



Illinois Supreme Court
Historic Preservation
Commission

October 6, 2022

HISTORY ON TRIAL: CHICAGO “BLACK SOX” PRODUCTIONS

Think you know everything about the Chicago White Sox loss to the Cincinnati Reds in the 1919 World Series?

The Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission announces its latest entry in its long-running History on Trial series: the Chicago “Black Sox.” The presentation will examine the 1919 White Sox allegedly throwing the World Series in their 5 games to 3 loss to the Reds and the legal ramifications following. In 1921, all of the players implicated in the scandal were acquitted or not tried. This stage presentation will feature actors portraying the players, lawyers, and judges to explore the legal aspects of the cases that appeared in the Cook County Circuit Court and elsewhere in the early 1920s.

“The History on Trial series highlights important cases in Illinois legal history and brings them to life to show that the law is a living, breathing element of society,” Chief Justice Anne M. Burke said. “The Chicago Black Sox scandal happened over 100 years ago but still looms large today. These presentations help root out fact from fiction in a fun and engaging way.”

These events will be theatrical productions in Springfield and Chicago, followed by a panel discussion of legal and baseball experts. The first production will be on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, at 7 p.m. at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, 212 N. Sixth St., Springfield. The second production will be on Wednesday, November 2, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. at the Spertus Institute, 610 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago. Mandatory Continuing Legal Education credit for lawyers is pending at each of the venues through the Illinois State Bar Association. DePaul University Theatre School is managing both productions.

Tickets are \$15 and are available at <https://www.illinoiscourthistory.org/history-on-trial>.

The 1919 World Series has been the subject of many books and movies. The 1963 Eliot Asinof book *Eight Men Out*, as well as the 1988 movie of the same name popularized many longstanding myths about the team and its owner Charles Comiskey. The Society of Baseball Research (SABR) has done some recent studies into the subject, finding that gambling was prevalent in the early twentieth century and that Comiskey was not as miserly as portrayed in books and movies. SABR’s findings can be found here: <https://sabr.org/eight-myths-out>.

Beginning in 2011, the Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission has produced History on Trial to highlight modern public policy issues through the lens of historical trials. Previous events include retrials and trial presentations on Lincoln assassination co-conspirator

Mary Surratt, Mary Lincoln's insanity hearing, Mormon prophet Joseph Smith's habeas corpus trials, and the Alton school segregation cases.

(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: John Lupton, Executive Director of the Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission. 217-670-0890, ext. 1. Or john.lupton@illinoiscourthistory.org.)