

mob speak

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THIEF! character, Vince Eli

F R I D A Y , J U L Y

➔ Part III: Supreme, Crack, Hip-hop & 50-Cent

Part III of a 3-Part Series

We take up again with Seth Ferranti, author of *The Supreme Team: The Birth of Crack and Hip-hop, Prince's Reign of Terror and the Supreme/50-Cent Beef Exposed*.



Jay-Z & Supreme

MS: Do you think Supreme and his gang believed they could outsmart the system or just accepted that death or prison was the price one paid?

SF: I would say a lot of dudes know that death and prison are the eventual outcomes when they get involved in the drug game but to them it seems that is the acceptable eventuality. I am sure they know they will only beat the system for so long but like I mentioned in one of the previous answers when you start beating cases left and right you might get caught up in the God complex and start believing your own press clippings. The ego is a terrible thing in situations like these which leads to blind spots that can keep these

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Slick signs THIEF! in Las Vegas

guys delusional in a way. But in another way I give them the ultimate respect and props because they remain who they are and they hold true to their ideals and their way of life even in the face of tremendous adversity. So in a weird or twisted kind of way they do have their own unique sense of honor and I would say their own unique sense of fate too. Because they have to know that they are going down but they do it anyway. To live big for that moment and in that minute they will do whatever it takes and pay whatever price. It is the ultimate live fast, die young attitude that these dudes embody. The epitome of who and what they are and the things they will do to maintain their reputation is truly gangster because to me being gangster is about having ideals and morals and sticking to them even if in society's sense they are twisted. That is why I call dudes like Supreme and Prince gangsters. Because they stuck to what they believed in. They lived by a code and never gave in or sold themselves short no matter what the situation. So maybe in all actuality they thought they could beat the system for a while but deep down inside they must have known they were living on borrowed time and in essence they were cool with that.

MS: You state, “Scarface made selling drugs seem cool and lucrative. It romanticized the dope game while glamorizing it and led a whole generation of youth astray. In reality that movie corrupted the whole black community.”

As powerful as it was, can one movie really have that much of an impact on a whole generation? Tony Montana wasn't even black. He was Cuban, a Latino.

SF: I think so, the impact that movie had on hip-hop and the inner-city is undeniable. Tony Montana wasn't black but the black community identified with him. He was a man that came from nothing and rose to the top of the dope game. Dudes in the inner-city saw that and they thought hey I can do that too. Why not? It's really not about being black or white or Cuban or whatever, in the end it's about the haves and the have not's. If 10% of the population in this country have all the money and all the power then in essence we can all be Tony Montanas in a sense. It's like a ghettoized version of the American Dream. Kids in the ghetto don't grow up thinking they can go to Harvard but they do think they can be Tony Montana. Why? Because they see the local drug dealers who have that Scarface aura and get that Scarface respect and to them that is obtainable. All the rest is foreign to them. A lot of kids from the inner-city see the dope game as the way out. It is sad but it is the truth. I believe that movie had a tremendous impact on a whole generation of wanna be hustlers. Tony Montana made the drug game seem cool and glamorous. And the dudes that were running the drug trade in New York were the guys who the rappers emulated and wanted to be with, so it all goes back to hip-hop, which is a microcosm of black culture in a way.

MS: A few pages later you say that Preme was successful in merging blacks and Latinos, something that had been unheard of before. Why hadn't it happened before, especially considering that the two groups had much in common?



Al Pacino as Scarface



Mob Writer Cherie reading her favorite book

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SF: I think it goes back to the old saying of separate but equal. The way our country is structured society keeps the different groups of people separated. Divide and conquer is the oldest maxim in the book. Our country has a history of pitting ethnic groups against each other. It is a kind of survival of the fittest. That is how the cream rises to the top. And in truth a lot of people are ignorant of so many things. Supreme wasn't, he saw the big picture. He had a vision and he did what he had to do to bring his vision to reality. It's really a shame he chose the options he did, he could have been a great and charismatic leader for his people and for America. But he chose the path he did and he has become a legend in the process. I didn't make Supreme a legend, his actions and his own environment did. I just carried on the tradition of the storyteller and brought his legacy to the masses in my book. This is not something that hasn't been done before with countless other criminals and outlaw heroes. The line stretches all the way back to Robin Hood and Billy the Kid and all the way up to John Gotti and Pablo Escobar and Supreme and other black inner-city gangsters.

MS: Rookie police officer Byrne's murder while sitting in a patrol car became a symbol of the nation's failure in its war on crime, a killing not even perpetrated by the Supreme Team. Yet they were blamed for it. Was that due to the fact that crack was involved and the Supreme Team was synonymous with crack?

