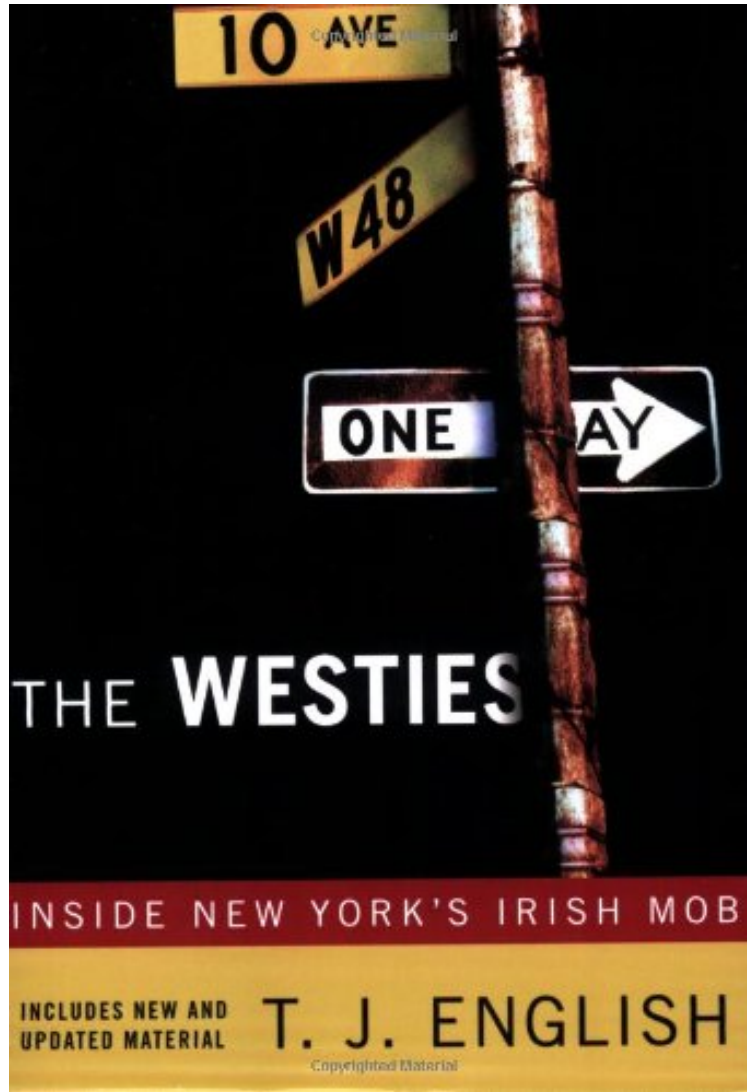


(Free read ebook) The Westies: Inside New York's Irish Mob

The Westies: Inside New York's Irish Mob

T. J. English

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T. J. English : The Westies: Inside New York's Irish Mob before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Westies: Inside New York's Irish Mob:

46 of 48 people found the following review helpful. A spellbinding tale By Andy in Washington The Westies controlled the West Side of Manhattan, known as Hell's Kitchen (currently Clinton). TJ English takes us through a history of the Westies, primarily as a personal history of several of the main characters. Of these characters, Mickey Featherstone was perhaps the most interesting. There is no doubt Featherstone was a nasty sort—you certainly didn't want to be on his bad side. But he also had some interesting touches that made him a very complex and multi-dimensional character. If I

had to characterize him, he was sort of a anti-Shakespearean hero...a man who is basically evil, but with a tragic "good" flaw. I won't spoil the excitement of the book by revealing too many details, but English does a very credible job of relating the trials and tribulations of Featherstone, fellow gangster Jimmy Coonan, and a host of other mostly despicable characters. The Westies were a loose organization-even their name came from the newspapers-but were a constant target of organized crime investigators. The book ends with the virtual elimination of the Westies as a gang, although Realtors and Developers may have been as much responsible as cops and prosecutors. There is a fair amount of blood and gore in the book, but while somewhat graphic, is not overly sensationalized or highlighted. The book is easy and almost "fun" to read. I found myself actually "rooting" for Featherstone, as his character does create sympathy and empathy, despite his obvious character flaws. So if you are a fan of crime history, especially relating to NYC or organized crime, you will enjoy this volume. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Highly Recommended - Fascinating and Written Well By Francie Nolan The Mafia sure didn't corner the market on crime and violence. I never read about the Irish Mob in New York. The beginnings are like the beginnings for the Sicilians/Italians. Squashed in tenements and facing prejudice in employment, they had few options. For the Irish, it was the priesthood, the police or join a gang. Seems like the Irish and Italian Mobs had it all under a sort of control with their understandings with the NYC police, politicians and neighborhood people...until the 60's when drugs came in, the younger guys came up and the old guys started dying out (or were murdered). The Irish, in particular Coonan, became extremely, absurdly, irrationally murderous. At the same time, Coonan meets up with Castellano and they come to an agreement. But Coonan made a mistake when he didn't look after the family of his main man when he was in prison. That, IMO, was the beginning of the end. This is written well and fascinating, although I must admit--I skimmed when the author described the killings and cutting up. Can't take that aspect anymore. Highly recommended. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended By Jo Ann English *s research and acumen show throughout. I particularly appreciated that he included all the information necessary for reader to know how the lives of all the players turned out, and not just the major players. It turns out that in some ways this ends as a feel good story. The good guys win, for the most part. The bad guys for the most part get what they deserve, or at least part of it. Featherstone does turn his life, and that of his family, around.. A good read. I also have English's Paddywhacked, and look forward to reading it. N

