

# GRAFTERS **AND** GOO GOOS

**CORRUPTION AND REFORM IN CHICAGO**



**JAMES L. MERRINER**

# Grafters And Goo Goos Corruption And Reform In Chicago

**James L. Merriner**



## **Grafters And Goo Goos Corruption And Reform In Chicago:**

Grafters and Goo Goos James L. Merriner, 2008-07-21 Chicago's reputation for corruption is the basis of local and national folklore and humor *Grafters and Goo Goos Corruption and Reform in Chicago 1833 2003* unfolds the city's notorious history of corruption and the countervailing reform struggles that largely failed to clean it up More than a regional history of crime in politics this wide ranging account of governmental malfeasances traces ongoing public corruption and reform to its nineteenth century democratic roots Former Chicago journalist James L Merriner reveals the battles between corrupt politicians and ardent reformers to be expressions of conflicting class ethnic and religious values From Chicago's earliest years in the 1830s the city welcomed dollar chasing businessmen and politicians swiftly followed by reformers who strived to clean up the attendant corruption Reformers in Chicago were called goo goos a derisive epithet short for good government types *Grafters and Goo Goos* contends a certain synergy defined the relationship between corruption and reform Politicians and reformers often behaved similarly their separate ambitions merging into a conjoined politics of interdependency wherein the line between heroes and villains grew increasingly faint The real story asserts Merriner has less to do with right against wrong than it does with the ways the cultural backgrounds of politicians and reformers steered their own agendas animating and defining each other by their opposition Drawing on original and archival research Merriner identifies constants in the struggle between corruption and reform amid a welter of changing social circumstances and customs decades of alternating war and peace hardships and prosperity Three areas of reform and resistance are identified structural reform of the political system to promote honesty and efficiency social reform to provide justice to the lower classes and moral reform to combat vice In the matter of corruption and reform the constants might be stronger than the variables writes Merriner in the Preface The players rules and scorekeepers change but not the essential game Complemented by eighteen illustrations *Grafters and Goo Goos* is rife with shocking and amusing anecdotes and peppered with the personalities of famous muckrakers bootleggers mayors and mobsters While other studies have profiled infamous Chicago corruption cases and figures such as Al Capone and Richard J Daley this is the first to provide an overview appropriate for historians and general readers alike In examining Chicago's notorious saga of corruption and reform against a backdrop of social history Merriner calls attention to our constant problems of both civic and national corruption and contributes to larger discussions about the American experiment of democratic self government

*Grafters and Goo Goos* James L. Merriner, 2014-05-14 Chicago's reputation for corruption is the basis of local and national folklore and humor *Grafters and Goo Goos Corruption and Reform in Chicago 1833 2003* unfolds the city's notorious history of corruption and the countervailing reform struggles that largely failed to clean it up More than a regional history of crime in politics this wide ranging account of governmental malfeasances traces ongoing public corruption and reform to its nineteenth century democratic roots Former Chicago journalist James L Merriner reveals the battles between corrupt politicians and ardent reformers to be expressions of conflicting class ethnic and religious

