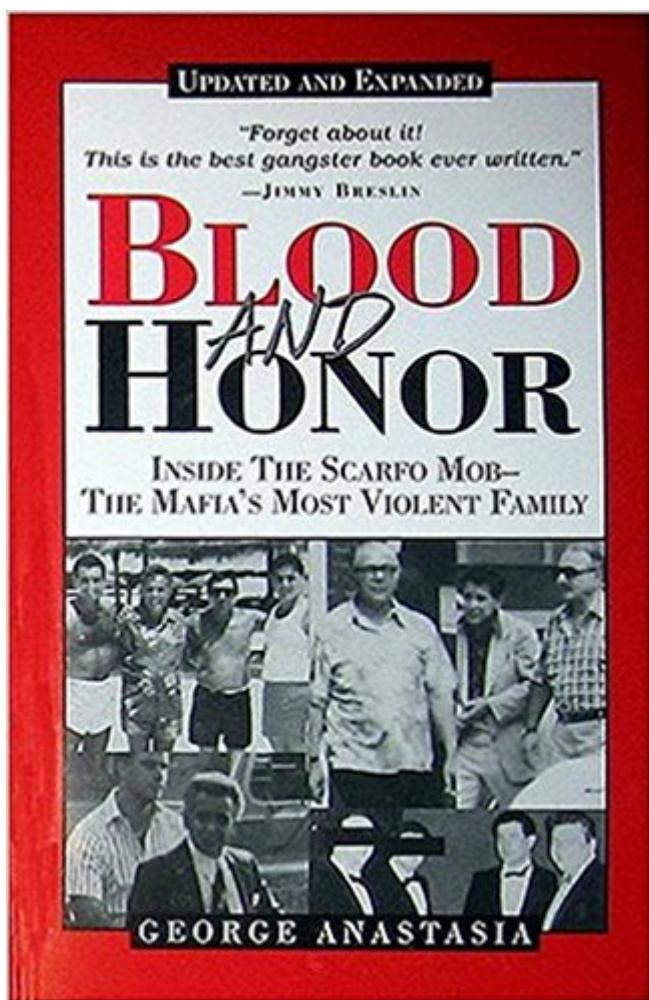


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# Blood And Honor: Inside The Scarfo Mob--The Mafia's Most Violent Family



## **Synopsis**

Here is the critically acclaimed inside story, now in an expanded edition, about the rise and fall of Philadelphia's notorious Scarfo organization. Blunt and unsparing, it is a first-hand account of murder, money, and corruption told by wiseguy-turned-witness Nick Caramandi, whose testimony put Nicky Scarfo and many of his associates behind bars for the rest of their lives. A prime target for hit men to this day, Caramandi continues to survive only through the government's Witness Protection Program. In this updated edition of Blood and Honor, author George Anastasia picks up the story where he left off, filling us in on the fates of all the characters--major and minor--in recent years.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The violent rise and precipitous fall of the Philadelphia/Atlantic City Mafia family led by the bloodthirsty Nicky Scarfo has received extensive coverage in Joseph Salerno and Stephen J. Rivele's *The Plumber* (LJ 1/90), Donald W. Cox's *Mafia Wipeout* (LJ 2/15/90), and Frank Friel and John Guinther's *Breaking the Mob* (LJ 6/15/90). Journalist Anastasia's riveting account is based primarily on his interviews with Scarfo associate Nick Caramandi, a confessed murderer and extortionist-turned-government witness who helped convict the entire Scarfo hierarchy. His story rings true, and it is one of treachery and viciousness, all blood and no honor. Easily the best of the Scarfo mob books, it is recommended for organized crime collections.-Gregor A. Preston, Univ. of California Lib., Davis

