

SAMPSON, CURT. *The Masters: Golf, Money, and Power in Augusta, Georgia*. New York: Villard, 1998. Pp. xxxiv + 263. Bibliography, index. \$25 cb.

With this publication, Curt Sampson offers a peek behind the door of secrecy at Augusta National Golf Course—one very private golf club that became the male retreat for global capitalists and Wall Street wizards of the mid-twentieth century. While Sampson nicely details layers of human ugliness hidden behind an obsessed addiction to surface beauty, this work also contains much satisfying lightness.

The Masters will appeal mostly to a golf audience that understands the subtleties of birdies and bogies, but it also has potential to serve as a beginning primer for those looking at the evil of silence in golf institutions claiming to support democracy in corporate sub-culture, such as those corporations supporting anti-democratic practices inherent in a new form of global capitalism (e.g., Nike in Indonesia and Rawlings in Central America). *The Masters* fails to escape from behind the walls of Augusta—thus, its narrow focus fails to sufficiently analyze the real power of corporate media and other global octopi that manufacture consent, overdone celebrity, and unelected power. This book may cause a few socially conscious ripples in the world of golf as corporate sub-culture, but it remains to be seen if Sampson's "dream wish" in the final chapter leads to any "communion" (242).

In the first chapter, famous sportswriter and original Augusta National member Grantland Rice (*The Tumult and the Shouting*, 1954) shows up for a few conspiratorial roles in the early Masters story, but Sampson's work primarily revolves around the cold heart and dictatorial nature of Augusta National's founder Charles de Clifford (Cliff) Roberts Jr. In 1932, Roberts decided to join with globally admired golfing great Bobby Jones in creating a private golf club for themselves and select friends during winter. Before and after WWII, Roberts and Jones continue to invite powerful friends like Coca Colas Robert Woodruff, and later Dwight Eisenhower (whom Roberts charms), eventually forming a "gang" of unelected advisors giving Ike biased political input and illegal financial help.

Sampson's description of Roberts' suicide in 1977 on the grounds of Augusta National, and the suicide of a local Augustan in 1997, provide the kind of media copy which the secretive Augusta National abhors—it discourages publicity of *any* kind, except good things said about the Masters tournament held every April since 1934. These two significant suicides and other devices are used to capture the aloof, coldhearted nature of this rigid and humorless club. Within the historical narrative, we find the master-slave dynamic, implied misogyny, dislike for children, and other power relationships Roberts develops with CBS TV producers, announcers, the national press, corporate sponsors, and players. In his will, Roberts left the bulk of \$100 million to various Ike charities and to Planned Parenthood, with small change for intimates and National associates. He "believed that overpopulation would be the death of us all" (xxi).

Since the book lacks footnotes, scholars should know that Sampson drew from an 876-page transcript of comments Roberts made for the Eisenhower Oral History Project at Columbia University. This transcript provides data mostly about his private relationship with President Eisenhower, offering little toward the golf story. Sampson also used the Eisenhower Library at Abilene, Kansas; however, we are forced to guess which letters

and quotes come from which collection. Since the National withholds its archives from writers, interviews with National members refusing to be identified provide other access to Roberts and Jones' letters contained in newsletters and annual reports since, "everybody's afraid to say anything at all critical for fear they won't be asked back" (187).

Roberts, a multi-millionaire stockbroker/investment banker from New York City, was the man Jones needed to create the National and the Master's; their partnership provided the formula of an "iron fist in a velvet glove" (9) that would make the Master's the perfectly packaged TV event after CBS began exclusive coverage in 1959. Roberts was the executioner, Jones the well-liked amateur gentleman. Roberts controlled nearly every decision CBS made, including firing of announcers using descriptions not to his liking, such as "mob" for excited galleries and "bikini wax" for fast greens. CBS producer Frank Chirkinian stated that "[w]ith autocratic rule, there is no confusion. I became autocratic running the golf coverage. I had to because that's really the only sensible way to do things."

