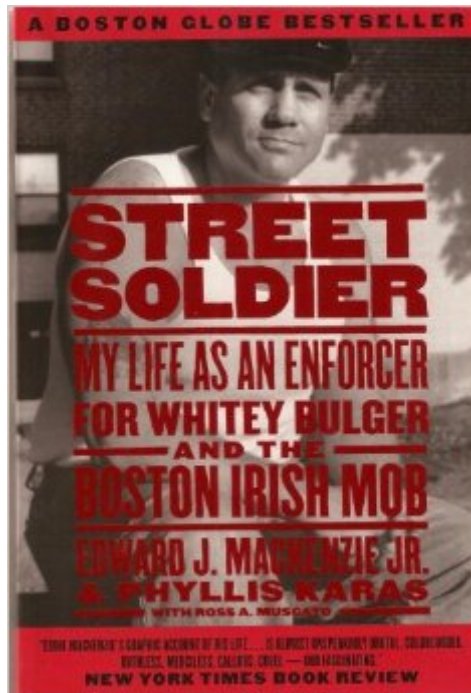


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Street Soldier: My Life As An Enforcer For Whitey Bulger And The Boston Irish Mob



Synopsis

For decades the FBI let James "Whitey" Bulger get away with murder, an almost unbelievable story that entered a new chapter when Bulger was arrested in California and put on trial. During the 1980s, Edward J. MacKenzie, Jr., "Eddie Mac" was a drug dealer and enforcer who would do just about anything for Bulger. In this compelling eyewitness account, the first from a Bulger insider, Eddie Mac delivers the goods on his one-time boss and on such former associates as Stephen "The Rifleman" Flemmi and turncoat FBI agent John Connolly. Eddie Mac provides a window onto a world rarely glimpsed by those on the outside. Street Soldier is also a story of the search for family, for acceptance, for respect, loyalty, and love. Abandoned by his parents at the age of four, MacKenzie became a ward of the state of Massachusetts, suffered physical and sexual abuse in the foster care system, and eventually drifted into a life of crime and Bulger's orbit. The Eddie Mac who emerges in these pages is complex: An enforcer who was also a kick-boxing and Golden Gloves champion; a womanizer who fought for custody of his daughters; a tenth-grade dropout living on the streets who went on, as an adult, to earn a college degree in three years; a man, who lived by the strict code of loyalty to the mob, but set up a sting operation that would net one of the largest hauls of cocaine ever seized. Eddie's is a harsh story, but it tells us something important about the darker corners of our world. Street Soldier is as disturbing and fascinating as a crime scene, as heart-stopping as a bar fight, and at times as darkly comic as Quentin Tarantino's Pulp Fiction or Martin Scorsese's Good Fellas.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Street Soldier is as intense as a kick in the teeth with a steel-toed boot, but without the pain and drive to the hospital. You get the same cringe of discomfort and sick-to-your-stomach feeling reading about MacKenzie's horrible acts of violence, though- not to mention all the same rubbernecking fascination. His tale is formulaic in a lot of ways: "Mac" is passed around from one foster home to another, abused and molested as a kid; he quickly excels at a life of crime and rises to great and seedy heights; and he gets caught, crashes, and waxes about his mistakes. Those heights reached were probably not known outside of South Boston, even notwithstanding the raft of Irish Mob stories of the last decade (representing a wave that Street Soldier is clearly trying to ride). Locality doesn't matter, though, since the story is interesting enough to transcend state and cultural lines. It is also violent enough to cross the lines of good taste. Not like I objected, but be forewarned that no details are spared as Mac clinically and dispassionately describes the kicking in of ribs, biting off of ears and fingers, and pulling out of teeth, all to collect a buck or spread the word of his boss' displeasure. All in a day's work...Some of the more interesting aspects of this story that separate it from its peers include MacKenzie's love for, and prowess in, the martial arts and boxing. While obviously helpful to his career as a thug, they allowed Mac to win heaps of athletic awards that in another lifetime could have been his ticket to legitimacy. Mac also didn't seem to indulge in the drugs and substances that he pushed, which arguably helped him remember the last 20 years more clearly.

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