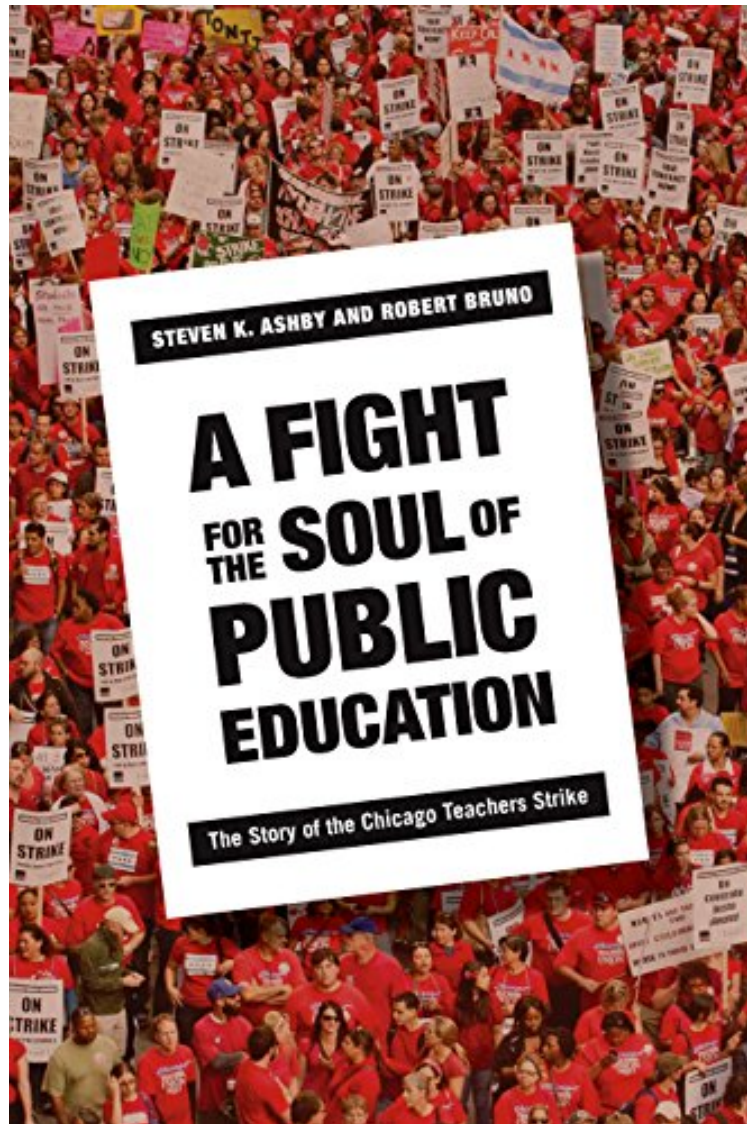


[Download free pdf] A Fight for the Soul of Public Education: The Story of the Chicago Teachers Strike

A Fight for the Soul of Public Education: The Story of the Chicago Teachers Strike

Steven K. Ashby, Robert Bruno

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Steven K. Ashby, Robert Bruno : A Fight for the Soul of Public Education: The Story of the Chicago Teachers Strike before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Fight for the Soul of Public Education: The Story of the Chicago Teachers Strike:

In reaction to the changes imposed on public schools across the country in the name of "education reform," the

Chicago Teachers Union redefined its traditional role and waged a multidimensional fight that produced a community-wide school strike and transformed the scope of collective bargaining into arenas that few labor relations experts thought possible. Using interviews, first-person accounts, participant observation, union documents, and media reports, Steven K. Ashby and Robert Bruno tell the story of the 2012 strike that shut down the Chicago school system for seven days. *A Fight for the Soul of Public Education* takes into account two overlapping, parallel, and equally important stories. One is a grassroots story of worker activism told from the perspective of rank-and-file union members and their community supporters. Ashby and Bruno provide a detailed account of how the strike became an international cause when other teachers unions had largely surrendered to corporate-driven education reform. The second story describes the role of state and national politics in imposing educational governance changes on public schools and draconian limitations on union bargaining rights. It includes a detailed account of the actual bargaining process revealing the mundane and the transcendental strategies of both school board and union representatives.

"It is rare for authors to have the kind of intimate contact with their subject matter that Steven K. Ashby and Robert Bruno have in their book about the great 2012 strike by Chicago public school teachers. Ashby and Bruno saw it all up close, and they also have unparalleled access to all documentary evidence. The result is a riveting book with insights into the future of the U.S. labor movement and the future of public education in this country. The narrative and the analysis are extraordinary."—Bruce Nissen, Florida International University

"The strike victory by the Chicago teachers clearly marked a watershed moment in U.S. labor history. Steven K. Ashby and Robert Bruno take us behind the headlines in a compelling account of teachers fighting to reclaim their union, of city fathers doing everything they can to stop them, and of the union's slogging through months of bargaining to win one of the most significant victories for teachers, students, and public education. Meticulously researched, this page-turner is a must for both union activists and academics wanting to understand what it really takes for union renewal."—Tom Juravich, University of Massachusetts Amherst, author of *Ravenswood* and *At the Altar of the Bottom Line*

"*A Fight for the Soul of Public Education* is an important story told with the details needed to appreciate the true complexity of contemporary public-sector labor relations and to see what's needed for labor to thrive rather than just survive. The stress of marathon bargaining sessions, the energy of member and community engagement, the frustration of teachers with old-style unionism and new-style corporatized public education, the messiness of union democracy, the power of political agendas and vested interests, the savviness and missteps of individual leaders, and the passion for racial and educational justice all vividly come to life. The result is a valuable combination of wake-up call, strategy manual, reality check, eyewitness to history, and, most of all, inspirational tale."—John W. Budd, University of Minnesota, author of *The Thought of Work*

"There is much to be learned from the Chicago Teachers Strike of 2012. *A Fight for the Soul of Public Education* skillfully tells how a reform leadership slate won control of the union and used a systematic grassroots organizing strategy to build support and involvement among both its own membership and members of the community. The result was a victory over Chicago's Mayor Rahm Emmanuel that inspired and energized the American labor movement."—Paul F. Clark, Professor and Director, School of Labor and Employment Relations, Penn State University, author of *Building More Effective Unions*

About the Author Steven K. Ashby is a Clinical Full Professor of Labor and Employment Relations in the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He is coauthor of *Staley: The Fight for a New American Labor Movement*. Robert Bruno is a Professor of Labor and Employment Relations and Director of the Labor Education Program in the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He is also Director of the School's Project for Middle Class Renewal. He is the author of *Steelworker Alley: How Class Works in Youngstown* and *A Fight for the Soul of Public Education: The Story of the Chicago Teachers Strike*, both from Cornell, *Justified by Work: Identity and the Meaning of Faith in Chicago's Working-Class Churches*, and *Reforming the Chicago Teamsters: The Local 705 Story*.