



My Chicago

Jane Byrne

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By the end of her first meeting with the late mayor Richard J. Daley, Jane Byrne had been questioned, berated, and told she might, one day, reach the House but probably not the Senate-and she had also reduced *him* to tears. That would be but the first of many altercations in her pioneering political career.

My Chicago is the story of Jane Byrne's rise from young campaign worker to the mayor's office, all within the bruising arena of Chicago politics. Part sociopolitical history, part memoir, it begins with a history of the city and her early life, before she enters politics as a paid staff member of JFK's presidential campaign and, soon after, begins service in the Chicago Machine, but not of it.

Her view from the inside allows Byrne to sketch portraits of Daley, for whom she eventually worked, members of the Kennedy family, and Presidents Carter and Reagan. And, of course, it provides a fascinating perspective on the battle to succeed Daley, which ended with her own triumph over the Machine and a controversial term as mayor, which saw her begin development across the city and (famously) move into the Cabrini-Green housing project. The first memoir by a Chicago mayor in two generations, *My Chicago* is a valuable history as well as an entertaining look at no-holds-barred city politics.

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