

Vendetta

A Gangland Resource For Mean Streets

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FILM GANGSTERS

chapter one

Gangsters have been a part of America's counter-culture since Sicilian refugees flooded into the United States during the latter part of the 19th century. This type of criminal element had such an impact on American society that Hollywood directors took to them like bears to honey in the '30s, '40s, and '50. They permeate all aspects of American pop-culture as well, including numerous books, television programs, and, most notably, movies.

Vendetta: A Gangland Resource is the first supplement in support of Deep7's role-playing game of classic film noir, *Mean Streets*. This PDF sourcebooklet presents a more detailed look into the American branch of the Mafia – its roots, founding fathers, families – and puts it all into perspective for those who want to play mobsters and hooligans in crime/gangster-based scenarios, or to add further flavor to mobsters in a current film noir campaign. As such, *Vendetta* contains very little in the way of additional rules or “crunchy bits,” primarily because the information contained within has been designed with the sole purpose of fleshing out the game setting. While this has the benefit of making *Vendetta* system-independent (thus allowing GMs to apply the material to other game systems), it also allows GMs and players to focus on what's really important to a role-playing game: story and setting.

Vendetta has been designed for both GMs and players. As such, you're not required to purchase this product in order to have access to information that was left out of the core game book, for whatever the reason.

Vendetta has the tools GMs will need to craft engaging and thrilling crime-based campaigns, while players will find useful information on how to portray gangsters and criminals in an RPG.

Film noir Gangsters

Gangsters have been featured in films dating back to the early days of Hollywood, during the silent era. One of the first to mark the start of the gangster as its own genre was D. W. Griffith's *The Musketeers of Pig Alley* (1912). Two of the most influential films that helped to launch the entire genre in the 1930s were German director Fritz Lang's *Dr. Mabuse, The Gambler* (1922) and its sequel, released in 1923. This is a two-part crime melodrama about an evil, criminal boss capable of disguise and tremendous hypnotic powers. Josef von Sternberg's *Underworld* (1927) is also considered a classic. It's a film with many of the genre's standard conventions and shot from the gangster's point of view.

Lastly, Lewis Milestone's *The Racket* (1928), a Howard Hughes-produced film,



The Chicago Mob

Commonly known as the “Outfit,” Chicago’s organized crime families have a long history of ruling the city through fear and coercion. But they weren’t always organized under one banner and Don. Prior to the Prohibition era, the families were more or less fractured groups of thugs involved in bootlegging, gambling, and prostitution. There were constant street battles over neighborhood rights, bootleg circuits, along with the occasional personal vendetta. Essentially, it was every man for himself, and the families were hardly interested in “enriching” their members. All of this changed with the arrival of Silvio “Big Daddy” Desideria, who eventually became one of Chicago’s most powerful crime bosses.

Desideria was born in Messina, Sicily during the 1890s, but immigrated with his family to New York City in 1903. Eventually, the family moved to Chicago to stay with relatives there, who had come to live in the United States in 1888. Prior to his involve-

ment with the Chicago Outfit, Desideria was as powerful as Desideria made quite a few enemies – equally power hungry bosses who decided that Big Daddy stood in the way of millions of dollars of wealth.

Eventually, gunmen aligned with the Giglioti family assassinated Desideria in his North Shore home. The boss of that family, Vincent Caravaglia, quickly took over what Desideria had built, and used it as the foundation for a bootlegging empire. Caravaglia is credited with calling together the other major local gangs and forging them into a cartel that divided up the liquor business in the city in order to bring stability and maximum profitability to bootlegging.

In the 1940s, Chicago’s Outfit is supreme in the city; no other syndicate has been able to make inroads into its neighborhoods. Since moving away from bootlegging, the Outfit now concentrates most of its efforts on gambling and vice. Club and casinos line Rush Street, in the neighborhood of Cicero, and in south suburban Calumet City.

Chicago Crime Families

Much like their peers in New York City, Chicago’s five crime families are aligned under a tenuous alliance known as the Outfit; however, the difference stops there. Unlike the Syndicate, where the Commission is, more or less, a democratic body, the Outfit is controlled by one man, Vincent Caravaglia, the Boss of Bosses. There are still instances of infighting among the families though, with the majority of problems arising from clashes over who controls what in the city. So far, Caravaglia has been able to prevent an all-out mob war.

The Los Angeles Mob

The first boss of the Los Angeles crime family was Joseph Gennaro, who was in control until he died of a massive heart attack in 1931 at the age of 87. Michael Imperia, who eventually led the family to

Chicago Mob Statistics

<u>Family</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Boss</u>
Giglioti	600	Vincent Caravaglia
Caruso	400	Michael Costa
Ricerche	400	Luigi DeLuca
Greco	250	Anthony Santoro
Fontanna	300	James Marino

ment with the Chicago Outfit, Desideria was making successful inroads into the city’s political arena, serving as a precinct captain, which provided him with envious political protection.

As Desideria grew in power among the fractured crime families, so did his own gang. By the mid-1920s, the man commanded the largest and most powerful group of racketeers in the city. Unfortunately, a man





dictability, just like for any good, justifiable business enterprise.

The New York mob has traditionally perpetuated this by taking over legitimate businesses, while providing a service in return. Although, the mob never really assumes complete control of any business they absorb. This is primarily because they wish to keep the criminal element outside a climate necessary for a legitimate business' success. That, and it doesn't leave an obvious paper trail to the door of the crime bosses.

The Syndicate's legal and illegal activities and business enterprises are widespread. They have even adopted tactics that are considered to be "Mafia specialties." These specialties include focused forms of racketeering (like business and labor racketeering), bid rigging, business fraud, and industry cartels – areas that the Syndicate demonstrates its most aggressive and effective penetration of the city's legitimate economy. In fact, of all the families known to operate in the United States, the New York City Syndicate is the most effective at employing these methods. Specialized racketeering still

proves the most profitable and is organized into two separate fundamentals: labor and business.

Labor racketeering involves organized crime control of labor unions. With this control, vast sums of money are siphoned from union pension funds, businesses are extorted in return for labor peace, and an absence of strikes and bribes are solicited for "sweet-heart contracts." Business racketeering has occurred primarily in New York City in the construction, music, and garbage industries. In addition, the New York Syndicate controls unions, bars, brothels, restaurants, and trucking firms. The four families have also, at various times, controlled the Fulton Fish Market, the New York Coliseum, and air cargo operations at Laguardia Airport, as well as numerous other sites.

Death, Taxes, and Wall Street

As a result of the monopoly control held by the Syndicate in copious industries, consumers are forced to pay inflated prices. The practice is known as the "Mob tax" and is utilized by all families operating in the United States.