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and electoral politics to trace the gay movement's path since the 1950s in Chicago Stewart Winter stresses gay people's and African Americans shared focus on police harassment highlighting how black political leaders enabled white gays and lesbians to join an emerging liberal coalition in city hall Fixing Illinois James D. Nowlan, J. Thomas Johnson, 2014-05-30 In the 1950s thriving commerce strong leadership and geographical good fortune made Illinois one of the most envied states in the nation Today persistent problems have left it the butt of jokes and threatened it with fiscal catastrophe In Fixing Illinois James D Nowlan and J Thomas Johnson use their four decades of experience as public servants Springfield veterans and government observers to present a comprehensive program of almost one hundred specific policy ideas aimed at rescuing the state from its long list of problems including An overhaul of state pension systems that includes more reasonable benefits and raising of the retirement age among other changes Broadening of the tax base to include services and reductions in rates Raising funds with capital construction bonds to update and integrate the antiquated information systems used by state agencies Uprooting the state's entrenched culture of corruption via public financing of elections redistricting reform and revolving door prohibitions for lawmakers Pointed honest and pragmatic Fixing Illinois is a plan for effective and honest government that seeks an even nobler end restoring our faith in Illinois's institutions and reviving a sense of citizenship and state pride **Down for the Count** Andrew Gumbel, 2015-04-07 The updated edition of Steal This Vote a rollicking history of US voter suppression and fraud from Jacksonian democracy to Citizens United and beyond In Down for the Count award winning journalist Andrew Gumbel explores the tawdry history of elections in the United States From Jim Crow to Tammany Hall to the Bush v Gore Florida recount it is a chronicle of votes bought stolen suppressed lost miscounted thrown into rivers and litigated up to the Supreme Court Gumbel then uses this history to explain why America is now experiencing the biggest backslide in voting rights in more than a century First published in 2005 as Steal This Vote this thoroughly revised and updated edition reveals why America faces so much trouble running clean transparent elections And it demonstrates how the partisan battles now raging over voter IDs campaign spending and minority voting rights fit into a long largely unspoken tradition of hostility to the very notion of representative democracy Interviewing Democrats Republicans and a range of voting rights activists Gumbel offers an engaging and accessible analysis of how our democratic integrity is so often corrupted by racism money and power In an age of high stakes electoral combat billionaire backed candidacies and bottom of the barrel campaigning this book is more important than ever In a riveting and frightening account Gumbel traces election fraud in America from the 18th century to the present the issues he so winningly addresses are crucial to the future of democracy Publishers Weekly on Steal This Vote *Chicago* Dominic A. Pacyga, 2024-05-31 Chicago has been called by many names Nelson Algren declared it a City on the Make Carl Sandburg dubbed it the City of Big Shoulders Upton Sinclair christened it The Jungle while New Yorkers naturally pronounced it the Second City At last there is a book for all of us whatever we choose to call Chicago In this magisterial biography historian Dominic Pacyga traces the storied past of his

hometown from the explorations of Joliet and Marquette in 1673 to the new wave of urban pioneers today The city's great industrialists reformers and politicians and indeed the many not so great and downright notorious animate this book from Al Capone and Jane Addams to Mayor Richard J Daley and President Barack Obama But what distinguishes this book from the many others on the subject is its author's uncommon ability to illuminate the lives of Chicago's ordinary people Raised on the city's South Side and employed for a time in the stockyards Pacyga gives voice to the city's steelyard workers and kill floor operators and maps the neighborhoods distinguished not by Louis Sullivan masterworks but by bungalows and corner taverns Filled with the city's one of a kind characters and all of its defining moments Chicago A Biography is as big and boisterous as its namesake and as ambitious as the men and women who built it

**Great Chicago Beer Riot, The: How Lager Struck a Blow for Liberty** John F. Hogan & Judy E. Brady, 2015 In 1855 when Chicago's recently elected mayor Levi Boone pushed through a law forbidding the sale of alcohol on Sunday the city pushed back To the German community the move seemed a deliberate provocation from Boone's stridently anti immigrant Know Nothing Party Beer formed the centerpiece of German Sunday gatherings and robbing them of it on their only day off was a slap in the face On April 21 1855 an armed mob poured across the Clark Street Bridge and advanced on city hall The Chicago Lager Riot resulted in at least one death nineteen injuries and sixty arrests It also led to the creation of a modern police department and the political alliances that helped put Abraham Lincoln in the White House Authors Judy E Brady and John F Hogan explore the riot and its aftermath from pint glass to bully pulpit

**Culture of Corruption** Michelle Malkin, 2010-08-09 A syndicated conservative columnist and cable news commentator asserts her opinion on Barack Obama his cabinet and other members of his circle

**From Slave to State Legislator** David A Joens, 2012-01-19 This is a full length political biography of John W E Thomas 1847 1899 the first African American to serve in the Illinois General Assembly and the leading Illinois African American politician in the years after the Civil War Long forgotten by the public and historians alike Thomas led a fascinating career which included opening the first school for African Americans in Chicago serving three terms in the Illinois General Assembly successfully passing the first Civil Rights Act in Illinois and chairing two Illinois colored conventions in the 1880s In addition to his career as a politician Thomas was also a school teacher businessman attorney and real estate investor

