

TSS BOOK REVIEW: Ex Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman Dishes On Tyson, King, More

Written by David A. Avila
Friday, 14 June 2013 11:10



It's not uncommon to see former Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman out in public with a martini in hand, flanked by two glowing showgirls in glitzy costumes.

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The former attorney-at-law, actor, activist and ambassador of Las Vegas is much like the silver-haired gentleman in the beer commercial depicted on television. But this gentleman recently had his life chronicled in a book called "Being Oscar: From Mob Lawyer To Mayor of Las Vegas."

Most people take the path of least resistance and work toward living comfortably, always striving for financial mobility. Very few people choose the rocky road filled with hidden minefields and other booby traps in life.

Goodman is one of those few.

Though born and raised in Philadelphia, the son of an attorney ended up in the casino capital of the world in the early 1960s when it was experiencing a growth boom. Goodman set up an office and was immediately called upon to represent the accused.

Among the first to beckon Goodman was a person named Mel Horowitz, an underworld figure whose case would open up the door to many more alleged mobster and gambler cases. Those following would be many of the most colorful figures in mobster history such as Meyer Lansky, Ruby Goldstein, Nick Civella, Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal, Joe Agosto, "Little Nicky" Scarfo, Vinny "The Animal" Ferrara and Tony "The Ant" Spilotro.

It's a who's who of the underworld and led Goodman to be dubbed "the mob lawyer."

Spilotro was a Las Vegas figure whose life was depicted in the movie "Casino." Actor Joe Pesci portrayed Spilotro and Robert DeNiro portrayed Rosenthal in the 1995 hit. Goodman also appeared in the film.

As a criminal attorney representing the Spilotros, Civellas and Scarfos, the Las Vegas lawyer ran into many wiretapping situations involving the F.B.I. and other law enforcement organizations. They didn't always play by the rules and Goodman has harsh but truthful opinions on that topic. Ironically, the same issues of privacy invasion are now being debated on the public forum today with the National Security Agency and C.I.A. accused of abusing its

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power.

Goodman was always interested in the Constitution and defending it. Justice under the law is the main constant in the book. Regardless if it was for major figures or regular Joes, due process is an important theme for Goodman.

If you're an attorney in Las Vegas it's inevitable that boxing will knock on your door. Among those represented by Goodman were the "Brown Bomber" Joe Louis, Frans Botha, promoter Don King and "Iron" Mike Tyson.

Goodman represented Tyson during the ear-biting incident with Evander Holyfield in 1997. Following the suspension of the Las Vegas-based fighter, it was Goodman who managed to save the fighter's career during the Nevada State Athletic Commission hearing. He also represented King many times.

Eventually the bon vivant ventured into politics and gambled he could win. Goodman became mayor of one of the most vibrant and colorful towns in the world. And with his leadership the town thrived and grew even more. His personal goal was renovating the downtown area and it proved successful. For 12 years he served as mayor until he was termed out.

Now, it's Goodman's wife Carolyn Goodman who leads Las Vegas as its mayor. Maybe she'll share her view on the rise of Las Vegas.

I'm positive that everyone will be as captivated as me when reading this biography. It was written by Goodman with assistance from George Anastasia. If you have any interest in the history of Las Vegas, this book is for you. It's like a movie. It should be a movie.

What's that saying in the commercial?

"He is the most interesting man in the world."

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That's pretty much Goodman.

[Comment on this article](#)

dino da vinci says:

I love Oscar Goodman.

And what's not to love? Man got things done while most people are content just talking about [!]maybe[!/] someday doing something.

kidcanvas says:

go deepwater lmao i agree with everything u said on the spying and Ojackass but Characters like goodman are the ones that gets **** done. what would america be without interesting cads like him ,the mob , promoters etc... boring

dino da vinci says:

@Deep.

Let's have some fun with this. Your thoughts on Mike Tyson.

dino da vinci says:

...and he used to rob little old ladies when he was old enough to know better. Biting an unsuspecting opponent's ear off, all in a days work.

Your opinion on Ruben "Hurricane" Carter?

Radam G says:

The Hurricane Carter was a killa, a thilla and a chilla. And eyewitnesses -- not earwitnesses -- say he used to beat "Night Train" Sonny Liston like a gorilla.

Those selfish collectors with the films of the sparring sessions ought share. Put the stuff on Youtube. Holla!