

Fixing Illinois

Politics and Policy in the Prairie State

JAMES D. NOWLAN AND
J. THOMAS JOHNSON

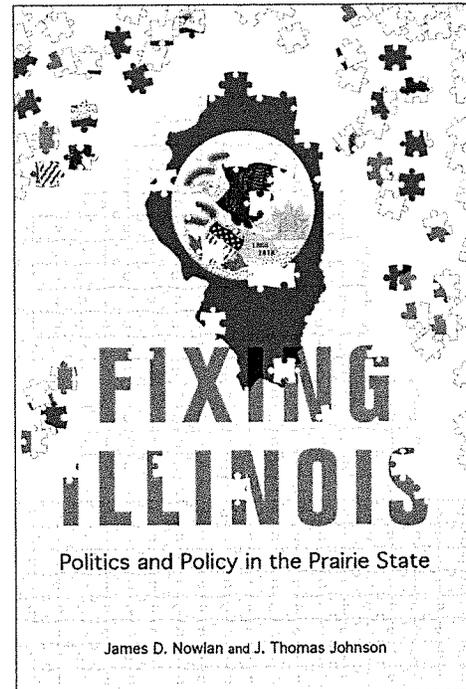
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Persistent problems have left Illinois the butt of jokes and threatened it with fiscal catastrophe. In *Fixing Illinois*, James D. Nowlan and J. Thomas Johnson use their four decades of experience as public servants, Springfield veterans, and government observers to present a comprehensive program of almost one hundred specific policy ideas aimed at rescuing the state from its long list of problems, including:

- An overhaul of state pension systems that includes more reasonable benefits and raising of the retirement age, among other changes;
- Reducing one of the nation's highest corporate tax rates to attract business;
- Medicare reform through an insurance voucher program;
- Broadening of the tax base to include services and reductions in rates;
- Raising funds with capital construction bonds to update and integrate the antiquated information systems used by state agencies.

Pointed, honest, and pragmatic, *Fixing Illinois* is a plan for effective and honest government that seeks an even nobler end: restoring our faith in Illinois's institutions and reviving a sense of citizenship and state pride.



JAMES NOWLAN served two terms in the Illinois House of Representatives and worked under three governors. He is the coauthor of *Illinois Politics: A Citizen's Guide*. **J. THOMAS JOHNSON** was director of the Illinois Department of Revenue and is President Emeritus of the Taxpayers' Federation of Illinois.

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CHAPTER 8

Corruption in Illinois

An Enduring Tradition

Corruption has been an enduring habit in Illinois and Chicago governments throughout the state's history. And habits are hard to break.

In this chapter we discuss the realities and perceptions of this corruption and the costs the perceptions impose on Illinois.¹ We also offer observations about and options for transforming the culture of corruption that we believe exists in the state. We begin by noting that corruption is anything but a recent phenomenon in Illinois

Corruption through Illinois History

Ninian Edwards served as both the territorial governor of Illinois (1809–1818) and the third elected governor of the state (1826–30). Early in our statehood, he issued prescient warning about the corrupting role of money in elections by decrying what he called the “common practice” of the time of “treating” prospective voters with whisky to win their votes.² Those who do so, declared Edwards, “establish a school of vice and depravity in our country tending to contaminate not only the present but succeeding generations. . . . The precedent, once established, will become less and less objectionable by becoming more familiar to you; it will finally become fashionable, and ultimately necessary to success. . . . All distinctions will then be confined to the rich, for they alone will be able to meet the expenses of an election.”³

The history of vote fraud in Chicago elections goes back to at least 1884. In *Grafters and Goo Goos* (2004), James L. Merriner takes a romp through corruption in the Chicago area from 1883 to 2003 and of efforts to combat it. He notes, for example, that reformers were highly suspicious of the mayoral victory in 1884 of Carter Harrison Sr.⁴ So the Union League Club of Chicago hired detectives to investigate a typical precinct. The sleuths found that George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Hancock, and other notables had registered and voted. (Merriner notes that parallel ruses were discovered in a 1969 investigation of vote fraud in Chicago.) Of 1,112 votes cast in the precinct, 907 were fraudulent. Of 171 precincts ultimately examined, only 7 seemed to be without irregularities.