Even among the Mob, the Westies were feared. Starting with a partnership between two sadistic thugs, Jimmy Coonan and Mickey Featherstone, the gang rose out of the inferno of Hell's Kitchen, a decaying tenderloin slice of New York City's West Side. They became the most notorious gang in the history of organized crime, excelling in extortion, numbers running, loan sharking, and drug peddling. Upping the ante on depravity, their specialty was execution by dismemberment. Though never numbering more than a dozen members, their reign lasted for almost twenty years?until their own violent natures got the best of them, precipitating a downfall that would become as infamous as their notorious ascension into the annals of crime.

From Publishers Weekly Hell's Kitchen, a section of Manhattan west of Eighth Avenue between 34th and 59th Streets infamous for poverty and gang-related crime which dates back to the 19th century, was taken over in the late 1960s by the "Westies" mob. The name--used by the press and the police, not by the mobsters themselves--designated a group of ruthless and vicious hoodlums, led by Jimmy Coonan and Francis (Mickey) Featherstone, who cut up the bodies of victims to dispose of them more readily. Once in power, Coonan caused considerable grumbling in the mostly Irish gang when he allied his men with the Gambino crime family. Next, Coonan arranged to have rival Featherstone charged with a murder; found guilty, he became a witness against the Westies, joined by other gang turncoats. In early 1988 Coonan and several of his henchmen were convicted of assorted crimes and imprisoned. English, who covered the trial for the Irish Voice, ably traces the Westies' rise and fall. Literary Guild and Doubleday Book Club alternates. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Irish-led criminal gangs have a long history on Manhattan's West Side (formerly known as Hell's Kitchen), the latest being "the Westies," seven of whom were recently convicted of racketeering and murder charges. Based primarily on the testimony of feared mob enforcer Mickey Featherstone, portrayed here rather sympathetically, journalist English dramatically re-creates the Westies' violent tale. Less organized and more small-time than the Mafia--only top gangster Jimmy Coonan really prospered--the Irish mob was no less vicious. An attempt to frame Featherstone on a murder charge led to the gang's demise. This is a harrowing account of big city crime. Recommended. Doubleday and Literary Guild alternates.- Gregor A. Preston, Univ. of California Lib., Davis Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Must reading...will shock even the most hardened readers." ?Playboy "Sterling social history...the author's skillful reporting makes the most of his subject." ?The New Yorker "Raw, earthy and heavily flavored with New York vernacular...[T.J. English] knows the people he writes about and never sets himself above them." ?San Francisco Chronicle "Masterfully told, gracefully written...the true story of the most violent men this nation has ever seen. Al Capone would have cringed...you want to cheer at the end...The Westies will blow you away." ?Edna Buchanan, author of The Corpse Had a Familiar Face "Must reading... an investigative story about contract killers for the Mafia that will shock even the most hardened

reader.” ?Playboy“A disquieting look at a worthwhile subject: the frailties of justice in the big city.” ?The New York Times“Stunning...a graphic account of brutality in search of power and money.” ?Ocala Star Banner“A fascinating, frightening account of how bad kids turned worse, and how the worst one, finally turned good.” ?Booklist“A fascinating look into an Irish American criminal enterprise that may not have rivaled the Mafia in sophistication, but certainly surpassed it in terror.” ?Wall Street Journal“A fast-moving tale of criminal corruption in which, for a change, the good guys win...English pulls no punches.” ?L.A. Daily News“Both compelling and unsettling...it's also chilling. You'll have a hard time putting it down.” ?Rocky Mountain News“A great yarn--English writes with a controlled lushness. He provides the detail of a detective's notebook.” ?Anniston Star“Pure enjoyment...if you want to read a book about the 'Irish Mafia,' this is it.” ?Vermont Standard“A harrowing account of big city crime.” ?Library Journal“Potent...what English has done is take organized crime as it really evolves and occurs on a human scale and then builds it back into an engrossing narrative. His book will stand.” ?Irish America Magazine“Reminiscent of Poe and Dostoyevsky in subject and character... at times as jolting as running on concrete on a cold winter morning.” ?New York Newsday“As exciting as E.L. Doctorow's Billy Bathgate...the hardest part is trying to remember this isn't a novel; it's real.” ?Arkansas Gazette