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To Hate Like This Is To Be Happy Forever: A Thoroughly Obsessive, Intermittently Uplifting, And Occasionally Unbiased Account Of The Duke-North Carolina Basketball Rivalry



Synopsis

A thoroughly obsessive, intermittently uplifting, and occasionally unbiased account of the Duke–North Carolina basketball rivalry

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Customer Reviews

[Signature]Reviewed by Sara NelsonFor a reviewer who's not all that clear on the difference between basketball and basket weaving, this book is a revelation. Former Esquire editor Blythe's debut is an examination of the rivalry between the University of North Carolina and Duke University college teams; in it, he interviews and profiles players and coaches, and even gives play-by-plays of key games. And yet, it is not "just" a sports book. At heart it's a memoir. Like Pat Conroy's *My Losing Season* and even Frederick Exley's *A Fan's Notes*, to which the author Anthony Wofford compares it, *To Hate Like This* is about family and passion and people and parents and aging and, oh, yeah, some sports, too. Blythe is a native North Carolinian whose UNC passion was bred in the bone; he and his siblings were raised to be genteel and polite about all things, except while watching basketball games, particularly against arch-rival Duke. After living in New York for many years, Blythe returns home as his father is dying and reflects on the passion that has shaped him and, he suggests, his region. Forget the Mason Dixon line, the real division in this border war is between Carolinians who support the Blue Devils and those who live for the Tarheels. Sports fans can expect to enjoy the accounts of particular pivotal games recounted here, but the real revelations for the relatively uninitiated are Blythe's portraits of his characters: the tough-guy coaches like Mike Krzyzewski and Dean Smith, one of whom nearly breaks down confessing that he's still in love with

his ex-wife; the nurse tending Blythe's dying father; and, most of all, the father himself, the kind of personality you expect to meet in great southern novels from Harper Lee to Pat Conroy. To call *To Hate Like This* a sports book is to be only about one-third right. An elegy to place and time and generation, it is also a story of fathers and sons and an elegant testament to the way pastimes are far more than ways to pass the time. (Mar. 1) Sara Nelson is the editor-in-chief of *Publishers Weekly*. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

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You don't have to be a Tar Heel or Blue Devil to like [THLT], because it's funny, perceptive, and smart. (Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post*) An exceptionally entertaining parable in defense of good, healthy, all-American loathing.... an animosity the whole family can share. (New York Post) The best book about politics I've read since *All the King's Men* ... it's about basketball [like] *Moby Dick* is about whaling. (Hartford Courant) "A revelation.... an elegant testament to the way pastimes are far more than ways to pass the time." (Publishers Weekly (signature review)) "The kind of sportswriting that comes along so rarely you can count the classics on one hand . . . read this book." (Play (New York Times Magazine sports supplement)) "Blythe seduces with his story of Southern identity...passed down from fathers to their roaming sons...raucous, tender, and fierce." (Adrian Nicole LeBlanc, author of "Random Family") "The best book on basketball I have ever read ... destined to become a classic of sports literature." (Pat Conroy) "Not since Exley's *A Fan's Notes* has anyone produced such a graceful and elegiac evocation of place, family, and sport." (Anthony Swofford, author of *Jarhead*) Goes far beyond the facile John Feinstein "inside a season" formula ... [Blythe] writes amusingly, self-deprecatingly and often beautifully. (New York Times Book Review) Blythe writes like a wizard ... Even if college basketball isn't your obsession, you'll get caught up in this. (Elle) Hilarious and remarkably wise ... you don't want to say too much about [this book], for fear of spoiling the surprises. (Sports Illustrated) Blythe makes you want to scream from the sidelines... while his hate is contagious, the obvious affection behind it remains. (New York Post) Blythe brings great wit, style, and insight... a long-awaited American answer to *Fever Pitch*. (Baltimore Sun) The best book about loving a team since "A Fan's Notes" ... [a book] about a lot more than basketball. (Greensboro News & Record)

Being a Tar Heel Graduate I Couldn't Be Any Happier than The University of North Carolina's 2017

National Championship, Our 6th !! Two More than Dook, Thank God ! Just Remember, If God Wasn't a Tar Heel, then Why Is The Sky Carolina Blue !! The Book Title Says Enough ! It's a Religion to Hate Dook, especially If You've Experienced the Special Feeling of Being There---This Book Brings Back and Enlightens the Experience of The Greatest Rivalry in College Basketball !! To Be Happy Forever, GOOO TARRR HEEELS !!! Joe

I've put off reading the last few pages of this book until tonight because I didn't want it to be over. Many readers, not just those who are basketball fanatics, will enjoy this book. It goes far deeper than basketball- it's about connection to one's family and home. I am not surprised that Nancy Pearl, librarian extraordinaire, author of "Book Lust," and book reviewer for the Seattle NPR station, lists "To Hate Like This" as one of the ten best non-fiction books of 2006. I think Dook fans would like it too. Will Blythe has described what I thought was a very personal magic that developed between my father and me as we shared the beauty of UNC basketball--the unselfish plays, brilliant come-from-behind wins, and the genius of Dean Smith. He and I knew the tricks: if UNC was in a slump, he would light his pipe and sit in the leather chair, I would put my jinx on the opposing team's free-throw shooters. As my father was dying, I flew across the country to catch the last Carolina NCAA playoff game that we'd ever watch together. This book is funny, hauntingly touching, and well written.

