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Dead Silent: Life Stories of Girls and Women Killed by the Italian Mafias, 1878-2018

Robin Pickering-Iazzi

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, rpi2@uwm.edu

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DEAD SILENT:

Life Stories of Girls and Women Killed by the Italian
Mafias, 1878-2018



Robin Pickering-Iazzi

Robin Pickering-Iazzi is Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature in the Department of French, Italian, and Comparative Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She is the author of *The Mafia in Italian Lives and Literature: Life Sentences and Their Geographies*, published in Italian as *Le geografie della mafia nella vita e nella letteratura dell'Italia contemporanea*, and editor of the acclaimed volumes *The Italian Antimafia, New Media, and the Culture of Legality* and *Mafia and Outlaw Stories in Italian Life and Literature*. She is currently working on a book that examines representations of femicide in Italian literature, film, and media.

Robin Pickering-Iazzi

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Graphics and design by Hailey Ray Backus

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Acknowledgments

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Introduction:

Lived Histories of Italian Girls and Women, the Nation and the Mafias

All memories begin with a name.
Maria Rosa Cutrufelli, *La briganta*, 8.

Along with the right to obtain reparation and justice, the right of victims is precisely to be remembered. Remembered in all of their uniqueness and individuality. In their work and the results achieved. In their everyday humanity. And first of all, in their name. Don Luigi Ciotti, preface to *L'altra storia*, xii.

Typing the name Marcella Tassone in your Web browser brings up several articles and pages, as well as images. Among the items is a photograph of a young girl with dark green eyes, who looks directly into the camera, conveying a sense of liveliness. Likely taken to capture the memory of her first communion, the photograph pictures Marcella in a long white dress that sets off her full head of black hair, carefully combed into loose curls held back from the sides of her face with white barrettes, her bangs falling just above her eyebrows. In many respects, Marcella's life was typical for ten year-old Italian girls of her time. She lived with her mother and father in Laureanna di Borello, a town of some 6,500 residents in the 1980s, nestled in the hills that give onto the Gioia Tauro plain in Calabria. Marcella enjoyed school and playing with her friends. But what she adored most of all was popular music, listening to singers on the radio or watching them on television variety shows. In fact, on the evening of 23 February 1989, Marcella was anxious to get home from a visit to her brother's family because she couldn't wait to see some of her favorite singers performing at the spectacular San Remo music festival, broadcast on television and still watched by millions of Italians today. With her brother Alfonso at the wheel, Marcella sat beside him as they traveled the usual route to their parents' home. Blasts from a shotgun suddenly ripped through the car, immediately killing Alfonso. When the car came to a stop, Marcella suffered one pistol shot to the nape of her neck, followed by six shots to her face, fired by members of the 'ndrangheta mafia organization. Thus, the photograph of Marcella in her long white dress, perhaps taken with the idea that one day she could look back at how she was on

that important day of passage, now serves as a commemoration of her brief life, stored in digital memory.

Like Marcella, all of the little girls and women whose life stories are reconstructed in this history were victims of the deadly violence that the camorra, Cosa Nostra, and 'ndrangheta have used as a common tool since the 1800s, and the United Sacred Crown has employed since the early 1980s, when it was founded. As in Marcella's case, the women and children's death was what suddenly made them newsworthy. In articles and public records, the dynamics of mafia ambushes and massacres, modalities of the murders and motives, as well as the killers, receive ample coverage. Yet the female victim, particularly if aged, tends to be relegated to the final lines, represented with the bare essentials of her identity, her name and perhaps age, that were soon forgotten. As their life stories reveal, a great number of young girls and women of all ages were killed while occupied in the common tasks and pastimes of everyday life. One year-old Angela Talluto was playing at her mother's feet, whereas Annalisa Durante, a bright young girl living in Naples, stopped to chat a moment with her cousins and friends. Stella Costa died while helping her mother take out the garbage. Giovanna Elia, 67 years old and living in a town in Calabria, went out onto her balcony to escape the sweltering July heat in her home and get a breath of fresh air.

Caught similarly unawares were women who broke unwritten mafia laws that prescribe female behavior, and suffered violent death as punishment, often at the hands of their own families. Lia Pipitone, for example, asserted her own desire by marrying the man she loved and pursued her education in art, acting against the dictates of her father, a Cosa Nostra boss. Her struggle for such basic freedoms ended when she was just 25 years old, murdered in a staged robbery that was approved by her father. Although Maria Teresa Gallucci had no family ties to 'ndrangheta clans, their belief that marriage vows are binding beyond the grave motivated the massacre in which she died, along with her mother and niece. Widowed when she was 25 years old, Maria later fell in love with a businessman. Despite their discretion, rumors spread about the so-called dishonor to her dead husband, which in 'ndrangheta thought must be washed away by the woman's own blood.

Several lives chronicled here epitomize both women's endeavors to fight publicly for freedom from fear and the mafias and the right to justice and equality, as well as the criminal tactics employed to silence them. Notable in this respect is Giuseppa Di Sano, who worked with her husband in their prosperous Palermo business in the late 1800s. She took the rare step of reporting the mafia's counterfeiting ring to the police. In an act of vendetta against her, killers shot rifle fire into her storeroom, but hit and killed her 17 year-old daughter, Emanuela Sansone. Giuseppa's courageous testimony at trial links her to contemporary antimafia figures who were slain, such as Renata Fonte, Francesca Morvillo, and Lea Garofalo.

This history shifts focus from the premature end of life at the hands of mafia men that silenced the voices of Italian girls and women, burying them in oblivion, to the lives that each one made for herself. It reconstructs over 200 life stories, shedding light on richly different experiences, occupations, causes championed, personal attachments, and aspirations that convey a sense of who the individual girls and women were and how they lived, each one somehow uniquely distinct from the other. They made their lives in diverse historical periods dating from 1878 through 2018, and resided in towns and cities throughout Italy, such as Genoa, Milan, Nardò along the Salento coastline, Parma, Naples, and Gela. With different educational and economic means at their disposal, some young girls and women barely eked out their survival in rural villages and bustling cities, while dreaming of a better life. Some hoped for an early marriage in order to escape the repressive rules imposed by fathers or brothers. Numerous other women carved out meaningful roles in service of their communities as architects, entrepreneurs, journalists, lawyers, police officers, and antimafia activists. The desire and struggle for autonomy and the freedom to assert individual choices in their lives emerge also in the lived stories of some women who were connected to mafia families by birth, marriage, or intimate relationships, and thus confronted particular beliefs, prohibitions, and expectations created by mafia men in order to impose their power in the clans and especially over women, who are considered their property.

By gathering together the factual stories of the girls and women killed by the mafias, scattered through diverse times, locations, and sources, this work places value on their individual lives as historical subjects and preserves them for future generations. The resultant history also documents the mafia's systematic use of murder against women and young girls since the very beginnings of the criminal organizations. The life stories thus refute the entrenched notions that the mafia does not harm children or women, or that the original "old" mafia always protected and venerated them, myths commonly entertained today. In order to compile this history and flesh out each of the subjects' uniquely fashioned lives, the stories incorporate traces of the victims discovered in a variety of sources. In addition to public records and the original articles breaking the news in newspapers, the online Italian sites www.vittimemafia.it, www.memoriaeimpegno.it, and www.impronteombre.it provide a variety of articles and photographs that document the victims who were killed by the mafias from the founding of Italy in 1860 through 2015 and have been identified thus far. In a pioneering project, daSud profiles the cases of female victims of the mafia through 2011, and is accessible at www.sdisonorate. But the most helpful sources for acquiring a sense of the individual's personal features and relationships are interviews with family members, diaries, school essays, and the memories shared by friends and teachers. The testimonies given by ex-members of the mafias who have become witnesses for the State, known as *pentiti*, remain instrumental for explaining the motives, events, and individuals involved in specific murder cases and sometimes kept secret for decades. Their testimonies also prove indispensable for

discovering the identities of countless women who have just "disappeared," the victims of *lupara bianca*, the mafia practice of destroying all traces of the murdered person's body. The "disappearing" of mafia victims' bodies drew widespread attention during the war led by Cosa Nostra boss Salvatore Riina against the Palermo crime families in the late 1980s and early 1990s. But as Anna Nocera's brief life shows, murder by *lupara bianca*, which generally escapes the public eye and also denies the victim's family the right of mourning and justice, has a longstanding history. Anna, 16 years old and pregnant after Leonardo Amoroso, a member of the Amoroso mafia clan, sexually abused her, left her parents' home to go to work doing domestic chores early on 10 March 1878, and disappeared into thin air. Since then, numbers of fellow girls and women who vanished were later identified as victims of the mafia. Maria Chindamo, who disappeared on 6 May 2016, is among the most recent, and her body has never been discovered. Such problems with identifying women victims, as well as discovering the identities of deteriorated female remains with signs of physical trauma, buried in forests, fields, or at the bottom of wells, make this history partial by necessity. Moreover, as Matteo Indice writes, in 2018 the mafias are committing escalating numbers of murders. From January to May 2018, 20 mafia murder victims, including 3 women, have been identified. ("Raffiche di Kalashnikov e bombe. Le mafie uccidono sempre di più," *La Stampa*, 5 May 2018.)

Daily Living in the Singular, the Collective History of Italy, and Mafia Territoriality

Essential for an understanding of history is not just the knowledge of the lives of obscure and ordinary individuals (all of us, in one way or another), but also information about the ideas feeding into their everyday experience. Luisa Passerini, *Fascism in Popular Memory*, 1

The routines, work, and moral judgements that orient behaviors, interests, and leisure activities express the daily humanity of girls and women in their life stories. While offering multiple vantage points on the history of changing trends of everyday living in Italian culture and society, their lives dramatically expose local battles over power and the places where they are lived and fought by common people struggling to overcome the deadly conditions created by the mafia organizations in such regions as Apulia, Calabria, Lombardy, Campania, and Sicily. Giuditta Levato's life's work and activism provide special insights on the conflicts over power between peasants, along with the members of the Socialist and Communist parties who worked on their behalf, and large

estate owners aligned with powerful members of the mafia. Levato lived in a small Calabrian town where she worked in the fields to support her family. Like many peasant women of the 1940s, she joined the peasant cooperative, which fought for peasant rights to own plots of land, earn a living wage, and work in decent conditions. During a standoff between the owner of a large estate and fellow peasants in 1946, Levato was shot and killed, a victim of 'ndrangheta. Some 50 years later, on 1 March 1996, the mafia control over day labor in the agricultural sector, and the deadly working conditions that it produces, caused Annamaria Torno's death in Puglia. Described by her friends as smart and talented, 18 year-old Annamaria dreamed of studying to become a women's fashion designer. However, anxious to begin a new stage in her life with her fiancé, she worked as a day laborer to save money for their wedding. Packed into a small van with 14 other women, she died when the van was struck by a car, crushing the passengers. In the summer of 2018, this same scenario played out on the Italian news, reporting the deaths of immigrant day laborers, caught in the 'ndrangheta and United Sacred Crown's criminal networks, which are linked to human trafficking.

In the course of their everyday dealings as shopkeepers and entrepreneurs, the decisions and actions taken by women chart a dynamic business culture committed to the ethics of work, honesty, and justice, which actively opposed corruption and the mafia system of extortion. Recalling Giuseppa Di Sano's denunciation of mafia counterfeiters in the 1800s, Giuseppa Cozzumbo strove to keep the café she owned in Bronte mafia free. She refused to pay the *pizzo*, money extorted by members of mafia clans to protect business owners from criminal acts committed by the mafia itself. The extortion racket performs key functions in the criminal organizations' territories. The exorbitant profits made by Cosa Nostra, 'ndrangheta, the camorra, and United Sacred Crown, estimated to total some 150 billion Euros in 2016, fund lawyers to defend mafiosi, the living expenses of criminal families while mafia members are in jail, as well as drug and arms purchases. But as Edoardo Zaffuto of Addiopizzo explains in an interview, the mafia extortion system is also critical as a means to exert cultural power and control.¹ By making everyone pay even a small sum, from factory owners to artisans selling their wares at a festival stall, the payment confers legitimacy on the system as a "normal" price for doing business. At the same time it robs Italian citizens of their democratic rights. Thus, Giuseppa's refusal to pay the *pizzo* denied the local Cosa Nostra clan both income and power. On 16 December 1991, while Giuseppa worked alongside her daughter, a masked man shot her at close range in the face and chest, as both punishment for not obeying the mafia and as an example for other business people. In this regard, Agata Azzolina's

¹ Edoardo Zaffuto provides invaluable insights on mafia behaviors and culture in daily living, his experiences as a co-founder of Addiopizzo, and the ongoing cultural revolution to create a mafia free Sicily. The interview can be accessed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXgYzD8cupY&t=114s.

experiences in the Sicilian town of Niscemi are especially useful to note. After both her husband Salvatore and son Mimmo were killed in an altercation with mafiosi demanding the *pizzo*, which they had refused to pay, fellow shopkeepers blamed the family for creating its own problems. Through Agata's story readers witness the conditions of living death produced by the mafia's physical, psychological, and emotional violence, which she confronted virtually alone, until she became the author of her death, induced by the mafia. The sense of civil responsibility put into daily practice by such women in their manners of living adds depth and breadth to the history of opposition to the extortion racket foregrounding such contemporary grassroots associations as Addiopizzo and Libera International, which offer various forms of support for individuals who work for a culture of lawfulness in opposition to the mafias.

Leisure time activities offer important keys to acquiring a sense of the girls and women's tastes, forms of pleasure, and ventures that distinguish each life history from all others. In their time unburdened by the responsibilities of work, school, family, and home chores, the girls and women of all ages invest their time and energy in a broad variety of endeavors. Filomena Morlando, who lived to the fullest what she saw as her vocation teaching young schoolchildren, devoted her Sunday mornings to inventing new desserts, prepared for her family's usual dinner together later in the day. When 19 year-old Roberta Lanzino was not darting on her blue moped between her Economics classes at the University of Calabria and her family's home in the town of Rende, she avidly played basketball, or relaxed by listening to folk music. Though the advent of affordable home computers and smart phones opened new possibilities for play and pleasure, in some cases the time engaged in exploring the world created on the Web and making friends on social networks assumed more serious meanings. Subjected to the severe rules and punishments imposed by her father, a member of the powerful 'ndrangheta Bellocco clan in the city of Rosarno, and then her husband, Maria Concetta Cacciola lived as a virtual prisoner in her home, and a victim of extreme physical abuse. When left alone, she chatted with friends on Facebook, where she discovered non-mafia ways of living and a desire to escape the clan and become a witness for justice.

Turning an eye to the youngest victims of the mafias, their favorite games, toys, and pastimes serve as primary signs of their distinct characters and lives, while conveying ideas about family, community, and society. Family outings for a day of play at the beach, as well as children improvising games in gardens and town streets recur as shared forms of care-free amusement. Although she had just turned 2 years old, Valentina Terracciano was attached to her toy cell phone, and a small stuffed bear, inseparable from her in life and memory. Both toys were placed on her white coffin, an image immortalized in countless photographs. Toys convey a very different meaning in Marcella Tassone's life. Just days before her death, she took all of her toys to school and gave them to her fifth-grade classmates, in a gesture indicating her sense of impending

death. Marcella explained to her teacher, “After all, they’re of no use to me anymore”. The attachment to classmates also orients Mariangela Anzalone’s activities during her free time. Whenever one of her fellow third-graders was home sick from school, she would go to visit the child at home and then let her classmates know how their friend was feeling. Mariangela’s practice of care earned her the nickname “the little nurse”. Among adolescent girls, writing in diaries stands out as a treasured activity during their free time. As we see in the diaries written by Rita Atria and Annalisa Durante, the individual, sometimes fragmented, entries serve to record events that the writers perceive as significant, their innermost thoughts, and feelings. The diaries thus give readers an idea about the girls’ own perceptions of who they were and meanings of growing up as girls living respectively in the Sicilian town of Partanna and in Naples. Specifically, Rita’s diary writings detail her childhood experiences growing up in a mafia family in the 1970s and 1980s, the sufferings of traumatic loss caused by the murders of her father and brother by members of the local Cosa Nostra clan, and then her attempts to create a new identity as a witness for justice in the early 1990s. Born in 1990, Annalisa’s diary writings testify to her fears and dreams, as well as day-to-day events in the life-threatening conditions created by the camorra in the Forcella neighborhood in Naples. The highly self-reflective thoughts put to paper by both Rita and Annalisa inform both the reconstructions of their life stories and the culture of everyday living in which they participated.

Among the many women who worked full time in such occupations as homemakers, teachers, architects, and factory workers, the dedication of the little spare time they had to socially beneficial volunteer activities is striking. Though a young 22 year-old, Gelsomina Verde, known by family and friends as Mina, worked long hours in the leather goods industry in Naples. But as soon as she finished up her work day she divided her time between telling stories to the poverty-stricken children living in Scampia, reading the letters written by jailed husbands aloud to their wives, and volunteering as a clown therapist for hospitalized children, the activity she loved most of all. Silvia Ruotolo, a mother of 2 young children, focused her volunteer efforts on children’s education and health. She fought for the introduction of hot school lunch services for kindergarten children and worked in assistance programs for educating differently challenged students. Although a red electric wheelchair was Felicia Castaniere’s sole means of mobility after she suffered polio as a baby, as her children grew up she expanded her volunteer work to serve different communities in need. She became the Director of the agency for the differently challenged in Casandrino, located on the periphery of Naples, where she helped her clients overcome bureaucratic obstacles and acquire the necessary assistance. Felicia also worked distributing food and clothing to the poor. In her son’s words, Felicia lived a life of committed social action and denouncing injustices. As in the stories of Felicia, Agata, Mina, Mariangela, and Annalisa, the ways fellow girls and women uniquely fashioned their occupations, beliefs, and forms of pleasure help us understand the relationships between the individual stories and collective ones that

produce Italian history in its social and cultural dimensions, marked also by multiple sites of trauma and loss produced by the mafias.

Female Bodies of Evidence and the History of the Italian Nation

The pact between the State and mafia began with the unification of Italy.
Ignazio Coppola, 17 November 2013

The stories of the lives lived by girls and women who died at the mafias’ hands stand as bodies of evidence testifying to the longstanding criminal history of systematic murder, which is tantamount to a State sponsored massacre, given the collaborative interrelations between parts of the Italian State and mafia organizations. This claim is hardly overstated, as demonstrated by the historic ruling delivered by the Italian court on 20 April 2018, which convicted high-ranking government officials and Cosa Nostra bosses of negotiating a secret pact, the *Trattativa tra stato e mafia* (the State-mafia pact), during the early 1990s. The former senator Marcello Dell’Utri, right-hand man of ex-Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, a retired colonel, and ex-generals in the military police, acted as go-betweens to deliver the mafiosi’s requests to political figures, such as weakening antimafia laws, in exchange for which the mafia would bring to an end its massacres of police officers, judges, and public antimafia figures. During the years of negotiations, Cosa Nostra planned and committed the catastrophic Capaci Massacre (23 May 1992) and the Via D’Amelio Massacre (19 July 1992), in which Judge Francesca Morvillo and police bodyguard Emanuela Loi were respectively killed, along with judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, as well as 7 bodyguards. They paid with their lives to protect democratic rights and the very State in which corrupt elements were collaborating with their killers. In the aftermath, as antimafia prosecutor Nino Di Matteo reveals in his autobiographic account of investigating the pact and putting the State on trial, for over 25 years members of Parliament and State institutions created a wall of silence around the truths in their possession. They hid or destroyed evidence, and tried to sabotage the investigation in multiple ways. (See *Il patto sporco: Il processo stato-mafia nel racconto di un suo protagonista*, by Saverio Lodato and Nino Di Matteo.)

The criminal actions taken by certain State representatives in collusion with the mafias are significant for several reasons. First, they forestalled the discovery of truths pertaining to the mafia massacres of the early 1990s, and the delivery of some kind of justice to the victims and their survivors, as well as the Italian people. Second, the

silence and sabotage perpetuated the criminal power network within the State that made use of mafia killers, as exemplified by the infamous Massacre of Via dei Georgofili on 27 May 1993, which took place in Florence, renowned as the heart of Italy's artistic patrimony. In all appearances, the modality of the massacre had Cosa Nostra's typical signature. A tremendous car bomb exploded, destroying buildings and homes, and moreover, fatally crushing Angela Fiume, her 8 year-old daughter Nadia, and her baby Caterina in the rubble. Members of Cosa Nostra did in fact carry out the bombing. However, high-ranking *pentiti* such as Gaspare Spatuzza insist the attack was conceived and ordered by a "different kind of political power," likely linked to the secret services and their political allies. (See Alessandra Dino, *A colloquio con Gaspare Spatuzza*, p. 147-48.) This same kind of State power is evidenced by the criminal execution of the internationally known journalist Ilaria Alpi and her camera operator Miran Hrovatin (20 March 1994), who had proof that radioactive toxic waste was being shipped from Italy to Bosaso, in Somalia, in a scheme executed by 'ndrangheta, political representatives, and the secret service. Finally, the strategy of collaborative co-existence between the Italian State and the mafias has enabled the criminal powers of both to flourish over the last 25 years, and is thus all the more responsible for the murders of over 80 girls and women represented in this history from July 1992 to December 2018.

The pact between the State and the mafias has its roots in the founding of Italy as a nation, and its history is written in large part on the bodies of girls and women, as illustrated through their reconstructed life stories. Certain events in this history demonstrate key elements of State-mafia relations and their ever changing forms that are contingent upon the diverse social and cultural contexts, as well as the particular interests of both parties concerned. These events provide a context for understanding the various meanings of the lives and deaths recounted here. First, in 1860, members of mafia clans in Sicily and in the camorra operating in the region around Naples joined ranks with Giuseppe Garibaldi's volunteer soldiers in the successful campaign to liberate Sicily and the Naples area from Spanish Bourbon reign, and then created the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. Mafia boss Giuseppe Bonanno's memories of the stories his grandfather used to tell him reveal the motivations driving the clans' support of the unification: "My grandfather used to tell me that when Garibaldi came to Sicily, the men in our tradition [mafia] sided with Garibaldi's red shirts because they were suited to our own objectives and interests" (quoted in Giuseppe Carlo Marino, *Storia della mafia*, p. 35). The consolidation of this alliance resulted in the production of a corrupt system by powerful political figures, the owners of vast agricultural estates, bankers, and mafiosi, who each played various roles in their affairs of state and business, while eliminating any threats to their profits and power. Among the primary threats were the peasants and the activists in the Socialist and Communist parties who represented them. Together they formed the Sicilian Leagues (*Fasci siciliani*) in the 1890s, whose scope included achieving reforms for workers, eliminating criminal elements from local administrations, and eradicating

the mafia. Their public demonstrations in 1893 and 1894 were violently put to an end by State military and mafia forces, who fired on the crowds of children, women, and men participating. Among the documented dead, according to Umberto Santino's *Storia del movimento antimafia*, were two women, Teresa Seminerio and Concetta Lombardo, and 3 little girls, 1 year-old Anna Olivieri, 9 month-old Cira Russo, and 2 year-old Maria Spinella.

Although the Italian government disbanded the Sicilian Leagues in 1894, the struggle for land and work reforms pitting peasants against dominant political powers and the mafias intensified in the wake of World War II, when Cosa Nostra's power achieved new significance. During the occupation of Sicily by British and United States troops in 1943, the Allied leaders appointed mayors of mafia extraction in some 90 per cent of the towns and cities, and created what Umberto Santino calls a "formal criminalocracy" (*Storia del movimento antimafia*, 134). This Allied action worked to authorize mafia men as legitimate political leaders and to bolster their positions in relations with members of Parliament and Ministers in Rome, some of whom were involved in the atrocious Massacre of Portella della Ginestra, a traumatic story told here through the lives of Vincenza La Fata and Margherita Clesceri, and fellow women. Vincenza, who had just celebrated her eighth birthday, and Margherita, a mother of 6 children, were among the some 2,000 peasants who went to Portella della Ginestra, in the province of Palermo, on 1 May 1947, anticipating a day of fun enjoying lunch and festivities to celebrate Labor Day with family and friends. All of a sudden, the chatting and laughter was interrupted by bursts of explosive noise, which some thought were firecrackers. Then women, girls and boys, and men started to collapse in the crowd, while others ran to find some cover. Over 11 people died as a result of wounds inflicted by Salvatore Giuliano and members of his criminal band, who fired machine guns into the dense crowd of people, acting under the auspices of the local mafia clan with the apparent involvement of members of the government and secret services. Well over 30 other people were wounded, but survived.

The Massacre of Portella della Ginestra may seem to belong solely to Italy's distant past. However, the massacre marks a local and national site of ongoing trauma that can not be put to rest due to the leaden silence under which it is buried and the continuing collusion between the State and mafias, aimed at protecting secrets that bind the forces responsible. To this day, government documents relating to the criminal machinations that went into the planning, execution, and cover-up of the attack are sealed as State secrets, which denies both truth and justice to the victims, their families, and fellow citizens. As a result, in 1997, the organization *Non solo Portella* (Not only Portella) was formed by survivors of the Massacre of Portella della Ginestra and the families of the many leaders in politics and unions who had been killed in Sicily since 1944. Headed by Giuseppe Casarrubea, the association operates to abolish the government's State

secret privilege and obtain public disclosure of information regarding all such murders.

The issues raised by the Massacre of Portella della Ginestra concerning State-mafia relations and the material conditions that they create in daily life throughout Italy bear upon the subsequent massacres involving hundreds of innocent victims whose lives you will come to discover. Among them are the Massacre of the Freccia del sud, also known as the Gioia Tauro Massacre, which took place on 22 July 1970, when the 'ndrangheta and far right political interests master-minded the explosion of the commuter train running between Palermo and Turin with some 200 working-class passengers on board; the Massacre of train 904, dubbed the Christmas Massacre, which on 23 December 1984, saw the explosion of the express train carrying some 700 passengers from Naples to Milan, to spend the holidays with their family and friends, committed by Cosa Nostra; and the Massacre of the Freccia della Laguna train on 20 July 2002, which merits attention for what it can tell us about the State-mafia pact in the new millennium. As in the case of each killing of an individual and the multiple murders in the massacres evoked above, the historical and political circumstances, motivations and aims, and individual lives of the victims are particular to the tragic events suffered by the passengers on the Freccia della Laguna train, who numbered 190. The train ran between Palermo and Venezia Santa Lucia, serving workers, students, families visiting relatives in northern Italy, and vacationers. Approximately 3 hours into the 18 hour train ride, a colossal impact hurled the locomotive in a 180 degree turn, and flung the passenger cars every which way in an apocalyptic scene, killing 8 people and injuring 47 others. Responsibility for the massacre, officially attributed to poor maintenance on the couplings, can be traced to the local Cosa Nostra clans and government representatives who colluded with them, as demonstrated by reporters specializing in mafia investigations. Antonio Mazzeo, for instance, states: "The realization of the new Messina-Palermo railway line is the story of hundreds of millions of [State] dollars that wound up in the hands of the Sicilian mafia's businesses, but it's also the story of a series of massacres, homicides, and murders by *lupara bianca* that have bloodied the towns of Barcellona, Terme Vigliatore and Milazzo in the 1980s and 1990s" ("Strage di stato, strage di mafia," Terrelibere.org). What Mazzeo's analysis also highlights is how the mafia's relations with State institutions enables it to obtain profitable public contracts and monopolies, worked through a corrupt network of elite entrepreneurial and financial figures, and whose price is measured in human lives. The embedded mafia relations with the State, dating back over 150 years, lead Isaia Sales to conclude, "The mafias are not reducible to just a 'criminal history'. Rather, they are a full-fledged part of Italian history" (*Storia dell'Italia mafiosa: Perché le mafie hanno avuto successo*, 14). In this regard, the lives of women and girls who died because they were caught in mafia crossfire, were specifically targeted as punishment for their acts of independence or as a vendetta, or because they took public action against the mafias, form an equally full-fledged part of Italian history.

Women's Inside Stories of Mafia History and Myths

I viewed the mafia like Natale viewed it. . . Like a means for justice . . . They didn't touch women or children . . . I didn't think it was bad . . . I didn't see the cruel things you see now . . . Now I know I was wrong. But the mafia used to be different once.

Giacoma Filipello, quoted in Liliana Madeo, *Donne di mafia*, 64

The names of girls and women of all ages represented in this history differ from those posted on many antimafia association sites, which generally list "innocent" victims of the mafias, loosely understood as individuals who had no ties to the crime organizations, or if they did, broke with the clans and became witnesses for justice, as in the cases of Rita Atria and Lea Garofalo. In contrast, this project aims to chronicle all manner of women and girls killed by the mafias, first of all because they are all in one sense or another victims of criminal systems constructed by men to achieve their own interests, in great part by cultivating female obedience to unedited laws of behavior through privileges or punishments. In many cases, mafia women are both victims and agents of the repressive, deadly system of mafia thought and action that they perpetuate, making it difficult to draw fine distinctions between innocence and guilt. This is especially so when the consequence of disobeying those laws or breaking with the clan is death, a reality to which the lives of Concettina Labate, Liliana Caruso, and Lea Garofalo attest.

The diverse lives of mafia women also offer the opportunity to learn from their routines, family events, ideas, and emotions as part of their day-to-day lives, which illustrate lived realities of mafia gender roles, ideas on sexuality, meanings of honor and shame, and the problem of the objectification of human life, even in one's own family. The lived realities of girls and women in Cosa Nostra, 'ndrangheta, the camorra, and the United Sacred Crown discredit both the assumptions that we as readers may have about life in the mafia, as well as the popular myths the mafias themselves have created since their beginnings in the 1800s. The greatest myth of all is that the mafia does not harm women or children. This fabrication and the image of the mafioso as a man of respect who lives by a code of honor serve serious purposes in the mafias. In particular, they are employed to attract new recruits, exert power in the clans, and create public consensus. Similarly, many people may assume life in the mafias grants the security of power over others, riches, and privileges. However, the life stories of women married to powerful bosses or born into their families, such as Maria Rosa Bellocco, Carmela Minniti, and Vincenza Marchese, reveal the precarious conditions of everyday living,

often marked by the trauma of violent death, and moreover, the fear of losing one's own life at the hands of rival clans. Along similar lines, the material conditions and facts concerning the individual girls and women affiliated with the mafias should put to rest the notion that assuming more powerful positions in the criminal associations represents a form of female emancipation, mirroring women's social and economic advances in society at large. Emancipation, or the assertion of autonomy and self-affirmation, is a mute point for both women and men in the mafias, which demand total obedience to the boss's orders and rules, on pain of death. This point is poignantly expressed through the lives of Lia Pipitone and Annalisa Isaia, whose emancipated behaviors went against the wishes of father and uncle, who were respectively responsible for their murders.

As exhibited by mafia women's distinct life stories, women perform a range of key roles in the criminal clans, such as operating in communication networks, creating alliances between clans through marriage, collecting extortion payments, and ruling the clan in emergencies. Flesh and blood women also function as "symbolic instruments and victims in cross-vendettas against next of kin," as noted by Alessandra Dino in "Symbolic Domination" (75), and documented with shocking frequency in this history. Girls born into mafia families are groomed to fulfill the gender roles of wife and mother, designed to suit criminal interests. The Cosa Nostra *pentito* Leonardo Messina explains this process in his testimony: "Women have never been officially affiliated and never will be. But they have always had a fundamental role. Men like me marry a suitable woman: the daughter of a man like me. Cosa Nostra controls them from the time they're little girls, like us [. . .]. A man of honor's patrimony is primarily to have a woman who is aware of her role" (Teresa Principato and Alessandra Dino, *Mafia donna: Le vestali del sacro e dell'onore*, 53). In the system of power described by Messina, women are not permitted to become affiliated members of Cosa Nostra, thus denying them the possibility to become the heads of clans. However, in times of emergency, when a boss is imprisoned, for instance, they assume the position of head of clan by proxy, and make sure the boss's orders are followed. In this respect, Cosa Nostra differs from the 'ndrangheta, camorra, and United Sacred Crown, which have histories of women who fulfill criminal roles in full and become clan bosses. (See Milka Kahn and Anne Véron, *Women of Honor*.)

In mafia families, women serve an especially important function by raising and educating their children in mafia culture and codes of behavior that enforce criminally defined values of obedience, loyalty, honor, and shame. In this system, women, in their roles as wives and mothers, bear the full responsibility for the conduct of both their children and spouses. Therefore, if a member of their family becomes a *pentito* or a witness for justice, the betrayal of the mafia becomes their own failure and a source of palpable shame. Agata Di Filippo, whose brothers became *pentiti*, describes the self-isolation and pain of such disgrace, stating "We're shut up inside our house. We don't

even open the shutters because of the shame. Please understand, for our family it's a tragedy" (Anna Puglisi, *Donne, mafia e antimafia*, 65). Unable to cope with insurmountable shame, Agata attempted suicide on 28 June 1995. Her emotions and actions offer potential clues for ways of thinking about how mafia beliefs, behavioral codes, and punishments may become the instruments of women's deaths even in cases of suicide, such as that of Vincenza Marchese. Born into a Cosa Nostra family, Vincenza married Leoluca Bagarella, a descendant of a multi-generational mafia family and brother-in-law of the infamous boss Salvatore Riina. Despite the power, prestige, and material wealth Bagarella's position accorded her, Vincenza appears to have suffered losses of different kinds. Living as the wife of a fugitive from the law meant renouncing everyday freedoms, and she experienced the pain of having 2 miscarriages. Furthermore, she had the burden of dishonor when her brother Giuseppe Marchese began collaborating with the police. On 12 May 1995, Vincenza hung herself in the Palermo apartment where she had lived with Bagarella, giving rise to much speculation. The mafia sense of family shame that can only be washed away by the blood of vendetta, to restore family honor, may be one key for interpreting Vincenza's action. According to this line of thought, she killed herself in order to protect her husband from shame, and from a potential vendetta as well. It may also be that she, like the witness for justice Rita Atria, felt the burden of guilt over loving a man who was affectionate and caring to her, but committed multiple homicides and ordered the 1993 kidnapping of 12 year-old Giuseppe di Matteo, who was tortured and killed in 1996. The psychological and emotional power of such guilt should not be underestimated. On 2 April 2017, Maria Rita Logiudice jumped off the balcony of her family's home, taking her life. Just 24 years old, Maria had recently earned her university degree in economics and was planning to continue her studies in Law. Though she apparently had a brilliant future in front of her, the burden of her last name as the daughter of a high ranking 'ndrangheta boss was too heavy to bear, according to some of her close university friends.

The contradictory position of mafia women as both agents and victims of criminal culture and practice is epitomized by their relations to the vendetta. On the one hand, mothers teach their children the pedagogy of the vendetta, simply put, an act of murder to avenge the killing of a family member and thereby restore honor. They also incite members of the family to perform the vendetta, a role that continues today. An intercepted telephone conversation that took place in the home of the 'ndrangheta Bellocchio clan boss in Rosarno provides chilling evidence. While the boss lays out the plan for the attack, he specifies that the enemies 18 years old and older should be killed. His wife interrupts him, and orders, "You have to kill all of the women and children, because this family must not have any future offspring" (Lirio Abbate, "La strage degli innocenti: Così è cambiato il codice d'onore delle cosche"). Though speaking here from a position of power, the boss's wife will take the place of the very women and children that she condemns to death if the cycle of vendettas continues. Celeste Costantino explains the

logic of killing women as vendettas often aimed at their fathers, brothers, husbands, or sons, stating the rival strikes “the ‘thing’ that is most dear to you and symbolically, for this reason, it should never be touched” (Prefazione, *Sdisonorate*, online). This logic is commonly applied by the camorra, Cosa Nostra, ’ndrangheta, and the United Sacred Crown.

