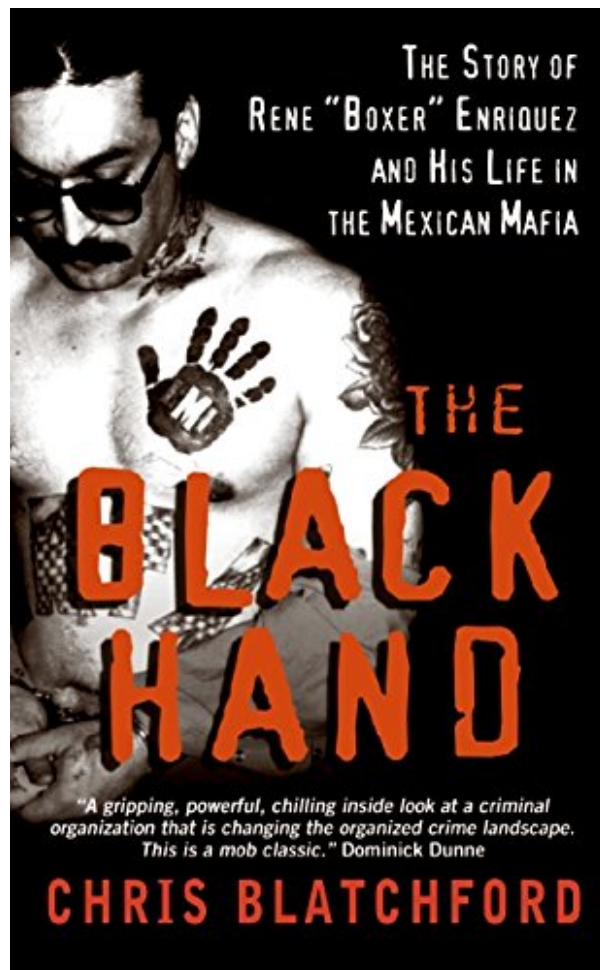
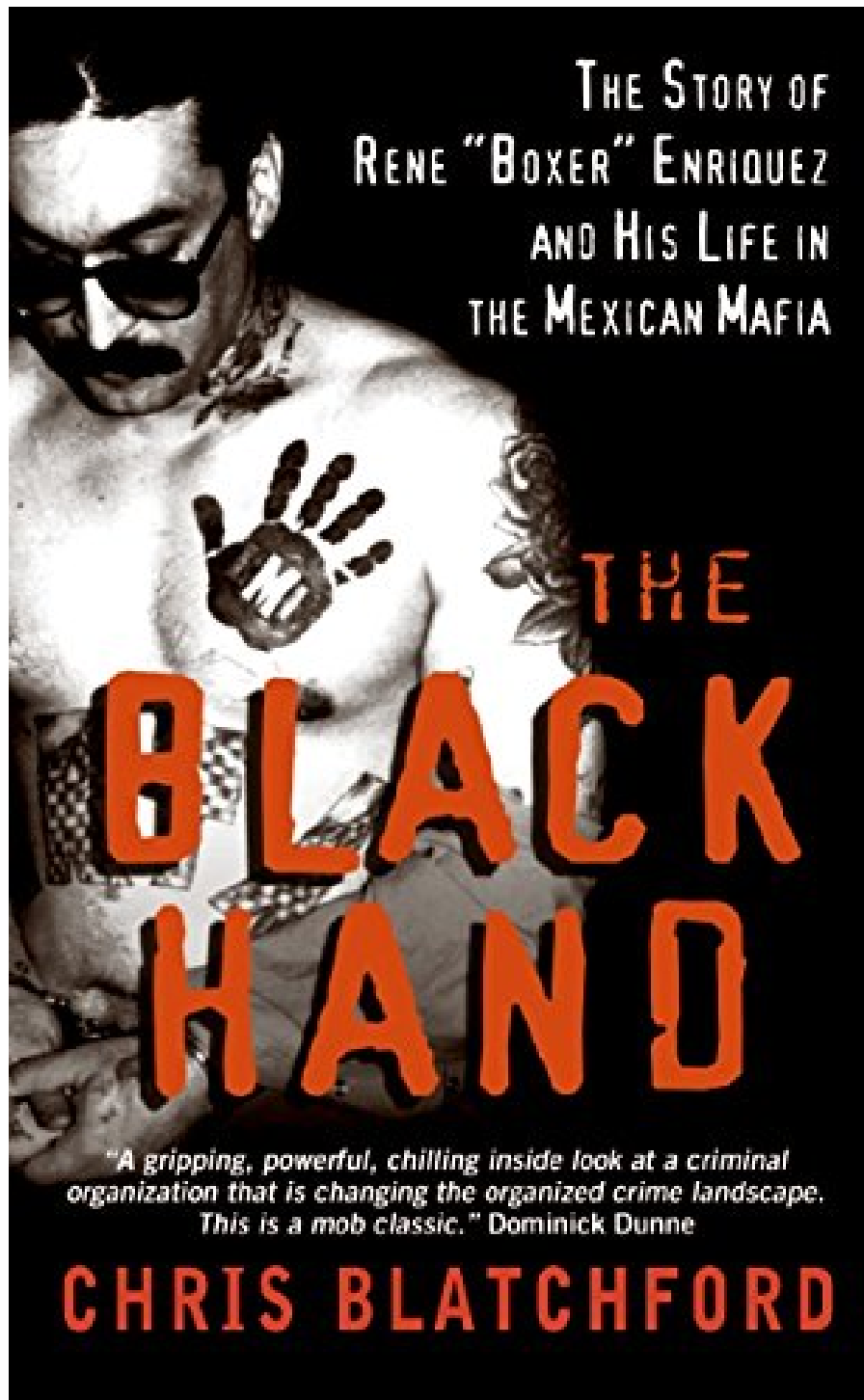


THE BLACK HAND: THE STORY OF RENE "BOXER" ENRIQUEZ AND HIS LIFE IN THE MEXICAN MAFIA BY CHRIS BLATCHFORD



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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.