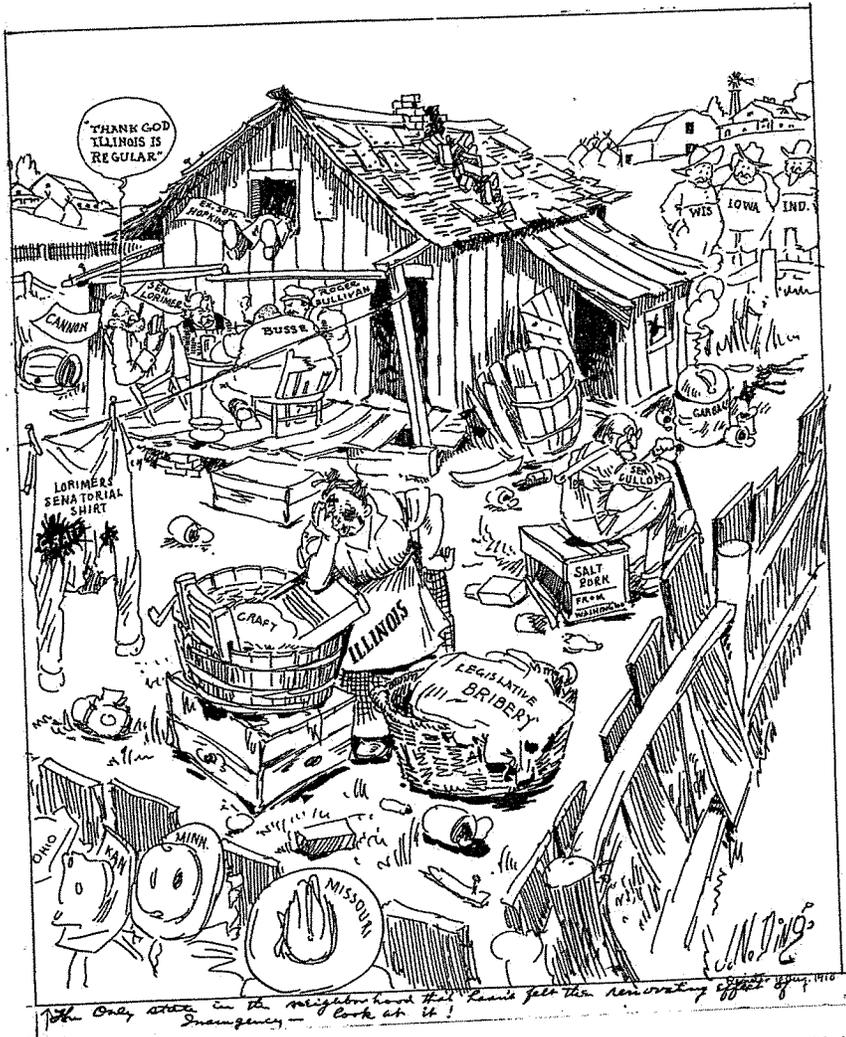
By the 1890s, declares Robert J. Schoenberg, "Chicago routinized corruption as never before—politicians, police, prosecutors, defense bar, judiciary, citizenry and lawbreakers became so bound by ties of graft, bribery and intimidation that honesty appeared eccentric."⁵ During this decade, streetcar magnate Charles T. Yerkes paid bribes of up to \$50,000 each to Chicago aldermen in return for particularly favorable franchises. Yerkes simply bought most of the 68 members of the city council. He set market prices for council favors: \$100 for a saloon license and \$500 to restore a license that had been revoked for cause.⁶ The \$200-per-year job of alderman became worth \$25,000, often more, to the boodling lawmakers (a boodler is one who participates in graft).

Yerkes also tried, with some success, to buy the state legislature. The bribery was so blatant that a reporter for the *Chicago Evening Journal* was inadvertently offered money for his vote. Sitting in the seat of a member of the House before the day's session got under way, the journalist was mistaken for that member by a near-sighted old state senator. "The lawmaker sat down beside me," recalled the reporter, "and opened with the explicit statement he would pay \$2,500 for my vote on the traction bill. He quickly discovered his mistake, and there was much scurrying in the ranks of the grafters."⁷

In 1909, supporters of Congressman William J. Lorimer created a national sensation when they apparently paid \$100,000 in bribes to as many as forty state lawmakers in Springfield to elect Lorimer to the United States Senate.⁸ Bribes of up to \$2,500 per bribed lawmaker were split between pre-vote payments and a post-session "jackpot" of payments from the major interest groups to lawmakers who had voted in their interests. (At the time, a new Model T Ford cost \$850.) See figure 9, an editorial cartoon from a 1910 edition of the *Des Moines Register*, which depicts the bemusement of observers of corruption in Illinois. In 1912 Lorimer was expelled from the United States Senate on the ground that he would not have been elected absent the brib-

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FIGURE 9. "What's the Matter with Illinois?" by J. N. "Ding" Darling



Source: Des Moines Register, August 10, 1910. University of Iowa Libraries: Iowa Digital Library.

ery. The scandal generated renewed interest in passage of the Seventeenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, adopted in 1913, which provides for popular election of senators.

