

Your 25 Key Books About Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs

A free guide to essential reading about the bikers' world and what lies behind the motorcycle club patches of the Hells Angels MC, Bandidos MC, Outlaws MC, Pagans MC and others

Introduction

As the author of The Brethren Outlaw Motorcycle Club series of crime thrillers set in the biker world, I've often been asked about my research.

After all, as Ed Winterhalder and I noted in the introduction to our compilation of current biker writing, [The Ultimate Biker Anthology](#):

The outlaw biker's own policy of carefully guarded privacy, under which club business is club business, as well as a general, and probably understandable, distrust of the press, have... meant that the motorcycle clubs, and their members' sides of the story, have had relatively little exposure.

My experience growing up in the seventies and eighties was that this was very true. Having read Hunter S Thompson's classic Hells Angels, I wanted to find out more but I quickly found the options for factual reading, as opposed to fairly lurid fantasy, were very few and far between. There were occasionally magazine interviews, or by reading around the subject I could find limited references to bikers in other books covering high times in California by [Tom Wolfe](#), ride-on roles in the [Mason family](#) story and [Janis Joplin's biography](#), and one day I caught a brief sight of a battered paperback copy of [Buttons, The Making of a President](#), and that was about it.

But since the publication of Sonny Barger's autobiography Hell's Angel in 2000, the situation has changed dramatically (as can be seen by the publication dates on many of the books listed below), to the extent that this year I have found myself buying two or more books a month to keep up with the material coming onto the market.

These books break down into three main categories.

Firstly, there are those written (with or without professional help) by insiders, current or ex club members wanting to talk about the realities of club life as they've experienced it.

Secondly, there are those written by outsiders, journalists, and academics who are looking to create an overview or tell the history of some particular incident.

And thirdly, there are those written by informers, usually looking to explain and justify their actions by painting as black a picture of ruthless criminality and violence as they can; together with a few well known books by undercover officers who have successfully infiltrated outlaw clubs.

So by way of an introductory guide to a selection of non-fiction books about the outlaw biker world that you might care to read, I have selected two dozen books covering each of these categories.

Some authors will be seen as being for want of a better description 'pro biker', some will be seen as being 'anti'. All are simply presented here with my brief commentary by way of a review and recommendation.

Obviously this is not a comprehensive guide to all the books that out there on the subject but I hope it provides a reasonable guide to a fair range of the most readable by way of a starting point. Where possible I have included links to Amazon (.com and .co.uk) in case you are interested in buying any of the featured books.

Iain Parke 2015

The Books

The Insiders

1	Hell's Angel	Ralph 'Sonny' Barger, Kent & Keith Zimmerman	USA	Hells Angels MC
2	Satan's Choice	Lorne Campbell & Peter Edwards	Canada	Satan's Choice MC
3	Honor Few, Fear None	Ruben 'Doc' Cavazos	USA	Mongols MC
4	Riding on the Edge	John Hall	USA	Pagans MC
5	Bikers	Maz Harris	UK	Hells Angels MC
6	Prodigal Father, Pagan Son	Anthony 'LT' Menginie & Kerrie Droban	USA	Pagans MC
7	Outlaws	Tony Thompson	UK	Outlaws MC
8	Out in Bad Standings & The Assimilation	Edward Winterhalder (& Wil De Clercq)	USA	Bandidos MC

The Outsiders

9	Out Bad	Donald Charles Davis	USA	Mongols MC
10	The Bandido Massacre	Peter Edwards	Canada	Bandidos MC
11	Fallen Angel	Jerry Langton	Canada	Hells Angels MC
12	Showdown	Jerry Langton	Canada	Outlaws MC / Hells Angels MC / Bandidos MC
13	Conspiracy of Brothers	Mick Lowe	Canada	Satan's Choice MC
14	Angels of Death	William Marsden & Julian Sher	World	Hells Angels MC
15	Hells Angels	Hunter S Thompson	USA	Hells Angels MC
16	The Brotherhoods	Arthur Venio	Australia	

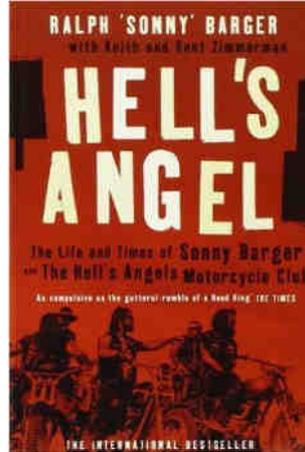
The Informers & Infiltrators

17	Dead Man Running	Ross Coulthart & Duncan McNab	Australia	Bandidos MC
18	Hells Angels Into the Abyss	Yves Lavigne	USA	Hells Angels MC
19	I was a Killer for the Hells Angels	Pierre Martineau	Canada	Hells Angels MC
20	Breaking the Code	Pat Matter & Chris Omodt	USA	Hells Angels MC
21	Hell's Witness	Daniel Sanger	Canada	Hells Angels MC
22	A Wayward Angel	George Wethern & Vincent Colnett	USA	Hells Angels MC
23	No Angel	Jay Dobyns	USA	Hells Angels MC
24	Under and Alone	William Queen	USA	Mongols MC

Hell's Angel

The life and times of Sonny Barger and The Hells Angels Motorcycle Club

Ralph 'Sonny' Barger with Keith and Kent Zimmerman



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1K0RuVc>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBHKG7>

Published 2000

Amazon description

The autobiography – the dangerous life and wild times – of Sonny Barger, the legendary leader of the Hell's Angels.

Sonny Barger is the Hell's Angel of all Hell's Angels, the motorcycle club that has been the scourge of America for over forty years.

Sonny was their de facto leader for much of that time, the man who Hunter S Thompson immortalised in his 1965 classic *Hells Angels*, noting 'Barger is nothing short of Winston Churchill when it comes to leading people'. He's been called an American legend and he's feared and revered by people on both sides of the law. From the club's formation in the 1940s to the height of their notoriety twenty years later, from Sonny's first-hand account of what really happened with the Rolling Stones at Altamont to his periods of imprisonment, from his fights with rival gangs and the police to his own battle with cancer, *Hell's Angel* sets the record straight.

Sonny Barger has ridden with the Angels for forty years, obeying no law but that of the HAMC. For the first time, this is his own – and their own – story.

Commentary

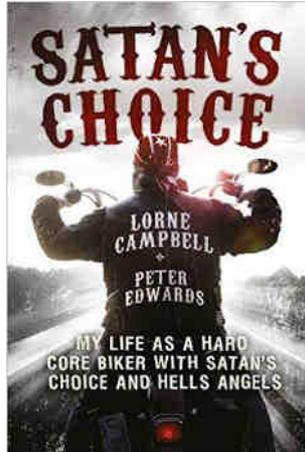
And how appropriate to start with Sonny Barger's autobiography, a ground breaking book in many ways given the 'omerta' approach that seemed to have been the rule up to this point for current club members.

Hell's Angel (with the apostrophe) is a very readable collection of snapshots and short descriptive pieces rather than a sustained narrative which build to give a strong impression of both Sonny's life and how he sees the club having developed over the years.