Many readers are likely familiar with representations of the vendetta in fiction and film that lead us to believe the mafia commits this kind of murder only to avenge the unjust killing of a loved one. In a few instances, this idea is borne out by the victims’ histories. Rosa Versaci, for example, fled with her son to Canada, with the precise scope of escaping the threats of vendetta against her family in Calabria, which started when her husband killed their nephew in 1961. She had a full, safe life, while she raised her son in Toronto. Nonetheless, she dreamed of returning just once to her hometown of Calanna. Wanting to make his elderly mother’s dream come true, Angelo accompanied Rosa to Calanna for Christmas. As they drove down the road where their nephew had been killed, a hit squad opened fire, fatally shooting both mother and son in a vendetta harbored for over 30 years. In contrast, the numerous lives of women and girls living inside the mafias and beyond tell different stories that illustrate the many forms vendettas take. They serve for instance as messages to mafia members, as tactics in power struggles for control over clans or over new territories, or as punishment for offending a mafioso or a member of his family. Liliana Caruso’s brief, yet inspirational life, sheds light on the mafia language of vendetta and its meanings, while also indicating the ways mafia women take active roles in the clan. Just 28 years old and the mother of 3 young children, Liliana took the brave step of fully supporting the choice of her husband, Riccardo Messina, to collaborate with antimafia prosecutors and begin a new life. Messina was a member of the Savasta clan, allied with the powerful Cosa Nostra family headed by Nitto Santapaola in Catania. The wives of mafiosi in Riccardo’s former clan immediately began threatening Liliana, and then tried to convince her to pretend that she and her children were being held hostage, and could be freed only if her husband retracted his testimony. Liliana reported the threats to the prosecutors, who described her as “calm and confident.” Days later, Liliana and her mother were doing their usual morning grocery shopping. A hit squad of 4 mafiosi specifically targeted Liliana, shooting her multiple times, especially in the face to disfigure her. They tracked down her mother, hidden between parked cars, and killed her as well. The attack was committed as a vendetta for Riccardo’s betrayal of Cosa Nostra, but served also as a message to him to stop collaborating with the law. This specific targeting of women with immense firepower is not an exception to the rule, as shown by the Bagheria Massacre of Women on 24 November 1989, and more recently, the Cava Massacre on 26 May 2002, the latter of which was organized by women in camorra clans.

In the decidedly patriarchal family system shared by the 4 major Italian mafias, the

female body functions as a symbol of family honor that girls and women must embody in the flesh through obedience to male authority, loyalty, and fidelity. Infractions to the rules are interpreted as casting dishonor on both the male head of family and the criminal organization to which he belongs, and is thus punishable by death. Multiple voices speaking through women’s bodies testify to mafia men’s systematic use of murder when female family members assert their social autonomy or sexual independence. In the early 1980s, Giuseppina Lucchese, for example, lived under threat when her brother Giuseppe Lucchese, the Cosa Nostra boss of Ciaculli, came to suspect she was having an affair. He told Giuseppina’s husband that she had to be killed for bringing dishonor on the family. Her husband, also a member of Cosa Nostra, warned his brother-in-law not to touch Giuseppina, a surprising break with ranks that had predictable consequences. While Giuseppina, her husband Giuseppe, and their daughter were all together in a café, Giuseppe Lucchese killed them both, under their daughter’s eyes. Maria Teresa Gallucci’s life reveals how the ’ndrangheta members take fidelity to marriage vows to be binding even beyond the grave. Moreover, the case shows how the actions of a daughter, son, nephew, or grandchild can draw honest family members into the sphere of power dominated by clan laws. At just 25 years of age, Maria lost her husband, a bricklayer, to a fatal accident at work. After she had dedicated her life to raising her 3 children alone, she fell in love with a businessman, and began a serious relationship with him. Despite their discretion, rumors reached her son, who had begun frequenting members of the Pesce clan of Rosarno. When her companion was murdered, Maria fled to Genoa to hide in her relatives’ home. She was tracked down and killed on 18 March 1994, along with her mother and niece, as punishment for casting shame on her dead husband. These women’s histories, along with those of such fellow women as Maria Rosa Bellocco, Annunziata Pesce, Angela Costantino, and more recently Carla Maria Fornari, killed by the United Sacred Crown in 2014, clearly express mafia men’s perception of the female body and sexuality as the site for their control and dominance.

The common use of physical violence and death to force girls and women to uphold criminal culture and practice may also drive the victims to break from the family in order to create different lives for themselves or for their children. The testimonial histories of Concettina Labate, Rita Atria, and Lea Garofalo, who were born and raised in mafia families, provide insights about what may motivate the desire to cut family bonds and begin life anew. Their thoughts, emotions, and actions also bring to light the material and psychological obstacles to escaping the clans and reconstructing personal identities. Concettina Labate’s early life mirrors those of many young girls raised in ’ndrangheta families. The powerful Labate clan in which she was born arranged for her to be married to a man of their choosing, in order to solidify an alliance with his clan. While still a young woman, Concettina took an exceptional step for mafia women of the early 1980s. She left her husband, and thus broke ties with the rest of her family as well in order to live a fully independent life. While standing firm in the face of death threats

delivered by members of her family, Concettina managed to build an identity of her own, with a home and decent job, and a relationship based on love and affection. Although her own father and brothers ultimately delivered on their death threats, Concettina serves as a precursor to women who take similar steps in the 1990s and thereafter, able also to avail themselves of the witness protection program, officially established in 1991. Indeed, as shown by Rita Atria and Lea Garofalo's struggles to achieve a safe haven from the physical and psychological threats, violence, and terror inflicted respectively by Cosa Nostra and 'ndrangheta on both body and mind, the material and emotional forms of support offered by antimafia prosecutors, counselors, and police are critical, though fraught with problems. From their earliest memories of childhood, Rita and Lea's stories are markedly different, as are their motivations for breaking with their families. Though Rita's first impulse for becoming a witness for justice was to avenge the murders of her beloved father and brother, who lived and died by mafia laws, she ultimately shifted her allegiance to lawful justice and the figures who upheld it, such as judges Alessandra Camassa and Paolo Borsellino. Lea's single-minded motivation for breaking ties with her family was to give her daughter Denise a different life, honest and happy. Thus, she separated from her companion Carlo Cosco, a member of 'ndrangheta and Denise's father, in 1996, and in 2002 became a witness for justice. She provided detailed testimony about the clan's crimes and illegal business network in Milan and Calabria. Following Lea's death, Denise became a witness for justice and gave key testimony against her father and other clan members for the murder of her mother. In this regard, the lives lived by Concettina, Rita, and Lea provide compelling evidence that criminal beliefs and behaviors taught and passed down from one generation to the next are subject to change.

Women in the Making of History, Memory, and Future Change

I like to think my life won't end in death. I'd like to be remembered by the people who survive me. Annalisa Durante, *Il diario di Annalisa*

We can't hope for a better future if the country loses its memory.
Nino Di Matteo, *Antimafia duemila*, 21 November 2018

By telling and compiling the stories of girls and women who, for the most part, lived uncommonly common lives until they died in the most inhumane ways at the hands of the mafia, this work makes a space for them in history. The resultant collective space is constituted by the singularity of each individual making a life uniquely her own, in her

own name, with values, hopes and simple gestures of humanity made while at play, work, caring for family, or just walking through the neighborhood, with which readers may identify. Such identification and the knowledge that the life stories make accessible invite us to imagine what futures the girls and women might have made for themselves and others. In the process, we can gain an appreciation of the traumatic injustice delivered by their deaths and suffered by loved ones who survived them, as well as their communities.

No form of justice can adequately compensate the loss of life suffered by the victims of the mafia. It is possible, however, to fulfill their right to be remembered. This history of the ongoing mafia massacre of girls and women of all ages provides the means for coming to know and remember the life stories written in each individual's name, and for making memory and social change as well. The history before you is open-ended as it reaches into both the past and future. Unidentified girls and women killed since the 1800s are still buried in silence, the truths about their disappearances, "suicides," or unsolved murders as yet undiscovered. By putting what were often publicly anonymous lives and deaths into the public eye, this history serves as a point of departure for working to identify currently unknown victims of the mafia and reconstruct the historical memory of their lives. Along these lines, remembering the flesh and blood women through public discussion of their lives and the problems that their murders reveal refutes mafia myths of honor and respect that veil mafia men's systematic use of deadly violence against women and children. Such discussions also put under public scrutiny the enmeshed enterprises of mafia members and elements of the Italian State, which perpetuate the bloodshed. Last, the transmission of the stories of lives lived in mafia territories and written on the bodies of the victims is in itself an act of social change. Breaking the silence claims the very freedoms that were denied to the victims: the freedom to assert the human rights and responsibilities of everyday living in local and global civil communities that are free from criminal intimidation and violence.

Postscript

The author invites readers who have additional information pertaining to the lives of the girls and women represented in this history or information about victims not identified here to contact her in English or Italian at rpi2@uwm.edu.

Life Stories

of Girls and Women Killed by the Italian Mafias

ANNA NOCERA

10 MARCH 1878



Only scattered pieces of information tell us something about Anna Nocera, likely among the first female victims of *lupara bianca*, the mafia practice of leaving no trace of the murder victim's body. Sources suggest she was a responsible, hard-working young girl from a poor family of Palermo. To help her family get by, Anna did domestic chores in the household of the Amoroso family, a mafia clan of Porta Montalto active in Sicily in the 1800s. Known for their ruthlessness, the 2 brothers, Gaetano and Leonardo, had committed some 6 murders by the late 1870s, and held control over the area, while the bands of the Stuppagghieri and the Fratellanza respectively controlled Monreale and Favara. While working, 16 year-old Anna caught the eye of Leonardo, who mercilessly pursued her. Terrified, Anna confided in her mother, who then kept her at home for protection. After a few months, the family's economic straits became dire, so Anna was forced to find work again. She returned to her job in the Amoroso household. Leonardo ultimately overpowered Anna, who became pregnant. She begged Leonardo to marry her and put things right. Early in the morning of 10 March, Anna left home to go to work as usual, and take care of her chores. She never returned home. Her relatives searched everywhere, but to no avail, and soon suspected that she had been killed. Finally, Anna's father confronted Leonardo, demanding to know what had happened to his daughter. Leonardo turned violent, and threatened to kill Anna's father if he said anything to the police. Anna's case was virtually silenced. However, 5 years later in 1883, the Amoroso brothers and fellow clan members were put on trial in Palermo, accused of committing 9 homicides, including Anna Nocera's. Her mother, Vincenza Cuticchia, joined the public prosecutor's case. During the trial, she looked the accused straight in the eyes and yelled, "Wicked villains, you have my daughter's blood on your hands!" (cited by Umberto Santino). Coming to the defense of the Amoroso brothers were 2 members of Parliament, Valentino Caminneci and Raffaele Palizzolo, the latter of whom would ultimately stand trial for ordering the murder of Emanuele Notarbartolo.

Sources: Umberto Santino, “Le associazioni e i primi pentiti nella guerra ai clan dell’800,” la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 3 July 2015; Antonino Cutrera, *La mafia e i mafiosi: origini e manifestazioni (1900)*, Whitefish Montana, Kessinger Publishing, 2008; “Anna Nocera,” www.legalitaegiustizia.it/privacy.

EMANUELA SANSONE



27 DECEMBER 1896

The newspaper article that broke the news of Emanuela Sansone's murder in Palermo on 27 December 1896, tells us she was “a very beautiful, flourishing girl with light blond hair and aqua eyes”.¹ She regularly spent her days with everyone else in her family, working in their prosperous establishment that sold various dry goods and foodstuffs, and had a few tables where customers could drink a glass of wine. Two days after Christmas, she was playing with her younger brother in the storeroom of the family's business while their mother, Giuseppa Di Sano, worked nearby. Rifle fire exploded in the room, and bullets struck Emanuela's temple and her mother's arm and side. The 17 year-old Emanuela died on the spot. Ermanno Sangiorgi, the Police Chief of Palermo at the time, concluded that Emanuela was killed in a vendetta against her mother, who was the intended target. Giuseppa Di Sano had taken the courageous action of reporting mafiosi for making counterfeit money to the police, and thus stands as a precursor to today's women who become witnesses for justice. Significantly, Emanuela Sansone's case and Giuseppa Di Sano's testimony resulted in the Sangiorgi report (Rapporto Sangiorgi), written from 1898 to 1900, which is renowned as the first official Italian police document to name and define the Sicilian mafia as a secret criminal organization based on an oath, with solely illegal aims and activities. Few of the accused mafiosi were found guilty at the trial, in large part due to lack of witnesses willing to testify at the trial and many retractions from individuals who had originally provided evidence. In an effort to keep the memory of Emanuela Sansone alive, in 2016, the ARAM IEFP Esthetician and Cosmetology school of Catania dedicated its new laboratory in her name.

¹ See the article “Il doppio assassinio di via Sampolo” in the *Giornale di Sicilia*, 29 dicembre 1896. Important to note is that the newspaper article misidentifies Emanuela's mother as Giuseppa Basano, an error repeated in some historical sources.

Sources: mentecritica.net/vittime-di-tutte-le-mafie-27-dicembre-1896-emanuela-sansone/oldstuff/mumon/33860/; "Scuola di Catania ricorda la prima donna vittima della mafia," it.blastingnews.com, 10 May 2016; "Il doppio assassinio di via Sampolo," *Giornale di Sicilia*, 29 December 1896.

ANGELA TALLUTO



7 SEPTEMBER 1945

Angela was the youngest child in the Talluto family, which lived in Montelepre, a town nestled on the hills rising above Palermo, about 9 miles in the distance. In 1945, the town of Montelepre, with some 5,000 inhabitants, was torn by violent clashes as Salvatore Giuliano's band of bandits, working in collusion with the local mafia clans, perpetrated attacks on forces of the law and members of the Socialist party, as well as peasants. On 7 September, Angela, just 1 year old, was outside her home in Montelepre, along with other children and neighbors who had gathered and were chatting in the street. A hail of gunfire cut through the crowd, shot during an ambush organized by Salvatore Giuliano to kill Giovanni Spiga, a Socialist activist standing amidst the neighbors. Angela suffered a fatal gun shot wound, and died on the spot. In a gesture recalling Angela's short life, 2 young loggerhead turtles, one named Angela and the other named in honor of Simonetta Lamberti, an 11 year-old victim of the camorra, were set free in the sea waters near the *Isola delle Femmine* in Sicily, on 21 March 2017, the national day of memory and commitment in Italy, devoted to remembering all innocent victims of the mafias.

Sources: "Angela Talluto," decidiamoloinsieme.it; "Mafia: liberate in mare Angela e Simonetta, tartarughe col nome di due bimbe uccise," liberoquotidiano.it, 21 March 2017.



TOMMASA (MASINA) PERRICONE

3 MARCH 1946

Recently married, 33 year-old Masina lived in the town of Burgio, located near the city of Agrigento, in Sicily. In the wake of World War II, the some 5,000 residents of Burgio made their livings primarily in agriculture and artisan products, such as ceramics. Masina and her husband were making preparations for their first child. On the springtime evening of 3 March, just as Masina was returning home from errands and about to reach her front door, mafia killers were preparing to ambush the mayoral candidate Antonio Guarisco, an activist in the Communist Party. A sudden spray of gunfire in via Santi hit Guarisco, as well as Masina Perricone. She was killed immediately. Guarisco suffered wounds to his arm and recovered. Masina Perricone and her surviving family continue to be denied the recognition and rights of innocent victims of the mafia, due largely to bureaucratic errors. Official documents of the Region of Sicily record her murder under Masina Spinelli, her husband's last name, and erroneously report the date of her murder as 16 May 1946, and the place as Favara, linking her case to the murder of Gaetano Guarino. These serious factual errors have produced numerous discrepancies among historical sources that attempt to document the victims of the Italian mafias. Such errors have also prevented Masina Perricone's survivors from receiving the compensation that the Italian State generally provides to innocent victims of the Italian mafias and their surviving family.

Sources: "Esce 'Senza storia', di Bugea e Di Bella" (11 October 2006), Vittimemafia Facebook Page; Alfonso Bugea, Elio Di Bella, *Senza Storia: vite innocenti rubate dalla mafia, uccise dal piombo e dal silenzio*, Turin, Edizioni Concordia, 2006.

GIUDITTA LEVATO

12 NOVEMBER 1946



Historical descriptions of Giuditta highlight her dedication to hard work, strength of character, and courage. Born in 1915, Giuditta was the daughter of a peasant family living in Calabricata, a town in Calabria. Her family made ends meet by working the fields owned by large estate owners, and as a child she grew up dividing her time between field labor and domestic chores. When Giuditta turned 21, she married Pietro Scumaci. While raising their 2 children, Giuditta continued working the fields to put food on her family's table. Pietro was drafted during World War II, and went off to fight at the front. After the 1944 Gullo law assigned a few plots of land to the peasants, Giuditta joined the peasant cooperatives, finally able to have the satisfaction of working her own fields. On 12 November 1946, in one of the first armed conflicts between large estate owners in Calabria and peasant cooperatives, Giuditta was in the fields with fellow peasants during a standoff with the estate owner Pietro Mazza, who had left his oxen to graze in the peasants' fields. One of the men protecting Mazza's interests shot his rifle, and hit Giuditta in the abdomen. She was taken to the hospital where she died, 31 years old and 7 months pregnant. She spoke her last words to senator Poerio, stating, "Tell my husband, my mother, my brothers and my sisters not to cry over me, I want them to fight with me, more than me, to vindicate me . . . I died for them, I died for everyone". Today many streets in Calabrian cities are named in honor of Giuditta, a symbol of female courage and peasant struggle, and a victim of 'ndrangheta, which aligned with large estate owners using violence to protect both groups' interests.

Sources: "Giuditta Levato: il sacrificio di una madre," Stampacritica.org, 30 November 2016; Lina Furfaro, *Giuditta Levato: La contadina di Calabricata*, Cosenza, Falco Editore, 2015; "Giuditta Levato, la contadina calabrese che morì per tutti," briganti.info; "Giuditta e i piagnistei," stopndrangheta.

Documentary *Mille donne, una storia: Giuditta Levato*, by Mimmo Raffa, 2011: <http://www.arcoiris.tv/scheda/it/14458/>.



MARGHERITA
CLESCERI



VINCENZA
LA FATA

1 MAY 1947

Margherita Clesceri and Vincenza La Fata were among the some 2,000 peasants and day laborers who had gathered with their families and friends at Portella della Ginestra in the province of Palermo on 1 May 1947, to celebrate Labor Day, listen to speakers, and enjoy lunch together out in the open air. As the first speaker took the stand, bursts of noise rang through the air and “seemed like fireworks, or firecrackers set off to make the festival more beautiful,” according to Cristina La Rocca, who was a little girl at the time. Instead, the explosive noise was machine gun fire trained on the tightly knit crowd by Salvatore Giuliano and members of his criminal band. In less than two minutes, they killed 11 people and wounded somewhere between 30 and 60 more. Among those who suffered fatal wounds and died during the massacre were Margherita Clesceri, a 37 year-old mother of 6 who was pregnant at the time, and Vincenza La Fata, who had just celebrated her eighth birthday. Vincenza Spina, Eleonora Moschetto, Vita Dorangricchia, and Provvidenza Greco were among the victims who later died from wounds sustained during the attack, known as the Massacre of Portella della Ginestra.

Sources: Giuseppe Casarrubea, *Storia segreta della Sicilia. Dallo sbarco alleato a Portella della Ginestra*, Milan, Bompiani, 2005; Giuseppe Bagni, *Ritorno a Portella della Ginestra*, pdf; sitocomunista.it/italia/archiviostorico/portella.html.

Portella della Ginestra, 1 maggio 1947 - La storia siamo noi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8xVKvZM5To>.

VITA DORANGRICCHIA



31 JANUARY 1948

A young woman of 23 years, Vita lived in Piana degli Albanesi, a town situated on a mountainous plateau in Sicily and known for its enchanting lake. On 1 May 1947, Vita went with her brother to the May day festivities at Portella della Ginestra. When the gunfire broke out during Salvatore Giuliano’s attack, Vita was among the shooting victims. She died from her wounds after 9 months of suffering. Documented as the 12th murder victim of the Massacre of Portella della Ginestra, Vita’s case was investigated by the University of Palermo and Catania in collaboration with the Piana degli Albanesi trade union center (*camera del lavoro*) as part of the project “Portella della Ginestra – La memoria e il lutto”.

Sources: “Corleone, campi di lavoro antimafia. Al mattino lavoro, poi a vedere Portella,” cittanuove – corleone.net, 15 June 2014; “Vita Dorangricchia,” amicidilibera.blogspot.com.



PROVVIDENZA GRECO

1951

Provvidenza was among the many women, children, and men killed or critically wounded during the Massacre of Portella della Ginestra 1 May 1947. She suffered a severe gunshot wound that left a bullet lodged in her head, causing the loss of her sight and ability to speak. Provvidenza ultimately died 4 years later from lesions that resulted from her wounds.

Sources: "1 maggio 1947 La Strage di Portella della Ginestra (Palermo). 11 morti," vittimemafia.it; Umberto Santino, "La Strage di Portella della Ginestra," www.sitocomunista.it/italia/archivistorico/portella.html.


DOMENICA ZUCCO

3 OCTOBER 1951

Domenica lived with her family in the small town of San Martino di Taurianova, near Reggio Calabria. In the early autumn evening of 3 October, 3 year-old Domenica and her sister Maria waited for their father to return home from the fields, where he worked as a day laborer. After dinner, while Domenica and Maria each sat beside their father just outside their home's front door, Vittorio Fedele walked up and fired his rifle, seriously wounding both little girls. Domenica was shot in the abdomen, and died 24 days later. Maria survived. The ambush was intended as a vendetta against Domenica's father, Domenico Zucco, who had been involved in the murder of Girolamo Fedele a year earlier.

Sources: Danilo Chirico, Alessio Magro, *Dimenticati. Vittime della 'ndrangheta*, Rome, Castelvechi, 2010; "Domenica Zucco," centroimpastato.com.





ANNA PRESTIGIACOMO

26 JUNE 1959

In the late summer afternoon, Anna and her 11 year-old sister Rosetta were outside in the yard of their home, located in the San Lorenzo suburb of Palermo. While they played together, they heard a gunshot and Anna collapsed. A bullet had struck Anna, and killed her instantly. She was 15 years old. Her sister recognized the shooter, Michele Cusimano, who apparently killed Anna as a vendetta against her father, Francesco Prestigiacomo, suspected of being a police informant. Thirteen years earlier, Prestigiacomo had convinced Cusimano to turn himself in to the police after being involved in a gunfight. Cusimano was arrested, along with his father, for the murder of Anna, and was ultimately found guilty.

Sources: “26 giugno: La mafia uccide una 15enne e una 18enne,” www.napolitan.it, 26 June 2017; “Anna Prestigiacomo,” Centroimpastato.it.

GIUSEPPINA SAVOCA

19 SEPTEMBER 1959



Giuseppina had just celebrated her twelfth birthday with her family, which lived in Palermo. On 19 September, the little girl happened to be walking down the city street Messina Marina when gunfire broke out as a settling of accounts between criminal clans vying for territorial control over construction. The shooters intended to target Filippo Drago, but Giuseppina was critically wounded by a stray bullet. She died from complications three days later while in the hospital. At the time, the murder of Giuseppina provoked outrage among thousands of citizens of Palermo. More recently, students at the E. Basile high school in Palermo produced an award-winning video titled “Una voce dal silenzio” (A voice from silence, 2004/2005), which tells the story of Giuseppina Savoca and her death.

Sources: “Palermo, il ricordo di Giuseppina Savoca, la bimba uccisa per sbaglio,” <https://palermo.meridionews.it>, 21 September 2013; “Giuseppina Savoca – Gli invisibili,” www.gliinvisibili.it.



MARIA
STILLITANO



NATALINA
STILLITANO

22 DECEMBER 1962

Maria and Natalina lived and worked as seamstresses in Drosi, a small town in the Gioia Tauro plain located in Reggio Calabria. Three days before Christmas they were busy finishing up their work on holiday clothes and preparing the packages to deliver to customers the following day. When they heard a knock at the door of their home, Maria cracked open the front door. She was immediately shot and killed. The killer, named Domenico Maisano and later dubbed the beast of Drosi, burst inside armed to the teeth with a sawed-off shotgun and pistol. He demanded that Natalina tell him where to find her father, Francesco. Terrorized and unable to stop screaming, Natalina couldn't answer. Maisano emptied his pistol into her. He then shot their 15 year-old niece three times in the legs, seriously wounding her. Maria and Natalina, respectively 22 and 21 years old, were killed as part of a vendetta against their father, whom Maisano held responsible for the shooting of his nephew, Martino Seva, confined to a wheel chair as a result of those wounds. Maisano was killed some 7 years later by members of the 'ndrangheta.

Source: Arcangelo Badolati, "Donne uccise dalla 'ndrangheta: l'analisi di Arcangelo Badolati," quicosenza.it.

CONCETTA LEMMMA



11 JANUARY 1964

Concetta Lemma's name appears on numerous sites dedicated to remembering the victims of the Italian mafias, yet little information about her life and family is available. Concetta, a young 16 year-old girl, lived with her family in Feroletto della Chiesa, a town near Reggio Calabria. On 11 January, she was in her home when someone entered and shot her with a sawed-off shotgun. She died on the spot. Concetta's murder was related to a war between 'ndrangheta clans in the 1960s.

Sources: "Cocò e gli altri bambini uccisi dalla 'ndrangheta," espresso.repubblica.it, 12 October 2015; "La testimonianza. Bambini, vittime innocenti," corriereocride.it, 27 September 2015.



CONCETTA IARIA

18 JANUARY 1965

In January of 1965, Concetta lived in Sant'Eufemia d'Aspromonte, raising her 4 children on her own. Her husband, Giuseppe Giofrè, was in prison serving a sentence for killing Antonio Dalmato and Antonio Alvaro some seven months earlier. Late at night on 17 January, Concetta was sound asleep beside her two young daughters, the 5 year-old Maria and the 6 month-old Carmelina. Killers associated with the 'ndrangheta broke down her front door, and burst into her home, awakening Cosimo, her oldest son. Cosimo was immediately shot in the chest and died; his younger brother was wounded. The killers then turned their guns on Concetta, who sustained a gunshot wound to her head and died instantly, at the age of 36. Her two daughters were wounded, but survived. The carabinieri arrested the shooters, who had targeted Concetta as a vendetta for the double homicide committed by her husband. The men charged in her case were acquitted at trial, a fact many interpret as a sign of the power of the 'ndrangheta clan on whose behalf the vendetta was performed. The death of Concetta's husband underscores this point. Upon Giofrè's release from prison in 1972, he moved away from Reggio Calabria to Turin, with his second wife and his three surviving children. He was murdered on 11 July 2004, exactly 40 years after one of the men that he had shot died in the hospital.

Source: Meo Ponte, "Erano stati assolti i sicari della moglie di Giofrè," *La Repubblica*, 14 July 2004.

MARIA ROSA FILLETI

2 NOVEMBER 1966

Maria faced a life of deadly threats and deep loss, as part of the Filleti family that lived in the town of Sinopoli, in the Province of Reggio Calabria. In 1964, warfare broke out between 'ndrangheta clans, pitting the Filleti, De Angelis, and Orfeo families against the Alvaro clan, supported by the Forgione and Violi families. Following the death of her son Antonio, Maria frequently went to the Sinopoli cemetery to mourn at his tomb. On 2 November, while Maria prayed over Antonio's grave, she was attacked and stabbed to death.

Source: Arcangelo Badolati, *Le 'ndranghetiste dell'est. Profili internazionali della mafia calabrese*, Cosenza, Pellegrini Editore, 2017.





MARIA IMMACOLATA **MACRI'**

1 JUNE 1969

Prior to 1968, the elderly Maria lived a relatively quiet life as part of the close-knit village of Mammola, nestled in the hills of Aspromonte. Then, on 14 December 1968, Maria's 54 year-old nephew, Nicodemo Sansalone, murdered Nicodemo Ianizzi, who was just 20 years old. During an altercation, Sansone used his umbrella as a sword and pierced the young man's eye and vital organs, fatally wounding him. The consequences were tragic for Maria, Sansone's aunt. On 1 June, Maria was shot eight times and died at the hands of Maria Teresa Ferraro, the grieving mother of Ianizzi. Upon her arrest, Ferraro confessed that she was driven by the desire "to avenge" the murder of her young son.

Source: Cosimo Sframeli, "La storia. Desiderio di vendetta," *Corriere Locride*, 21 March 2015.



RITA
CACICCA



ROSA
FASSARI



NICOLETTA
MAZZOCCHIO



CONCETTA
LETIZIA
PALUMBO



ADRIANA
MARIA
VASSALLO

22 JULY 1970

Just after 5:00 pm on 22 July 1970, the Freccia del sud train that ran between Palermo and Turin was carrying some 200 passengers, many of them working class commuters. Among the people on board were 35 year-old Rita Cacicca of Bagheria, a teacher who worked with the hearing and speech challenged; Rosa Fassari, 68 and a resident of Catania; Nicoletta Mazzocchio, who was 70 years old and lived in Casteltermini; the 48 year-old seamstress Concetta Letizia Palumbo, also a resident of Casteltermini; and Adriana Maria Vassallo, who was 49, lived in Agrigento, and worked as a teacher. At 5:08 pm, as the train was approaching the Gioia Tauro station, the passengers felt a strong impact under the train, which lurched violently as the sixth carriage derailed, taking another eight cars with it and crushing some of them. Rita, Rosa, Nicoletta, Concetta, and Adriana were killed in what is now referred to as the Freccia del sud Massacre or the Gioia Tauro Massacre, which left 6 people dead and over 70 injured. Although the cause of the tragic derailment was originally attributed to human error, in 1993, the *pentito* Giacomo Ubaldo Lauro, a former member of Antonio Macri's mafia organization who turned state's evidence, confessed to supplying the explosives that caused the derailment. Moreover, he provided valuable information about the collaboration between the 'ndrangheta and terrorist groups of the far right in Calabria, specifically the Comitato d'Azione per Reggio (Reggio Action Committee).

Source: Massimo Parini, "Giacomo Ubaldo Lauro – il pentito della Freccia del Sud," stopndrangheta.it, 24 April 2014.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) ©

Blu notte Gioia Tauro la strage dimenticata: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6314eZ0rNk.



ANNALISE BORTH¹

26 SEPTEMBER 1970

The few sources that provide information about Annalise Borth tell us she was a smart, attractive young woman born in Germany, and a socially committed activist in the anarchist movement of the 1960s. She arrived in Italy in 1969, and lived first in Rome and then in Reggio Calabria, where she married Gianni Aricò on 28 April 1970. Annalise, Gianni, and fellow anarchists, dubbed the “anarchici della baracca” (anarchists of the hovel) for the dilapidated building where they held meetings, compiled a dossier of information that documented the neofascist infiltration of the organizations Ordine Nuovo and Avanguardia Nazionale and, moreover, the collaboration between neofascists and the ‘ndrangheta. Their dossier purportedly demonstrated that the derailment of the Freccia del Sud that killed six passengers on 22 July 1970 near the Gioia Tauro train station was caused by explosives set on the tracks by neofascists working with members of the Calabrian mafia. A little past 11:00 pm, on 26 September 1970, Annalise, Gianni, and three fellow anarchists were traveling on the highway, some twenty-five miles from Rome, where they planned to turn the dossier over to the editors of *Umanità Nova* and go public with it. A fatal car accident, likely staged by the very organizations the dossier accused, immediately killed the young Angelo Casile, Franco Scordo, and Luigi Lo Celso. Gianni died soon thereafter. Annalise, 18 years old and 2 months pregnant, went into a deep coma. She died 21 days later in San Giovanni Hospital in Rome. The dossier disappeared, and has never been recovered.

Sources: Arcangelo Badolati, *‘Ndrangheta eversiva*, Cosenza, Klipper Edizioni, 2007; Carlo Lucarelli, *Misteri d’Italia: i casi Blu Notte*, Torino, Giulio Einaudi, 2002; Giovanni Maria Bellu, “Cinque anarchici morti e una strage. Scoprirono la verità, li uccisero,” *La repubblica*, 10 April 2001.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](#)

¹ The spelling of Borth’s first name varies in the historical sources, appearing as Annalise in some of them, and Annelise in others.

FRANCESCA BARDO

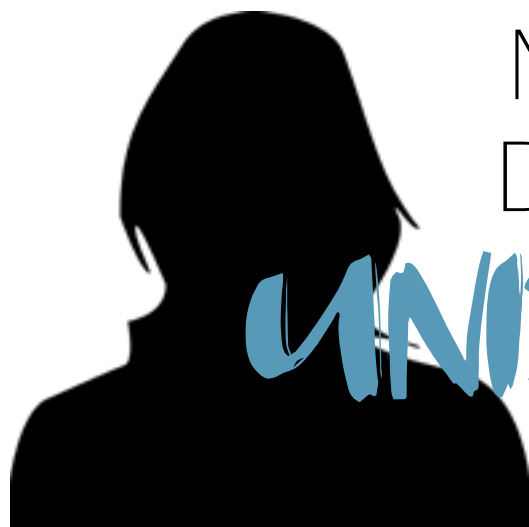
26 JANUARY 1973



Francesca Bardo was already a widow at forty years of age, not uncommon in the town of Seminara during the 1970s, when mafia violence between warring ‘ndrangheta clans intensified. Her husband, clan boss Rocco Pellegrino, was among the first murder victims of the feud between the Pellegrino and Giofrè families that left 16 dead and some 26 wounded. On the one-year anniversary of her husband’s death, Francesca went to church to attend a mass for his soul. Afterward, as Francesca walked to the church’s nursery school to gather up her 4 small children, she was riddled with gun shots and died instantly.

Source: Arcangelo Badolati, *Mamma ‘ndrangheta. La storia delle cosche cosentine dalla fantomatica Garduña alle stragi moderne*, Cosenza, Pellegrini Editore, 2014.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](#)



MOTHER & DAUGHTER

UNIDENTIFIED

JUNE 1973

Though the traces of the lives and deaths of these two victims of Cosa Nostra, a mother and her daughter, are documented, their names have yet to be identified by witnesses for justice or *pentiti*. While living in Milan, the mother had an intimate relationship with Damiano Caruso, a member of Cosa Nostra who was the trusted killer for the boss Giuseppe di Cristina. She had a young daughter, who was reportedly between 14 to 16 years old. Luciano Liggio, an infamous member of Cosa Nostra who was responsible for numerous murders, had Damiano killed, as a vendetta for shooting a mafioso close to Liggio. According to both John Follain and Pino Arlacchi, when Liggio was living in Milan, he lured both the mother and daughter to a secret location and killed the mother on the pretext that she knew a lot of secrets about Cosa Nostra's business dealings and assassinations. He then raped and strangled her young daughter. It is worthy of noting that the killing of the mother and daughter are also referenced in the interview given by Judge Paolo Borsellino to Fabrizio Calvi, shortly before the judge was killed in the Via D'Amelio Massacre. As Borsellino recalls, "Liggio committed the murder of two women, one was raped and killed, a 14 or 15 year-old girl, was raped and killed".

