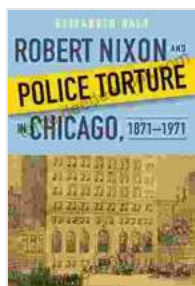


Robert Nixon and Police Torture in Chicago, 1871-1971: A Long and Tortured History



Robert Nixon and Police Torture in Chicago, 1871–1971

by Elizabeth Dale

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 847 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 151 pages

Screen Reader : Supported



The history of police torture in Chicago is a long and shameful one. From the early days of the city's police force in the 1870s, through the infamous reign of Robert Nixon as police superintendent from 1951 to 1962, torture has been a systemic problem within the Chicago Police Department (CPD).

Nixon's tenure as superintendent was a particularly dark chapter in the CPD's history. Nixon, a former FBI agent, brought with him a ruthless and authoritarian approach to law enforcement. He believed that the only way to effectively fight crime was to use violence and intimidation against suspects.

Under Nixon's leadership, the CPD engaged in widespread torture of suspects. Officers routinely beat, electrocuted, and suffocated suspects in order to extract confessions. Nixon himself was known to participate in

these torture sessions, and he encouraged his officers to use whatever means necessary to get results.

The CPD's use of torture was not limited to the interrogation room. Officers also used violence to suppress dissent and to terrorize minority communities. In the wake of the 1968 Democratic National Convention, for example, the CPD unleashed a wave of violence against anti-war protesters, beating and arresting hundreds of people.

Nixon's reign of terror finally came to an end in 1962, when he was forced to resign after a series of scandals. However, the CPD's use of torture continued for many years after Nixon's departure. It was not until the early 1970s, after a series of lawsuits and investigations, that the CPD finally began to reform its practices.

Today, the CPD has a zero-tolerance policy on torture. However, the legacy of Nixon's reign of terror continues to haunt the city. The CPD's use of torture has left a deep scar on the city's psyche, and it is a constant reminder of the dangers of unchecked police power.

The Roots of Police Torture in Chicago

The roots of police torture in Chicago can be traced back to the city's early history. In the 1870s, the CPD was a notoriously corrupt and brutal force. Officers routinely used violence to suppress dissent and to extort money from citizens.

In 1871, the Great Chicago Fire destroyed much of the city, including the CPD headquarters. In the aftermath of the fire, the CPD was rebuilt from

the ground up. However, the new force was just as corrupt and brutal as the old one.

In the early 20th century, the CPD became increasingly involved in suppressing labor unrest. Officers used violence to break up strikes and to intimidate union organizers. In 1919, the CPD killed 38 people during a race riot in the city's South Side.

The CPD's use of violence and brutality continued throughout the 20th century. In the 1950s and 1960s, the CPD was a major player in the suppression of the civil rights movement. Officers used violence to suppress protests and to intimidate activists.

Robert Nixon and the Institutionalization of Torture

Robert Nixon was appointed police superintendent of Chicago in 1951. Nixon was a former FBI agent with a reputation for being tough on crime. He believed that the only way to effectively fight crime was to use violence and intimidation against suspects.

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The Legacy of Police Torture in Chicago

The CPD's use of torture has left a deep scar on the city's psyche. The torture victims of the Nixon era have suffered lifelong physical and psychological damage. The CPD's use of torture has also eroded public trust in law enforcement.

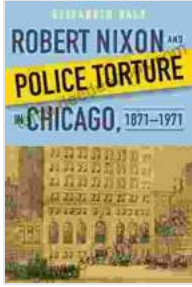
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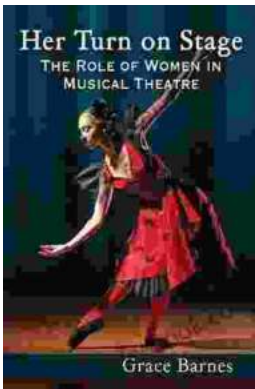


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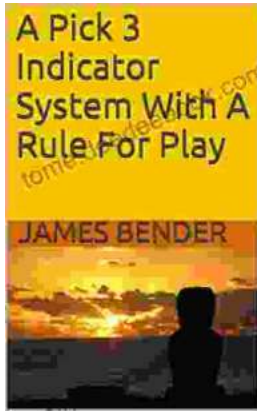
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