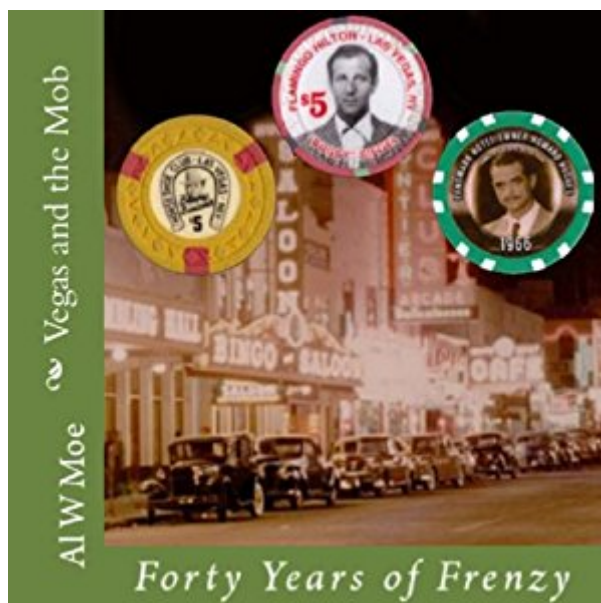


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Vegas And The Mob



Synopsis

Las Vegas was the Mob's greatest venture and most spectacular success, and through 40 years of frenzy, murder, deceit, scams, and skimming, the FBI listened on phone taps and did virtually nothing to stop the fun. This is the truth about the Mob's control of the casinos in Vegas like you've never heard it before, from start to finish. Two of the nation's most powerful crime family bosses went to prison in the 1930s: Al Capone, and Lucky Luciano. Frank Nitti took over the Chicago Outfit, while Frank Costello ran things for the Luciano Family. Both men were influenced by their bosses from prison, and both sent enough gangsters into the streets to influence loan sharking, extortion, union control, and drug sales. Bugsy Siegel worked for both groups, handling a string of murders and opening up gaming on the west coast, and that included Las Vegas, an oasis of sin in the middle of the desert - and it was legal. Most of it. The FBI watched as the Mob took control of casino after casino, killed off the competition, and stole enough money to bribe their way to respectability back home. By the 1950s, nearly every major crime family had a stake in a Las Vegas casino. Some did better than others. Casino owners watched over their profits while competing crime families eyed each other's success like jealous lovers. Murder often followed.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you ever wondered just who put the Sin into Sin City, this is the book for you. This book names all the players, and chronicles not only what they did, but what they did to each other. There are the big well-known gangsters who rose up through the New York, Chicago and West Coast crime

syndicates, as well as the lesser lights, the hangers on, the greedy grifters, the show business hucksters, the crooked politicians and Federal agents, the shyster lawyers, the colorful and enigmatic personalities, and the small time hoods and con men who came looking for power and money but who usually ended up in shallow unmarked graves far from the lights of Las Vegas. Al W Moe has done an admirable job of researching the roots of Vegas and the role played by the Mob over the decades, as well as connecting the dots between people and events. If there was one thing I took away from this book is that Mob rule was bad for business. The lords of Vegas hurt their own products by massive skimming of profits, poor accounting procedures, and the need to lay out huge sums of money to stay in business and out of jail, both in the form of attorney fees and bribes to every greedy government minion, from the local councilman to US Congressmen and FBI agents; they didn't have to bribe J Edgar Hoover, just show him a picture of his boyfriend in a compromising situation. It was not until the Mob was pushed out of Vegas, when the owners became millionaires and corporations with good practices that the casinos finally broke out of their forty-five-year death spiral; the casinos still go through the cycles of boom and bust, but now they are the result of economic pressures and not gang warfare. Anyone who has stayed in Vegas since the 1940's will find information and anecdotes about their favorite casinos. Mine was the Sahara, one of the greatest of the mid-century glamour casinos and the last of them to fall. But there are also stories about the Sands, the Aladdin and others that faded away before most of us were old enough to gamble or drink. While the book is excellent reading for the nostalgic, it's also a trove of information for historians, especially those interested in crime and society.

Not the best writing I must say. Poorly edited. But Al Moe seems to know his stuff. I lived in Vegas as a kid in the fifties and sixties. I got info on a hotel that was burned out (mob arson) and not rebuilt for the longest time. Hard to know what is reality and what is mob lore, nonetheless, this is a fun book if you like this kind of stuff. Sort of a vintage Sopranos without really getting into character. That said, believe more of these "facts" than you are inclined to. Not sure if Las Vegas is all that improved for the lack of the enforcers. Seems like Las Vegas is now all glitter with the sleaze not that far under the surface. As a kid we used to ride across town on our bikes without worries about our safety. The corporations have seemed to remove a lot of the fun from the city. Everything costs a fortune now. I suppose the mob was worse.

Interesting book. Too short really. Never got into the real characters behind the faces. Informative though and pretty enjoyable but could have been so much more.

This book was a good overview of the formation and growth of the city we all know as Las Vegas. It offers more than the usual mob characters and shows the influence of many others. It also skillfully shows how the mob influence gave way to the corporations which now own many or most of the casinos. The author tosses in some sarcasm now and then throughout the book which I liked, but some might not enjoy it. The book was well worth the time to read it.

Well, hard to review this book. A portion of it was quite informative. The chapter on Howard Hughes was very good. However, for the most part it skipped around. You read a paragraph and then the next paragraph was discussing a different person with no real connection. I do know more about Las Vegas history than I did so that is a plus. Other than the Howard Hughes chapter it was quite difficult to follow. I guess it was worth \$1.05

I'm a prolific reader. This book was good fun. He could have used more time on individual stories, anecdotes and the like. It seemed to race from fact to arcane details (who bought what hotel when) instead of just telling the stories of the people involved. He was at his best when he talked about Bugsy and Howard Hughes.

I chose the five star rating because I don't want to get whacked. Seriously though, this book held me spellbound from beginning to end. I learned so much about Vegas, and I have never even been there, but now I would like to go and bring this book with me. I recommend this read for anyone that is going to or has been to Las Vegas. I even found myself referencing all of the characters as I went from chapter to chapter. I was sorry to see this book end. Good job Mr. Moe

This is a very light and enjoyable read. I learned a lot about the characters who built Las Vegas: they certainly are not the kindly grandfather types they have portrayed themselves to be in recent years. They were rough, ruthless men, who would not hesitate permanently eliminating a rival, if they thought it necessary. The book contains lots of inside information. Vegas is a glitzy place. But it's continued existence depends on hard scrabble business management by strong men and women at the helm.

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