an aggressive business structure, where theft and murder are an unfortunate side effect of financial success. Keller deceives himself as to his own guilt both by asserting that it was wartime, a time of stress where bad decisions were made, but also allows himself to believe that he did what was best for his family.

Christopher Bigsby believes that family is the root of all Keller's actions, suggesting that Keller "denies his relation to society so that he can excuse unethical business practices that keep his manufacturing company fiscally sound and his family financially secure. So long as he acts to preserve the welfare of his family, Keller believes that anything he does can be justified" (Bigsby, Companion, 53). This certainly seems to be the case within the play, as throughout Keller stresses
the importance of leaving something for Chris, and downplays (or outright lies about) his involvement in the crimes committed under his company name. For Keller, Chris' continuing to run the company is paramount. However, as Bigsby suggests in his biography of Miller, "love becomes invested with other qualities, contaminated, compromised" (Bigsby, Miller, 268). Thus Kate and Joe's love for each other and their sons, Chris and Ann's love for each other and their families, all become contaminated by the eventual knowledge (or acceptance of such knowledge) of what Keller has done in the name of caring and providing for his family. He may not necessarily have been acting in a responsible, legal or moral manner, but one could argue that he felt his heart was in the right place regarding his family, even if his actions eventually destroy his family.

The family in All My Sons has banded together after the death of Larry; although deep down they are all aware of Keller's guilt they choose not to acknowledge the fact until forced to. For Keller, everything is focused on his family. Miller himself feels that "Keller's trouble, in a word, is not that he cannot tell right from wrong but that his cast of mind cannot admit that he, personally, has any viable connection with his world, his universe of his society" (Collected Plays, 19). Bigsby agrees with this assessment, stating that "beyond the family was the family of man" (Miller, 267) and Keller's inability to understand this has allowed him to convince himself that as long as his own family is cared for and provided for he does not need to concern himself with other families' losses.

While All My Sons examines war, money (and by extension, business and business practices) and the effects of these on the family unit, The Crucible is a much stronger indictment of American society, juxtaposing as it does 1950s anticommunist America with the Salem Witch Trials of the 1690s. While All My Sons is rather claustrophobically centred around one small place, the Kellers' back garden, making an examination of the family its priority, The Crucible extends the focus to a whole community. Dennis Welland argues that "neighbourliness is a cardinal virtue in All My Sons" (Welland, 32); this very neighbourliness is, in The Crucible, warped and twisted. The figurative and literal closeness of the characters prior to the events of the play becomes a weapon, as neighbours use information that was previously unimportant or uninteresting to fuel their
accusations and condemn their neighbours and past friends in their attempts to save themselves. Christopher Bigsby argues that "if The Crucible is concerned with power, its source, its manipulations, its language, it is also concerned with betrayal" (Bigsby, Miller, 447). Betrayal, therefore, is one of the main themes of The Crucible.

This betrayal is evident in the behaviours of several of the characters; sometimes it is an unconscious, unintentional betrayal such as that with Giles Corey and his wife Martha, and sometimes it is intentional and malicious as seen in the character of Abigail Williams, the main antagonist of the play. In her attempts to have Elizabeth Proctor executed in order to take her place as the wife of John Proctor, she manages to destroy half the village in her wake as accusations flood in from all sides, leaving "many cows wanderin' the highroads, now their masters are in the jails" (Crucible, 314). Giles Corey accidentally places his wife in the line of fire with an ill-timed complaint about her book-reading and his inability to pray properly whilst she is in their home, an accusation he later deeply regrets. Miller, in the form of narrator, likens Corey to some of the accusers during the 1950s (who, in some cases, did not expect their throwaway comments to be taken so seriously) with the comment "that she stopped his prayer is very probably, but he forgot to say that he'd only very recently learned any prayers and it didn't take much to make him stumble over them" (Crucible, 254). As with anticommunist informers and accusers, it didn't matter to the authorities who listened to them whether the story they told was true; it doesn't matter to Danforth, Hale and their compatriots that Corey was only telling half the story, nor whether there was any proof of its relative truth. It only took one unconsidered comment for Martha Corey to be arrested and interrogated at length. Much of what some of the (now) more famous informers such as Elizabeth Bentley said was later proved to be greatly embellished or, in some cases, outright lies. This is mirrored especially in the character of Abigail, the chief accuser and instigator of the chaos leading to the ensuing trials and executions.

Abigail comes to represent the figure of betrayal; it can also be argued that she is Miller's representation of Senator Joe McCarthy within the play, with her accusations and her group of
female followers; she "brings the other girls into the court, and where she walks the crowd will part like the sea for Israel. And folks are brought before them, and if they scream and howl and fall to the floor - the person's clapped in the jail" (Crucible, 263). For Christopher Bigsby, "a breach of loyalty, a denial of the social contract, is associated with the most personal of deceits" and Abigail certainly does this when she decides to bring destruction on a whole village rather than take responsibility for her own actions (Bigsby, Miller, 412). She mirrors McCarthy and his followers, with their farcical exchanges during hearings filled with interruptions and attempts to smokescreen. As far as The Crucible is concerned, Abigail's word is Gospel truth, however her suspected end also mirrors McCarthy's death from alcohol-related hepatitis; in the 'Echoes Down the Corridor' epilogue, Miller rather baldly states that "legend has it that Abigail turned up later as a prostitute in Boston," a grave situation for a young girl as adamant about her honesty and innocence as Abigail is during the play's events (Crucible, 330). The accusations that end Act One are also reminiscent of the people accused in the 1950s who were forced to name names in order to save their own careers or avoid imprisonment. Abigail and Betty (and several of the other young girls in the village) are in serious trouble having been caught dancing naked, and therefore make up accusations of witchcraft to draw attention away from themselves, a tactic which was also successful for people like Elia Kazan, who, like Abigail, was never imprisoned for his suspected transgressions because of his decision to name other people. In such a manner was Miller himself convicted of contempt of court for refusing to name others (a charge which was later dropped) while his accuser, who was later proved to have been the one fabricating evidence, was never convicted of anything at all.

Another theme which continues throughout The Crucible is the abuse of power by the authorities within the play. Right from the start the audience is faced with the character of Parris, a man who presents himself as a man of God, yet who spends a great deal of time causing problems within the community; "I regard that six pound as part of my salary. I am paid little enough without I spend six pound on firewood... I am not some preaching farmer with a book under my arm; I am a graduate of Harvard College" (Crucible, 245). Even before the witch hunts have begun, the
audience is aware of Parris' unpopularity and his own selfish grabbing. This lack of sensible people in positions of authority continues as Hale and Danforth are introduced into the mix; Danforth, especially, should be a character who conveys sense and support yet he is responsible for the trials and executions, refusing to listen to physical proof in favour of believing the teenage girls. Miller uses these characters to satirise those who were in positions of authority within the anticommunist movement; Danforth refuses to change his position even when he starts to doubt the convictions; "Postponement now speaks a floundering on my part... as God have not empowered me like Joshua to stop this sun from rising, so I cannot withhold from them the perfection of their punishment" (Crucible, 318). Danforth insists on public retribution, and is angered when John Proctor refuses to allow his confession to be publicly announced, going so far as to destroy the paper upon which it is written, an action which results in his execution. This refusal is the reason he dies, rather than the confession itself; as with Miller, not confessing to a suspected offense causes the punishment, and those who do confess (be it truthfully or not) are allowed a much more lenient sentence. Danforth juxtaposes John Proctor's eventual honesty, allowing the audience to understand the basic goodness in the characters who are punished; as Miller himself says, "there are people dedicated to evil in the world; that without their perverse example we should not know the good" (Plays, 43).

