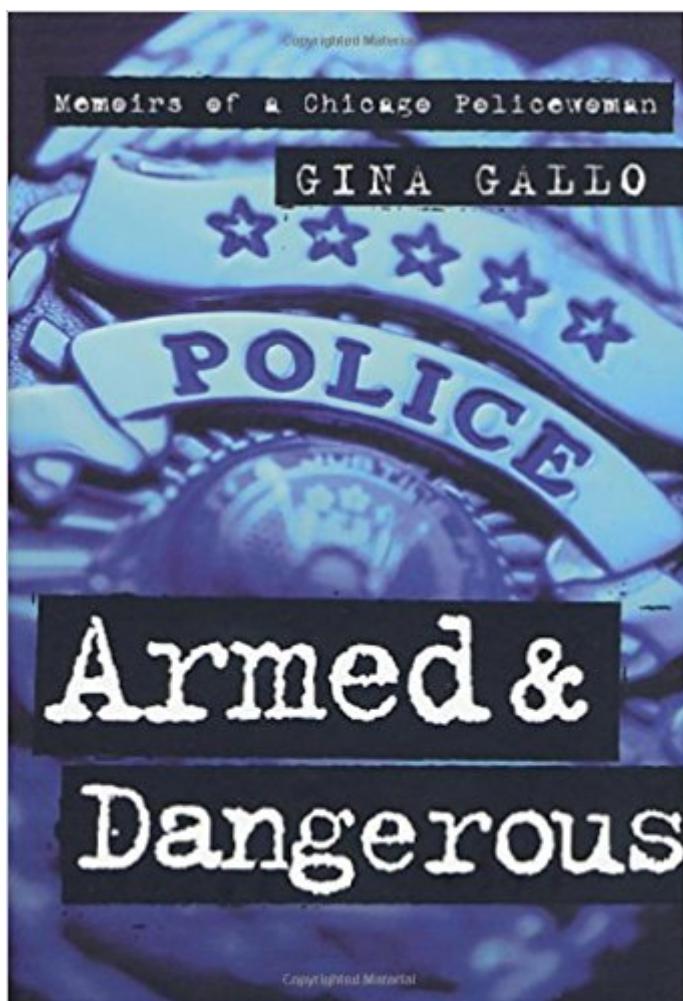


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Armed And Dangerous: Memoirs Of A Chicago Policewoman



Synopsis

The critically acclaimed memoirs of one female police officer's sixteen-year odyssey, beginning with day one at the Police Academy and spanning assignments on Chicago's West Side, one of the most dangerous areas in the city. The notorious cops' code of silence is broken as the author recounts incidents in the West Side projects: shoot-outs, ambushes, and what it feels like to kill a man just four days out of the Academy. The stories told are sometimes tragic, sometimes funny, often poignant, and always provide the reader with an on the scene feel for life behind the badge. Domestic violence, murdered spouses, abused children, and philandering CPD brass are just some of the topics addressed, topics that officer Gallo dealt with everyday. From her work with gangs, narcotics, the gun task force, and acting as a prostitute, Gina Gallo offers a gritty account of the darker side of the city, giving readers an objective side to the cops, crooks, and victims that comprise the police cops world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gallo's streetwise memoir--her first book--of policing Chicago's roughest neighborhoods blends equal parts humor and regret. A Chicago cop's daughter, Gallo completed a master's and began a career in psychology, but Reagan-era cutbacks directed her onto her father's path. Intending to work as a police therapist, she was instead unceremoniously assigned to the patrol division and became both a decorated officer and something of a trailblazer as one of the first women to receive high-risk tactical assignments. Gallo astutely considers the female cop's unique circumstances:

male partners deride her femininity yet capitalize on it during domestic calls; romances with civilians seem doomed. The elusive "feminine" qualities, feared by old-boy police officials, benefited her performance, while the misery of the streets apparently took a greater psychic toll than on her male counterparts. Gallo's fresh perspective counters typical TV images of cops, as she describes the experiences of "[t]hose who muddle along... trying to do the right thing." She gives devastatingly effective accounts of relations between "brother" officers and of trying to avoid being perceived as a "bimbo with a badge" or a "dog cop" (lazy or irredeemably greedy). Weaker moments occur in the melodramatic re-created crime-scene dialogues. Gallo is at her best when straightforwardly detailing the earthy minutiae of "cop life" or casting about for the emotional costs of being both witness and enforcer amidst the violence of the inner city. (Mar.) Forecast: Given the preponderance of TV shows and movies about the police and the scarcity of unadorned every-cop accounts, Gallo's book could appeal to a broad readership if prominently displayed in stores (the guns on its cover will be a draw). Author appearances at Chicago-area bookstores and police-related community events will garner regional interest. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

