

# Interview



SAM GIANCANA 2d

## Name dropper

The family secrets were so dastardly, he felt compelled to live under a made-up moniker. Until now . . .

**T**HAT SAM "MOONEY" GIANCANA was just soooo . . . tacky. Even for a mobster. Came across as some crass, crazed combo of Ernie Borgnine, Joe Mantegna, Harvey Keitel, Al Pacino, Bobby De Niro, Jack Nicholson, Warren Beatty AND my friend Michael. To Sam Giancana, women were just like shoes: wear them out, throw them away; it's nice if they're the best-looking shoes you can buy, but they're still shoes any way you cut it, and that means disposable! Heir to the gory glory and Chicago throne of Al Capone, Sam Giancana

boasted of links to at least seven U.S. presidents, many top Hollywood stars, various entertainers and sports heroes, the CIA, the puppet monarch King Farouk, and maybe even (gasp!) the Vatican. Gunned down in his own home only days before he was due to testify before Congress, he left a hideous legacy.

Twenty-three years ago, this legacy impelled his goody-goody brother Chuck to change the family name into something more comfortable outta embarrassment and a desire for a "legit" life. Now Mooney's preppy nephew, godson and namesake, Sam "Little Mooney" Giancana 2d, has come forward, blowing all that hard-won, deliberately chosen obscurity. Armed with a college history degree and a slick writing style honed by a dozen years in business running a Florida "health-care marketing communications firm" with his brainy blond wife, Bettina, Sam 2d and his pop (inspired to finally spill his guts on the eve of open-heart surgery) have created the chilling and compelling *Double Cross: The Explosive, Inside Story of the Mobster Who Controlled America*.

"Until 1969, our family was held captive by the legacy of Chicago mob boss Sam Giancana. At that time," write Sam 2d and Chuck, "we mistakenly thought that by changing our last name, we could escape the very real stigma, and the memories, attached to being related to a notorious gangster. It was an act whose logic ultimately proved faulty, for it succeeded in stripping us of our rich Italian heritage, to say nothing of our friends and family. Hiding behind a mask, we denied our very existence, creating merely the illusion of normalcy. It was an illusion only we could dispel. Now, we have."

Thirty-seven-year-old Sam Giancana 2d is finally eager to divest himself of family secrets, though he won't spill his assumed moniker. "Frankly, we were always the kind of people who have hidden our past. Worried what people would think of us. Concerned we'd somehow become victim of the kill-the-messenger routine. Then finally realizing this was HIS legacy, not ours," he declares at the Four Seasons. "My parents had shunned any publicity. Hid in the background. Avoided notoriety. Yes, we spent our lives hiding. And we're not going to destroy 23 years of anonymity just for the sake of 15 minutes' fame."

With good reason. His family's secrets stretch into the furthest reaches of American ignominy, secrets tinged with blood and fear and power and greed and lies, secrets that touch and contaminate some of those who rule us, some of those who perform for us, even some of those who would save our souls, secrets that he once dissociated himself from, secrets that — now revealed — may plunge him into jeopardy.

His eyes are red from jet lag and fatigue. His hair is razor-cut. His nose has been surgically al-

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