SF: The Queens drug dealers had a kind of brotherhood. They called it the roundtable. All the dealers- Fat Cat, Pappy Mason, Wall Corley, Cornbread, Supreme, Prince, Tommy Mickens, Pretty Tony and all their respective crews- put aside any beefs in the name of business. Due to this association all of the dealers from Queens have been blamed and associated for the tragic murder of Edward Byrne. Even though four Bebobs are doing time for the murder, all the dealers from that era are associated with it in news reports. The Bebobs were Pappy Mason's crew and Pappy Mason was Fat Cat's enforcer. If you check out photos from the era all of the above dealers are seen partying together at the hip-hop hotspots like Disco Fever. When the murder happened the feds and cops went all out on all the dealers from Queens. They didn't differentiate. The authorities were out for blood and they went after all the Queens drug lords. But without crack none of that happens. In a way crack really destroyed everything for the drug lords, yeah, they made money but the collateral damage was tremendous and they all ended up paying an extremely high cost although not as high a cost as Edward Byrne paid. Before crack a lot of dudes I have spoken to call it the wonder years, but after crack it was all murder, murder and more murder.

SF: Once Supreme was in prison, you say that the Supreme Team under Prince's management engaged in senseless violence, open-ended free-for-alls ending in murder to a degree that made New York the "murder capital of the world." How much of a role, if any, did Preme play in all this?

SF: Preme was in prison, so I am sure he did not play a role in all the senseless murders and free for alls. He would have tried to be more diplomatic and stop a lot of that but with the dawning of the crack era maybe even he would have been unable to stem the tide. Crack is a vicious drug and when you mix crack, money and power it is a volatile brew and then add

people's egos to that mix and you get the picture. Some of the dudes in the streets at that time really thought they were Scarface. They were going out with guns blazing. They did not give a fuck. And a lot of these types of dudes were on the team. So who knows if Supreme would have been able to curb the murderous and destructive behavior that a lot of these dudes engaged in? Crack really changed things. So it was not just Supreme not being out there it was a combination of that, Prince's more ruthless style and the cutthroat world that emerged as crack took hold of Queens and the inner cities across the nation. I would say crack made New York the murder capital of the world and it brought the violence to the degree that it got to.

MS: A Supreme Team member said, "If not for the fed case, we would have retired. We would have flipped that illegal money, opened up stuff that could help our people in the neighborhood." How likely was that to happen do you think? Can leopards change their spots?

SF: Without all the violence and murders I believe it could have happened. The crack era made a lot of things change. Even the big dealers like Fat Cat, who made millions before crack, would have been ok without the violence. But the power started to go to these dudes' heads and I think the ego maniac aspect of the Scarface movie did too. They saw Scarface and they wanted to be that. They wanted to have that power and with that ego maniacness a kind of craziness came into it. And then you put crack in that mix it was like pouring napalm on an already raging fire. Things exploded and got real chaotic. So without all that they might have been able to go legit. It's been done before; the Kennedys are a good example of that. This is America so I am sure things like that have happened all the time in our history and in the black community. Most of the dudes on the team were hustlers first and foremost all the other stuff came into play because dudes got sheisty and they had to show that they weren't going for it. If you are righteous and treating people right, in the drug world that is, and dudes get it twisted and come at you wrong, how are you supposed to act? The streets dictate that you fight fire with fire. So that is how sometimes good people do bad things and make bad decisions.

MS: To continue along the previous line, Supreme did his utmost to go legit with his movie, *Crime Partners*, whose production and distribution were apparently financed legally. He stated, "I just wanted to be a regular person." Is that to say he was on the straight and narrow? That once back on the streets he had nothing to do with drug dealing?

SF: I would say that Supreme was on the straight and narrow but it goes back to the hood and in reality, as outsiders, there are a lot of things we don't understand about the hood. Ok, Preme was going legit but he still had this reputation as a big gangster and ghetto star. He still loved his hood and his people. He still represented for them. So the problem exists because you got all these suckers that are hating on Preme because of his success. They are trying him, disrespecting him, trying to get their own reputation at his expense. So what is the man supposed to do? I mean he is Supreme, he is the gangster legend. So does he revert to form or try to ignore it? That is why when a lot of people make it from the hood they move out of the hood because they are not with all the bullshit. But Preme tried to keep it real, in fact he did keep it real. Too real and now he is paying the price for what he

did. But he stood on what he did, he didn't involve anyone else. He took it and kept it moving. That is why he is so revered and why his legacy should be honored. Not because he was a big drug lord or had power or this or that but because he stood on his ideals and didn't cave in the face of adversity. That is what makes him special. I can't say if he never sold drugs again. Who knows? But I do know he was making legitimate strides in a legal venture and due to his status and who he was the feds put a spotlight on him because they felt like he was the one that got away.

MS: Can you give us a short version of the beef between rapper 50 Cent and Supreme? How did it affect Supreme in the long run?

SF: 50 Cent was a nobody from the South Jamaica, the hood where Supreme is from. Supreme was riding what at the time was the winning horse, Irv Gotti and Ja Rule's Murder Inc. They were the stars, they were on top of the world. 50 Cent was trying to make a name for himself by disrespecting Irv Gotti and Ja Rule. So Preme stepped in, 50 Cent lied to Preme and kept it going and 50 Cent got blasted because of that. In the streets if a man comes to you and says check it out you need to stop doing this I am with these guys so leave them alone and you agree and then go back to doing the same thing the next eventuality due to you breaking your word is that you get fucked up, plain and simple. So 50 Cent broke his word to Preme and he got handled accordingly. Then after that 50 Cent goes on to become the biggest rapper in the world and he puts a lot of stuff in his songs and tells the feds to read my lyrics and he says a lot of stuff in interviews and then Supreme and Murder Inc. end up getting federally indicted and the indictment reads like everything 50 Cent was talking about in interviews and in his songs. So I would say the beef affected Supreme severely. But at the time he had no idea that this dude would blow up like he did. If he would have known he might have handled things differently but hindsight is 20/20.