Satan's Choice

My life as a hard core biker with Satan's Choice and Hells Angels

Lorne Campbell & Peter Edwards



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDSx6R>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBIFX8>

Published 2013

Amazon description

Lorne Campbell was an officer and enforcer for the outlaw biker club Satan's Choice for over thirty years, before patching over to the Hells Angels. The product of a violent childhood, with a hair-trigger temper and fearless nature, he just wanted a place to belong. He found brotherhood with his fellow one percenters, and a code he has lived his life by. In his time he's seen club life slip further into the criminal underworld and be transformed by cocaine dealing. He killed a rival biker to save his brothers and has been imprisoned for assault and drug trafficking. He's faced off police out to get him, taken revenge on men who betrayed him, and gone to extreme lengths to protect his honour and his club.

Written with dark humour and raw honesty, and filled with unforgettable characters living life on their own terms, *Satan's Choice* is a unique insight into an outlaw world seen through the eyes of one proud and unrepentant biker.

Commentary

Lorne Campbell stood up in court and admitted shooting dead a member of a rival club.

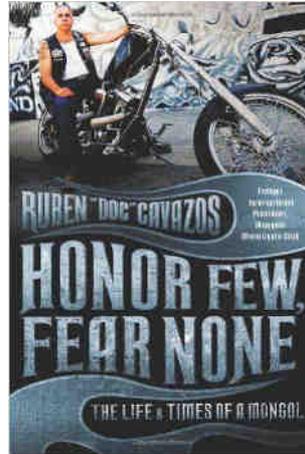
He wasn't believed and instead the judge sentenced his club brothers for the crime giving rise to the case of the Port Hope Eight and the miscarriage of justice covered in Mick Lowe's Conspiracy of Brothers (of which more below).

Satan's Choice is well written (with Peter Edwards involved it was always going to be), unapologetic, and gives a view of the development of the Canadian outlaw biker scene from the view of one of the strongly independent minded clubs until their eventual patch over into the Hells Angels.

Honor Few, Fear None

The life and times of a Mongol

Ruben 'Doc' Cavazos



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1lzTvqo>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1VTnAeJ>

Published 2008

Amazon description

The stunning, never-before-told story of Ruben 'Doc' Cavazos, international president of the Mongols Motorcycle Club

When Ruben 'Doc' Cavazos changes his clothes at daybreak, he is no longer a CAT scan technician at the University of Southern California Medical Center. He becomes the man known—and, in a few special cases, feared—as Doc, international president of the Mongols, the fastest-growing and most closely watched organization of its kind in the United States.

In reality, the Mongols are a tightly knit band of brothers devoted in equal measure to the club, their fellow Mongols, and their freedom. They live to enjoy life, party, and travel the open road. Above all, they demand respect. When pushed too far, Mongols join together to push back. Just ask the Hells Angels, the Ukrainian mafia, the Mexican mafia, and the US government. All have tested the Mongols' resolve.

In *Honor Few, Fear None*, Doc is ready, for the first time, to share the stories of the Mongols' battle to survive and thrive against incredible odds and sometimes terrible violence.

Doc takes you to the streets and into the bars, the secret meetings, the brawls, and the shoot-outs, all proof that if you live like a Mongol does, you must honor few, fear none.

Commentary

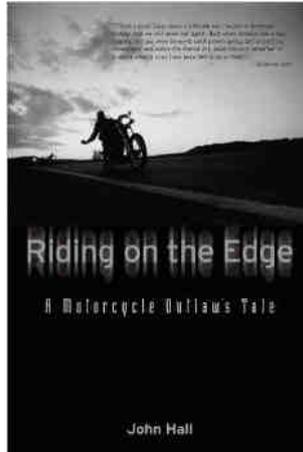
Interesting, particularly in terms of biker politics, but not an attractive read.

In contrast to the tone of Campbell in *Satan's Choice*, *Honor Few, Fear None's* tone feels more like one of self-justification and majors on complaints about how the author and his club are treated by the police.

Riding on the Edge

A motorcycle outlaw's tale

John Hall



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1ljDiGE>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1N08sGu>

Published 2008

Amazon description

Ride with author John Hall into the turbulent world of 1960s bike club culture, from his beginnings at an upstart motorcycle club to his rise to the Long Island chapter president of the Pagans, a club that the FBI called 'the most violent criminal organization in America'. Follow him into the Pagan heartland of Pennsylvania where he fell in love, got in a roadhouse brawl over a honky-tonk angel, and eventually went to jail for 'takin' care a club business'.

Now after a career as a journalist and college professor, he returns to the violent days of his youth and smashes up stereotypes like he once smashed up bars, resurrecting long-dead brothers in a style reminiscent of Jack Kerouac and Mark Twain. Hall presents them as they really were: hard living, hard loving, hard drinking, hard fighting rebels, but also hard working, patriotic, loyal, and lovable characters. Outlaws, yes, but outlaws as American as apple pie.

Commentary

Well worth reading as a sixties comparison to Hunter S Thompson's book, John Hall's book about being a young tough, and riding with the early Pagans MC is well written and feels as though it gives a real insight into the attractions and lifestyle of clubs at the time.

I have heard some suggestions that it is more fictional than factual and I have no way of knowing whether this allegation is right, but whatever the truth, to me as a book it certainly rings true and is well worth a read for anyone interested in the growth of the outlaw biker culture in the sixties.

Bikers

Birth of a modern day outlaw

Maz Harris



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1OKr1yS>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1VTnGDc>

Published 1985

Commentary

Up until his death in a motorcycle accident in 2000, Dr Maz Harris was probably one of the best known figures on the British biker scene being both spokesman for the Hells Angels charter in England and a biker magazine columnist focusing on biker rights.

He completed his PhD at Warwick University looking at myths and reality in the motorcycle sub culture and I suspect a fair bit of that work found its way into this.

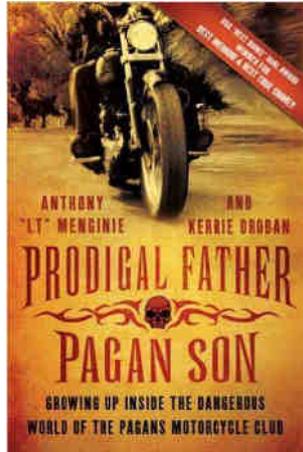
The book contains a large selection of photographs tracing mainly British biker history from *The Wild One*, through the sixties rockers, and then on into the outlaw biker club scene. But while the written content is quite slim, it is well worth reading. He manages to describe in a very readable way both the personal, in his own path to involvement in bikes and bike club culture, and his feelings about riding and what it means; as well as the social significance (as I guess you'd expect given his studies) in an insightful view of the development of the biker scene in the light of changing culture elsewhere.

Highly recommended and a bit of a collector's item these days (hint – you may need to try eBay).

Prodigal Father, Pagan Son

Growing up inside the dangerous world of the Pagans motorcycle club

Anthony 'LT' Menginie & Kerrie Droban



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1jDc1M>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBJRtv>

Published 2011

Amazon description

By the time he was 13, he already had attended 13 funerals. Abandoned by his mother, and with his father in jail, 'LT' Menginie was raised inside the outlaw biker club and became inducted into a life of sex, violence, drugs, and dysfunction. When his father, the chapter's president, is released from jail and betrays the club by going over to the rival Hells Angels – helping to touch off the Biker Wars in Philadelphia – the author must decide where his loyalties lie. Sure to appeal to fans of insider accounts such as *No Angel* and *Under and Alone* as well as the *Sons of Anarchy* television show, this gritty memoir takes the reader into the shocking and hypnotic underworld of 'one-percenter' clubs.

