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James R. Barrett: THE IRISH & THE MAKING OF MULTI-ETHNIC CHICAGO

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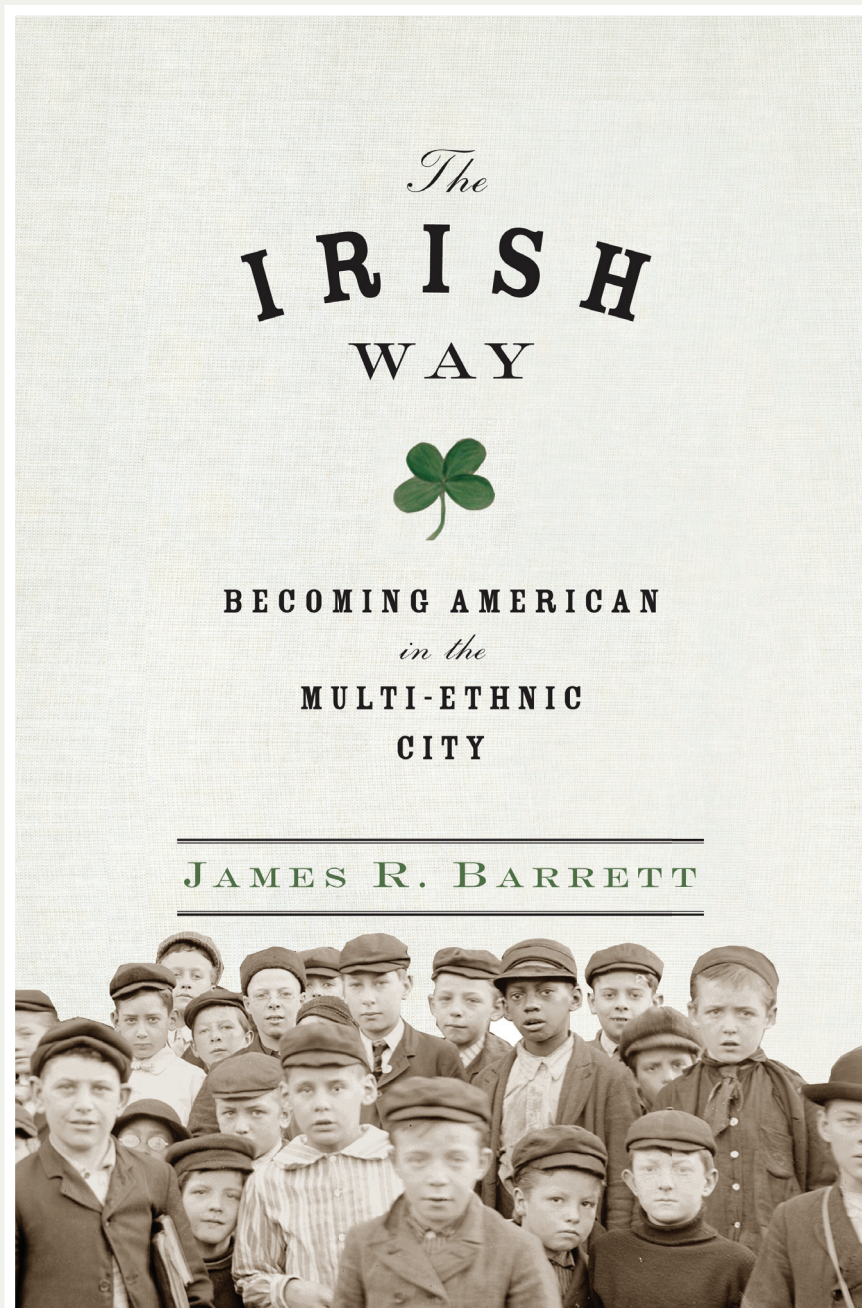
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THE IRISH & THE MAKING OF MULTI-ETHNIC CHICAGO

JAMES R. BARRETT
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UIUC

SEPTEMBER 15, 5 PM
DOUDNA FINE ARTS CENTER
LECTURE HALL



A lively, street-level history of turn-of-the-century urban life explores the Americanizing influence of the Irish on successive waves of immigrants in the American city.



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Taking Chicago as a particularly striking case, Jim Barrett describes how a new American identity was forged in the interactions between immigrants in the streets, saloons, churches and workplaces of the American city. This process of “Americanization” was led largely by the Irish. On Chicago’s South Side and in other urban communities between the end of the nineteenth century and the Great Depression, waves of immigrants and migrants of color found it nearly impossible to avoid the entrenched Irish. While historians have long emphasized the role of settlement houses and other mainstream institutions in Americanizing immigrants, Barrett makes the case that the most important acts in this drama occurred in city streets and that the vibrant hybrid working class culture absorbed by newcomers had a distinctly Hibernian cast.



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