



POWER FAILURE

Politics, Patronage, and the Economic Future of Buffalo, New York

DIANA DILLAWAY

266 pp (Illustrations)

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"Power Failure offers a series of case studies in Buffalo's failures of leadership and missed opportunities over the past half century....Although politicians make easy marks, Dillaway's studies place the lion's share of the blame for these failures with the power elite—the city's oldest and wealthiest families, the heads of banks and influential law firms and insurance companies, those who sit on boards of directors for various companies—whose money and control of the city's institutions have always lent their decisions

(or lack of decisions) special weight....Reading Power Failure is a head-shaking experience—a painful reminder for the civic-minded of what might have been."

Artvoice

"Diana Dillaway has meticulously set out the causes—economic and social—of the decline of Buffalo, NY, once the fastest growing and most promising city in the nation...This compact volume is must reading for any North American student of urban history. It ought to be in every school and college library in Upstate New York."

Douglas L. Turner

The Buffalo News Washington, DC bureau chief

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We begin with a hat tip to some of our **Best Ballot Stuffers**, who congregate perennially in this section of the Best of Buffalo polling.

Of course, there's a distinction to be made between ballot-stuffing and mounting a campaign. Plenty of our finalists in this section handed out ballots to customers and urged them to vote. That's fair enough. It is likewise fair to send out emails to all your friends and customers with a link to the Artvoice Web site. We like that people want to win our Best of Buffalo awards; it's flattering. But sometimes the lust for recognition leads to perfidy. The telltales are the same every year: dozens of xeroxed ballots, for example, filled out with the same pen, in the same handwriting, mailed on the same day. Often the ballot stuffers will fill out just enough categories—roughly 25 percent of the ballot must be complete, or we throw it out—to make the ballot count. In this electronic age we can often uncover online ballot stuffers, as well; it's trickier, but our tech guys are aces.

To give an idea of how much ballot-stuffing we're talking about: More than 1,000 ballots were disqualified. The majority of these invalid ballots were chucked because they were obvious frauds.

Rotten Jack's Creep Shack was among the more ambitious of our ballot stuffers this year, having tried to creep into the winner's circle in the **Best Gift Shop**, **Best Men's Clothing**, **Best Women's Clothing** and **Best Web Site** categories. Perhaps they stretched themselves too thin; they didn't send in enough votes to win in any one of those categories. And once we pulled the fraudulent ballots, they didn't even place.

RedHouse Tattoo also mounted a furious ballot-stuffing campaign. Curiously enough, they need not have bothered: We pulled stacks of clearly bogus ballots for RedHouse out of the mix—a hundred at least—and they still finished as a finalist for Best Tattoo.

Have a little faith in yourselves next year,

RedHouse. Let the people speak. They like you...they really, really like you.

As for the rest of this section, our readers' responses begged the same question as every one of Artvoice's special issues: Who needs to go to the mall? We are a region rich with small, energetic and creative businesses. We make special mention of two that are likely to be displaced by the proposed Elmwood Village Hotel at the corner of Elmwood and Forest. **Don Apparel** placed in the voting for **Best Antique Store** and **Best Thrift Shop**. **Mondo Video**, owned and operated by Artvoice film editor M. Faust, placed in the voting for **Best Video Store**. Whatever one's position on the hotel, the city can ill afford to lose businesses like these, which thrive on high pedestrian traffic, proximity to college students and, frankly, cheap rent. Let's hope both shops find new homes that offer all those conditions.

Best Antiques Store

Stock Exchange
Horsefeathers Architectural
Gothic City Collector's Cove
Don Apparel
Coo Coo U
Antique World

Best Bookstore

Talking Leaves
Second Reader Book Shop
Rust Belt Books
Oracle Junction
Old Editions Book Shop and Café

Best Convenience Store

Wilson Farms @ Elmwood/Auburn
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 Studio 806
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 Excuria Salon & Day Spa
 Elite Salon & Day Spa
 Chez Ann Salon
 Capello Salon & Day Spa

Best Florist
 Wildflowers & Co.
 Mother Nature Plant Emporium
 Michael's Florist & Gifts
 Maureen's Buffalo Wholesale Flower Market
 Graser's Florist
 Floristry
 Brighton-Eggert Florist

Best Men's Shop
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 Ultimate Men's Shop
 Riverside Men's Shop
 Napoli's
 Aldo's Uomo



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Cowpök
HOD Custom Tattoo
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Blue Moon Tattoo
Strange Brew
Nickel City Tattoo

Best Thrift Shop

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Junior League Shop
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Don Apparel
Amvets

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Presence Unique Clothing & Jewelry
Half & Half Trading Company
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