Sources: "16 maggio: nel 1974 viene arrestato a Milano Luciano Liggio, la primula rossa di Corleone," www.altolazionotizie.it, 16 May 2018; John Follain, *Gli ultimi boss. Ascesa e caduta della più importante famiglia mafiosa*, Milan, Mondadori, 2011; Pino Arlacchi, *Gli uomini del disonore*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2010; Fabrizio Calvi interview of Paolo Borsellino, "Mandanti occulti: Borsellino e le verità nascoste," *Antimafia Duemila*, 30 December 2009; Renate Siebert, *Secrets of Life and Death: Women and the Mafia*, London, Verso, 1996.

MARIA GIOVANNA ELIA

26 JULY 1973



For 67 year-old Maria, the sweltering summer air of July was unbearable inside her home, located in the Fondo Gesù area of Calabria. Seeking relief, Maria went out on her balcony. Just at that instant, a gunfight broke out in the streets below between 'ndrangheta members of the Vrenna and Feudale families. Maria was hit by a stray bullet and killed.

Source: Nicola Gratteri and Antonio Nicaso, *Fratelli di sangue. Storie, boss e affari della 'ndrangheta, la mafia più potente del mondo*, Milan, Mondadori, 2010.



MARIA TERESA
TEDESCO

2 JANUARY 1974

Maria Teresa's family, aligned with the Gallace family, was pitted against the Randazzo clan and their allies in a deadly feud that divided the townspeople of Guardavalle, in the Province of Catanzaro, for some 20 years, and reached a peak in 1974. On the morning of 2 January, 46 year-old Maria Teresa was inside her home when Nunziato Randazzo burst in with a shotgun and shot her point blank, killing her instantly. Nunziato, later dubbed the "solitary avenger," murdered Maria Teresa in a chain of shootings that he carried out as a vendetta for the killing of his 2 brothers Luigi and Domenico on New Year's Day 1974.

Sources: Danilo Chirico, Alessio Magro, *Dimenticati. Cittadini innocenti uccisi dalla 'ndrangheta e sepolti dall'indifferenza dello stato*, Rome, Castelvecchi, 2012; "Faida in Calabria: cinque morti – L'avanti," avanti.senato.it, 3 January 1974.

ANGELA ROSA
DANIELE

1 MARCH 1974

Widowed 6 years earlier when her husband was killed, 67 year-old Angela was virtually alone to face the threats against her life during the deadly clan warfare between her family and the Randazzo's in Guardavalle, a small town near Catanzaro. Two of her sons were in prison, and many of her relatives had been killed or critically wounded. Fearful for her life, she escaped to Turin to live with relatives. They soon felt under threat by Anna's presence in their home, and sent her back to Guardavalle. Anna began working in her fruit and vegetable store again. On 1 March, Randazzo caught up with her there, and shot her at close range with his rifle. She died on the spot. Following her murder, townspeople voiced hostility toward the elderly woman, declaring she "had a big mouth" and told everyone "her sons and husband were killed by the mafia".

Source: Franco Martelli, "S'allarga il cerchio della faida," *L'Unità*, 2 March 1974, p. 5.





ANGELA CARROZZA

6 JANUARY 1975

Angela Carrozza lived with her husband Salvatore and family in the village of San Martino of Taurianova, situated in the heart of the Gioia Tauro Plain. On 6 January, Angela and Salvatore were walking across the main piazza, decorated with holiday lights left up to celebrate the Epiphany. Gunfire broke out as 'ndrangheta killers tried to ambush the boss of San Martino, Giuseppe (Peppe) Zappia. In the hail of bullets, Angela was critically wounded. She died the next morning in the hospital, at 36 years of age. Her husband, Salvatore Carrozza was wounded. Zappia escaped with a wound, but his 33 year-old son Vincenzo was killed. The attack that killed Angela was part of the first 'ndrangheta war from 1974-1977, which left over 230 people dead.

Source: Danilo Chirico, Alessio Magro, *Dimenticati. Cittadini innocenti uccisi dalla 'ndrangheta e sepolti dall'indifferenza dello stato*, Rome, Castelvecchi, 2012.

CRISTINA MAZZOTTI

26 JUNE 1975



Smart, outgoing, with long light brown hair, Cristina lived in Eupilio, a town in the Province of Como, some 20 miles north of Milan. The evening of 26 June 1975, she was with friends, returning home from a party to celebrate their high school graduation when two cars suddenly blocked the road. An armed man asked which one of the young people was Cristina Mazzotti, and she immediately identified herself, offering no resistance as she was forced to get into one of the other cars. Cristina lived the final days of her life in a damp, two-by-two meter hole dug into the ground, while the 'ndrangheta kidnappers negotiated the ransom with her father, the wealthy grain trader Helios Mazzotti. At the end of July 1975, he paid one million fifty thousand lire, but 18 year-old Cristina was not released. On 1 September 1975, her body was found by chance, dumped amidst the garbage in the environs of the city Varese. The revelations of the *pentito* Antonio Zagari led to the arrest of the 'ndrangheta boss Domenico Loiacono. Later arrested were the powerful Antonio Giacobbe of Lamezia Terme, and the head of the kidnapping squad, Giuliano Angelini.

The play *5 centimetri di aria*, written by Paolo Ornati and directed by Marco Rampoldi, tells the story of Cristina and fellow children kidnapped during the wave of 'ndrangheta kidnappings in the 1970s. For insightful interviews with Rampoldi and actors, see YouTube, *5 centimetri D'aria – Osservatorio sul Presente*, Piccolo Teatro di Milano.

Sources: Raffaello Binelli, "Quaranta anni fa il sequestro di Cristina Mazzotti," *Il giornale*, 21 June 2015; Alvin Shuster, "Italians' Apathy over Kidnappings Is Shaken by Girl's Murder," *The New York Times*, 12 September 1975.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it

5 centimetri d'aria - Osservatorio sul presente: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvCXaoxHSfg>.



GIUSEPPINA UTANO

12 DECEMBER 1975

Giuseppina, Pinuccia to her family, had just turned 3 years old, and was soon to be a big sister. Her mother, 20 year-old Domenica Pangallo, was 6 months pregnant with her second child. Giuseppina's father, 25 year-old Sebastiano Utano, had a record for thefts and was known to have worked as the driver and body guard for Domenico "don Mico" Tripodo, the 'ndrangheta boss of San Giovanni di Sambatello. More recently, however, Sebastiano had worked as a brick layer in Sarzana, and then, after moving his family to Reggio Calabria, was gainfully employed by his father-in-law Sebastiano Pangallo. On the afternoon of 12 December, Giuseppina and her mother went to pick up her father at the hospital where he had completed some tests, and then spent the afternoon all together at a friend's home in Scilla. Driving home in the evening, as they approached the city limits of Sambatello, the road was blocked by a car. When the Utano family slowed down, 3 men armed with rifles and handguns riddled the Utano's vehicle with bullets. The killers aimed at the driver's seat, thinking Sebastiano Utano was at the wheel. Instead, Giuseppina's mother was driving. Though critically wounded, Domenica managed to escape, and drove to the home of a friend, who took them all to the hospital. Giuseppina had been shot in the head and was already dead. The hit squad intended to kill Giuseppina's father as a message for Domenico Tripodo, whom emergent clans wanted to supplant, in order to take over his territory.

Sources: "Giuseppina Utano," www.memoriaeimpegno.it/event/giuseppina-utano-bambina/; Memoria e impegno per Reggio Calabria, www.memoriaeimpegno.blogspot.com/2014/12/giuseppina-utano.html

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from memoriaeimpegno.blogspot.com.

CATERINA LIBERTI

22 MARCH 1976



Caterina worked in agriculture on her farm near Motticella, a Calabrian village near the town of Bruzzano Zeffirio, where she lived with her daughter. When several goats were stolen from her farm, she attempted to recover them on her own, to no avail. She then reported the theft to the police. On 19 March 1976, as Caterina was returning home with her mother, she was shot in broad daylight in the main town square of Motticella, likely because she broke omertà, the mafia law of silence. She died three days later in the Tiberio Evoli hospital, where she had been admitted for multiple gunshot wounds. Cristina was 36 years old, and survived by her 14 year-old daughter.

Source: "Caterina Liberti," memoriaeimpegno.blogspot.com/2014/12/caterina-liberti.html.



CARMELA
MILAZZI



ANNALISA
ANGOTTI

10 AUGUST 1976

Carmela and her husband Ugo Angotti rented a small house a few steps from the seashore in the Sicilian town of Siculiana, so their children could enjoy a brief summer vacation playing on the beach. Carmela, 36 years old, was a homemaker, and Ugo worked for the city and earned a modest salary. At around 2:00 am on 10 August, the family was awoken from a sound sleep by a tremendous explosion and flames that were engulfing the house. In fact, a bomb placed under a car parked on the street in front of their house had been detonated. Ugo managed to get Francesca (16 years old), Raffaella (13 years old), and Renato (9 years old) through a wall of fire at the home's entrance and out to safety. Carmela tried to rescue the youngest of her 4 children, Annalisa, just 4 years old. Annalisa's bed was on fire, and she was virtually burning alive. Annalisa was taken to the hospital in Caltanissetta, and then transferred to intensive care in a Palermo hospital, where she died from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degree burns covering her body. Carmela suffered 6 days of agonizing pain from her own burns, and then died as well. As investigators discovered, the bomb was likely intended to kill 45 year-old Francesco Frenda as a vendetta. The bomb was positioned under the car belonging to Frenda, who had returned home from Germany two days earlier.

Sources: "Auto minata scoppia: Bimba bruciata viva," *L'Unità*, 12 August 1976; "Carmela Milazzi e Annalisa Angotti," vittimemafia.it.

Photo courtesy of ANSA.it, drawn from iptc.org.

MARIANGELA PASSIATORE



28 AUGUST 1977

Mariangela was spending the final days of a summer vacation with her husband, Sergio Paoletti, the founder of Lp Italiana in Milan, in the seaside town of Brancaleone, in Reggio Calabria. At around 10:30 pm, on 28 August 1977, the couple was finishing up a dinner with two friends when five masked men armed with guns burst into the villa where the Paoletti's were staying. They gathered everyone's jewelry and cash, and then forced Mariangela into their car. The kidnapers initially demanded a 150 million lire ransom, but subsequently cut off direct communications. One year after the kidnapping, as the case languished in silence, Sergio Paoletti offered a 30 million lire reward for information about Mariangela, but no one broke their silence. Mariangela Passiatore's case was recently reopened, due to new evidence discovered during electronic surveillance that recorded a conversation between the 'ndrangheta boss Michele Grillo and his friend Luciano Scarinci, on 22 April 2012. Grillo was part of the squad that kidnapped Mariangela and, as he explained, they had prepared to hide her in a hole they had dug in the ground, and then move her from one location to another. Soon after they kidnapped her, Grillo went to buy medicine to treat her ulcer and anxiety. Upon his return to the hideout, he found the other kidnapers raping Mariangela, and then, in his words, "they beat her around the head, clubbing her to death."

Source: Cesare Giuzzi, "La verità sul sequestro Passiatore 'L'hanno violentata e poi uccisa'," Milano.corriere.it, 3 August 2015.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) ©



MARIA ROSA BELLOCCO

1 SEPTEMBER 1977¹

Maria Rosa was born and raised in the Bellocco clan, a powerful 'ndrangheta family that divided rule over the Rosarno territory with the Pesce clan. She was suspected of having an extramarital relationship, an act often punished by death according to customary criminal rules governing 'ndrangheta clans. In fact, the Bellocco family ordered Maria Rosa's husband, Mario Alessio Conte, to kill her. He refused. During the night of 1 September 1977, at least two killers entered Maria Rosa's home, armed with guns and knives. Maria Rosa died immediately from knife and bullet wounds, along with her husband and 9 year-old son. Maria Rosa's father, brothers, and cousins had all played a role in the massacre. However, only her brother, Antonio Bellocco, was found guilty at the time. Information later provided by the *pentito* Pino Scriva landed her cousins Giuseppe, Umberto and Carmelo Bellocco in jail too.

Source: Arcangelo Badolati, *Mamma 'ndrangheta. La storia delle cosche cosentine dalla fantomatica Garduña alle stragi moderne*, Cosenza, Pellegrini, 2014; Mario Casaburi, *Borghesia mafiosa: la 'ndrangheta dalle origini ai giorni nostri*, Bari, Edizioni Dedalo, 2010.

¹ Mario Casaburi reports this case under the name Teresa Bellocco and dates the murders in summer of 1976, in his book *Borghesia mafiosa: la 'ndrangheta dalle origini ai giorni nostri*, Bari, Edizioni Dedalo, 2010.



GIACOMA GAMBINO

22 MAY 1978

Giacoma Gambino fully shared in the everyday life, travels, and dealings of her husband Giuseppe Sirchia, the second in command for Michele Cavataio, the Cosa Nostra boss of Acquisanta in the 1960s. Well aware his life was in danger, Sirchia moved with Giacoma to the Veneto region for a time. According to people who knew him there, he asked for a job in a factory, and began working on the assembly line every day, spending his evenings with Giacoma. When they moved back to Palermo, Giuseppe frequently had Giacoma accompany him around the city, because he thought the other mafiosi would not kill a woman. On 22 May 1978, Giacoma was in fact accompanying her husband to the Ucciardone prison in Palermo, where he was serving a sentence on custodial day release. She was seated in the back seat of their car, with her daughter Maria Filippa in the driver's seat, and Giuseppe beside her. At around 8:30 pm, as soon as the car stopped in front of the prison, a shooter fired a hail of bullets at the back door of the car. Giacoma suffered multiple gun shot wounds, along with her husband. She died instantly. According to depositions given by Tommaso Buscetta to Giovanni Falcone, "Giuseppe Sirchia, right hand man of Michele Cavataio, had to be killed because he was an accomplice to so many misdeeds committed by Cavataio, in particular, the murder of Bernardo Diana, who was killed by Sirchia."

Source: Monica Zornetta, *A casa nostra. Cinquant'anni di mafia e criminalità in Veneto*, Milan, Baldini & Castoldi, 2014.



GILDA PASSERINI

18 JANUARY 1980

Only a few scattered words are dedicated to the life and death of Gilda Passerini. At 45 years of age, she shared an intimate relationship with Cosa Nostra boss Salvatore Sansone, and lived in Palermo. Purportedly, on 18 January, as Gilda was climbing the stairs to her home, she was shot 3 times in the face. Gilda died instantly.

Sources: Renate Siebert, *Secrets of Life and Death: Women and the Mafia*, London, Verso, 1996, p. 136; *Giornale di Sicilia*, 19 January 1980.

GRAZIELLA DE PALO

2 SEPTEMBER 1980



Graziella's case is deeply embedded in the history of collusion between mafia arms and drug trafficking from the Middle East, political interests, and the Italian secret services. Born in 1956 in Rome, Graziella was the daughter of Vincenzo De Palo, a captain in the carabinieri, and Renata Capotorti, a literature teacher. After pursuing her degree in literature at the University of Sapienza in Rome, at 20 years of age she broke into journalism, her passion. Graziella quickly demonstrated her brilliant abilities as an investigative journalist, and contributed articles to several publications, including *Quotidiano donna*, *L'astrolabio*, and the prestigious *Paese Sera*. Drawing on her expertise in the connections between Italy and the Middle East in arms and drug trafficking, in early August 1980, Graziella began focusing on the problem in Lebanon and, more specifically, the potential links between Lebanon and the Massacre in Bologna, on 2 August 1980. Graziella and her colleague Italo Toni (50 years old) arrived in Beirut on 24 August to begin their research. On 1 September, they went to the Italian Embassy in Beirut, and informed them about their plans to go to south Lebanon, requesting that if they had not returned within 3 days, to search for them. On 2 September, Graziella De Palo and Italo Toni disappeared without a trace. Years later in the course of court proceedings for a related case, the judge ascertained that Graziella and Italo were taken from the hotel Triumph where they were staying by the Habbash militia, interrogated, and killed. The judge requested an indictment of Colonel Stefano Giovannone and General Santovito, the heads of Sismi and the headquarters in Beirut, for aiding and abetting in the crime, which obtained no results. Graziella's family continues to make appeals to Italian State officials to give public access to documents currently blocked as secrets of State. Her brother has painstakingly gathered new evidence and published a thoroughly documented investigation of Graziella and Italo's case.

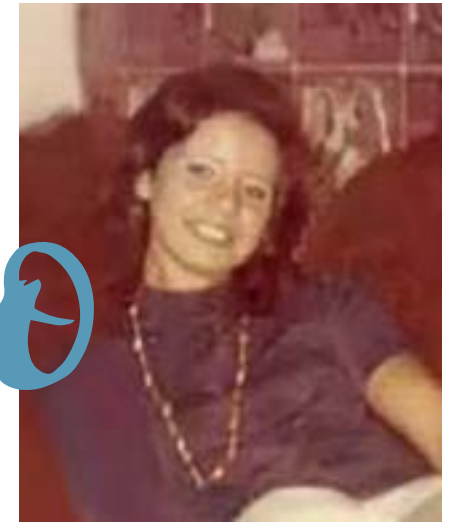
Sources: "La fine di Toni e De Palo non è più un segreto," iltempo.it, 29 August 2014; Nicola De Palo, *Omicidio di Stato – Storia dei giornalisti Graziella De Palo e Italo Toni*,

Rome, Armando Curcio Editore, 2012; Amadeo Ricucci, documentary *Un mistero di Stato – Il caso Toni-De Palo*, La storia siamo noi, RAI, 2008.

Photo, Giancarlo De Palo, https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graziella_De_Palo. This photo is usable under [Creative Commons License](#). ©

Documentary Italo Toni e Graziella De Palo - La storia siamo noi: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCI0OW_I23c.

FILOMENA MORLANDO



17 DECEMBER 1980

Born and raised in the historic city center of Giugliano, just north of Naples, Filomena, or Mena, as she was called among family and friends, had a passion for her work as a school teacher and for creating new desserts, which she always made for Sunday dinners with all of her family. During the 1970s, the streets of Giugliano and Naples had become battlefields of open gunfights between camorra clans allied by Raffaele Cutolo in the Nuova camorra organizzata (the NCO, New organized camorra) and those who opposed them, loosely gathered in the Nuova Famiglia (New family), which included the powerful Casalesi clan. From 1978 to 1980, some 700 murders were committed in the Naples area alone. On the evening of 17 December 1980, Mena was taking some laundry to the dry cleaners when she was caught in an ambush targeting Francesco Bidognetti. This future boss of the Casalesi was in hiding in Giugliano and grabbed Mena, using her as a human shield. She was killed on the spot, at 25 years of age. Omertà and attempts to take the investigation off track, by claiming the murder was a crime of passion, essentially buried the truth for nearly 25 years. Due to the work of family and antimafia figures, by 2004 the facts of Mena's case were documented and she was proclaimed an innocent victim of the mafia. In 2011, the Libera center in Giugliano was dedicated in her name.

Source: Giuliana Covella, *Fiore . . . come me. Storie di dieci vite spezzate*, Naples, Spazio Creativo Edizioni, 2013.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from a YouTube video on Filomena Morlando.

In ricordo di Mena Morlando, 20 December 2011: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kg7NrJ2u1nU>.

Intervista a Raffaele Cantone, Mena Morlando, vittima innocente della camorra: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lllbsyWla5U>.



ROSSELLA CASINI

22 FEBRUARY 1981

Born and raised in Florence, Rossella was living with her parents and pursuing a major in Psychology at the University of Florence when she met Francesco Frisina, a young man from Palmi, located in Reggio Calabria. He was majoring in Economics at the University of Siena, and lived in her same building, along with other young men from Palmi. When their relationship became more serious, in the summer of 1979 Rossella and Francesco went to spend their vacation in Palmi. During their stay, Francesco's father, Domenico Frisina, was killed by members of a 'ndrangheta clan. Rossella discovered she was trapped in a war between the Condello and Gallico clans of Palmi, which ultimately claimed 54 lives. She also discovered that Francesco was involved in laundering 'ndrangheta profits. In December of 1979, during an armed clash between rival clans, Francesco was wounded and admitted to a hospital. Subsequently, Rossella contacted the police and revealed everything that she knew about Francesco's family activities to Judge Francesco Fleury, and convinced Francesco to break omertà and provide information to the police as well. However, Francesco's family forced both of them to sign retractions of their statements. Then, on 22 February 1981, the 25 year-old Rossella disappeared from Palmi. Despite the attempts of her father Loredano to obtain news about her whereabouts, no one came forward to break the silence until 1994, when the *pentito* Vincenzo Lo Vecchio provided information about her death. According to his testimony, Rossella was kidnapped by her fiancé's clan, raped, killed, dismembered, and her body thrown into the sea. Among the accused for her murder were Concetta Frisina, Francesco's sister, Francesco, Domenico Gallico, and Pietro Managò.

Sources: Marcello Scaglione and volunteers of the Francesca Morvillo Presidio of Libera, Genoa, "Nomi e storie delle vittime innocenti delle mafie," Pdf; Franca Selvatici, "Cosa successe a Rossella Casini che oggi avrebbe sessant'anni," [Firenze.repubblica.it](http://www.coniane.pontessieve.fi.it/rete-civica/in-ricordo-di-rossella-casini), 21 February 2016.

In ricordo di Rossella Casini: <http://www.coniane.pontessieve.fi.it/rete-civica/in-ricordo-di-rossella-casini>.

GIOVANNA RAGONA

FEBRUARY 1981



Giovanna was 18 years old at the time of her death in Falsomiele, Palermo, a suspected victim of the mafia. She was found stuffed into a closet in her apartment, with a fatal gun shot wound to her head.

Source: Giovanna Ragona, www.bibliotecacentraleregionesiciliana.it/ermy/principalelist.php?



FRANCESCA MOCCIA

12 MARCH 1981

The 48 year-old Francesca and her husband owned a produce store near Piazza Garibaldi in Naples. At about 2:15 pm, Francesca was moving boxes of fresh fruit from the outdoor display into the store. Just then, 4 to 5 men armed with machine guns and pistols fired a hail of bullets. Francesca suffered multiple gunshot wounds and was killed, an innocent bystander in what was a settling of accounts between rival camorra clans. The boss Raffaele Cutolo sent the hit squad to kill *Ciro Mazzeola*, who trafficked in contraband and drugs.

Source: "La camorra uccide due vittime innocenti, *Mariano Mellone* e *Francesca Moccia*," *Napolitan*, 12 march 1981.

ANNUNZIATA PESCE

MARCH 1981

Born into the powerful 'ndrangheta Pesce clan, Annunziata grew up in a family of drug traffickers, extortionists, and killers. When she fell in love with a carabinieri and began an extramarital relationship with him, she broke two unwritten laws of the 'ndrangheta code, punishable by death. In March of 1981, while hiding in Scilla with the carabinieri, Annunziata was kidnapped and disappeared, her name never to be spoken in the family again. The *pentito* *Pino Scirva* provided information about Annunziata's disappearance, but no investigation was initiated. She was declared presumed dead by the courts in 1999, and largely forgotten until 2010, when *Giuseppina Pesce* became a witness for justice. According to her testimony, the 'ndrangheta boss *Giuseppe (Peppe) Pesce*, Annunziata's uncle, ordered her murder, which was carried out by 57 year-old *Antonino Pesce* and 47 year-old *Antonio Pesce*, her brother. After the kidnapping, Annunziata was blindfolded, driven to the countryside, and shot in the head.

Sources: *Milka Kahn, Anne Véron, Women of Honor. Madonnas, Godmothers and Informers in the Italian Mafia*, London, Hurst & Company, 2017; *Giuseppe Baldessarro*, "Annunziata, 'giustiziata' dal fratello per quell'amore con un carabinieri," [LaRepubblica.it](https://www.larepubblica.it), 16 April 2011.





PALMINA MARTINELLI

2 DECEMBER 1981

Palmina faced many economic, physical, and emotional hardships during her short life, growing up in Fasano, a large town of some 40,000 residents, located in the province of Brindisi. Her father was unemployed and her mother largely supported the family of 11 children by working as a cleaner. At 14 years of age, Palmina had to discontinue her education and take care of the Martinelli home and her younger brothers and sisters. She was subjected to repeated acts of emotional and physical violence at the hands of her father and brother-in-law, and dreamed of getting married and leaving her family. However, Enrico Bernardo, the fiancé of her sister Franca, and his step-brother Giovanni Costantino, with whom Palmina fell in love, tried to coerce her to become a prostitute in their prostitution racket. Palmina flatly refused, and attempted to run away from home, but was caught by her father. According to the most recent reconstructions of events that occurred on 11 November 1981, in the afternoon Palmina put on her best dress and a necklace, and left home at 2:30, to go to the Salette church and take part in the catechism in preparation for her confirmation. Along the way she encountered Bruno, a boy her age, and had an argument with him because he had spread a rumor he'd gone to bed with her. At 3:30 pm, Palmina's father and brother-in-law Cesare Ciaccia, the husband of her older sister Tommasina, caught up with her and took her back home, leaving her there alone. At 4:25, Antonio, Palmina's older brother, arrived home and smelled something burning, then heard cries coming from the bathroom. He discovered his young sister in flames, trying to turn the shower on and put them out. But that day there was no water in Fasano. Antonio loaded Palmina in the car and drove her to the emergency room, where she was treated by Doctor Lello Di Bari. Dr. Di Bari stated that Palmina was lucid, and told him, as well as prosecutor Nicola Magrone, everything that had happened to her. According to her official statement, which was recorded and transcribed, Palmina said that Enrico and Giovanni had hurt her, and set her afire with "alcohol and a match". After 20 days of agony, Palmina's heart gave out and she died in intensive care at the Bari Politecnico hospital. Initially, Palmina's death was ruled a

suicide, due to the goodbye message to her mother that Enrico and Giovanni had forced her to write, but which included words at the end written by another hand. Just recently, Giacomina, Palmina's younger sister, filed a request that the case be reopened as a homicide.

Sources: "Palmina, bruciata viva dal papà e il cognato a 14 anni perché non voleva prostituirsi," quotidianopuglia.it, 19 March 2018; "Palmina Martinelli: Bruciata viva non viene creduta. Assolti gli aguzzini," www.avvocatienzafrontiere.it/?p=1981; RAI television series *Chi l'ha visto?*, 15 June 2010; RAI television series *Telefono giallo*, "La tragica morte di Palmina," 13 January 1989.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from chilhavisto.rai.it.

Palmina Martinelli fu bruciata viva, riaperto il caso: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtbxdppG-1s>.

Palmina Martinelli - diario di produzione: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xa-N6ihQUFA>.



INES ZANGARO

1981

Ines Zangaro lived in Falconara Albanese, in Cosenza, and had a daughter who was involved with the local 'ndrangheta boss, Franco Pino. In 1981,¹ Ines and Mario Turco, a younger man with whom she was having a relationship, disappeared, the victims of *lupara bianca*. According to the investigators, Ines's relationship with Turco cast dishonor on the 'ndrangheta boss, especially due to their age difference.

Sources: "L'omicidio di Luigi Palermo e la prima guerra di mafia," lacchite.com, 3 September 2015; Vincenzo Ceruso, Pietro Comito, Bruno De Stefano, *I nuovi boss. Camorra, 'ndrangheta e mafia*, Rome, Newton Compton, 2012.

¹ *Sdisonorate* dates Ines Zangaro's disappearance in 1982. The majority of sources state she disappeared in 1981.



ANNAMARIA ESPPOSITO

7 JANUARY 1982

The 33 year-old Annamaria Esposito owned a café in the town of San Giorgio a Cremano, located on the foothills of Mount Vesuvius. Annamaria worked long hours in her café to support her 2 children. As she sat behind the cash register on 7 January, 2 young men with their faces covered walked in and shot her multiple times. She died shortly after arriving at the hospital. Investigators thought it likely that Annamaria was shot because she may have seen the faces of the men who murdered Giuseppe Vollaro, a camorrista allied with the Nuova Famiglia, two days earlier on 5 January, in the same neighborhood.

Sources: "Brevi storie di vittime innocenti della criminalità: Annamaria Esposito," Fondazione Pol.i.s., 15 January 2015; www.memoriaeimpegno.it.



ROSA VISONE

8 JANUARY 1982

At around 8:30 pm, the streets were full of people in Torre Annunziata, situated on the Gulf of Naples. Walking among the crowds was 16 year-old Rosa. Just as Rosa started to cross the street, gunfire broke out between four camorristi associated with Raffaele Cutolo, armed with shotguns and pistols in a car, and the carabinieri who had stopped their car to check the men's documents. Caught in the fray of people running for cover, Rosa was hit by a stray bullet and instantly killed. The carabiniere Luigi D'Alessio, 41 years old, was also killed, and 3 other people were wounded.

Sources: www.stopviolenzadonne.wordpress.com, Blog delle donne, 2 January 2016; "Rosa Visone," www.isiciliani.it, 1 January 2014.

Photo, Almanacco di Torre Annunziata, tuttotorre.blogspot.com.



SIMONETTA LAMBERTI

29 MAY 1982

The many photographs devoted to the memory of Simonetta Lamberti picture a golden haired, slender 11 year-old girl, with a broad smile and sunny disposition. On the spring day of 29 May, Simonetta was returning home from an outing to the beach with her father, Prosecutor Alfonso Lamberti, who handled numerous cases against the camorra in the 1970s and 1980s. In his own words, he felt "relaxed, happy," as he drove down the road near Cava de' Tirreni, with Simonetta at his side. Then he suddenly heard a loud blast, that seemed like an explosion. As discovered later, a car with 3 camorra killers associated with the New Organized Camorra had pulled up alongside Lamberti's car and fired multiple rounds. Simonetta was struck by a bullet in her head and died instantly. Her father was wounded. The murder of Simonetta remained unsolved for some 30 years. The first break occurred in 2011, when Angelo Moccia indicated the involvement of the camorrista Antonio Pignataro, who became a *pentito* in 2015. He confessed to carrying out the hit with two other men. Enzo Biagi's interview with Simonetta's father and mother, Angela Procaccini, provides invaluable testimony about Simonetta, the trauma of surviving a child's murder, and the family life of judges who prosecute mafia members. On 2 April 1983, the soccer stadium of Cava de' Tirreni was named the "Simonetta Lamberti Stadium," and several piazzas and buildings in the region of Campania bear her name.

Sources: Luca Rinaldi, "34 anni per fare giustizia: chiuso il caso dell'omicidio di Simonetta Lamberti," linkiesta.it, 19 May 2016; "Angela Procaccini madre di Simonetta Lamberti perdono assassini di mia figlia," positanonews.it, 14 March 2013; "L'omicidio di Simonetta Lamberti," YouTube, posted 27 July 2011; "Simonetta Lamberti," YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v+tgC-rmQk8xk>

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from Simonetta Lamberti's Facebook page.

L'omicidio di Simonetta Lamberti, raccontato dal giudice Alfonso Lamberti ad Enzo

Biagi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x710rRDMbms>.

Omicidio di Simonetta Lamberti a Cava De' Tirreni, la sorella: "Chiedo verita' e giustizia":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJchyUT05o>.

PALMIRA GIGLIOTTI



22 JULY 1982

On the hot summer afternoon of 22 July, Palmira was among the women who were outside watching over their children as they played in the streets of the fishing village Le Castella near Crotona. Two men pulled up, got out of their vehicle and began shooting wildly. Palmira, 34 years old and a mother of 5 children, ran into the street to protect them. She was struck by a bullet in her heart, and died instantly, a victim of the 'ndrangheta. The ambush was committed by shooters who intended to kill Luigi Liò, a member of the Liò clan, with whom the Maesano family was at war.

Source: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.



EMANUELA SETTI CARRARO

3 SEPTEMBER 1982

Born in Borgosesia, Piedmont, in 1950, Emanuela earned her diploma as a voluntary Red Cross nurse. She worked for many years in nursing at the Military Hospital of Milan and at the Institute of Surgical Pathologies of the University of Milan. On 10 July 1982, she married General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa, who had been appointed Prefect of Palermo with the scope of combatting the mafia and establishing civil order in the region, which suffered mafia murders almost daily. Emanuela moved to Palermo, serving as Dalla Chiesa's confidant and support. At around 9:00 pm on 3 September 1982, Emanuela picked up her husband from work at the Prefecture of Palermo. As she drove down Via Isidoro Carini, a Cosa Nostra hit squad ambushed them firing rounds from Kalashnikovs, and instantly killing 31 year-old Emanuela and Dalla Chiesa. Domenico Russo, who served as Dalla Chiesa's bodyguard and was following in his car right behind them was critically wounded, and died 12 days later. Based on the investigators' reconstruction of the murders, after the first wave of bullets riddled the victims, one of the killers approached Emanuela and shot her in the head, disfiguring her. Today several streets throughout Italian cities are named in honor of Emanuela Setti Carraro, and a school in Palermo bears her name, the Istituto Comprensivo Statale Emanuela Setti Carraro. She was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for her devoted service in the Italian Red Cross. The 1984 film *One Hundred Days*, directed by Giuseppe Ferrara, tells the story of General Dalla Chiesa's last 100 days in Palermo with Emanuela Setti Carraro.

Sources: Renate Siebert, *Secrets of Life and Death. Women and the Mafia*, London, Verso, 1996; Luigi Castano, *Emanuela Dalla Chiesa Setti Carraro. Una crocerossina secondo il vangelo*, Turin, Editrice Elledici, 1993; Henry Kamm, "Gunmen in Sicily Kill High Italian Police Official," *New York Times*, 4 September 1982.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it.



GRAZIELLA
MAESANO



MARIA
MAESANO

21 SEPTEMBER 1982

Graziella and Maria were 9 years old, and respectively the daughter and niece of Gaetano Maesano. On the evening of 21 September, while the girls were walking with Gaetano down the street in Le Castella, 'ndrangheta killers gunned down Maria, Graziella, and her father.

Sources: Giovanni Tizian, "Cocò e gli altri bimbi uccisi dalla 'ndrangheta," *L'Espresso*, 12 October 2015; Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.



CONCETTINA LABATE

5 OCTOBER 1982

Concettina rebelled against the rigid 'ndrangheta rules of the powerful Labate clan in which she had been raised, in the Gebbione area of Reggio Calabria. In her early thirties, she left the husband who had been chosen for her as an arranged marriage to solidify an alliance between clans, and broke with her family in order to live an independent life. She began working at the Revenue Office and started a relationship with a man of her own choosing. The Labate family used numerous threats in the attempt to force Concettina's return to her husband, but she did not yield, thus sullyng the clan's so-called honor. On the morning of 5 October 1982, while Concettina was driving to work, a killer was waiting for her at a curve in the road, and fired seven shots at her. Three bullets struck Concettina in the head, and she was killed instantly, at 32 years of age. Her murder remained unsolved for some 12 years until 1994, when the *pentiti* Giacomo Lauro and Filippo Barreca disclosed their inside information about the young woman's death. As the first investigators had noted, the Labate family did not carry out a vendetta for Concettina's murder, which raised their suspicions. In fact, they were the ones who ordered her murder, as punishment for her extramarital relationship. Her father, Antonino Labate was arrested in 1994. Also involved were Orazio Assumma, the clan's killer, and Concettina's brothers, Pietro and Santo, fugitives from the law.