By the time Al Capone came to town a few years later, one alderman declared, "Chicago is unique. It is the only completely corrupt city in America." In such an environment and with much of the citizenry thirsty for the beer

and spirits prohibited by the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, "a Capone became not just logical but inevitable."¹⁰ Capone and his gangs gained power through the corruption already in place, through willing accomplices in government, and through the citizenry. During the reigns of mayor William Hale (Big Bill) Thompson and of the supportive Capone, Police Chief Charles Fitzmorris admitted that about half of his force of six thousand was involved in bootlegging—not only soliciting and receiving bribes but actively pushing alcohol.¹¹ Merriner writes, "The Bureau of Internal Revenue estimated the 1927 income of Capone's gang at \$100 million, of which \$10 million was Capone's profit. Thirty million dollars was budgeted for graft to buy politicians and the police."¹²

As Kenneth Alsop observes, writing of Chicago, "[a]fter the start of Prohibition, who was the crook? Millions of people who regarded themselves as upright, law-respecting . . . began . . . to cheat and lie, and entered into routine conspiracy with the underworld."¹³ As Capone once put it: "Nobody's on the legit. . . . Your brother or your father gets in a jam. What do you do? Do you sit back and let him go over the road, without trying to help him? You'd be a yellow dog if you did. Nobody's legit when it comes down to cases."¹⁴

Corruption was so pervasive in the Capone era that contemporary observers said even honest politicians "had to make compromises with evil, in their judgment, in order to create a greater good."¹⁵ The system, as it had developed, made them do it.

In 1956, Illinois Auditor of Public Accounts Orville Hodge pleaded guilty to stealing at least \$1.5 million from state coffers.¹⁶ At that time, the auditor of public accounts was responsible for doing both the pre-audit and the post-audit of Illinois spending. So, for several years, Hodge was able to issue warrants to persons who had formerly done business with the state and have the warrants secretly cashed.

Not even the state's high court was immune from at least charges of ethical lapses. In 1969, Illinois Supreme Court chief justice Roy Solfisburg and former chief justice Raymond Klingbiel resigned, under great pressure, from the high court because of the appearance of improprieties.¹⁷ The two justices had received stock in a new bank issued by Theodore Isaacs at a time circuit court charges against Isaacs for defrauding the state were being dismissed by the state Supreme Court in a decision written by Klingbiel.

In 1970, when Illinois Secretary of State Paul Powell died, he left behind \$800,000 in large bills stuffed in shoeboxes and found in his Springfield hotel room.¹⁸

The most distressing examples of public corruption were brought to light in the late 1980s and early 1990s as a result of Operations Greylord and Gam-

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bat, U.S. Department of Justice investigations into the court system of Cook County.¹⁹ Nearly one hundred court officials and lawyers, including eighteen judges, were convicted of systematic bribery as a result of Operation Greyford. Operation Gambat used a corrupt lawyer turned informant to reveal that associates of the Chicago Mob were paying off judges to dismiss cases against even murderers and hitmen. Operation Gambat resulted in convictions of twenty-four corrupt judges, lawyers, and police officers, including the presiding judge of the Chancery Court, the assistant majority leader of the Illinois State Senate, and a judge convicted of fixing murder cases, the only such judge in the United States.

Since 1980 a total of thirty Chicago aldermen have been convicted of federal crimes such as bribery, extortion, embezzlement, conspiracy, mail fraud, and tax evasion.²⁰

The Illinois convictions included a first in 2003 when the George Ryan Campaign Committee, rather than a person, was convicted of racketeering. In 2006 Ryan himself was convicted on all twenty-four counts with which he was charged, including racketeering, mail fraud, filing false tax returns, and lying to investigators. Indeed, four of the past seven governors (Otto Kerner, Dan Walker, George Ryan, and Rod Blagojevich) have been found guilty of wrongdoing by federal courts.

