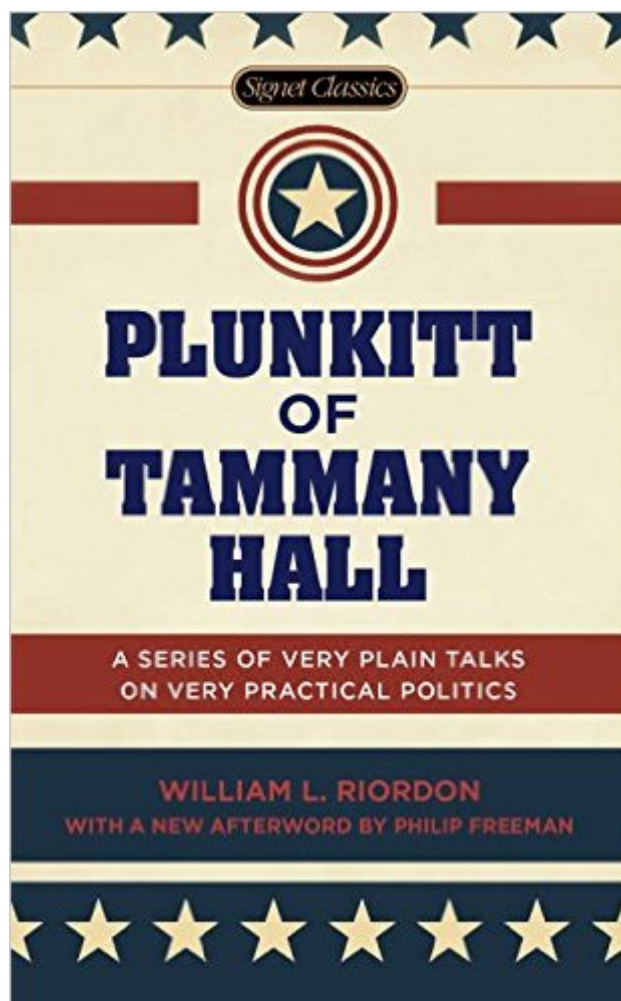


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Plunkitt Of Tammany Hall: A Series Of Very Plain Talks On Very Practical Politics (Signet Classics)



Synopsis

Plunkitt of Tammany Hall A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics William L. Riordan

“Nobody thinks of drawing the distinction between honest graft and dishonest graft.” This classic work offers the unblushing, unvarnished wit and wisdom of one of the most fascinating figures ever to play the American political game and win. George Washington Plunkitt rose from impoverished beginnings to become ward boss of the Fifteenth Assembly District in New York, a key player in the powerhouse political team of Tammany Hall, and, not incidentally, a millionaire. In a series of utterly frank talks given at his headquarters (Graziano’s bootblack stand outside the New York County Court House), he revealed to a sharp-eared and sympathetic reporter named William L. Riordan the secrets of political success as practiced and perfected by him and fellow Tammany Hall titans. The result is not only a volume that reveals more about our political system than does a shelfful of civics textbooks, but also an irresistible portrait of a man who would feel happily at home playing ball with today’s lobbyists and king makers, trading votes for political and financial favors. Doing for twentieth-century America what Machiavelli did for Renaissance Italy, and as entertaining as it is instructive, Plunkitt of Tammany Hall is essential reading for those who prefer twenty-twenty vision to rose-colored glasses in viewing how our government works and why. With an Introduction by Peter Quinn and a New Afterword

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Customer Reviews

If you want to understand the absolute basics of American urban politics at any time in our nation's history, you MUST read this book. George Washington Plunkitt was a Tammany wheelhorse -- district leader, State Senator, and organization man. In a series of speeches from his favorite rostrum, the New York County Courthouse Bootblack Stand, he explained how an urban politician operates and becomes both politically and personally successful. Everything he says in his speeches is as deadly accurate today as it was more than 100 years ago -- build up a following. Know human nature and act accordingly. Do not violate the penal code. See your opportunities and take advantage of them. Do not wear a dress suit to meet with the people. Do not drink to excess. Support the organization. Make friends across the aisle to push through policy. Reward your supporters. Do not hesitate to make deals that advance yourself and the organization. Maintain the party organization. Be there for your constituents in their times of trouble. Empower your constituents and reward their loyalty. Show patriotism. Every one of those points is absolutely applicable to any political race today. And he said all that back in the 1880s and 1890s. All of these concepts are still being done in modern politics. Every time a new intern comes on board my shop in the City of Newark (I do the city's press releases), I lend my copy to that intern, and tell them to read it. Sometimes they ask me to purchase it for them, which I do. A few weeks ago, I got a copy for an intern working for a big wheel in the government, and the big wheel got a look at it ahead of the intern. A few days later, the big wheel asked me to get her a copy, too...she'd never read it.

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