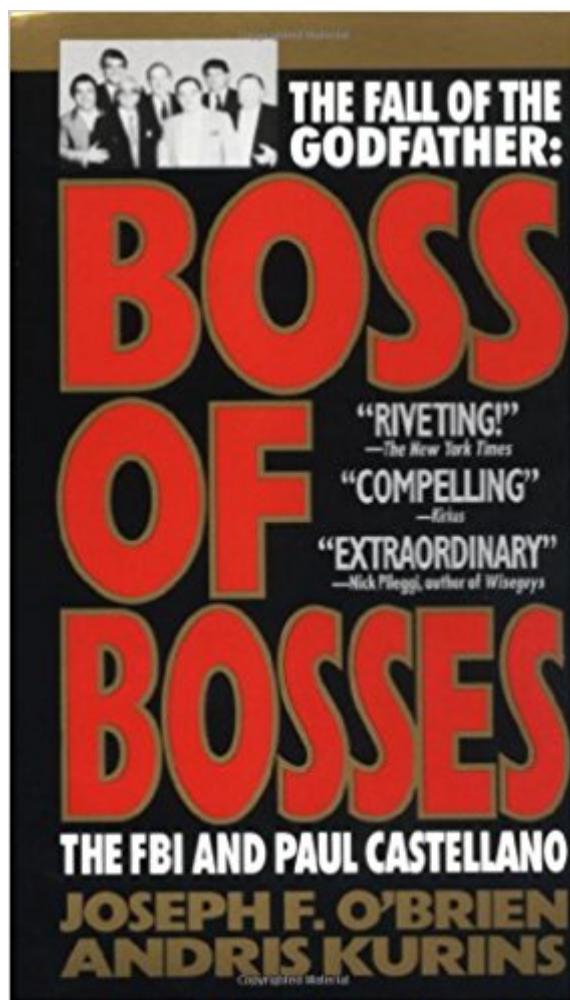


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Boss Of Bosses: The Fall Of The Godfather- The FBI And Paul Castellano



Synopsis

Paul Castellano headed New York's immensely powerful Gambino crime family for more than ten years. On December 16, 1985, he was gunned down in a spectacular shooting on Manhattan's fashionable East Side. At the time of his death, Paul Castellano was under indictment. So were most of the major Mafia figures in New York. Why? Because in 1983 the FBI had hidden a microphone in the kitchen of Castellano's Staten Island mansion. The 600 hours of recordings led to eight criminal trials. And this book. Agents Joe O'Brien and Andris Kurins planted that mike. They listened to the voices. Now they bring you the most revealing look inside the Mafia ever ... in the Mafia's own words.

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Customer Reviews

In 1981 Paul Castellano, head of New York City's Gambino crime family, was at the height of his power. At age 66 he controlled an empire that dictated to much of the construction and meat businesses, had a major say in the operation of two supermarket chains and was involved in such standard mob enterprises as prostitution, loan sharking, etc. Then FBI agents O'Brien and Kurins set out to stop him. Planting a listening device in Castellano's Staten Island home, they were able to secure enough information to send many of the area's top mafiosi to prison. Castellano, however, was fatally shot, gangland style, on a Manhattan street in 1985, while he was being tried for conspiracy to commit murder and for operating a stolen car ring. Exemplary sleuths, competent writers, the authors recreate a tense, lively tale redolent of high living and lawlessness, full of shrewd observations that break the code of crime-speak, to which these long-suffering snoops were

subjected during their electronic surveillance of the mob. First serial to New York magazine; film rights to Warner Brothers. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Castellano, boss of the Gambino crime family, was gunned down on a Manhattan street in 1985. FBI agents O'Brien and Kurins previously had planted a listening device in Castellano's home. Unlike such flamboyant mafioso as John Gotti, Castellano was quiet and circumspect, and the tapes provide somewhat less than expected about Mafia activities--they are most revealing about Castellano's affair with his maid. Despite their assignment, the authors respected Castellano, and Kurins actually was a favorable character witness for mobster Joseph Armone at his trial. They "have taken pains not to preach," and, however one views this approach, they largely succeed in telling an entertaining story that should prove popular. For crime collections.- Gregor A. Preston, Univ. of California Lib., DavisCopyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

