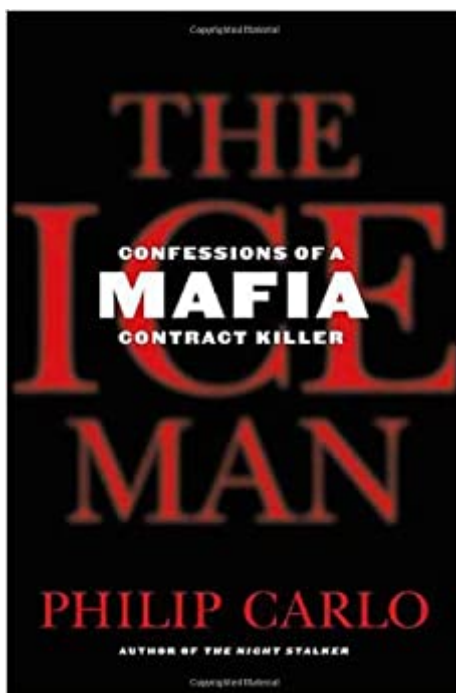


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# The Ice Man: Confessions Of A Mafia Contract Killer



## Synopsis

Philip Carlo's *The Ice Man* spent over six weeks on the New York Times Bestseller List. Top Mob Hitman. Devoted Family Man. Doting Father. For thirty years, Richard "The Iceman" Kuklinski led a shocking double life, becoming the most notorious professional assassin in American history while happily hosting neighborhood barbecues in suburban New Jersey. Richard Kuklinski was Sammy the Bull Gravano's partner in the killing of Paul Castellano, then head of the Gambino crime family, at Sparks Steakhouse. Mob boss John Gotti hired him to torture and kill the neighbor who accidentally ran over his child. For an additional price, Kuklinski would make his victims suffer; he conducted this sadistic business with coldhearted intensity and shocking efficiency, never disappointing his customers. By his own estimate, he killed over two hundred men, taking enormous pride in his variety and ferocity of technique. This trail of murder lasted over thirty years and took Kuklinski all over America and to the far corners of the earth, Brazil, Africa, and Europe. Along the way, he married, had three children, and put them through Catholic school. His daughter's medical condition meant regular stays in children's hospitals, where Kuklinski was remembered, not as a gangster, but as an affectionate father, extremely kind to children. Each Christmas found the Kuklinski home festooned in colorful lights; each summer was a succession of block parties. His family never suspected a thing. Richard Kuklinski is now the subject of the major motion picture titled "The Iceman" (2013), starring James Franco, Winona Ryder, Ray Liotta, and Chris Evans.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Prichard strives to navigate this marathon parade of torture and murder in an authoritative, almost aloof manner. But the clichéd, repetitive and overwrought prose frequently undermines him. Carlo's apparent sympathy toward the Ice Man further subverts Prichard's crime-show host persona. In stomach-turning detail, Prichard brings to life Richard Kuklinsky's extraordinary 40-year career of murder. The gruesome, clinical accounts of countless killings-by every method imaginable-leaves listeners wincing and feeling depleted. Prichard's voice is worn and aged, with a slight nasal quality as if getting over a cold. For the most part, he handles the voluminous narrative without flagging. When rendering Kuklinsky and various Mafia figures and associates, the audio actor employs a similar tough-guy impersonation, which amounts to dropping his voice, bleeding out the emotion and barking swear words. This sometimes leads to confusion over who's speaking. Also included are two not especially revealing jailhouse interviews with the chillingly congenial Kuklinsky. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Richard Kuklinski, the Ice Man of the title, has told his story before in a variety of forums, including books and videos. Here Carlo tells Kuklinski's story more or less straight from the killer's mouth, with little verification or questioning. Given Kuklinski's grandiose claims, such as participation in the unsolved murder of Jimmy Hoffa, this produces a narrative of unrelieved horror. Kuklinski revealed not only in killing but also in the suffering of his victims, and here he emphasizes how he compartmentalized his life so that his family was shielded from the nastiness of his trade. Other than fulsome detail, not much new about Kuklinski is relayed. Carlo's presentation of Kuklinski uninterrupted does, however, make for nice comparative reading with the killer's wife's book, *Married to the Iceman* (1994). Good as an omnibus resource on Kuklinski, this is a fine entry in the burgeoning field of works tracing the decline of the traditional organized crime families and their once impenetrable structures. Mike Tribby Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I watched all three documentaries before reading this book. So my review might be from that perspective. If the book seems slow, give it a while because it gets faster towards the end. Regardless of how much the book is fact vs. fiction, it gives deep insight into Richard and his life. There are a couple of people in the book that he runs into that make you root for Richard briefly. It's a nice change of pace from his constant evil. The stories about his family also show somewhat of a different side, but even there there's some evil. Just as you notice the book seems to be repeating

himself (only because Richard kept repeating patterns), the book takes a turn and moves faster and better. I read the last 1/3 in a day, faster than the first part. I don't know which is better to read/watch first, this book or documentaries, but I do recommend doing both. The videos will give more insight into his childhood, the book more into his adult "career".

I was in the Army in Germany when this happened and never remember even hearing about this guy. Pretty amazing that he could have gotten away with all he did, but back then it seems they were just starting to catch more and more serial killers. Book was pretty good and kept my interest.