Interviews with Augusta's surviving African American caddies and club managers echo the Roberts personality found in transcripts and letters. In a 1958 letter to Ike from Europe, Roberts admires Mussolini's buildings, saying that "No one but a dictator could have done such a fine job" (152). Although a history of Augusta the city is contained within, Sampson uses it mainly to magnify the clubs dynamics. Augusta's most famous citizen, Godfather of Soul James Brown, participated in the evening entertainment: a downtown boxing match arranged by Roberts' loved and respected black assistant Bowman Milligan. After the main events came the Battle Royal: "Six blindfolded black boys... recruited from... Augusta's Negro territory... are shoved into the ring... one hand is tied behind... to prevent any defensive jabbing... throwing haymakers... they hit air, ring ropes, ring posts and each other. Last one standing wins" (43-44). Brown would "be out there stumbling around, swinging wild, and hearing people *laughing*. I didn't know I was being exploited; all I knew I was getting paid a dollar and having fun" (44). More shocking to some will be the comments made by Roberts nearly eight years after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968. Referring to workers at a Coca Cola plant he co-owned with Jones in Brazil, Roberts ranked the races thus: white, black, mixed. "The mixed are the worst," he said. "They are the most worthless of all in every respect" (176).

Some of Sampson's stories conflict with details in Eubanks' *Augusta: Home of the Masters Tournament*, and therefore historians must also read other books about the Master's for context. These include Roberts's own *The Story of the Augusta National Golf Club* (1976) and Frank Christian's (National's official photographer) *Augusta National and the Masters* (1996). In Sampson's final chapter, "Communion," concerning the National's suffering trees (avoiding the larger environmental story of chemical saturation), he offers some closure to all the ugliness that has built such a beautiful monument to golf. Sampson concludes with a nicely done fantasy dream describing some discarded and harmed souls of Roberts's inquisition years at a communion service in the church where Ike and Bobby once sat in their usual pews. Castoffs banned by Roberts for such ungentlemanly behavior as hitting two balls into a practice round hole are united by passing the bread and wine to one another, while one miscreant "hands the bread and wine to Roberts, who passes it to Tiger Woods. And on and on it goes, from golfer to member to total stranger, because what we want here is not inquisition, but communion" (242). However, in Sampson's

dream wish, the most shunned black golfer—Charlie Sifford—is still not invited to partake of the bread; Sifford, still bitter at age 75 for never being invited to the Masters, does not make light of the exclusion.

Sampson's layering of Master's golf stories will satisfy those who enjoy the drama of golf, but his stop-and-start style kept me wishing he would take the dream of Earl Woods closer to communion. Tiger's father Earl asserted in the pages of *Sports Illustrated* that Tiger could now be "compared to Indian religious leader Mahatma Ghandi" (234), with the capability to change the course of humanity, but Sampson trivializes the incident as an "embarrassing crescendo" (234). Will "Tiger Ghandi" ever reach communion with Thailand, Tiger's mother's native land? Could Tiger ever be intellectually honest about a corrupt Thai military that continues to destroy jungle habitat and build golf courses for itself and land-starved golf addicts from Japan? Obviously, nothing is mentioned about Jack Nicklaus taking million-dollar-consulting fees from a corrupt military government in Thailand.

While *The Masters* is one small voice against master-slave relationships and other cruelties, its wish for communion after inquisition ignores forgiveness. If forgiveness were applied in this dream wish, Charlie Sifford could help prevent history from repeating, and no other author then need write a cruel chronicle of Sifford joyfully watching Augusta's members suffer the guillotine for blackballing poor Charlie.

The Masters is mostly smooth reading and a solid contribution to the field of sport history, but it leaves large questions of power and money unanswered. Sampson is in the business of entertainment, but dreams like his need more active and honest ingredients before reaching the historical magnitude of a Martin Luther King, Jr. or a Ghandi.

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PEPER, GEORGE, WITH ROBIN MCMILLAN AND JAMES A. FRANK, EDs. *Golf in America: The First One Hundred Years*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994. Pp. 304. Illustrated. Bibliography, index, tables. \$45.00 cb, \$25.00 pb.

Golf in America is a collection of essays written by *Golf Magazine's* distinguished staff of writers. It is a pictorial history with essays covering the origins of golf in America, the USGA, the emergence of women's golf, the growth of professional golf, the heroes of golf, golf course architecture, golf equipment, and instructional practices. The photographs themselves form a beautiful and informative narrative, illustrating not only the legends of golf, but describing the changes in technology in a way that words would fail to capture.

The "story" of golf's origin in America is well known, although its accuracy is uncertain. It is re-told again in the first chapter. According to the story, golf in America began on 22 February 1888 in Yonkers, New York, when a Scotsman named John Reid taught some of his friends to play. The first club was named St. Andrew's, not to be confused with St. Andrews, the old course in Scotland. Although it seems unlikely that no one played golf in America before 1888, the story certainly has greater validity than baseball's Doubleday myth. The members of St. Andrew's were quick to take credit and certainly provided documentation of their efforts to promote golf. Popular tales such as this one go unchal-