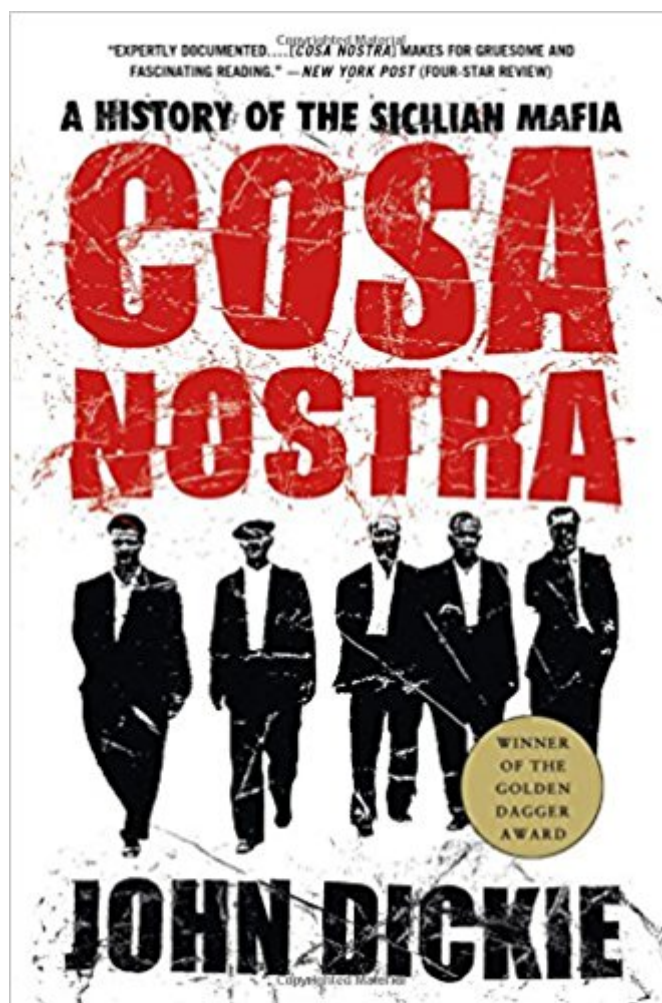


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Cosa Nostra: A History Of The Sicilian Mafia



Synopsis

Hailed in Italy as the best book ever written about the mafia in any language, *Cosa Nostra* is a fascinating, violent, and darkly comic account that reads like fiction and takes us deep into the inner sanctum of this secret society where few have dared to tread. In this gripping history of the Sicilian mafia, John Dickie uses startling new research to reveal the inner workings of this secret society with a murderous record. He explains how the mafia began, how it responds to threats and challenges, and introduces us to the real-life characters that inspired the American imagination for generations, making the mafia an international, larger than life cultural phenomenon. Dickie's dazzling cast of characters includes Antonio Giammona, the first "boss of bosses"; New York cop Joe Petrosino, who underestimated the Sicilian mafia and paid for it with his life; and Bernard "the Tractor" Provenzano, the current boss of bosses who has been hiding in Sicily since 1963.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“The inspiration of far too much pulpy entertainment, the Italian mobsters under John Dickie's microscope in *Cosa Nostra* have long cultivated outsiders' tendencies to romanticize their supposed honor and loyalty. But Dickie demonstrates definitively that the centuries-old mafia has never been more than an illegal business and shadow state pursuing 'power and money by cultivating the art of killing people.'”
—[The Washington Post](#)
“His is the first truly definitive English-language study of this myth-laden subject, and it is a pleasure to read...his book is notable for shrewd judgments couched in language that is vibrantly memorable. His acquaintance with the island and his immersion in the wider modern Italian culture also allow him to