Sources: Umberto Ursetta, *Vittime e ribelli: donne di 'ndrangheta da Lea Garofalo a Giuseppina Pesce*, Cosenza, Luigi Pellegrini Editore, 2016; "Lasciò il marito scelto dal clan e la famiglia la fece eliminare," [ricerca.repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 12 January 1994.



GIUSEPPINA LUCCHESE

16 APRIL 1983

Sources report conflicting information about the date of Giuseppina's murder, but agree on many of the other details regarding the killer and the motive. Giuseppina was the sister of the mafia killer Giuseppe Lucchese, boss of Ciaculli in Sicily. She was married to Giuseppe Giuliano, also a member of Cosa Nostra. When Giuseppe began to suspect his sister was having an affair, he told Giuseppina's husband, saying she had to be killed for bringing dishonor on the family. According to the testimony given by the *pentito* Raffaele Favaloro, Giuseppe Giuliano angrily told him, "You don't touch anyone. If you dare touch her, I'll blast off your face." On the day of the murder, Giuseppina, her husband, and their daughter were together at the Alba café, according to the deposition given by Giovanna Galatolo, the daughter of Vincenzo Galatolo, boss of Acquisanta. A man came into the bar and demanded the cash, then shot both Giuseppina and her husband dead. In actuality, the killer was Giuseppina's brother, Giuseppe Lucchese, disguised in a woman's blond wig, who staged the killing as a robbery. He then planted a bag of heroine in her purse, to take the investigation off track. Later, the body of singer Pino Marchese, Giuseppina's presumed lover, was discovered shot, with his genitals placed in his mouth.

Sources: "Lia e le altre. I femminicidi di mafia," [la Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 18 July 2018; Silvia Buffa, "Lia Pipitone, nuove dichiarazioni sulla sua morte. 'Tante donne dei boss morte per la loro libertà'," [Meridionews](https://www.meridionews.it), 24 June 2016; "Arrestato boss mafioso. Fece uccidere la figlia," [la Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 9 January 2003.



ANNUNZIATA GIACOBBE

2 MAY 1983

Annunziata was raised in a 'ndrangheta family operating in Taurianova and aligned with the powerful Piromalli clan based in Gioia Taura, which had extensive illegal activities in the sectors of public works, construction, and the booming port. During the mid-1980s, the Piromalli clan and the Tripodi vied for territorial control, through alliances, arranged marriages and murder. On the afternoon of 2 May 1983, Annunziata, a young 24 year-old woman, had an appointment with someone, but was afraid to go on her own. Her cousin Antonio agreed to accompany her. Antonio was at the wheel of Annunziata's car, with a passenger next to him, whose identity is unknown, when they stopped on a country road. They were ambushed by at least two killers who fired multiple shots into Annunziata's car. Antonio, who was 18 years old, died instantly. Annunziata was critically wounded and dying in the back seat of the car when the killers slit her throat. The third passenger, likely an accomplice, disappeared from the scene. The motive for the murders is still unknown and the case unsolved. The *pentito* Salvatore Marasco, ex-member of the Rosarno clan headed by Giuseppe Pesce, claimed Vincenzo Pesce ordered Annunziata's murder because she was pressuring a young man in the Pesce family to become engaged with her, thus breaking the traditional 'ndrangheta law of female obedience.

Sources: Umberto Ursetta, *Vittime e ribelli: donne di 'ndrangheta da Lea Garofalo a Giuseppina Pesce*, Cosenza, Luigi Pellegrini Editore, 2016; Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.

PATRIZIA SCIFO

18 JUNE 1983



Patrizia grew up in the town of Niscemi in the province of Caltanissetta, and was raised for the most part by her mother Angela. Her father, Vittorio Scifo, left Niscemi in 1969, and soon achieved international fame as the Mago (magician) of Tobruk, dividing his time between Rome and Paris. Patrizia's mother ran a successful café in Niscemi's main piazza. At 17, Patrizia fell in love with Giuseppe Spatola, an affiliated member of the local Cosa Nostra clan that fought to dominate contracts for public works. The young girl ran away with Spatola, who was already married. Spatola asked Patrizia's parents for their consent to his relationship with their daughter, telling them he planned to separate from his wife. Despite the promised separation, Vittorio and Angela opposed Patrizia's involvement with him. Patrizia continued living with Spatola, and in the following months, suffered psychological and physical violence at his hands. Spatola forced her to play Russian roulette with a loaded pistol, and repeatedly beat her. After one such attack, Patrizia filed a police report, but then withdrew it after the birth of their baby girl, Monica. On the evening of 18 June 1983, Patrizia took Monica to her mother's home, and said she would come back to pick her up the next day. Just 19 years old, Patrizia was never seen again. The police held Spatola in custody, as he was the last person to see the young girl alive. He was later released because he had a strong alibi. Both Vittorio and Angela searched for Patrizia, until 18 July 1983, when Vittorio was shot in the face and killed, while sitting in front of their café in Niscemi. As Angela tells us, "When they told me my husband had been murdered, I knew my daughter was dead too." Testimonies given by ex-mafiosi to Italian prosecutors have clarified some of the facts. Patrizia was strangled in her bed by Spatola because she was asking questions and wanted to leave him, and he likely buried her body on one of his many properties. He also ordered the murder of Vittorio, committed by renowned Cosa Nostra killer Giovanni Passaro. On 17 November 2003, the request of Angela, Monica, and Patrizia's sister that Patrizia be declared dead was granted by the Court of Caltagirone. Angela has made public pleas for information about the site where Patrizia's body is hidden so that her family can give

her a proper burial.

Sources: “18 Giugno 1983: A Niscemi scompare Patrizia Scifo, figlia del celebre mago di Tabruk che verrà ucciso un mese dopo,” *Napolitan*, 18 June 2017, www.napolitan.it/2017/6/18/65541/18-giugno-1983-niscemi-scompare-patrizia-scifo-figlia-del-celebre-mago-di-tabruk-che-verra-ucciso-un-mese/; Patrizia Vindigni, “Patrizia Scifo: uccisa a 19 anni dalla mafia,” *Stampacritica.it*, 15 January 2012; Rosario Cauchi, “Niscemi, in manette il killer del ‘mago di Tabruk’,” *liberainformazione.org*, 8 April 2011; RAI television series *Chi l’ha visto?*, 5 October 2009.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from chilhavisto.rai.it.

Mago Tobruk e Patrizia Scifo - 29 febbraio: <http://www.rai.it/dl/RaiTV/programmi/media/ContentItem-4a95e15f-0008-4926-b394-be00f8fcf4e1.html>.

Libera apre un presidio a Enna intitolato a Patrizia Scifo: <http://www.rainews.it/dl/rainews/TGR/media/sic-presidio-Libera-Enna-don-Ciotti-9d7b281b-8fef-4d94-b904-d6aa0d5306ac.html>.

MARIA MAIOLÒ

10 JULY 1983



By all accounts, at seventeen Maria was an extraordinary girl, excited to finish high school and explore the world beyond the isolated mountain town of Fabrizia in Calabria, where she was born and raised. In the early 1980s, Fabrizia had some 3,340 inhabitants, who more or less adhered to traditional gender roles and manners, and arranged marriages were still common. Maria lived with her brother and mother, Rosina Greco. Her father had been a coal worker and died from cancer in 1980. Thus, when Maria was just 15 years old, Rosina arranged a marriage between her daughter and Giuseppe La Rosa, who was a distant relative some 15 years older than Maria, and worked as a bricklayer in Brescia. Rosina pressured Maria to request permission from the courts so that she could be married as a minor, in August 1983. When the school year ended, so did Maria’s freedom to see her friends and acquaintances who lived in neighboring towns, and to make plans for her own future. Promised in marriage, she had to stay inside her home, going out only to do the grocery shopping and was always accompanied by a relative. On 10 July, Maria asserted what little control she had over her life. Taking special care, she dressed in her favorite jeans and a blue top, put on bright nail polish, and combed her curly brown hair. Following failed attempts to slit her wrists with an old kitchen knife, she took her father’s hunting rifle, put the barrel to her stomach and fired. She died at home. As sources note, the sole motive for Maria’s death was to escape a forced marriage.

Source: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.



ROSALIA (LIA) PIPITONE

23 SEPTEMBER 1983

Lia was the daughter of Antonino Pipitone, Cosa Nostra boss of Arenella, and a strong ally of Salvatore Riina and Bernardo Provenzano. Lia tenaciously fought to make her own independent life, free of her father and the mafia, and rebelled against the strict rules imposed on girls in mafia families. According to school friends, Lia was full of ideas and a passion for life. One friend, Cinzia, tells us Lia had “such a beautiful smile, it infected everyone who was around her.” Giorgio recalls how bright she was, “When she was at school she was a volcano of ideas and words, and always had advice for everyone . . . Her enthusiasm, her joy for life infected us all.” At home, however, Lia had no freedoms. Cinzia reports that her friend couldn’t even take a walk in the afternoon, go to play at a friend’s house, or attend a schoolmate’s party. As soon as she turned 18, she ran away with her boyfriend Gero Cordaro, whom she’d met at school, and married him. Upon their return to Palermo, she resumed her studies in art, and lived in a small apartment with her husband. In 1979, Lia had a baby boy, named Alessio. Dressed in jeans, t-shirt and tennis shoes, Lia was a modern, smart woman who asserted her rights, going out on her own and meeting up with other young people, but always under the constant eye of Cosa Nostra men in the city. These common modern behaviors gave rise to rumors that she was having an extramarital affair. Shortly before 6:30 on the evening of 23 September 1983, Lia went into a pharmacy in Arenella to use the public telephone near the entrance. While she was talking on the phone, two men with their faces covered came inside, casually looked at some items, then went to the counter and demanded all the cash at gunpoint. The storeowner complied, but the men lingered, until Lia finished up her phone call and approached the counter. One of the men shot her in the leg, and then yelled, “She recognized me!”, and emptied 4 more shots into her body, killing her on the spot. At the time, investigators concluded Lia’s murder was part of a robbery. Subsequently, based on the testimony provided by *pentiti* collaborating with State prosecutors, the case was reopened. Lia’s father Antonino was suspected of ordering his daughter’s murder, motivated by the “dishonor” her suspected affair and

modern ways cast on the family, according to Cosa Nostra codes of behavior. He was absolved of charges. Ultimately, in July 2018, mafia bosses Vincenzo Galatolo and Antonio Madonia were sentenced for Lia’s murder, which was staged to appear like a robbery. Madonia ordered the killing, and Lia’s father consented. Gero Cordaro and Lia’s son Alessio battled for years to obtain justice for Lia, a 25 year-old woman who had, as they say, fought for her freedom and was killed for it. They recently founded the *Centro antiviolenza Lia Pipitone* (Lia Pipitone Center against Violence), in a building confiscated from the mafia in Monte Pellegrino, a neighborhood with dire social problems.

Sources: “Lia Pipitone, uccisa perché troppo libera,” *Antimafia Duemila*, 23 September 2015; “Uccisa perché disonorò il padre boss’ Riaperta l’inchiesta sul delitto Pipitone,” palermo.repubblica.it, 3 October 2012 ; Alessio Cordaro and Salvo Palazzolo, *Se muoio, sopravvivimi*, Milan, Melampo, 2012.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from Venerdì’ della Repubblica, 28 September 2012.

‘Padre padrino’: la storia di Lia Pipitone: <http://www.rainews.it/dl/rainews/media/Padre-padrino-la-storia-di-Lia-Pipitone-f168a712-e4ae-47b1-9b31-14817137d8cf.html>.

Inaugurato il centro anti-violenza “Lia Pipitone”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JID-qWigxWl>.



RENATA FONTE

31 MARCH 1984

Nearly 35 years after the murder of her mother, Renata Fonte, Viviana recalls how she was “passionate about life and loved the land of her birth.”¹ Renata’s life demonstrates this passion and love through her work as an activist engaged in a variety of civic projects to improve life in the community of Nardò, where she was born in 1951. In 1982, Fonte successfully ran as a candidate in the Italian Republican Party (Partito Repubblicano Italiano) in the administrative city council elections. She served as Assessor of Finances, and then also as Assessor of public education and culture. Among her important achievements was the battle to preserve the regional national park Porto Selvaggio from being parceled and sold to land speculators and urban developers. Located along the coastline of the Salento peninsula, Porto Selvaggio is famous for its pristine waters, rocky cliffs, and wild forest. The land was a prime target for mafia land speculation in the early 1980s, which saw increased crimes committed by the camorra and the founding of the United Sacred Crown (Sacra Corona Unita), the Puglia mafia. Renata Fonte’s public campaign to protect the natural park, as well as her discovery of environmental crimes committed by the mafia, threatened lucrative illegal business dealings between local politicians, financiers, and members of the mafia. After numerous death threats failed to intimidate and silence Renata, late in the evening of 31 March 1984, two killers ambushed her as she was driving home from a city council meeting. She was killed by three gun shot wounds. According to the investigators’ reconstruction of the case, Renata’s fellow politician Antonio Spagnolo asked Mario Cesari to eliminate Fonte; Cesari contacted Pantaleo Sequestro, who enlisted the criminals Marcello My and Giuseppe Durante to commit the murder. Renata Fonte was recognized as a victim of the mafia in 2002, and is known as the first Italian woman politician killed by the mafia. Renata’s two daughters, Viviana and Sabrina, carry on her legacy by sharing their mother’s story and speaking

out about the mafia and legality.

Sources: Donatella Polito, “Mia madre Renata Fonte, la prima donna politica italiana uccisa dalla mafia,” [today.it/donna](https://www.today.it/donna/storie) storie, 8 March 2018; film *Renata Fonte – Una donna contro tutti*, directed by Fabio Mollo, 2017; Ilaria Ferramosca, Gian Marco De Francisco, *Nostra madre Renata Fonte*, Turin, 001 Edizioni, 2013; Flavia Pankiewicz, “Renata Fonte. 30 years since her murder,” [bridgepugliausa.it](https://www.bridgepugliausa.it); “L’omicidio di Renata Fonte – Storia criminale. La Sacra Corona Unita,” [Lastoriasiamonoi.rai.it](https://www.lastoriasiamonoi.rai.it); Flare – Renata Fonte vittima della mafia, @OLE Otranto Legality, YouTube; Carlo Bollino, *La posta in gioco*, Rome, Carmine De Benedettis, 1988; film, *La posta in gioco*, directed by Sergio Nasca, 1988.

Photo courtesy of [vittimemafia.it](https://www.vittimemafia.it), drawn from [trnews.it](https://www.trnews.it).

Ten generation 2014-15: la storia di Renata Fonte: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ce8CoiVzpog>.

Liberi sognatori: Renata Fonte - una donna contro tutti: https://www.mediasetplay.mediaset.it/video/liberisognatori/renata-fonte-una-donna-contro-tutti-quarta-puntata_F308483601000101.

¹ Quoted in Donatella Polito, “Mia madre Renata Fonte, la prima donna politica italiana uccisa dalla mafia,” [today.it/donna](https://www.today.it/donna/storie) storie, 8 March 2018.



ANNA MARIA
BRANDI



ANGELA
CALVANESE
DE SIMONE



ANNA
DE SIMONE



SUSANNA
CAVALLI



LUCIA
CERRATO



LUISELLA
MATARAZZO



VALERIA
MORATELLO



MARIA LUIGIA
MORINI



FEDERICA
TAGUALATELA

23 DECEMBER 1984

On Sunday evening, 23 December, some 700 passengers were traveling on the express train 904 from Naples to Milan, to spend the Christmas holidays with their families or friends. Among the passengers were Angela Calvanese De Simone, a 33 year-old elementary school teacher who lived in Casoria (province of Naples) and her 9 year-old daughter Anna De Simone; Maria Luigia Morini, 45 years old and a neonatal nurse living in Imola; and Lucia Cerrato, 76 years old, retired and a resident of Naples. Anna Maria Brandi, from Riccione, was 26 and finishing up her university degree in modern literature. Luisella Matarazzo, 25, and Valeria Moratello, 22, were close friends and university students from Bologna who had gone to Florence to do some Christmas shopping. The 22 year-old Susanna Cavalli, from Gaiano di Parma, also studied at the university and was engaged to be married. Twelve-year-old Federica Tagliatela of Ischia was traveling with her family, excited to spend Christmas with her relatives living in Milan. Federica's teacher tells us she was "very vivacious, good at sports, and intelligent." She also had a sense of commitment toward society. In Federica's last school essay, dated 14 December 1984, she wrote, "There are some violent young people who resemble

ferocious tigers. But with time and a bit of good will, also on the part of tamers, these people can be taught." Each of these girls and women were killed by the mafia when a bomb placed in the ninth car of their train was detonated by remote control at 7:06 pm, just as the train was going through the Apennine Base Tunnel, in order to achieve the maximum amount of damage. In fact, the explosion eviscerated the car where the bomb was placed. The explosion, shrapnel, and flying shards of glass killed 17 people and seriously injured 267. The apparent motive of what is now called the Massacre of Train 904 or the Christmas Massacre was to create the appearance of a terrorist attack and thereby draw attention away from the investigation of Cosa Nostra, which had intensified after the ex-boss Tommaso Buscetta became a *pentito* and provided inside information about the mafia's structure of power, clans and members, and crimes. In the course of the investigations, the Cosa Nostra boss Giuseppe (Pippo) Calò, his collaborator Guido Cercolo, camorra clan boss Giuseppe Misso and Alfonso Galeota of the Misso clan, and Friedrich Schaudinn of the extreme right were all charged with crimes related to the massacre and ultimately sentenced. Survivors of the massacre continue to make calls for truth and justice, and for the full disclosure of information concerning elements of the crime related to political interests and the Italian State.

Sources: "La strage di Natale (Rapido 904)", [Lastoriasiamonoi.rai.it](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nq2zPLnKPw), YouTube, 19 April 2017; documentary *Rapido 904 La strage di Natale*, directed by Martino Lombezzi, 2016; "Uccidono gli innocenti," *L'Unità*, 27 December 1984; "Quattordici vittime identificate," [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 27 December 1984.

Photo courtesy of [vittimemafia.it](https://www.vittimemafia.it).

Rapido 904. Una strage al buio - Diario civile: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nq2zPLnKPw>.

La strage di Natale (Rapido 904) - La storia siamo noi: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzT_z9z6ajA.



BARBARA RIZZO ASTA

2 APRIL 1985

The morning of 2 April began like any other school-day in the Asta family. Barbara was cajoling her 6 year-old twin boys, Salvatore and Giuseppe, to get dressed and ready for school, and their older sister Margherita, 11 years old, was nervous about getting to class on time. So she ended up catching a ride with her neighbor, as she sometimes did. Shortly past 8:30 am, Barbara was at the wheel of her Volkswagon Scirocco, with Giuseppe and Salvatore in the back seat, driving their normal route to school along the coastline Pizzolungo road in the Province of Trapani. As she neared the curve in the road another car accelerated to pass her. Just as the other vehicle pulled up alongside, a deafening explosion eviscerated the Scirocco and literally ripped Barbara and her sons Salvatore and Giuseppe to shreds. With the intent of killing the prosecutor Carlo Palermo, who was in the car passing Barbara's, members of Cosa Nostra had detonated a roadside car bomb, thinking it would blow up both vehicles. Instead, Barbara's car took the full blast, and was unrecognizable. Carlo Palermo, and the four bodyguards in the two-car escort accompanying him to the Trapani Palace of Justice, sustained serious injuries, but survived. Today at the site of the Massacre of Pizzolungo there is a sculpture on the shoreline dedicated to Barbara and her two sons, which serves as a space of memory and civil consciousness. The top of the sculpture represents a mother with her arms wrapped around two little boys, and the tall base bears the inscription, "Resign yourselves to death, not to injustice. The victims of 2-4-1985 are waiting for the redemption of Sicilians from mafia bondage, Barbara, Giuseppe and Salvatore Asta." Margherita Asta now works as an antimafia activist with Libera and co-authored her testimonial story, titled *Sola con te in un futuro aprile* (Rome, Fandango Libri, 2015).

Sources: Caro Marziano, "La strage di Pizzolungo," 26 June 2017, the first episode of the television series by PIF; "La felicità è una conquista, la testimonianza di Margherita Asta," *Antimafia duemila*, 22 May 2016; Margherita Asta, *Sola con te in un futuro Aprile*, Rome, Fandango Libri, 2015; Rai Storia, Diario Civile, "La strage di Pizzolungo 30 anni

dopo", 2015.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from No Mafie Biella.

La strage di Pizzolungo - Caro Marziano -03-05-2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0xg8PxP9-E>.

Pizzolungo: memorie di una strage - Diario civile: <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2017/03/Pizzolungo-memorie-di-una-strage---Diario-civile-8b2fe10c-b06e-4ab9-b919-aafc9b340445.html>.



ANNUNZIATA
(NUNZIATINA)
FERRARO

1 MAY 1985

On the afternoon of 1 May, 16 year-old Annunziata, known as Nunziatina, was outside helping to plant potatoes on her family's small farm in Mammola, Reggio Calabria. With her were her father Salvatore Ferraro and the farm worker Pasquale Sorbara. A squad of four killers suddenly opened fire on them. In the words of Maria Mercuri Ferraro, Annunziata's mother, "They wanted to kill us all, they kept on shooting, I was near the house and I saw everything, like a film, I saw my husband and my daughter die."¹ According to Pantaleone Sergi, Annunziata's death was particularly horrific, because she "tried to escape from her killers and they shot her in the leg from long range, and then finished her off with a pistol at close range." In addition to Annunziata and Salvatore Ferraro, Pasquale Sorbara was also killed. Investigators presumed the murders were a 'ndrangheta vendetta against Salvatore Ferraro for his likely involvement in the kidnapping of Alfredo Sorbaro (no relation to Pasquale) exactly one year earlier. The Sorbaro brothers were suspected of the killings.

Sources: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012; Pantaleone Sergi, "Agguato nelle campane calabresi assassinati 2 uomini e una ragazza," la Repubblica.it, 3 May 1985.

¹ See Pantaleone Sergi, "Agguato nelle campane calabresi assassinati 2 uomini e una ragazza," la Repubblica.it, 3 May 1985.

MARIA GIUDITTA
MILELLA

25 NOVEMBER 1985



In photographs, Giuditta (Titta) appears to have been a vivacious 17 year old with an infectious smile. On 25 November, shortly after 1:40 pm, Giuditta and fellow students had just gotten out of class at the G. Meli high school in Palermo and were waiting for the bus, on their way home. Screeching tires cut through their chatting voices when one of the police bodyguard cars escorting Judges Paolo Borsellino and Leonardo Guarnotto swerved to miss a car that had cut them off, and then ran into the crowd of students. Biagio Siciliano died at the accident scene, and numerous students sustained critical injuries. Giuditta was taken to the hospital, and died 3 days later. Though Cosa Nostra forces and people complicit with them attempted to exploit the tragic accident and turn public opinion against the antimafia judges, the students of G. Meli high school placed full blame for the deaths and injuries on the mafia and the deadly conditions it created, especially for agents of the law. For an imaginative portrayal of this historic event and its aftermath that gives fictional voice to Giuditta and Biagio's sense of trauma, forgiveness, and unanswered questions, see Piero Melati and Francesco Vitale's *Vivi da morire* (Milan, Bompiani, 2015).

Sources: Piero Melati, Francesco Vitale, *Vivi da morire*, Milan, Bompiani, 2015; Roberto Puglisi, *25 novembre 1985*, Palermo, Pietro Vittorietti, 2005; Maria Giuditta Milella, *Voglia di risposte*, Palermo, Carlo and Francesca Milella, 1987.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from Giovanni Perna of Dedicato alle vittime delle mafie.

Giuditta Milella, 25 November 1985: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaW0vljqCBc>.



GRAZIELLA CAMPAGNA

12 DECEMBER 1985

Born in 1968, Graziella grew up in a large family with six brothers and sisters, in Saponara Superiore, in Sicily. A young girl of 17, she worked as a laundress in the nearby city Villafranca Tirrena, earning some \$125.00 per month to help support her family. One day at work, while she was checking the pockets of a shirt to be washed, she found a small notebook, belonging to one of the regular customers, known as Toni Cannata. As the young girl's brother recalls, "Graziella confided in my mother and told her she'd found Cannata's notebook, she knew he was someone else."¹ In point of fact, Toni Cannata was the alias used by Gerlando Alberti Junior, a member of Cosa Nostra and a fugitive wanted for mafia association and drug trafficking. The evening of 12 December 1985, Graziella finished up at work and, as usual, went to wait for the bus to go home. She never arrived. Her family immediately reported their daughter missing, and began searching for her. Two days later a young doctor discovered her body at Forte Campone, near Villafranca Tirrena. Graziella had been kidnapped and shot at close range by a sawed-off shotgun, suffering wounds to her hand, arm, chest, and head. Her yellow watch had stopped at 9:12 pm, the presumed time of the murder. Her brother, Piero, a carabinieri, identified his sister's body and then began a long battle for the truth and justice in the course of investigations that were systematically undermined. On 17 December 1996, the Rita Atria Antimafia Association of Milazzo and the Committee for Peace and Disarmament of Messina presented the first dossier on the murder of Graziella, titled "Graziella Campagna a 17 anni vittima di mafia" (Graziella Campagna 17 year-old victim of the mafia), which was published as a book in 1997 by the publisher Armando Siciliano Editore. Finally, in 2004, Gerlando Alberti Junior and Giovanni Sutera were found guilty of murdering Graziella Campagna, and at a retrial in 2008 received life sentences.

¹ Piero Campagna in Silvia Fumarola, "'La vita rubata': Così Graziella fu uccisa a diciassette anni," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 4 June 2007.

Sources: Rosaria Brancato, *Con i tuoi occhi. Storia di Graziella Campagna uccisa dalla mafia*, Palermo, Edizioni La Zisa, 2010; film *La vita rubata*, directed by Graziano Diana, 2008; Silvia Fumarola, "'La vita rubata': Così Graziella fu uccisa a diciassette anni," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 4 June 2007.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from [Ammazzatecittutti.org](https://ammazzatecittutti.org).

Piero Campagna: su sua sorella Graziella - Antimafia Special: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xT9m1CnDULg>.

La vita rubata: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wXRYmNy03o>.



DOMENICA DE GIROLAMO

11 FEBRUARY 1986

Born in 1920, in the Calabrian town of Saline di Montebello Jonico, Domenica was hired by the Postal and Telecommunications service when she was in her late twenties. She was assigned to a position as clerk in the Platì office, where she had a successful career, ultimately serving as Director of the Post Office until she retired in 1985. In recognition of her professional achievements, she was awarded the Honor of Knight of the Italian Republic. While working in Platì, Domenica met Francesco Prestia, whom she married in 1951. On the evening of 11 February 1986, Domenica and Francesco were working behind the counter of their tobacco shop when four men wearing hoods over their faces burst in and shot numerous rounds from rifles and hand guns, instantly killing Francesco. Domenica was taken to the Locri hospital, where she soon died from her wounds. Two young men, Rocco Marando and Antonio Barbaro, were arrested for the murder, with the ostensible motive that the couple refused to pay extortion money. However, they were released and the investigation hit a dead end. As noted in the Impronteombre site profile of the case, "It's difficult to conduct the investigation in Platì in the 1980s. It is a small inland city where the presence of the [ndrangheta] clans is among the highest in the Reggio Calabria Ionian area and youth violence converges with organized crime." Domenica, as well as Francesco, a former mayor of Platì, were recognized by fellow citizens for their strong sense of duty and service to the State.

Sources: "Tentata rapina uccisi marito e moglie," la Repubblica.it, 12 February 1986; "Domenica De Girolamo," www.impronteombre.it/public/files/DomenicaDeGirolamostoria.pdf.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from memoriaeimpegno.blogspot.it.

LUCIANA ARCURI

25 FEBRUARY 1986



At 22 years of age, Luciana was married to a member of 'ndrangheta who was serving a prison sentence for a homicide committed during the warfare between the Condello and Gallico clans that claimed some 20 victims from 1977 to 1986. The young woman began a relationship with Ferdinando Fagà, a police officer who was married with two children. In the eyes of 'ndrangheta, Luciana's extramarital affair was an act of dishonor toward the criminal clan and her husband, to be punished by death. On the evening of 25 February, Luciana was with Ferdinando in his car, parked in an isolated spot on the beach in Palmi, Reggio Calabria. They were ambushed by 4 killers who emptied their shotguns and pistols into the car, killing Luciana instantly with one shot to her forehead and another in her chest. Though seriously wounded, Ferdinando managed to start the car and drove a few miles, then crashed into a small villa.

Source: "Palmi, vittime di una faida gli amanti uccisi sulla spiaggia," la Repubblica.it, 27 February 1986.



FORTUNATA PEZZIMENTI

3 MAY 1986

In the town of Bruzzano Zeffirio at the foot of Aspromonte, the Pezzimenti family had a reputation for being honest, with no ties to the 'ndrangheta clans. In fact, 24 year-old Fortunata was studying medicine at the University of Messina. On the morning of 3 May, Fortunata and her brother Pietro, 26 years old and also a medical student, were in their car taking roof tiles up to their family home to make some repairs. While they drove slowly up the narrow road to the village of Motticella, they were trapped in an ambush by killers firing a shotgun loaded with buckshot and handguns. Fortunata was shot in the head and died instantly. Her brother Pietro was able to get out of the car, but as he tried to escape he suffered a fatal wound to the head. As later discovered, Fortunata and Pietro were murdered in a vendetta linked to the Motticella feud that arose between the Mollica and Morabito-Palamara clans, over disputes about the handling of the kidnapping of the pharmacist Concettina Infantino. Fortunata and Pietro's sister, Caterina, had married Gabriele Spadaro, who was implicated in the kidnapping, and murdered in his butcher shop in 1985. This marriage thus drew the Pezzimenti family into the clan's criminal affairs. Some 50 people were murdered during the Motticella feud, from 1985 to 1990.

Source: "Sette omicidi per un sequestro," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 21 February 1987.

NUNZIATA SPINA

8 OCTOBER 1986



Nunziata was born in 1951, and grew up in Sant'Alfio, located in the metropolitan area of Catania. The evening of 8 October, at around 10:00 pm, she was waiting to be treated in the physical therapy ward of the Ganzirri hospital, in Messina. She passed the time chatting with two other patients, 13 year-old Francesco Sgroi and 21 year-old Pietro Bonsignore. Two men burst into the waiting room and started shooting in Bonsignore's direction. One of the bullets hit Nunziata in her left temple and she collapsed. Doctors found a weak pulse, but were unable to save her. She died at 35 years of age. Also killed was Bonsignore, known among criminal elements as Vallanzasca, the intended target in a bid by rival clans to take control of the territory and kill members of a band whose boss was in prison during the Messina maxi-trial that was taking place.

Source: "8 ottobre 1986 Messina. Resta uccisa Nunziata Spina, 35 anni, in un regolamento di conti, mentre era ricoverata in ospedale," *L'Unità*, 10 October 1986.

“È il fratello l’assassinio della donna di Reggio,” la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 23 April 1987.



FRANCESCA FAMILIARI

21 APRIL 1987

Like many children born into families in the 'ndrangheta, Francesca's childhood was marked by violence, mourning, and oppressive clan rules of behavior. In September 1981, when she was 18, her father Vincenzo, who was the boss of Montebello Jonico, was murdered, and her brother Santo disappeared, a victim of *lupara bianca*. Her brother Antonio had been arrested and was in jail. Francesca fled from her family and attempted to make a different life for herself, facing dire economic hardships and threats from her family. Her relationship with Mario Bellingeri,¹ with whom she had two daughters, Santina and Antonella, put Francesca at even greater risk for her family's retribution for breaking clan rules. Bellingeri was part of the Roma community, living in Gioia Tauro. The Roma are a traditionally itinerant ethnic group that originated from the northern Indian subcontinent and are often the targets of prejudice. Upon receiving an order of expulsion from Calabria, due to her criminal record for theft and prostitution, Francesca moved to Lombardy with Mario. Uncertain about being able to support her daughters, Francesca entrusted Santina and Antonella to a religious institute in Reggio Calabria. In April 1987, Francesca and Mario returned to Reggio Calabria to spend time with their young daughters. In broad daylight on 21 April, while the couple were in their car in front of the Reggio train station, a man walked up, shot out the car's tires and then turned his gun on Francesca, shooting her twice at close range. She died on the spot, at 24 years of age. Bellingeri could not identify the killer. Within 24 hours, the police arrested Francesca's younger brother, Stanislao, a 20 year-old truck driver. He confessed immediately, proclaiming that Francesca had dishonored the family and killing her was his responsibility.

Sources: “Calabria una donna è l’ultima vittima dei killer,” la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 22 April 1987;

¹ Mario's last name is reported as Bellingeri in the *Repubblica* article cited in the sources, whereas *Sdisonorate* reports it as *Berlingieri*.



ANNA MARIA LEGATO

18 JULY 1987

Anna Maria was married to Gianni Delfino and lived in Gioia Tauro. On 18 July, she was waiting at the bus stop when she was shot and killed. To this day, investigators have no leads concerning either the motive or suspects.

Source: Arcangelo Badolati, *Le 'ndranghetiste dell'Est. Profili internazionali della mafia calabrese*, Cosenza, Pellegrini Editore, 2017.



LUCIA ANASTASI

11 AUGUST 1987

Available information suggests that Lucia, 55 years old, took full part in the mafia life and dealings of her husband Giuseppe Alleruzzo, the Cosa Nostra boss who dominated drug traffic and extortion in the area of Paternò, a town in the metropolitan area of Catania, and was a strong ally of the Catania boss Nitto Santapaola. Described as a strong, robust woman always dressed in black, Lucia visited her husband in the Catania prison every week, following his arrest in 1986. She was suspected of delivering messages between the boss and members of his clan, a common role played by mafia women. On 9 July 1987, Lucia and Giuseppe's son Santo was brutally murdered, signaling a war brewing between clans for control over the Paternò territory. On Sunday, 9 August, Lucia went to church and had a mass performed for her dead son. On Monday, as always, she went to visit Giuseppe in prison. Then on Tuesday, 11 August, while Lucia was sitting outside in front of her modest home located on the outskirts of Catania, two to three men approached her. They suddenly opened fire with sawed-off shotguns, wounding Lucia multiple times. She died instantly.

Source: "Catania, uccidono la moglie del boss," [la Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 12 August 1987.




LUISA PROVVIDENZA GRIPPI

15 AUGUST 1987¹

Luisa was married to Antonino Lucchese, brother of the infamous Cosa Nostra killer Giuseppe Lucchese. Luisa's husband was arrested in June of 1987, under suspicion of murdering Vice Chief of Police Antonio (Ninni) Cassarà and his bodyguard Roberto Antiochia. On 15 August 1987, Luisa went to visit Antonino in the Ucciardone prison in Palermo, where he was being held for mafia association. Later the same day, she went to a downtown Palermo café, with a little girl. While in the café, a man grabbed Luisa's purse, and then shot her in the head point blank. According to the testimony of the *pentito* Francesco Marino Mannoia, Luisa's murder was staged to appear like a robbery. Her brother-in-law, Giuseppe Lucchese suspected she was unfaithful to her husband and had an affair while he was in prison. He therefore ordered she be killed. It appears that her husband Antonino did not offer any opposition to the murder of Luisa.

