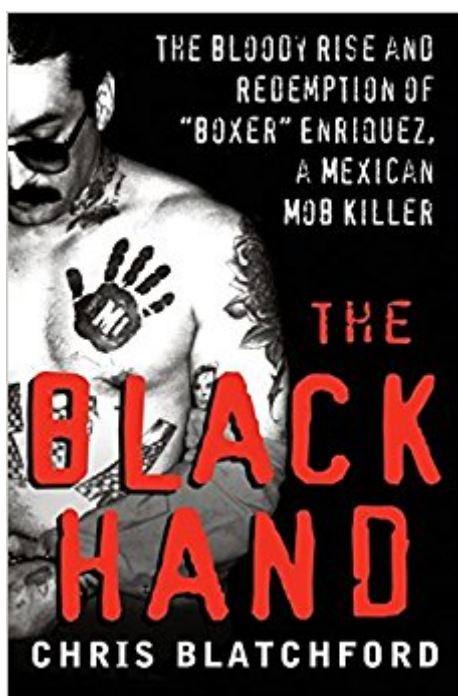


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The Black Hand: The Bloody Rise And Redemption Of "Boxer" Enriquez, A Mexican Mob Killer



Synopsis

An intense and shocking inside look at the inner workings of La Eme, the Mexican Mafia (La Familia Mexicana), *The Black Hand* is the story of loyal soldier Rene "Boxer" Enriquez, his life of crime, and his ultimate redemption. Award-winning investigative journalist and author Chris Blatchford tells the never-before-told true story of the most powerful gang in America and one of the most brutal and ruthless criminal organizations in the world who control the California underworld and wave the flag of The Black Hand.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. There is much to praise in this authorized biography of Rene Boxer Enriquez, penned by Peabody Award-winning journalist Blatchford (*Three Dog Nightmare*). While this is a superb cautionary tale about the dangers of youth falling into senseless gang violence, it also rates as a probing, redemptive story of Enriquez, a vicious, heroin-addicted killer for Los Angeles's largest criminal street gang, with 20,000 members involved in extortion, drug-dealing, vice and murder. Blatchford explores with grim accuracy Enriquez's criminal past, prison killings, turf wars and contract eliminations around the West Coast. But the book also reveals Enriquez and his crew's total commitment to hoodlum honor, the cost in lives and status, and the betrayals and intrigues both behind bars and out in society. This is a savvy account of Enriquez's arduous self-education and personal transformation from cold killer to a man who, in his own words, educates law enforcement and the public about a prison and criminal subculture that should scare

the hell out of them. (Sept.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

“Blatchford is well-suited to tell this story . . . he captures the nuances and nihilism of the prison world . . . The narrative is interspersed with fascinating prison arcana.” (Los Angeles Times) “A gripping, powerful, chilling inside look at a criminal organization that is changing the organized crime landscape. This is a mob classic.” (Dominick Dunne) “A fascinating, vivid and unforgettable insider’s look at the bloody, secret and deadly Mexican Mafia. Chris Blatchford’s compulsively readable wake-up call spares no one and names everyone, including the politicians who aid and abet this dangerous criminal organization, through corruption, maddening naiveté, or political correctness.” (Joseph Wambaugh) “A courageous and well-written exposé on one of the most ruthless and powerful gangs of all, the Mexican Mafia. Chris Blatchford reaffirms his position as being among Americans greatest investigative reporters.” (Vincent Bugliosi, author of *Helter Skelter*) “Chris Blatchford has hit a grand slam. *The Black Hand* is an important page turning book that will take you into a frightening dark world that shouldn’t exist but it does. It’s riveting, and when you finish the book, you’ll get up and lock your doors. Highly recommended.” (William “Billy” Queen, retired special agent ATF and bestselling author of *Under and Alone*) “A fascinating look at the world of the Mexican Mafia, more ruthless than the LCN. A must read for law enforcement and a tribute to the courage of dropout Rene Boxer Enriquez.” (Joe Pistone, aka Donnie Brasco)