MS: You state that "Supreme was targeted from the word go..." by overzealous prosecutors. And one of Supreme's associates observed, "...with the feds it's like once a drug dealer always a drug dealer." The question still remains: Was Supreme innocent of the murders they charged him with?

SF: I believe he is innocent. It just seems kind of far-fetched. He is convicted of murder for hire but there is no evidence, no physical evidence at all. Just the dudes who committed the murders saying Preme paid them \$50 grand to do it. But \$50 grand for a hit is a lot of money in South Jamaica, Queens. And the dudes who got killed were known thugs and gunslingers who were armed when they were killed. So who is to say that the shooters didn't kill these guys of their own accord and then look to connect Supreme to it when they didn't want to face the consequences of their actions? All this Supreme/50 Cent stuff is big news anyhow and the feds are trying to connect Preme to anything at all resembling a crime. Remember the whole Murder Inc. case started because the feds said Preme gave Irv Gotti the seed money to start Murder Inc., but then several years later when Supreme finally went to trial it changed into a murder for hire case. It just doesn't make sense. It's like the feds designated a target in Supreme and then put the case together as they went with no real evidence just the dudes who did the shooting saying that Supreme paid them to do it and there was no evidence of that occurring either, just these dudes' words. And it turns out one of the dudes was a frequent flyer informant. This was the second time he had got

busted for something and cooperated with the feds. So it is a kind of far-fetched and crazy situation. I believe he is innocent of the murders they charged him with.

Seth, thanks for your candid, well-researched thoughts. Your book *The Supreme Team* seems certain to go down as the new standard for all exposes on legendary gangsters.



Author Seth Ferranti with wife Diane

Check out www.gorillaconvict.com for more information.

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W E D N E S D A Y , J

➔ Part II: Supreme, Crack, Hip-hop & 50 Cent

Part II of a 3-part series

Mob Speak talks with Seth Ferranti, who Michael Gourdine calls "the most respected name in urban, gangster and prison literature."



Supreme Team poster (Supreme & Prince)

Writing from prison while serving a 304-month sentence on a drug charge, here are Seth's unexpurgated thoughts on his latest book, *The Supreme Team: The Birth of Crack and Hip-hop, Prince's Reign of Terror and the Supreme/50 cent Beef*. One can't help but wonder at his nerve to tell it like it is.

MS: Did the fact that Supreme backed you 100% to write this book affect your decision to do it?

SF: When I was first trying to get back in touch with Supreme, who was being held limbo incommunicado at ADX Florence the BOP's SuperMax, to get him to approve the manuscript it just wasn't happening. The publisher tried to get to him but he wasn't receiving our messages. So to do the right thing I reached out to Prince at USP Allenwood instead, he was second in command of the Supreme Team, so I tried to get approval from him but he didn't want to parlay with me or even address me. He sent Bimmy at me on

Facebook with threats and insinuations. Bimmy told me emphatically that he and Prince and other remaining members of the team were not with my book. I sent them some rough drafts of the manuscript but they didn't even want to look at them or address them. So out of respect I shelved the book. A year went by and finally my publisher established communications with Supreme who was in the step down program at ADX and had entered the last level so he could communicate more freely than before. Supreme had us send the manuscript to one of his main dudes to check out so we did and I got my approval that way. See what a lot of these dudes don't know even know, dudes on the team, is that I was on the compound with Supreme at FCI Gilmer in 2004-05 before he was taken back on the Murder Inc. indictment. I talked to him extensively about this entertainment type stuff. I did the Supreme Team story in Don Diva issue #23 with his blessing and worked with Ronald "Tuck" Tucker on that and I did the Supreme story in Don Diva issue #30 in which I used material that I had gotten from Tuck in my interviews with him and from David "Bing" Robinson, another Supreme Teamer I did time with and interviewed while I was at FCI Loretto. Supreme saw all these articles and approve them all. Then I did the chapter on him in Street Legends Vol. 1, which he approved also using a lot of the same material I had gotten from the interviews I conducted. Still when I couldn't get approval I shelved the book and then when we got back in contact with Supreme and he approved it we put it out. The fact that he backed it directly affected my decision to put it out. I wanted to anyhow but the way that I work is I need approval from one of the primaries. I can't help it if these other dudes are not with Preme's decision that is on them.

MS: Anyone ever ask you if being a white dude has helped, hindered or had no affect on who will talk with you?