He lived in a seventeen-room mansion on top of Todt Hill on Staten Island with his wife, mistress, and his various medications for a variety of ills. Already we are beginning to see a dysfunctional setting for this story. Paul Castellano projected various personalities depending on his listening audience. While holding court with fellow mobsters New York's Godfather used a gutter vocabulary which matched the associates he mingled with. In dealing with agents of the F.B.I. Castellano was duly respectful since they were only doing their job. Being driven into the city following his arrest he spoke in a manner befitting any ordinary citizen. This book doesn't detail the life of Paul Castellano. Instead, it is as the sub-title reads, "The Fall of the Godfather: The F.B.I. and Paul Castellano." The book includes a great amount of dialog between F.B.I. agents, Castellano, and his Bolivian mistress who speaks broken English, and the vernacular version of the English language used by mobsters. The key to justifying the arrest of Castellano was the planting of a listening device in a lamp in The Godfather's home while he was vacationing in Florida. This was easier said than done since the agents had to rehearse over a series of months just how to overcome locks that supposedly could not be picked, intricate security devices, and putting his two doberman pincers to sleep temporarily by providing them with drugged meat. This bugging of The Godfather's mansion provided a wealth of information regarding the comings-and-goings on Todt Hill. I had to feel sorry for the secretaries who had to transcribe the dialog between the mobsters not only because two or three individuals would speak at the same time, but because they had to listen to the venom and

vomit that came out of the mouths of these mobsters who speak with a very limited vocabulary and punctuate their thoughts with numerous profanities. One hour of dialog would take fifteen hours to transcribe. For some unknown reason the listening device installed inside the lamp eventually malfunctioned, but not before numerous mobsters incriminated themselves leading to their eventual arrest. The book concludes with the mob-hit on Castellano, but no details of the assassination outside of Spark's Steak House on December 16, 1985, along with his driver, Tommy Bilotti, are provided. Several factors leading up to Big Paul's date with death include the mob believing he was showing weakness over his head-over-heals behavior towards his Bolivian mistress along with his lack of respect in avoiding the wake of the deceased Aniello Dellacroce. A third factor was his choice of deciding that his new underboss of the Gambino family would be a loose cannon named Tommy Bilotti. Now The Godfather who could order the rub-out of an individual merely by the lift of an eyebrow or a frown became the one on the hit list himself. If you can get by the amount of profanity used in the book in the dialog between mobsters you will find this to be a very interesting book on true crime.

This book is not the greatest page turner, but it is a very interesting take on the saga. It appears the (2) FBI agents have a bit of an ego as well as Big Paul. There was a lot of work involved in bringing down the Commission so it was not a total waste of time, but I think that they were a little miffed at John Gotti for taking away their big prize. All in all, Paul got what he deserved. He should have never accepted the position offered to him. He was most unqualified for the job. The underboss was the next in line so, really you can blame a lot of the families troubles on Carlo picking family over Family. Paul was actually a pig, he had no understanding of respect. Not for either family. Though he was not a total idiot, his business acumen would have been put to better use as the #2 or #3 man in the family. And even though Carlo picked him, it was his own fault to allow the feds to record so much of his business. I've read many books on the Mafia, and this is certainly one of the better ones.

So real I can't believe it. I grew up around this life and I can't believe how real this book is to the truth.

Good info even if written by an Irishman. Just a little humor. Will hold your attention. So go ahead and enjoy

What can I say. I was raised in New Jersey and spent many nights in NYC. In fact when John Gotti passed away I owned a coffee shop in New Jersey and Had his picture hanging on the wall for two weeks draped in black. But the book was fantastic.

One of the best New York mafia books I have read. Not so much about actually mob information. But an in site into what it's like to be the Godfather!

Easy read with both sides of the coin. I did not care for the FBI low class comments about the way some of the mobsters looked or dressed. Seemed a bit below the standards of professional law men. But the book was great.

Excellent delivery time and the books met all my expectations.

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