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Gregorio, Katharine. *The Double Life of Katharine Clark: The Untold Story of the Fearless Journalist Who Risked Her Life for Truth and Justice*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2022, 384 pp., \$16.99 (Paperback). Reviewed by Ecaterina Stepaniuc, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, estepaniuc@ncat.edu.

A pen can become more powerful than a weapon is a dominant theme in Katharine Gregorio's new book, *The Double Life of Katharine Clark*. The book tells an inspiring story of courage, truth, and the high price one needs to pay for freedom. It presents the great sacrifices two people have made to bring the truth about Communism in post-war Europe to the West.

Katharine Clark is a passionate wire-reporter who puts her job above family, prestige, and her own life. In her great desire to tell the truth, she is willing to report from some of the most dangerous places behind the Iron Curtain – a time filled with revolutions and great danger.

Milovan Djilas – a high-ranking Communist leader, former vice-president of Yugoslavia, and acquaintance of Stalin – challenges the political system he wholeheartedly believed in when he publicly criticizes the practices of the Communist regime in several newspaper articles. This decision costs him his titles, his family, and most of all his freedom. The meeting of these two people, an American reporter and a Communist Serbian, take a dangerous route when Milovan experiences a complete change of mind. During an interview with Katharine, he comes to realize that he's not a Communist anymore. His seven words of confession, "Well, I guess I no longer am [a Communist]," (122) marks the beginning of Milovan's sacrifices and Katharine's double life.

Throughout the book, the author, who is also Katharine's niece, does a fantastic job at providing enough context and detail to take you to Communist Yugoslavia and other Communist countries during post-war Europe. The material is organized in a logical sequence with every chapter providing the month, year, and city Katharine is reporting from. The

strength of the book relies on the variety of primary and secondary sources the author uses in the storytelling process by adding meaning, depth, and credibility to every page you read. As someone that was born in the Soviet Union, and later raised in a post-Soviet Republic, I was taken aback by the author's descriptions of Communism. The long lines of people at grocery stores waiting to buy food, the extremely modest and poor house conditions, and people's willingness to become free perfectly aligns with my childhood memories. As a former journalist, I found myself cheering for Katharine's courage to stand up for herself and tell the truth, "Katharine could use her weapon—her pen—and convince others to do so as well" (261).

Her commitment to telling Milovan's story inspired me to be willing to do the same. We live in a world that is so afraid to speak the truth, that we've almost lost our compass of who we are and what we stand for. This wasn't the case with Katharine. She spoke her mind and wasn't ashamed to stand for the truth even if that meant putting her life in danger while smuggling Milovan's manuscripts outside of Yugoslavia. She didn't do it for praise, confirmation, or recognition. To her, it was far more important to help her friend tell his story, tell the world about the atrocities experienced by people under Communist regimes, and finally, believe that truth will prevail.

The book's significance is tremendous because it plants a seed of hope that reporters and media professionals, in general, would be willing to follow Katharine's steps and take on the watchdog function in society. People deserve to know the truth. They should learn of the government's failures even when the price is high. The purpose of the book is to confirm that for the truth to prevail, good people need to act. Truth doesn't get lost, sooner or later it comes

to light. Milovan discovered the truth in the chaos of Communist lies. “They did not know the new Milovan—the repentant one who had taken on Stalin, Tito, and Communism itself with his pen” (306). After Milovan received a new mind, he took on the responsibility to help others see the truth for themselves. He did so through his writings and told the world the truth about Communism.

The book would serve as an incredible resource for any journalism class (300-level and above), including graduate courses that focus on reporting, ethics, and storytelling. Media history classes that cover Eastern Europe and the Cold War era would greatly benefit from reading it. And finally, for anyone that has ever shown any interest in Communism believing that it is the solution to social

issues, reading this book might help put things into perspective.

A criticism of a book like this is that the Cold War era ended, and Yugoslavia is a country that no longer exists; as such, Milovan’s story becomes insignificant. However, we need only to turn on the news and look at today’s world. The constant fight for power between the west and the east, tyranny of the powerful, poverty, and manipulative ideologies are as real today as they were 70 years ago. Milovan Djilas was sentenced to prison for his beliefs in 1956. Alexei Navalny was jailed for criticizing Vladimir Putin in 2021. Russia attacked Ukraine in 2022. This book comes at a perfect time for our world to do better. Katharine’s and Milovan’s stories give us hope in matters of truth and justice.