SF: No one has ever asked me this but I have found that in a way it has helped me. Because I am an outsider because I am white but at the same time I am an insider because I am in prison. So it works both ways. But I think maybe due to my race and how I have carried myself and the time I am doing it helped a lot of these dudes open up to me and tell me their stories. You have to remember we are talking about dudes that went to trial and lost and to whom it is anemic to talk to the government or media about anything regarding their lives or their crimes. There is that whole code of the streets thing but the way I always explained to them is that I write the story within the street code. I have had dudes tell me all kinds of stuff I could never print. Sometimes the stories just flow out of these dudes and I feel as if I might be the first person hearing it. They tell me some crazy stuff but I have to sort through it and see what is plausible to print because obviously we can't be doing interviews about unsolved murders and stuff like that because I am not even trying to go that route. I do not consider myself an investigative journalist where I am trying to do the police's job for them. But a lot of dudes even those on the team probably think who the fuck is this white boy? But if they check they can find out, my reputation precedes itself. I am not a tough guy or a killer but I am a man of my word and I do what I say I am going to do. There is more than you can say for most people.

MS: I've heard that Blacks and Latinos generally mix about as well as wives and hookers. How do you think Supreme managed to meld the two groups?

SF: I would say Supreme did it by pure strength of will and charisma. Supreme is a very magnetic character. His ability to charm others and make them feel important goes beyond geographical and ethnic boundaries. He is the glue that held the Supreme Team together and made it what it was. It

was by his hand that the legacy took shape and thrived. No one else could have had that same effect that he did. By his own strength of will and personality he took two different ethnic groups and molded them together into one unified movement and organization. As one Supreme Team member told me, Supreme is the master of the buildup. He sees people potential and then motivates and inspires them to be all they can be. His leadership abilities are really what have always separated him from other urban and inner-city gangsters. It's not that he was tough, or a killer, or feared, it was because he was respected the utmost and to this day. His name does not elicit fear it garners respect. Not to say he can't or won't do things to make people fear him but he is more of a diplomatic type of dude who thinks before he speaks. He has a lot of admirable qualities.

MS: It appears that Supreme operated his organization almost as well in prison as out. He even seduced one of the female guards who became his agent. How else did he communicate with the outside?

SF: I have heard stories of visiting room meetings and coded phone calls and letters. The usual routine but I would say most of all Preme used other team members who visited him to relay his orders and get things in order. Black Just was known as a big conduit for these messages. But I am sure Preme had his way in prison with cell phones and getting unmonitored calls or whatever he wanted. The man manages to get his way more often than not. He has always been the type of person who could communicate how he feels about any given situation and get people on the outside to act accordingly. Just part of what makes him Supreme I believe. It's almost like an approval kind of thing, a lot of these guys they just wanted his approval for whatever reason, he was almost like a revered or father like figure to a lot of them in some ways. But he would use whatever opportunities presented themselves.

MS: Prince who is Supreme's nephew and second in command of the Supreme Team was feared and respected by all for his extreme violence. Yet Supreme is painted as kind of above it all. Did Supreme need someone else to do the dirty work and Prince naturally filled the role because of his temperament? Or is there some other explanation?



Gerald Prince Miller

SF: I would say that Supreme used his nephew in this capacity not only because it was what his nephew was good at, but from my point of view it was what his nephew wanted to do. Supreme and Prince grew up as brothers, but Supreme was the older brother, so Prince was always in Preme's shadow in a way and just maybe to act out in a violent and fearsome manner was his way of stepping out of Preme's shadow and asserting his own identity. Who knows? That could be the truth but until one of them says for sure we will never know. I am not privy to the conversations between them, as far as I know no one is or has been so who knows what they discussed among themselves. It is obvious they were always close and had each other's back through thick and thin. So was it a plan they devised, a grand scheme? Or was that just how things fell. Until either one of them gives out this information we will never know it will just be speculation. I conjectured a lot on this in the book but that is strictly my opinion or how I

have seen things with the information and material I had access too. But from knowing Supreme personally I can say that he is the kind of dude that is above it all, not to say that he can't or won't get his hands dirty. I believe Supreme is the type of dude that will do what he has to when he has to but he doesn't jump to conclusions, he thinks it out and he try's diplomatic means first and always. Where as maybe someone like Prince if you are against him then it's on. But you have to realize too a lot of this took place when they were young and people change. So who is to say what they think looking back on it all now? I can only say what I think about it as an outsider who has done extensive interviews with team members and who has researched the team exhaustively.

MS: Bing said, "If not for the fed case, we would have retired. We would have flipped that illegal money, opened up stuff that could help our people in the neighborhood." Isn't that statement quite a stretch?


SF: I don't know if it is a stretch. The Rockefellers did it, the Kennedys did it, if not for crack and the mandatory minimum prison sentences enacted by congress that significantly increased the amount of time drug dealers had to do, I don't see why they couldn't have done that. Of course with the murders it would have been hard. The police always get involved when murders are involved. That is the surest way to get busted, start killing people. But remember this was in the crack era and its said and been documented that a lot of the security team members like Puerto Rican Righteous and others were smoking crack. Maybe if the crack era never happened they could have retired and flipped the money. It's been done before. In fact I like to think that is the American way and the American dream personified. But there would have been a lot of ifs to that equation and from a regular Joe point of view it is quite a stretch. But in the drug dealer's world and vernacular that is the unobtainable dream that he is striving for- legitimacy from his illicit riches.

MS: A large part of the book details the ruthless violence of Prince. Yet when he's indicted by the feds, he acts almost as if he's an innocent victim. For example, he complains that he didn't do such-and-such a killing (ignoring other murders he did commit), therefore the feds are using him as a scapegoat. What gives?

