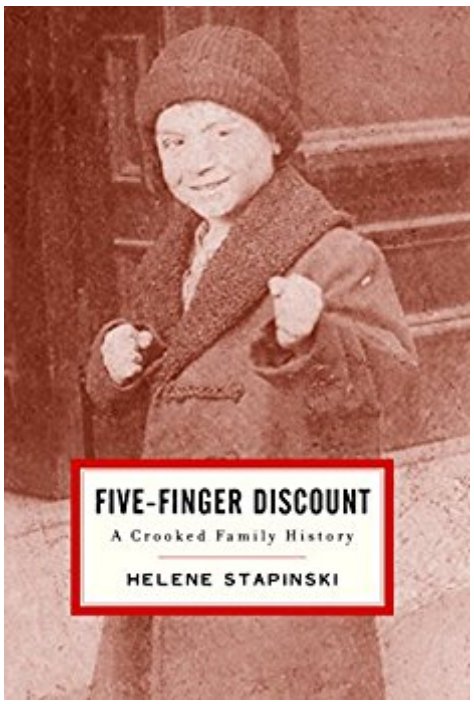
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Five-Finger Discount: A Crooked Family History



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Synopsis

Now a PBS documentary, thisÃ Â astonishing memoir of growing up in rough-and-tumble Jersey City Ã¢â ¬Å“will steal your heartÃ¢â ¬Â• (People) With deadpan humor and obvious affection, Five-Finger Discount recounts the story of an unforgettable New Jersey family of swindlers, bookies, embezzlers, and mobster-wannabes. In the memoir Mary Karr calls Ã¢â ¬Å“a page-turner,Ã¢â ¬Â• Helene Stapinski ingeniously weaves the checkered history of her hometown of Jersey CityÃ¢â ¬â •a place known for its political corruption and industrial blightÃ¢â ¬â •with the tales that have swirled around her relatives for decades. Navigating a childhood of toxic waste and tough love, Stapinski tells an extraordinary tale at once heartbreaking and hysterically funny. Praise forÃ Â Five-Finger Discount Ã¢â ¬Å“By turns hilarious and alarming, [Helene StapinskiÃ¢â ¬â„¢s] book reads on the surface like something by Damon Runyon and Elmore Leonard, with a dark undertow of real-life pain and disillusion.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Michiko Kakutani, The New York Times Ã¢â ¬Å“ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a brilliant book, a darling book. It is the blessedly modest chronicle of a magical consciousness that seems to have been born pulling diamonds out of the muck, hearing angelsÃ¢â ¬â„¢ voices in the fiercest thunder. . . . I adored every word of this wondrous book. Get it. Read it.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Michael Pakenham, The Baltimore Sun Ã¢â ¬Å“In the tradition of . . . Rita Mae Brown and Amy Tan, Ms. Stapinski is an exciting writer, unabashedly candid, and at the same time unashamedly self-contained. Five-Finger Discount is a must-read.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Victoria Gotti, The New York Observer Ã¢â ¬Å“What [Frank] McCourt did for Limerick, Ireland, Helene Stapinski does for Jersey City.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The Star-Ledger Ã¢â ¬Å“Hugely entertaining.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •The Sunday Times (London)

Book Information

File Size: 643 KB

Print Length: 272 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0375758704

Publisher: Random House (May 1, 2001)

Publication Date: May 1, 2001

Sold by:Ã Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B000FC1I40

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #133,499 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #24 inÃ Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > United States > Regions > Northeast > Mid Atlantic #131 inÃ Â Books > Travel > United States > Northeast > Mid Atlantic #274 inÃ Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > True Crime > Criminals

Customer Reviews

Five Finger Discount is an entertaining, detailed account of life in Jersey City during a high-crime time. Stapinski writes with candor and flair. She candidly names names and points fingers. It is a twisted trip down memory lane.

Insightful book in many ways as well as a true history of a time and place that is already becoming smothered in the pages of history. Fast-paced journalistic style makes it easy reading, and content is a springboard for researchers in the social sciences and Jersey City history. It is also a story of the courage of everyday men and women who faced familial and economic challenges.

A gem especially for Jersey citizens. Amusing, informative and well written. Captures the real Jersey City in all its ugly history.

Very good read,especially if your from jersey city,or Hoboken or neighboring towns. Sure brought back memories of growing up in the city

I honestly don’t know why so many reviews are negative about this book. It’s an honest description of life, both good and bad, in was used to be one of America’s ugliest and most corrupt cities. A true portrayal of growing up poor surrounded by an abandoned industrial wasteland at a time when petty theft was necessary for survival. The description of the main character’s life is both hilarous and pathetic. If you remember the "old" Jersey City before all the luxury apartments and the creation of Liberty State Park from hundreds of acres of hideous railroad ruins, then this book is for you!

written with a lot of humor and allowed me to travel in a time warp back to the earlier days of Jersey

City. There is so much history in our home town of Jersey City. I hope this author has lots of luck in her efforts to bring this book to the movie screen as reported in the local Jersey Journal.

A very interesting book enjoyed it very much

Brought back lots of memories ..... remember the Mike Bell enthusiasm when I was in college.

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