Rod Blagojevich became governor in 2003 on a reform platform, proclaiming that there would be “no more business as usual” in Illinois government. In 2006, however, a top fundraiser and advisor to Blagojevich named Antoine (Tony) Rezko was indicted on twenty-four counts of corruption in what U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald called “a pay-to-play scheme on steroids.”²¹ Prosecutors accused Rezko of “trying to collect nearly \$6 million in kickbacks from government deals and trying to shake down a Hollywood producer for \$1.5 million in campaign contributions to Blagojevich.”²² Blagojevich himself was convicted on June 27, 2011, of seventeen criminal counts, including wire fraud, attempted extortion, bribery, and conspiracy, on top of an earlier conviction for lying to the FBI.²³

In 2006 the *Chicago Tribune* ran an editorial titled “Corruption on Parade,” which declared, “But as you plow through the daily digest of indictments, not-guilty pleas, convictions, the occasional acquittal, sentencings and look-whose-heading-off-to-prison stories, it’s possible to lose the big picture. This is a unique time in Illinois. . . . Illinois produces enough guilty pleas for these kinds of crimes to establish that this state’s problem is close to unique.”²⁴

Realities and Perceptions of Corruption in Illinois

By some measures Illinois is among the most corrupt states in the nation. According to an analysis of U.S. Department of Justice reports of convictions for public corruption from 1976 to 2010, 1,828 persons in Illinois have been found guilty during this time frame, more than in any states but New York and California.²⁵ On a per capita basis, Illinois ranked third among the large states in public corruption convictions. The United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (metropolitan Chicago) tallied more convictions for public corruption over a thirty-five-year period than did any district court in the nation.²⁶

And that represents only the illegal corruption. Illinois officials have become masters of milking our governments and taxpayers through legal corruption. We are deeply disturbed, for example, by the 2011 *Chicago Tribune* investigation that found that Chicago alderman Edward Burke doubled the annual pension of his buddy, former state representative Bob Molaro, to \$120,000.²⁷ Burke had Molaro work for just one month at \$12,000, which created an annualized salary rate that qualified him for the doubling of his legislative pension. What did Molaro do to earn the \$12,000? He wrote a paper about the sorry state of our public pension systems, basically laughing at the taxpayers who will pay the extra pension benefits for Molaro! For too many public officials in Illinois, doing well in public office comes before doing good for the public.

By other measures, however, Illinois is in the middle of the pack when it comes to corruption. Professor Richard Winters at Dartmouth College points out that if the numbers of elected officials per state are considered (Illinois has more than forty thousand, far more than most states, because we have more units of local government than any state), then Illinois is really about average in terms of convictions for public corruption per thousand elected state and local officials.²⁸

Yet reality may lie in the eye of the beholder, and when it comes to perception, Illinois consistently ranks among the most corrupt states in the nation. For example, in a 2012 poll that we conducted, one-third of those surveyed identified Illinois, unsolicited, as such, following only New York and California. And a full 45 percent of the respondents over age thirty-five named Illinois as one of the most corrupt states.²⁹ Other Midwestern states were rarely mentioned as among the most corrupt, which means that Illinois sticks out like a sore thumb in the heartland region.

Journalists believe Illinois to be one of the most corrupt states as well. In 2000, Richard Boylan and Cheryl Long surveyed journalists nationwide,

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who ranked Illinois third highest in corruption among the forty-five states with usable numbers of responses.³⁰

Widely held perceptions such as these are also bad for business in Illinois. In the national survey cited above, 60 percent of the respondents said knowing about corruption in a state would have a negative or strongly negative effect on their decisions to locate in such a state.³¹

Possibly more important is a 2011 survey we took of seventy economic development professionals in Illinois (the people who work to attract business to a community). Three in four surveyed said corruption in Illinois had a negative impact on their business recruiting.³² Among the forty-nine written responses to this question, two provide particular insight. One says, "Unfortunately and especially in manufacturing and international circles, there is an understanding that corruption in Illinois that once occurred at an individual level has moved to systemic corruption." The other states, "As part of an economic development marketing group that spans Illinois and Iowa, I keep hearing that Iowa makes sense as a business location if you just want to fill out an application and have a transparent process. Illinois works better if you have political clout and are willing to use it. I think that is a travesty and that is what Illinois is becoming known for—pay to play."

What has come to be called "the Chicago Way" or "the Illinois Way" of public corruption has likely undermined the voters' sense of political efficacy.³³ Why apply for a city or state job if you think that only friends of political insiders will be hired? Why report corrupt officials if you think they won't be punished and that the system may turn the powers of government on you instead? Voters may sometimes laugh at the antics of corrupt public officials, but in the end they feel powerless, lose their faith in government, and vote less often because they believe that the fix is in. Lilliard Richardson found in his study of the 2008 national elections that "convictions (for public corruption) per capita are strongly associated with lower political activity across the board."³⁴

And there are tangible costs to corruption. Political scientist Dick Simpson estimates that it costs Illinois and its governments \$500 million each year. "Governor Blagojevich's well-publicized corruption antics" he writes, "led to a lowering of the state's bond rating, which cost the state more than \$20 million during a recent bond issue. Corruption also takes time and resources away from police and prosecutors. Blagojevich's first trial costs tens of millions of dollars to investigate and prosecute."³⁵

Observations

Why is there so much corruption, or at least the strong perception of corruption, in Illinois?

