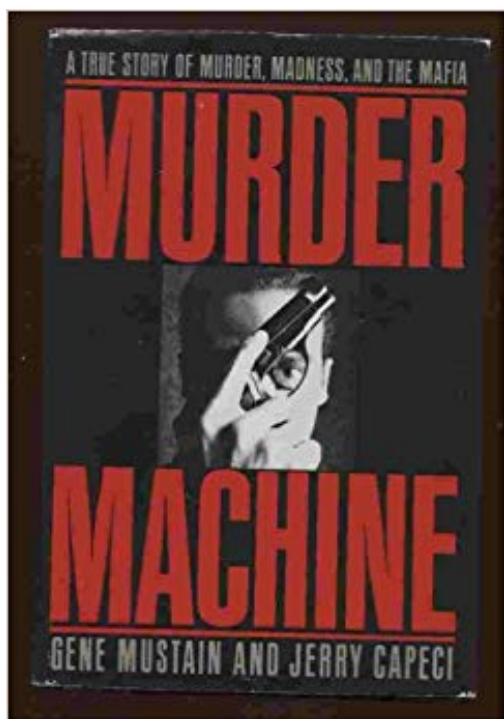


## Murder Machine: A True Story of Murder, Madness & the Mafia *by* Gene Mustain



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**ISBN:** 0525934677

**ISBN13:** 978-0525934677

**Author:** Gene Mustain

**Book title:** Murder Machine: A True Story of Murder, Madness & the Mafia

**Pages:** 418

**Publisher:** Dutton Adult; 1st edition (August 1, 1992)

**Language:** English

**Category:** True Crime

**Size PDF version:** 1890 kb

**Size ePUB version:** 1947 kb

**Size FB2 version:** 1437 kb

**Other formats:** doc mobi lrf

A gritty expose+a7 of organized crime focuses on Roy DeMeo, a professional hit man whose team of contract killers caused even the Gambino crime family to tremble. By the authors of Mob Star. 35,000 first printing. \$35,000 ad/promo. Tour.



## Reviews of the **Murder Machine: A True Story of Murder, Madness & the Mafia** *by* Gene Mustain

Yndanol

Although cinematic portrayals of the Mafia have generated plenty of cringe-worthy moments, reading about the real-life deeds of Nino Gaggi's murderous underlings makes the "Sopranos" appear like a series more suitable for Nickelodeon. MURDER MACHINE details the rise and fall of a Gambino-family crew that may have been responsible for up to 200 murders and how the legal system finally caught on to them.

While I thought this was going to be a book exclusively about the notorious Roy DeMeo, it actually isn't. MURDER MACHINE presents a broader perspective by illustrating DeMeo and his gang of thugs as an efficiently effective cog in the Gambino family wheel of criminal activity. The main underlying theme that runs throughout the book is the tempestuous relationship between Nino Gaggi and his nephew, Dominick Montiglio ... a relationship that eventually gave law enforcement the tools necessary to shut down the "Murder Machine".

What I really liked about MURDER MACHINE is that the authors provide readers with a complete picture of Mafia serial killing. A story that starts with a patriarchal Nino Gaggi essentially stealing his nephew, Dominick, to serve as his pseudo-son and how that tenuous relationship ultimately implodes and ends with Dominick providing prosecutors the nails needed to seal the Gaggi/Demeo coffin. While the Gaggi/Montiglio team serves as bookends to the storyline; DeMeo and his crew provide the (no pun intended) "meat" in the middle. Mustain and Capeci do a good job illustrating the seedy atmosphere of New York in the 1970s that suitably caters to the criminal activity and grisly murders committed by the DeMeo gang. The detailing vividly covers events in a manner that make it easy to image the entire storyline in movie-like fashion. I particularly appreciated this aspect of the book as it thoroughly illustrates the depravity of Gaggi and DeMeo's activities. While some may feel the minutiae bogs the story down, I considered it critical in providing the clarity needed with so many individuals and events meshing together.

What separates MURDER MACHINE from so many other Mafia-related books is that it covers a particularly bloodthirsty group of men that seemed wired to kill and did so with relish. Roy DeMeo angle was certainly interesting and it is clear that the man was an insecure thug without a conscience. DeMeo's name gets all the attention, but his crew of underlings were just as bad, if not worse ... and all killing was generally done with capo Gaggi's unspoken approval. As long as the money flowed to Gaggi and his superior, Gambino boss Paul Castellano, no one seemed to care who was killed, how they were killed or how the money was made. The book eerily illustrates how the Mafia's tendrils crept into the everyday lives New Yorkers and it didn't just involve drugs or loan-sharking. DeMeo's crew was responsible for stealing thousands of cars ... every year. Paralleling the criminal activities is the slow creep of law enforcement linking murders to Gaggi/DeMeo and eventually building an operation to take them down by getting Mafia underlings to become witnesses for the prosecution.