**The Gambler King of Clark Street** Richard Lindberg, 2009-06-12 The Gambler King of Clark Street Michael C McDonald and the Rise of Chicago's Democratic Machine tells the story of a larger than life figure who fused Chicago's criminal underworld with the city's political and commercial spheres to create an urban machine built on graft bribery and intimidation In this first ever biography of McDonald author Richard C Lindberg vividly paints the life of the Democratic kingmaker against the wider backdrop of nineteenth century Chicago crime and politics Twenty five years before Al Capone's birth Michael McDonald was building the foundations of the modern Chicago Democratic machine By marshaling control of and suborning a complex web of precinct workers ward and county bosses justices of the peace police captains contractors suppliers and

spoils men the undisputed master of the gambling syndicates could elect mayoral candidates finagle key appointments for political operatives willing to carry out his mandates and coerce law enforcement and the judiciary The resulting machine was dedicated to the supremacy of the city's gambling vice and liquor rackets during the waning years of the Gilded Age McDonald was warmly welcomed into the White House by two sitting presidents who recognized him for what he was the reigning boss of Chicago In a colorful and often riotous life McDonald seemed to control everything around him everything that is except events in his personal life His first wife the fiery Mary Noonan McDonald ran off with a Catholic priest The second Dora Feldman twenty five years his junior murdered her teenaged lover in a sensational 1907 scandal that broke Mike's heart and drove him to an early grave Michael McDonald's name has long been cited in the published work of city historians members of academia and the press as the principal architect of a unified criminal enterprise that reached into the corridors of power in Chicago Cook County the state of Illinois and all the way to the Oval Office The Gambler King of Clark Street is both a major addition to Chicago's historical literature and a revealing biography of a powerful and troubled man

**The Limits of Judicialization** Sandra Botero, Daniel M. Brinks, Ezequiel A. Gonzalez-Ocantos, 2022-08-25 Utilizing case studies of seven Latin American countries this book reassesses the role of legal institutions in the politics of the region

**Chicago's Modern Mayors** Dick Simpson, Betty O'Shaughnessy, 2024-01-23 Political profiles of five mayors and their lasting impact on the city Chicago's transformation into a global city began at City Hall Dick Simpson and Betty O'Shaughnessy edit in depth analyses of the five mayors that guided the city through this transition beginning with Harold Washington's 1983 election Washington Eugene Sawyer Richard M Daley Rahm Emmanuel and Lori Lightfoot Though the respected political science sociologist and journalist contributors approach their subjects from distinct perspectives each essay addresses three essential issues how and why each mayor won the office whether the City Council of their time acted as a rubber stamp or independent body and the ways the unique qualities of each mayor's administration and accomplishments influenced their legacy Filled with expert analysis and valuable insights Chicago's Modern Mayors illuminates a time of transition and change and considers the politicians who for better and worse shaped the Chicago of today

**Chicago Transformed** Joseph Gustaitis, 2016-07-14 Taking New Heart Organized Labor and the Postwar Strikes 15 Eyes to the Future Chicago in 1919 Notes Index About the Author Back Cover [Roger C. Sullivan and the Making of the Chicago Democratic Machine, 1881-1908](#) Richard Allen Morton, 2016-07-12 Dominating the Windy City for decades the Chicago Democratic Machine has become a fixture in American political history Under Mayor Richard J Daley it acquired almost mythical perhaps notorious status Yet its origins have remained murky some say it began as a shady enterprise during the ethnic upheaval of the late 1920s Based upon new research this book offers a fresh perspective Formed through factional warfare and consolidated with methods borrowed from the business world the Machine grew out of the unfettered capitalism of the late 19th century Its principal founder and first boss Roger C Sullivan represented a generation of businessmen