In the 1970s the late student of American federalism Daniel Elazar contended that the United States was divided into three historical political subcultures: the moralistic, the traditionalistic, and the individualistic. In brief, the moralistic culture tends to see government as a positive force and believe that politicians are not expected to profit from political activity. Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan are dominated, in Elazar's construct, by this set of cultural attitudes.³⁶

The traditionalistic culture tends to be operated by an elite that sees government as a means for maintaining the existing social order, and corruption by government officials is tolerated as a way of maintaining that order. This culture dominates in the Deep South. The individualistic culture sees government as a necessary evil that should be limited so as not to affect the individual's private business activities. Corrupt politics is accepted as a fact and is tolerated.

Illinois is dominated overall by the individualistic culture, according to Elazar, though he notes that southern Illinois is influenced heavily by the traditionalistic culture. Yet because two of the three political subcultures tolerate corruption, this framework, if there is anything to it, provides limited help in separating Illinois from other states.

We also subscribe to the additional theory that immigrants such as the Irish, Italians, and Poles found it difficult to enter legitimate businesses in Chicago that were dominated by the white Anglo-Saxon Protestants who preceded them. Thus, they used their growing numbers to win at the business of politics, where many of them developed the tradition of providing government jobs in return for political support and of doing well as much as doing good.

Another reason why corruption exists some places but not others (at least, not as much), according to Michael Josephson, is that "corruption flourishes because it is allowed. Whatever you allow, you encourage."³⁷ In this regard, for example, the Illinois General Assembly lacks a "revolving door" prohibition, that is, one that would bar legislators from lobbying members of the General Assembly for at least one year after they leave the legislature. As a result, in 2012 several members of the Assembly resigned in the middle of their terms to take lobbying positions with interest groups with whom they had close legislative ties. Nobody in the political world of the General Assembly seemed to think much about it.

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94. Enact a revolving-door prohibition for Illinois state legislators, barring them from lobbying members of the General Assembly for at least one year after they leave the legislature.

We also think that over the course of the past century our culture has developed an underlying sense that, for some of us, taking advantage of government is the thing to do, since everyone else does it.

For example, for several years Jim Nowlan conducted an exercise with his students at the University of Illinois at the beginning of his courses in American politics.³⁸ Most of the students were seniors, many headed for law school. Semester after semester, two-thirds of the students would opt for using bribery to get a brother out of a particularly burdensome DUI charge. The students rationalized their decisions with such observations as, "Everyone else does it" and "We'd be played the fools for not doing so for our brother."

Moreover, we simply don't think about the ethics of our actions. Rare is the person who enters politics planning to be corrupt. Some cynics would say that in Chicago that should read "planning to be caught." Why are so many in our state measured for striped suits when that wasn't our objective? When Jim Nowlan entered the Illinois legislature as a young man in the late 1960s, he had not previously thought about the fact that private gain could be made at public expense (our definition of corruption). He could easily have gone along with the way some people played the game and accepted "contributions" at about the same time action was taken on certain bills.

Fortunately, in his freshman year the late George O'Brien (a freshman legislator like Nowlan, and later a congressman) sent copies of the play *A Man for All Seasons* to his fellow freshmen. The play is about Thomas More, who rejected King Henry VIII's demand for a divorce. More stood on principle and paid the ultimate price with his head. Though far removed from the Illinois General Assembly, the play struck Nowlan like a thunderbolt. There are indeed matters of principle at play in politics, and one must be aware when they arise. And sometimes it may be difficult to stand up to a corrupt system. Ninety-seven Cook County court officials were convicted of bribery and related charges in the 1980s in Operation Greylord. Some may have lacked the fortitude to challenge the system in which they became caught up.

Maybe some cannot resist the temptation of financial gain based on inside knowledge or actions, and figure they won't be caught. In this day and age, it is best to assume that everything will be found out!

Several years ago, a young friend of Nowlan's moved back after college to his hometown, where he ran for mayor as a reformer against the ossified "old

guard.” Walking door to door, this friend won the full-time job of mayor. A few weeks later, he was at a national mayors’ conference in Washington, DC, hob-nobbing with Willie Brown of San Francisco and Rudy Giuliani of New York City.

