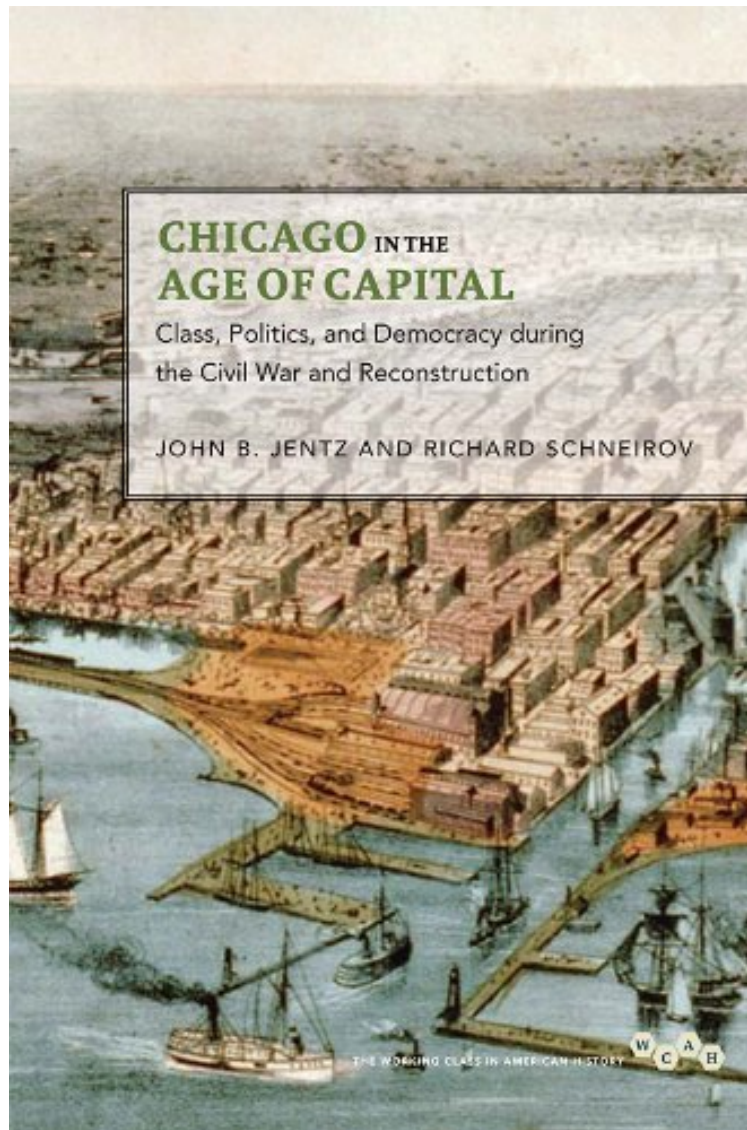


[Mobile pdf] Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction (Working Class in American History)

Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction (Working Class in American History)

John B. Jentz, Richard Schneirov

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John B. Jentz, Richard Schneirov : Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction (Working Class in American History) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction (Working Class in American History):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great ResearchBy double dExcellent research on Chicago.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Honestly I expected a lot moreBy Charles E. CoulterLet me get the hard part out of the way first: I hate the five-star system for evaluating books (or anything for that matter). It is incredibly limiting. This book deserves more than 3 stars-- more like 3.5 stars -- but it definitely doesn't deserve 4 stars. So 3 stars it is."Chicago in the Age of Capital" is an important work on the history of that city during the middle of the nineteenth century. Using Chicago as an example, it does a wonderful job of describing and explaining the economic and social changes that occurred in this country in the years immediately before and after the Civil War. In those years the country continued its transformation from a nation of artisans and small producers to one of capitalists and wage laborers. I can honestly say I learned a great deal about Chicago and the era. This work filled in some gaps in my knowledge and made me see some things a little bit differently. From that standpoint, the book deserves at least four stars.But "Chicago in the Age of Capital" has too many other flaws to get a 4-star rating:I am a recovering academic and I understand the processes which the authors went through in order to get published. But for a book that was published as part of the the Working Class in American History series, I expected more to see more of the working class itself. At least half of the text, possibly two-thirds, is devoted to political machinations, vote totals and academic theory which are supposed to provide context; the workers hardly make an appearance at all except in the pages devoted to the Great Strike of 1877, and even then the reader seldom gets to hear the voices of the workers themselves. I know part of this is a function of available sources; how many of those workers were literate enough to leave records? Thus for the most part the only German or Bohemian voices we get to hear are those individuals who earlier generations would call the community leaders.Which leads me to a second complaint: Where are the women? The book deals almost exclusively with elite males who were making political decisions (One exception is the description of the Great Strike when Bohemian women came out and joined their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers in a pitched battle with police. But life in any community is more than work and strikes and politics. What about families? What obstacles or challenges, what joys or triumphs did these women have in adjusting to life in a new country? Where did they go to church or send their kids to school? There are a lot of small details about the workers themselves that could have been worked into the text without losing the bigger picture. And even when dealing with the so-called leaders, the authors missed a chance to give a nod to gender: Albert Parsons' wife, Lucy, was just as involved in the socialist and anarchist movements as her husband. It might have been nice to see what role if any she played in the Great Strike. And by the way Lucy denied any African American heritage.Which leads me to my next point: What part, if any, did black residents play in the working class movement in this period? There numbers were small (about 4000 in a total population of almost 300000 in 1870) but growing. Black people are really only mentioned in three contexts: as slaves, the reference to Lucy Parsons and as I believe packing house workers. The questions I raise about Immigrant workers, women and African Americans is one and the same: where is their agency? Rather than being the subjects of this study, they are objects, waiting too often in the authors' telling for something or someone to act on them.It is ironic that the authors mention and quote Eric Foner's "Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution". Foner's work is a masterpiece of social and political history. Always the activities of the slaves, former slaves and freedmen are in the forefront of his text. He demonstrates how black people's motives and actions often drove political responses.In addition Foner's prose is lucid and graceful. The authors' prose here is turgid, awkward and sometimes redundant (I am a recovering journalist as well). The work also throws out so many sociological terms and theories the average reader can get lost. The writing also suffers because of this.I so wanted to love this book. I would recommend it to anyone who wants to gain insight into Chicago political history or the development of capitalism. But expect a rough read.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. History reads like fictionBy Kip ZegersI'm impressed, parts are like reading Dreiser, the sense of social forces. There's a narrative push, events unfolding, and the writing is strong. I didn't see two styles' I did see clear, uncluttered, honest prose. I liked when the authors explained the shift in terminology and scholarship. The book doesn't feel written over the heads of general readers into the minds of specialists. I hope some general readers get their hands on it. I'm one of those, and a Chicagoan.

In this sweeping interpretive history of mid-nineteenth-century Chicago, historians John B. Jentz and Richard Schneirov boldly trace the evolution of a modern social order. Combining a mastery of historical and political detail with a sophisticated theoretical frame, Jentz and Schneirov examine the dramatic capitalist transition in Chicago during the critical decades from the 1850s through the 1870s, a period that saw the rise of a permanent wage worker class and the formation of an industrial upper class.

nbsp;"A masterful case for the power of intensive local studies."--Journal of Illinois History "Chicago in the Age of Capital will be useful to other historians for its extensive use of newspaper records and its solid grounding in the quantitative analysis of population and manufacturing trends. Its blend of social, political, and intellectual history contextualizes and deepens our understanding of the relationship between capital, labor and politics." The Historian nbsp;