

Chayefsky, Paddy (1923-1981)

Encyclopedia Article

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Chayefsky, Paddy (1923-1981)

Distinguished playwright, novelist, and screenwriter Paddy (born Sidney) Chayefsky was a major force in the flowering of post-World War II television drama, sympathetically chronicling the lives and problems of ordinary people. His most famous piece of this period is *Marty*, about the love affair between two homely people, which became an Oscar-winning film in 1955. Bronx-born and college educated, he attempted a career as a stand-up comic before military service, and began writing when wounded out of the army. The most acclaimed of his Broadway plays is *The Tenth Man* (1959), drawing on Jewish mythology, but he found his wider audience through Hollywood, notably with original screenplays for *The Hospital* (1971) and *Network* (1976), both of which won him Academy Awards and revealed that he had broadened his scope into angry satire. He controversially withdrew his name from the 1980 film of his novel *Altered States* (1978), which he had adapted himself, and died a year later.

Further Reading:

Considine, Shaun. *Mad as Hell: The Life and Work of Paddy Chayefsky*. New York, Random House, 1994.