It is clear, then, that there is indeed a change in theme between the two plays. In contrast to All My Sons, and its focus on money and familial perceptions of morality and betrayal, The Crucible takes betrayal to a larger group with its implicit condemnation of the Salem Witch Trials and the (by today's standards) gross miscarriage of justice. Miller himself suggested in his introduction to Collected Plays that fear in 1950s America was a theme in The Crucible, a fear that, to him, could be seen everywhere. "That so interior and subjective an emotion could have been so manifestly created from without was a marvel to me. It underlies every word in The Crucible" (Miller, Plays, 40). The fear of betrayal, of having one's name given to the authorities, seems indeed to be a direct comment on the effect anticommunism and the HUAC was having on so many institutions and professions during the late 1940s and early to mid 1950s. Miller expresses horror
"that a political, objective, knowledgeable campaign from the far Right was capable of creating not only a terror, but a new subjective reality, a veritable mystique which was gradually assuming even a holy resonance" (Miller, *Plays*, 39). This, then, was his influence in writing *The Crucible*, and the parallels between 1790s Salem and 1950s American society are clear; for *The Crucible*, "'what was in the air' provided the actual locus of the tale" (Miller, *Plays*, 39). As with the characters in *The Crucible*, Kate Keller "prefers to believe that external forces - the stars - determine her son's destiny and not individual choice" - the authorities in *The Crucible* are so very concerned with what is right under God's law that they forget about their own morality, just as Kate refuses to believe Larry is dead, instead punishing her husband every time she refuses to let go (Bigsby, *Cambridge Companion*, 56).

While *All My Sons* is a comment on capitalist society, *The Crucible* is a clear indictment of anticommunism. The two plays are accordingly very different, with the family crises in *All My Sons* becoming a wider community tragedy in the later play. It can very well be argued that, for Miller at least, the ongoing situation in 1950s America was a definite influence on his work, showcasing as it does "characters who deliberately and cynically give false evidence, or incite others to do so" just as was happening in Miller's own society. While the influence of McCarthyism can be seen in Miller's plays, this is as of yet not indicative of literature on a wider scale; for any conclusions to be drawn, one must look at other authors. Another writer who found himself involuntarily pulled into the debates and issues of the 1950s was Langston Hughes, some of whose poetry will now be examined.

*Langston Hughes*' "Good Morning, Stalingrad," "When the Armies Passed," "Ballad of the Landlord," "Sliver," and "Militant"
Langston Hughes was another celebrated writer who, despite already having established himself in his writing career, found himself entangled in anticommunism's net. Due to his earlier poetry in the 1930s and 1940s which praised Socialism and aspects of the Soviet way of life, Hughes found himself blacklisted from appearing on the radio. Although broadcasting had not been his main source of income nor his only method of writing, being blacklisted did tarnish his reputation. Hughes did not focus on just one form of writing; although only his poetry will be examined here, he also produced children's literature, songs, plays, prose and autobiographical works over the course of a very prolific career. His style changed over time, as well as changing to fit the form he was using; he chose to examine different and ranging subjects such as civil rights, Socialism, ordinary working life and the blues. This range of subjects and themes is interesting, especially as some of the Socialist poetry appears in anthologies surrounded by blues poems.

Hughes' earlier poetry very much focused on using the rhythm of the blues and blues imagery such as the music itself, women, dancing, drinking and so on. However, poems such as "Good Morning, Stalingrad" were focused on Soviet Russia and the imagery and language used changes accordingly. Hughes was writing at a time when Jim Crow laws were still enacted - that is, the racial segregation laws in America that resulted in not only separation in public areas of black and white Americans, but also in substandard work and living conditions for black Americans. With these laws as a social context for the poem, Hughes states that "Where I live down in Dixie,/ Things is bad" (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 6-7, 96); however, he takes comfort in the fact that "as long as your red star/ Lights the sky/ We won't die" (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 13-15, 96). These lines, when taken together, are significant as Hughes uses the Soviet image of the red star as a symbol of his own situation (and that of thousands of black Americans), allied as America was in 1943 with Russia against the Axis forces; he thus allies his own position with the revolution and subsequent Soviet regime in Eastern Europe. This suggests that Hughes' admiration for the symbols of life in Russia extends to a hope for the future in America; "But as for me- you're my ally/ Until we all are free" (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 26-27, 96).
"Good Morning, Stalingrad" provides a great contrast to Hughes' blues poetry; works such as "Big Buddy" were printed in the same volume of poetry as "Stalingrad" (Jim Crow's Last Stand) but with a much stronger connection to the rhythm of the blues:

"Big Buddy, Big Buddy,
Ain't you gonna stand by me?
Big Buddy, Big Buddy,
Ain't you gonna stand by me?
If I got to fight,
I'll fight like a man.
But say, Big Buddy,
Won't you lend a hand?" (lines 1-8, 91)

This poem in particular demonstrates the rhyming pattern of many blues songs, and at first glance seems to have little in common with "Stalingrad;" however, Hughes' image of fighting "like a man," combined with war-like imagery of roaring guns in "Stalingrad" (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 18-19, 96), almost seems a metaphor for the fight many ordinary people later faced in the 1950s - the fight against oppression in the form of segregation laws. Marx (writing with Engels and reported in Marx and Modernity by Robert Antonio) argues that "political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another" (Marx and Modernity, 226); much of Hughes' work, including both "Stalingrad" and "Big Buddy," dealt with the oppression of black Americans by whites. Hughes uses the ideology of Russian socialism in "Stalingrad" to draw attention to the situation he experienced in America that "Big Buddy" refers to. There is, however, a rather uncertain element within the poem; that of the identity of 'Big Buddy,' which is never confirmed. Although it is fair to assume he is a compatriot of the poem's speaker (and therefore, in continuation, a compatriot of Hughes), Buddy does not respond to the question "won't you lend a hand?" Big Buddy can therefore represent many things; another fighter for human rights and racial equality alongside Hughes, an indifferent member of the public whom Hughes is trying to rally for
the cause, or even an opponent to whom the poem is a defiant address. Like the imagined reciprocal audience in "Stalingrad," "simple working folks" who "lift their heads too," confirmation of mutual support is never truly confirmed (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 32-33, 97).

