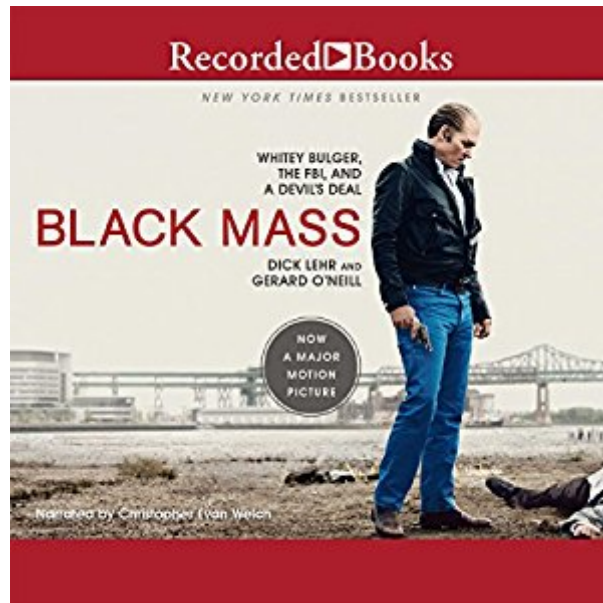


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# Black Mass: Whitey Bulger, The FBI, And A Devil's Deal



## Synopsis

In this gritty New York Times best-seller, the true story of a crooked deal between the FBI and the Irish Mob is exposed. By providing a penetrating look into the mean streets of mid-1970s South Boston, the author shows how two kids from the neighborhood cross paths again years later, ending in the biggest informant scandal in FBI history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

With the advent of the capture of Whitey Bulger by the FBI in June of 2011, Dick Lehr and Gerard O'Neill's book, "Black Mass: The Irish Mob, The Boston FBI, and a Devil's Deal" will be read by many. This is a first hand account of how Whitey Bulger, and Steve Flemmi became part of the FBI as informants, and in turn the FBI became informants for Whitey and Steve. The story goes back to the early 70's in South Boston when Whitey was growing up and became head of the Winter Hill gang. He was always a kid in trouble, it seems and never graduated from high school. He wanted to become the 'Lord of the Rings' in his town and slowly he built a reputation via gambling, drugs, corruption, mayhem and murder. No one wanted to cross Whitey. At the same time his brother, Billy, became a lawyer and then a politician and the father of nine children. Billy the good child and Whitey the black cat of the family. This book pulls us into the life of a criminal in South Boston, the Irish neighborhoods, and the Irish Mafia, the Winter Hill gang. 'Southie' is explored, its lure and its people. We meet the people who inhabit Southie and those that were part of Whitey's gang. Slowly we are introduced to the FBI, the men who developed Whitey as an informant, and who were pulled so far into the lure of Whitey's world that they came to respect and admire this criminal. We get to

know John Connolly, the biggest fraud of them all. He protected Whitey at all costs, and all costs meant loss of freedom. The kind of mind and commitment needed to remain in denial about the kind of work he was doing and what he did to the FBI, itself, is incomprehensible. We also meet the victims, none of these crimes were victimless. It is said that Whitey killed 19 people, all of them had friends and family. Many of the bodies were not found until someone gave up the secrets. We come to know some of the families and what they experienced. The lives of people in Southie were difficult and some turned to crime. The choices usually were to become a cop or a criminal. We meet the lawyers who defend the Mafiosi and the criminals and come to know them. Mostly brilliant people, who want to do the right thing. The right thing sometimes meant laying out scenarios that would hurt others. The lawyers, the FBI, the State Police, the DEA, the criminals and the everyday "Joes and Janes", these are the people who explore Southie. The writing is precise and filled with accurate timelines. The writing also kept me quite absorbed. I understood the personalities of these players. One side was often pitted against the other. Substantial information was relayed and in such a manner that it was difficult to put this book down. This book is as relevant today as it was in the 1990's. I can only hope that Lehr and O'Neill will write a new book that follows the path of Whitey from 1995 when he went on the 'lam', until the day he was captured. Highly Recommended.

prsr07-03-11 Rogues and Redeemers: When Politics Was King in Irish Boston True Crime  
Authors Black Mass with Dick Lehr and Gerard O'Neill. The History Channel

