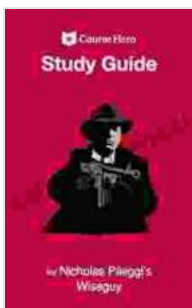


Study Guide for Nicholas Pileggi Wiseguy

Course Hero: Unraveling the Intricacies of Organized Crime

Nicholas Pileggi's "Wiseguy: Life in a Mafia Family" is a captivating memoir that offers an insider's perspective into the secretive world of organized crime. Through the eyes of Henry Hill, a former associate of the Lucchese crime family, Pileggi paints a vivid portrait of the mob's operations, hierarchies, and violent rituals.



Study Guide for Nicholas Pileggi's Wiseguy (Course Hero Study Guides) by Course Hero

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1239 KB

Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 43 pages

Lending : Enabled



This Course Hero Study Guide provides a comprehensive companion to Pileggi's masterpiece, enriching your understanding of the book's key themes, characters, and historical context. By delving into the intricacies of organized crime alongside Pileggi and Hill, you will gain invaluable insights into this fascinating and often misunderstood aspect of society.

Key Themes

The Code of Silence

One of the defining characteristics of organized crime is the strict code of silence known as "omertà." This unwritten rule forbids members from cooperating with law enforcement or discussing their criminal activities with outsiders. Breaking this code can result in severe consequences, including death.

The Family Structure

Mob families are highly structured organizations with a clear hierarchy. At the top is the "boss," who controls all aspects of the family's activities. Below the boss are various levels of underbosses, capos, and soldiers. Each member has specific roles and responsibilities within the organization.

The Criminal Enterprise

Organized crime groups engage in a wide range of criminal activities, including extortion, racketeering, drug trafficking, and gambling. They operate both locally and internationally, generating vast profits that are laundered through legitimate businesses.

The Violence

Violence is an integral part of organized crime. Mobsters use violence to intimidate, punish, and eliminate threats to their operations. Murders, assaults, and other forms of violence are common within the underworld.

Character Analysis

Henry Hill

Henry Hill is the central character in "Wiseguy." As a former associate of the Lucchese crime family, he provides a firsthand account of the mob's inner workings. Hill's story is a cautionary tale about the dangers of getting involved in organized crime.

Jimmy "The Gent" Burke

Jimmy Burke is a ruthless mob boss who becomes Hill's mentor. Burke is known for his violent temper and his cold-blooded approach to business. He is responsible for some of the most heinous crimes committed by the Lucchese family.

Karen Hill

Karen Hill is Henry's wife. She is drawn into the world of organized crime through her husband, but she eventually becomes disillusioned with the mob lifestyle. Karen's story illustrates the negative impact that organized crime can have on families.

Historical Context

The Mob in New York City

"Wiseguy" is set against the backdrop of New York City in the mid-20th century. At this time, the city was a major hub for organized crime, with several powerful families vying for control. The Lucchese crime family, which Henry Hill was associated with, was one of the most notorious of these organizations.

The War on Drugs

The 1980s saw a significant increase in drug trafficking by organized crime groups. The Lucchese family played a major role in the importation and distribution of cocaine into the United States. This contributed to the rise of drug-related violence and the crack cocaine epidemic.

The RICO Act

In 1970, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) was passed. This law gave law enforcement powerful new tools to combat organized crime. RICO allowed prosecutors to charge individuals for racketeering, even if they were not directly involved in specific criminal acts.

Nicholas Pileggi's "Wiseguy: Life in a Mafia Family" is a compelling and informative account of organized crime. Through the story of Henry Hill, readers gain a unique Einblick into the inner workings of the mob. This Course Hero Study Guide has provided a valuable resource to enhance your understanding of the book's key themes, characters, and historical context.

By immersing yourself in the world of organized crime alongside Nicholas Pileggi and Henry Hill, you have gained invaluable insights into this complex and fascinating subject. May this study guide empower you to continue your exploration of the underworld and its impact on society.

Study Guide for Nicholas Pileggi's Wiseguy (Course Hero Study Guides) by Course Hero

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1239 KB

Screen Reader : Supported



Print length : 43 pages

Lending : Enabled



The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research: A Comprehensive Guide

The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research is a groundbreaking and comprehensive collection of essays that examines the intersections of...



Unveiling the Lyrical Mastery of Henri Cole's "Blizzard Poems"

In the realm of contemporary poetry, Henri Cole's "Blizzard Poems" stands as a testament to the transformative power of language and imagery. Through a...