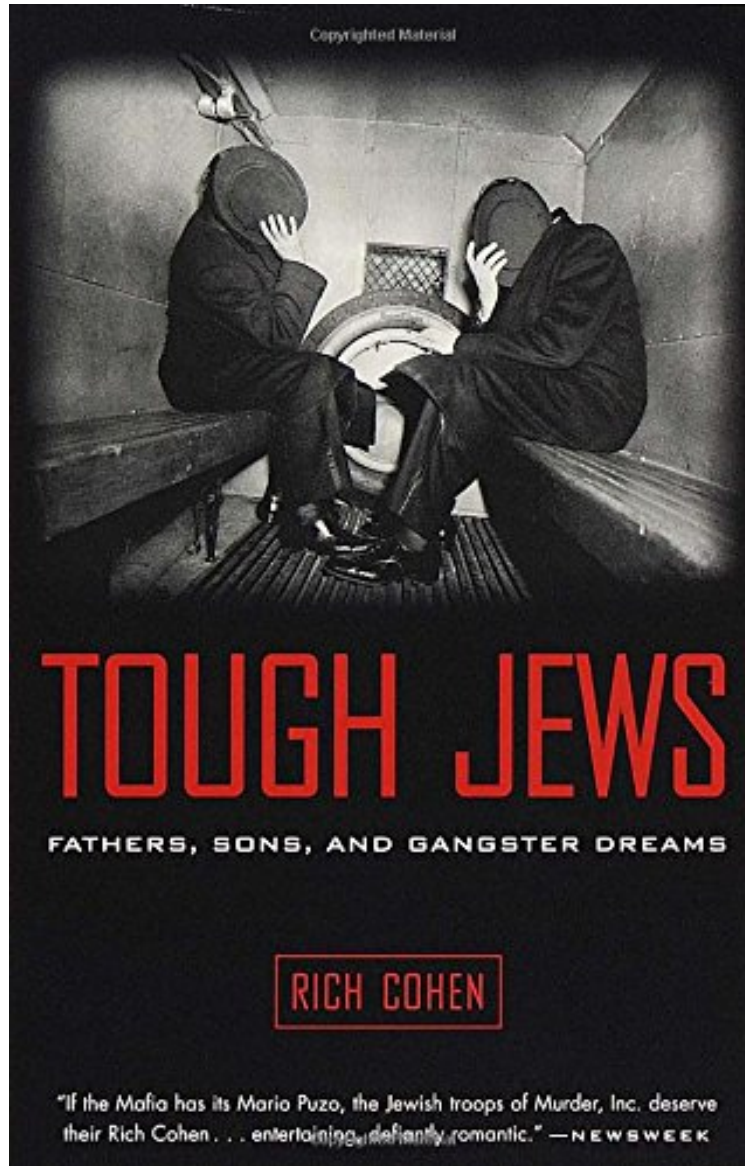


(Free read ebook) Tough Jews : Fathers, Sons, and Gangster Dreams

Tough Jews : Fathers, Sons, and Gangster Dreams

Rich Cohen

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#129744 in Books Cohen, Rich 1999-04-20 1999-04-20 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.98 x .62 x 5.14l, .62 #File Name: 0375705473304 pages | File size: 25.Mb

Rich Cohen : Tough Jews : Fathers, Sons, and Gangster Dreams before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tough Jews : Fathers, Sons, and Gangster Dreams:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well researched.By CustomerWell researched.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting StoryBy E. PekarskyThe writing style of the author was not exactly what I was looking for - this book focuses on the characters/players from a novelty fictional portrayal and less than an actual

historical recount of the organization founding and formation. I was looking to get more out of this book, especially in regards to the history, instead got a lot of physical descriptive imagery glorification of the people involved. A lot of material became very repetitive and it was not so compelling and/or nostalgic. A good casual read but a read that allows reader to pick up the book months later. I expected this book to be as good as "The Avengers" which was written by the same author. I didn't find the subject as appealing to me so perhaps it is only that I'm much more interested in reading about Jewish heroes. If you have this book and like it, you should LOVE "The Avengers".

In an L.A. delicatessen, a group of Brooklyn natives gets together to discuss basketball, boxing, the weather back east, and the Jewish gangsters of yesteryear. Meyer Lansky. Bugsy Siegel. Louis Lepke, the self-effacing mastermind of Murder, Inc. Red Levine, the Orthodox hit man who refused to kill on the Sabbath. Abe "Kid Twist" Reles, who looked like a mama's boy but once buried a rival alive. These are just some of the vibrant, vicious characters Rich Cohen's father reminisced about and the author evokes so pungently in *Tough Jews*. Tracing a generation of Jewish gangsters from the candy stores of Brownsville to the clubhouses of the Lower East Side--and, occasionally, to suites at the Waldorf--Cohen creates a densely anecdotal and gruesomely funny history of muscle, moxie, and money. Filled with fixers and schlammers, the squeal of tires and the rattle of gunfire, his book shatters stereotypes as deftly as its subjects once shattered kneecaps.

When we think gangster, hood, or wiseguy, we often associate these characters with such names as Capone, Luciano, or even Corleone. However, when organized crime reared its ugly head in the late 1920s in Brooklyn, at the foundation were men like Meyer Lansky and Ben Siegel--both Jews. Rich Cohen's romantic account of Jewish gangsters, *Tough Jews*, brings to life the story of Jewish involvement in the world of organized crime. Cohen persuasively achieves his objective by recounting the stories he heard from his father, who grew up with his friends (including broadcaster Larry King) at the end of the gangster era in Brooklyn, finding heroes in men like "Kid Twist" Reles and Bugsy Goldstein. The intriguing tales Cohen heard, although slightly embellished over time, offer a rare glimpse into a world that can barely be related to today's generation of Jews living in America. These Jews went to prison for committing violent felonies, not white-collar crimes, and got the chair for it. Inspired by their stories, Cohen went on to conduct extensive research through old journals, police records, and court reports to uncover the real stories behind the tales he heard as a boy. Cohen warmly discusses his father's fascination with these powerful, charismatic figures, and openly envies his experiences at a time before Jewish people lived under the debilitating shadow of the Holocaust. In addition, Cohen shows compassion for the need of his father's generation to look up to "someone who gives them the illusion of strength." --Jeremy Storey
From Library Journal
Journalist Cohen on Jewish organized crime in 20th-century America.
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From Booklist
For younger Jews, Jewish gangsters are as alien and as long extinct a species as dinosaurs, but for some of their elders, many of whom survived pogroms in Europe and Russia and vowed never to be victims again, Jewish wise guys were heroes. Cohen examines the origins and gestalt of the Jewish underworld in colorful and often wry accounts of the lives of such major figures as Louis Lepke (once considered "the most dangerous criminal in America" by J. Edgar Hoover), Arthur Rothstein ("probably the first major American drug dealer"), and Meyer Lansky, probing their interactions with the Italian mob and illuminating the mind-set that has ensured that "gangsterism would at last become Americanism--as much about remaking yourself as about striking it rich." His anecdotal chronicle is based on his own family's observations of gangster life in Bensonhurst during the years leading up to the Depression and on through the war. Cohen doesn't glamorize or condone the violence of these tough Jews, but he sure does admire their moxie. Donna Seaman