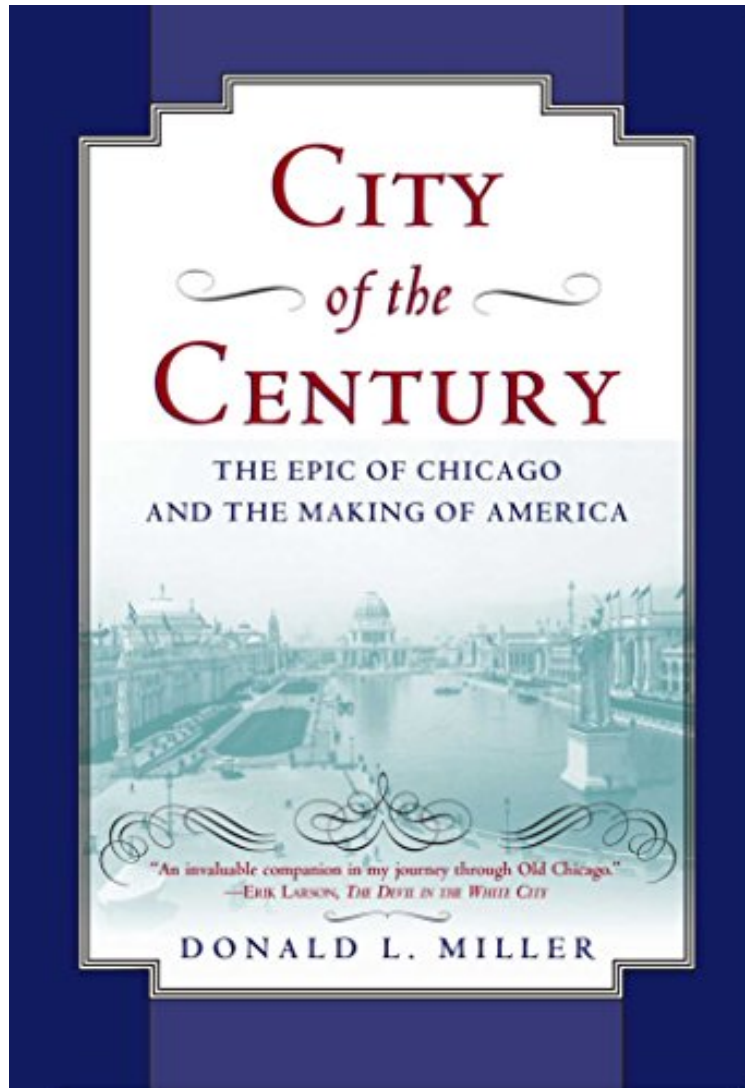


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City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America

Donald L. Miller

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Donald L. Miller : City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America:

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you can believe it will remain in my personal library as both an entertainment and reference source. What can I say about Miller other than WOW! City of the Century is a wonderfully written history of the development and trials and tribulations of nineteenth century Chicago. The good - the bad - and the ugly. The story is captivating and I found it hard to put it down. Note: after my 1st read, I bought copies for my brothers and grandchildren and they too love this book. I submit that it should be a MUST read for anyone with an interest in U.S. history since it is a story about nineteenth century Chicago as told through individual stories of Chicago business leaders, politicians and Chicago citizens. You will enjoy how the story unfolds and the influence that Chicago and its people had as the U.S. marched westward taking along the Midwest ideals, values, and attitudes. I can only say that I was NOT sorry that I bought Miller's book. You won't be sorry either! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. It ain't windy cuz of the wind! By fleeminnieme For a native Chicagoan who knows all these places and streets this is a great book. It is not a travel guide. It is history. I grew up in Indiana and knew some of Chicago's wild past, but this book really gives it perspective. From a swamp that even the Indians didn't want anything to do with to the Columbian Expo of 1893, this book is a romp. Excellent book. Well worth the read. For a great companion piece read "Devil in the White City" by Larsen. That one will have you gasping to turn to the next page. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I recommend the book to all Chicago residents who call the ... By Rudolph Lioi A very detailed history of Chicago up to the beginning of the 20th century. The author covers every part of the growth of the city, its various movers and shakers, its low life, sleaze bags and upper crust wealthy citizens. In some respects the detail is more than necessary to get the proper perspective of the events and people who shaped them but the reader can't complain that the subject was not thoroughly covered. I recommend the book to all Chicago residents who call the second city home and are interested in the city's development.