Commentary

An impressionistic, and decidedly unromantic, account of growing up as the son of a jailed senior biker amongst a world of drugs, casual sex and violence.

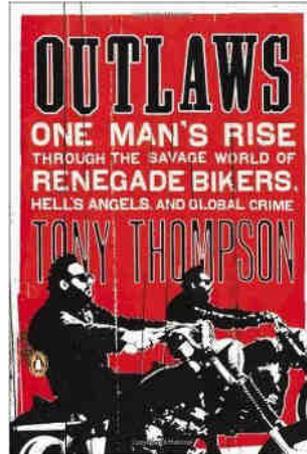
As the subject of the book grows up he naturally gravitates into the world of the club as it and its life is all he knows, and the book smells of alienation.

Not a comfortable read.

Outlaws

Inside the violent world of biker gangs

Tony Thompson



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDS4l8>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBJYVU>

Published 2011

Amazon description

An outlaw motorcycle club is a band of brothers like no other. Hidden away from mainstream society behind multiple layers of secrecy, mythology and a sophisticated campaign of misinformation that portrays them as nothing more than loveable rogues, the brutal truth about the biker world has long escaped public scrutiny.

In reality, today's outlaw bikers are at the epicentre of a violent underworld subculture, enforced by a ruthless code of silence, and control a global criminal empire worth millions.

Spanning the UK, Europe, America, Canada and Australia, *Outlaws* is a compelling, shocking and chilling story of how bikers are born and made, and how and why they die.

Commentary

Tony Thompson is a highly respected journalist with a track record of successful books on the UK gangland and crime scene and his writing skills show here.

This book is the biography of ex-Outlaws MC member Daniel 'Snake Dog' Boone, but through it Thompson tells the wider story of the development of the UK outlaw biker scene since the eighties and how it has been affected by international biker politics, up to and including the 2007 murder of Gerry Tobin.

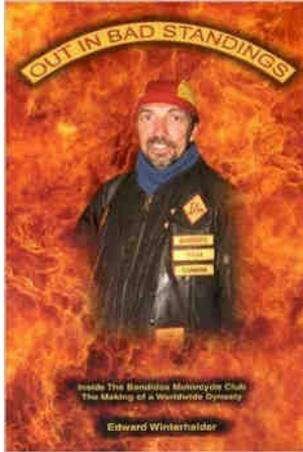
Thoroughly recommended and essential reading for anyone interested in the club scene in England.

I'm just glad this wasn't published until 2011 as if it had come out before *Heavy Duty People* I don't think I'd have ever been able to write it.

Out in Bad Standings

Inside the Bandidos Motorcycle Club - The Making of a Worldwide Dynasty

Edward Winterhalder



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1zTONf>

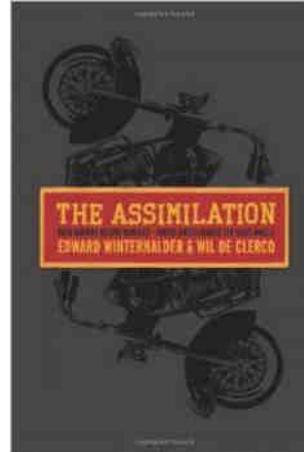
Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBKkvE>

Published 2005

The Assimilation

Rock Machine Become Bandidos - Bikers United Against the Hells Angels

Edward Winterhalder & Wil De Clercq



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1OZNh8P>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1N08UVf>

Published 2008

Amazon descriptions

Out in Bad Standings

In this exposé of his life as a member of the Bandidos Motorcycle Club, Edward 'Connecticut Ed' Winterhalder allows the reader a rare look into how major decisions were made by Bandido leaders all over the world, how the Bandidos expanded into the worldwide dynasty they are today, and how the Bandido machine operates on a day-to-day basis.

While a member of the largest 1%er motorcycle club in the world, Connecticut Ed was privy to much information about the inside workings of the club and what the future held for it. Regularly assigned projects by the club's international leader, he was responsible for defusing the war between the Hells Angels and Rock Machine in Canada, establishing new Bandido and support club chapters worldwide, organizing the club into a well-oiled machine, and mediating internal power struggles between club members.

As founder, President and Secretary of the Bandidos' Oklahoma chapter, for the first time in history, Connecticut Ed is your personal guide as you learn what it takes to establish a new Bandidos chapter and keep it running for the first few years of its life. In his thirty years of riding and/or associating with various 1%er outlaw motorcycle clubs, he gives the reader a unique inside look into the world of today's 1%er motorcycle clubs.

In his last few years with the Bandidos, Connecticut Ed realized that the club's ideology was changing because methamphetamine use was now becoming an accepted part of everyday club life. After failing to alter the destructive course the club was on, he left the Bandidos Oklahoma chapter in September 2003 'Out in good standings'.

But because of the wealth of information he possessed about the inner workings of the club, Connecticut Ed's 'out' status was changed to 'Out in bad standings' by the world

President of the Bandidos just before Thanksgiving 2003. Was he that much of a threat to the worldwide leadership of the Bandidos? Find out for yourself by reading this book...

The Assimilation

From years of bloody conflict to probationary Bandidos membership, this memoir recalls the life and times of an outlaw biker from Oklahoma and his quest to add to the Bandidos Nation.

The Rock Machine, founded by Salvatore Cazzetta, had every intention of standing up against the Hells Angels. Heavily outnumbered, the Rock Machine appealed to the worldwide Bandidos Motorcycle Club, who rivalled the Hells Angels in terms of membership and strength.

In January 2000, the Rock Machine ceased to exist and became a probationary Bandidos chapter. Winterhalder was assigned this transition and, at 46 years of age, was considered an elder statesman in the outlaw biker world. He was the founder and former president of the Oklahoma Bandidos and a confirmed biker for 25 years. Furthermore, he possessed a keen knowledge of jurisprudence and was an astute businessman who owned and operated a multi-million dollar construction management company.

Starting with the arrest and unsuccessful deportation proceedings, and leading to more intrigue, assassinations, and double-crosses, Winterhalder found his life spiralling further and further out of control.

Commentary

I was originally intending this guide to cover twenty-four books, neatly giving eight in each of the categories, but when I came to Ed's books I decided had to put in both.

Between them, these two volumes tell Ed's story as he became involved in bikes and sought out life in a bike club, eventually founding the Oklahoma Bandidos MC chapter. He rose to have a number of responsible roles within the club including the job of coordinating the patch over of the remaining Rock Machine members as probationary Bandidos, before then falling out with the club leadership over the corrosive spread of methamphetamine and eventually being forced out in 2003.