Sources: Silvia Buffa, "Lia Pipitone, nuove dichiarazioni sulla sua morte. 'Tante donne dei boss morte per la loro libertà'," Meridionews, 24 June 2016; "Due minuti col coltello alla gola," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 5 August 2004.



GIUSEPPINA STRICAGNOLA

4 MAY 1988

Giuseppina grew up in the town of Cirò, in the province of Crotone, where she married Basilio Cariati, a member of the local 'ndrangheta clan. On 4 May, the 32 year-old Giuseppina was abducted and taken by car to the countryside of Favara. Two killers murdered her with 4 gun shot wounds to the head. Information provided by *pentiti* asserts that Giuseppina was suspected of having an extramarital relationship, and thus punished by death.

Source: Arcangelo Badolati, *Le 'ndranghetiste dell'Est. Profili internazionali della mafia calabrese*, Cosenza, Pellegrini Editore, 2017.

¹ Sources differ on the spelling of Luisa's last name, some recording it as "Gritti" and others as "Grippi." There is similar confusion surrounding the date and year of her murder, which appears as 1983, 1984, and 1987. The information reported here is based on the sources that appear to be most reputable for fact checking.



ROBERTA LANZINO

26 JULY 1988

In July of 1988, 19 year-old Roberta had just finished her first year of studies in Economic and Social Sciences at the University of Calabria. Like many teenagers of the time, she dressed in jeans and t-shirts, wore her dark brown hair long, and rode her moped from Rende, where she lived with her parents, to and from the university. According to her mother Matilde, Roberta was passionate about listening to the radio, folk music, and playing basketball, and had an outgoing, sunny personality. Recalling her daughter, Matilde tells us, “People who knew her know how full of life she was, happy, devoted to her family and friends, joyous and straightforward.”¹ On 26 July 1988, the Lanzino family was busy closing up their home in Rende and gathering everything they needed to spend the rest of the summer at their small house on the seashore in the Torremare di Falconara area, as they did every year. While her parents took care of the last-minute details, Roberta left for the beach house ahead of them, riding her blue moped, and planned to meet them there shortly. Worried about riding her slow motorbike on the highway, she took a shortcut on the older road, called the Falconara by locals. Roberta was unfamiliar with this route and asked several people for directions, including farmers, some truck drivers, and perhaps two men aboard a light brown Fiat 131, which pulled up alongside her on the road. When Matilde and her husband Franco arrived at the beach house, there was no sign of Roberta to be found. Immediately worried, Matilde and Franco began to search for their daughter, contacting hospitals and the police, for fear she had been in an accident. Their desperate search continued through the night until just after midnight, when Roberta’s blue moped was discovered in the Falconara Albanese mountains, with her badly beaten and raped body cast into the bushes a few yards away. The young girl’s body tells the story of what must have

been a vicious fight for her life, with her jeans ripped off, the shoulder pads to her own jacket stuffed into her mouth, which suffocated her, multiple defense wounds, and knife wounds to her throat. The investigation into the rape and murder of Roberta Lanzino has been riddled with errors, such as the mishandling of evidence from the crime scene and even destroying some of it, and multiple attempts to steer investigators on the wrong track. Furthermore, the 'ndrangheta law of silence has prevented some witnesses from reporting the information they possess about Roberta’s murder and at least 4 other murders linked to it: Luigi Carbone, associated with 'ndrangheta clans, disappeared in November 1989, a presumed victim of *lupara bianca*; Rosaria Genovese, strangled to death in 1990 because she was privy to the facts surrounding Roberta’s murder; the murders of Alfredo Sansone, and the herdsmen Libero Sansone and Pietro Calabria, whose bodies were discovered in March, 1989. Today, the truth and justice have never been delivered to Roberta Lanzino’s family. Despite this and the horrific facts of her death, Matilde says that the memory left by Roberta “Is just like her, full of joy.” In order to keep Roberta’s memory alive and also combat violence against women, the Roberta Lanzino Foundation and Center was founded.

Sources: Anna Foti, Roberto Moliterni, www.donnamoderna.com/news/italia/storia-di-un-omicidio-roberta-lanzino; Celeste Costantino, Marina Comandini, *Roberta Lanzino, ragazza*, Rome, Round Robin Editrice, 2012; “Roberta Lanzino. Il ricordo gioioso dei suoi cari,” 28 November 2009, terrelibere.org/3896-roberta-lanzino-il-ricordo-gioioso-dei-suoi-cari/; Carlo Lucarelli, “L’ultimo viaggio di Roberta Lanzino,” episode in the Blu notte television series, 2000.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from dazebaonews.it.

Blu notte Roberta Lanzino Falconara Albanese: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMXCS4bduW0>.

Roberta Lanzino, Ragazza - Book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laXK6-G47Y4>.

¹ See Anna Foti, “Roberta Lanzino. Il ricordo gioioso dei suoi cari,” 28 November 2009, terrelibere.org/3896-roberta-lanzino-il-ricordo-gioioso-dei-suoi-cari/



GRAZIA SCIMÉ

12 SEPTEMBER 1988

Grazia was a 56 year-old home-maker who lived in Gela, Sicily, during the late 1980s, when the city streets resembled war zones, due to gun fights between members of Cosa Nostra and Stidda. On the autumn morning of 12 September, Grazia went to do some grocery shopping at the open market in what was then Piazza Salandra, now called Piazza Sant'Agostino. While Grazia and other neighborhood women were choosing some fruit to buy from the vendor Giuseppe Nicastro, 2 Cosa Nostra killers opened fire in the crowded market, targeting the fruit vendor, who was affiliated with Stidda. Grazia was shot and died from her wounds after being transported to the hospital. Three other women were wounded: Concetta Iudice (40), Saveria Catalano (50), and Antonella Guala (23). They survived. Two months after the massacre, Gela students organized a march to remember the victims and placed a large plaque in Piazza Sant'Agostino, dedicating it to Grazia Scimé. It read: "Gela mourns innocent victims. In memory of Grazia Scimé. 11-2-1932 to 12-9-1988. Signed, A Gela citizen".

Sources: "Spari tra la folla, ferite 4 donne," La Repubblica.it, 13 September 1988; "Grazia Scimé," vittimemafia.it

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it.

FRANCESCA CITARDA

28 SEPTEMBER 1988



The daughter of a boss of the Cruillas clan in Sicily, at 40 years of age Francesca had 3 daughters with her husband Giovanni Bontade. Giovanni was a lawyer and the youngest of the Bontade mafia family, which had ruled a part of Palermo for some 50 years. At 10:00 am on 28 September 1988, Francesca and Giovanni were at home having a late breakfast in their villa in Villagrazia, a hamlet of Palermo with rich lemon groves, separated by low rock walls. Giovanni had served 6 years of his prison sentence at the Ucciardone prison, but was granted house arrest due to health problems. Their 3 daughters were at school. When someone rang at the gate to the estate, Giovanni checked the video surveillance, and let them onto the property. The men entered the home and went into the kitchen. While Francesca sat on a chair, she was shot 2 times at close range, and died on the spot. Giovanni was also killed, with 2 shots to the nape of the neck. Their bodies were discovered by Francesca's sister Rosa around 11:00 am.

Source: "Un abbraccio, un caffè, poi LE P38," la Repubblica.it, 29 September 1988.

Photo, pulcinella291, forumfree.it.



LUCIA MONTAGNA

12 NOVEMBER 1988

Raised in Melfi, located in the Basilicata region, 14 year-old Lucia showed great promise and strength to overcome the economic and social adversities faced by her family. She excelled as a student at the Bernardi Middle School, and shouldered the care of her younger siblings. Her father eked out a living working only on and off in city waste management due to his health problems. The family lived in an abandoned, tumbledown hospital that poor families had made into makeshift homes. On Saturday afternoon, 12 November, Lucia made lunch for the children, who then went outside to play. While cleaning up the kitchen alone in her home, Lucia heard someone knocking on the door and opened it. She was then brutally attacked by three women of the Russo family who were armed with knives: Filomena, 23 years old; Maria Altomare, 28 years old; and Rosa Russo, 21 years old. Lucia was discovered by her sister-in-law Florinda, dead in a pool of blood on the kitchen floor, with over eleven knife wounds. The police investigation concluded that Lucia was killed as a vendetta for the murder of the women's brother Santo Russo, committed by Angelo Montagna, Lucia's brother. The killing of Santo Russo and then Lucia Montagna derived from criminal codes of behavior and relations between certain gypsy families and the Basilischi criminal organization. The Basilischi crime association originated with a family belonging to the 'ndrangheta of Calabria, which aided and protected it, and then became autonomous in the early 1990s. It was officially recognized as a mafia type organization operating in Basilicata on 21 December 2007, in a prison sentence delivered by the Court of Potenza.

Source: "Uccisa per vendetta da tre sorelle," la Repubblica.it, 15 November 1988.

MARIA STELLA CALLÀ¹

14 NOVEMBER 1988



Separated from her husband, Maria Stella lived alone with her 14 year-old son Giovanni in the coastal town Bovalino in the Crotona province. The 38 year-old woman worked in the administration department of the Locri prison, where she had no contact with the prisoners. On the evening of 14 November, she was at home with her son when someone rang the buzzer for the building's main entrance. Maria Stella let the person in, and went out onto the landing. After a brief conversation, a gun shot rang through the quiet building, and Giovanni ran to the door and discovered his mother's dead body. Maria Stella had been shot between the eyes, and died instantly. Initially the police were puzzled by Maria Stella's murder, along with an earlier act of aggression. In June of 1988, her car had been set on fire. Ultimately, a young man from the town of Africo Nuovo was charged with her murder. He had met Maria Stella while serving a sentence in the Locri prison, and harbored romantic feelings for her. She rebuffed his advances, and he killed her for it.

Sources: www.napolitan.it/2017/11/14/70399/maria-stella-calla; "Assassinata dentro casa," la Repubblica.it, 16 novembre 1988.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from *L'Unità*.

¹ *Sdisonorate* records Maria Stella's last name as Callà, whereas other sources cite it as Callà.



GIUESEPPA MAGANICO

21 DECEMBER 1988

With the Christmas holiday approaching, Giuseppa's home was decorated, with the nativity scene holding pride of place. At 42 years of age, she was the mother of 2 daughters and 3 sons, and married to Salvatore Polara (52 years old), who was an increasingly powerful Cosa Nostra boss of the clans controlling the subcontracting works in the city of Gela, and an ally of Giuseppe Madonia. Shortly after 1:30 on the afternoon of 21 December, Giuseppa was serving her family the soup she had made for lunch. Her husband and sons, Marcello (17 years old), Giuseppe (16 years old), and Pietro (14 years old) were seated around the dining room table. One of Giuseppa's daughters was still at school and the other was at a friend's house. The doorbell rang, and Marcello went to answer it. As he cracked open the door to see who was there he was shot straight in the head, his dead body falling across the doorway. The killer, disguised in a woman's blond wig and armed with two handguns, entered the dining room and shot over 10 bullets. Giuseppa was shot between the eyes, and died instantly. Also killed were her husband Salvatore and son Giuseppe. Pietro was critically wounded, but survived. The murders were committed by a killer working for a rival clan linked with the Stiddari, and part of the historical war for power over Gela between Cosa Nostra and Stidda from 1987 through 1990, during which over 100 people died in Gela.

Source: "Gela, un massacro a domicilio," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 22 December 1988.

MARCELLA TASSONE

23 FEBRUARY 1989



Photographs of Marcella at ten years of age reveal a slender young girl with long black hair, and deep green eyes. She lived with her mother Maria Catananzi and father Salvatore in the town of Laureana di Borello, located in the plains of Gioia Tauro, which witnessed a violent feud for power between clans aligned with the Molè of Gioia Tauro and others aligned with the Bellocco clan of Rosarno. From 1989 to 1993 alone some 40 people were murdered. Among the victims was Marcella's older brother, Domenico, killed on 9 November 1988. His violent death deeply affected Marcella, according to her fifth-grade teacher, who stated the young girl, "had a kind of presentiment, a strange feeling," expressed in her words and actions. Shortly after Domenico's death, Marcella wrote an essay for school, revealing her wish "to be a young sparrow so I could fly to paradise and be with my brother again." A few days before Marcella was murdered, she took all of her toys to school and announced, "I want to give them to my schoolmates. After all, they're of no use to me anymore." Shortly past 8:30 on the evening of 23 February, Marcella was anxious to get home from her brother Alfonso's house, because she wanted to watch her favorite singers on the popular San Remo music festival television broadcast. With Alfonso at the wheel of his Alfetta and Marcella beside him, they took his usual route to their parent's home. Two killers were waiting for them, hidden behind a low stone wall at the side of the road. When the car came into sight, they opened fire with shotguns, killing 20 year-old Alfonso first. They then shot Marcella once in the nape of her neck and 6 times in her face with a pistol. The murder of Marcella provoked outrage among the honest people of Laureana di Borello, with over 5,000 of them walking in the funeral cortège. During the funeral for her daughter and son, Marcella's mother was overcome with grief and anger, and exclaimed "Those damned . . ." with a muffled name, cut short by her husband, who covered her mouth. "Shut up!" he warned, "They'll kill us all!". The 'ndrangheta members who ordered the murders and the killers were arrested and found guilty.

Sources: www.impronteombre.it/.../MarcellaTassone//lanotiziadellamorte.pdf; Filippo Veltri, "Massacrata a dieci anni dai killer della 'ndrangheta," la Repubblica.it, 24 February 1989; "Addio alla piccola Marcella," la Repubblica.it, 26 February 1989.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from sosed.eu.

Marcella Tassone - 3aC - Istituto Comprensivo Pegli 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JczFR2WYqco>.

RAFFAELLA CHINDAMO



1 MARCH 1989

Raffaella lived in Laureana di Borrello with her family, part of the 'ndrangheta Chindamo clan aligned with the Lamari and Ferrentino clans, which were pitted against the Albanese, Cutellè, and Tassone clans during the feud of the late 1980s and early 1990s. On 1 March, while the young woman stood in her home's courtyard, she was shot in the neck by drive-by killers armed with a revolver. Raffaella was transported to the hospital, where she died on 6 March, at just 24 years of age. She was the victim of a vendetta for the murder of Marcella Tassone, committed 23 February 1989.

Source: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.



NICOLINA BISCOZZI

22 JUNE 1989

A resident of Brindisi, 33 year-old Nicolina had a steady relationship with Vincenzo Carone, who was affiliated with the United Sacred Crown clans in the Apulia region of southern Italy. On 22 June, while the couple was traveling in Vincenzo's car, another car pulled up alongside them and opened fire. In the hail of bullets, Nicolina was critically wounded and died a month later in the hospital. The deadly attack was organized to kill Vincenzo, and part of the war between two United Sacred Crown clans, one headed by the boss Giuseppe Rogoli and the other by his former right-hand man Antonio Antonica.

Source: "Nicolina Biscozzi," iltaccoditalia.info; www.mesagnesera.it/i-nostri-giovani-ammazzati-dalla-mafia.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from mesagnesera.it.



MIRELLA SILOCCHI

28 JULY 1989

Mirella, called Anna by people who knew her, is remembered for the love and care she devoted to her family and for her strong sense of commitment to helping people in need, especially the elderly and the poor. In fact, she spent much of her time working on volunteer social projects, such as food and clothing drives for the needy in Parma and nearby Stradella di Colecchio, where she usually spent the summer with her husband Carlo Nicoli, who owned a successful family iron business, and their sons Pierluca, then 29, and Michele, 27. According to Carlo, the morning of 28 July was like any other at Villa Lina, their country home. Anna, 50 years old, had gotten up early so she could have breakfast with him and their son Pierluca, who was visiting them with his wife and 16 month-old son, who were asleep upstairs. After coffee, milk and breakfast cookies, Carlo kissed Anna goodbye and left for work along with his son. At around 8:30 am, while Anna was talking on the phone with a relative, two men, one reportedly dressed as a customs officer, knocked at the door. When she opened it, the men burst inside her home. Anna desperately tried to fight them off, calling for help. Francesca Martini, who lived on the estate with her husband as groundskeepers, ran into the house, but was immediately caught, tied up and gagged. The kidnappers put Anna, also tied up, into the car. After a month of silence, the kidnappers contacted Carlo Nicoli, requesting a ransom of 5 billion lire, around 4.5 million dollars at the time. Three months later, they cut off one of Anna's ears and left it in a service station near Parma. On 4 December 1989, Carlo received an envelope with photographs of Anna, chained up and in dire health, with a rifle pointed at her head. The last words written by Anna in a letter sent to her husband testify to the brutal acts and pain that she suffered at the kidnappers' hands: "They're treating me horribly and beat me, I'm bound with a chain around my neck and feet, always lying down. My legs hurt because my blood can't circulate . . . I'm alive 30 November . . . Carlo, I can't take it anymore. Every day they beat me and scare me with something. My life is hell, I can't take it anymore." Carlo and members of the band of kidnappers finally agreed upon a ransom of over one million dollars, but when he arrived at the

appointed place in Turin, no one was there. Remains said to be Anna's were discovered in a country well near Viterbo, but they were badly decayed and had been burned, and no DNA test was possible. Anna likely died between 2 December 1989 and 19 January 1990, from starvation. The police investigation uncovered a complex, international group responsible for the kidnapping and murder of Anna, comprising Sardinian shepherds and fugitives, and anarchists that included Sicilian and Calabrian criminals, an Italian American, and a Libyan, whose activities were connected to a subversive cell in Rome. Ultimately, all of the presumed perpetrators were caught and tried, most recently the Italian American flight attendant Ann Scrocco, arrested in Amsterdam 16 January 2005.

Sources: "Carlo, è un inferno: non ce la faccio più," *La Nuova Sardegna*, 17 December 2004; "Rapita nella sua villa 'È stata l'anonima'," *la Repubblica.it*, 29 July 1989; Davide Barilli, "Nicoli, vent'anni senza Anna," www.gazzettadiparma.it/news/parma/21490/Nicoli-vent-anni-senza-Anna.html.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from twimc.it.

IDA CASTELLUCCIO



5 AUGUST 1989

Early summer of 1989 was a time of new beginnings for Ida Castelluccio, a spirited 19 year-old with bright blue eyes and long black hair. She had just completed the final exams for her diploma, and was looking forward to majoring in education at the university. Ida planned to have a career as a teacher. In July, she married Antonio (Nino) Agostino, an officer in the Palermo Police Department, and at the beginning of August found out she was pregnant with their first child. Shortly after 2:00 on 5 August, Ida joined Nino after his shift at work, to go pick up their album of wedding pictures. They then set out for Nino's parents' home in Villagrazia di Carini in the province of Palermo, where the family was going to celebrate his sister's birthday. When the couple arrived at the Agostino's villa, Nino went to show the wedding photos to a neighbor. His father Vincenzo, who was inside the home watching the television, was struck by how quiet the neighborhood was, stating "I remember the complete silence in the street. There wasn't any traffic that evening. All of a sudden I heard a loud boom, I thought it might be a firecracker, then another one, and another." But what continues to echo in Vincenzo's mind today is Ida's bloodcurdling voice screaming, "They're killing my husband." Vincenzo ran outside to help, while Nino and Ida attempted to escape the two killers shooting at them. Though wounded, Nino managed to get inside the garden gate and pushed Ida to the ground to protect her before he died. According to Vincenzo, Ida raised herself up and yelled, "I know who you are," and then was shot in the heart. The killers escaped on their motorcycle. Judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino attended the funeral for Nino and Ida, where Falcone reportedly stated Nino had saved his life. In fact, several sources report the young police officer was investigating the failed attempt to murder Falcone with explosives planted in a beach bag at Addauro, discovered 21 June 1989. However, from the very beginning, the investigation into the murders of Ida and Nino was sabotaged, led off track, and then buried with the sealing of pertinent documents as State secrets. On the day Vincenzo Agostino saw his son and daughter-in-law killed, he began to let his beard grow, promising to cut it only when the truth was exposed and

justice delivered. Today, in 2018, his long white beard symbolizes his ongoing battle against the Italian State's silence and failure to provide any form of justice.

Sources: Gabriele Santoro, "Storia di Nino e Ida, Vittime della mafia, 23 August 2017, www.minimaetmoralia.it/wp/storia-di-nino-e-ida-vittime-della-mafia/; "Ida Castelluccio," vittimemafia.it.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from malitalia.it.

Nasce a Palermo "U Cunto", biblioteca sociale dedicata a Antonio Agostino e Ida Castelluccio: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSuBYpAieg4>.

CARMELA PANNONE



24 AUGUST 1989

Shortly before 10:00 on the morning of 24 August, 5 year-old Carmela was sitting in the car with her uncle Giuseppe Pannone, a member of a camorra clan, and 3 young cousins, anxiously waiting for her aunt Vincenza to come back out of the supermarket. Carmela was spending the day with her uncle's family, who were staying in a small villa in Paestum for their summer vacation. On their way to the seashore, they had stopped at the store in Agropoli to get some toys to play with at the beach, and a few other items. Four killers armed with handguns pulled up near Pannone's car in the crowded parking lot and shot repeatedly through the windows. Carmela was hit multiple times and died just after she arrived at the hospital. Her cousin Luigi De Lucia, 6 years old, was also seriously wounded, but survived. Giuseppe Pannone, 32 years old, died from his wounds at the crime scene. He had been released from prison in October 1988, after serving a 6 year sentence for criminal association with the camorra, and was affiliated with the Cutolo clans.

Sources: "Agguato al boss camorrista uccisa anche una bambina," la Repubblica.it, 25 August 1989; "Carmela Pannone," vittimemafia.it.



ANNA MARIA CAMBRIA

8 NOVEMBER 1989

A tall 16 year-old girl with chestnut brown eyes and hair, Anna Maria Cambria lived with her parents in Milazzo, a town near Messina. To her fellow students at the Tecnico Commerciale Leonardo da Vinci high school, Anna seemed a bit shy, but always ready to take part in class activities. Just before 8:00 on the evening of 8 November, Anna went into the Amoruso café in Via Risorgimento, located in the main piazza of Milazzo. She bought some pastries and chocolate sweets to share with her boyfriend, whom she was planning to meet. Anna came out of the café with her bag of sweets, and was caught in a spray of gunfire. She tried to take cover by a telephone booth, but was struck multiple times. She died at the scene. Also killed was 29 year-old Francesco Alioto, who had a record for drug dealing and was the intended target of the two mafia shooters.

Source: www.oggimilazzo.it/2012/11/08/18-novembre-1989-veniva-uccisa-la-sedicenne-anna-cambria/

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from gazzettadelsud.it.



LEONARDA
COSTANTINO



LUCIA
COSTANTINO



VINCENZA
MARINO
MANNOIA

23 NOVEMBER 1989

Leonarda (63 years old), her daughter Vincenza (24 years old), and her sister Lucia (59 years old), were important figures in the Marino Mannoia clan of Palermo, privy to inside information about their network of relations, criminal dealings, and murders. During the war for territorial power launched by Salvatore Riina of the rural Corleone mafia against the large Palermo clans, Leonarda's son Francesco Marino Mannoia, an up-and-coming mafioso affiliated with Stefano Bontate's clan in Palermo, shifted allegiance to the Corleone clan. In 1989, Francesco became a *pentito*, valued for the information he possessed about the Corleone network and tactics. Then in April of 1989, Leonarda's son Agostino, a renowned killer in Riina's hit squads, disappeared, presumably a victim of *Iupara bianca*. Likely assuming Riina knew of her son Francesco's collaboration with law enforcement and fearing other members of her family would be murdered, Leonarda moved to Bagheria, along with her husband Rosario, sister, and daughter. During the week leading up to their murders, every evening Leonarda, Vincenza, and Lucia would return to their Palermo home to bring a load of the remaining small items to the new apartment in Bagheria. Following the same routine, just after 9:00 on Thursday evening, 23 November, Leonarda, Vincenza and Lucia got into their car to make the drive to Palermo. Before they had time to start the car, a hit squad appeared and opened heavy shotgun fire. They executed a clearly well planned assault, described by investigators as showing "the kind of fire power and violence generally reserved for killing mafia bosses". Leonarda's husband Rosario witnessed the attack from their apartment balcony, as gun shots exploded like canon blasts, and the body of the car was literally shot to pieces. Leonarda, Vincenza, and Lucia all died at the scene of the attack, now known as the Bagheria Massacre of Women, a transversal vendetta most

likely motivated by Francesco's betrayal of Cosa Nostra and the Corleone clan's secrets.

Sources: Umberto Rosso, "Sapevano tutto della cosca," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 25 November 1989; Attilio Bolzoni, "Una strage chiamata pentimento," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 25 November 1989.

ORNELLA GRECO



25 NOVEMBER 1989

Late on the evening of 25 November, Ornella was riding in the car with her fiancé Giuseppe Martina at the wheel, in the town of Copertino in the Apulia region, where she lived. As their car drove down Via Corsica, another vehicle pulled up on the driver's side and several men armed with shotguns and handguns opened fire. Ornella suffered a fatal gunshot wound to the head. She was 24 years old. Following the ambush, Martina drove the car to the hospital and abandoned it, with Ornella inside. Martina was affiliated with the United Sacred Crown and had a record for attempted murder and drug trafficking. Investigators presumed he was the target of the attack.

Sources: "Uccisa dai killer che spararono al fidanzato," *Stampa Sera*, 27 November 1989; "Storie di donne e bambini uccisi dalla mafia," www.iltaccoditalia.info.



ANTONELLA
ORONZO MAGGIO



ANNA
FORCIGNANO

1990

Little information is available about Antonella and Anna, cousins who lived in the town of Squinzano, with a population of just over 14,000, located in the Apulia region. At 30 years old, Antonella had a romantic relationship with Valerio Marucci, with whom she lived. Marucci was affiliated with the United Sacred Crown, and disappeared in early 1990. Antonella began searching for information about his disappearance on her own, and she soon disappeared as well, along with her 24 year-old cousin Anna. Three years later, the young women's bodies were discovered, buried in a vineyard. The *pentito* Piero Manca claimed responsibility for killing Antonella and Anna.

Source: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.

ROSARIA GENOVESE



5 APRIL 1990

Rosaria lived in Paola, in the province of Cosenza, with her five children. On 5 April, she received a telephone call and, according to one of her sons, left the house. When she failed to return that day, her son reported her missing. Fourteen days later, her body was discovered partly submerged in water in a sluice located in the Cavani area of Falconara Albanese. The 49 year-old woman had been violently struck on the forehead and strangled to death. Rosaria's ex-fiancé Francesco Sansone was arrested for her murder, which he committed to silence her after she had revealed information about the rape and killing of Roberta Lanzino to one of her close women friends. Sansone was implicated in the Lanzino case and had shared the details with Rosaria.

Source: "Iniziato a Cosenza il secondo processo per la morte di Roberta Lanzino," // *Quotidiano del Sud*, 24 November 2009.



MARCELLA DI LEVRANO

5 APRIL 1990

Born 18 April 1964, Marcella had a difficult childhood, growing up with her loving mother Marisa and physically abusive father. After suffering years of physical violence at her husband's hands, Marisa Fiorani took a courageous step and separated from him, moving along with Marcella and her two sisters to Mesagne in the province of Brindisi. As a young girl, Marcella had a sunny disposition and was among the top students in her class during middle school. She chose to continue her studies in education with the goal of becoming a school teacher. Marcella had a successful first year, but then her mother noticed changes in her behavior. In fact, Marcella's best friend's uncle, a drug dealer for the United Sacred Crown, had introduced both the girls to light drugs and then heroine. Marcella became addicted, frequenting the drug houses and dealers in Mesagne and Brindisi. In her early twenties, after the birth of her daughter Sara, Marcella decided to make a new life, and began by collaborating with the police as a witness for justice. She kept a daily journal in which she recorded facts about the United Sacred Crown's drug network and dealers, with names and places. Then she disappeared. Marcella's body was discovered on 5 April, in a forest between Mesagne and Brindisi. Her face was hardly recognizable because she had been battered so badly with a large rock, found beside her. According to the autopsy, she had been killed some 10 days earlier. From the statements given by diverse witnesses for justice we now know that Marcella looked her killer in the eyes before her death, and told him "What you do to me doesn't matter, but I beg you, take good care of my little girl afterwards." She was murdered by the United Sacred Crown for collaborating with the police. Marcella was just 25 years old. Today Marcella's mother Marisa continues to tell her daughter's story, working with the Libera organization and talking with students at school events throughout Italy.

Sources: Giuseppe Messe, "La storia di Marcella di Levrano sarà ricordata nel Pavese ma non a Mesagne," www.mesagnesera.it/, 30 January 2018; Fernando Orsini, "Marcella Di Levrano, la storia di una donna che si ribellò alla Scu," www.quimesagne.it/marcella-

di-levrano-la-storia-di-una-donna-che-si-ribello-alla-scu/, 5 April 2016; Gianmarco Di Napoli, "La storia di Marcella, uccisa a colpi di pietra perché voleva uscirne dalla droga. E proteggere la sua bambina," *il7 Brindisi Magazine*.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from senzacolonneneews.it.



RAFFAELLA SCORDO

13 JULY 1990

Raffaella, 39 years old, had a successful career as a middle-school teacher, and lived with her family in the charming seashore village of Ardore Marina, in the province of Reggio Calabria. Her husband, Franco Polito, enjoyed success as a professor at the Istituto Professionale di Siderno, and her children, 16 year-old Maria Antonietta and 12 year-old Antonio, excelled in school. Shortly after midnight between 12 and 13 July, Raffaella, her husband, and their children were returning to their home, located on the outskirts of the village, from their usual late evening drive along the seashore road. Raffaella got out of the car to open the garage door and three men with white stockings over their faces jumped out of the darkness, and one of them grabbed her. While she desperately fought back, Franco and the children got out of the car to help her, but the kidnapper struck her about the neck with a hammer-like tool, and she collapsed. She was taken to the hospital, where she remained in a coma for 18 days, and then died from her wounds. Raffaella was among the many victims of the rash of kidnappings by 'ndrangheta clans, termed a "kidnapping emergency" ("emergenza sequestri"), that occurred in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Sources: Pantaleone Sergi, "L'inutile lotta di Raffaella. Una 'vita rapita' dall'Anonima," *la Repubblica.it*, 2 August 1990; Enzo Laganà, "Resiste ai rapitori, massacrata a martellate," *La Stampa*, 14 July 1990.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from *Dimenticati* by D. Chirico and A. Magro, p. 131.



ELISABETTA
GAGLIARDI



MARIA MARCELLA
GAGLIARDI

7 SEPTEMBER 1990

After living for a time in Milan, Maria Marcella, her husband Mario Gagliardi, and their daughter Elisabetta moved back to Calabria, and settled in the small town of Palermiti, some 20 miles from Catanzaro. Their older daughter, 25 year-old Annamaria was married and lived in Milan, where their 24 year-old son Diego lived too. In May of 1990, Elisabetta had celebrated her first communion, and on 7 September was enjoying the final days of summer vacation before returning to school. She had just turned 9 years old and was about to begin fourth grade. Early in the morning, sometime between 8:30 and 9:30, killers drove up to the Gagliardi country home and restaurant, located on Sanguria mountain on the outskirts of Palermiti, where Elisabetta and her mother were. As the investigation of the crime scene suggests, the killers used exceptional violence and force, firing some 23 shots at the mother and daughter. Maria Marcella suffered six gunshot wounds, and Elisabetta was shot at close range execution style, with two bullets to the nape of her neck. During the same morning time frame, Mario Gagliardi, 49 years old and with a criminal record, was ambushed by shooters on the outskirts of the town, while he had a heated discussion with Domenico Catalano, a construction contractor. Both men were wounded but left the scene on their own to seek medical help. According to the carabinieri, there is no clear motive for the massacre of Maria Marcella and Elisabetta, but they suspect 'ndrangheta drug traffic or a vendetta were likely involved.

Sources: "Terrore in Calabria madre e figlia uccise con 23 colpi di pistola," *la Repubblica.it*, 8 September 1990; Aldo Varano, "Uccisa bambina di 9 anni," *L'Unità*, 8 September 1990.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) ©



ROSALBA CODISPOTI

11 DECEMBER 1990

Rosalba lived in Locri, Reggio Calabria, with her husband and 3 year-old daughter Vittoria. On 11 December, Rosalba sang her daughter to sleep with a lullaby, and then lay down on the bed to rest beside her. She was shot twice at close range with a rifle, by her nephew Rocco Pizzinga. Rocco blamed Rosalba and his father's relatives for his parents' separation, and killed her as punishment.

Source: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.

CRISTINA PAVESI

13 DECEMBER 1990



At 22 years of age, Cristina's life was full of promise. She lived with her parents in Conegliano, a town in the Veneto region of Italy, while studying at the university. Recalling what Cristina was like, her aunt Michela Pavesi tells us she "was a special girl, we did a lot of things together and she was like a daughter to me. I'm sure she would have become a very beautiful person." On 13 December 1990, Cristina went to the university as usual, and met with her thesis director. In the evening, she caught the train running from Bologna to Venice, to go home in time for dinner. At around 6:30, the train in which she was riding neared the Venice-Milan train, which was stopped on the other tracks in the open countryside near Barbariga di Vigonza. Cristina and her fellow passengers had no way to know the other train was under attack and putting them at risk. Members of the Mala del Brenta, the mafia organization headed by Felice Maniero, had opened heavy fire on the armored postal car in the course of a robbery. Ultimately, they detonated dynamite placed on the tracks in order to gain access to the armored car, just as the Bologna-Venice train was passing by. The blast sent shrapnel and flying shards of glass through Cristina's train car, fatally wounding the young girl. The men in the mafia band got away with the valuables from the postal car, escaping into the countryside. Maniero was arrested for various charges in 1993, and subsequently became a *pentito*, collaborating with law enforcement. He was never tried for Cristina's murder. Thus, as Cristina's aunt maintains, the family is still waiting for some kind of justice from the State. The Mala del Brenta, formed in Veneto in the 1970s, expanded its operations in northeastern Italy, strengthened by the presence of several members of Cosa Nostra who were sent to the region by the State, to live there in forced residence in the 1980s. Renamed the New Mala del Brenta, today this mafia organization operates in northern Italy, competing with both 'ndrangheta and camorra clans for lucrative public contracts as well as control over extortion rackets and drug and arms trafficking.

Sources: "Camorra in Veneto ha preso il posto della Mala del Brenta: 50 arresti. Anche

il sindaco di Eraclea e un poliziotto,” ilfattoquotidiano.it, 19 February 2019; Carlo Cecino, “Treviso, la zia della ragazza uccisa da Maniero: ‘Non gli credo, mia nipote punita dalla region di Stato’,” corrieredelveneto.corriere.it, 15 November 2018; Francesco Trotta, “Cristina Pavesi. Vittima di una mafia dimenticata troppo in fretta,” cosavostra.it, 12 December 2015.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from cosavostra.it.