SF: I think a lot of these dudes when the tables turn on them they have a persecution complex, like they are Jesus on the cross or something. And to Prince's credit he probably was blamed for a lot of stuff that happened that he didn't do and that he didn't have any control of. Not to say he didn't do stuff in the street. That is what his reputation is built upon. But being on the end where you're being persecuted and you keep getting indicted and you keep beating charges maybe you do get a kind of God complex. Maybe you do start believing your own rhetoric or maybe you are just trying to play the role and beat the cases again. If it worked once you figure it will work again. Like John Gotti was called the Teflon Don, Prince was known as an untouchable for a while too. He beat a lot of cases in a lot of different ways. So why not play the innocent victim? That is what these mobsters do; they commit crimes and then claim innocence. That is their M.O. So does it really surprise you that Prince tried to do the same thing? Only he knows the real extent of what he did and didn't do and for me that is his cross to bear. He is the one who has to look at himself in the mirror every morning. He is the one doing life in prison. And he is the one paying for crimes that maybe he did

commit and for some that maybe he didn't commit. That is the way our system works. Sometimes they don't get you for what you did but they still get you. A perfect example of that is Supreme's case that he is doing life for now.

Look for Part III, the final entry in this 3-part series, next week.

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T U E S D A Y , J U N

➔ Supreme, Crack, Hip-hop & 50 Cent

Part I of a 3-part series

In an exclusive Mob Speak interview, Seth Ferranti reflects on his latest and most powerful book to date, *The Supreme Team: The Birth of Crack and Hip-hop, Prince's Reign of Terror and the Supreme/50 Cent Beef Exposed*.



In the words of author Seth Ferranti, "The Supreme Team has gone down in street legend and the lyrical lore of hip-hop and gangsta rap as one of the most vicious crews to ever emerge on the streets of New York. Their mythical and iconic status inspired hip-hop culture and rap superstars like 50 Cent, Jay-Z, Biggie, Nas and Ja Rule. Born at the same time as crack, hip-hop was heavily influenced by the drug crews that controlled New York's streets. And the cliché of art imitating life and vice versa came full circle in the saga of the Supreme Team's infamous leaders Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff and Gerald "Prince" Miller. In the maelstrom of the mid-80s crack storm and burgeoning hip-hop scene, their influence and relevance left a lasting impression."

We speak now with Seth Ferranti, multi-published author who resides in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. He's lived in "the belly of the beast" as he calls it almost 19 years for a non-violent, first-time offense on a drug conspiracy charge. His current release date is set for 2015.

MS: In the foreword of your book Plex states, "Seth has chosen to investigate, interview and filter the information with an unbiased eye choosing to educate his readers with truth rather than make money off of glorified lies..." Is keeping to the facts and not embellishing difficult for you?

SF: I have to stick to the facts, I am not writing fiction. I am writing real life stories and dudes in prison are reading what I am writing and taking it as the gospel truth so I have to make sure everything is kosher because if it's not and I report something wrong dudes could end up getting stabbed or hurt due to things I put in my book. This is a big responsibility to me that I don't take lightly. Even more so I have to make sure



my facts are straight so that I don't face the same fate. I am not trying to have to look over my shoulder all the time. I am in prison with these dudes I am writing about.



Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff

How many times do you think a mainstream media journalist wrote something about someone and they wanted to punch them or shoot them or even kill them? I am sure it has happened many times. Didn't John Gotti and other Mafia figures get several journalist or radio personalities beat down for disparaging marks? Didn't Pablo Escobar kill numerous reporters that told his tale or left him portrayed in an unflattering light? Haven't multitudes of journalist in Mexico been killed by the cartels? By keeping to the facts I protect myself. I believe in the saying the truth will set you free. It isn't always what you say it is what you don't say. I am not a member of the mainstream media, I am not a member of law enforcement, I am not a historian, I am just a man in unusual circumstances trying to tell stories that I want to tell. Granted I do tend to glorify and romanticize but I am writing from the other side of the coin, the flip side of the stream. I write from the convict and criminals point of view. That is my claim to fame, that is who I am. Right or wrong, that is what I do.

MS: You say that “...many black gangsters have a newfound relevance in our culture because rappers put them on pedestals and mythologized their crime exploits.” Do you perceive part of your role as someone who sorts through the myth and ferrets out the real story?

SF: I sort through the myth and the facts but I put it all in there. To me in every myth or legend there is a kernel of truth. In every legend from Robin Hood to Supreme's. I write to keep the legend and myth going, to sustain it. I am not here to tear down someone's legacy. I didn't start any of this, we have been interested in and writing about outlaw heroes since the dawn of time, I am just continuing the tradition albeit in a different medium. Like I said I am a storyteller. I am like the poet and the bard who tells the grandiose tales by the fireside. I seek to entertain in my stories. But I put the facts in with the myths. Who am I to tarnish the legacy of one of these men who are heroes to their hometown and community? People need heroes. I am just a collector of stories. I research and gather material on stories that interest me, put them together and then move on to the next one. It just so happens that due to me being in prison I am doing a lot of stuff on black gangsters. But this is just for now. I will move on from this but I will keep doing the same thing. I like the glorification and romanticism of it. I like the Hollywoodization of these stories. I am a propagator of the myths and legends. For whatever reasons I have decided that this is my calling for now. So yes I sort through the myth and the real story but I lay it all out there for the reader to decide. I am not here to make pronouncements or judgments on anyone or anything. I am not trying to get to the bottom of anything. I am just trying to entertain myself and other people with my writing. Because to me what I do is fun and I have a passion for it.