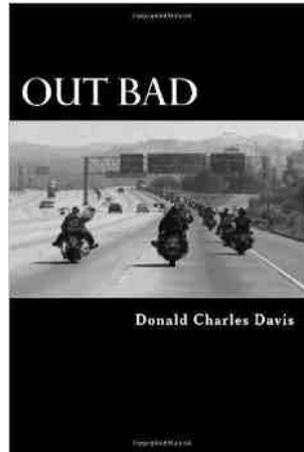
While it was one thing for Sonny Barger as elder statesman of the Hells Angels to write an autobiography giving a positive view of the club, in my view it was an entirely different and brave move for Ed to produce *Out in Bad Standings* in 2005 which has elements of an exposé.

The Assimilation is written as a normal narrative whereas the style of *Out in Bad Standings* seems to be much more of a diary format. Now to me the danger of anything in a diary format is that without a strong guiding narrative the form can tend to be a bit flat in places. Against this, it has the very strong advantage of intimacy and honesty which comes through in spades here in Ed's book, giving you a clear insight into the detail of day to day life both in terms of his life as a biker and movingly the way he focused on looking after his daughter following the collapse of his first marriage, whilst also creating a highly successful construction business.

For a clear insider's account these both have to be on anyone's reading list.

Out Bad

Donald Charles Davis



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1jCSQF>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1N09bYi>

Published 2011

Amazon description

Out Bad is a true story about motorcycle outlaws and modern American police. It begins with the painstakingly assembled, never before told story of the murder of a Mongols Motorcycle Club member named Manuel Vincent 'Hitman' Martin. Martin was shot off his motorcycle on the Glendale Freeway in Los Angeles about 2 am on 8 October, 2008. Initial reports alleged that Martin had been murdered by the Hells Angels and that he died as part of an ongoing, 'furious feud' between the two groups.

The truth behind the murder is much more interesting and disturbing than that. Martin died on the final day of a three-year-long, undercover investigation of the Mongols by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The ATF called it 'Operation Black Rain'. Both Black Rain, and the federal prosecution that followed, were so cynically unfair and corrupt that some Mongols still believe that Martin was actually murdered by government agents. Together, the investigation and the prosecution probably cost \$150 million. The initial press coverage of the case was manipulated by the ATF. News of the subsequent legal wrangling was virtually non-existent because the Department of Justice wanted to keep the case as secret as possible.

Out Bad draws on numerous public and confidential sources including numerous sources within the Mongols, the Hells Angels and the ATF, to accurately reveal what really happened. *Out Bad* is a startling ride down a dark road nobody yet knows. Here's your ticket. Climb on. There ain't no seatbelt.

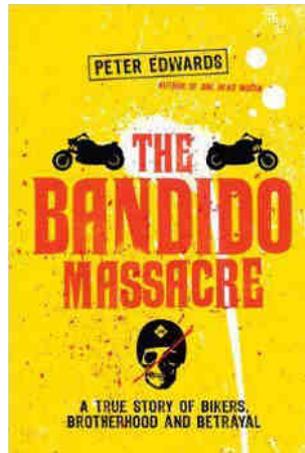
Commentary

Davis, AKA The Aging Rebel, is a well-known biker blogger. He writes some interesting books which are worth a read to see how he builds a case against the police in respect of their treatment of both Mongols here (and Hells Angels in *Framing Dave Burgess*). But as somewhat campaigning books they end up being a bit polemical for my taste.

The Bandido Massacre

A true story of bikers, brotherhood and betrayal

Peter Edwards



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1OZMW5R>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Bandido-Massacre/dp/155468045X>

Published 2010

Amazon description

On the morning of 8 April, 2006, residents of the hamlet of Shedden, Ontario, woke up to the news that the bloodied bodies of eight bikers from the Bandidos gang had been found dead on a local farm. The massacre made headlines around the world, and the shocking news brought a grim light to an otherwise quiet corner of the province. Six Bandidos would eventually be convicted of the first-degree murder of their biker brothers.

Like other outlaw bikers, Bandidos portray themselves as motorcycle enthusiasts who are systematically misunderstood and abused by the police, as well as feared by the public. We now know the Bandidos were anything but simple motorcycle enthusiasts. However, unlike such biker gangs as the Hell's Angels, who run sophisticated operations, the Bandidos were highly disorganized, prone to petty infighting and even engaged in sabotaging fellow members. This is the story of how the Bandidos self-destructed over one dark night.

As gripping as any crime novel, *The Bandido Massacre* takes us inside a crumbling brotherhood bent on betrayal and self-obliteration.

Commentary

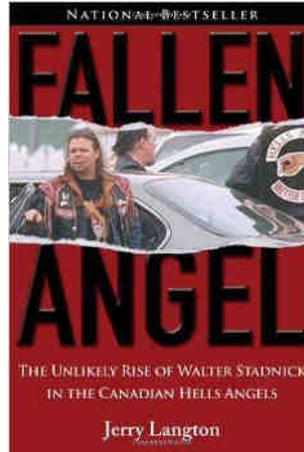
This telling of the Shedden massacre of eight Bandidos at the hands of a mix of club mates and deranged wannabes, including a one-time failed police officer who was looking to reinvent himself as an outlaw biker player, reads like a tragedy.

Edwards tells the stories of the dead men, introducing a group ranging from established bikers to probationers, loners to family men, and petty criminals to ordinary working stiffs; laying out how they all came to be facing their death one after another in a Nazi fantasist's barn.

Fallen Angel

The unlikely rise of Walter Stadnick in the Canadian Hells Angels

Jerry Langton



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1M0o4v2>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1VTombM>

Published 2006

Amazon description

Walter Stadnick is not an imposing man. At five foot four, his face and arms scarred by fire in a motorcycle accident, he would not spring to mind as a leader of Canada's most notorious biker gang, the Hells Angels. Yet through sheer guts and determination, intelligence and luck, this Hamilton-born youth who had the nickname of 'Nurget' rose in the Hells Angels ranks to become national president.

Not only did he lead the Angels through the violent war with their rivals the rock machine in Montreal in the nineties, Stadnick saw opportunity to grow the Hells Angels into a national criminal gang. He was a visionary – and a highly successful one. Bikers are not known for their fondness for rival gangs. Stadnick and the Angels fought and defeated rival gangs, or used power of persuasion to patch them over. As Stadnick's influence spread, law enforcement took notice of the growing presence of the Angels in Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia.

However, Stadnick's success did not come without a price. Arrested and charged with 13 counts of first-degree murder, Stadnick beat the murder charges but was convicted of gangsterism and is currently serving time. *Fallen Angel* details one man's improbable rise to power in one of the world's most violent organizations, while shedding light on how this enigmatic and dangerous biker gang operated and why it remains so powerful.

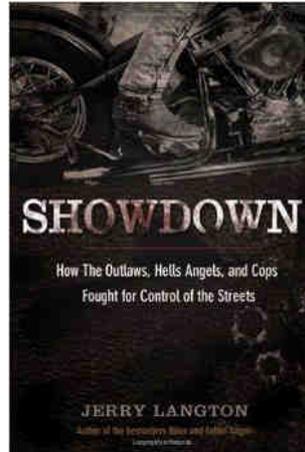
Commentary

Jerry Langton probably falls into the 'anti' camp, but through telling the story of Walter Stadnick this book provides one of the best overviews I've come across of the development of the outlaw biker world in Canada, the Canadian biker wars and the involvement of biker clubs in Canada in organised crime (although it's crying out for a map).

