



Portland: People, Politics, and Power, 1851-2001

Jewel Lansing

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This is the definitive book on Portland's political, social, and cultural history, beginning in 1845 when a 16-lot townsite was laid out on the bank of the Willamette River and continuing through April 2001, the 150th anniversary of Portland city government. Jewel Lansing has amassed a treasure trove of information on Portland's civic and political life, which she presents in a readable style, organized around an account of the successive reigns of Portland's 44 mayors. The story is enlivened by anecdotes that bring to life the unique individuals and controversial issues of Portland's distant and more recent past. Lansing shows that Portland's path to its present place as the 28th largest city in the United States, with a deserved reputation as one of the nation's most livable cities, has not always been smooth, and its story is far from dull. Corruption, profiteering, and wide-open vice characterized Portland at the turn of the century, and every era has had its controversies and rivalries: disputes over railroad franchises and rights-of-way, women's suffrage, public versus private power, the Chinese Exclusion Act, Prohibition, and the siting of freeways, to name just a few. Colorful personalities, from Populist governor-turned-mayor Sylvester Pennoyer to tavern-owner-turned-mayor Bud Clark, have emerged in every period, as the city has grown and its government has evolved from a small group of volunteers to a complex bureaucracy with 8,000 employees and a \$1.1 billion budget. Anyone with an interest in Portland, and in learning more about the individuals, events, and issues that have shaped it, will find this exhaustive history fascinating and extremely informative.



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