MS: In the book, you chronicle the rise, fall and rise again of the Supreme Team. How did you amass such a large body of material on this allegedly 200-member+ organization then sort out what was “real” for final inclusion.

SF: I talked to a lot of people. I researched this book for almost 7 years. I wrote drafts and sent them to members of the team to review and correct and

authenticate. I let dudes in prison from Queens, who grew up when the team was in power read the manuscripts and I took everything, everybody said and put it in the manuscript. Of course as a writer I am looking to check facts. Like if one person told me something I would look for other people to corroborate it. That is how I sorted out what is real. If I heard it from multiple sources then I knew it was true. But I had access to a lot of Supreme Team dudes also that I did time with and even Supreme himself who is the namesake, founder and leader of the team. I got and received approval and his blessing to do this book. I believe this book is the concise volume on the Supreme team to date. I used all the other books like Copshot and Queens Reigns Supreme and all the magazine articles from Don Diva (which I wrote) and F.E.D.S. and AS IS as source material and put it all together in one massive tome. It was a tremendous amount of work and the book ended with over 100,000 words. We also got over 75 photos for it of the team members in all their 1980s glory. These dudes were the Tony Montana's and Scarface's of the black underworld and it just wasn't one individual it was a number of them and they were all larger than life characters. To me at this point in my life this is my masterpiece. I hope others feel the same way. Time will tell. But in truth as I said in the author's note, I was limited in the amount of members who I could talk to there was no way I was talking to all 200 or so, but I did talk to as many as possible and I stand by my work and know that it is a truly wonderful and fabulous story and look into these men's lives and the beginnings of hip-hop and the crack era and the part they played in shaping all that.

MS: What were some of the problems/challenges you encountered writing *The Supreme Team*?

SF: The problems I experienced with the Supreme Team book didn't really materialize until I got closer to publication. Some dudes on the team, namely Prince and Bimmy, didn't want the book to come out. They were shopping for a book and movie deal allegedly and felt my project was infringing on what they were trying to do. So they put some shit in the game and tried to slander my name and work and tarnish my reputation. Others came out of the woodwork, even former friends who had helped me tremendously material wise for the book, and decided that they didn't want to support me either. All types of claims have been made, but I'm not about all that he said/she said shit, it is what it is. I wrote the book, I published it and I stand by my work. If someone wants to see me about it they can see me. Still some of these dudes put some shit in the game, contacting mutual friends and associates and making it seem like I was doing something wrong or that I didn't have proper approvals or even that I was stealing other people's ideas or work. But it is all some bullshit really. I have been working and writing in this street genre, trying to push these stories, so that dudes writing and working on documentaries on this type of stuff can get some money, but all these haters just want to try and sabotage me and my work by pulling me down to their level. I am reaching for the stars and these dudes are trying to pull me down by the ankles. As they say misery loves company and it is what it is, crabs in a barrel. I always try to get approval for the work and writing that I do from the people that I am writing about. I always want them to have input. I mean it is their lives I am writing about. I always contact them, that is my M.O. where it goes from there is on them. I stand by the way I do business. I only do it this way because I am in prison with these dudes and I understand how the mainstream media can distort things and tow the government line about these dudes and these cases. Anyone who has been on the end of a federal indictment will understand what I am saying. For these dudes to come at me like I am doing something wrong is both hypocritical and stupid. Because my success would be their success. But with a lot of these dudes they can't see the big picture they have a street corner mentality and that is the problem. I

guess the real problem for them is that I can move on from this, I have other stories to write. That is what I do, I tell stories. These dudes that I am having problems with they don't have anything but their story. And I wish them the best of luck with their endeavors. I am a supporter not a hater.


Do you think some of the Supreme Team members didn't want you to write the book? Maybe they want to stay under the radar?

SF: I know Bimmy was advertising a DVD in his magazine Cornerstore, with a similar title to mine. But it hasn't come out to date. I know Prince supposedly has a manuscript The Supreme Team: From Legend to Legacy but it hasn't come out either. I know Ronald "Tuck" Tucker has a book, Team Player: Tales from a Southside Ambassador, that is coming out. I read a couple chapters of it several years ago and they were good. I wanted to use some of the events in Tuck's book in mine but he vetoed that, so I respected it. I am waiting for all these projects to come out and I will support them all. Or any other projects that come out on the Supreme Team. I don't think they want to stay under the radar because if they did why would they be working on all these projects and going online and on YouTube and talking about them. Or doing interviews in the magazines. I mean it was all good when they were out there in the 1980s being gangsters but all of a sudden it's not good when someone wants to write about it? I don't get it. If a person courted fame, courted infamy and did the things on the streets that led them to being notorious why would they not want someone to write about it later down the line? That is what myths and legends are about. That is what I do. But I didn't start this stuff it has been around since Robin Hood and Billy the Kid. So don't blame me because you don't want your story written. It is public record anyhow and like I said I made the effort to connect with a lot of these dudes so that they could go over what was written and object to it or collaborate with me on the project, some did, some chose not to. I gave them the ultimate consideration and respect by doing this. A big publisher would just ask them if they want to talk to them about the story or make a comment and then roll from there. So to me it is a lot of unnecessary crying on their part. You were a notorious dude in the 1980s, the rappers made you a part of hip-hop's lyrical lore and now there is a cottage industry of street mags like Don Diva and F.E.D.S. and street books like mine that celebrate, glorify and romanticize your story and exploits. So get over it.