Will Blythe has crafted a must read book with this one!! I laughed through it as I recognized myself in the obsessed Carolina fan self portrait Blythe paints. It simply is the best book on Carolina basketball ever written. The one on one conversations with Coach K, Coach Smith, and even Crazy Towel Guy are all must reads. Most remarkable is the way he ties family, religion, class struggles, and basketball all into one probing question ... IS IT ALRIGHT TO HATE YOUR RIVAL LIKE THIS? This is a must read for anyone seeking to understand the tribal mindset that is sports fanaticism. Those willing to laugh at themselves will enjoy it the most.

excellent !

Some of the best American nonfiction writing is about sports, and some of the best American writers are sportswriters. Even though he isn't, to the best of my knowledge, a sportswriter (strictly speaking) Will Blythe has written an absolutely brilliant book about one of the most storied and heated rivalries in college basketball: UNC vs. Duke. He has all the qualifications one needs to opine

authoritatively: he was born and raised in North Carolina, he went to school at UNC, and like most of us who did (I fit that profile myself), he's a rabid Carolina basketball fan. And while this book will be of obvious and direct interest to anyone who has spent some time on Tobacco Road--it is as authentically North Carolinian as a plate of barbecue and a glass of sweet iced tea--*any* college basketball fan, or any sports fan, really, or even anyone who appreciates the fine art of the wry personal memoir, would find "To Hate Like This..." engaging and delightful reading.

There are the proverbial lines in the sand when rivalries are discussed. This definitely was a book that if you are a North Carolina fan you will enjoy.. The Carolina-Duke is fierce for all of us on the outside, but you got an idea of what it is like in the area. One of the more interesting parts was how much the players get along between the two teams.

Disclaimer: I am a HUGE North Carolina Tar Heels fan, though I did not attend UNC and only lived in North Carolina for a year. I started this book thinking that it would be a more or less thorough examination of the North Carolina-Duke basketball rivalry (after all, the subtitle is 'A Thoroughly Obsessive, Intermittently Uplifting, and Occasionally Unbiased Account of the Duke-North Carolina Basketball Rivalry.' However, while author (and UNC fan) Will Blythe interviews several of the key players in the UNC-Duke hatefest and documents the 2004-2005 season, he does not really do much to trace the roots of the rivalry. Instead, this book is like a documentary of the 2004-2005 season for Duke and UNC, which resulted in UNC capturing its fourth national championship. The result is that recent incidents (like Shavlik Randolph's decision to go to Duke vice UNC) are overplayed while the deeper historical roots of the rivalry and the context in which the 2004-2005 season occurred with regards to the overall rivalry are downplayed. That said, if you don't mind the occasional unexplained reference to the circle of hell to which UNC fans consign Christian Laettner, this book is extremely readable and insightful, particularly when it comes to the lesser known stars at both Duke and UNC during the 04-05 campaign. Blythe clearly got extraordinary cooperation from Melvin Scott and his family, which, while it doesn't really shed any light on the rivalry, is fascinating to anyone interested in the difficulties faced by today's players. Blythe has blended together three elements to fill out the narrative structure of the basketball seasons - interviews with principals (Mike Krzyzewski, Roy Williams, Dean Smith, JJ Reddick, and others are all interviewed); accounts of some of the critical games of the season, including both Duke-UNC matchups, and the author's personal account of his history with the rivalry. This includes Blythe talking, at times for significant stretches, about his father's death, his mother's passion for the game, and other issues. If you are

not someone who likes their authors interjected into nonfiction work, you will find this to be the most disappointing part of the book, though I thought these accounts blended in rather well with the main thrust of the book. Blythe tries to place the rivalry and the importance of college basketball on some sort of larger conceptual field, not only by reiterating UNC's views on Duke (Northeastern elites who are carpetbagging to the south) and Duke's on UNC (hicks who will eventually be working for Dukies). However, most of Blythe's efforts to explain the depth of the passion for basketball in North Carolina are vague and uninteresting; Blythe's riffs on the deeper meaning of the rivalry are the most uninteresting parts of the book. The bottom line is that Blythe is an excellent author and is easy to read - I raced through *To Hate Like This* in less than 4 days. However, he has produced an unfocused book that falls somewhere between his goal (apparently to write the definitive work on Duke-UNC basketball), a memoir of the Old South, and an account of UNC's championship run. If you are a fan of UNC in particular, you will enjoy this book. However, if you are a neophyte to the insanity that is the Duke-UNC rivalry, this book will likely leave you as confused as when you started.

Well written and quite enjoyable. About family and life as well as America's top college rivalry. Maybe one can go home again?

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