

The New Criterion

Features September 2010

“Organized” crime

by Andrew C. McCarthy

On the President’s favorite philosopher, Saul Alinsky.

It is a matter of no small amusement for the journalist and agitator Nicholas von Hoffman that his beloved mentor, Saul Alinsky, learned the craft of “organizing” at the feet of Chicago’s most notorious mobsters. This was nearly eighty years before the self-proclaimed radical became a household name, having posthumously inspired an up-and-coming organizer who went on to become the forty-fourth president of the United States. Alinsky’s entrée to the Al Capone gang (which, tellingly, he called a “public utility”) was neither his ruthlessness nor his penchant for rabble-rousing, though a surfeit of both qualities surely impressed his friend Frank (“the Enforcer”) Nitti. It was, instead, his academic credentials.

A freshly minted doctor of criminology from the University of Chicago, Alinsky sought out, bonded with, and closely studied anti-social types. His experience...

The rest of this article is locked. Please make sure you are logged in to view the full article.

Andrew C. McCarthy is a contributing editor at *National Review* and a Fox News contributor. His most recent book is *Ball of Collusion* (Encounter).

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 29 Number 1 , on page 11

Copyright © 2024 The New Criterion | www.newcriterion.com

<https://newcriterion.com/issues/2010/9/aoeorganizeda-crime>