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Up-close and personal perspectives on a consequential Mafia family that law-enforcement agencies and turncoats have all but put out of business. Drawing mainly on interviews with Nick Caramandi (a confessed killer, loan shark, and extortionist now in the Federal Witness Protection Program), Philadelphia Inquirer reporter Anastasia offers a tellingly detailed rundown on a fiefdom encompassing not only his hometown but also Atlantic City from the late 1970's through the mid-1980's. During this violent period, an arguably psychopathic thug named Nicodemo Scarfo headed the local branch of La Cosa Nostra. His regime was notable for unusually savage rub-outs as well as for the systematic corruption of public and union officials. Eventually, however, the deadly don and more than a dozen of his henchmen were convicted on scores of felony murder and RICO charges in a series of trials that began in 1987. Among those responsible for putting Scarfo behind bars was Garamandi, a successful streetwise hustler who had been formally initiated into the mob. The erstwhile wiseguy broke the secret society's vow of silence and became an informer when he learned his capo had marked him for death in the wake of a failed real-estate swindle involving Philadelphia pols. The decision to eliminate Caramandi ranks among the vengeful Scarfo's worst since "Crow" (as he's known in gangland circles) provided government prosecutors with the firsthand dope they needed to bring a flock of kingpin outlaws to book. The gossipy stool pigeon here also provides the author an insider's savvy briefing on the quotidian world of organized crime; by Garamandi's credible account, there was appreciably more bad blood than honor among the thieves in thrall to Scarfo. Gripping curbside insights into mafiosi at work and play. (Eight pages of b&w photographs--not seen). -- Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.  
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I read this book many times over a two-year period. What I noticed on each different read was how much scarier Nicky Scarfo became. Scarfo, like all mobsters, had a code, but his was a little different than that espoused by the fictional Vito Corleone. Fear was the only way to rule, and the gun solved all problems. His code became clearer and clearer in each read, because everyone feared him. He realized that no one loved him, and it made him more maniacal. That's what the first book in the Scarfo duality story (Anastasia also wrote *Mobfather*, a story dealing with Scarfo captain Tommy DelGiorno that was also in the Scarfo era) is about through the eyes and experiences of Nicholas 'Nicky Crow' Caramandi. Some in these comments have issues with minor mistakes, but that's their issue. The overall idea—that Scarfo was a crazy person who decimated what once was a thriving, powerful criminal enterprise—remains. And it's not debatable. Anastasia seems tentative at first, not

hitting the stride he eventually would as he wrote more books-but this story is still so great it overwhelms any mistakes that could conceivably force the story to the roadside. It stands the test of readability: Could you pick it up and become engrossed in the story immediately no matter how long ago you read it? The answer is yes. Enjoy.

Extremely well researched. A compelling narrative that kept me turning pages well into several nights. Highly recommended, this gritty story told from the stand-point of one of the major figures in the Scarfo mob. Caramandi's rise from a lone wolf street hustlers and con man to the upper echelon of the organization, asbig money producer and hit man, and eventual turncoat whose testimony waskey in the convictions of Scarfo and a large number of. mobsters, politicians, andUnion officials, is a story not to be missed by readers interested in crime history.

Mr. Anastasia brilliantly weaves the facts and notes from his years as a reporter following the Philadelphia mob scene with the narrative of the charismatic former Mafioso Nick Caramandi who turned into the biggest witness the Fed's ever had. This book puts you in the center of the Scarfo family mob era like no other. Fantastic read !

Blood & Honor details the mob world that's hiding in plain sight all around us. Using the story of mob-made-man turned informant, Nick "The Crow" Caramandi, as his pivot point author George Anastasia weaves a bloody tale of transition from the low key, respect based leadership of the Philadelphia mob under boss Angelo Bruno to the flamboyant excesses of "Nickey" Scarfo. Scarfo felt that fear trumped respect & consolidated control of both Philly & the then booming Atlantic City through a series of audacious murders & power plays. Anastasia wisely allows Caramandi to speak directly about scams, murders, hustles & other crimes he personally took part in. That gives the narrative a riveting authenticity. Whether finding the right spot to dump a body or detailing the steps involved in taking over the office of the Mayor of Atlantic City, the reader is there. Anastasia is a crack investigative reporter with the Philadelphia Inquirer newspaper. That background gave him the resources to assemble a mountain of facts. But here he lets the storyteller in him come through, letting Caramandi & the others provide context, motivation, hopes & dreams that the cold facts barely hint at. This is not a recitation of a list of crimes. It is a look into the souls of men for whom those crimes are their stock in trade & how a day spent doing shakedowns & hustles is their day at the office. In so doing, Anastasia has humanized his subject without in any way excusing their deeds. That is not easy to pull off but he does & we, the readers, are the benefactors of his efforts.

This book was very interesting as I was growing up during this time frame. I remember some of the events depicted in the book from news reports it's interesting to know more of the background first hand information but I thought it was a washed out on descriptions and lacks a lot of details about the wives and families I would have like to know what happened to his wife and stepdaughters

Very good read from start to finish

Somewhat confusing collection of cowards and bullies. Got away with what they could. Most were strange, narcissistic bullies but cowards that would shoot people from behind. Sad little men. The first third of the book was nearly unintelligible leading up to little nicky ascending. Would like to have seen more character study than just cowardly deeds.

I did not find the whole story that interesting. Too many people, murders and cons to keep track of. If the book had been a bit condensed and concentrated more on the ending, I would have liked it better. Only for true die hards.

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