If you live in Boston, as I did for a few years, the name Whitey Bulger is as resonant as Jimmy Hoffa. Both were men feared by some and idolized by others. Both had no qualms about victimizing those who feared and idolized them. Both were seen by some as the guy like them who managed to stand up to the Establishment. And both disappeared. But nobody thinks Whitey is buried at Gillette Stadium. Whitey Bulger was a mythic figure in Boston, especially his old neighborhood of Southie, the gangster who always managed to slip out of the hands of the law. But even Southie little boys and girls grew up dreaming of becoming FBI agents. Chances are their dreams didn't involve having gangster over to the house for dinner. John Connolly, another son of Southie, dared to have this dream and in pursuit of it he pretty much turned the Boston office of the FBI into Whitey Bulger and his Winter Hill gang's own little intelligence squad. Make no mistake about it, James "Whitey" Bulger and his partner Stevie "The Rifleman" Flemmie were crooks, thugs, murderers, and all around low lifes. One could spend hours cataloging their many crimes. Oddly, they fail to get the credit they deserve for their pioneering work in the field of bromance. Any law enforcement agent can have an informant. Any crook can become a snitch. But it takes real imagination to turn it into quite evenings

at home with your snitch/handler at the home of the handler's boss enjoying a home cooked meal the handler's boss has prepared. Candles, wine - champagne on occasion, steaks and the occasional visit from Whitey's powerful politician brother to share the latest family pictures. Just another night at Chez Agent Morris. Special dinners away from the cares of work aren't enough to keep a bromance alive, either. You need to show your bro that you care. Really care. Don't be afraid to give him a give now and then. A bottle of wine, a tasteful silver champagne bucket or a very special belt buckle says "I think you're the best" more than words ever can. This is one mind-bending story and Dick Lehr and Gerard O'Neill are perfectly suited to the task. Their journalistic style is spot on in terms of original research and the kind of prose that doesn't get in the way of illuminating facts. Lehr & O'Neill know when to let these looney-tunes speak for themselves as in this line from murderer Stevie Flemmie that actually made me laugh out loud: "I received a sweatshirt from (Agent) Nick Gianturco." The next time you're wondering what to get that special multiple murderer in your life, look no farther than your local sporting goods store. I kept hoping it was some sort of demented joke about giving a fleece to a thief but no, ethically challenged FBI Agents John Morris and John Connolly and their pals thought this made sense. This is an entertaining, well-researched, well-written book. The only flaws are that it drags in the final chapters when they provide perhaps a bit too much detail about the grand jury proceedings that ultimately brought this sordid business to light and that the book begs to be updated to cover Connolly's recent convictions. Aside from that, this is as smart a book about the mob as any True Crime fan could hope for. Highly recommended for any True Crime fan, anyone interested in the Mafia and anyone from Boston. Kindle note: Photographs included.

read this and watched the movie, I'm from Boston and remember his reign of terror. Seeing these places in the movie Triple O's and Southie brought back memories. I used to fix beer and soda systems all over Boston during these years. There was a place on Broadway "Whitey Mcgrail's" (no relation to Whitey Bulger) they used to have a cigar box on top of the ice machine, for the numbers game I'd ask the bartender to move it so I could fix the machine, he'd say you can move it. NO Way ! it's full of money. A guy comes in and robs the place, takes the cigar box, by the time he gets to the door, he has about 40 bullet holes in him. Everyone in the place takes a shot at him. The place empties out, the Cops show up "What happened to this guy?" The response "He died of Lead Poisoning" ! Southie used to be a very tough place

After reading "Black Mass: Whitey Bulger ..." I became more fully aware just how corruption gets a

foothold: It takes TWO willing parties who are greedy for power and/or money, and it takes opportunity. The FBI was betrayed, (and then so, too, were the American people), by a couple of "I-wanna-go-up-the-ladder-of-promotion" of it's members. The cancer that was the underworld in South Boston got a "green light", and took advantage of it. The rest is history. Only the scruples of honest men stopped the mayhem, and ... eventually ... justice was served. The details between the first encounter and the last, is where the story lies. And, oh my, what a story it is. A good read, but the malignancy of corruption, I predict, will leave a foul taste in the readers mouth ... for a long time after the final page is silenced by the closing of the back cover.

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