

Philadelphia Divided: Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love. By JAMES WOLFINGER. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. 336 pp. Illustrations, tables, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95.)

James Wolfinger's *Philadelphia Divided* provides an in-depth analysis of the lives and politics of Philadelphia's various racial and ethnic groups between the 1930s and 1950s. He argues that, during this period, several political trends mitigated attempts to effect racial solidarity and damaged liberalism in Philadelphia. These issues were a more assertive black politics that drew African Americans closer to the Democratic Party, a right-wing drift among some members of Philadelphia's white population, and the Republicans' use of the "race card." Tensions also revolved around job competition and housing, international politics, the transit strike, and the segregation caused by the growing suburbanization outside of Philadelphia. Wolfinger's book also provides a plausible explanation for the early rise of modern conservatism and the decline of New Deal liberalism in cities like Philadelphia.

Wolfinger examines the actions of Philadelphia's black organizations, including the National Negro Congress (NNC). As such, the author depicts how well-organized and knowledgeable African Americans leaders—men like Arthur Huff Fauset—focused on Philadelphia politics and harnessed the potential political power of blacks. Indeed, Wolfinger describes Fauset as a man who also understood the commonality that white and black workers shared if they could only overcome the race issue. At times, Fauset and a resurgent NAACP led by Carolyn Davenport Moore were able to build viable interracial coalitions with the Congress of Industrial Unions (CIO), Jewish groups, and Catholics to target egregious civil rights violations. However, racism and segregation always lurked beneath the surface (70–77). Ultimately, white political demagogues used racial rhetoric to maintain political power, which, coupled with an anti-Communist hysteria, doomed the NNC and depicted black civil rights as being anti-American.

Wolfinger's most important contribution with this study is his clear delineation of how Republican mayor Bernard Samuel used the GOP's modern-day "racial coded" language to defeat Democratic challenger William Bullitt in 1943. Terms such as big government, tax-and-spend Democrats (people who took money from working-class whites to aid African American social programs), and supporting reverse racism make a clear link to Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan, the fathers of modern conservatism, and to Mayor Frank Rizzo. This marriage between the northern white working class and white southern Dixiecrats would serve to create the modern Republican Party (5, 107–12, and 242–47). When one considers FDR's intervention in Philadelphia's transit strike, which ended federal support of white privilege in the transit company's occupational hierarchy, the reader can clearly understand why many whites turned

against the New Deal as soon as they received their own personal benefits.

One weakness in Wolfinger's book is that it insinuates that African Americans' sole desire was to integrate with whites. Yet, evidence suggests otherwise. Some African Americans who sought equal opportunities were not so enthusiastic about being integrated with whites. In fact, some African Americans in Philadelphia were so embittered by racism that they preferred to deal with whites as little as possible. Some of these African Americans exhibited a strong dose of racial chauvinism. Arthur Huff Fauset's study, *Black Gods of the Metropolis: Negro Religious Cults of the Urban North* (1944), identifies several of these groups.

Nevertheless, Wolfinger makes many important observations. He points out that unions were not always havens of racial inclusion, and he identifies liberalism's limitations. Moreover, he notes that the postwar African American responses to racism were not monolithic and that the old "civil rights south" paradigm is inadequate. For these reasons, Wolfinger's book should be praised.

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Sweet William: The Life of Billy Conn. By ANDREW O'TOOLE. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008. xi, 376 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.95.)

Sweet William is a masterful biography of Billy Conn, whose greatest fight was a loss to Joe Louis in a heavyweight championship bout in June 1941. According to Andrew O'Toole, Conn saw boxing as a way to escape working in the Pittsburgh-area factories; seeing his father (whom O'Toole and Conn referred to as "Westinghouse" because of his employment) come home worn out every night encouraged "Sweet William" to find another way to support his family. Key to Conn's success in the ring, according to the author, were trainer Harry Pitler (who went by the name Johnny Ray because Irish fighters were better draws than Jewish ones), promoter "Uncle Mike" Jacobs, and manager Milt Jaffe.

The pride of the Pittsburgh neighborhood of East Liberty, Conn was one of many prizefighters—including Teddy Yarosz and Fritz Zivic—who emerged in the early to mid-1900s from western Pennsylvania and contended for titles. O'Toole explains that Conn was a formidable opponent who nearly defeated Joe Louis in 1941 but never again reached the same level of success. This loss to Louis both defined Conn's career and caused him persistently to believe that he could beat the Brown Bomber, even though he failed to do so in two subsequent rematches. The resounding defeat in the 1946 rematch, in fact, was so disastrous that Conn retired for several years—partly out of embarrassment for his performance in the championship bout. O'Toole does not explicitly state it, but the