In a way that seems almost premonitory, Hughes uses language in "Stalingrad" that imitates some of the accusations made by anticommunists some ten years later. Hughes states in the poem that he "can't send no messages through the air./ But I reckon you can hear me./ Anyhow, away off there" (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 50-52, 96). "Big Buddy" and "Stalingrad" are poems which speak to an undefined persona; there is a sense of a connection between the speaker in "Stalingrad" and those in the city who share his beliefs, just as there is between Big Buddy and the speaker in the poem of the same name. There is no sense of a return communication, just that (in "Stalingrad" at least) the speaker derives comfort from the thought of others like himself. This sentiment of understanding without communication is interesting given the fact that one of the many arguments used against communism by anticommunists was that Moscow had an almost absolute hold on American members of the Communist Party, that although there was little communication between the American Communist Party and the Soviet Union, orders could and would be carried out. Although Hughes' poem pre-dates this suspicion by several years, it is an interesting connection between the two opposing groups; the socialists who felt an unspoken association with the working man in Russia, and the anticommunists who believed this kinship would become a problem for the more right wing government of America. It may also be significant that this connection doesn't seem to need any form of technology, rather relying on shared ideology. Written at a time of great technological advances, with mass production allowing more and more people access to appliances in their homes, Hughes chooses to show the possibility of communication without any of the old or new inventions. This becomes even more significant given Hughes' later blacklisting on the radio, meaning he himself had to find other methods of communication to a large audience.

Another poem that seems to stand out from its fellows is "When the Armies Passed," printed in Fields of Wonder in 1947. "Armies" takes the socialist imagery in "Stalingrad" to a familial level,
Hughes satirises the American refusal to accept Communism (and the emergence of persecution against communists), so different to the attitude of alliance from just a few years before, by having the mother in the poem insist that the hat found by her son cannot have a red star on it. "It might have been/ Your father's blood/ Perhaps blood/ Of your brother" (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 17-20, 150). She is more willing to believe that her son is holding the bloodied cap belonging to a beloved family member than a Communist icon, her belief a clear sign of the change in attitude among Americans towards the Soviet Union and Communism less than two years after the end of World War Two.

The soldier's cap is a symbol of the effects of war and the possibility of failed revolution, both in the fact that there is no soldier to go with the cap, and in the fact that the child sees "red stars, mother./ Scattered all over the snow" (Poems, Vol. 2, lines 12-13, 150). The hats dotting the landscape are symbols of fallen soldiers; Hughes' earlier impression of Communism, while not necessarily changed to become negative, is not as bright-eyed and hopeful as it was in "Stalingrad." Instead, it has become muted and less passionate, as shown by the mother's reaction to her son's own excitement; her willingness to convince her child that the star is blood comes after an initial dismissal of the cap. It is only after her son insists she look closer that she herself begins to talk about the possibility of there being a more violent story behind his find. Her reaction can be seen as Hughes' comment on American society's refusal to acknowledge the success of Communism, but it also reflects the way attitudes had changed towards a country that had, in the final years of World War Two, been closely allied with the USA.

While "Good Morning, Stalingrad" and "When the Armies Passed" share the theme of war and Soviet imagery, they differ somewhat in the way they represent these themes. However, "Ballad of the Landlord," printed in the Montage of a Dream Deferred anthology (1951), is very different indeed, focusing on an unfair relationship between a tenant and his landlord. Rather than a bright-eyed praising of Socialist society, "Landlord" addresses a problem faced by an ordinary man who dares to speak up about the inequalities he faces. The unnamed landlord comes to represent not only
those of privilege, with land and money, but also the American government; the landlord almost seems to be a satirical figure of the HUAC, looming over his tenant with the threat of eviction and prison. "What? You gonna get eviction orders?/ You gonna cut off my heat?/ You gonna take my furniture and/ Throw it in the street?" (Poems, Vol. 3, lines 13-16, 43). This corresponds with the experiences of those caught up in McCarthy's trials who found themselves threatened with jail sentences or even, in some cases, deportation.

Marx and Engels felt that "the class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it" (The German Ideology, reported in Critical and Cultural Theory Reader, 39). The landlord in the poem represents a member of the class controlling physical and mental production, the tenant being a member of the 'subjective' class - that is, the class subject to those who control production. This connects to Easthope and McGowan's writing that "Louis Althusser analyses ideology as functioning across a range of state institutions to reproduce subjects 'who work by themselves' and live out their sub-ordination unconsciously" (Critical and Cultural Theory, 35); for daring to step outside his class and refusing to 'live out sub-ordination unconsciously,' the tenant is punished with ninety days of jail time. As the tenant says, just before he is arrested, "you talking high and mighty" (Poems, Vol. 3, lines 17, 43); unfortunately, in this case, the landlord's 'high and mighty' speech is backed by members of the police force who unquestioningly take the landlord's side in the dispute while the tenant is left to fend for himself. The police who support the landlord fulfil the role of Althusser's 'state institution,' also living out their own sub-ordination whilst enforcing that of the tenant.

The landlord in question has refused to repair the falling-down building in which the tenant lives; it is the tenant's daring to argue and assert his rights by refusing to pay the rent until the repairs are made which results in him being accused of terrorism:

"Police! Police!

Come and get this man!"
He's trying to ruin the government
And overturn the land!" (Poems, Vol. 3, lines 21-24, 44).

Onwuchekwa Jemie argues in An Introduction to the Poetry that Hughes shows the "forces of law and order... who, like the landlord, equate the assertion of tenant rights with revolution, for the tenant's refusal to accept and pay for substandard and dangerous living conditions is a threat to a society which grows fat from tenant abuse" (Jemie, 71). Jemie's argument agrees with comments made by William Greider in "These Dark Satanic Mills," who says that "when law and social values retreated before the power of markets, then capitalism's natural drive to maximise returns had no internal governor to check its social behaviour. When one enterprise took the low road to gain advantage, others would follow" (Marx and Modernity, 331). As landlords were allowed free rein to maximise their profits, less emphasis was given to the social aspect of their jobs - the maintenance of the properties in their possession. Hughes highlights this lack of social care in "Landlord," coupling it with the obvious support for the landlord by the authorities in the form of the police and the judge.

Hughes also links "Landlord" to the HUAC in the way that the landlord's falsified (or at least exaggerated) claims of aggression from the tenant are believed and acted upon without question. Much of the testimony given regarding communism by informers such as Elizabeth Bentley was later proven to be false or exaggerated. Senator McCarthy's own career was built upon accusations and remonstrations which were also often unfounded. Ellen Schrecker references this when she states that "the elaborate ideological edifice that Hoover and the rest of the anticommmunism network had so painfully constructed would fall apart. That edifice had, in fact, been built on perjury" (Schrecker, Many are the Crimes, 230). By placing his protagonist within a racial situation, that of black tenant and white landlord, as well as within a society willing to convict on the basis of an exaggeration, Hughes links his poem to both the racial tension of the 1950s and the seedier sides of capitalism (in this case, tenant abuse) and anticommmunism.
Another poem from the *Montage of a Dream Deferred* anthology, "Sliver," is again very different to "Landlord" and the other poems it was published with, and almost seems to carry a warning. Six years after World War Two there was a culture of fear emerging; the fear of the atomic bomb and nuclear weapons in the hands of new enemies and the fear of the Other represented, especially in America in the 1950s, by Stalin and Soviet Russia. "Sliver" warns of the ease of losing one's reputation or worse, one's job or ability to remain in the United States. "Sliver" alerts those who would speak out against inequality or repression by representing the dangers of seemingly innocent or insignificant comments and the ways such comments were beginning to be used by anticommunists to condemn the people called before committees. The words "A cheap little tune/ To cheap little rhymes/ Can cut a man's/ Throat sometimes" are Hughes' manner of reflecting upon the way people were being hauled in front of the HUAC because of a one-time visit to a Communist-affiliated rally or a piece of writing condemning aspects of capitalist America. It did not take much to destroy a person's reputation and this appears to be the main theme of "Sliver."