La zia di Cristina Pavesi incontra l'ex della Mala del Brenta: www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xBLrItzZYE.

VALENTINA GUARINO



9 JANUARY 1991

Shortly after 8:00 on the evening of 9 January, 6 month-old Valentina was in the arms of her mother, who sat in the passenger seat of their car, driven by her father, Cosimo Guarino. While the Guarino family drove along a dark street in the Tamburi neighborhood in Taranto, plagued by clan crime and violence, another car pulled alongside and killers opened fire with a hail of bullets. Valentina was shot in the face and died on the spot, along with her father, victims of the clan warfare that left over 30 people murdered in 1990 alone. Cosimo, 38 years old, was the brother-in-law of clan boss Gianfranco Modeo, and affiliated with the clans of Modeo brothers Claudio and Riccardo, who were engaged in warfare against the clans aligned with Antonio Modeo, known as the Mexican (*il messicano*).

Sources: “Uccisa a sei mesi col padre. E la guerra dei racket,” *L’Unità*, 13 January 1991; Tonio Attino, “Taranto, i killer uccidono padre e figlia di 6 mesi,” *La Stampa*, 10 January 1991.



SILVANA FOGLIETTA

7 FEBRUARY 1991

Described by Tea Sisto as “a beautiful woman, full of dignity,” Silvana left her home in Foggia at an early age, when she fell in love with Cosimo Persano and moved to Ostuni in the province of Brindisi to live with him. Cosimo, the father of Silvana’s four children, seemed to be an upstanding businessman, but later became affiliated with the United Sacred Crown. Following serious disputes with clan bosses, Cosimo was killed on 9 March 1990, when he was attacked by a heavily armed hit squad in downtown Torre Santa Susanna. His driver, Romolo Guerriero escaped that attack, but was killed two months later. Silvana began asking questions, searching for the truth about Cosimo’s murder. Moreover, she went to the police to report her suspicions. Members of the United Sacred Crown were reportedly afraid she would become a witness for justice and provide important information about their illegal business deals. On 7 February, Silvana was driving her car near the Vitali elementary school in Ostuni when a squad of armed men blocked the road. She locked herself in the car, but they broke out the windshield and kidnapped her. At 37 years of age, Silvana disappeared, a victim of *lupara bianca*. She was survived by her four children.

Source: Tea Sisto, “Silvana Foglietta,” vivi.libera.it/schede-105-silvana_foglietta_un_delitto_rimasto_senza_colpevoli_senza_giustizia

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from vivi.libera.it.



ANGELICA
PIRTOLI



PAOLA
RIZZELLO

20 MARCH 1991

Two year-old Angelica lived alone with her mother Paola Rizzello, 27 years old, in the Parabita area of Lecce. In the early 1980s, Paola had a brief intimate relationship with Luigi Giannelli, boss of the United Sacred Crown clan in Parabita. She later met Luigi Calzolari, a young man from her own home town, with whom she began a serious relationship. In 1985, Calzolari was murdered, and Paola began asking questions, with the suspicion that Giannelli had ordered the murder. In fact, Paola had substantial information on the inner workings of the power relations in the clan network, the homicides committed, and drug hiding places. According to testimonies given by *pentiti*, on the evening of 20 March 1991, Paola had a meeting with Luigi De Matteis, whom she trusted, and Biaggio Toma. The two men waited for her along the road to her home, and when Paola arrived, she got into their car, holding her daughter Angelica in her arms. They drove to a country house, where they all got out of the car. De Matteis, now a *pentito*, stated that he went up to Paola and pointed the barrel of a rifle at her. She stood defiantly, still holding Angelica in her arms, and said, “I’m not afraid of you.” De Matteis shot her in the stomach, also wounding Angelica’s foot. Then he shot Paola in the chest, killing her instantly. De Matteis and Toma left Angelica with her dead mother, and then returned after an hour. In his testimony, De Matteis stated, “Biaggio Toma got out of the car, grabbed the little girl by her feet and struck her against a wall four or five times, and then nothing, the little girl was dead.” Her skull was shattered. De Matteis and Toma burned the bodies, then threw Paola’s remains in a cistern, discovered in 1997 in the Tuli district of Parabita; they put Angelica’s charred body in a jute sack, and took it to Sant’Eleuterio hill, where it was found by carabinieri 4 May 1999. All individuals involved in the murders of Angelica and her mother Paola have been charged and sentenced: Luigi Giannelli (56 years old) ordered the killings, Anna De Matteis (52 years old), along

with Donato Mercuri (51 years old) conspired to organize the murders; De Matteis and Toma committed the homicides.

Sources: Andrea Morrone, "Omicidio della piccola Angelica, il racconto dell'orrore da parte del 'pentito'," www.lecceprima.it/cronaca/omicidio-della-piccola-angelica-il-racconto-dell-orrore-da-parte-del-pentito.it/, 9 June 2016; Tiziana Colluto, "Angelica Pirtoli, uccisa dopo sua madre, 'Risolto caso più nero della Sacra corona'," IlFattoQuotidiano.it, 22 January 2015.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from amicidilibera.blogspot.it.

Photo, antimafiaduemila.com.

#GiustiziaPerAngelica, bimba uccisa dalla mafia: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_vXLYBwxe4.

LUIGINA DE LUCA



6 MAY 1991

Luigina De Luca lived in Cosenza and was the mother-in-law of Franco Garofalo, an up-and-coming boss in the 'ndrangheta. On 6 May, killers riddled her body with bullets, in an apartment in piazza Zumbini. Her son Antonio De Luca was also killed in the attack, and both of their bodies were then disfigured, beaten with a club. Franco Garofalo was later involved in the killings of 4 people as a vendetta for the murders of Luigina and Antonio. He ultimately became a *pentito* and provided testimony to the Italian judiciary.

Source: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.



ANTONELLA

CANTERUCCIO

9 JUNE 1991

The scant information reporting the discovery of Antonella's decayed remains provides the only clues about the life she lived. The young woman was a resident of Cosenza and engaged to be married to Rodomondo Giannotta, a member of the Pino-Sena 'ndrangheta clans that were pitted against Franco Perna's clan. On 9 June, Antonella's badly decomposed body was discovered in the forests of Civita, a hilltown that is part of the Pollino National Park in Calabria. Rodomondo's remains were nearby, wrapped in a jute sack. Antonella's family is still waiting to know the truth about her murder.

Source: Arcangelo Badolati, *Mamma 'ndrangheta*, Cosenza, Pellegrini Editore, 2014.



SALVATORA

TIENI

11 AUGUST 1991

Salvatora lived and worked in the province of Brindisi, which saw a string of murders and vendettas during the battle over agricultural lands fought between the Bruno and Persano clans of the United Sacred Crown. In 1990, some 9 people were victims of *lupara bianca*. Among them was Salvatora's son Romolo Guerriero, who was the driver for Cosimo Persano. Salvatora and her husband Nicola Guerriero began investigating their son's disappearance on their own, and decided to testify against the Bruno brothers as suspects. On 11 August, Salvatora and her husband left home to go feed the dogs on a farm in Monticelli, and disappeared along with their three-wheeled delivery truck, the victims of *lupara bianca*. Based on information provided by a *pentito*, Romolo's body was eventually discovered. Salvatora and Nicola's daughter Cosima became a witness for justice, and provided testimony that enabled the successful trial against her parents' killer. By necessity, Cosima lives under a new identity in the witness protection program.

Source: "Salvatora Tieni," www.memoriaeimpegno.it/event/salvatora-tieni-e-nicola-guerriero/.



ANNA MARIA COZZA

NOVEMBER 1991

Anna Maria lived in Cosenza and had separated from her husband Francesco Chirillo, boss of the Chirillo 'ndrangheta clan, because she wanted to make a new honest life for herself. She was in a serious relationship with 30 year-old Gianfranco Fucci, employed in a good job, when he was brutally killed on 2 May 1990. While Gianfranco was driving along the road from Cosenza to Dipignano, he was pursued by a car with men armed with rifles, who opened fire. When his car came to a stop the killers shot him in the head, and planted a bag of heroine in his car to mislead the investigators. Anna Maria began investigating the murder on her own and reported the Chirillo family to the carabinieri, stating they were responsible. In an attempt to obtain solid proof, she confronted the Chirillos while carrying a hidden tape recorder. In November 1991, at 23 years of age, Anna Maria disappeared, a victim of *lupara bianca*.

Source: "Delitto Fucci: assoluzione definitiva per i fratelli Chirillo, 9 November 2012, www.quicosenza.it/news/le-notizie-dell-area-urbana-di-cosenza/cosenza/3077-delitto-fucci-assoluzione-definitiva-per-i-fratelli-chirillo.



GIUSEPPA COZZUMBO

16 DECEMBER 1991

Giuseppa, a 47 year-old business woman who owned a café in Bronte, Sicily, took a bold stand and refused to pay the *pizzo*, essentially money demanded by the mafia to protect the owner of a business from mafia criminality. On 16 December Giuseppa was working in her café, named *Collina verde*, along with her daughter. A man with his face covered came in and shot her four times in the face and chest, presumably as punishment for not submitting to the mafia extortion racket and to serve as an example to other business people. In the first trial, Giuseppa's daughter testified as an eye witness, and Pietro Longhitano was found guilty. He was later absolved on appeal, when Giuseppa's daughter withdrew her testimony.

Sources: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012; "Bronte, uccisa una donna a colpi di pistola nel bar," la Repubblica.it, 17 December 1991.



GIOVANNA SANDRA STRANIERI

29 DECEMBER 1991

Giovanna lived in Taranto with her father and mother. She earned her diploma in accounting, and at 24 years of age dreamed of finding a good job. On the morning of 29 December, she and her friend Carmela Bruno came out of a church and into the crowded downtown streets of Taranto. At around 11:40, loud noises exploded in the air, and many of the families out walking thought they were firecrackers set off early in celebration of New Years Eve. At the first sound, Giovanna and Carmela tried to take cover in a café. But Giovanna collapsed. Confused about what was happening, Carmela asked her friend, “Giovanna, what’s wrong?”. In fact, the sounds exploding in the air were gunshots, and a stray bullet had struck Giovanna in the throat. She was taken to the hospital, where she died at 1:15 pm. Though the gunfire was first thought to be the latest attack in the war between the Modeo clans, investigators arrested Carmelo Fuggetti, who claimed he shot at Umberto Galiano after an argument.

Sources: “Duello tra banditi, muore un’innocente,” *La Stampa*, 31 December 1991; “A Taranto si spara, falciata una ragazza,” *L’Unità*, 30 December 1991.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from *La Stampa*, 31 December 1991.



LUCIA PRECENZANO

4 JANUARY 1992

Living in the Calabrian city of Lamezia Terme, 55 year-old Lucia was a devoted homemaker who confronted the challenges of sharing her life with her husband Salvatore Aversa, the Superintendent of Police, who was specialized in tracking down and arresting members of the 'ndrangheta in the area. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the 'ndrangheta clans markedly expanded their illegal activities in drug trafficking, waste management, public contracts, and political power. As a consequence, on 29 September 1991, a decree issued by the President of the Italian Republic dissolved the city government due to mafia infiltration. In the days following New Year’s Eve and leading up to the Epiphany, the streets of Lamezia had a festive air, with decorations and holiday lights. A little after 6:00 pm on 4 January 1992, Lucia and Salvatore were out to visit friends in the downtown area. As they were getting into their car a hit squad approached and opened fire. Lucia died at the scene, along with 59 year-old Salvatore. They were survived by their three children. Investigators described the murders as a “well-planned,” professional execution, in which some 17 shots were fired. Ultimately, Salvatore Chirico confessed to the double homicide.

Sources: “L’omicidio di Salvatore Aversa e Lucia Precenzano,” stampacritica.org/2017/01/15/lomicidio-salvatore-aversa-lucia-precenzano/; www.raistoria.rai.it/articoli-programma-puntate/diario-civile-la-notte-di-lamezia-storia-di-salvatore-aversa/32817/default.aspx; La notte di Lamezia: Storia di Salvatore Aversa, documentary posted on YouTube, 6 November 2017.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it.

Documentario - La 'ndrangheta uccide Salvatore Aversa (Diario Civile): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2XbQ9URubo>.



FRANCESCA MORVILLO

23 MAY 1992

Born in Palermo 14 December 1945, Francesca earned her Law degree with honors at the University of Palermo. She pursued a brilliant career, serving as a judge in the court of Agrigento and as Deputy Prosecutor in the Juvenile Court of Palermo, where she demonstrated a strong commitment to rehabilitating youths involved in delinquent crime. While continuing her own career, Francesca also provided personal and professional support to Giovanni Falcone, whom she married in 1986. Despite the challenges and sacrifices of their married lives, with 24-hour bodyguard protection and death threats, Francesca made notable contributions to the field and practice of law. As her colleague Pasqua Seminara recalls, Francesca “Was an excellent penal lawyer. She had her life, her personality, and strong character. Giovanni respected her ideas.” On 22 May 1992, Francesca was at the Ergife Hotel, fulfilling her responsibilities as a member of the Commission for the Judiciary qualifying exams. The next day, 23 May, after taking the plane from Rome to Palermo, she sat next to Giovanni as they drove along the highway from the airport to downtown Palermo, escorted by two other police cars and 7 bodyguards in all. At around 6:00 pm, they were approaching the city of Capaci when a colossal explosion blasted a crater in the highway beneath the cars. Some 400 kilos of explosives had been planted under a culvert and detonated by order of mafia superboss Salvatore Riina. The explosion caused critical internal injuries to Francesca, who was transported to the hospital, where she died later in the evening at 46 years of age. Also killed in the explosion, known as the Capaci Massacre, were Giovanni Falcone, and the police body guards Rocco Di Cillo, Antonio Montinaro, and Vito Schifani. Francesca was awarded the Gold Medal of Honor. According to both Annamaria Palma, a judge and friend of Francesca, and Fernanda Contri, a voluntary member of the Magistrates Internal Board of Supervisors, Cosa Nostra’s murder of Francesca was deliberate and planned. Palma states, “Francesca’s death was not a matter of chance; they [Falcone and Morvillo] weren’t killed together just because they were a close couple. I think that

Francesca knew a lot of things and they were afraid to leave her alive.” Along similar lines, Contri maintains, “They deliberately waited for a time when Francesca would be there too, unfortunately Francesca did not only enjoy her husband’s confidence, but she shared in the demanding work of the magistracy. . . . She would have been a rather inconvenient witness.”¹

Sources: Francesca Laura Morvillo, Rete degli Archivi per non dimenticare, www.memoria.san.beniculturali.it; Paula M. Salvio, *The Story-Takers. Public Pedagogy, Transitional Justice, and Italy’s Non-violent Protest against the Mafia*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2017; Renate Siebert, *Secrets of Life and Death: Women and the Mafia*, London, Verso, 1996.

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Francesca Morvillo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXXWkf8P9LI>.

francesca morvillo.wmv: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7gaArWCy8s>.

Era D’Estate - Clip dal film - Prima cena all’Asinara: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtJm0kCmzZM>.

¹ See Renate Siebert, *Secrets of Life and Death: Women and the Mafia*, London, Verso, 1996, pp. 137-8.



EMANUELA LOI

19 JULY 1992

Born 9 October 1967, in the town of Sestu in Sardinia, Emanuela had dreamed of becoming a teacher, but then became interested in working as a police officer. She and her sister Claudia studied for the qualifying exams, and Emanuela passed the test with honors. In 1989, she was admitted to the 6-month police training course in Trieste, and then began what promised to be a successful career. In 1991, Emanuela was assigned a position as sentry guard, and served as protection for Sergio Mattarella, Pina Maisano Grassi, and mafia boss Francesco Madonia, a protected witness. On the weekends when she was free, she returned home to Sestu, to spend time with her mother Alberta, father Virgilio, sister Claudia, brother Marcello, and fiancé Andrea. In the wake of the Capaci Massacre, that claimed the lives of 3 fellow police bodyguards along with Judges Giovanni Falcone and Francesca Morvillo, Emanuela was notified that she would become part of the bodyguard protection squad. In early July, she was assigned to Judge Paolo Borsellino's team of bodyguards, a high risk position. On 19 July, shortly before 5:00 pm, Emanuela and fellow bodyguards escorted Judge Borsellino to his aged mother's home in Via D'Amelio. As they got out of the car, a Fiat exploded, instantly killing Emanuela, fellow bodyguards Walter Eddie Cosina, Agostino Catalano, Claudio Traina, Vincenzo Li Muli, and Judge Borsellino, the intended target. On 5 August 1992, Emanuela was awarded the Gold Medal of Honor. Commenting upon her sister's profound sense of duty and how her example should serve others, Claudia tells us, "I want to pay tribute to Emanuela, I want to remember and commemorate her every day. Not only because she was the first woman in Italy entrusted with police bodyguard duty and the first woman to die while performing that duty. I want to do so also because, together with fellow victims of mafia and terrorist massacres, and together with people who paid with their lives to defend the State and democratic values, Emanuela is an example, both great and simple at the same time. She's the example of a young woman, like me, my sister, my best friend, who simply fulfilled her duty to the fullest without ever holding back, not even when fate sent her to Palermo". Numerous schools, piazzas and streets in Italy

have been renamed in honor of Emanuela Loi. Her sister Claudia gives talks at schools and public events, telling Emanuela's story and informing people about the mafia and the culture of legality.

Sources: Film *La scorta di Paolo Borsellino – Emanuela Loi*, directed by Stefano Mordini and Pietro Valsecchi, 2018; Annarita Caramico, "Emanuela Loi: un angelo biondo al servizio dello Stato," <https://ecointernazionale.com/>; Annalisa Strada, *Io, Emanuela agente della scorta di Paolo Borsellino*, Turin, Einaudi Ragazzi, 2016; Laura Anello, *L'altra storia*, Milan, Sperling and Kupfer Editori, 2012; film *Gli angeli di Borsellino*, directed by Rocco Cesareo, 2003.

Photo, [it.Wikipedia.org](https://it.wikipedia.org/), [Creative Commons License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) 

Per Non Dimenticare Emanuela Loi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mP11ijGkB9M>.

Film La scorta di Paolo Borsellino - Emanuela Loi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pb1ojPkgvxA>.



RITA ATRIA

26 JULY 1992

Born on 4 September 1974, in Partanna Sicily, Rita was raised in a mafia family. Her father Vito Atria was a small-time mafioso who rustled livestock and then extorted money from the owners for the livestock's return. Rita's brother was also involved with the local mafia clans and the drug trade. In 1985, when Rita was just 11 years old, her father was gunned down by members of the clan vying for territorial power. Then 6 years later, in 1991, Nicola was riddled with machine gun fire, likely to prevent him from carrying out the vendetta against his father's murderers. In early November, 1991, Rita followed the example of her sister-in-law Piera Aiello, with whom she had a close, affectionate relationship, and became a witness for justice. Almost immediately she received death threats, and was transferred to Rome as part of the witness protection program. Working with Judges Alessandra Camassa and Paolo Borsellino, Rita provided invaluable testimony about the Cosa Nostra clans in the Partanna area and their possible links with local politicians, which enabled the successful prosecution of numerous mafiosi. Following the Capaci Massacre 23 May 1992 and then the Via D'Amelio Massacre 19 July 1992, which took the lives of judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, along with Judge Francesca Morvillo and 8 police body guards, Rita wrote the following words in her diary, "Borsellino, you died for what you believed in but without you I'm dead." Exactly 7 days after the murder of Borsellino, Rita jumped to her death from the seventh-floor balcony of her safe-house in Rome. Since then, she has become an inspirational symbol of the antimafia struggle and the commitment to justice, and several books tell her life story. Moreover, Rita Atria's own writings give invaluable insights about growing up in a mafia family, the experience of becoming a witness for justice, and the significance of the fight for truth and justice.

Sources: Robin Pickering-lazzi, *The Mafia in Italian Lives and Literature: Life Sentences and Their Geographies*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2017; video, "La storia di Rita Atria," Associazione Nazionale Legalità e Giustizia, YouTube, published 17 April

2014; Andrea Gentile, *Volevo nascere vento. Storia di Rita che sfidò la mafia con Paolo Borsellino*, Milan, Mondadori, 2012; Petra Reski, *Rita Atria. La picciridda dell'antimafia*, Modena, Nuovi Mondi, 2011; Rita Atria, "Testimony," in Robin Pickering-lazzi, *Mafia and Outlaw Stories from Italian Life and Literature*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2007; Sandra Rizza, *Una ragazza contro la mafia. Rita Atria, morte per solitudine*, Palermo, La luna, 1993.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from bsicilia.it.

La storia di Rita Atria: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMjMQ_3CzVU.

Il ricordo di Rita Atria: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0tFqUJMPQ>.



ANGELA
FIUME



CATERINA
NENCIONI



NADIA
NENCIONI

27 MAY 1993

Angela (36 years old) lived in the heart of the historic downtown area of Florence, in Via dei Georgofili with her husband Fabrizio Nencioni (39 years old), and daughters, 8 year-old Nadia and Caterina, her baby girl born on 6 April 1993. The young woman worked as the custodian of the prestigious Accademia dei Georgofili, located between the Uffizi Gallery and the Arno river. At 1:04 am on 27 May, while Angela and her family slept, a Fiat Fiorino loaded with some 259 kilos of explosives exploded in front of the Accademia. The massive explosion totally destroyed Angela and Fabrizio's residence, along with much of the building, and set others nearby afire. Angela, Nadia, and Caterina were crushed by the rubble and died on the scene, as did Fabrizio and Dario Capolicchio, a 22 year-old architecture student. Based upon testimonies given by *pentiti* and the extensive investigation, members of Cosa Nostra carried out the bombing, known as the Massacre of Via dei Georgofili, striking the symbolic center of Italy's artistic patrimony as an attack on the State. However, investigators and high profile *pentiti* such as Gaspare Spatuzza maintain the attack was conceived by a "different kind of criminal power," likely linked with political figures.

Sources: "La strage di via dei Georgofili, vent'anni fa," *Il Post*, 27 May 2013; "Nadia, Caterina, Giuseppe la mafia che non risparmia i bambini," la [Repubblica.it](http://www.repubblica.it), 23 May 2013.

Photo courtesy of [vittimemafia.it](http://www.vittimemafia.it), drawn from [memoria.san.beniculturali.it](http://www.memoria.san.beniculturali.it).

Ricordando la strage di via dei Georgofili a Firenze: <http://www.teche.rai.it/2018/05/ricordando-la-strage-via-dei-georgofili-firenze/>.

Franco dei Califfi - Omaggio a Nadia Nencioni dei Georgofili Firenze, Poesia il Tramonto: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su3YbC2DCG8>.

ROSA VERSACI

11 JANUARY 1994



At 67 years of age, Rosa had made a good life for herself and her son Angelo (41 years old) in Toronto, Canada, but dreamed only of returning to her hometown of Calanna in Calabria, just once before she died. Born in Calanna, she had married Rosario Morena and raised their son there, until she fled to Toronto to escape a spiraling cycle of vendettas, which started when her husband shot and killed their nephew, Letterio Versaci in 1961. He confessed and served a 16 year sentence. Upon his release in 1977, he was gunned down in the same spot where he had murdered Letterio. Hoping to fulfill his elderly mother's dream, on 20 December 1993, Angelo and his wife Caterina accompanied Rosa on a trip to Calanna to spend Christmas there. Just 3 days before they were scheduled to return to Toronto, on 11 January 1994, they were traveling on the road that runs from Calanna toward Rosaniti and neared the spot where Rosario had died, and Letterio before him. Another car pulled alongside theirs and a hit squad opened fire. In the hail of bullets, Rosa and Angelo were fatally shot, thus fulfilling the vendetta harbored for over 30 years. Caterina survived the attack without a scratch.

Source: Aldo Varano, "Madre e figlio assassinati in Calabria. Una vendetta covata per oltre trent'anni," *L'Unità*, 13 January 1994; "Rosa Versaci," www.vittimemafia.it.



ANGELA COSTANTINO

16 MARCH 1994

Extremely young when she married, by the time Angela was 25 she already had 4 children and lived as a “white widow” in Reggio Calabria, which is to say, a married woman whose spouse is in prison. Her husband, Pietro Lo Giudici, a clan boss who had been a major figure in the ’ndrangheta war from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, was serving a sentence in the Palmi prison. In his absence, according to Sara Ombra of the Public Prosecutors Office, Angela may have tried to make a different life for herself and her children with another man, likely Domenico Megalizzi. She became pregnant, and the Lo Giudice family forced her to terminate the pregnancy. Her extra-marital relationship and the pregnancy broke two fundamental laws of ’ndrangheta codes of behavior, bringing shame on the clan and their criminal sense of honor and respect, needed to effectively command. The decision to kill Angela was taken by the entire family. On 16 March, Angela went to the home of her nephew, Fortunato (Natino) Pennestri, who strangled her and hid her body. Angela’s remains have never been found. Pennestri was found guilty of the murder and Bruno Stilo was tried and convicted for ordering Angela be killed. She was survived by her 4 children. Megalizzi disappeared during the same period as Angela, a presumed victim of *lupara bianca*.

Sources: “Scomparsa di Angela Costantino, il pm: 30 anni per gli imputati,” www.corrieredellacalabria.it/cronaca/item/18158-18985_scomparsa_di_angela_costantino_il_pm_30_anni_per_gli_imputati/, 12 November 2013; “Tradì il marito boss mentre era detenuto,” la Repubblica.it, 14 April 2012.

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MARILENA
BRACAGLIA



NICOLINA
CERRANO



MARIA TERESA
GALLUCCI

18 MARCH 1994

As a young woman living in Rosarno, in Calabria, Maria Teresa faced extreme hardships. When she was 25 years old, her husband died while working as a bricklayer, and she was left to support and raise their three young children on her own. Once her children were grown, Maria Teresa fell in love with a businessman, Francesco Arcuri, and began an intimate relationship with him. Although they were discrete, rumors began circulating, and finally reached her son Francesco Alviano, the oldest of her 3 children. Francesco had earned his diploma with honors, and enrolled in the university in Economics. Nonetheless, he aspired to be a powerful ’ndranghetista. Francesco started to frequent important figures in the ’ndrangheta of Rosarno, ruled by the Pesce clan. In November 1993, Maria Teresa’s lover, Francesco, was murdered by professional killers tied to ’ndrangheta. Fearing for her life, before Christmas Maria Teresa left Rosarno with her mother, Nicolina Cerrano, and went to Genoa to hide out with relatives until the situation at home calmed down. They took shelter with Maria Teresa’s sister Concetta Gallucci, her husband, and their 3 children. On the morning of 18 March, only Maria Teresa, Nicolina, and Concetta’s 22 year-old daughter Marilena, a student of architecture, were home. When the doorbell rang at around 9:00 am, Maria Teresa went to see who was there, and opened the door. She was shot in the head at close range and died instantly. Marilena, who was asleep on the sofa bed in the living room, was shot 4 times in the head, and Nicolina, her grandmother, was shot and killed as she ran into the room to see what was happening. During the attack 10 bullets in all were fired from two different handguns. Francesco was arrested for the crime by police in Rosarno, but released due to insufficient evidence.

Sources: “Una coppia di killer per vendicare il boss,” la Repubblica.it, 24 March 1994; Danilo Chirico and Alessio Magro, *Uccidere o morire*, www.stopndrangheta.it/stopndr/

[art-asp?id=1392,uccidere+o+morire](https://www.vittimemafia.it/art-asp?id=1392,uccidere+o+morire)

Photo courtesy of [vittimemafia.it](https://www.vittimemafia.it), drawn from *La Stampa*, 21 March 1994.

ILARIA ALPI

20 MARCH 1994



Born in Rome on 24 May 1961, Ilaria earned notable recognition for her investigative reporting on the collusion between members of 'ndrangheta, elements of the Italian State, and business people in the trafficking of arms and highly toxic waste from Italy to Somalia. Her degree in Islamic Culture from the University of La Sapienza in Rome, fluency in Arabic, French, and English, and substantial time spent on the African continent made her uniquely qualified to conduct her work as a special correspondent for Tg3 in Somalia. She possessed personal aptitude for journalism as well. Recalling Ilaria, her close friend and colleague Rita Del Prete tells us, "She was curious, open-minded, human. Very direct. She didn't try to climb the career ladder, she was only interested in doing her own work well." As Ilaria prepared to make her last trip to Somalia and wind up her investigation into arms and toxic waste trafficking, she revealed how important the story was to her, speaking to another colleague, Alberto Calvi. In her words, the exposé was "The story of my lifetime, I have to finish it. I want to write the end." On 20 March, Ilaria and her camera operator Miran Hrovatin were returning to Mogadishu from Bosaso, where she had conducted interviews regarding arms trafficking and the Italian Cooperazione group. As they travelled along the road, a jeep blocked their car. Before Ilaria and Miran's driver could put the car in reverse, a squad of 7 men got out of the jeep and opened fire with Kalashnikovs. Ilaria suffered a fatal wound to the nape of her neck and Miran was shot in the head and died at the scene. Ilaria was 33 years old. Despite declarations of eyewitnesses who described the attack as an execution, attempts to steer the investigation off track were successful, and investigators perceived the attack as a failed kidnapping attempt. This line of thought was refuted by the *pentito* Francesco Fonti, an ex-member of 'ndrangheta, who stated Ilaria and Miran were killed because of evidence they had discovered, proving radioactive toxic waste was being shipped from Italy to Bosaso by the 'ndrangheta, with the involvement of elements of the Italian State and the secret services. In 2017, Luciana Alpi, Ilaria's mother, published evidence she and others had gathered, documenting facts about the murder of Ilaria

and Miran, as well as the attempts by the State to sabotage the investigation. Since 1994, many streets, parks, and piazzas have been named in honor of Ilaria Alpi. In 1995, the Ilaria Alpi award for investigative news reports on subjects of social and civil value was founded, and is awarded annually in Riccione. Numerous books, films, and even songs have been produced to tell the story of Ilaria's life and work. Nonetheless, the truth about the murder of Ilaria and Miran has yet to be disclosed.

Sources: "A futura memoria', dopo 24 anni la verità su Ilaria e Miran," *Antimafia Duemila*, www.antimafiaduemila.com/home/mafia-news/254-focus/69602-a-futura-memoria-dopo-24-anni-la-verita-su-ilaria-e-miran.html, 24 March 2018; Luciana Alpi, *Esecuzione con depistaggi di Stato*, Milan, Kaos Editore, 2017; Marco Rizzo and Francesco Ripoli, *Ilaria Alpi, il prezzo della libertà*, Padua, Becco Giallo, 2015; Francesca Bussi, "Ilaria Alpi, vent'anni fa l'omicidio della giornalista Rai," *Vanity Fair*, 3 March 2014; documentary, *Ilaria Alpi, l'ultimo viaggio*, 2015, directed by Claudio Canepari and Gabriele Gravagna; film *Ilaria Alpi. Il più crudele dei giorni*, released in the USA as *The Cruellest Day*, 2003, directed by Ferdinando Vincentini Ornagni.

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Nient'altro che la verità, il caso Ilaria Alpi Report: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LIX2h7XcmQ>.

Ilaria Alpi e Miran Hrovatin, le verità parallele - La storia siamo noi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-JILUq2rCg>.

Ilaria Alpi, l'ultimo viaggio: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmpPQOjtJ6E>.

Ilaria Alpi: The Cruellest Days Trailer: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6kgtrto>.

ANNA DELL'ORME



26 MARCH 1994

In her mid-forties, Anna was a member of the Amura family living in Secondigliano, a suburb in northern Naples, which was engaged in violent conflicts with the Esposito camorra clan for control of the territory. She had two grown sons, Domenico and Carmine Amura, and worked in one of the supermarkets owned by the Amura family. In 1991, 20 year-old Domenico was the victim of murder, poorly disguised as an accidental drug overdose. The killers injected the heroine into his right arm, and Domenico was right handed. Anna, dubbed the "detective mother," reconstructed her son's movements on the final day of his life, and discovered he had met with killers used by the Esposito clan, who were also renowned drug traffickers. She accused some 7 criminals in all of murdering her son, including Luigi Esposito, who was considered to be the right hand man of camorra boss Gennaro Licciardi. In her battle for justice, Anna, accompanied by her son Carmine, appeared on two popular Italian television shows, *Il coraggio di vivere* (The courage to live) and *I fatti vostri* (Your own affairs), where she publicly presented her evidence and accusations against members of the Esposito family. Riccardo Bonacina, the host of *Il Coraggio di vivere*, described Anna as "A strong woman, and desperate at the same time . . . she wanted justice, not a vendetta." As Anna herself stated on the show, "I want to see them tried in court, and put in prison." On the afternoon of 26 March 1994, Anna was working in the supermarket when she was shot, and died at the scene at 47 years of age. In the very same time frame, Anna's son Carmine was shot and killed, while arranging the window display in his clothing store. Police arrested Luigi Esposito for the crimes, but he was released due to lack of evidence.

Sources: "Aveva visto i killer: Giustiziato," la Repubblica.it, 8 April 1994; "26 marzo 1994: Uccisa a Secondigliano Anna Dell'Orme e il figlio Carmine Amura," www.napolitan.it/2017/03/26/61858/anna-dellorme-e-carmine-amura/.



MARIA TERESA PUGLIESE

27 MARCH 1994

Maria Teresa (48 years old) was active in women's associations in the Calabrian city of Locri, Calabria, where she lived with her husband Domenico Speziali, a well-known pediatrician and the former mayor of Locri. They had three children; their daughter Francesca practiced law, and their 2 two sons, Luigi and Felice, were both students. In the months leading up to March, the family had received threats from members of 'ndrangheta's extortion racket, and Maria Teresa's car was set on fire. The evening of 28 March, Maria Teresa and Domenico were ready to attend a Rotary dinner, scheduled at the last minute for the Siderno restaurant at the Hotel President. Domenico went to wait for his wife in their car. As Maria Teresa came out of the house, killers on a motorcycle drove up. One of the men pulled a sawed-off shotgun from under his jacket, and fired two shots at her, killing her instantly. Investigators have failed to discover a clear motive and the perpetrators.

Sources: "L'obiettivo era proprio la moglie dell'ex sindaco," [la Repubblica.it](#), 28 March 1994; Carlo Macrì, "L'agguato a Locri: non è stato un errore dei killer, volevano uccidere la signora," *Corriere della Sera*, 28 March 1994.



MARIA GRAZIA CUOMO

8 APRIL 1994

Maria Grazia led a cloistered life, by choice or circumstances. She had been born with a wine-colored birthmark on her face, and had few interactions with neighbors in the town of Nola, located on the plain between Mount Vesuvius and the Apennines. She lived in a country house with her sister Giuseppina and brother-in-law, Francesco Alfieri, and their 3 children. Late on the night of 8 April, at around 11:30, Maria Grazia was sound asleep when a squad of killers armed with Kalashnikovs burst into the home. They searched several rooms, and then went into Maria Grazia's dark bedroom yelling, "Where's Antonio?". When no one answered, they emptied their guns into the dark room, and fled. Maria Grazia suffered fatal wounds and died instantly at 57 years of age. The intended target of the ambush was Antonio Alfieri, 26 years old, the son of Carmine Alfieri, a former camorra boss who became a *pentito* following his arrest in 1992, and a distant relative of Francesco. The camorra hit squad sought to kill Antonio as both a punishment for his father's betrayal of the criminal clan and a warning to other members of the organization about the price they would pay for collaborating with the State authorities. In fact, the early 1990s saw a wave of camorristi becoming *pentiti*.

