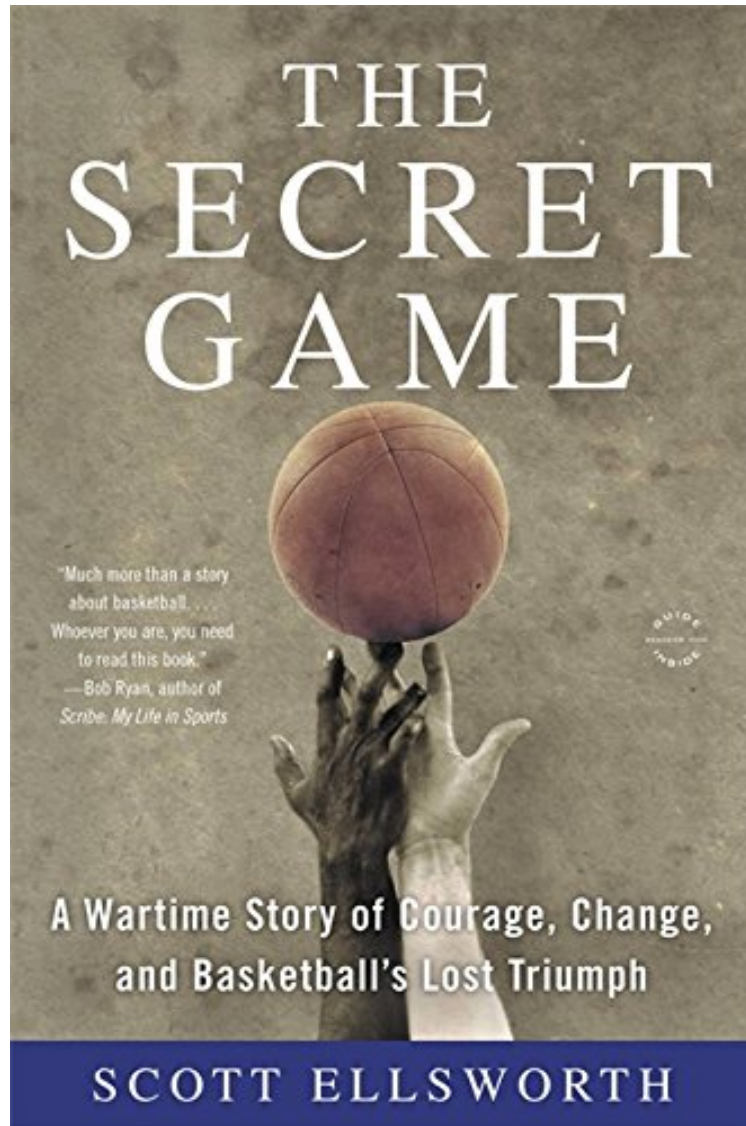


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The Secret Game: A Wartime Story of Courage, Change, and Basketball's Lost Triumph

Scott Ellsworth

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#161374 in Books Scott Ellsworth 2016-03-01 2016-03-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.38 x 1.00 x 5.50l, .0 #File Name: 0316244627400 pages The Secret Game A Wartime Story of Courage Change and Basketball s Lost Triumph | File size: 61.Mb

Scott Ellsworth : The Secret Game: A Wartime Story of Courage, Change, and Basketball's Lost Triumph before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Secret Game: A Wartime Story of Courage, Change, and Basketball's Lost Triumph:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Great Story of America By Robert Gunn This is a wonderful soy

which tells us about life in the South during the days of strict segregation and how it was overcome by two basketball teams - one from the North Carolina College for Negroes and the Duke University Medical School team. Ellsworth takes the first part of the book to introduce the characters and show us about their lives, building up to the climax of "the game". He explains the serendipity of meeting the coach and gives us a history of basketball playing during WWII. Teams were formed all over the country because, as he explained, the game requires a minimum of equipment and space. There are wonderful character sketches, introducing us to the players and to the coach, who was especially amazing. This is not a sports book - it is a human interest story and our book club (all women) enjoyed it immensely. We are fortunate to have Mr. Ellsworth live in our town (Ann Arbor) and he was able to come to our meeting. What a great time we all had! I would recommend this to people who are interested in the history of our country and the "way it was", and to some extent, still is. This would make a fine movie.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Just As Enthralling As "Boys in the Boat" By Peter Hillman Was thinking "Boys in the Boat" was a once-a-decade book, but then picked this up on strength of its just winning the PEN-ESPY award for literary sportswriting. Easy to see why it won--a remarkable, almost-forgotten story (also from the 30's/'40's), told with the highest level of craftsmanship, and a true page-turner! An eye-opener on how horrible and difficult Jim Crow was; like "Boys...", similar in the tale of humble people transcending obstacles, pulling together and achieving miracles for the time. What's more, the author engagingly traces evolution of the game of basketball itself, and paints wonderful tableaux of the game's founder and developers. Am hoping PR on this amazing book will spread and it will achieve "Boys..." readership level.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

A Well-Kept Secret By Charles Sparrow Those who are interested primarily in personalities will enjoy this book. It is more a chronicle of the effect of the African-Americans upon the game than vice-versa. An understanding of the background--teams of color did not compete on the playing floor with their white counterparts--is almost essential. Ellsworth is to be commended for his research into "the game that never happened" between medical students at Duke University and the undergraduate team from all-black North Carolina College. The author's love for the game of basketball is shown in his detailed treatment of James Naismith, its inventor. His high regard for those athletes who wanted to learn "just how good they were" is unequivocally shown in his description of the competition between the two squads on March 19, 1944. That Sunday afternoon in a locked gymnasium, two games were played. One was a refereed game won by the North Carolina College men. Later, in one of those events that defies prediction, a pick-up "shirts and skins" match materialized. Outside the locked doors, students from North Carolina College also materialized. They doubtless knew something significant was taking place. It has taken us four generations to recognize it. Scott Ellsworth has something significant to say, and he does so with compelling clarity.

