

# Gangster Capitalism

# GANGSTER CAPITALISM

THE UNITED STATES AND THE  
GLOBAL RISE OF ORGANIZED CRIME



**MICHAEL WOODIWISS**

"If you want the real deal on organized crime,  
read Woodiwiss." — Greg Palast

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Everyone knows what organized crime is. Each year dozens of feature films, hundreds of books, and thousands of news stories explain to an eager public that organized crime is what gangsters do. Closely knit, ethnically distinct, and ruthlessly efficient, these mafias control the drugs trade, people trafficking and other serious crimes. If only states would take the threat seriously and recognize the global nature of modern organized crime, the FBI's success against the Italian mafia could be replicated throughout the world. The wicked trade in addictive drugs could be brought to a halt. The trouble is, as Woodiwiss demonstrates in shocking and surprising detail, what everyone knows about organized crime is pretty much completely wrong. In reality the most important figures in organized crime are employees of multinational companies, politicians and bureaucrats. Gangsters are certainly a problem, but much of their strength comes from attempts to prohibit the market for certain drugs. Even here they are minor players when compared with the intelligence and law enforcement agencies that selectively enforce prohibition and profit from it. Woodiwiss shows how respectable businessmen and revered statesmen have seized these opportunities in an orgy of fraud and illegal violence

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