convey the noxious atmosphere of corruption with flair. — Christopher Sylvester, The Sunday Times (London) — “A serious contribution to modern Italian history . . . it can be safely predicted that Dickie’s book will be a sensation, not least because it has a dozen potential movies in it. — Clive James, Times Literary Supplement — “I couldn’t put it down. His archival sleuthing is yoked to his powerful, often coruscating storytelling to create a chilling account of the mafia’s sinister, horrific reality. — John Guy, The Sunday Times — “Absorbing . . . He succeeds in being both opinionated and precise and has performed a necessary work of rebranding. — Financial Times — “Riveting — Sunday Telegraph — “Vibrant, muscular and highly readable. — Clare Longrigg, Guardian — “Lucid . . . grimly readable. — Daily Telegraph — “A brave work. — Mail on Sunday — “Highly readable . . . compelling. The narrative is entertaining and, at times, as chilling as the darkest crime fiction. It combines compelling horror with clear, rational analysis. — Glasgow Herald — “Cosa Nostra overflows with wonderful vignettes about mafia codes of conduct . . . engrossing. — John Naughton, 0 Word — “A fascinating book. Cosa Nostra combines scholarship with a rip-roaring read. — Sunday Herald — “Monumental and gripping. — Andrew Marr, BBC Radio 4’s Start the Week

The Italian-American mafia has its roots in a mysterious and powerful criminal network in Sicily. While the mythology of the mafia has been widely celebrated in American culture, the true origins of its rituals, laws, and methods have never actually been revealed. John Dickie uses startling new research to expose the secrets of the Sicilian mafia, providing a fascinating account that is more violent, frightening, and darkly comic than anything conceived in popular movies and novels. How did the Sicilian mafia begin? How did it achieve its powerful grip in Italy and America? How does it operate today? From the mafia’s origins in the 1860s to its current tense relationship with the Berlusconi government, Cosa Nostra takes us to the inner sanctum where few have dared to go before. This is an important work of history and a revelation for anyone who ever wondered what it means to be “made” in the mob. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The author does an exacting job of identifying historical events, but he too often bores the reader with details best summarized.

This book dives in deep to the history of the mafia and its know major players/influences. It tackles

crime from both a political and social aspect to show you how interconnected the Italian system was to the mafia without even directly being able to acknowledge its existence

John Dickie's *Cosa Nostra* tracks the Mafia underworld back to Italian unification efforts in the 19th Century. It explores the growing influence of the Sicilian criminal element and its flight overseas in the 1920s to escape Fascism. Dickie notes the reestablishment of Mafia authority in Sicily following the Second World War and describes intergang friction on that island from the 1960s to the present day. Dickie's work is the latest to illustrate England's fascination with the Sicilian Mafia. Though the book's jacket claims it is the "first English language history of the Cosa Nostra," readers of James Fentress's *Rebels and Mafiosi* (which certainly seemed to be in English when I read it a few years ago) will experience some *deja vu*. The book appears to have been very well researched. The subject matter might be a bit too heavy for the casual reader, and Dickie does not help matters with his academic writing style. If you are fond of short sentences and are fearful of semicolons, this one's probably not for you. The book contains a helpful bibliography, a good index, sixteen pages of photographs and a few maps.

John Dickie's book on the history of the Sicilian Mafia is a landmark in investigative and historical journalism. The uncovering of the inner workings of an organization that, for obvious reasons, kept few or no written records is in itself a Herculean effort. There is nothing like it in the annals of journalism. It is far and away the most comprehensive portrait of organized crime ever written, but in addition to Mr. Dickie's brilliant and exhaustive research, his insights and writing style elevate the work to highest levels of journalism. The book opens with an extraordinary dissection of the assassination of the crusading Sicilian Magistrate, Giovanni Falcone, whose murder galvanized the Italian people, and the Pope himself, to finally stand up against the Mafia's two centuries of outrages. Then Mr. Dickie explains how Massenet's extraordinary opera, *Cavalleria Rusticana* -- used in both *Raging Bull* and *The Godfather III* -- helped create the myth of Sicilian Mafiosi as "Men of Honor", an aberrant term if ever there was one. A flawless, unflinching masterpiece of investigation and composition. Bravo, Mr. Dickie. James Dalessandro, author of "1906"

A brand new book, I read it whenever I have time, I like to learn different contents from literature BESTSELLERS a plus, from Great Authors either based on real facts or just from the Imagination of the Writer.

A bit tedious but good insight. I would have rated the book 4 stars, if the figures were included in the Kindle edition.

A pretty solid history on the real Sicilian Mafia and not the mutant one that exists in America. A few chapters cover the mafia in America but only during the days of Prohibition and the Castellamarese War, when the Mafia of Sicily still controlled the branch in America, before Luciano and the Commission. A very interesting book, and quite hefty book. I would recommend it.

This book is very informative while captivating at the same time making it hard to put down. I highly recommend it to anyone, especially if interested in crime novels, history, or criminology!

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