The Ice Man was perhaps the most chilling account of crime I have ever read. The author was very adept at giving the reader the sequence of events in an orderly convincing manner. The very fact that such a killer even existed is enough to make shady surroundings very uncomfortable for weeks after reading. This book is not for the faint of heart

Richard Kuklinsky was cursed before he was born., as well as anyone who had the misfortune of meeting him afterwards. Was he truly involved in some of the infamous hits or just did he add it to play with his captors and the media? There just as many questions as there are bodies. Well written; worth the read. For full impact, see the HBO documentary; it is as chilling as the book.

Philip Carlo does a great job of writing this book. I couldn't put it down from beginning to end. The craziest thing is knowing all the areas he mentions in his book. I lived in some of the locations mentioned or have friends in those towns. How bizarre this was happening right under everyone's nose. I was only a child during that era, but all I can say is whoa!!! The Ice Man is the correct name for him, but you have to be cold in order to live the lifestyle and not to have any emotions towards your victims.

This was as an entertaining a book about psychopathic killer as one will ever read ( Also... "Murder Machine" by Capeci and "The stranger beside" me by Ann Rule. Unfortunately, the publicity seeking Kuklinski injects a bit of fiction into his life story. Most egregious is his placing himself at the scene of the Jimmy Hoffa murder. Others have made this assertion in print( Tony " the Greek " Frankos and Frank Sheeran in " I hear you paint houses "). None of these accountants are consistent with the others'. However, Frank Sheerans account is clearly most plausible. Also strange, Kuklinski is never mentioned in Murder Machine. Finally, Kuklinski places himself at the scene of the Castellano

murder. Yet he is not mentioned in Sammy Gravano's description of the hit in his autobiography. And we know Sammy was near.

Continuing his journey through the minds and lives of mafia involved killers, Philip Carlos tries his hand at the life of Richard Kuklinski, in *The Iceman: Confessions of a Mafia Contract Killer*. This book pulls back the typical dehumanizing aspects from books about killers, and puts the facts into an easy to follow story. This humanization of Richard Kuklinski allows the reader to focus on other things such as; the power of the mafia and their associates, the hard work of the NYPD, and the lasting effects of a more than disturbing childhood. With a ruthless father who would beat him at any moment, and a religious tyrant of a mother, it was no surprise that Richard Kuklinski would amount to a life of crime. As a child Richard was never taught the difference between right and wrong; he was simply just wrong all the time and beat repeatedly for it. Not only would Richard's father Stanley beat his children relentlessly but also his wife as well. These abusive tendencies would surface in Richard's own marriage later in life as he would beat his wife Barbara (whom he really did love) repeatedly to the point that she would actually suffer from two miscarriages. Besides being beaten by his father and mother, Richard was also repeatedly abused by the nuns at his Catholic school and even other children of his apartment building. It wasn't just Richard that suffered from a household filled with pain, but his siblings as well. When Richard was just six years old his brother Florian was killed by his father Stanley, and the family was forced to cover it up, in fear of what Stanley might do. The aftermath of this horrifying childhood also led Richard's younger brother Joseph to a life of crime, and in 1970 was charged with the rape and killing of a teenage girl. When Richard was asked about his brother's crimes he simply replied, "We come from the same father." (Page 145). There's no denying that mafia families are powerful, but in the 1950s they ran the cities that they inhabited. With news of Richard Kuklinski's useful skills and undeniable discreteness, he seemed as if he could be a powerful asset, and every family was dying to get their hands on him. With the Five Families breathing down his back, and putting wads of cash in his pockets, there was no way for Richard to turn away from them. Richard was hired to kill dozens of marks, and all for a satisfactory price. Local cops were unable to catch on due to Richard's interchanging methods; guns, knives, bats, fire, and poison, he used it all. The cops that did know what was going on however, made a slight profit off of their silence. It didn't take long before famous mafia members such as Paul Castellano and Roy DeMeo had Richard roped into more than murder.

Soon he was distributing porn, prescription pills, and extensive amounts of cocaine. The desire for money, along with help from the the Five Families transformed Richard into a man that craved only one thing; power. The arrest of Richard Kuklinski not only required the betrayal of some his closest friends, but also the hard work of truly passionate detectives. Mid 1980's a detective named Pat Kane teamed up with Dominic Polifrone for an undercover assignment. Kane got Richard's friend Phil Solimene to introduce Dominic Polifrone as a prospective client, and the operation was a go. It took almost a year before Polifrone got Richard on tape describing how he would kill a man. Once Richard was arrested, a jury found that he could only be connected to a total of 5 deaths; which was impressive as Richard had racked up the blood of nearly 200 men on his hands. Due to the fact that he pleaded guilty, Richard would not be sentenced to death, instead he was charged with repeated life sentences. As he had managed to keep his double life a secret from his wife and kids, Richard's only regret was to have to "See the embarrassment, humiliation, and shame his family would have to suffer." (Page 465). Even though many would argue that people are born killers or that they are just plain evil, author Philip Carlos makes the not-so-subtle argument that people can be caused to metamorphosize into a killer, based on a life filled with unruly circumstances. It's unknown what Richard's life could have been like if he hadn't been beaten without mercy, powerfully persuaded by the mafia, or arrested midlife. It is clear however, that Richard Kuklinski had become a money seeking, power craving individual. After confessing to the killing of his long time friend George Malliband (Which had been requested by Roy DeMeo), Richard had only one thing to say; "It was- it was do due to business." (Page 475).

I absolutely loved this book. It doesnt drag at all. Very interesting with details and a look into richards life. Its sad that he did what he did and became what he was he could've been a great man

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