politicians who emerged in the 1880s Sullivan and his allies created an informal public power structure that while serving their own interests also made government more functional The Machine is a product of America s Gilded Age and the Progressive Era and offers a lesson in the advantages and limitations of representative government      **The Man Who Emptied Death Row** James L. Merriner,2008-09-08 This biography traces Ryan s family history and the Illinois political climate that influenced his development as a politician Merriner goes beyond Ryan s life and career to explore the politics of crime highlighting the successes and failures of the criminal justice system and suggesting how both white collar fraud and violent crime shape politics A fascinating story that reveals much about the way Illinois politics works The Man Who Emptied Death Row will help determine how history will judge Illinois governor George Ryan Jacket      **The Railroad Tycoon Who Built Chicago** Jack Harpster,2009-08-28 William Butler Ogden was a pioneer railroad magnate one of the earliest founders and developers of the city of Chicago and an important influence on U S westward expansion His career as a businessman stretched from the streets of Chicago to the wilds of the Wisconsin lumber forests from the iron mines of Pennsylvania to the financial capitals in New York and beyond Jack Harpster s The Railroad Tycoon Who Built Chicago A Biography of William B Ogden is the first chronicle of one of the most notable figures in nineteenth century America Harpster traces the life of Ogden from his early experiences as a boy and young businessman in upstate New York to his migration to Chicago where he invested in land canal construction and steamboat companies He became Chicago s first mayor built the city s first railway system and suffered through the Great Chicago Fire His diverse business interests included real estate land development city planning urban transportation manufacturing beer brewing mining and banking to name a few Harpster however does not simply focus on Ogden s role as business mogul he delves into the heart and soul of the man himself The Railroad Tycoon Who Built Chicago is a meticulously researched and nuanced biography set against the backdrop of the historical and societal themes of the nineteenth century It is a sweeping story about one man s impact on the birth of commerce in America Ogden s private life proves to be as varied and interesting as his public persona and Harpster weaves the two into a colorful tapestry of a life well and usefully lived      *Sports and Politics* Frank Jacob,2020-08-24 Sport is everything but never solely sport The commodification of human pleasure in or about many sports led to an increased political interest and dimension with regard to the major leagues and their stars Corruption and scandals increased while the human being in sports was and still is very often exploited or mistreated These problems often relate to the political dimension as well Consequently it seems very promising and necessary alike to take a closer look at the interrelation of sports and politics The present volume addresses this interrelation from different angles when talking about issues like racism gender inequality or classism      *The Burning of the World* Scott W. Berg,2025-02-04 WINNER OF THE MIDLAND AUTHORS AWARD FOR HISTORY  
 LONGLISTED FOR THE ANDREW CARNEGIE MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE A NEW YORKER BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR The illuminating New Yorker story of the Great Chicago Fire a raging inferno a harrowing fight for survival and the struggle for



the soul of a city told with the clarity and tension of a well wrought military narrative Wall Street Journal In the fall of 1871 Chicagoans knew they were due for the big one a massive uncontrollable fire that would decimate the city It had been bone dry for months and a recent string of blazes had nearly outstripped the fire department's already scant resources Then on October 8 a minor fire broke out in the barn of Irishwoman Kate Leary A series of unfortunate mishaps and misunderstandings along with insufficient preparation and a high south westerly wind combined to set the stage for an unmitigated catastrophe The conflagration that spread from the Learys property quickly overtook the neighborhood and before long the floating embers had been cast to the far reaches of the city Nothing to the northeast was safe Families took to the streets with every possession they could carry Powerful gusts whipped the flames into a terrifying firestorm The Chicago River boiled Over the next forty eight hours Chicago fell victim to the largest and most destructive natural disaster the United States had yet endured The effects of the Great Fire were devastating But they were also transforming Out of the ashes faster than seemed possible rose new homes tenements hotels and civic buildings as well as a new political order The elite seized the reconstruction to crack down on vice control the disbursement of vast charitable funds and rebuild the city in their image But the city's working class recognized only a naked power grab that would challenge their traditions hurt their chances to keep their hard earned property and move power out of the hands of elected officials and into private interests As soon as the battle against the fire ended another battle for the future of the city erupted between its entrenched business establishment and its poor and immigrant laborers and shopkeepers An enrapturing account of the fire's inexorable march and an eye opening look at its aftermath The Burning of the World tells the story of one of the most infamous calamities in history and the new Chicago it precipitated a disaster that still shapes American cities to this day

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