Winner of the 2016 PEN/ESPN Award for Literary Sports Writing

The true story of the game that never should have happened--and of a nation on the brink of monumental change

In the fall of 1943, at the little-known North Carolina College for Negroes, Coach John McLendon was on the verge of changing basketball forever. A protégé of James Naismith, the game's inventor, McLendon taught his team to play the full-court press and run a fast break that no one could catch. His Eagles would become the highest-scoring college team in America--a basketball juggernaut that shattered its opponents by as many as sixty points per game. Yet his players faced danger whenever they traveled backcountry roads.

Across town, at Duke University, the best basketball squad on campus wasn't the Blue Devils, but an all-white military team from the Duke medical school. Composed of former college stars from across the country, the team dismantled everyone they faced, including the Duke varsity. They were prepared to take on anyone--until an audacious invitation arrived, one that was years ahead of anything the South had ever seen before. What happened next wasn't on anyone's schedule. Based on years of research, *The Secret Game* is a story of courage and determination, and of an incredible, long-buried moment in the nation's sporting past. The riveting, true account of a remarkable season, it is the story of how a group of forgotten college basketball players, aided by a pair of refugees from Nazi Germany and a group of daring student activists, not only blazed a trail for a new kind of America, but helped create one of the most meaningful moments in basketball history.

"As a member of the Duke community, I have long been aware and proud of the secret game. Now Scott Ellsworth has brought it to light. The true story behind this extraordinary, long-buried game goes beyond any one school or any one state. *The Secret Game* is a triumphant look at how basketball has broken down barriers, and helped create a new kind of America. Every citizen needs to know this story--and to know it now." --Mike Krzyzewski, head coach of Duke Men's Basketball

"There is a basketball on the cover, but this is much more than a story about basketball. Yes, there was a ground-breaking basketball game played in Durham, N.C., seven decades ago, and it is recounted in great detail by Scott Ellsworth. But what we really have here is indispensable social history. White people need to read this book. People of color need to read this book. Whoever you are, you need to read this book." --Bob Ryan, Boston Globe, ESPN, author of *Scribe: My Life in Sports*

"A powerful book that is a page-turner from start to finish.... Ellsworth has written an important book that should appeal to people of all colors." --Bob D'Angelo, Tampa Tribune

"A fascinating new work of cultural and sports history.... Through a mixture of oral history and archival research, Ellsworth captures

the rich human details of a whole generation of largely forgotten basketball players."?Nick Romeo, Boston Globe"It would be difficult, if not impossible, for me to overstate my admiration for Scott Ellsworth's magnificent *The Secret Game*. It's a book about race, a book about the South, a book about America, a book about the '40s, a book about change as well as how things remain the same. This is one of the smartest and most eloquent books I've come across in a long time. A masterpiece."?Steve Yarbrough, author of *The Realm of Last Chances*"A historian with the soul of a poet, Ellsworth offers a remarkably nuanced, vibrant, and eloquent account of life in the South during WWII, and his portraits of the principal players in this secret drama are multitextured and complex."?Wes Lukowsky, Booklist (starred review)"Ellsworth has unearthed a brave moment in basketball, forgotten to history, which resonates far beyond the court."?Billy Heller, New York Post"Scott Ellsworth has unearthed the facts of this little-known but hugely important moment. His research is as overwhelming as his story-telling style is accessible and engaging. If you love basketball, truly love the game and all that it means in terms of this country and its civil rights history, you'll want to read and reread *The Secret Game*."?Roland Lazenby, author of *Michael Jordan: The Life*"Ellsworth skillfully puts this story in the context of World War II, which forced this country to face -- albeit slowly -- its unjust treatment of those who also spilled blood to protect American democracy. He lets us know what happened to each of the players after the secret game -- their lives and their triumph no longer lost or forgotten."?Cliff Bellamy, The Herald Sun"Riveting."?Kevin Nance, Chicago Tribune"Amazing."?Robert Gray, Shelf Awareness"Beautifully paced, its eloquence cloaked within a common touch."?Jeff Calder, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution"A compelling story about basketball, race and transformation...."?"D.G. Martin, Winston-Salem Journal"[*The Secret Game*] should be read by anyone with an interest in basketball history, or American sports history. Or maybe even American history for that matter."?Bill Reynolds, Providence Journal"Ellsworth tells their story in the vein of *Seabiscuit* and *The Boys in the Boat*.... He reminds us who heroes are and what they can be."?Daniel Solzman, The Kentucky Democrat"Ellsworth chronicles a groundbreaking matchup....He weaves 50 years of story lines...[and] the takeaway is the unimaginable bravery of both teams."?Lisa Sorg, Indy Week"Mesmerizing.... An elegant, deeply talented writer."?Jennifer Conlin, frequent contributor to the New York Times"Engrossing..."?Chris Skaugset, The Daily News"A riveting, little-known story reminding readers of a rising generation of risk-takers who fought against Jim Crow laws and ushered in the Civil Rights Movement."?Genesis Jackson, Duke Today

About the Author Scott Ellsworth has written about American history for the New York Times, the Washington Post, and the Los Angeles Times. Formerly a historian at the Smithsonian Institution, he is the author of *Death in a Promised Land*, a groundbreaking account of the 1921 Tulsa race riot. He lives with his wife and twin sons in Ann Arbor, where he teaches at the University of Michigan.