While murder and dismemberment are the book's trademarks, I found the machination within the Gambino crime family and the characters involved more compelling. MURDER MACHINE continuously introduces readers to a cast of characters that keep things interesting. Aside from the insecurities of Gaggi and DeMeo, there is Dominick Montiglio, the Green Beret who fought with valor in Vietnam only to become embroiled in his uncle's criminal empire and eventually succumbing to the debauchery associated with his uncle's Mafia life. It is Dominick who seems to provide much of the book's details. The other characters in the book give the stories color: Vito Arena, the obese gay hitman, the "Gemini Twins" and their enthusiasm toward dismembering victims, "Dracula" the creepy old mobster who actually lived in the apartment where the dismembering was done and a host of other interesting criminals and victims. In some cases, even friends become prey for the "murder machine". We also get a clear picture of the guiltless lust for power and money exhibited by Mafia members and the paranoia it infuses within the ranks ... no one is truly safe or invincible ... as most of the characters, including DeMeo, find out.

One thing I did find quite interesting is that Richard "Iceman" Kuklinski is NEVER mentioned in the 458 page book. My initial introduction to Roy DeMeo was from watching HBO's "The Iceman Tapes" in which Kuklinski coldly places himself as a major hitman in DeMeo's crew of killers. MURDER MACHINE either debunks Kuklinski's claims or simply ignores his "contributions". Considering the number of unsolved murders/missing people possibly linked to DeMeo, it is still hard to tell whether or not Kuklinski was or wasn't involved with any of the killing.

While I didn't find MURDER MACHINE particularly "chilling", it does reveal how ruthless the Mafia is and how indiscriminant its members can be when it comes to killing those who've crossed or inconvenienced them. The criminal activity and the story of those committing the crimes comprise the soul of MURDER MACHINE, not the grisly method of disposing bodies. This is certainly one of the better Mafia storylines I've read over the years and it seems to work hand-in-hand with the filthy, run-down image of New York City in the 70s.

Orevis

...this will be my last 'mob' guy tells it all book. Not because it was bad, but because I can't imagine reading a better one. If you're like me and have paid attention to these things over the years you have probably heard about the events in this book - but, you will never find this story or any other like it told in a more riveting fashion. Could not put it down - lost sleep reading it. This chapter in modern Mob history is twisted, depraved and downright unsettling. Bravo to the authors and the depth of research that went into the telling of Murder Machine. PS - you'll think twice before you take a spin through Canarsie.

Stonewing

Yes this was a good read that played like a video movie that kept me going to the next page and then to finish each chapter most of the time through the main 449 pages, finishing it in 14 days. Of course for me this book was of great interest because I'd grown up in those neighborhoods of B'klyn, NY and the same time frame when all this took place and even knew of most of the places and people mentioned which was why I bought this book after being told about it.

So after reading this book my gut shook and trembled a little even though 40 yr's has past, just thinking how many times I might have made eye contact with anyone of these out of control guys from a simple negative verbal or hand gesture during a unfair automobile lane change or cutoff making a turn that could have gotten me killed like so many that crossed their paths one way or the other just by being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Mayno

This is one gritty book and it is all true. The amount of people that Roy DeMeo killed is almost unbelievable. The story is mostly about the DeMeo mob through the eyes of Dominick Santamaria who - as a child - was brought up into "that life". I have some pity for Dom because he was taught to be that way from his uncle Nino. He never murdered anyone but was present for several and was on mafia sniper detail but never had to pull the trigger. May God have mercy on his soul as the young are the most vulnerable. Dominick was also a great soldier during Vietnam and earned a Green Beret and I admire him greatly for that. I am an Italian and for the life of me don't understand what the big attraction is to being a mug. The story was insulting to me because it gives the Italians a bad name. I have had some anti-Italian things happen to me throughout my life. That we are all involved in crime and even the brutal side of the Roman Empire was blamed on me by some co-workers. Sorry people but that as they say was a long time ago.

JoldGold

This book brings you to the time and events as if you are standing next to the events unfolding in front of you. It accurately puts both crime and punishment in balance and keeps you hoping for the good to prevail until the very end...This is the 1st organized true crime I read in 2001 and have been hooked since. I re-read it now in 2017 and again I couldn't put it down. What's most amazing to me is that the facts have held up over time and aligned with crimes and arrests after, this could only mean that the sources have been truthful and the authors investigated the facts to a superb level, before printing. I would challenge Any reader to not be addicted to organized true crime after reading this book. Furthermore this book should go down as a true crime classic and a basis for historians interested in organized crime in the late 70s to the mid eighties Era. Truly the best true organized crime book I've ever read.

Unsoo

This is the best mafia book I've read, and its about an entire crew of stone cold serial murderers. They were prolific. People were dropping like flies in Brooklyn. They killed for hire, for business, for fun. They really should make this one into a movie, it would make millions !! Jerry Capeci and Gene Mustain did a bang up job, you won't be able to put it down. Seriously

Blackredeemer

A meticulously detailed and horrifying story of the murderous Roy DeMeo crew that slaughtered hundreds of people in Brooklyn during the 1970s and 80s. Hard to read...harder to put down.

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