Jean Wagner argues in *Black Poets of the United States* that "Hughes showed himself to be a close and intelligent observer of cultural, political, and social life" (Wagner, 392) and it should therefore come as no surprise that "Sliver" should have been written at a time when one's comments or literary works were being thoroughly scrutinised.

The 'cutting of a man's throat' which resulted from seemingly insignificant details may also refer to long-reaching consequences of anticommunism, not only for those who were accused of communist leanings but also for those who repented. Ted Morgan describes an incident involving Elia Kazan many years after he chose to appease the anticommunist committees; "in the year 2000, at the age of eighty-nine, Kazan was finally awarded an honorary Oscar... Anti-Kazan demonstrators picketed the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles, where the Oscar ceremony was held" (Morgan, 524). Almost fifty years after he stood before the HUAC, Kazan was still feeling the effects of his controversial decision. Hughes' words seem almost premonitory in their
suggestion that the effects of anticommunism - and the consequences of words or actions which were not thought through - would be as far-reaching and long-lasting as they have proved to be.

"Militant," from *The Panther and the Lash* (1967) but written much earlier, carries on the theme of "Sliver," that of destruction of reputation or personal situation, with a focus on Hughes' own feelings. "Let all who will," Hughes states, "Eat quietly the bread of shame./ I cannot/ Without complaining loud and long" (*Poems, Vol. 3*, lines 1-4, 156). These four lines mean that "Militant" can be argued as the poem mostly closely influenced by anticommunism of the five discussed here, given that it appears to show Hughes' own opinions regarding the climate of naming and shaming that had pervaded 1950s America. It also draws a comparison between Hughes, who chose not to name others, and people like Elia Kazan who decided to give names to the HUAC to save their jobs. Kazan in particular regretted his decision for a great deal of his later life. David Chinitz, in his article "The Ethics of Compromise", wrote that Hughes' writing "continued to reflect an intense commitment to social justice; he spoke out against the persecution of communists" (Chinitz, 98); Hughes' "bread of shame" can therefore be read as a disappointment felt towards those who took part in the attempted purges.

The following lines of the poem return to a theme that continues that of "Ballad of the Landlord" by looking again at the common man and the struggles faced by ordinary people, especially black people living under 1950s racist segregation laws. "For honest work/ You proffer me poor pay./ For honest dreams/ Your spit is in my face" (*Poems, Vol. 3*, lines 8-11, 156) and this poor pay, for many people, was then in part being given to the kinds of landlords shown in "Ballad." Jemie feels that "Hughes was primarily a social poet, and recognized himself as such; but he was also a lyricist of the first order," (Jemie, xvi) and this is certainly true of the way that "Militant" combines feelings of disappointment with the plight of those stuck in impossible situations which were not of their own making; the disappointment felt by Hughes towards those people who "Eat quietly the bread of shame" extends to those who profit from paying out poor wages or who rent out shoddy housing under the protection of the law.
Hughes' use of language in the poetry as a whole is also important. As touched upon above, there is a reflection of the later beliefs of anticommunism in the poem "Good Morning, Stalingrad." This can also be seen in "Militant," where the overall feeling of shame corresponds with a statement made to the HUAC committee members who questioned Paul Robeson, an NFL football player and singer who was a firm civil rights supporter. Robeson was also, like Hughes, eventually blacklisted as a result of his conversations with the Committee, but he was outspoken in his beliefs and towards the committee members. He stated, on record, that he believed that the committee members, rather than those who were questioned, were "the nonpatriots, and you are the un-Americans, and you ought to be ashamed of yourselves" (Testimony of Paul Robeson before the House Committee on un-American Activities, June 12, 1956). Robeson's sentiments seem to agree with Hughes' but are directed towards a different opponent; rather than contemporaries in the literary and film worlds who had named names, Robeson's anger is directed instead at the people who manned the committees forcing such behaviour. It is interesting that such language is used by both Hughes and Robeson, and iterates the influence of cultural context on Hughes' work.

Hughes' chosen themes do change over the years, as demonstrated by the five poems examined. Ranging from shared ideological belief in "Good Morning, Stalingrad" to tenant abuse in "Ballad of the Landlord," Hughes' poetry in his later life exhibited hints of his disappointment with those around him, as "Militant" shows. While the themes did vary, his ability to write social poetry which geared towards a hope for change did not. Despite being blacklisted from appearing on the radio, Hughes managed to get his voice heard by many black Americans through his poetry, and even though evidence of the effects of anticommunism can be read in his works, he, like many of his contemporaries, continued to stand for what he felt was right. His and Arthur Millers' writings have things in common, especially their focus on everyday people, families and situations. A very different, much younger writer from the same period, Richard Matheson, had other ideas in mind when he turned to the writing of horror stories and scripts. An analysis of his short stories from the early 1950s, along with the novel I Am Legend, follows.
Richard Matheson's "Born of Man and Woman," "Clothes Make the Man," "Legion of Plotters" and I Am Legend.

While Arthur Miller and Langston Hughes seem to have things in common such as their belonging to minority groups (Miller as the son of immigrant Jewish parents, Hughes as a black American), their shared interest in Communism and their focus on ordinary people in ordinary jobs, Richard Matheson seems an odd choice to follow them. Uninvolved in the anticommunist purges, he was neither blacklisted nor questioned, left to write seemingly in peace. However, horror writing (and science-fiction) often carries with it a form of social commentary, utilising the fears and paranoia which form part of a writer's cultural context to generate the thrill for the reader. Matheson was no different. Writing at a time before the space race had kicked into high gear but when space travel and the potential discovery of alien life was very much in the public mind, Matheson used aliens, the fear of both an unknown Other and of nuclear tension to stir up uncertainty both in his short stories and in his novels. In the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when nuclear warfare was a threat that was difficult to understand, Matheson examined the effects of radiation, along with life in what was becoming a Cold War. His short-stories from the 1950s are horror stories which, Matheson freely admits in his comments on each story, were written to make a living. However, they show the sorts of fears that were in the public consciousness during the 1950s quite apart from the fear of Communism and Soviet Russia; these fears are used successfully within the stories to create suspense.