Source: Stella Cervasio, "Terra bruciata intorno ad Alfieri," *La Repubblica*, 9 April 1994.



LILIANA
CARUSO



AGATA
ZUCCHERO

10 JULY 1994

Liliana’s brief life demonstrates her strong character and willingness to make a new, mafia free life for herself and family. At 28 years of age, she was the mother of 3 children and married to Riccardo Messina (34 years old), a mafioso in the Savasta clan, allied with the powerful clan headed by Nitto Santapaola in Catania. In June of 1994, Riccardo decided to become a *pentito* and collaborate with the antimafia prosecutors, and was taken into custody. Liliana then moved with her 3 children to her parents’ home in downtown Catania. Within days, Liliana was contacted by women married to mafiosi in Riccardo’s former clan, including Concetta Spampinato, Domenica Micci and Santa Vasta. The women threatened Liliana on the clan’s behalf, and tried to convince her to pretend that she and her children were being held hostage and would be freed only if Riccardo retracted his testimony. Liliana did not yield to the threats, and in fact reported them to the antimafia prosecutors. Describing Liliana, the prosecutors stated, “She wasn’t afraid for her own life, she was calm and confident. She had a strong, loving bond with her husband.” On 8 July, Liliana visited Riccardo in the high security prison where he was in protective custody in order to alert him to the increasing dangers. “Be careful! I’m afraid they can kill you here too,” she told him. Two days later, around 9:00 am, Liliana, along with her mother Agata Zuccherò, 61 years old, went out to do the grocery shopping, and left her children at home. Liliana entered the neighborhood delicatessen in Via Garibaldi, while her mother waited a few steps away on the sidewalk. A squad of 4 mafia killers began their ambush; 2 killers went into the delicatessen and one of them pointed a revolver at Liliana’s face, shooting her at least 3 times, and leaving her almost unrecognizable. Upon hearing the shots, Agata attempted to escape between parked cars, but the killers caught up with her and shot her in the head 2 times. Both women died at the scene of the crime. Liliana’s 3 children were taken to a secure location. Though

questions were raised concerning the lack of protection for Liliana and her family, it appears that Liliana refused bodyguard protection, thinking that it might draw attention to her and make the situation more dangerous. She also rejected moving her family to a protected location, because it would have made visits to see her husband difficult. Arrest warrants were issued for Antonino Puglisi and Orazio Nicolosi, top men in the clan and fugitives at the time. Concetta Spampinato, Domenica Micci, and Santa Vasta were taken into custody. Despite the murders of his wife and mother-in-law, intended as the mafia’s vendetta against Riccardo and a warning, Liliana’s husband continued to give testimony against the mafia clan members and crimes.

Sources: “Agguato alle donne del pentito,” la Repubblica.it, 16 July 1994; Walter Rizzo, “Massacrate mentre fanno la spesa,” *Corriere della Sera*, 16 July 1994; “Si è fatta assassinare per non tradire il marito,” la Repubblica.it, 17 July 1994; “10 July 1994. Catania. Assassinate Liliانا Caruso, 28 anni, e Agata Zuccherò, moglie e madre di un collaboratore di giustizia.” www.napolitan.it/2017/07/10/66517/liliana-caruso/.



PALMA (PALMINA) SCAMARDELLA

12 DECEMBER 1994

Palma lived in Pianura, a poor, crime-ridden suburb of Naples. In order to make ends meet and support herself and her 15 month-old daughter Emanuela, Palma took care of the children of friends and neighbors, a job in which she excelled. By all accounts, she adored children. On the evening of 12 December, Palma heard a noise outside her home, and went onto the stairway on the outside of the building to see what it was. She was shot in the head and died immediately, at 35 years of age. According to the investigators' reconstruction of the murder, the killers were targeting Palma's uncle Domenico Di Fusco in a settling of camorra clan scores. Di Fusco was a loyal member of the Lago clan, active in the western area of Naples, and lived in the building adjacent to Palma's. When the killers saw a person moving on the stairway behind some foliage they opened fire, assuming it was Di Fusco. In 2010, the Associazione Palma Scamardella – Vittima Innocente di camorra (Palma Scamardella Association – Innocent victim of the camorra) was founded with the dual scope of keeping Palma's memory alive and providing help to people in need, primarily through economic support, such as school scholarships, books, and funds for school programs. Today Palma's daughter Emanuela gives public talks at schools and other venues, to tell her mother's story and inform the public about the mafias and antimafia associations.

Sources: "12 Dicembre 1994: Uccisa a Pianura Palma Scamardella, vittima di un proiettile destinato a un camorrista," www.napolitan.it/2017/12/12/71473/palma-scamardella/; Giuliana Covella, *Fiore . . . come me. Storie di dieci vite spezzate*, Naples, Spazio Creativo Edizioni, 2013.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from fondazionepolis.regione.campania.it.

[Palma Scamardella, vittima innocente di camorra.](#)

[Napoli, due alberi a Pianura per ricordare Palma Scamardella.](#)

GIOVANNA GIAMMONA

25 FEBRUARY 1995



Following the infamous Cosa Nostra massacres of 1992, life in the city of Corleone, Sicily, was relatively calm, full of antimafia sentiment against mafia superboss Salvatore Riina's forces. Giovanna Giammona was a young mother who lived in Corleone with her husband Francesco Saporito (30 years old) and 2 small children, a 4 year-old daughter and a baby boy. Tragedy first struck Giovanna's family on 28 January 1995, when her brother Giuseppe was brutally gunned down in his Corleone store. He suffered 8 gunshot wounds and died instantly. Nearly one month later, shortly after 9:00 pm on 25 February, Giovanna held her 1 year-old baby boy in her arms while riding in the family car with Francesco at the wheel. Her daughter was asleep in the back seat. A car suddenly pulled in front of Giovanna's and blocked the downtown Corleone street. Two men armed with handguns got out of the car and approached, then opened fire, shooting some 4 shots each at Giovanna and Francesco. Giovanna, 27 years old, died on the spot, along with her husband Francesco. Their children both survived, and were raised by Giovanna's mother, Caterina Somelini. The execution style murders of Giuseppe, Giovanna, and Francesco puzzled investigators. Caterina Somelini declared repeatedly that her family never had dealings with the mafia, and in fact she succeeded at having her son, daughter, and son-in-law given juridical status as "innocent victims of the mafia." Light was finally shed on the Giammona case when Giovanni Brusca, a pivotal ex-member of Cosa Nostra, provided testimony. As he revealed, Salvatore Riina had gotten wind of rumors that the mafia clans he had decimated were planning to kidnap his elder son Giovanni, and the Giammona family was somehow involved. This threat of kidnapping was never confirmed. Furthermore, the Giammonas had been entirely extraneous to the Corleone mafia. Nonetheless Riina ordered the murders of the Giammona family. Giovanni Riina was ultimately tried for these murders, among others, and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Sources: Patrizia Vindigni, "L'uccisione dei Giammona," stampacritica.it, 29 February

2016; “Giuseppe e Giovanna Giammona, Francesco Saporito sono vittime di mafia,” liberainformazione.org, 27 February 2012.

EPIFANIA (FINA) COCCHIARA



15 APRIL 1995

A vibrant young woman, Epifania, known as Fina by friends and family, lived a full life in the city of Gela, along with her husband Raffaele Cafà, their 5 year-old son, and 2 year-old daughter. She divided her time between family and her husband’s butcher shop, where she often spent time serving clients and taking care of the shop. People who frequented the butcher shop spoke warmly about Fina, in their words “a mild mannered woman, always polite and smiling when she helped the clients”. On Saturday, 15 April 1995, Fina, along with her children, went to the butcher shop to help out. It was an especially busy day, since families were making their purchases for preparing their Easter dinner celebrations. Fina and her husband had finished cleaning the shop, and were about to lock up when 2 masked men armed with semi-automatic weapons burst in and demanded the cash. According to reports, Fina had her young children beside her and her husband was standing with a gun trained on him by one of the men. Cafà punched the man, and one of the children got away from Fina, and she screamed. Amidst the confusion, a shot was fired, striking her in the nape of the neck. Fina, just 28 years old, died from the wound. Numerous citizens of Gela, as well as city leaders, attended her funeral. The investigations into the robbery and the young woman’s murder failed to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

Sources: vittimemafia.it; “La giovane moglie del macellaio uccisa da un solo colpo di pistola,” *Giornale di Sicilia*, 19 April 1995; “Quelle inutili discussioni,” *La Sicilia*, 18 April 1995; “Tentano una rapina in macelleria. Il titolare reagisce, uccidono la moglie,” *Giornale di Sicilia*, 18 April 1995.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, provided by Epifania Cocchiara’s daughter.



VINCENZA
(VINZENZINA)
MARCHESE

12 MAY 1995

Born into the Marchese mafia family of Palermo, Vincenza was raised according to mafia ways of thinking and acting, and groomed to be a wife of a mafioso. In 1991, she married Leoluca Bagarella, a descendant of a multi-generational Cosa Nostra family and brother-in-law of Salvatore Riina. Vincenza lived as the wife of a fugitive from the law for most of her marriage. On 12 May 1995, she hung herself in the Palermo apartment she shared with Leoluca. She left a brief note, asking for her family's forgiveness, the sole clue leading investigators to discover her death. The *pentito* Toni Calvaruso provided information shedding light on Vincenza's life and death. According to his testimony, Leoluca discovered Vincenza's body and telephoned Calvaruso to ask him to come to his home. They carefully dressed her body and placed her in the boss's car, and then Leoluca drove off. Vincenza's remains have yet to be discovered. The reasons for her suicide are also the subject of speculation. Vincenza suffered at least two miscarriages, and longed to have a child. She was also allegedly shocked and profoundly troubled by her husband's involvement in the 1993 kidnapping of the 12 year-old Giuseppe Di Matteo, who was tortured and then killed in 1996. There is also speculation that she had a deep sense of shame due to her brother Giuseppe's collaboration with police. By becoming a *pentito*, based on mafia thought, Giuseppe betrayed Cosa Nostra and cast dishonor and shame on his entire family. Thus, according to Enzo Mignosi, Vincenza committed suicide to escape her own shame and also to save Leoluca from shame and potentially a vendetta for his brother-in-law's betrayal of Cosa Nostra. Vincenza's life with Leoluca Bagarella and suicide are portrayed in ample scenes of the RAI television series *Il cacciatore* (2018), inspired by the book *Il cacciatore di mafiosi*, written by the prosecutor Alfonso Sabella. Sabella wrote the scripts for the 12 episodes of the television series, directed by Davide Marenga.

Source: Television series *Il cacciatore*, written by Alfonso Sabella, directed by Davide Marenga, produced by RAI, 2018; Alfonso Sabella, *Il cacciatore di mafiosi*, Milan,

Mondadori, 2008; Enzo Mignosi, "I gesti disperati delle donne d'onore," Live Sicilia, 2 April 2009,

https://Livesicilia.it/2009/04/02/i-gesti—disperati-delle-donne-donore_3566/.

Il cacciatore di mafiosi, il trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPz-TkcF9HI&list=P_Lonaig0yoNKsLOfLBbFcfi5VMaQJ1ljuK.



CARMELA MINNITI

1 SEPTEMBER 1995

As the wife of Catania mafia boss Benedetto Santapaola, known as Nitto, Carmela led a double life. She was the owner of an elegant stationary store in downtown Catania, which she managed on her own while raising her three children, whom she sent to the city's best schools. She also frequented public and private events organized by Catania's elite. Fulfilling the role performed by many mafia women, Carmela created a sense of normalcy and social respectability in her family, while her husband, the father of her children, ordered and committed some of the most violent mafia murders Catania had seen. The particular qualities possessed by Carmela were described by the police who went to her home on 18 May 1993 in order to arrest Nitto, who had been a fugitive for 11 years. They tell us, she "Was tough and loyal, like a mafia boss's woman must be, but also self-confident and elegant, with savoir faire, and dignified". The police added that she even thanked the officers for their professional conduct during the arrest. Two years later, on 1 September, Carmela and her daughter Cosima were at home preparing their dinner, and someone buzzed to enter the building. When Carmela asked who was there, the person said "Police." Upon opening the door into her home, Carmela faced two men dressed in police uniforms, who opened fire and killed her instantly. Her daughter Cosima was left unharmed. The ex-mafioso and collaborator with justice Giuseppe Ferone was found guilty for Carmela's murder, a vendetta, he said, for the murders of his son and father.

Source: "L'ultima colazione col marito in manette," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 2 September 1995.



MARIA BOTTA

1 FEBRUARY 1996

Maria Botta lived her days constantly on guard and under threat after she married Rolando Riera, a major figure in the Riera clan, pitted against the Equatore clan in a string of attacks and counter-attacks, committed to gain control over territory in downtown Naples. On 1 February, Maria, who was 8 months pregnant, and her father-in-law Salvatore accompanied Rolando to a meeting ostensibly set up by the Contini clan in order to reach a new agreement on dividing criminal activities in Naples. Suspicious, Rolando wanted some protection, and asked 26 year-old Maria and his father to come to the meeting with him. In actuality the meeting was a trap. Maria was shot and killed at the scene, along with Rolando and Salvatore, in what is now called the Riera family massacre. The attempts to save Maria's unborn child were futile.

Source: Viviana Lanza, "Massacro Riera: due ergastoli. Assolto il boss Annunziata," Il [Mattino.it](https://www.mattino.it), 5 July 2016.



ANNAMARIA TORNÒ

1 MARCH 1996

Tall, slender, with big blue eyes, Annamaria grew up in a large family living in Puglia, with 5 brothers and sisters. Her father insisted his children begin working as soon as they were able, and forced Annamaria to leave school and look for a job. After his death, she immediately enrolled in middle school, where she enjoyed her studies and achieved success. Drawing was a passion of hers, and her dream was to work in the fashion industry designing clothes. According to friends and family, she was smart, vivacious and full of energy. At 18, Annamaria was engaged to Cosimo Venezia, an agricultural worker in Ginosa, a small town near Taranto. Planning to be married soon, she moved to Ginosa, and found work as a seasonal fieldworker, a network of labor dominated by organized crime in Puglia and Calabria, among other regions. On the morning of 1 March 1996, Annamaria climbed into the van driven by her boss Pietro De Biase, which was built to carry just 9 passengers. Instead, De Biase normally transported 14 to 15 women workers at once, both to and from the farm. The van departed from Ginosa and at 7:30 am was making a left turn into the farm's property when another car crashed into it. Annamaria sustained the worst injuries, and was immediately taken to Santissima Annunziata hospital in Taranto, where she died. Recalling Annamaria's life and death, Libera underscored the importance of her voice, "One among many, reminding us that thousands of unknown, nameless people suffer and die every day because of the mafia."

Sources: Lino Castrovilli, "La mafia uccide anche in Puglia. Le 63 vittime pugliesi della criminalità organizzata," 21 March 2015; "Chi è Annamaria Torno," ivrea.liberapiemonte.it.

SANTA PUGLISI

27 AUGUST 1996

Born and raised in a mafia family, 22 year-old Santa was the daughter of Antonino (Nino) Puglisi, the boss of the powerful Catanian Savasta clan at the center of the mafia war for control over Catania. In 1996, Santa's father was in prison serving sentences for multiple homicides and on trial for ordering the murders of Liliana Caruso and Agata Zuccherò, the wife and mother-in-law of Riccardo Messina, a former member of the Savasta clan who was collaborating with antimafia prosecutors. In conjunction with the same case, Santa's mother, Domenica Micci, was also held in police custody because of the death threats that she and Santa Vasta made against Liliana. As the state prosecutor of Catania Mario Basacca speculated, Santa, like fellow mafia women, may have performed significant functions in the Savasta clan: "The clan bosses in prison have always communicated with members on the outside through their women . . . Some of these women have assumed active roles, not simply delivering messages, and it's possible Santa was in this group." At 2:50 pm on 27 August, Santa was making her daily trip to the Catania cemetery to place fresh flowers on the grave site of her husband, Matteo Romeo, who had been killed in a mafia ambush in downtown Catania on 23 November 1995. On this particular afternoon, some of her young cousins wanted to go with her. Salvatore Botta, 14 years old, and his 12 year-old sister accompanied Santa inside the cemetery, while a 3 year-old cousin was left sleeping in the car parked on the street. As Santa entered the small Puglisi family chapel, a man who seemed to be praying over a nearby grave stood up, shot Santa 4 times, first in the back, and then straight in the face to disfigure her, and by association, her father as well. Salvatore tried to escape, but the killer caught up with him and shot him in the head and face. His sister managed to hide behind a tall grave stone, and told investigators everything that she had seen. Within days, the police arrested Giuseppe Ravalli, the 18 year-old nephew of *ex-pentito* Giuseppe Ferrone. Ravalli confessed to the murders, stating that Ferrone had convinced him to kill Santa as a vendetta for the murders of Ferrone's wife and son: "He wanted Nino Puglisi to suffer the same way he had when they killed his son." As



historians note, Santa's murder was part of a deadly cycle of vendettas involving women linked to the Savasta clan of Catania, a clan that took its name from Antonio Puglisi's mother, described as "a strong woman, authoritarian, to the point that in postwar Sicily she imposed her last name on her descendants." The vendetta began with the murders of Liliana Caruso and Agata Zuccherò 15 July 1994, and the death threats made by Domenica Micci and Santa Vasta, the murder of Carmela Minniti, wife of boss Nitto Santapaola 1 September 1995, committed by Giuseppe Ferrone, and then the killing of Santa Puglisi.

Sources: "Massacro al cimitero. Uccisa la figlia del boss," *la Repubblica.it*, 28 August 1996; Alfio Sciacca, "Massacrata sulla tomba del marito," *Corriere della Sera*, 28 August 1996; Giusy Lazzara, "Strage al cimitero. Uccisi figlia e nipote di un boss catanese," *L'Unità*, 28 August 1996; Fabrizio Capecelatro, "Santa Puglisi fu uccisa a 22 anni da un killer di 18: erano consapevoli di morire e di uccidere?," www://pourfemme.it/articolo/santa-puglisi-fu-uccisa-a-22-anni-da-un-killer-di-18-erano-consapevoli-di-morire-e-di-uccidere/42257/.

GIROLAMA (MIMMA) FERRANTE



30 AUGUST 1996

In her friends' words, Girolama "Was a really dynamic woman, full of passion for life." By the time she was 48 years old in fact, Girolama, known as Mimma, lived a life rich with professional successes as an architect and urban initiatives to improve everyday living for the residents of Palermo. Well known in Palermo for her political and social activism, Mimma was committed to restoring the historic downtown neighborhoods that had been blighted by the mafia's sack of the city. With the scope of recuperating Palermo's artistic and cultural patrimony, in the 1970s she engaged in activist programs launched by leftist parties. Along with her husband Carlo Romano, a professor of psychology, Mimma also started to teach yoga and exercise classes at the famed Avatar Center, a popular meeting place of the seventies. After separating from her husband, Mimma moved to Mexico, and worked as an architect for a volunteer organization for several years. In the mid-1990s, she returned to Palermo in order to fulfill her lifetime dream, to open a social center for the elderly and people with social behavior problems. To house the center, she began a large restoration project at Villa Nicolosi, a complex of houses built in the 1800s, which she and her ex-husband had purchased some 20 years earlier. Work began on the houses in June 1996, and Mimma arrived at the building site early every morning, working until late afternoon. By August, the first house was fully restored, and the crew was ready to begin work on the largest building. On 30 August, Mimma went to the bank to withdraw funds for the workers' salaries, and then arrived at the work site. Two men appeared, asking to be hired on the crew, but were sent away. They returned minutes later with a handgun, demanding the money in Mimma's small bag. She resisted, and was killed with a gun shot to the abdomen.

Source: "Difende le paghe, assassinata," *la Repubblica.it*, 31 August 1996.



CONCETTA MATARAZZO

12 OCTOBER 1996

On the evening of 12 October, 37 year-old Concetta was riding in a car driven by her friend Raffaele Iorio, traveling along the Domiziana highway that runs along the seashore near Naples. Their car was nearly demolished when a VW Golf crashed into it after the driver and his passenger, 2 members of the camorra, were caught in gunfire and killed. Concetta was trapped in Raffaele's car, and had to be freed by the jaws of life. She died instantly in the crash, an innocent woman about whom "almost nothing is known," said reporters at the time.

Sources: "Feriti sull'auto in un agguato sbandano, muore una donna," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 12 October 1996; Milone Fulvio, "Camorra a Napoli vittima innocente in un agguato," [lastampa.it](https://www.lastampa.it), 12 October 1996.

LUIGIA ESPPOSITO

14 NOVEMBER 1996



Luigia was a victim of both the camorra in Naples and the justice system. The young woman frequented drug dealers, and was known to use heroine. On the evening of 11 November she was standing beside the BMW owned by Ciro Rispoli, who was tied to the Formicola clan and sold drugs in Barra. Luigia became an involuntary witness to his murder that night, which was part of the battle for power between camorra clans operating in the eastern part of the city. Clan boss Angelo Cuccaro then ordered Rosario Casillo and Francesco Amen to kill Luigia, presumably the only eyewitness to the shooting. On 14 November, the two men took Luigia into the open countryside in Sant'Anastasia and attempted to shoot her, but the gun jammed. They then struck her in the head, and rushed to the city to get a knife. When the two men returned, they stabbed Luigia over 20 times to the head and temples. She died at the scene. Though the police made arrests, initially Luigia's case was not tried in court, and "disappeared in the chaos of the justice system." By chance, the documents were discovered in 2005, and the case was reopened. Prosecutor Stefania Castaldi successfully presented the case and in 2009, Angelo Cuccaro was sentenced to life in prison for ordering Luigia's murder. Rosario Casillo was murdered, and Francesco Amen turned himself in and collaborated with the police.

Sources: "Giustizia per la testimone assassinata," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 22 January 2009; "Processo sparito? Denuncio tutto," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 14 December 2005.

Photo, [fondazionepolis.regione.campania.it](https://www.fondazionepolis.regione.campania.it).



MARIA
ANTONIETTA
SAVONA

18 NOVEMBER 1996

The warlike conditions of daily living created by the mafia have claimed the lives of victims in different ways, through murder, death threats pushing individuals to take their own lives, and fatally tragic circumstances. Such is the case of Maria Antonietta, whose life, for all intents and purposes, was entirely normal. She lived in Trapani, and at 36 years old she was a home maker and mother of 3 children with her husband Antonino Salerno, who worked as a carpenter in Milan. In early November, she had given birth to their youngest child, a baby boy they wanted to name Riccardo. On 18 November, Maria Antonietta was driving her car along the bypass that runs from Trapani to Palermo, along with her 3 children. Just as her car entered an intersection, an armored police escort car protecting the head prosecutor of Sciacca, Bernardo Petralia, drove through a red light, a maneuver that is sometimes necessary to avoid becoming trapped between vehicles and vulnerable to mafia attacks. The police escort vehicle struck Maria Antonietta's car squarely on the side where the one-week old Riccardo was seated, immediately killing him and his mother. Maria Antonietta was survived by her two other children.

Source: Saverio Lodato, "Uccisi da un'auto blindata," *L'Unità*, 19 November 1996.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it.



AGATA
AZZOLINA

23 MARCH 1997

Some 20 years after Agata's death, her daughter Chiara describes her poignantly, "My mother was the light, a joyful person, with a sunny disposition." Agata made her life in Niscemi, a town in Sicily of about 30,000 residents, with her husband Salvatore Frazzetto, son Giacomo, known as Mimmo, and daughter Chiara. She worked alongside her husband and son in the elegant Papillon fur and jewelry store that they had built themselves and made successful. In the mid-1990s, mafiosi enforcing the extortion racket in Niscemi hounded Agata and Salvatore to make them pay the *pizzo*, essentially money extorted to protect them and their business from the mafia's own violence. Agata and Salvatore refused to pay. Subsequently, two brothers, Maurizio and Salvatore Infuso, came into the store, saying they would take pieces of jewelry and pay on an installment plan, in other words, take goods instead of cash as payment of the *pizzo*. After refusing this idea, the storeowners became the victims of death threats, robbery, and physical assaults that escalated. On 16 October 1996, the brothers knocked at the Papillon store door. Agata was terrified to let them in and her husband's face turned "white as a corpse," as she revealed in an interview with Cecile Landman. Agata opened the door, and the brothers looked over the displayed jewelry, demanding to see rings that were more expensive. One of the brothers threw a small table at Salvatore, and the other assaulted Agata, so their son Mimmo went to get the gun registered in Salvatore's name. In the ensuing altercation between one of the brothers and Mimmo gun shots were fired. Meanwhile, Agata was nearly strangled to death, then grabbed by the hair, punched, and kicked repeatedly. After hearing more shots fired, Agata saw the killer still holding the gun as he approached her. He put it to her chest and pulled the trigger, but it misfired. The Infuso brothers fled, and Agata ran to check on Mimmo and Salvatore, both dead from multiple gunshot and knife wounds. The killers were arrested within hours. However, other clan members continued to threaten the life of Agata and her young daughter. One day, while Agata prayed over the graves of her husband and son, a man approached and told her that the affair "Wasn't over." Determined to continue

operating the business for the sake of her daughter, and not to give in to the mafia, Agata filed police reports against her attackers. She requested police protection, but it was denied, due to lack of funds and personnel. Two carabinieri were finally stationed outside her home, but could not accompany her when she went out. In December 1996, the Papillon's store display windows were all broken, which the police attributed to the cold weather. Agata found a note: "You have a daughter and you're in our hands. You have to pay the *pizzo*." Agata was left virtually alone to protect her daughter and herself, with no support from either fellow shop owners or the Italian State. As Chiara explains, the shop owners thought that paying the extorted money was the normal price of business, and blamed Agata for creating her problems. And as for the State, in Agata's words, "The State has left me all alone. Omertà is increasing, there's only silence." At around 3:00 am on Sunday 23 March 1997, Agata wrote a note to her daughter, stating "Forgive me, Chiara, but I can't take it anymore . . . leave this damned town." She took a nylon rope, threw it over a beam in the kitchen of the home her husband had built, and hung herself, a victim of the mafia. She was 43 years old.

Sources: "Io Ricordo Salvatore e Giacomo Frazzetto, nelle parole di Chiara (figlia e sorella)," YouTube, posted by Fondazione Progetto Legalità – Paolo Borsellino, 8 January 2014; Andrew Gumbel, "After the Suicide, a Wall of Silence," *The Independent*, 6 May 1997; "Un suicidio annunciato," *la Repubblica.it*, 24 March 1997; "Io, sola. . . morte vivente," *la Repubblica.it*, 24 March 1997.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from giornalecittadinopress.it.

Io ricordo Salvatore e Giacomo Frazzetto, nelle parole di Chiara (figlia e sorella): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqUHiGWGzfs>.

RAFFAELLA LUPOLI



10 JUNE 1997

At 11 years old, Raffaella was tall for her age, with blond hair and bright eyes. She dreamed of becoming a judge, as her family and classmates say, so she could put all of the drug traffickers and dealers in jail, and her father could overcome the addiction that tore her family apart. She lived in the town of Gandoli with her mother, Patrizia Turi (32 years old), who worked for a cleaning service, and rarely saw her father, Antonio Lupoli (34 years old). Patrizia and Antonio had separated some 7 years earlier and just divorced. On 10 June, Raffaella and her fellow fifth-grade classmates had a party to celebrate the end of the school year. Shortly after 9:00 that evening, Raffaella's father picked her up in his car to take a ride and celebrate the last day of school together. Antonio drove to the Tamburi neighborhood in nearby Taranto, known for its high crime rate and drug dealing, and slowed down at an intersection. A motorcycle with two men aboard approached Antonio's car. One of the men got off and fired several shots. Raffaella was hit 3 times, wounded in her side, her arm, and heart. She turned to her father and said, "There's so much blood!". She was rushed to the hospital, but died along the way. Antonio, whose hand was grazed, had a police record for minor criminal offences. But he was the intended target of the ambush because he was suspected of having had a relationship with mafia boss Rodolfo Cario's wife while the boss was serving a jail sentence. The police arrested both Cario (26 years old), who ordered the murder and was on the motorcycle, and Francesco Pulpo, the killer, just 20 years old. Raffaella has become a symbol for the antimafia organization Andria Viva.

Sources: "Arrestato il killer di Raffaella," *la Repubblica.it*, 13 June 1997; "Sarò giudice per salvare papà'," *la Repubblica.it*, 12 June 1997; video "Giorno particolare in ricordo di Raffaella Lupoli," <https://www.andriaviva.it/video/guglielmi-giorno-particolare-in-ricordo-di-raffaella-lupoli/>.



SILVIA RUOTOLO

11 JUNE 1997

Born in 1958, Silvia grew up in an upper middle-class family, living in the enchanting Vomero district of Naples with her parents, older sister Michela, and younger brother Giovanni. She loved playing tennis and also learned to play the guitar. Shortly after Silvia earned her high school diploma she met Lorenzo Clemente, whom she married in 1984. After the birth of their first child, a daughter they named Alessandra, Silvia decided to devote her time to being a home maker and mother. In 1992, Silvia gave birth to her second child, Francesco, and became highly active in educational and social initiatives. She worked to introduce school lunch services at the kindergarten school and engaged in assistance programs for educating differently challenged children at the Giffas Center. On 11 June 1997, Silvia went to pick up her 5 year-old son at kindergarten. Alessandra, 10 years old, was on their balcony watching her mother and brother as they walked up the narrow Arenella street, returning home. She then witnessed her mother die. Traffic suddenly jammed in the crowded street and two men got out of their car. They opened fire, and in the hail of bullets, some 40 shots, Silvia was struck in the face, and died on the spot. A young university student, Riccardo Valle was wounded in the back. The two targets of the ambush were members of the Cimmino camorra clan: Salvatore Raimondi, who was killed, and Luigi Filippini, who was wounded. Filippini and Rosario Privato were arrested and collaborated with the police, which led to the sentencing of clan boss Giovanni Alfano, as well as clan members Vincenzo Cacace and Mario Cerbone. Silvia's family was the first in Campania to receive economic compensation for relatives of victims of mafia crimes. They used the funds to found the non-profit Fondazione Silvia Ruotolo (Silvia Ruotolo Foundation), which has the primary purpose of providing aid to disadvantaged children and young people, and disseminating information on the culture of legality. Silvia's daughter is active in city projects to improve the living conditions in Naples and keep her mother's story alive.

Source: www.fondazione-silvia.ruotolo.it; "Silvia Ruotolo, vent'anni dopo,"

liberainformazione.org, 11 June 2017.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it.

Alessandra Clemente e' una giovane donna, E' figlia di Silvia Ruotolo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jOuVxvYO4w>.

Silvia Ruotolo, un simbolo per la legalita': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhqWCYuDw8c>.

<https://www.fondazione-silvia.ruotolo.it>.



ANNUNZIATA MIRABELLA

5 AUGUST 1997

Born in 1962, in New Jersey, Annunziata married Domenico Grasso, a boss of a 'ndrangheta clan, and moved to the town of Bovalino, in the Province of Reggio Calabria. In 1989, at the age of 26 with an 8 year-old son to raise, she became a "white widow." The police arrested Domenico in the northern city of Turin, and he soon began serving a life sentence in prison for the kidnapping of the Turinese industrialist Lorenzo Crosetto, who never returned home. While Annunziata lived on her own with her son Paolo, members of the local 'ndrangheta clan began to suspect that she was having a relationship with another man, thus casting shame on her husband's honor and the criminal organization's as well. Shortly before dawn on Tuesday, 5 August 1997, Annunziata was returning home with her son beside her. A man armed with a handgun approached them and gave orders to Paolo, "Move aside! You're not involved in this. I have to kill her." Trying to protect his mother, Paolo stepped in front of her, but the killer fired a shot, which struck Annunziata in the shoulder. She and Paolo both took off at a run, trying to escape. When Annunziata finally fell to the ground, the killer walked up to her and shot her close range in the head. She died instantly, at 35 years of age. In the fray, Paolo was wounded in the leg, but survived.

Source: Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012; "Uccisa moglie di un boss. Dava scandolo," *L'Unità*, 6 August 1997.



ANGELA BONARRIGO

11 AUGUST 1997

Angela's family was active in a 'ndrangheta clan that since 1992 had been involved in a violent war with other clans fighting for control over territory in the Gioia Tauro area. By the time she was 54 years old, she had lost two sons, Santo (25 years old), who was killed in an ambush in 1992, and Giuseppe (25 years old), murdered in 1995. On the torrid evening of 11 August 1997, just before 6:00 pm, Angela was near her home in the town of Oppido Mamertina, talking with her husband Giuseppe Antonio Gugliotta (57 years old), son Antonio Gugliotta, and Antonino Gangemi, a young acquaintance. A car abruptly stopped on the street, and a squad of at least 3 men got out and opened fire with handguns and rifles. Angela was shot and killed on the spot, along with her son Antonio, who was 28 years old. Her husband and Antonino Gangemi were wounded, and Gangemi later died of his injuries in the hospital.

Source: "Raid di terrore in Calabria uccisi madre e figlio. Due feriti," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 12 August 1997.



ANNALISA ISAIA

10 APRIL 1998

Living in Catania with her mother, 20 year-old Annalisa attempted to live a life free of the prohibitions and violence imposed by members of her family, aligned with the Sciuto clan of Cosa Nostra. Like other young people her age, she enjoyed going out to listen to music and dance at the local clubs, and spend time with friends of her own choosing, regardless of their family's last name. On 10 April, Annalisa left to spend the evening at a club with a young man her age, with whom she had a friendly relationship. She didn't return home that night, but her mother, Ignazia Trovato (44 years old) wasn't worried, because her daughter sometimes spent the night or even a couple of days at her girl friends' homes. After a few days went by with no word from Annalisa, her family reported her missing. Her body was found several days later, buried in the countryside near Passo Martino, just south of Catania. A member of a local Cosa Nostra clan who became a collaborator with justice provided information about Annalisa's murder, which led to the arrest of her uncle, Luciano Daniele Trovato, 28 years old, and a member of the Sciuto clan. Luciano made up an excuse to convince Annalisa to get in his car. He drove her to the countryside where he then shot her 2 times in the head, and buried her body. He killed the young girl as punishment for leading a life that was too "rowdy" and spending time with young people linked to a rival family, the Laudani clan, that he thought was responsible for the murder of Annalisa's father, Paolo Isaia, in an ambush in Acireale in 1993. When the investigators told Ignazia that Luciano had shot Annalisa, she expressed total disbelief: "It's not possible. I don't believe it. My brother couldn't have killed my daughter!".

Sources: Amy Boylan, "Democratizing the Memorial Landscape: Casamemoria Vittimemafia's Calendar of Loss," in *The Italian Antimafia, New Media, and the Culture of Legality*, edited by Robin Pickering-lazzi, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2017; Fabio Albanese, "Punita con la morte dai killer di Nico," *La Stampa*, 19 April 1998.



