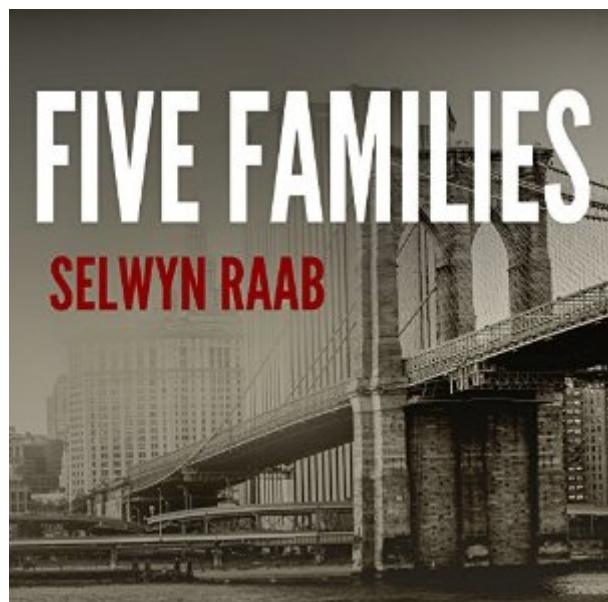


The book was found

Five Families: The Rise, Decline, And Resurgence Of America's Most Powerful Mafia Empires



Synopsis

Genovese, Gambino, Bonnano, Colombo, and Lucchese. For decades these Five Families ruled New York and built the American Mafia (or Cosa Nostra) into an underworld empire. Today, the Mafia is an endangered species, battered and beleaguered by aggressive investigators, incompetent leadership, betrayals, and generational changes that produced violent, unreliable leaders and recruits. A 20-year assault against the five families in particular blossomed into the most successful law enforcement campaign of the last century. Selwyn Raab's Five Families is the vivid story of the rise and fall of New York's premier dons, from Lucky Luciano to Paul Castellano to John Gotti and more. The book also brings the listener right up to the possible resurgence of the Mafia as the FBI and local law enforcement agencies turn their attention to homeland security and away from organized crime.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a great book on the history of the American Mafia with some new insights on its origins and how it came to the US, also how it functioned and bled New York for 70+ years. Raab has a done a masterful job of combing through the myriad newspaper, court documents and sources out there and assembled a chronological narrative of each of New York's Mafia Families. It is a riveting read, entertaining and informative. It gives new insights into the semi-legit rackets and old history like Apalachin, JFK's assassination, Luciano's war-time aid to the US, and Jimmy Hoffa. Of particular value is how the new focus on terrorism post 9/11 may give the Mafia a chance to regroup. However,

these strengths are also its weaknesses. It focuses exclusively on New York City. It says how New York made satellites of Mafia Families in other cities but never explains how things worked in other cities or how the New York Families subjugated other mafia groups around the country. It also would have been interesting to learn how New York mafia groups related to and cooperated with families in other cities, especially Chicago. It never explains how the New York Families could run crews in other cities with active Mafia Families, like Newark and California. Raab also relies heavily on FBI and Court transcripts, and sometimes his explaining the investigations and pursuit of the gangsters is too long and pulls the book off track. We want to learn about the Mafia and how it functions, not read a police investigative-procedural drama. The most glaring mis-step is Raab's over-simplification and neglect of other criminal organizations, especially Meyer Lansky, Moe Dalitz and other Jewish gangsters.

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