The narration had some issues in the first hour or so. After that the performance was excellent, in my opinion. Rene “Boxer” Enriquez chose a certain path it seemed because he wanted to be with the best, the most respected. These guys operating within the Mexican Mafia had to be in total control of themselves at all times except when they were drugged up, and they were almost all users of narcotics. The level of control that Rene and his peers demanded of themselves felt surreal to me. Their rules were strict, especially with regard to not being a coward and not hesitating. Imagine a lifestyle where you’d be required to kill somebody seemingly at the drop of a hat. So I can see how they were regarded by many as warriors and not just criminal offenders. The issues all the ‘made’ guys run up against are fundamentally the same as those for everybody, only with consequences that end up being violent and deadly for some unlucky member. It’s all about what they call “politicking.” That’s the word they use: politicking. I have a new appreciation for that word

now. The significant events were mostly prison stabbings. Once a prisoner gets stabbed, if he survives that event he will be marked as one who is likely to get killed at any moment. He can't recover. Basically, the guys are always reorganizing themselves based on individual power within the group. There's a lot to learn by listening to this book. Rene and his buddies aren't amateurs. Most aren't book smart but some are. They're all savvy when it comes to the pecking order and how every little thing brings the potential of change to the pecking order. I felt empathy for Rene as did the author. Maybe I was conned by a mean guy with charisma. Either way, I enjoyed the book.

I liked the book. It took awhile to get into the story line because in the beginning of the book too many names were used without developing the person, like who he was and why he was being mentioned. I felt like I had read multitudes of names without knowing who they were and what significance they had. I was looking to learn how the Mexican mafia developed. I don't think you find out until later in the book when the taxes are explained. Taxes are owed to the top EME mafioso. The book also skips around in time so you have to come back to a time period after being taken forward in time. By about three quarters of the way through the book you are fully understanding how this system works and how easy it is for an EME member to fall out of favor. That is illustrated well as Rene was always worried he could be next to have the green light on him, to be taken out. He had to be alert to his situation at all times and always had a knife concealed within his body ready for use if needed. This shows you how the Mexican mafia member lived in a heightened fight or flight mode. Although with all the heroin use you wonder how alert one could be. Lots of info on the drug use and how drugs and other contraband got into the prisons. Especially interesting was how the system, our government laws, were used to the benefit of the prisoners. How they called down certain prisoners for their benefit to kill or use for testifying. How they used law papers and the passage of them as they were not allowed to be searched by guards, like sneaking in many different kinds of drugs, by using their own personal messenger. It was amazing to see how inept our prison system was or is. How it functions and how the inmates ruled the joint. You wouldn't think so but they did. The book explains how all kinds of money was made behind bars in continuing illicit activities. But you have to wonder where did all that money go. It really is unfathomable that the prison administration had no knowledge of what was going on.

The "Black Hand" story of Mexican Gangs, La Eme, throughout the U.S. is eye opening and frightening at the same time. The Mafia for decades was the poster organization for corruption, violence, influence and crime. The Mexican Mafia seems to have learned from the Cosa Nostra and

created a national network of the same in this next generation. Rene Enriquez's story reveals the inner workings of this violent sub culture which murders, steals and manipulates the legal system to meet its needs with the assistance of reform minded liberal politicians. As early as 1968 La Eme began to build what has become a network of approximately 300,00 members throughout the U.S. After Boxer Enriquez becomes an informant after decades as a carnale killer law enforcement finally gets an insight into this alt culture which began in southern California. The business of drugs for profit fuels La Eme and most of it is directed from inside prisons where La Eme members are incarcerated. If you want to read a fascinating almost unbelievable story " The Black Hand " will pique your interest and provide you an education on why drugs proliferate and mindless violence occurs at such a high level in the U.S..

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