One story that illustrates the fear of the unknown is "Born of Man and Woman," written in 1950. A human couple gives birth to an alien child; unable to deal with the disgust they feel towards him, they chain him down in their cellar and refuse to let him live a normal life. The child's initial reaction is one of acceptance, but this quickly turns to rebelliousness as the child wants to learn
more about other people and his surroundings. "I hear laughs upstairs. I like to know why there are
laughs for" (Collected Stories, 16). The parents repeatedly beat the child for misbehaving, for
attempting to leave the cellar, or trying to watch other children playing out of the window - and
force the child out of sight; however, the fear of discovery is ever present. "One of the little fathers
saw me. He pointed at the window... I heard my mother come down. I heard the anger. Stay away
from the window" (Collected Stories, 17). Matheson taps into the fear of aliens, the unknown threat,
a theme which was and is even now used by horror film directors. He uses this theme to portray the
human reaction to the unknown. However, the parents' attitudes towards their own child and their
intense need to hide their shame from other people, can be read as a critical portrayal of those who
feel their appearance is more important than moral behaviour. The treatment of the child in "Born of
Man and Woman" is nothing more than abuse, yet both parents seem to have no issues with beating
their child so long as the neighbours do not see him; the neighbours' good opinion of them is more
important than family values. Mark Jancovich, writing in Rational Fears, argues that "if the child
appears hideous and monstrous to its parents, the story presents him as a sensitive victim of abuse,
while the normal world of the parents is presented as a monstrous culture of complacency, cruelty
and intolerance. The child is ignored, chained, and viciously beaten by those people to whom it
looks up" (Rational Fears, 133). Rather than the child, who is the more physically abnormal, it is
the parents who, within the story, are the monsters.

The reality of the child's dungeon in the cellar is a stark contrast to the "white palace. White
as white jewels that come from upstairs sometime" which greets the child when he finally makes it
out of the cellar and into the house for the first time (Collected Stories, 16). The family has bought
into the new age of production and consumerism, creating a beautiful, shining, clean home into
which the alien child simply does not fit. The parents' behaviour, placing surface beauty and the
ownership of fine things above the love of a child, is undeniably cruel; Jancovich suggests that "this
response is not only presented as an understandable and even justifiable response, but also as a
heroic rejection of the values of the supposedly 'normal' world" (Rational Fears, 134). Matheson
uses the child, the figure of the Other who so terrifies the parents who created him, to analyse and reject a world which places value only on surface qualities.

This consumerist theme, that of keeping up appearances, is reflected in "Clothes Make the Man" from 1951. In this short story, consumerism is taken to a new height when it is revealed that a successful businessman is controlled almost entirely by his work suit. He refuses to take his clothes off for anything, "A man isn't a man without his shoes, he said. I couldn't even walk without them" (Collected Stories, 57); when someone finally plays a practical joke on him and takes his hat, his world crumbles and he collapses, unable to think or act until the hat is replaced. Not only does it emerge that the clothes are doing the businessman's job for him, but it becomes clear that the clothes are in fact listening to the businessman's brother's tale, responding to comments without the tale-teller noticing who (or what) they are and is even dating the businessman's wife.

The story makes clear that the most important thing about the man, Charlie, is his clothing; "He was a fashion plate. That's what he was. Suits had to be just right. Hats just right. Shoes, socks, everything custom made" (Collected Stories, 56). Even his own wife confesses that "Half the time, she says, I don't know whether I'm married to a man or a wardrobe" (Collected Stories, 57). Charlie has become so reliant on his clothing, such an enthusiast of consumerism, that he can no longer function normally. "Without a hat, Charlie couldn't think. Without shoes he couldn't walk. Without gloves he couldn't move his fingers. A psychiatrist went on vacation after Charlie visited him" (Collected Stories, 58). Again, Matheson uses themes that were prevalent at the time; with the rise of mass production and new gadgets, he uses "Clothes Make the Man" as a warning to people not to get too caught up in their possessions - that inner substance is also important. Jancovich argues that "the story implied that, in the modern world, image is everything and people's identities are produced by the commodities which they consume, commodities which seem to have more life that the humans who possess them," and this is reflected in the way Charlie's wife, Miranda, reacts to her husband's collapse. She leaves him for the suit, showing that she too is caught up in the belief that Charlie's clothing is more interesting and important than the man himself; despite the suit only
having an outer presence and no inner worth, she chooses it over a real person. The suit, both in the
story and in reality, represents money, success, power. The story seems to suggest that an
appearance of wealth, of conformity, of accepted normality, is more important than what lies
beneath; the suit, although not human, is more acceptably human than the man who lived inside it.

With "Legion of Plotters" Matheson's choice of theme and subject moves from the rather
playful tone seen in "Clothes Make the Man" and turns darker and more disconcerting. Written in
1953, in the middle of Senator McCarthy's anticommunist campaign, "Legion" focuses on paranoia
and apportion of blame; its protagonist, Mr Jasper, shows Matheson's wish to "go behind the scenes
and show one of these guys - why they became that way... talk about paranoia!" (Collected Stories,
372). Mr Jasper's paranoid thoughts are not just self destructive; his reaction to the world around
him and his suspicions that everyone is trying to persecute him leads him to violence.

Some of Mr Jasper's complaints are of things that would probably irritate any ordinary
person, such as rude customers or a gentleman with a constant sniffing cold who insists on sitting
by Jasper on the bus every day. At first, even his reactions seem normal; "with every taxing
customer a gushing host of brilliantly nasty remarks would rise up in Mr Jasper's mind, each one
surpassing the one before. His mind would positively ache to set them free" (Collected Stories,
364). However, Jasper is a figure of extreme paranoia, so set in the thought that he is being
intentionally persecuted that he begins looking for things around him that irritate him and then
blaming them on innocent people, complete strangers. Naturally he finds these things everywhere
once he starts searching. Alan Levine, in Bad Old Days, discusses the "suppression of women, and
puritanical attitudes towards sex" that he agrees were common throughout the 1950s (Levine, 1);
this is to be seen in Mr Jasper in "Legion" through his incessant list of irritations, many of which he
attributes to women. He makes notes of occurrences such as "refusal to buy tie because torn,
2:38pm., store, WOMAN, 10," the woman scoring a ten out of ten for irritation even though she is
perfectly within her rights to refuse to buy his faulty merchandise (Collected Stories, 368). Jasper
shows his negative attitude to women not only through the capitalisation of gender in the previous
example but also in the way he allocates gender; "fly walking on hand, 1:43pm., female (?), 8."
Even though he has no way of knowing the gender of the fly, he automatically assumes it is female as he considers that many of his perceived problems are caused by women. It is thus significant that Mr Jasper appears to be single.

Matheson takes Jasper's paranoia to the point where he is only capable of noticing negative things, his nights consumed with the sounds of "a car coughing past in the street. A rattle of venetian blind. A set of lone footsteps somewhere in the house. The drip of a faucet, the barking of a dog, the rubbing legs of crickets" (Collected Stories, 366). All these normal ordinary night-time sounds form a background to "Mr Jasper's present nemesis... Albert Radenhausen, Junior, age seven months, possessor of one set of incredibly hardy lungs which did their best work between four and five in the morning" (366). On the one hand, Mr Jasper seems petty, a pathetic lonely figure who looks for irritation and then becomes angry when he finds it, never understanding that not only is he blaming people who have done nothing and do not even know they are annoying him, but that by beginning his search he has guaranteed that he will find issues. However, it becomes more than a simple case of petty irritation when Jasper takes a knife to work and stabs six innocent people on the bus. Matheson takes the paranoia pervading the 1950s and funnels it into the character of Mr Jasper; this also has the effect of turning said paranoia onto the general public as nobody around Mr Jasper knew he was festering such aggressively delusional thoughts. Not knowing what the person next to you is thinking, as with the sniffing bus-rider sat next to Jasper, suggests that an attack can come from nowhere; Matheson uses this notion to create the air of discomfort within the short story.