- Sales Rank: #23348 in Books
- Published on: 2009-09-29
- Released on: 2009-09-29
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.75" h x 1.11" w x 4.19" l, .50 pounds
- Binding: Mass Market Paperback
- 432 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Four Stars

By David Villarreal

Very informative!!

46 of 53 people found the following review helpful.

Very Powerful!

By Norwalquero

My first acquaintance with Rene Enriquez came in the early 1990's, during a week-long, Chris Blatchford exclusive on the Mexican Mafia.

In that early 90's report, Blatchford revealed 'Boxer' as a cold-hearted Eme leader who (during his double-murder, double-attempted murder trial) turned calmly toward the camera lens of a courtroom news crew and broke into 'shoulder -shaking laughter'. Since then, I have been anxious to know more about this man.

Like Blatchford himself, I too was floored when I learned (a few years ago) that Rene Enriquez had chosen to 'debrief' and to turn aside from his Gang. After all, not only had 'Boxer' previously demonstrated the

Can't-stop-won't-stop mentality of a loyal Eme soldier (by laughing in the face of a possible death penalty situation) but had also risen through the ranks of Eme leadership to the highest echelons of Mafia power.

Blatchford's long-anticipated book on Rene Enriquez does not, by any means, disappoint! To the contrary, it is perhaps the best first-hand account of the Eme's power, influence, ruthlessness and depraved potential in print today. (While "Mundo" Mendoza's seminal work provides an in-depth understanding and historical background of the first 25 years of the Eme's existence, Blatchford/ Enriquez bring readers up to speed on 'M' into the 21st century)

Blatchford covers Rene Enriquez from his childhood in Cerritos (then surrounded by dairy farms) to his initiation (following his older brother's footsteps) into 'Arta/ Artesia X3', to his teenage years gang-banging against the likes of Hawaiian Gardens, Tokers Town & Norwalk, getting high, doing robberies and growing increasingly rebellious against his parents and against authorities.

Blatchford follows Rene's graduation from Los Padrinos to Boys Republic to OC County Jail to Soledad, San Quentin & beyond. Rene speaks at length about his relationships with Eme leaders like "Black Dan" Barela who "read his Bible every day, but yet had a kill-first-talk-about-it-later attitude", "Topo" Peters who, after stabbing "Mon" 26 times in the LA County Jail's attorney room, urged "Boxer" to 'just plead guilty so we can go to our cells at Pelican Bay and watch color TV'.

He talks about the execution of Nico Velasquez for converting from Eme to Christianity (an action which Rene Enriquez himself disagreed with strongly), and about "Kilroy" Roybal's conversion to Christianity after being stabbed in Tehachapi, and a plethora of other interesting facts.

So much more can be said about Rene Enriquez's evolution/ redemption and about Blatchford's book. Much more than a mere book review can capture. The thing that struck me hardest, perhaps, was how utterly contrary to the popular/ romanticized version of Mafia the actual reality is.

Contrary to the notion of Eme being a closely-knit fraternity of brothers bound by loyalty to one another, Rene portrays the incessant backstabbing, politicking and scheming of 'carnales' against one another; about the never-ending anxiety that "Boxer" carried with him from day one of someday ending up "In the hat" (ostracized and marked for death by his own 'brothers') for some small, inconsequential infraction.

Contrary to the popular notion that power and 'palabra' (in the criminal world) is the be-all and end-all of life, Rene portrays with sober clarity that nothing could be further from the truth. Both Joe Morgan and "Topo" Peters died alone (and lonely) and in prison. (Not to mention that there were only a half-dozen attendees at "Topo's" funeral service).

To end with a theological reflection: the devil's a LIAR...and a thief who comes to steal, kill and destroy. For those youngsters who aspire to become 'carnales' and who are starstruck by the 'Big Homies' you hear and read about: don't take my word for it! Take it from "Boxer" Enriquez...someone who reached the heights of power in both the streets and the pinta...and concluded that it's all a massive (and evil) deception, and definitely NOT worth it!

18 of 19 people found the following review helpful.

The Hands of Terror

By Best Of All

Street life can be brutal, even for those who think they hold the winning hand.

Investigative reporter Chris Blatchford delves into the shadows of La Eme, the Mexican Mafia, in this authorized biography of former gang enforcer Rene Enriquez. The tentacles of this monster of urban terrorism spans several continents and grips the halls of government, businesses and neighborhoods by day, while brutally dealing drugs, extortion, vice and murder under the darkness of night.

And Enriquez - who is serving a life-sentence for crimes perpetrated for the gang - was once a player in the largest street gang in Los Angeles. Enriquez learned the ropes while growing up on the street of East L.A. and showed the smarts and muscle to find his way into La Eme.

His life of violence and the reasons he finally broke away, along with what happened when he began to publicly renounce the gang, makes for a compelling and urgent story. But Blatchford connects the dots in the puzzle that makes La Eme a force in North, Central and South America, with a growing army of gang members and supporters who have massive influence within a web of operations.

This is not some Hollywood version of wise guys or a fictionalized account of "honorable" men in a dishonorable profession; this is the hands of terror that are scooping up power and slapping aside those honest enough to stand in their way.

It is a call from the "Boxer" to stop the onslaught by the thugs before it is too late.

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