In college this big farm boy had played football in a Big Ten program, and now he proudly wore a Rose Bowl ring, a good conversation starter when he was with Willie and Rudy. Yet the friend realized that he looked shabby without a suit. So he quickly bought a suit in Washington, using his city’s credit card, the only one he had, planning to pay the city back.

Later the purchase became a *cause célèbre* in his small city. And it tarnished his otherwise fine reputation. We worry about the good guys who, like the young ex-mayor, have not thought about the fish bowl they are jumping into.

For the good guys who are newcomers to politics, we present our “Guide to Ethical Decision-making in the Twenty-First Century”:

- Don’t be careless. Even the slightest inadvertent indiscretion will get you. People do care—and do find out. It doesn’t matter what *you* think about what you did. If others think it’s indiscreet, it is. If it looks bad, it is.
- Is there any dimension of any decision you make that could be seen by others as personal gain at public expense? Or, as former Illinois auditor general Robert Cronson put it, “How would this sound to a grand jury?”
- Never justify a decision on the basis that “this is the way it has always been done.” Times change. In the 1950s a federal jury acquitted Illinois governor William Stratton on charges of paying for, among other things, evening attire for his wife from campaign funds and not reporting the expenditures as income. Today, how would the jury find him on similar charges? We would bet “guilty.”
- Identify a friend or acquaintance whom you respect for his or her integrity. (Ours would be Mike Lawrence, former head of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute.) Have him serve as your second opinion; how would he view a pending decision?
- If you have questions about a decision, assume it’s the wrong thing to do.

Ethics and Cultural Change

Yale political scientist Susan Rose-Ackerman declares that “corruption in all its myriad forms arises at the intersection of culture, the market, and the state. Its prevalence forces us to confront the tangled connections between private

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wealth and public power and between cultural practice and the creation of a competent and impartial government.”³⁹ As for reform, she notes that simple transparency is necessary as well as external oversight of government activity by investigative journalists.

We think Illinois suffers from a culture of corruption, as exhibited earlier by the university students who opted for bribery to help a hypothetical brother avoid a criminal charge. Charles Snyder is a retired executive at John Deere in Moline, Illinois, who was involved with efforts at cultural change at his company during the difficult early 1980s. He identifies the following factors as important:

- Leadership: authoritative, visionary, charismatic;
- Creation of a group identity;
- Defining a compelling need to change;
- Communicating the need for change; and
- Obtaining buy-in to change: shared sacrifice and not just asking “What’s in it for me?”⁴⁰

Susan Heathfield says executive support and training are critical: “Executives in the organization must support the cultural change,” she writes, “and in ways beyond verbal support. They must show behavioral support by changing their own behaviors.”⁴¹ Heathfield adds that since cultural change depends on behavioral change, training can be very useful in both communicating expectations and teaching new behaviors.

Cultural attitudes and behavior can change. Political scientist Robert Rich calls this process “public learning.”⁴² Think of society’s attitudes toward drinking and driving. When the authors were young, little thought was given to the issue. As a result of major campaigns by such groups as Mothers Against Drunk Driving and changes in law, public behavior has changed significantly, and the number of deaths caused by drunk drivers is down because of it. Similarly, when we were young, smoking was popular and “cool.” Today it is definitely not, and our collective lifespan has been increased.

Rich identifies several factors that have been shown to be important in achieving public learning. These include convincing evidence that an activity such as smoking is bad for people and society as well as continuing support from the media. In addition, change based on public learning needs a highly visible champion. For example, former U.S. surgeon general C. Everett Koop championed cessation of smoking and Mothers Against Drunk Driving continue their efforts to reduce driving under the influence of alcohol.

Positive change can be accomplished. According to Dick Simpson, a political scientist at the University of Illinois at Chicago, major cities such as

Hong Kong and Sydney, Australia, have gone from corrupt to clean.⁴³ And Chicago itself has a historical case in which a corrupt majority of the city council was driven from office. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Municipal Voters' League and its dynamic leader George E. Cole raised money, recruited candidates, ran campaigns, and elected honest men to the Chicago City Council.⁴⁴ According to Charles Merriam, who was then both a city councilman and a professor at the University of Chicago, the Voters' League "gave the city the best legislative body in the country for 20 years."⁴⁵ But by the 1920s, the fervor of the league's volunteer efforts had waned, and corrupt politics returned.