I Am Legend takes the paranoia from "Legion of Plotters" and takes it even further; unlike in Mr Jasper's world of irritation, the monsters in I Am Legend do exist and are really trying to harm the protagonist, Robert Neville. Written in 1954, whilst continuing the theme of paranoia already present in his short stories, Matheson also looks at the fears of disease, loneliness and betrayal within the novel, thus moving into a different field from his earlier works examined so far. Mark
Jancovich feels that Matheson's writing "displays a general concern with paranoia, loss of control and estrangement," themes that all run through *I Am Legend* (Jancovich, 130).

Robert Neville illustrates, right from the beginning, the importance of human contact. Left alone, seemingly the only survivor of an apocalypse which has left everyone else dead or turned into a vampire, Neville must survive the nightly attempts to reach him whilst dealing with the day to day struggle to keep his home from falling down. Simple tasks like gaining food have become difficult excursions that must be planned. Mathias Clasen argues that "the horror of isolation is very real and very rational," adding that "solitary isolation in the criminal justice system is considered an especially severe form of punishment" (Clasen, iv). Neville is used throughout the novel to explore the mental and physical processes a person may go through when forced to endure involuntary isolation; this is emphasised by the inclusion of a stray dog Neville discovers in his neighbourhood, to which he has an extremely powerful reaction. "He lurched forward with a dull cry and almost pitched on his face on the lawn. His legs pistoned, his arms flailed for balance. Then he caught himself and started running after the dog" (*Legend*, 83). Although this sort of behaviour may on the surface seem unusual, given that stray dogs are not an uncommon sight, it is understandable as Neville has at that point been completely alone, without any contact with a live person or animal at all, for over eight months. As Clasen says, "metaphorically, Matheson suggests that the need for companionship is as real, as fundamental, and as strong as the need for sustenance" (Clasen, iv); Neville employs far more care, patience and hard work in gaining the dog's trust than he does in looking after himself, only to be completely devastated when the dog dies of the plague. The dog symbolises the need for companionship that is so intrinsic to human nature; without it, Neville becomes hard, aggressive and frightening when he finally encounters another human being.

Self reliance is a theme that recurs throughout the novel *I Am Legend*, and one that goes hand in hand with that of loneliness; the two themes are so intertwined that it becomes hard to separate them. Robert Neville has to constantly rely on his own abilities to take care of himself in order to survive, teaching himself how to fortify and defend his own home and managing to keep it
powered long after the electricity companies have stopped production. He learns to function alone and on his own terms so effectively that he finds it difficult to allow anyone to enter his world, even when there is a chance they are immune like him.

"He had accepted too long the proposition that he was the only normal person left... He had doubted too long. His concept of the society had become ironbound. It was almost impossible for him to believe that there were others like him. And, after the first shock had diminished, all the dogma of his long years alone had asserted itself" (Legend, 115).

Neville's ability to care for himself in a post-apocalyptic world is tied up in his ability to function alone, and has come at a great cost; he is unwilling and unable to share his home and space with another human being, as he is used to only being able to trust himself. The dog he spends so much time, effort and emotion on building trust with is allowed into his home without question, as it poses a much lesser threat to Neville's rather shaky emotional state than a human who can make their own decisions. When confronted by Ruth and the potential for other human survivors, Neville seems more ready to accept loneliness than to risk losing another wife and child, whether by choice or by necessity, and acknowledges this fact to himself; "all these years he thought, dreaming about a companion. Now I meet one and the first thing I do is distrust her, treat her crudely and impatiently" (Legend, 115). Apart from Ruth and the dog, who are only around Neville for a comparatively short time, the only other characters in the novel are Neville himself and the vampires. This creates a rather claustrophobic air as most of the events take place within Neville's home and surrounding land, and as the novel progresses he becomes more and more trapped in his neighbourhood, only venturing out during daylight and when absolutely necessary. His self-reliance and independence become weapons against the vampires, yet they change and distort his ability to behave in the ways his pre-apocalyptic culture portrayed as normal.

One interesting argument regarding I Am Legend is brought up by Laura Diehl in "American Germ Culture: Richard Matheson, Octavia Butler, and the (Political) Science of Individuality," and
relates to the theme of disease within the novel. Matheson, through the character of Neville, explores the theory of vampirism as bacterial infection, allowing the question of Neville's immunity to arise. Not only does Neville's quest for knowledge bring a modicum of understanding to his situation, it also, according to Diehl, brings about his downfall; "his desire to retreat to some original state of purity increasingly becomes a symptom of his own disease. His ruthless militaristic individuality prevents contact with alterity, and it kills him in the end" (Diehl, 103). By taking refuge in his scientific attempts to analyse the epidemic, coupled with his own individual survival, Neville makes it impossible for him to even consider adapting as the other survivors have - by contracting a mild form of the vampiric bacteria - and therefore he cannot belong to either the full vampires' or the survivors' societies. Mark Jancovich agrees with Diehl's analysis of Neville, stating that his "refusal to accept change and the conformist forms of thought on which it is based, are shown to be dangerous. Not only does it prevent him from recognising the significance of the difference between the living and the dead vampires, but it also leads to his eventual destruction" (Jancovich, 150). Neville, by setting himself apart, seals his fate.

His scientific endeavours are also flawed. Neville, before the vampire epidemic, was not a scientist but rather a worker at a local factory. Nonetheless, he embarks on an extremely complicated blood analysis and triumphantly decides he has succeeded in his task of discovering the cause of the plague. Diehl comments that "Neville's primary weapon is his microscope, and, as one critic notes, he uses his own blood as the norm against which all others are diagnosed and found healthy or sick" (Diehl, 102). Neville does not analyse his own blood before making his comparisons; he has no idea whether he himself is sick or healthy, only that he does not have the vampiric infection, and therefore the abnormalities between his own blood and that of the vampires' could be anything at all. "I dub thee vampiris" thinks Neville to himself, but he has only the assumption of proof (Legend, 75). Regardless, he then uses his comparisons to judge others and proclaim them vampires. These assumptions tie into Diehl's main argument, that I Am Legend's theme of disease ties into a contemporary (to Matheson) accusation of Communism as a disease or
infection, contagious to all those who came into contact with it. As anticommunists judged others by their own standards which were based on their subjective view of what was right and wrong, so Neville judges others by his own amateur analysis of his own blood, assuming that his sample is clean and untouched by illness of any kind, just as anticommunists presumed they were in the right.