"Gallo's streetwise memoir of policing Chicago's roughest neighborhood blends equal parts humor and regret. Gallo is at her best when straight forwardly detailing the earthly minutiae of cop life or casting about the emotional costs of being both witness and enforcer amidst the violence of the inner city. • Publishers Weekly "A taste of life as a big-city cop • complete with comedy, drama and heartbreak. • The Chicago Tribune

A fine book to read if you want to know about the cop's life - especially those in Chicago. I was left admiring them and yet wanting to avoid them. You never know whether you're dealing with a good one or a bad one. Gallo is a fine writer, and this memoir is funny and sad by turns. She captures the first strange days of the rookie, the daily maneuvering of politics (something women must pay especially close attention to if they want to survive), and the numbing horror of seeing evil day in and day out. Eventually her cop career ended due to a suspect beating her with a bat. Her partner, a rookie, ran out the door without firing a shot, leaving Gallo to shoot the man who was trying to kill her. By that time, it seems she was suffering from PTSD, something cops in the big city cannot escape. But most of all, I think, her memoir is full of compassion for her fellow compatriots, the women and men out in the trenches who are basically dealing with scum every day. The stories got a little wearing after a while, but if she could live it, I could read it. I can only imagine what she went

through when she served the city of Chicago. After reading this, I'm looking at Chicago politics in a much more skeptical light.

This book is the most realistic account of policing in Chicago that I've ever read. I'm a Chicago Police Officer and can attest to the authenticity of the descriptions contained in this book. Gallo doesn't sugar-coat anything--she describes the Academy like it was, uses language true to policing, and hits it on the head with her definition of "game face". Mostly though, she nails the descriptions of the bosses--from the superintendent through the street sergeant--right on the head. It's exactly what the "real police" think, but can't say, because they would be buried in the Duece on midnights if they did. Thanks, Gina. I hope all the bosses read it and cringe when they recognize themselves! I know I can put names to many current and former P.O.'s from your vivid descriptions. Nice to see the deserving squirm a bit. Assuming they have the conscience to do even that much!

When a professor assigns a book to a student to read for a semester, it is not often that the student will read the book within the first two weeks of the semester. But, that is exactly what happened to my professor after I submitted the book report three months early. Gallo writes a riveting tale of life of an urban-city cop, splashing enough humor throughout it to keep the reader from growing to depressed at the scenes that officers can see. As somebody who is looking to go into law enforcement, who is about to graduate college to do just such a thing, I appreciate the brutal honesty that Gallo uses. I thoroughly recommend this book to anyone interested in a portrayal of urban law enforcement or going into the law enforcement field... Or even anyone looking for a good book to read.

A gritty, honest glimpse into the life of a policewoman. Articulate, unflinching, and bravely personal. Highly recommended for anyone who is interested in law enforcement, and anyone interested in understanding what life is like in the shoes of a policewoman.

As a former police officer I would recommend this book to everyone, especially non-police. The book does a great job showing the difficulties of the job, how police officers change during their careers, and showing a "culture" in our country that most people have no idea exists. One of the best police books I have ever read.

Armed & Dangerous is an excellent book whether you are considering a career in law enforcement

or not. Gallo begins her story with her father, who was shot on Easter, describing the pain of being a child of a police officer. She vowed never to become an officer, but life's circumstances forced her to change her mind. From there, she takes the reader on a roller-coaster ride from her days at the Academy to the day she resigned from the Chicago Police Department. Her depiction of the Academy made me wonder if this was fiction because I couldn't believe the brutal fashion in which the trainers handled future officers. A few of them left the Academy with permanent disabilities and no chance at a law enforcement career. She tells us how the rest of them made it through that grueling period, by banding together and forming a team. Being a team player is the most important skill in police work. I felt like I was right there with her as she described her first day on the job with a slacker for a field trainer and how that trainer deserted her when she needed him to back her up. She tells us what it was like to kill a man and what that did to her soul. She tells us what it's like to see a mutilated baby and then have to be professional in dealing with his murdering mother. And, she tells us what it's like to have to go to the same neighborhoods to deal with the same people day after day. There are lots of heartbreak stories in this book and some incredibly funny ones, too. I found myself laughing out loud at the craziness and the stupidity of both the criminals and the corrupt officers. More often than not, however, I felt disgusted by the drug addicts and the political games of the department brass. Throughout this book, I wondered how she managed to keep her humor when faced with the pain, the terror, and the good ol' boy mentality that tried its best to keep her in the trenches. The end saddened me, but it was typical. Armed & Dangerous stripped me of all my notions about police officers and what they do for a living. Gallo is a powerful writer, and I applaud her for having the courage to write this book. Throw away those police procedural novels. They pale against Gallo's book.

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