In their book *Nudge* (2008), University of Chicago business professors Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein posit that behavior can be changed by seemingly small psychological adjustments that they call "change architecture."⁴⁶ A change architect might, for example, rearrange the presentation and placement of foods in a student cafeteria to increase or decrease the selection of certain foods. Another example: after years of frustration and lack of success, the State of Texas reduced littering on its highways by 72 percent in six years by developing the "Don't Mess with Texas" slogan and advertising program. The slogan focused on youth between eighteen and twenty-four who were doing most of the littering with "a tough-talking slogan that would also address the unique spirit of Texas pride." Dallas Cowboy stars and Willie Nelson were among those featured in the advertising campaign.

The illustration above is from the chapter called "Following the Herd," which, boiled down to its essence, holds that people have a tendency to do what they think other people are doing.⁴⁷ And thus, Thaler and Sunstein write, "[a] few influential people, offering strong signals about appropriate behavior, can have a similar effect (of changing behavior)."

In addition to promoting cultural change, what can we do about corruption through changes in public policy? Illinois already has fairly stringent state ethics laws. In her book *The Shadowlands of Conduct: Ethics and State Politics*, Beth Rosenson rates Illinois at 8.5 on a scale in which 10.5 is the maximum. She notes that Illinois has a basic ethics code, limits on honoraria and gifts, and a requirement of personal financial disclosure.⁴⁸ This rating places Illinois higher on the scale than most states. The only criterion of Rosenson's that Illinois lacks is a limit on lobbying employment for former state legislators (see Suggestion 94, above). The Illinois ethics law was first promulgated in 1967 and has been amended in 1972, 1995, 2003, and 2009.

The 2003 Illinois Ethics Act, as amended in 2009, provided for inspectors general, executive and legislative ethics commissions, annual ethics training for state employees, whistleblower protections, and other changes. Unfortu-

nately, according to Illinois Legislative Inspector General Thomas J. Homer, the 2003 legislation did not address the significant shortcomings of the 1967 Ethics Act, which established a code of conduct and ethical principles for legislators and required the disclosure of economic interests but failed to provide sanctions for violations.⁴⁹ In a 2011 letter to members of the General Assembly, Homer noted that since 1972, fifteen state legislators and four governors had been convicted of crimes, but when the Code of Conduct was adopted in 1967, the legislature not only provided no penalties but expressly stated that the ethical principles “are intended only as guides [for conduct], and not as rules meant to be enforced by disciplinary action.” Homer went on to recommend that “violations of the Code of Conduct should be modernized and be made punishable by fines, public reporting and censure. These rules should not be merely aspirational goals.”

95. Make violations of the Illinois General Assembly’s Code of Conduct punishable by fines, public reporting, and censure.

In a 2012 poll of 1,200 Illinois residents, three of four respondents disagreed (most of them strongly) with the statement “Nothing can be done about corruption in our state.”⁵⁰ So public support for anti-corruption efforts should be strong.

There are at least two approaches that can be taken to dampen public corruption: legislation that changes the environment in which politics is conducted, and public awareness campaigns that increase sensitivity to the ethical and moral consequences of decision making in government.

In the legislation category, we champion public financing of campaigns, which could increase competition in elections and reduce, among some candidates, reliance on large contributions. Public financing of some elections exists in about half the states. The typical approach is that a candidate for office who draws a threshold number of small contributions, in order to show the candidate’s credibility, receives matching funds for all of his or her small contributions or receives a set amount of money and agrees not to raise any more.

In addition, we strongly advocate an amendment to the Illinois Constitution that would replace partisan gerrymandering of state legislative districts with an independent commission, as is the case in Arizona and California. The commission would ideally draw district lines without regard to incumbency and with regard for somewhat natural communities of interest where that might be possible.

The current process in Illinois almost guarantees that leaders of one of the two major parties will draw state legislative and congressional district

boundaries. With the technique of packing partisans of the respective parties into districts, incumbents have been protected and electoral competition has been stifled.

96. Enact public financing of campaigns in Illinois, perhaps beginning with campaigns for judicial offices as a way of introducing the policy.
97. Enact by citizens' initiative an amendment to the Legislative Article of the Illinois Constitution to create an independent commission to draw state legislative district boundaries without regard to incumbency.
98. As for public awareness campaigns, we recommend the following:
 - Governors should take responsibility for providing continuing and visible leadership in setting the highest standards of ethical conduct and for continually exhorting citizens to conduct that will transform "the Illinois Way" into a model for integrity in government and politics.
 - Mandate that of the two years of social science courses required in Illinois high schools, at least one semester be devoted to American government and civics.
 - Provide lesson plans for Illinois social science teachers that address ethics in personal life and ethics in government.
 - Provide workshops on ethics in government for newly elected state legislators, as well as those in city, county, school board, and other local governments.