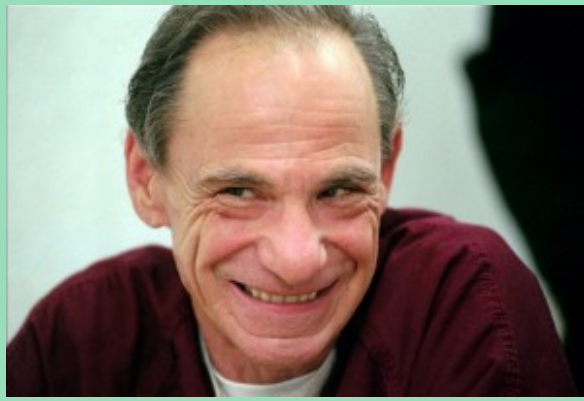
Part II coming soon.

Posted by [mobwriter](#) at 6:03 PM  No comments: 

W E D N E S D A Y , J

 [Former Goodfellas Gangster Henry Hill Dead at 69](#)

Ex-Mobster Henry Hill died June 12, one day after his birthday, of heart problems apparently related to smoking. Inside word has it that his legs were amputated a short while ago



due to diabetes. Check here for the full story:
http://www.centurylink.net/news/read.php?rip_id=%3CD9VCDUL80%40news.ap.org%3E&ps=1016.

Posted by [mobwriter](#) at 3:04 PM [No comments:](#) [✉](#)

T U E S D A Y , J U N

➔ **Mob Killer: Crime Beat Radio Show, June 7**

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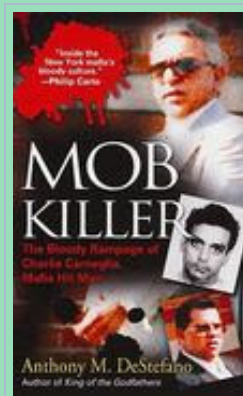
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Crime Beat Radio Show

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crimebeat123@yahoo.com



O.J., The Godfather, Donnie Brasco, Sammy the Bull, Sharon Tate and Norway's 2011 Murder Rampage

May, 2012—Crime Beat: Issues, Controversies and Personalities from the Darkside on Artist First World Radio Network is pleased to announce its forthcoming schedule for May 31, 2012, through August 2, 2012. Topics covered include Sammy "The Bull" Gravano, Mickey Cohen, the Sharon Tate murder, the Godfather saga, the continuing story of Joe Pistone and Donnie Brasco, and more. Here's the line up:

May 31— Joe Pistone talks about Donnie Brasco, the FBI and life since the movie and the book. [Read more.](#)

- June 7— In a command appearance, writer Tony

DeStefano discusses his chilling investigation and book, *Mob Killer: The Bloody Rampage of Charles Carneglia, Mafia Hitman* for the notorious and deadly Gambino Crime Family. [Read more.](#)

- June 14— Karen Gravano, the daughter of Sammy “the Bull” Gravano, talks about her best-selling autobiography, *Mob Daughter: The Mafia, Sammy the Bull Gravano and Me.* [Read more.](#)
- June 21— Investigator William Dear discusses his explosive book, *O.J. is Innocent and I Can Prove It.* [Read more.](#)
- June 28— Tere Tereba discusses her book, *Mickey Cohen: The Life and Crimes of L.A.'s Notorious Mobster*, and provides insight into the history of the LA crime scene. Also, officials of the Poker Players Alliance discuss recent developments affecting online gambling. [Read more.](#)
- July 5 The documentary film show— Tommy Reid discusses his doc, *Superthief*, a captivating firsthand look at the life of Phil Christopher, a career criminal, Cleveland native, Mafia associate and one of the most successful bank burglars in U.S. history. [Read more.](#)
Also director Yuriy Luchovy discusses his doc, *Genocide Revealed, the little known story of Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Union and the Ukrainian holocaust.* [Read more.](#)
- July 12 The Fiction Show— Ed Falco discusses his prequel to the Godfather book, *The Family Corleone*, one of this year’s major literary events. [Read more.](#)
Also popular crime fiction writer Jon Land discusses his just released novel, *Strong Vengeance.* [Read more.](#)
- July 19— Noted forensic psychiatrist Dr. Michael Stone discusses mass murderer, Anders Behring Breivik, and his murder rampage in Norway in the summer of 2011. Also, Alison Statman and Brie Tate discuss their best-selling book, *Restless Souls: The Sharon Tate Family's Account of Stardom, the Manson Murders, and a Crusade for Justice.* [Read more.](#)
- July 26— Richard Muti and Charles Buckley, authors of *The Charmer* discuss the true story of Robert Reldan, rapist, murderer and millionaire, and the Women who Fell Victim to his Allure. [Read more.](#)
- August 2— In a command appearance, Howard Campbell discusses his book *Drug War Zone: Frontline Dispatches from the Streets of El Paso and Juárez.* [Read more.](#)

