

Bugsy Siegel and Meyer Lansky

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Synopsis

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In the last 70 years, a countless number of people have come across the grisly and morbidly fascinating crime scene photographs of Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel's murder. The photographs are as disconcerting as they are iconic, for they show a gritty glimpse into the haunting reality of a life too often glamorized by pop culture. The less-publicized photograph of Bugsy in the morgue is, in a way, a more chilling reminder of the barbarity and callous irony behind the term "organized crime". With the blood on his face rinsed off and his hair slicked back, it almost seems as if the photographer had caught Bugsy mid-slumber, but the balls of cotton plugging the gaping bullet holes in his face suggest otherwise. One minute, the fearless Bugsy was stalking the streets of Sin City, his mere presence enough to make even the most hardened thugs break out in a cold sweat, and the next minute, Bugsy was reduced to an unrecognizable body sprawled out on a hard metal slab, with the name on his toe tag misspelled.

Bugsy, who helped turn Las Vegas into what it became, had risen to the upper echelons of New York's criminal underworld along with his childhood friend, Meyer Lansky. One of America's most infamous mobsters, Lansky was also one of the most mysterious, a perplexing, yet inexplicably intriguing individual with multiple reputations. To his admirers, he was in many ways the ultimate genius and survivor within the callous and cut-throat world of 20th century organized crime. He had all the stealth and cunning of a sphinx, and while remarkably even-tempered, gangsters twice his size dared not cross him. To them, he was no more than a wildly ambitious, often misunderstood entrepreneur who trod upon the border between legality and lawlessness with all the mastery of a tightrope artist.

Conversely, most will quickly concede that while Lansky was an exceptionally clever criminal, he was a criminal all the same, and the crimes of this dark horse were unforgivable. Meyer was a fraudulent, tax-evading crook whose massive fortune was literally made off the

bodies of countless victims. </p> <p>Lansky, whose most famous nickname remains the “Mob’s Accountant”, was one of the few gangsters of his era to die in old age, and he was never pinched for anything more serious than gambling. It’s believed he made upwards of \$20 million in his time as a mobster, but some still claim he was never the mogul the media painted him out to be.</p> <p><i>Bugsy Siegel and Meyer Lansky: The Controversial Mobsters Who Worked with Lucky Luciano to Form the National Crime Syndicate</i> profiles the friends and partners as they rose from the streets of the Lower East Side to become some of the most influential organized crime leaders in America. You will learn about Bugsy Siegel and Meyer Lansky like never before.</p>

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