Showdown

How the Outlaws, Hells Angels and cops fought for control of the streets

Jerry Langton



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1SAS3Py>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBKYtb>

Published 2010

Amazon description

The inside story of the street war between Canada's most violent biker gangs—the Outlaws and the Hell's Angels. Once bikers who road together, Mario Parente and Walter Stadnick are now mortal enemies, chiefs, respectively, of the Outlaws and Hell's Angels, embroiled in a bloody turf war over control of the lucrative drug, prostitution, and vice markets in Ontario's Golden Horseshoe.

Written with the cooperation of Mario Parente, *Showdown* describes the biker gang equivalent of the Godfather, the violent power shifts as Satan's Choice, a rival gang falls into disarray, and as Parente gears up to protect Southwest Ontario from Stadnick's vision of making the Hell's Angels the largest criminal biker gang in Canada. A gang's-eye look at the 2006 Shedden Massacre, where eight men were slaughtered. An account that lets Mario Parente go on the record with his story of the biker wars.

With frightening and compelling detail, *Showdown* lets readers experience first-hand the personalities and day to day workings behind the brutal and deadly rivalries that mark one piece of Canada's criminal underworld.

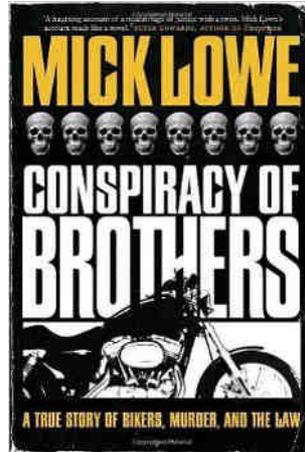
Commentary

As already noted Jerry Langton doesn't come across as a big fan of bikers but he's well connected enough to speak to senior players and he's a professional writer, so what he has to say is very readable. This book starts off looking at things from the Outlaws MC point of view and traces the history of the Canadian biker wars through to the demise of the Bandidos MC 'No Surrender' crew at the hands of their club mates in the Shedden massacre.

Conspiracy of Brothers

A true story of bikers, murder and the law

Mick Lowe



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1M0nYTW>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1VTotUB>

Published 1988

Amazon description

To coincide with Random House Canada's publication of the ground-breaking book *Unrepentant* by Peter Edwards and biker Lorne Campbell, Vintage Canada updates and reissues the award-winning true crime classic that tells the complete and scandalous story in the most gut-wrenching chapter of Campbell's life. You can't read one without wanting to read the other!

On the night of 18 October, 1978, small-town biker Bill Matiyek was having a drink in a Port Hope bar. A gunman walked up and fired three bullets into his head. Members of the rival bike club Satan's Choice, who were in the bar, quickly vanished. Was it a cold-blooded gangland-style execution, as the Crown Attorney and police would argue, or the compulsive act of a single gunman? Was the trial that followed driven by persistent police work or a police frame-up? Did the bikers conspire to murder or did the law conspire to convict them? Guilt by association, unreliable eyewitness testimony, suppression of evidence, botched police procedures – call the results justice or call them revenge, the question remains: Who really killed Bill Matiyek, and why?

Commentary

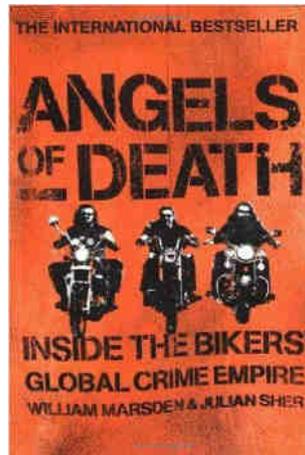
I was going to call this a companion piece to *Satan's Choice* (also known as *Unrepentant*) by Lorne Campbell and Peter Edwards except that Mick Lowe got there first.

This is the story of the Port Hope shooting which led to the imprisonment of a number of Satan's Choice, (despite the fact that Lorne Campbell had stepped up in Court to admit he was the shooter) and was a campaigning piece of journalism in its day, raising questions about an apparent miscarriage of justice in the cases of the bikers convicted.

Angels of Death

Inside the bikers' global crime empire

William Marsden & Julian Sher



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDRmEg>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1VToCaJ>

Published 2006

Amazon description

The Hell's Angels leader, Sonny Barger, is toasted as an American legend, and the bikers work hard to promote their folk-hero image.

But the facts tell another story. The Hell's Angels are America's major crime export. Their membership has spread to 25 countries including the UK, Australia and Holland, where they have inspired a violent subculture of biker gangs who traffic drugs and suppress any attempt to stop them.

Angels of Death opens at the darkest moment of the Hell's Angels story, with the beheading of a woman at a chapter meeting. It tells the true story of the bikers, their crime empire and the attempt of the police to stop them – with only a few successes.

With eyewitness accounts from police officers who have infiltrated the gangs and gang members who have turned informers, and undercover interviews with the bikers themselves, this is a chilling insight into the world's fastest growing crime empire.

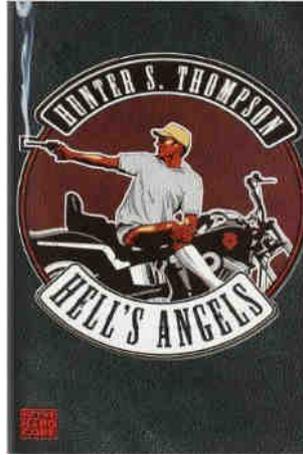
Commentary

Marsden and Sher's agenda is pretty clear from the subtitle and this is one of the classics of the *outlaw-motorcycle-clubs-are-a-new-international-mafia* school of writing.

This isn't a view I subscribe to personally, but for all the agenda this remains a well written and interesting book, providing a world tour of biker related crime and conflicts as it argues its case.

Hell's Angels

Hunter S Thompson



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDRhRb>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1VTn3tk>

Published 1966

Amazon description

From the father of 'gonzo journalism', Hunter S Thompson's research for *Hell's Angels* involved more than a year of close association with the outlaws who burned a path through 1960s America, resulting in a masterpiece of underground reportage published in Penguin Modern Classics.

'A phalanx of motorcycles came roaring over the hill from the west... the noise was like a landslide, or a wing of bombers passing over. Even knowing the Angels I couldn't quite handle what I was seeing.'

Huge bikes, filthy denim and an aura of barely contained violence; the Hell's Angels could paralyse whole towns with fear. But how much of that reputation was myth and how much was brutal reality? Only one man could discover the truth about these latter-day barbarians; Hunter S Thompson, Dr Gonzo himself, the man who saw the fear and loathing at the heart of the American dream. Determined to discover the truth behind the terrifying reputation of these marauding biker gangs, Thompson spent a year on the road with the Angels, documenting his hair-raising experiences with Charger Charley, Big Frank, Little Jesus and the Gimp. *Hell's Angels* is the hair-raising result: a free-wheeling, impressionistic counter-culture classic that made Hunter S Thompson's name as the wild man of American writing.

Commentary

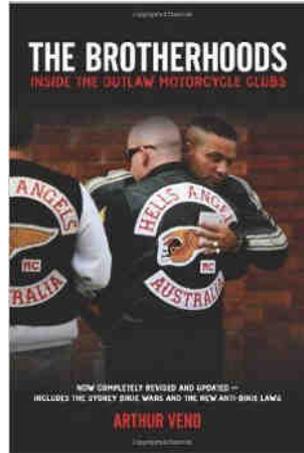
The starting point for anyone wanting to read about outlaw bikers has to be Hunter S Thompson's 1966 classic.