Illinois has a reputation for corruption in government. Actual corruption and the reputation for corruption both impose their costs on our society. We need to mount major campaigns of corruption abatement in Illinois to show the world that we are committed to high ethical standards. We need to begin now. After all, habits are hard to break.

In our small book about the state of Illinois we have attempted to touch on the bigger challenges facing Illinois and to offer suggestions, some major and some more modest, for addressing these challenges. We hope this is but the beginning of a substantive discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the suggestions in these pages and of your prescriptions for what might be done to right the ship of state, which we think has been listing badly. Let the constructive conversations begin.

16. "State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons," Pew Center on the States, Washington, DC, April 2011, p. 14.
17. "TAB Report," p. 85.
18. "Adult Redeploy Illinois: 2012 Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly on the Implementation and Projected Impact," Adult Redeploy Illinois Oversight Board, March 8, 2013, p. 1.
19. "TAB Report," p. 85.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
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Chapter 8. Corruption in Illinois: An Enduring Tradition

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29. Illinois Integrity Initiative Survey, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, Urbana, December 2011. Survey was taken for the Initiative by Kelton Research, New York, New York and Culver City, California.

30. Richard T. Boylan and Cheryl X. Long, "Measuring Public Corruption in the American States," *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, 3 (2003): 420–38.

31. Illinois Integrity Initiative Survey.

32. Survey by Jim Nowlan of the members of the Illinois Development Council, May 2011. Two hundred surveys went out via Survey Monkey; seventy responses were received.

33. Dick Simpson and Melissa Zmuda, "Corruption in Illinois," paper presented at the conference "Is There a Culture of Corruption in Illinois?" Institute of Government and Public Affairs of the University of Illinois, Chicago, March 2, 2012.

34. Lilliard Richardson, "Political Corruption and Its Effect on Civic Involvement," paper presented at the Ethics and Reform Symposium, September 27–28, 2012, Chicago, and available from the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, p. 13.

35. Simpson and Zmuda, "Corruption in Illinois."

36. Daniel Elazar, "Political Culture of the United States," <http://academic.regis.edu/jriley/421elazar.htm>.

37. Michael Josephson, address at the Ethics and Reform Symposium held September 27–28, 2012, Chicago, sponsored by and remarks available from the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

38. The exercise is as follows: Your brother has just been charged with a serious DUI. He will lose his license if convicted. He is in his first job after college and he absolutely must have a car to do his job. His wife is at home, pregnant with their first child.

The brother has employed a veteran lawyer. The lawyer says that he knows his way around the court system and that if your brother will provide him \$1,000 in cash beyond his fee, he is confident he can have the charge dismissed.

Your brother turns to you for guidance. Should he:

- Go for it
- Reject the idea

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41. Susan Heathfield, "How to Change Your Culture: Organizational Culture Change," www.humanresources.about.com, 2012.

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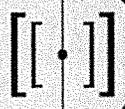
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48. Beth A. Rosenson, *The Shadowlands of Conduct: Ethics and State Politics* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), pp. 156–57.

49. Thomas J. Homer, Legislative Inspector General, letter to members of the Illinois General Assembly, Springfield, August 10, 2011.

50. Survey taken in January 2012 by the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies for the Illinois Integrity Initiative, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, Urbana, January 2012.



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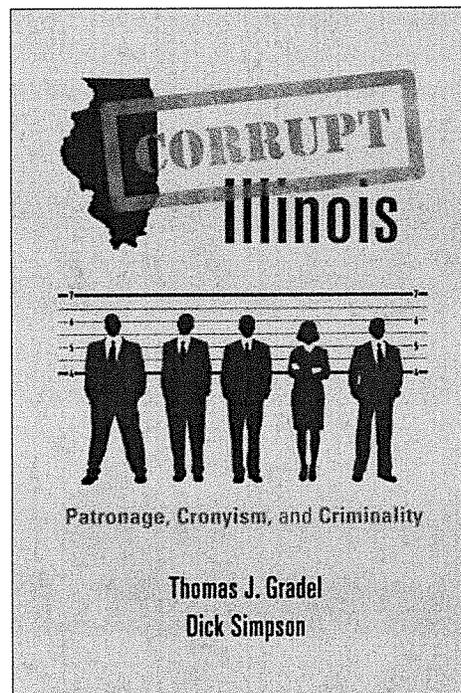
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