The connection between Communism and bacterial infection in *I Am Legend* is taken further within Diehl's argument. She states that "by the late 1940's, demonized images of communists were everywhere, as newspapers, movies, and congressmen depicted communists as viruses, germs, parasites, political cancers, and robots" (Diehl, 95). Matheson also connects Neville's situation to that of 1950s America and the role of the media and politicians in propagating an atmosphere of fear. "There was something grotesquely amusing in that: the frenetic attempt to sell papers while the world died... Yellow journalism, though, *had* been rampant in the final days. And, in addition, a great upsurge in revivalism had occurred" (*Legend*, 105). The society within the novel reacted in the same way as the society and culture within which Matheson was writing. Neville acknowledges the media role in accelerating panic and confusion just as journalists played a role in the Red Scare of the 1950s.

Within the novel little information is given to distinguish individual vampires from one another; with the exception of Ben Cortman, they are portrayed as a mindless, attacking mass. "The fact of autoimmune disorders... contributed to a paranoid Cold War rhetoric where citizens were invaders, the nation dissembled, individuality dissolved" (Diehl, 100). As with the short stories, Matheson uses Neville's (partly self-imposed, partly enforced) alienation as a result of his immunity to disease to create a horror reflecting what he, Matheson, perceived to be occurring in his own society. By standing alone between the living and dead vampires, Neville becomes the stranger, the outsider, even as he fights against what he perceives as the alien threat; he feels that he is the only normal person left, not understanding that that makes him the abnormal one. Jancovich argues that "the novel illustrates that definitions of the monstrous are always relative and social; a monster is a definition given by a particular society to that which it finds threatening" (Jancovich, 152). Neville's
actions cause him to be seen as the monster; "to them he was some terrible scourge they had never seen, a scourge even worse than the disease they had come to live with. He was an invisible specter who had left for evidence of his existence the bloodless bodies of their loved ones" (Legend, 159). Matheson shows that, for the majority, the minority can easily be discerned as monstrous, just as communists became monstrous to the majority of non-communists in American society.

There is also an arguable connection to Communism in two of the short stories discussed previously. In "Born of Man and Woman," the couple's secret is hidden away in the depths of the house, kept even from their friends and neighbours. Their fear of discovery and the treatment of the child when he dares to defy their abusive actions seems to reflect the fear implanted in the national consciousness - that one's abnormalities should be buried, that one could not recognise a communist simply by looking, that anybody could be hiding the secrets of their political affiliations. The child is ostracised for being unable to fit into his parents' rigid idea of familial perfection and happiness; "Mother says all right people look like they do" (Collected Stories, 17) and is punished by being locked away, neglected and ignored. In other words, anything which goes against society's picture of normality is, the story suggests, to be pushed aside and forced out. "Legion of Plotters" also seems to bear a connection through this paranoid need to flush out differences; Mr Jasper's notion of a grand conspiracy of people trying to punish him for untold transgressions includes "the neighbours... the society of them, that ubiquitous brotherhood which always lived in the apartments around Mr Jasper" (Collected Stories, 365). When one is told (or, in Mr Jasper's case, believes) that they are surrounded by the Other, it becomes easy to see evidence wherever one goes, just as Mr Jasper finds irritations everywhere once he begins to search for them. "One irritation per five minutes. Some of them, naturally, were so subtle that only a man with Mr Jasper's intuitive grasp, a man with a quest, could notice them" (Collected Stories, 368). By pushing the fact that communists were everywhere onto the American public, from the politicians through the media, people began to think communists were everywhere, just as Neville sees vampires, Jasper irritations, the child's parents a potential discovery of their secret, witnesses to the abuse they inflict on their child.
Matheson creates his horror by creating a parallel between his imagined worlds and the one he lived in.

**In Conclusion**

As stated in the chapters above, there are many themes discussed throughout the works of Hughes, Miller and Matheson; some of these themes, such as paranoia, anti-capitalism and persecution, are shared and examined by more than one writer. It is also the case that the thematic choices by each author change between their earlier and later works, with the later works becoming more bleak, less optimistic and featuring more portrayals of betrayal, treachery or persecution. Sidney Finkelstein says of Miller that "a distinction of Arthur Miller's plays is that their human conflicts are fought out against the background of the great social issues of the day" (Finkelstein, 252); this also seems to be true of Hughes and Matheson, both of whom used the fears and uncertainties they saw growing around them to enhance their artistic work.

Yet there are connections between the three authors quite apart from their thematic choices and use of social context within their works. Miller's *All My Sons* and Matheson's "Born of Man and Woman" both look at the struggle to conceal secrets, with the need to remain undiscovered overriding everything else and eroding family ties. Both Miller and Matheson include a warning about such determined secrecy. *All My Sons* ends with the family's discovery of Larry's suicide and Keller's own suicide by gunshot, while Matheson makes it clear that a similarly violent end may come to the child's parents; "I have a bad anger with mother and father. I will show them... If they try to beat me again Ill hurt them. I will" (*Collected Stories*, 18). Both authors place family ties, solidarity and honesty above the keeping of dark secrets, suggesting that openness and dealing with the consequences of one's own actions or bad luck is always the better policy.
There is also a stylistic connection between the endings of Matheson's "Legion of Plotters" and Hughes' "Ballad of the Landlord." Both writers choose to end with headlines reflecting the sensational journalism of the time:

"MAN THREATENS LANDLORD
TENANT HELD NO BAIL
JUDGE GIVES NEGRO 90 DAYS IN COUNTY JAIL!" *(Poems, Vol. 3, lines 31-33, 44)*

"MAN STABS SIX
IN CROWDED BUS:
SHOT BY POLICE
No Motive Found
*For Wild Attack* *(Collected Stories, 372)*

Neither headline gives the impression that the true story will be reported under the headline; neither represents the real occurrences. In the case of "Landlord" this may be for political reasons, as the black tenant's plight will go unheard as it will not sell as many papers as a white landlord being threatened by a black tenant during a time of white supremacy; for "Plotters," the reason may be more psychological, as Jasper's paranoid fantasies are so subjective and unspoken about to other characters. This stylistic connection not only links the poem and short story together, but also provides an association with the newspapers of the time reporting on McCarthyism. Edward Alwood notes that "there had been no full-blown investigation of Communists in the press, but the saber rattling by investigative committees had left a discernable chill" *(Alwood, 79)*; however, sensationalist journalism was rife with printed discussions of the political climate and accusations of communism. The endings of both "Plotters" and "Landlord" are a condemnation of such journalism, where truth is not always required and the sensational story is all important.

At the beginning of this thesis, four hypotheses were given regarding what the research was expected to show. The first was that there would be a clear difference in the earlier works
researched when compared to the later works by each author. This hypothesis appears to have been correct, as there are thematic differences in the works studied. The earlier works by each author, especially Miller, appear to be more anti-capitalist in form and theme while the later works are more paranoid, with more representations of persecution. This is especially true in "Legion of Plotters" by Matheson and The Crucible by Miller. This ties into the fourth hypothesis, which (at least with regard to the authors examined) is also true; that there will be more instances of paranoia and/or persecution in the authors' later works. The third hypothesis was to state that differences would manifest in the form of subject matter and imagery; this also applies to the authors concerned, who managed to keep their focus on ordinary men and women in more or less ordinary communities, thus highlighting very different ranges of subject. From small-town corruption with long-reaching consequences in All My Sons Miller moved to The Crucible's very contained, very public persecutions, while the parents' refusal in "Born of Man and Woman" to admit the learned humanity of their child turns to "Legion of Plotters" and Mr Jasper's decision to interpret simple day-to-day irritations as evidence of "a secret legion in the world" whose "Prime devotion was to drive him from his senses" (Collected Stories, 369).

