

# Ten Years As An Undercover Nazi

Gareth Henry

a review of

*Codename Arthur: The true story of the anti-fascist spy who identified the London nailbomber* by Nick Lowles. Partisan Books 2021

*Codename Arthur* is both a tribute to “Arthur,” an anti-fascist spy who spent a staggering 10 years undercover in the nascent far-right British National Party (BNP) during the 1990s and 2000s, facing the constant threat of exposure.

The book is an unwavering account of the far-right’s hateful, divisive and often farcical bid for electoral legitimacy in mainstream British politics.

It reads like a dossier of short intelligence briefings that Arthur fed back to Nick Lowles, then editor of the anti-fascist magazine, *Searchlight* and now director of the anti-fascist advocacy group, Hope not Hate.

It is a recounting of how Arthur helped the anti-fascist movement confront, harass and undermine far-right activism by sowing misinformation, creating paranoia, and nourishing internal power struggles.

A significant subplot to the book is Arthur’s identification of the London nail-bomber, 22-year-old David Copeland, who spread fear among London’s Black and LBQT communities with a series of bombings in 1999, killing three and maiming more than 200, including a two-year old girl with a three-inch nail in her skull.

Arthur was interviewed for this in the 2021 Netflix documentary, *Nail Bomber: Manhunt*.

Despite the litany of unsavory characters gracing the pages, there is a sense of inner conflict from Arthur who struggles with his disgust for far-right activists, notably the outright Nazi thugs, while nevertheless forming strong friendships with others.

Yet despite 10 undercover years in the BNP, Arthur doesn’t see himself as a hero but he ought to.

Gareth Henry lives in England.



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