On the air since January 28, 2011, Crime Beat is a weekly hour-long radio program that airs every Thursday at 8 p.m. EST. Crime Beat presents fascinating topics that bring listeners closer to the dynamic underbelly of the world of crime. Guests have included ex- mobsters, undercover law enforcement agents,

sports officials, informants, prisoners, drug dealers and investigative journalists, who have provided insights and fresh information about the world's most fascinating subject: crime.


Crime Beat is currently averaging 130,000 listeners plus each week, and the figure is growing. Crime Beat is hosted by award-winning crime writer and documentary producer **Ron Chepesiuk** (www.ronchepesiuk.com) and broadcast journalist and freelance writer **Will Hryb**.

Ronald Herd II, the popular Internet radio host and regular listener of Crime Beat, said: "Crime Beat sounds like an organized crime greatest hits collection...I am loving it!" Tom Hart of Atlanta, Georgia, writes: "I am a BIG fan of your show and enjoy the variety of guests you have on your show.. "Keep up the good work."

Crime Beat airs weekly every Thursday at 8 P.M. EST on the Artist First World Radio Network at artistfirst.com/crimebeat
To contact the Crime Beat radio program for interviews, e-mail crimebeat123@yahoo.com or call 803-366-5440.

Posted by [mobwriter](#) at [11:48 AM](#)  [No comments:](#) 

S U N D A Y , M A Y

 **Mobdaughter: New book by Karen Gravano**

***Mob Wives* Star Karen Gravano: "Being a Gangster Was Like Being Brad Pitt in Hollywood"**

By [Becky Bartkowski](#)

Apr. 13 2012

MOB DAUGHTER

THE MAFIA,
SAMMY "THE BULL"
GRAVANO,
AND ME!



KAREN GRAVANO
WITH LISA PULITZER

When mob heiress **Karen Gravano** was in her late teens, her father [Salvatore "Sammy The Bull" Gravano](#), who was second in command in the Gambino crime family, became an FBI informant and fed juicy bits of mafia info to hungry agents that eventually took down boss John Gotti.

And apart from Gravano's own brushes with the law (including involvement in her dad's [Arizona ecstasy ring](#), for which he's now serving time in Colorado and Karen was put on probation), that scandal is what has defined her. And much like her father gave up mob secrets, Gravano gives up her own in her new memoir *Mob Daughter*. Not that Gravano is a stranger to putting the spotlight on her family and its history. Quite the contrary: Gravano is currently starring in the second season of Vh1's *Mob Wives*, a "Family"-friendly reality program that seems destined for a third season. In the vein of other spousal shows like Bravo's *Real Housewives* franchise and Vh1's Arizona-based *Baseball Wives*, the show features women with varying ties to organized crime including Renee Graziano, whose father is consigliere for the Bonanno family, and spinoff-worthy Angela "**Big Ang**" Raiola, a Staten Island bar owner whose late uncle was a high-ranking member of the Genovese family.

Gravano, who splits her time between New York and Arizona, talked with us about reality TV, her book, which she'll sign at [Barnes & Noble](#) on Saturday, April 14, and her relationship with her incarcerated father.

Read the rest of the interview here:

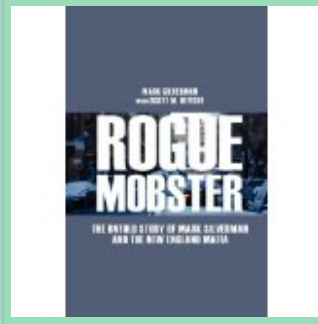
http://blogs.phoenixnewtimes.com/jackalope/2012/04/mob_wives_karen_gravano_sammy_the_bull.php

Posted by [mobwriter](#) at 4:11 PM No comments:

W E D N E S D A Y , M

May 2012

New Book Chronicles the Remarkable Story of a Rogue Mobster and the New England Mafia



When the infamous gangster Whitey Bulger went on the lam in 1995, the streets of Boston became a war zone between the Mafia and the renegades, with the Winter Hill Gang looking on.

Co-written by Mark Silverman with Scott Deitche, *Rogue Mobster: The Untold Story of Mark Silverman and the New England Mafia* chronicles the inside story of the Boston mob wars of the 1990's when over two dozen gangsters were killed in a vicious war for control of the Boston underworld. *Rogue Mobster* is told in the words of Mark Silverman, an outsider from Medford who got inside the mob and became an integral part of the ensuing war. His account is the first-ever inside glimpse into what went on at the street level, why people were killed, and what the stakes were.

Rogue Mobster: The Untold Story of Mark Silverman and the New England Mafia is available on StrategicMediabooks.com, Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, and bookstores near you.

Posted by [mobwriter](#) at 11:53 AM  No comments: 

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