

# Doomed by Cartoon: How Cartoonist Thomas Nast and the New York Times Brought Down Boss Tweed and His Ring of Thieves

John Adler, Draper Hill



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The legendary Boss Tweed effectively controlled New York City from after the Civil War until his downfall in November 1871. A huge man, he and his Ring of Thieves appeared to be invincible as they stole an estimated \$2 billion in today's dollars. In addition to the New York city and state governments, the Tweed Ring controlled the press except for Harper's Weekly. Short and slight Thomas Nast was the most dominant American political cartoonist of all time; using his pen as his sling in Harper's Weekly, he attacked Tweed almost single-handily before The New-York Times joined the battle in 1870. Where ""Doomed by Cartoon"" differs from previous books about Boss Tweed is its focus on looking at circumstances and events as Thomas Nast visualized them in his 160-plus cartoons, almost like a serialized but intermittent comic book covering 1866 through 1978. It has been organized to tell the Nast vs. Tweed story so that readers with an interest in politics history and/or cartoons will enjoy.

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