If you're at all interested in reading about outlaw bikers you will have read this already, and if you haven't, well don't do anything else until you have.

The Brotherhoods

The up-to-date, definitive account of Australia's outlaw motorcycle clubs, written by the country's foremost expert on bkie culture

Arthur Veno



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1K0Qz7a>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBM8EW>

Published 2002

Amazon description

Bikies consider themselves the last free people in society; unrestricted by the laws that rule ordinary citizens. Yet they have strict joining rules and jealously guard their privacy. The twenty-first century has seen bkie culture move from secretive disorganised crime to far more threatening organised criminal activities that led to the death of a Hells Angel's associate at Sydney airport in 2009, and the gang-style killings that preceded it.

Arthur Veno's account of bkie culture is as close to first-hand as is ever likely to be published. Australia's leading bkie expert, Veno reveals the true picture of the brotherhoods. Drawing on in-depth interviews, personal stories and years of meticulous research, he explains the rules and rituals of the clubs, tells of landmark incidents and profiles some famous bikies. In this fully revised edition of *The Brotherhoods* he outlines the rise of the so-called Nike bikies whose drugs and turf wars threaten to spill onto our streets, and the attempts by governments to introduce controversial laws to control the violence.

The Brotherhoods is the definitive account of bkie culture in Australia.

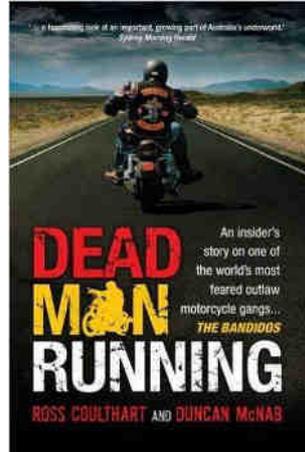
Commentary

A definite recommendation. A rarity in the outlaw book world being something by an obviously very well informed and connected outsider, which strives and manages to present a view which seems both balanced and nuanced.

If I was narrowing down an essential half dozen books, this would unquestionably make the cut. Well worth reading.

Dead Man Running

Ross Coulthart & Duncan McNab



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDR7cs>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1N0aq9M>

Published 2008

Amazon description

'We are the people our parents warned us about,' is the motto of the Bandidos, one of the world's most feared outlaw motorcycle gangs. For ten years, Steve Utah was a Bandidos insider. He arranged the security of their clubhouses and electronic surveillance and counter surveillance. He 'cooked' ecstasy and meth for them. He was at meetings where interstate and overseas drug and weapons smuggling was planned. He saw stolen military weapons, including deadly rocket launchers, being sold. He witnessed vicious beatings, helped dump corpses. He saw men executed in front of him.

It all became too much and, in an attempt to regain control of his life, Utah resorted to the unthinkable: he rolled over to the Federal Police and told them all he knew about the Bandidos. He had intimate knowledge of every facet of the Bandidos' business in Australia and many aspects of their activities in North America. He literally knew where the bodies were buried.

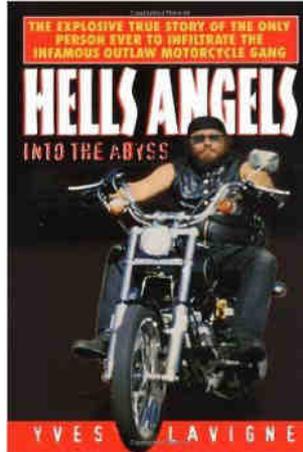
This shocking, unflinching, tragic story is Steve Utah's confession. He knows he is a dead man running – that inevitably the Bandido code will be honoured and he will be silenced. But not before Utah gets his chance to wake readers to the looming threat in their midst – the relentless rise of sophisticated organised crime networks inside outlaw motorcycle gangs and the apparent inability of the police and legal system to deal with it.

Commentary

Interesting, if only as an informer's view of the Australian 'gangland' scene, but eventually gives you the feeling that this is a man blowing his own trumpet rather too much.

Hells Angels Into the Abyss

Yves Lavigne



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1jBSvP>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1N0axC6>

Published 1996

Amazon description

This is the explosive true story of the only man ever to infiltrate the Hells Angels organization as an FBI informant, uncovering the truth about the notorious biker gang's netherworld of evil, lust, and violence. A chilling crime story that strips away the Hell's Angels' image to reveal a powerful and deadly organized crime syndicate. The author's acceptance into the highest ranks of the gang led to an unprecedented FBI sting operation and 42 arrests.

Commentary

Anthony Tait is what is known in the biker world as a rat, a full patch member who turned and betrayed his club brothers.

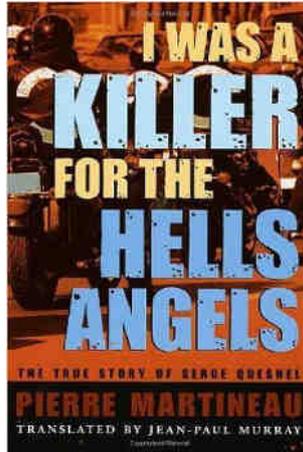
Informing to the police he set up everyone he dealt with up to and including Sonny Barger who went to jail on the basis of Tait's testimony, while other members received sentences of forty years or more.

And whether his work was justified or not, Tait does not come out well in this book by Yves Lavigne who has penned a number of other lurid exposé type books about the Hells Angels.

I was a Killer for the Hells Angels

The story of Serge Quesnal

Pierre Martineau



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1OKpTLH>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1N0aINR>

Published 2002

Amazon description

When I arrived at the restaurant, my boss gave me a wad of \$20 bills, which amounted to some \$2,000. He was acting as though money was burning a hole in his pockets. But this suited me fine. Melou often acted that way. He didn't want me to run out of money. A happy killer is a productive killer...

When he was fifteen years old, Serge Quesnal started hanging out in strip bars and committing minor thefts and burglaries. He soon became known to the police. He learned more about crime when he served time, first in a detention centre, and then later in the infamous Donnacona federal penitentiary. On his release, he was ready to realize his true ambition, to become a confederate of the Hells Angels.

To achieve this ambition, he set out to prove that he could hurt, maim, and kill people efficiently and without a qualm. His first murder victim was a drug dealer who was giving the local Angels chapter trouble. He and a friend beat the dealer to a pulp and then calmly wiped the crime scene clean of fingerprints. The Angels were impressed. He moved to Trois-Rivières and became a full-time enforcer.

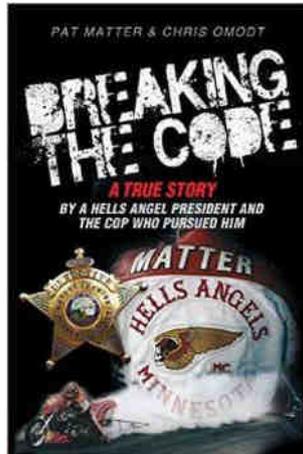
Quesnal, having now 'sold out' to the authorities and assumed a new identity, tells his story of violence and betrayal in chilling detail to Quebec journalist, Pierre Martineau. The resulting chronicle is a modern crime classic.