The epic of Chicago is the story of the emergence of modern America. Here, witness Chicago's growth from a desolate fur-trading post in the 1830s to one of the world's most explosively alive cities by 1900. Donald Miller's powerful narrative embraces it all: Chicago's wild beginnings, its reckless growth, its natural calamities (especially the Great Fire of 1871), its raucous politics, its empire-building businessmen, its world-transforming architecture, its rich mix of cultures, its community of young writers and journalists, and its staggering engineering projects—which included the reversal of the Chicago River and raising the entire city from prairie mud to save it from devastating cholera epidemics. The saga of Chicago's unresolved struggle between order and freedom, growth and control, capitalism and community, remains instructive for our time, as we seek ways to build and maintain cities that retain their humanity without losing their energy. City of the Century throbs with the pulse of the great city it brilliantly brings to life.

From Publishers Weekly A desolate fur-trading outpost in 1830, Chicago became, within half a century, the nation's railroad hub, livestock and packing center and a manufacturing giant. A glorious anthem to a tumultuous city, this synthesis of industrial, social and cultural history captures the raw, robust spirit of Chicago on every page. Miller, a history professor at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, peoples his big, colorful, engrossing canvas with architects Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan, railroad entrepreneur George Pullman, settlement-house workers Jane Addams and Florence Kelley, "Meat king" Philip Armour, dry-goods merchant Marshall Field, retailers Richard Sears and Alvah Roebuck, reaper inventor Cyrus McCormick, mail-order pioneer Aaron Montgomery Ward, Theodore Dreiser, Lincoln Steffens and others. Chicago—with its experience of mass transit, a regimented workforce, instant suburbs, the Americanization of diverse immigrant groups and battles between privatism and the public good—serves as a prism through which we watch the emergence of modern American life. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal No other American city experienced the growth and development, destructive natural disaster, and rebirth that Chicago did in the 19th century. The Great Fire of 1871 was potentially the end of the largest city in America's heartland, but by 1893 Chicago had rebuilt and hosted the World's Columbian Exposition. The story of that growth, loss, and reemergence is remarkable, and historian Miller (Lewis Mumford: A Life, LJ 6/1/89) has written an equally remarkable story of Chicago, what he terms an industrial history. Miller carefully develops the saga of Chicago's growth, despair, and recovery in an extraordinary text that is readable yet scholarly. In his narrative Miller tells of Chicago's historical and literary figures, reform leaders, architects, industrialists, and entrepreneurs. Several histories of the city have appeared over the years (e.g., Edward Wagenknecht's Chicago, LJ 3/15/64), yet Miller's is a model for future historians. Highly recommended for all libraries. ?Boyd Childress, Auburn Univ. Lib., Ala. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Miller set out to write a history of Chicago that "gives prominence to geography and personality," a comment marking the starting point for a certain kind of hyperbole that undergirds the rest of the narrative. Still, Miller's history is convincing and does not seem too strained. He writes about such explorers as Marquette and Joliet; the early pioneers as personified in the long, varied career of Gurdon Hubbard; displaced Indians like Black Hawk the Sauk chief; William Butler Ogden, real estate tycoon; Stephen A. Douglas, the first Chicago politician; Philip Armour, king of the packing plants; Cyrus McCormick, reaper king; Ida B. Welles, the indomitable black educator; and so on. Miller proves the people of Chicago were an enthusiastic, highly energetic people to whom capitalism was the mantra that drove them to superhuman strength, like

rebuilding their city of wood after the Great Fire of 1871 and subsequently hosting the spectacular World Columbian Exposition in 1893. It's a solid book and makes a good companion volume to Ross Miller's *Here's the Deal*, which covers recent years. The Democratic National Convention will be held once again in Chicago in 1996. In the spirit of capitalism, a few major books are bound to be published, perhaps one with a fresh take on Chicago's middle, and dark, ages. Stay tuned. Bonnie Smothers