

*The Sons of Westwood: John Wooden, UCLA, and the Dynasty That Changed College Basketball*

By John Matthew Smith

(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013. Pp. 334. Illustrations, notes, index. Clothbound, \$90.00; paperbound, \$24.95.)

For good reason, historians revel in examining periods rife with clashes of cultural values, clashes that can stem from differences in generations, regions, religion, politics, and race. In the case of John Wooden and the basketball dynasty he built at UCLA from 1948 to 1975, all of those factors resulted in on- and off-the-court disagreements between coach and athletes. Significantly, the disagreements never hindered the team's success, and almost forty years since he coached his last game, Wooden remains a popular figure.

John Matthew Smith cautions that "in the popular culture, adulators have constructed a sanitized version of UCLA's past," a narrative that excludes any reference to blemishes—including Wooden's reluctance to banish booster-bandit Sam Gilbert from the UCLA program—in an effort to mythologize the coach as the "Wizard of Westwood." Smith has, instead, produced a thoroughly researched history that examines not only Wooden, his Depression-era values, and his often fabricated image, but the reactions of his players and some of his critics. Smith quotes journalist Herbert Warren Wind: "He is an anachronism, John Wooden—an island of James Whitcomb Riley in a sea of Ken Kesey, the Grateful Dead, Terry Southern, and Jerry Rubin" (p. 158).

To that stormy sea of American culture in the late-sixties and mid-seventies, Smith adds the stories of some of Wooden's most accomplished players, notably Lew Alcindor (now Kareem Abdul-Jabbar), Bill Walton, and Wooden's first great African American player Walt Hazzard, a young man who left the ghetto of West Philadelphia for what he believed was the racial paradise of UCLA and Southern California. While Alcindor's difficulties with his coach came from his own growing racial awareness and Walton's came from his opposition to the Vietnam War, Hazzard's objections were more fundamental to the style of basketball Wooden favored: "The Hoosier coach held steadfast to... a philosophy founded on simplicity and structure. The Philadelphian brought an urban East Coast ethos to the West Coast, a style shaped by his experiences competing in playground pickup games" (p. 34).

Smith's account of Wooden and his tenure at UCLA offers no information that would strike sport and cultural historians as especially new, but the author has succeeded in interweaving Wooden's story with those of his players, and that narrative style reveals some of the thorniest and most destructive issues of a turbulent period in American culture. That Smith ably illustrates these issues within the con-

text of the most successful program in American intercollegiate sports is a noteworthy accomplishment.

Any review of *The Sons of Westwood* would be incomplete if it failed to praise Smith's writing style. The book is interesting and readable largely because of the writer's voice. Smith begins his first chapter by adopting Wooden's point of view as he struggled to negotiate the alien Los

Angeles freeway traffic in 1948, the year he left Indiana for UCLA: "John Wooden wanted to turn around, but it was too late. Indiana was long gone in his rearview mirror" (p. 1). Two short sentences that effectively say it all. The rest is historical exegesis and a great read.

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### *Detroit's Cold War: The Origins of Postwar Conservatism*

By Colleen Doody

(Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2013. Pp. 192. Illustrations, notes, works cited, index. \$50.00.)

More than twenty years after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, few people beyond historians and other scholars remember the intensity of the Cold War. However, its influence is still felt today whenever political conservatives rail against liberals and denounce civil rights initiatives and unions as un-American, anti-freedom, and socialistic. Colleen Doody's *Detroit's Cold War: The Origins of Postwar Conservatism* is a brief but well-researched book that explores the origins of modern conservatism in the United States, and largely debunks the long-held notion that Americans emerged from the New Deal and World War II with a liberal consensus regarding the political economy and society at-large.

Doody uses Detroit, the industrial powerhouse of the nation for most of

the mid-to late twentieth century, as a case study for her inquiry. Union membership peaked during the 1940s and 1950s, and the American Midwest was clearly the world's industrial heartland. Many industrial cities in Indiana and Ohio were immersed in the same political forces as Detroit during this era, but the latter city was the capital of the American labor movement and the fourth largest urban center in the U.S., with a large, growing African American population and an active civil rights movement. During these years, the author argues, the key elements of the modern conservative ethos coalesced: antipathy toward centralized "Big Government"; an embrace of religious conservatism, especially among the city's large Catholic population; a celebration of laissez-faire capitalism; and militant anti-Communism.