Commentary

One of a number of biographies of hitmen and other players coming out of the Canadian biker wars. By focusing on one man's crimes these sort of books give a feel for the detail of life in the milieu although it's noticeable that most of these individuals aren't actually patch-holding members of the club, or even close.

Breaking the Code

Pat Matter & Chris Omodt



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1OZLLDD>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBIqv7>

Published 2014

Amazon description

A highly respected Hells Angel president. An honest, hard-working cop. Both of their lives on totally different paths until their worlds collide...

‘With no holds barred, Omodt and Matter rip back the curtain of seedy reality and toss you headlong into the complex relationships of biker gangs and the cops whose job it is to pursue them. The writing is graphic, truthful, revealing and explores both sides of the law—the right side, and the wrong side—with equal detail. For lovers of true crime writing this is a must-read.’ – Mark Reps, author, Sheriff Zeb Hanks crime series.

‘The story of an adversarial relationship that turned into one of the most unlikely, remarkable friendships I’ve ever been exposed to. And, as written by the two protagonists, *Breaking The Code* is told in the most authentic voice you’ll ever read. Beyond the true crime audience, this is a story filled with so much humanity it must be experienced by all readers.’ – Ali Selim, writer and director of the award-winning film, *Sweet Land*.

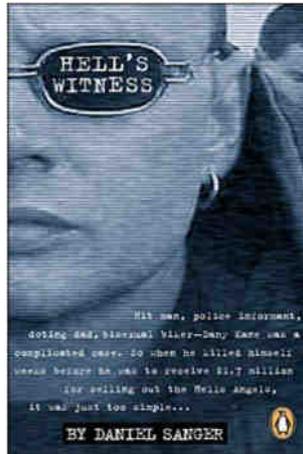
Commentary

An interesting joint effort with passages written alternately by Pat Matter and Chris Omodt giving the outlaws’ and cops’ views of what was going on, and it’s particularly interesting to see where their versions still differ.

There’s talk about friendship in it but some parts read as though there’s definitely still an edge there.

Hell's Witness

Daniel Sanger



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDQQ9k>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBMOKH>

Published 2005

Commentary

Undoubtedly one of the most bizarre biker related biographies you will ever read.

If I made up a character in one of my books who acted as a hit man while continuing to be funded as an informant by the police; who had the cops finance him in starting up a gay contact mag that he folded after issue two and finding himself a lover; who installed said lover in his flat together whilst continuing to share it with his black girlfriend; who then used the lover as a bumbling hit man; and while still not even making prospect in the Hells Angels, still seemingly had direct access to their most senior players to the extent of being on the wedding invite list of a top Nomad, no one would believe it.

If I then added a mysterious, and disputed by some, death by suicide just before mass arrests went down, I think I'd be laughed out of town.

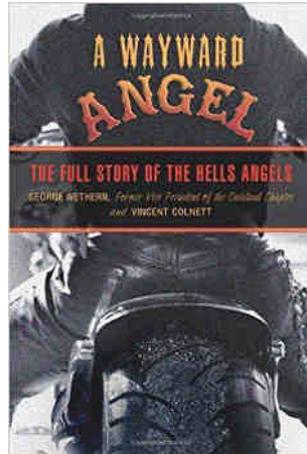
But that's exactly what this story covers.

This book suffers from the same issues as many books about Canada's biker wars in that you can lose track of who's looking to whack who and why, but as well as giving a lot of details on one aspect of the scene it also paints a fascinating story about non cooperation amongst rival police forces that should give outlaws everywhere reasons to smile.

The one area where it is weak is on the question marks around his death which are raised rather late in the day in a speculative way but without much effort at investigation or conclusion.

A Wayward Angel

George Wethern & Vincent Colnett



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDQKOZ>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1MBITxh>

Published 1978

Amazon description

We all know about the Hells Angels: toughs on Harleys terrorizing the law-abiding; wild brawls and wild sex; drugs and cruelty, beatings, and even murder. But nobody really knows what it's like to be an Angel except an Angel.

In this classic of Hells Angels literature, to be read alongside the works of Hunter S Thompson and Sonny Barger, George Wethern – for many years the vice-president of the Oakland Chapter – tells it like it is.

Until he found himself in reluctant service to the courts, Wethern was the quintessential Angel. One of the West Coast's top drug dealers, he was a man who loved bikes, fights, women, and drugs; a man who knew the deepest secrets of Angel life. Arrested, strung out, in despair, he bought a precarious freedom by testifying in major trials against Angels members-and then disappeared into the witness protection programme.

A Wayward Angel is a powerful book, a not-for-the-squeamish portrait of the drug scene and the alienation from modern life in late twentieth century California. We witness killings, million-dollar drug deals, and orgy-laced 'picnics'. This is a story uniquely American. And it is a terrifying tale-because it's real.

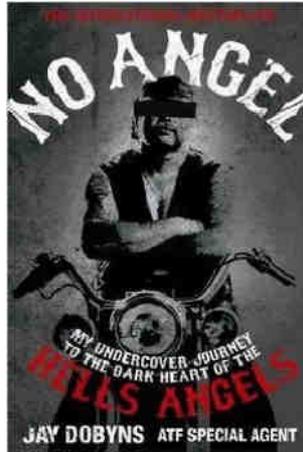
Commentary

For anyone who's read Hunter S Thompson, this makes a fascinating companion piece in that it reads very much like the story of what the boys got up to while Thompson wasn't around, and gives the lie to some assertions in Thompson's book.

No Angel

My undercover journey to the dark heart of the Hells Angels

Jay Dobyns



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1ljAZ6E>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1VTmShx>

Published 2009

Amazon description

In 2001, Jay Dobyns was the first federal agent to infiltrate the inner circle of the Hells Angels. His aim was simple: to examine the criminal underbelly of the world's most famous biker group and bring a major case against them. *No Angel* tells the thrilling, adrenaline-soaked story of one man on the brink of losing himself, and lifts the lid on one of the world's most infamous underworlds. It is a riveting tale of meticulous undercover detective work and a rare and fascinating glimpse inside the secretive world of outlaw biker gangs.

Commentary

Whatever you think about outlaw bikers, there's no denying that attempting to infiltrate them undercover is something that has to take real balls. Particularly when you pick the Hells Angels as your target.

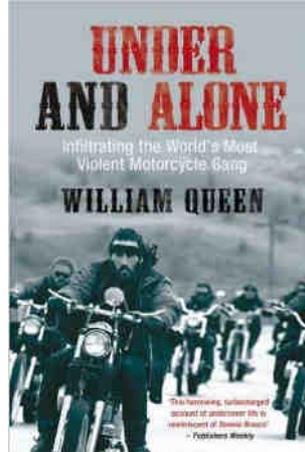
As a result, Jay Dobyns' story reads like a thriller from start to finish.

Hunter S Thompson observed in *Hell's Angels* that he saw similarities in the ways the police and outlaw bikers operated and organised themselves and both *No Angel* and William Queen's book below are of particular interest in how the cops involved relate to the outlaw's world with its hierarchy, rules and camaraderie; particularly when they then contrast it with how they are eventually treated by their own side.

