

## Royko remembers fun of Chicago convention

**W**e're closing in on the 20th anniversary of the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago. That means newspapers, magazines and TV stations are going to look back and ponder the historic significance of that wild week in Chicago.

Just about everybody who was there will be telling their stories — the politicians, anti-war protesters, policemen and news people.

One former high-ranking policeman told me: "I've already been interviewed four times. And I didn't even hit anybody on the head."

We'll see flashbacks of protesters taunting cops and cops chasing protesters. We'll see Sen. Abe Ribicoff scolding Mayor Daley and Daley bellowing at Ribicoff. There will be paddy wagons, tear gas, bandaged heads, the National Guard and shaggy poets chanting their mantras in Grant Park.



Mike Royko

The long-haired yuppies, who have become short-haired yuppies, will talk about their idealistic anti-war sentiments. The retired cops will ask why idealists thought they could end a war by lobbing bags of do-do at them.

Some political historians will say that because Daley was bullheaded, the convention became a riot and that put Richard Nixon, instead of Hubert Humphrey, in the White House. And aging Chicago politicians will say that if it hadn't been for Daley, Abbie Hoffman and his dope-ridden pals would have carried off Chicago's womenfolk and eaten babies.

Me? I'll probably write something or other when the time comes. But right now, when I think about that crazy, turbulent, violent, crazy week, all I feel is nostalgia. I get so sentimental, my eyes are teary.

How can I feel sentimental and nostalgic about a week that has been described as one of the most disgraceful in Chicago's history, if not in the history of American politics?

That's easy. It was the last political convention that was fun, that wasn't carefully orchestrated and a big bore.

I'm speaking selfishly, of course. To those who had their hairy heads cracked or their political careers disrupted, it wasn't a big hoot. But, hey, every four years I have to cover these

things. And given a choice between long, droning speeches or rioting in the streets, I'll take tear gas any time.

In 1972, both parties went to Miami. You try sweating out Miami in August, while listening to George McGovern, a personality kid, put a nation to sleep. Or watch a thousand Republicans in white shoes gaze reverentially at Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew.

Spend a week in New York just to watch Jimmy Carter floss his teeth. Or go all the way to Kansas City to see if Jerry Ford will stumble off the stage.

I have to admit that 1980 in Detroit had its bright side. A lot of the small-town Republicans genuinely feared that Detroit's black population might cook them in pots.

And next month we're going to Atlanta, where it will be 102 and humid, and thousands of news people will spend a week asking each other: "Do we know what Jesse wants yet?"

After that, it will be New Orleans, where it will be 105 and humid, with Republicans hoping for a miracle: George Bush stepping before the cameras to make his acceptance squeaks, but instead ripping off his coat and shirt and suddenly becoming Rambo.

If the television networks are smart, they wouldn't bother to show any of it. They'd just get out the old film clips of 1968 in Chicago. Wouldn't you rather watch a fat cop chasing Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin? Wouldn't you like to see, just one more time, Dick Gregory being lifted bodily into a paddy wagon?

Five years ago, a big California politician told me that Chicago would never get another convention because of the bitter memories of 1968. Instead, he said, they would hold the '84 convention in San Francisco because it is so civilized a city and would help the Democrats' image.

So they did. And on the first day of the convention, a big, burly guy named Erma came around the press rooms to announce that there would be an ejaculation contest that afternoon. Some image.

One of these years, they're going to wise up and come back to Chicago where we know how to show them a good time. I'm sure we have a few canisters left over.

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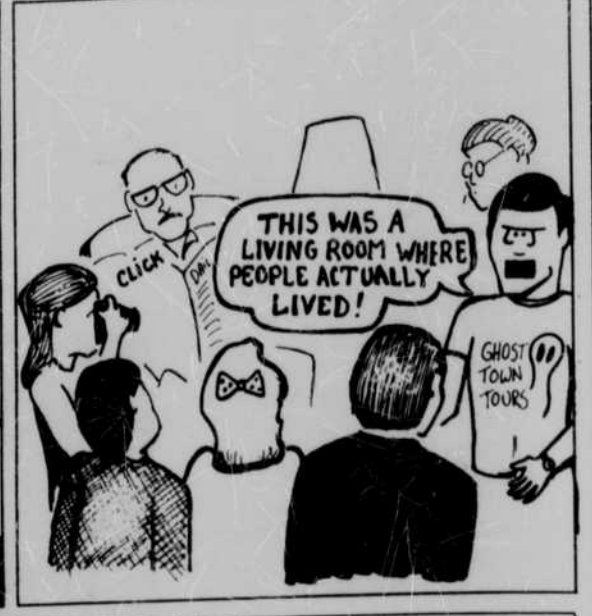
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John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan

## Kansas ghosts 'as real as me and you'

### Lieurance questions historian's definition of a ghost town

**W**hen I talked to Betty Brogan in St. Paul, Kansas yesterday she was alive as you or me, apparently sitting up and taking solid foods. Her husband of 22 years, Ed Brogan, told me she'd even wandered next door a few times.

I asked Ed what she was doing up and around.

Ed told me she had some errands to do.



Charles Lieurance

In her condition? I queried. What condition was that, Ed responded.

Why Ed, I said, as far as Daniel Fitzgerald of the Kansas Center for Historical Research in Topeka knows, your wife is no longer among us.

That so, Ed pondered. For that matter Ed, what are you doing there and what business does a Ghost Town have with phone serv-

ice?  
Ed was with me then.

It seems Mr. Fitzgerald wrote a book called "Ghost Towns of Kansas" which includes 99 Kansas towns. An Associated Press wire story reported that one of the towns, St. Paul, had 700 residents. Thinking perhaps my definition of "ghost town" was askew, I leafed through the handy Websters and found: "ghost town, the remains of a deserted town, permanently abandoned, esp. for economic reasons."

Okay, this was an older Websters. Perhaps the "scientific" definition of "ghost town" was different, or had been amended to include towns with under 1000 people or some such thing. So I called Pat Gaster over at the Nebraska State Historical Society, who edits Nebraska History Magazine.

"Could you define 'ghost town' for me, please?"

"A town with no one in it, maybe a few buildings left standing," she said.

"Would you consider it slightly irresponsible for an historian to call a town with 700 people in it ghost town?"

She thought for a second, already letting the first sounds of a "yes" slip

through her teeth.

"Yeeeaas," she committed herself. "I'd consider that kind of irresponsible. But you'd better call back and talk to Jim Potter, our state historian."

So maybe St. Paul was closing down and all of its residents were moving to Parsons, 18 miles away. One of the resident's names was listed in the AP story, so I thought I'd call and see if there was some mistake.

This is when I found out Betty Brogan, who was mentioned in the story, and her husband Ed were still hanging out.

At first, Ed's voice from the grave startled me.

Stragglers, I thought.

Haven't you and Betty moved out of there yet? I imagine there will be quite a housing shortage in Parsons what with 700 people moving in and all, I said, you and Betty best get a move on.

Ed informed me they had no intentions of moving to Parsons or anywhere else.

Maybe the Brogans were like those stubborn old coots who won't get off the sides of erupting volcanos or plant lawn chairs on their roofs during

See ST. PAUL on 5