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Review

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Detroit's Cold War locates the roots of American conservatism in a city that was a nexus of labor and industry in postwar America. Drawing on meticulous archival research focusing on Detroit, Colleen Doody shows how conflict over business values and opposition to labor, anticommunism, racial animosity, and religion led to the development of a conservative ethos in the aftermath of World War II. Using Detroit--with its large population of African-American and Catholic immigrant workers, strong union presence, and starkly segregated urban landscape--as a case study, Doody articulates a nuanced understanding of anticommunism during the Red Scare. Looking beyond national politics, she focuses on key debates occurring at the local level among a wide variety of common citizens. In examining this city's social and political fabric, Doody illustrates that domestic anticommunism was a cohesive, multifaceted ideology that arose less from Soviet ideological incursion than from tensions within the American public.

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I found Detroit's Cold War to be an illuminating glimpse into the origins of not only modern conservatism, but modern organized labor. As a child of the post-Cold War era, communism was a thing of the past, and my entire experience with politics has been what we now consider the standard liberal vs. conservative system. To learn how recently our modern conservative party developed, and the impetus behind that ideology, was fascinating. I was completely ignorant of the influence the American communist party had on the organization and rise to power of labor unions, as well as how organized labor, civil rights, and anticommunism shaped the burgeoning conservative movement.

Ms. Doody's analysis of how anti-communism, labor relations, civil rights, and religious traditionalism impacted public opinion, served to provide a new framework for my understanding of our current political landscape.

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First-rate Modern History

By Ashley

I thoroughly enjoyed DePaul Professor Colleen Doody's "Detroit's Cold War." Using Detroit as a microcosm for the post-war era, the book examines the roots of the modern conservative movement. Doody weaves examples from labor-relations, politics, race and religion to illustrate the origins of many of our current societal conflicts, and she does so in a remarkably engaging way. She has produced a brilliant yet accessible historical work.

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Linking anticommunism to conservatism in this case study of Detroit ...

By milton tambor

Linking anticommunism to conservatism in this case study of Detroit made for an insightful analysis. I will be drawing on this material in any discussion of McCarthyism in America.

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