Under and Alone

The true story of the undercover agent who infiltrated America's most violent outlaw motorcycle gang

William Queen



Amazon.com: <http://amzn.to/1gDQAax>

Amazon.co.uk: <http://amzn.to/1JXCffT>

Published 2006

Amazon description

When veteran law-enforcement officer and lifelong motorcycle lover William Queen penetrated the San Fernando chapter of the notorious Mongols, he was at the mercy of psychopaths who sought to have him prove his fealty by any means necessary, from selling and doing drugs to arms trafficking, driving getaway cars and, in one shocking instance, stitching up the face of a Mongol 'ol' lady' after a brutal beating at the hands of her boyfriend.

Yet despite the constant criminality of the gang, Queen came to see the genuine camaraderie they shared. When his lengthy undercover work totally isolated Queen from his relatives and friends, the Mongols felt like the only family he had left. *Under and Alone* is a breathless, adrenalin-charged read that puts you on the street with some of the most dangerous men in America.

Commentary

Less of a thriller of a read than *No Angel*, but a strong workman-like account of the day to day stress and nitty gritty of working undercover, and a striking portrait of a low rent violent world, crime yes, organised crime, not so much; international criminal mafia, hardly.

Compare and contrast how he ends up feeling about his Mongol brothers and his law enforcement superiors.

Iain Parke

I import industrial quantities of Class A drugs, kill people and lie (a lot) for a living, being a British based crime fiction writer.

I became obsessed with motorcycles at an early age, taking a six hundred mile cross-country tour to Cornwall as soon as I bought a moped at the tender age of sixteen. After working as a London despatch rider, I built my first chopper in my bedroom at university, undeterred by the fact that my workshop was upstairs.

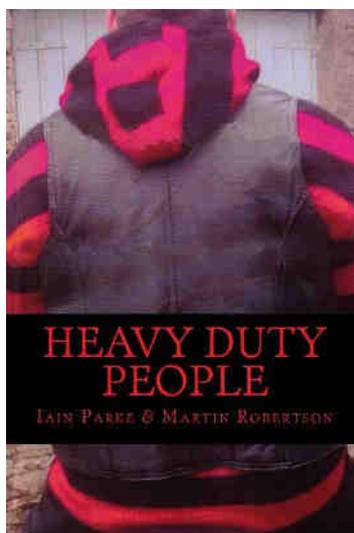
Armed with a MBA degree, I worked in insolvency and business restructuring in the UK and Africa (which inspired my first novel *The Liquidator* a conspiracy thriller set in East Africa – whatever you do, don't take it on holiday as your safari reading!).

This was then followed by my 'Biker Lit' series of The Brethren Outlaw Motorcycle Club crime thrillers, starting with *Heavy Duty People* set amongst UK outlaw bikers and which is now in TV development.

The next book in the series, *DILLIGAF*, is due out Autumn 2015.

Today I live off the grid, high up on the North Pennines in Northumberland with my wife, dogs, and a garage full of motorcycle restoration projects and I'm working on a number of book projects.

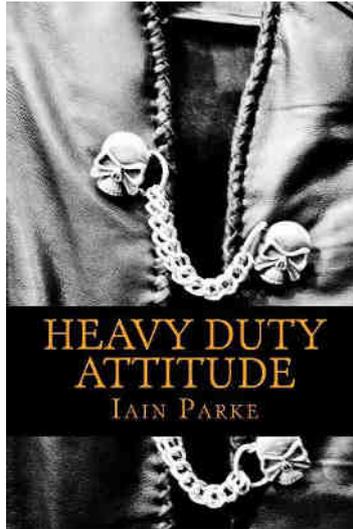
For my books, or to read sample chapters, please follow the links below.



<http://amzn.to/1JXCmlg>

Sample chapter:

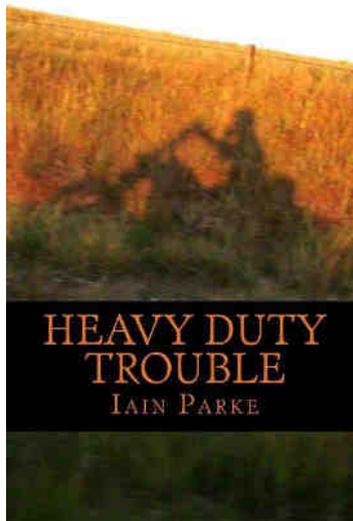
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<http://amzn.to/1DiephT>

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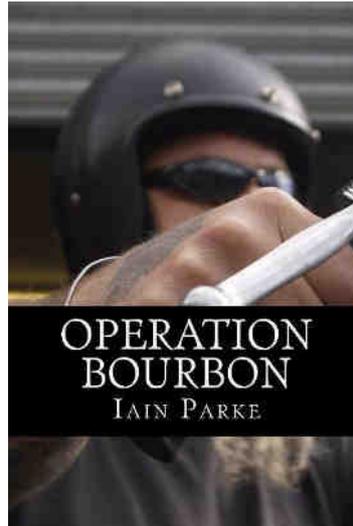
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<http://amzn.to/1JXcUe>

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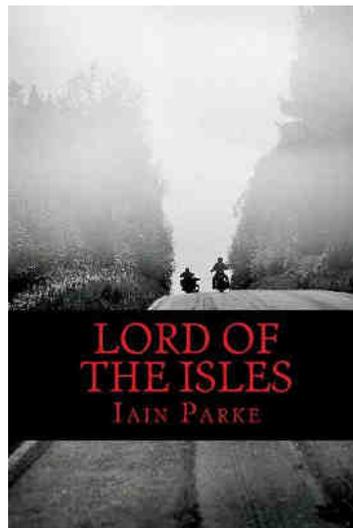
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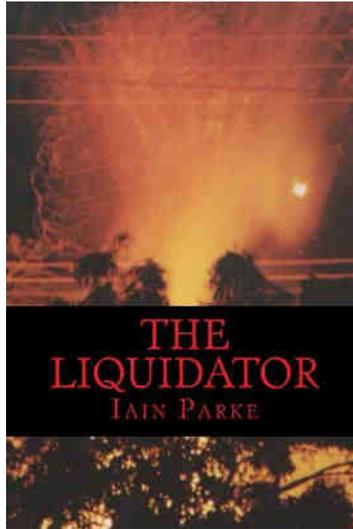
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<http://amzn.to/1fN7Fy>

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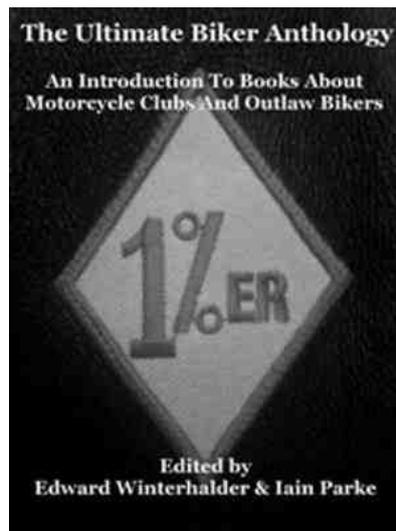


<http://amzn.to/1OXe0mt>

Sample chapter:

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Jointly with Edward Winterhalder



<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/371484>

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