However, while these three hypotheses are provable as a result of the research conducted, the second hypothesis is less easy to announce as correct. Hypothesis two stated that the differences in theme, imagery etc would be more easily seen in those authors who came into direct contact with the HUAC than in authors who did not. Miller and Hughes found themselves questioned, accused, held under suspicion and blacklisted on the radio. Matheson, on the other hand, seems to have been mostly left alone, yet his works show just as much change and development, in much the same direction, as those of the older two authors. On the face of things this would suggest that perhaps the persecution of suspected communists by anticommunists affected American Literature as a whole - this claim cannot be made without further research, as only three authors have been examined here. However, due to the presence of communist imagery, along with the clear influence
of social, contemporary issues within the texts, the inference can be drawn that the differences found during this research are due to 1950s American concerns with communism and socialism.

Whether this is the case across the board with American Literature as a whole would, as stated, require further research. This could be in the form of examination of more works by each author from an earlier or later time than discussed, to form a comparison with the study described here. Also, looking at other writers from the same decade would shed light on the situation in a way not looked at in this thesis. It would also be interesting to look at the film industry, as this was the most fervently persecuted of the arts; the changes to film and the behaviour of actors would go some way towards describing the effects of anticommunism on this art form. Finally, examining genres may also be significant, as Matheson's writing took its place within the horror genre during the 1950s. Looking at other horror writers to see if their own work developed in the same way would show whether Matheson was alone in making these changes or whether the genre developed alongside him. If other genres, such as romance, action or science fiction, also changed in the same ways, this would potentially strengthen the argument for anticommunism's effect on the literary world.

Without further research, it is still possible to claim that anticommunism, Joseph McCarthy and the HUAC all had their effect on the writings of Langston Hughes, Arthur Miller and Richard Matheson, with the fear and confusion in the air at the time of their writing infusing into their works and bringing a darker, more paranoid edge to their writings. The hypotheses stated at the beginning of the thesis are mostly supported by this research, and can only be strengthened by further research in the areas suggested.
Appendix

The Poems: 1941-1950

"Big Buddy" - from Jim Crow's Last Stand, 1943 (91)

   Big Buddy, Big Buddy
Ain’t you gonna stand by me?
   Big Buddy, Big Buddy,
Ain’t you gonna stand by me?
   If I got to fight,
   I’ll fight like a man
   But say, Big Buddy.
   Won’t you lend a hand?
   Ain’t you gonna stand by me?

   Big Buddy, Big Buddy
Don’t you hear this hammer ring?
   Hey, Big Buddy,
Don’t you hear this hammer ring?
   I’m gonna split this rock
   And split it wide!
   When I split this rock,
   Stand by my side.
   Say, Big Buddy,
   Don’t you hear this hammer ring?

"Good Morning, Stalingrad" - from Jim Crow's Last Stand, 1943 (96-97)

Goodmorning, Stalingrad!
Lots of folks who don't like you
Had given you up for dead.
But you ain't dead!

Goodmorning, Stalingrad!
Where I live down in Dixie
This is bad -
But they're not so bad
I still can't say,
Goodmorning, Stalingrad!
And I'm not so dumb
I still don't know
That as long as your red star
Lights the sky,
We won't die.
Goodmorning, Stalingrad!
You're half a world away or more
But when your guns roar,
They roar for me-
And for everybody
Who wants to be free.

Goodmorning, Stalingrad!
Some folks try to tell me down this way
That you're our ally just for today.
That may be so- for those who want it so,
But as for me- you're my ally
Until we all are free.

Goodmorning Stalingrad!
When crooks and klansmen
Lift their heads and things is bad,
I can look way across the sea
And see where simple working folks like me
Lift their heads, too, with gun in hand
To drive the fascists from the land.
You've stood between us well,
Stalingrad!
The folks who hate you'd
Done give you up for dead-
They were glad.

But you ain't dead!

And you won't be
As long as I am you
And you are me-
For you have allies everywhere,
All over the world, who care.
And they
Are with you more
Than just today.

Listen! I don't own no radio-
Can't send no messages through the air.
But I reckon you can hear me,
Anyhow, away off there.
And I know you know
I mean it when I say,
(Maybe in a whisper
To keep the Klan away)
Goodmorning, Stalingrad!

"When the Armies Passed" from *Fields of Wonder, 1947* (150)

Mama, I found this soldier's cap
Lying in the snow.
It has a red star on it.
Whose is it, do you know?

*I do not know
Whose cap it is, son,
All stained
With wet and mud.*

But it has a red star on it!

*Are you sure
It is not blood?*

I thought I saw red stars, mother,
Scattered all over the snow.
But if they were blood, mother-
Whose?

*Son, I do not know.
It might have been
Your father's blood,
Perhaps blood
Of your brother.*

See! When you wipe the mud away,
It *is* a red star, mother!

*The Poems: 1951-1967*

"Ballad of the Landlord" from *Montage of a Dream Deferred, "Dig and Be Dug" section, 1951* (43-44)

Landlord, landlord,
My roof has sprung a leak.
Don't you 'member I told you about it
Way last week?

Landlord, landlord,
These steps is broken down.
When you come up yourself
It's a wonder you don't fall down.
Ten Bucks you say I owe you?
Ten Bucks you say is due?
Well, that’s Ten Bucks more’n I’ll pay you
Till you fix this house up new.

What? You gonna get eviction orders?
You gonna cut off my heat?
You gonna take my furniture and
Throw it in the street?

Um-huh! You talking high and mighty.
Talk on- till you get through.
You ain’t gonna be able to say a word
If I land my fist on you.

Police! Police!
Come and get this man!
He’s trying to ruin the government
And overturn the land!

Copper’s whistle!
Patrol bell!
Arrest.

Precinct Station.
Iron cell.
Headlines in press:

MAN THREATENS LANDLORD
---
TENANT HELD NO BAIL
---
JUDGE GIVES NEGRO 90 DAYS IN COUNTY JAIL

"Sliver" from Montage of a Dream Deferred, "Dream Deferred" section, 1951 (72)

Cheap little rhymes,
A cheap little tune
Are sometimes as dangerous
As a sliver of the moon.

A cheap little tune
To cheap little rhymes
Can cut a man’s
Throat sometimes.

"Militant" from *The Panther and the Lash*, "The Bible Belt" section, 1967 (156)

Let all who will
Eat quietly the bread of shame.
I cannot,
Without complaining loud and long,
Tasting its bitterness in my throat,
And feeling to my very soul
It's wrong.
For honest work
You proffer me poor pay,
For honest dreams
Your spit is in my face,
And so my fist is clenched
Today-
To strike your face.
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