INCORONATA
SOLLAZZO



MARIA INCORONATA
RAMELLA

24 APRIL 1998

Incoronata, 36 years old, was a married mother of 2 children who lived in Carapelle, a small town in the Foggia Province of Apulia. Maria, 25 years old, was a young woman just beginning to make plans for a life with her husband. Both women helped their families eke out a living by working as day laborers for the agricultural businesses linked to the vast fields surrounding Cerignola and nearby areas, which are still controlled by the mafia clans' system of exploitation. Likely thankful they had been chosen as day laborers for a canning business some 5 days earlier, Incoronata and Maria finished their long shift of hard physical work in Bisceglie. They boarded a van along with 17 fellow women workers, to make the trip back home. The van was constructed with a maximum limit of 10 passengers, but was carrying 19 women, creating dangerous conditions for the passengers and driver Maria Scuto, as well. As the van neared Cerignola, one of the tires exploded and the van went out of control. Incoronata and Maria were killed in the accident, victims of the mafia and the criminal system of labor that it controls.

Sources: Giusy Patera, "Morire di lavoro: Incoronata Sollazzo e Maria Incoronata Ramella," Stampacritica.org, 30 April 2016; Piero Ferrante and Marica Todaro, "Vittime di caporalato, vittime di mafia," *Narcomafie*, 23 July 2015; "In 19 a bordo, è esplosa una gomma Furgone stracarico fuori strada: due morte," *Il Tirreno*, 25 April 1998.



MARIANGELA ANZALONE

8 MAY 1998

Mariangela was known by her classmates and teachers as the little nurse, a nickname earned by the way she cared for her friends at school and family. When one of her classmates fell ill, she would always visit them and let her teacher know how they were doing. At 9 years old, Mariangela excelled in her third-grade school work at the elementary school in Oppido Mamertina, a town of some 4,000 residents, where she lived with her father, Basilio Anzalone, mother Francesca (Franca), and her 8 year-old brother Giuseppe. The afternoon of 8 May, Mariangela and her mother went to her school for the parent-teacher meeting, and Franca blushed at the teacher's praise of Mariangela's accomplishments. In particular, Mariangela had just finished up the assignment of writing a beautiful letter for her mother in celebration of Mother's Day. Later that day, shortly after 8:00 pm, while her father was working on his route delivering newspapers, Mariangela was sitting in her grandfather's car, along with her grandmother Maria Annunziata Pignataro, her mother, and little brother. Her grandfather, Giuseppe Maria Bicchieri, was driving them all home. While they were stopped in the town's main square, a spray of machine-gun fire ripped through the car. Giuseppe attempted to drive off, but was shot and killed immediately, and the car went out of control, ultimately crashing into a wall. The first hail of bullets also killed Mariangela on the spot. A young man, around 20 years old, took Mariangela's wounded body in his arms and carried her to the hospital, but there was nothing they could do. Mariangela's mother and little brother were critically wounded, but survived. Mariangela and her grandfather were murdered solely because they happened to pass in front of a butcher shop where two men had just murdered Giovanni Polimeni (22 years old) and his cousin Vittorio Rustico (21 years old), as part of the ongoing war between members of the Polimeni-Zumbo criminal families and the Ferraro-Gugliotta clans for control over the Gioia Tauro area. The killers had mistaken Giuseppe Bicchieri's car for one owned by Domenico Polimeni, likely the intended target. In the elementary school of Oppido, located just 100 yards from the murder scene, Mariangela's classmates and teachers were distraught the day after

her death. One of her classmates, Tonino, placed white flowers on her desk, took the crucifix from the wall of the classroom and put it over the flowers. As one of Mariangela's teachers commented, "How do we explain that a little 9 year-old girl was murdered as if she were a dangerous mafia boss?". Another teacher confessed, "We feel impotent. As if our work were useless, wasted. So much effort and hard work to transmit life values and hope, and then a heavy blow like this brings us to our knees." Right after the Oppido Massacre, fear drove many residents of Oppido Mamertina to create a wall of silence that the police could not break. However, the Bicchieri family soon became an example of speaking out against the 'ndrangheta, inspiring some fellow citizens to follow in their steps.

Sources: "Calabria: Arresti per la strage Oppido Mamertina (RIF.N.23)," *adnkronos*, 19 May 1998; Guido Ruotolo, "Bocche cucite a Oppido dopo la strage," *Gazzetta di Modena*, 10 May 1998; Aldo Varano, "Nella scuola di Mariangela 'la chiamavano piccola infermiera'," *L'Unità*, 10 May 1998.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it.



GIUSEPPINA GUERRIERO

3 SEPTEMBER 1998

Giuseppina had worked for years in the fields, gathering crops to help support the family she was raising with her husband Nicola Quartucci in Scisciano, a municipality of Naples. They had 4 children, Rosa, Anna, Raffaele, and Antonella. Giuseppina adored cooking, and at 43 years old had the chance to turn her passion into a career. She had heard that a restaurant in Via Garibaldi was looking for skilled employees. After work on 3 September, she went to the restaurant for an interview. By 11:00 pm she was on her way home. Giuseppina had almost arrived at her door when she entered the line of fire in an ambush between camorra clans, and a bullet struck her in the head. Passersby came to her aid and she was transported immediately to the hospital. Her wound was critical, and Giuseppina died a few days later. Giuseppina's husband and children gave their consent for her organs to be donated, "So that," as they explained, "they can somehow give life again, after a life was so unjustly cut short." It is important to note that residents in the neighborhood where Giuseppina was shot, poor and ridden with crime, came forward and broke omertà, providing crucial information to the police investigators who soon identified the killer. They arrested Giovanni Gioia, who was sentenced to 24 years in prison in 2001. He had targeted Saverio Pianese of a rival camorra clan, and fired the shots even though Giuseppina's car was square in his sights. In April 2013, the antimafia organization Libera inaugurated the Libera center of San Vitaliano in Giuseppina Guerriero's name.

Sources: Gigi Di Fiore, *La camorra e le sue storie*, Turin, U.T.E.T., 2015; Brevi storie di vittime innocenti della criminalità: Giuseppina Guerriero, Fondazione Pol.i.s., 27 September 2011; "Uccisa dai clan, donati gli organi," la Repubblica.it, 5 September 1998.

ERILDA ZTAUSCI

1998



Erilda Ztausci has been identified as a victim murdered by the mafia, and her name appears among those remembered on the national Day of Memory for innocent victims of the mafia, which is celebrated in Italy every 21 March. As the antimafia association Libera contro le mafie (Libera against the mafias) notes on its site, the story of Erilda's life and death has yet to be discovered.

Source: "Nomi da non dimenticare – Libera," www.libera.it, 21 March 2018.



ROSA ZAZA

25 AUGUST 1999

At 31 years of age, Rosa had just begun her life with Ennio Petrosino (33 years old), whom she married in 1998. Together they worked hard to restore an old home in Pozzuoli, a town located near Naples, where they lived. Rosa worked in a public office in Naples, along with her husband, and was highly involved in social projects to improve life in the city and its environs. During their summer vacation, Rosa and Ennio went to Croatia, and as their friends say, “They had a great time, they were happy.” On 25 August the young couple departed from Croatia and arrived in Bari at around 10:00 pm, planning to celebrate their first anniversary with their family and friends in Pozzuoli. The young couple were riding their Suzuki motorcycle in the warm evening air, shortly before midnight, when a car with its headlights turned off crashed into them. The impact threw both Rosa and Ennio off the motorcycle and onto the asphalt highway. The car’s driver and passengers abandoned the vehicle and fled on foot through the countryside. Another driver passing by alerted authorities, and an ambulance transported Rosa and Ennio to the Cerignola hospital. They both died from their injuries en route. As investigators concluded, Rosa and Ennio were killed by a car driven by smugglers who were part of a criminal network operating between Montenegro, Bari, and Brindisi. The vehicle was carrying some 172 kilos of cigarettes, and the smugglers made a U-turn to avoid a road block, and then crashed into Rosa and Ennio on their motorcycle.

Sources: Antonella Mascali, *Lotta civile*, Milan, Chiarelettere, 2009; Francesco Forleo, *Plenilunio con pistola*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2003; Domenico Castellanata, “Strage del contrabbando,” *la Repubblica.it*, 27 August 1999.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from *Un nome, una storia* - Libera.

ANNA PACE

12 OCTOBER 1999



Anna lived with her husband in the town of Fasano, in the province of Brindisi, which saw a rash of violent attacks and homicides in the late 1990s, committed by smugglers linked to criminal organizations. On 12 October, Anna was riding in the family car with her husband at the wheel driving. A van suddenly came out of nowhere and crashed into their car. Anna was killed immediately, at 67 years of age. The van was loaded with contraband cigarettes and driven by Pietro Sibilio, part of a ring of smugglers who purchased cigarettes in Montenegro for redistribution in Puglia and Campania, and was linked with the major crime syndicates in those regions.

Source: “Contrabbando in Puglia, un anno di sangue,” *la Repubblica.it*, 24 February 2000.



MARIA COLANGIOLI

7 JUNE 2000

As on many other evenings, on 7 June, 70 year-old Maria was busy preparing dinner for her family inside a kitchenette built on her balcony. She lived with her family on the third floor of a building in the San Paolo neighborhood of Bari, stricken by clan warfare between the Montani and Diomedede clans. As Maria stood in her kitchenette, gunfire broke out in the street below. A bullet fired from a rifle went through the open windows, wounding her. Maria's daughter was home and called the ambulance to transport her mother to the hospital, but little could be done. The bullet pierced Maria's femoral artery and she died in the hospital. The killers, young men belonging to rival clans in the neighborhood, have yet to be identified.

Source: "Sparatoria in strada a Bari. Uccisa donna su un balcone," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 8 June 2000.

VALENTINA TERRACCIANO

12 NOVEMBER 2000



Valentina had recently celebrated her birthday and turned 2 years old. She loved to play with a small brown stuffed bear with a red ribbon around its neck and a toy cell phone, her favorite toys. On the morning of 12 November, Valentina went with her mother and father to the flower shop owned by her uncle Fausto Terracciano in Pollena Trocchia, a town just east of Naples. Four men riding on 2 motorcycles approached the shop and opened fire. Valentina was struck in the head by multiple bullets. She was rushed to the hospital, where she died later that day. Valentina's little stuffed bear and toy cell phone were placed on top of her small white coffin at her funeral, attended by thousands of citizens who honored her short life with applause. Her parents had donated her corneas, and in recognition of this life-giving gesture, the priest voiced the hope that "Those eyes would surely see a better world." Valentina's case spurred a wave of uproar among residents of the metropolitan Naples area, who denounced camorra violence. Even the camorra clan that organized the ambush, meant to target Valentina's uncle Fausto as a vendetta aimed at Domenico Arlistico, her father's step-brother and an up-and-coming boss, took steps to punish the mistake that resulted in Valentina's murder. The Veneruso clan boss, Gennaro Veneruso, first hid Carmine De Simone, Ciro Improta, Ciro Molaro, and Pasquale Fiorillo, the young men in the hit squad, in Caianello and Ladispoli. He then set up a meeting with them in the countryside near Cerveteri. De Simone and Improta, the 2 shooters, were killed at the meeting place on 25 November 2000. The drivers, Molaro and Fiorillo escaped the ambush, and turned themselves in to the police. Gennaro Veneruso later received a life sentence for his role in Valentina's murder.

Sources: Davide de Bari, "Ricordando Valentina, la bambina senza colpe uccisa dalla camorra," *Antimafia Duemila*, 12 November 2017; "A Pollena Trocchia la camorra uccide Valentina Terracciano, una bambina di 2 anni," www.napolitan.it/2017/11/12/70344/valentina-terracciano/; "Applausi e fiori bianchi ai funerali di Valentina," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it),

16 November 2000.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from La Repubblica.

Tg1 del 14 11 2000 Omicidio Pollena Trocchia: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZSDOOE9vME>.

SILVANA DE MARCO



16 NOVEMBER 2000

Silvana worked in the construction business along with her husband Sergio Perri, the nephew of Giuseppe (Pino) Chiappetta, the Rende town counselor who was killed by 'ndrangheta hit men in 1990. Chiappetta had apparently expanded his own construction company into the cement field without asking permission from the local clan boss. Perri ran the company after his uncle's death, and in 1999 was arrested for illegally obtaining public contract works. He was released from jail in early November 2000. On 16 November, 30 year-old Silvana was at the wheel of their Mercedes station wagon with Sergio next to her, driving along the road from Rende to Castiglione Cosentino. A car with 2 armed men pulled up alongside and opened fire. Silvana slammed on the brakes and tried to escape on foot, but was shot and killed at the scene, as was her husband. The murders were part of the second 'ndrangheta war of Cosentino.

Sources: "Il salto di qualità: l'omicidio di Pino Chiappetta," *lachte.com*, 24 November 2016; Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.



FLORENTINA (TINA) MOTOC

17 FEBRUARY 2001¹

Florentina grew up in a small town in Romania. As a young woman, she left her parents' home and 2 year-old daughter to immigrate to Italy, in search of gainful employment and a better life. Instead, she was roped into a criminal racket of human sex trafficking, and forced to work as a prostitute in the Turin metropolitan area. According to investigators, on 9 February 2001, at around 4:10 pm, Florentina made her last telephone call, to talk with her parents. She then disappeared. Eight days later, Florentina's brutally beaten, naked body was found alongside an irrigation canal on the outskirts of Turin. Sometime on the night of 16 February, Florentina had been tortured, beaten on the head and face, raped, and strangled, her nylons tightly wrapped around her neck and used to bind her hands behind her back. Her legs and feet were burned, apparently by the fire the killer set to destroy her clothing. She died from suffocation, at 20 years of age. Libera, led by don Ciotti, organized a proper funeral for Florentina. In 2003, Maurizio Minghella was given a life sentence for the murder of Florentina, and other sentences for the murder of 4 other young women.

Sources: "Florentina Motoc," amicidilibera.blogspot.com/2018/02/non-uccidiamoli-una-seconda-volta-tina.html; chilhavisto.rai.it/dl/clv/Misteri/ContentSet-a7973c35-da5c-4fbc-9eaa-a824ee68c74a.html; "Così il serial killer è tornato a uccidere," la Repubblica.it, 12 October 2001.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from chilhavisto.rai.it.

¹ Many sources identify Florentina as "Fiorentina." However, according to investigators who traced the young woman's parents, her given name is Florentina. See Amici di Libera blog spot, referenced in this entry's sources.

FRANCESCA VECCHIO

14 MAY 2001



Francesca's life and death unfolded in Rosarno and Gioia Tauro, strongholds of the 'ndrangheta's criminal ideas concerning honor and shame, which influence some members of the community at large who are not clan members. Born in Taurianova, at 28 years of age Francesca had been married for just over 2 years to Angelo Fazzari (35 years old), who had a record for petty crimes. They lived in Rosarno with their 14 month-old daughter, and were co-owners of the clothing store called Meda-Moda, located in downtown Gioia Tauro. Francesca managed the store and worked with the customers. When Francesca's marriage became rocky, she began seeing another man, a betrayal punishable by death according to the 'ndrangheta notion of male honor. At 9:00 pm, on 14 May, Francesca was closing up the boutique for the evening, and an argument ensued with her husband. Armed with a knife, Angelo attacked Francesca, and stabbed her over 50 times. He then locked her dead body in the store, and called the carabinieri of Rosarno to claim responsibility for the murder. Angelo evaded police for a week and then turned himself in.

Sources: "Uccide la moglie, fuggi ma prima dà l'allarme," Il Tirreno Livorno, 16 May 2001; "Calabria, uccisa una donna è caccia al marito," la Repubblica.it, 14 May 2001; "Francesca Vecchio, un tradimento mortale," www.impronteombre.it/volto_a.php?id=118.



CLARISSA
CAVA



MICHELINA
CAVA



MARIA
SCIBELLI

Photo, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/correspondent/2372457.stm>.

Women enter mafia wars: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/correspondent/2372457.stm>.

26 MAY 2002

Since 1972, the camorra families of the Cava camorra clan, headed by Biagio Cava, had been pitted in battle against the Graziano clan in Lauro, a town in the province of Avellino, where they lived. The Cava clan was considered the winning camp, as they maintained control over almost all of the criminal activities, extortion and drug trafficking in particular. They also had a strong foothold in securing public contracts, especially for reconstruction works following the 1998 flooding in the Vallo di Lauro area. Clarissa Cava, the 16 year-old daughter of the boss Biagio Cava, his sister Michelina Cava (51 year old), and sister-in-law Maria Scibelli (53 years old), wife of Salvatore Cava, had entrenched camorra beliefs, and were active in the clan's illegal activities. Early in May 2002, women in the Cava and Graziano clans encountered each other in the town square and hurled verbal attacks at each other that culminated in a violent altercation. The Graziano family came out for the worse, and were intent upon redeeming their honor. A few days later, on the evening of 26 May, women from both clans had a so-called meeting. Among the girls and women of the Cava family riding in an Audi were Clarissa, Michelina and Maria, armed with clubs, bill hooks, and acid to disfigure their rivals. As their car reached the outskirts of Lauro, another car ran into it. Then Luigi Salvatore Graziano got out of the bullet proof Alfa Romeo he was driving, and opened fire with a submachine gun. Clarissa, Michelina, and Maria were shot and killed at the scene, and others were wounded. In a taped telephone conversation between two members of the Graziano clan, one declared, "We destroyed them, annihilated them!". Some seven members of the Graziano clan were arrested for involvement in what is now called the Cava Massacre.

Sources: "Festa dopo la strage: 'Sterminate'," la [Repubblica.it](http://www.repubblica.it), 28 May 2002; "Camorra, agguato in Irpinia morte tre donne del clan Cava," la [Repubblica.it](http://www.repubblica.it), 27 May 2002.



STELLA COSTA

18 JUNE 2002

Neighbors and friends describe 12 year-old Stella as “happy, always smiling,” with a passion for playing volleyball and taking walks with her girlfriends in the town center of San Severo, in Puglia. In June of 2002, Stella had finished up her first year of middle school, passing with honors. She was looking forward to her birthday, and had already written the invitations for her party, set for Sunday 23 June. On the unusually hot evening of 18 June, people still crowded the streets at 11:30. Stella went with her mother, Anna Costa, to take the garbage out to the bin on the street. While her mother was walking across the street, Stella stopped for a moment to talk with her best friend Catia. Gunfire suddenly broke out and according to Catia, “People ran, trying to take cover behind the cars and in the building entrances. I ran too as soon as I heard the shots. I saw Stella collapse.” Anna Costa also saw Stella collapse, and rushed over to her, gathering her daughter up in her arms. “What happened?,” she asked, “Did you fall? Get up!”. Hearing all of the commotion, Stella’s father Francesco and brother arrived and tried to help. Stella was immediately taken to the hospital, but was dead before she even arrived. One of the 6 bullets shot struck one of her lungs and went through her heart. Within hours, Giuseppe Anastasio, 19 years old, was arrested for Stella’s murder, the result of a stray bullet. The ambush was meant to target a young man on a motorcycle.

Sources: Anna Langone, “Sparatoria per strada, muore a 12 anni,” *La Stampa*, 20 June 2002; “Uccisa a 12 anni per uno sbaglio,” *La Nuova Sardegna*, 20 June 2002; “Dodicenne uccisa in strada fermato un giovane,” la Repubblica.it, 19 June 2002.



HANJA
ABDELHAKIM

FATIMA
FACHREDDINE

GIUESEPPINA
MAMMANA

20 JULY 2002

Hanja, Fatima, and Giuseppina were among the some 190 passengers on the Freccia della Laguna train that departed from the station in Palermo at 4:00 pm, and served workers, vacationers, students, and families visiting relatives in northern Italy. The train was scheduled to arrive at its final destination, Venezia Santa Lucia at 10:00 am the next morning. Hanja and Fatima were travelling with their families. Hanja, 41 years old, was born in El Gara in Morocco, but was a resident of Saudi Arabia, where she lived with her husband, a pilot for Saudi airlines, and their two children, who were traveling with her. Fatima (59 years old), was born in Em Maaiz in Morocco, and a resident of Messina, where she and her husband Miloudi Abdelhakim (75 years old) lived with their family. Giuseppina Mammana was of Sicilian origin, but the 22 year-old woman had been a resident of Ludsburg, Germany for several years. The train had passed the station at Venetico and at 6:56 pm as it neared Rometta, the locomotive suddenly went off the tracks and crashed into a road inspector’s house, the residence of 3 railway families who were out at the time. The tremendous impact hurled the locomotive in a 180 degree turn, so it landed facing back toward Palermo. Other passenger cars were flung off of the rails in what some journalists described as an apocalyptic scene. Ultimately, 47 passengers were injured and 8 people were killed. Among the dead were Hanja, whose 2 children survived their injuries, Fatima, and Giuseppina. Official investigations into the derailment focused on the couplings that gave way and placed responsibility on the administrator and technicians of the company that performed the maintenance on the railway. However, inquiries conducted by journalists and antimafia figures have traced the responsibilities for this massacre back to both the Cosa Nostra clans in the area and political figures representing the Italian State who colluded with them. The writer Antonio Mazzeo of the Associazione Terre libere, for example, denounced the derailment as a

mafia attack, stating, “The building of the new Messina-Palermo railway line is the story of hundreds of millions of dollars that wound up in the hands of the Sicilian mafia’s businesses, but it’s also the story of a series of massacres, homicides, and murders by *lupara bianca* that have bloodied the towns of Barcellona, Terme Vigliatore and Milazzo in the 1980s and 1990s.”

Sources: “Messina, la strage dell’Espresso 1032 ‘Freccia della Laguna’,” Stampalibera.it, 21 July 2011; “La tragedia dell’espresso otto morti e 47 feriti,” la Repubblica.it, 21 July 2002; Giampaolo Cerri, “Freccia della Laguna: fu attentato di mafia?,” www.vita.it/it/article/2002/12/03/freccia-della-laguna-fu-attentato-di-mafia/19331/; “Strage di stato, strage di mafia,” Terrelibere.org.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from palermo.repubblica.it.

Disastro di Rometta, i vagoni dimenticati: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nfTrXAc8CA>.

Freccia della Laguna: fu attentato di mafia?: <http://www.vita.it/it/article/2002/12/03/freccia-della-laguna-fu-attentato-di-mafia/19331/>.

ARMIDA MISERERE

19 APRIL 2003



Born 23 May 1956, Armida had a distinguished career as one of the first women to become a director of penal institutions in Italy. Raised in the small town of Casacalenda in the province of Campobasso, Armida earned her university degree in Jurisprudence, with a specialization in Criminology. At 28 years old, she embarked on her career, accepting a position as Vice-Director of the Parma prison, where she met Umberto Mormile, who worked alongside her teaching theater to the prison population and also became her loving partner. Armida advanced in her career, serving the State as Director of prisons in various Italian cities such as Voghera, with the institution for the most dangerous terrorists, Turin, Spoleto, and Palermo, at the Ucciardone prison. Her hardline position on the role of penal institutions and the roles of prisoners and guards made her the subject of controversy. In the interview she gave to the magazine *Io Donna* (November 1997), she conceded that prisons should have the goal of rehabilitating inmates, but insisted that a prison must “be a prison and not a luxury hotel.” Armida also shared important insights on her life, apparently one of deep solitude, allayed only by the companionship of her 2 dogs, Leon and Luna. In fact, while meeting the challenges of her work directing prisons, Armida was struggling with a sense of insurmountable loss and injustice. On 11 April 1990, her partner Umberto was shot and killed in a mafia ambush. On 19 April 2003, Armida wrote a message, placing responsibility for her death on the people who “ruined my life”. She then shot herself in the head and died instantly, with a photograph of Umberto beside her. When her body was discovered one of her German Shepherds was by her side as well. In subsequent years increasing information concerning the murder of Umberto has come to light. As Armida suspected, the ambush was ordered by Domenico Papalia, then the superboss of the ‘ndrangheta in Lombardy, because Umberto refused to write a positive report on Domenico Papalia when he was a prisoner. Furthermore, Umberto was aware of an agreement, the Farfalla Protocol, between the secret services and penal administrators, whereby agents were allowed to speak with mafia bosses serving strict solitary confinement, 41 bis.

Sources: “Omicidio Mormile, ‘Umberto ucciso dalla ‘ndrangheta con il nulla osta dei servizi segreti’,” *IlFattoQuotidiano.it*, 26 July 2017; Cristina Zagaria, *Miserere. Vita e morte di Armida Miserere, servitrice dello stato*, Palermo, Dario Flaccovio Editore, 2016; film *Come il vento*, directed by Marco Simon Puccioni, 2013; “Sulmona, direttrice del carcere suicida con un colpo di pistola,” *la Repubblica.it*, 19 April 2003.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) 

Armida TGR: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8r29EjfygnQ>.

Come il vento Trailer Ufficiale: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-I-IPQjUIAc>.

MATILDE SORRENTINO



26 MARCH 2004

Matilde lived in Torre Annunziata, a large city located in the Naples metropolitan area on the Gulf of Naples at the foot of Mount Vesuvius. She worked hard to help make ends meet, along with her husband, who worked as a laborer. Together they raised their two sons, Fabio and Salvatore. Demonstrating immense courage, in 1997, Matilde and 2 other women, Bianca and Annunziata, filed police reports against a ring of pedophiles who were sexually abusing young children at the elementary school in via Isonzo in Torre Annunziata. Matilde’s young son Salvatore was among the victims, and as her husband recalls, “At seven years old my son still wet his bed. He was aggressive. He’d only go to the bathroom if his mama or I went with him. But before going to the bathroom, he’d bring all of the knickknacks and even the broom into the hallway. We understood why months later. He told us that he was the victim of the janitors at the Torre Annunziata elementary school. 19 men were abusing little children in the basement, garage, and bathrooms.” After Matilde filed the official police report for the sexual abuse, she was hailed by some as “mother courage,” but also criticized by others in her neighborhood for breaking the silence and causing trouble. At the conclusion of the first trial in 1999, 15 men were found guilty. Subsequently, other mothers came forward to file additional reports of sexual abuse at the school, and a second trial was scheduled. Matilde’s testimony had key importance in the first trial, and promised to be equally important in the second. On the evening of 26 March 2004, at 8:30, there was a knock at the door of Matilde’s home. She went to answer it, while her husband was sitting in their living room. As soon as she opened the door a man fired his gun at her six times, shooting her in her face and chest. She died instantly, at 49 years old. Her husband heard the shots and immediately ran onto the landing, but the killer had already fled. By killing Matilde, the man silenced her as witness, and sent a threat to other mothers who were ready to speak out. Under the auspices of the Salesian Institute, a group home named “Mother Matilde” was founded in honor of Matilde Sorrentino in via Margherita di Savoia in Torre Annunziata.

Sources: “Uccisa a Torre Annunziata Matilde Sorrentino, la mamma che denunciò i pedofili,” Napolitan, 26 March 2017; “Torre ricorda ‘mamma coraggio’ a dieci anni dalla sua scomparsa,” donboscoalsud.it, 27 March 2014; Giuliana Covella, *Fiore . . . come me. Storie di dieci vite spezzate*, Naples, Spazio Creativo Edizioni, 2013; “Uccisa madre che denunciò i pedofili,” Corrieredellasera.it, 28 March 2004.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from Lo srillone.Tv, 27 March 2010.

Sindaco Starita: “Matilde Sorrentino esempio di civiltà”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjWorpC9XQI>.

Morte di una “Madre Coraggio”: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=911357632397918>.

ANNALISA DURANTE

27 MARCH 2004



Sharing her dreams with her diary, as a young girl Annalisa writes, “I look at the starry sky and imagine I’m one of those little bright lights and can see the universe and immense space. I’d like to fly away. To open the window and reach the sky on a rainbow.” From Annalisa’s writings in her diary, an invaluable testimony to her experiences of day-to-day happenings in her neighborhood, reflections on life, hopes and fears, it is clear she enjoyed loving relationships with her family and friends, and had a sensitive, precociously smart, and lively character. Annalisa dreamed of becoming a hairstylist, and constantly surprised everyone by doing her own hair in different styles to suit new looks. Friends recall her generous smile most of all, also a sign of courage, given the severe social and economic problems plaguing the neighborhood of Forcella in Naples, where she lived. The high unemployment rate was matched by high criminal activity controlled by the camorra, and increasing numbers of victims murdered in gunfights between clans vying for control over the drug trade and extortion racket. In reaction to the murder of Claudio Tagliatela, an innocent boy gunned down in a robbery 10 December 2003, Annalisa gave voice to the sense of traumatic loss and fear created by unrelenting camorra street violence: “Today we watched Claudio’s funeral on television. We cried so much. My mother is distraught. She says losing a child is the most horrible thing of all. It chilled me to the bone. What a tragedy. Why should anyone die like that? It’s not right.” Three months later, on the evening of 27 March 2004, 14 year-old Annalisa was standing at the front door of her home with a group of friends, chatting with her cousin. Two motorcycles sped into the street and as gunfire broke out, according to eyewitnesses, a man “Grabbed Annalisa by her hair and used her as a shield”. A bullet struck Annalisa in the head, and she shrunk to the ground. At the sound of shots, her father Giovanni ran onto the balcony, and as he says, “When I looked over the side of the balcony I saw my baby girl on the ground in a pool of blood.” Annalisa went into an irreversible coma and after 3 days in the hospital was declared dead by the doctors. In a gesture of strength and hope, her parents donated her organs, and 7

people were able to have new lives. Annalisa's murder inspired a general outcry against the camorra, exemplified by a note on a bouquet of flowers left on the street where she was shot: "Free us from these monsters. Goodbye Annalisa". Shortly thereafter, police arrested Salvatore Giuliano, the member of the camorra who was the intended target of the attack. He was tried, found guilty of the murder, and sentenced to 24 years in prison. In the aftermath, Annalisa's father Giovanni worked to transform an old movie theater in the neighborhood into a safe meeting place for children and young people, who could engage in a variety of educational and cultural activities. In June of 2015, Giovanni's center inaugurated a space for an open doors library, to which people from around the world donated some 6,000 books. The center offers the opportunity to take part in and view theater productions, and free courses in subjects such as computer science and photography. A firm believer in the power of culture and reading, Giovanni's aim is to "create a Naples as great as Annalisa's dreams". In addition to the open doors library, art exhibits and numerous cultural events, as well as the Associazione Annalisa Durante, have been dedicated to her name and memory.

Sources: Paolo Maggiano, *Ali spezzate. Annalisa Durante. Morire a Forcella a quattordici anni*, Trapani, Di Girolamo Editore, 2015; "Annalisa Durante – vittima innocente della camorra," YouTube, 29 July 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwU6GouS64o&gl=IT7hl-it>; Matilde Andolfo, *Il diario di Annalisa Durante*, Naples, Tullio Pironti, 2005; "Napoli: Annalisa dichiarata morta," https://www.corriere.it/Primo_Piano/Cronache/2004/03_Marzo/29/annalisa.shtml; "Sparatoria a Napoli, quattordicenne in coma," https://www.corriere.it/Primo_Piano/Cronache/2004/03_Marzo/28/spari_napoli.shtml

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from Repubblica, 18 November 2005.

Annalisa Durante - vittima innocente della camorra: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwU6GouS64o>.

Intervista - #Unlibroperannalisa, Giovanni Durante ci racconta l'iniziativa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftoCujGex_0.

Napoli - Annalisa Durante, una mostra a Forcella (27.03.17): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5UNhwd3vWw>.

GELSOMINA VERDE

21 NOVEMBER 2004



Identified by one newspaper as the 114th victim claimed by the camorra since the beginning of 2004, Gelsomina, or Mina, as she was called by family and friends, had an extraordinary sense of social commitment to helping the most vulnerable citizens of Naples, little children, the homeless, and the elderly. She had worked hard in school and earned her diploma in accounting, overcoming the obstacles of life in a poorer neighborhood in Naples. Her father was a laborer and her mother worked part time whenever she could find employment. Mina was employed in a leather goods establishment, but devoted most of her free time to her passion, volunteering as a clown therapist for children in the hospital and also offering help to the elderly, women whose husbands and partners were in prison, and the inmates themselves. When she was in her late teens, she had a brief relationship with a young man named Gennaro Notturmo, but broke off the relationship with him when he became a member of the camorra. In November of 2004, Mina was contacted by Pietro Esposito, a member of the Di Lauro camorra clan, whose children she had looked after as a babysitter when she was a young girl. Pietro told Mina it was important they meet, but she was afraid to do so. In fact, the meeting was a trap set by the Di Lauro clan, who were looking for Gennaro and thought she might know his whereabouts. But Mina hadn't seen or heard from him for 3 years. Mina, just 22 years old, was kidnapped, beaten, tortured, and then shot 3 times in the nape of her neck. Her charred body was discovered in her car, which had been set afire. Pietro Esposito was soon arrested at Scampia, and collaborated with police, telling them everything that he knew about Mina's murder. In 2005, Ugo De Lucia, the killer, was arrested as well. Mina's brother Francesco founded an association in Mina's honor, dedicated to helping children who are under treatment in hospitals in Naples.

Sources: "Mina, torturata e uccisa a 22 anni: Tredici anni dopo manca ancora giustizia," *il mattino.it*, 20 September 2017; Giuliana Covella, *Fiore . . . come me. Storie di dieci vite spezzate*, Naples, Spazio Creativo Edizioni, 2013; "Gelsomina vittima dei clan

carbonizzata dopo l'esecuzione," la [Repubblica.it](https://www.repubblica.it), 22 November 2004.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from [Inricordo.eu](https://inricordo.eu).

Ricordando Gelsomina Verde - TG Capri News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZHpoO8hpUI>.

Apri a Scampia l'Officina delle culture di Gelsomina Verde: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_fKJ1Zge8g.

CARMELA ATTRICE



15 JANUARY 2005

By the time she was 47, Carmela, known by many as Pupetta, had lived an exceptionally hard life taking care of her family virtually alone in what had become a civil combat zone in Secondigliano, a district of Naples. Her husband, 43 year-old Michele Barone, was serving a jail sentence for robbery and crimes related to drugs and arms trafficking, and her son Francesco was in and out of jail for crimes committed in association with the *scissionisti* of Secondigliano, a splinter group that broke away from the Di Lauro camorra clan, and used deadly force to try and assert its control over drugs and prostitution in the area. Francesco's loyalty to the splinter group placed his mother and family in a particularly dangerous position, in part because at the time the Di Lauro clan controlled the low-rent housing projects in Secondigliano, and decided who could have or be denied housing, and who would be evicted. Carmela, as the mother of a *scissionista* (member of the splinter group), received word she had to leave her small apartment in Scampia, the so-called "sky-blue houses," where she lived with her daughter Orsola. When Carmela opposed the eviction, threatening messages were slipped under her door, and then she was subjected to physical acts of intimidation. On the afternoon of 15 January, while her daughter was listening to music, a 16 year-old boy Carmela knew rang her doorbell, and asked her to come out, assuring her the problem had been resolved. In the meantime, 2 killers had hidden in the basement and another was positioned in a doorway. Once Carmela was fully in sight, they gunned her down, and she suffered multiple wounds to her head and body. Though intended to send a message to relatives of members of the splinter group to leave their homes, the show of exceptional violence prompted two witnesses to provide information to the police, and the killers were identified. Orsola, who had discovered her mother's wounded body and called police, also gave a statement. Two lines that she added to the typed testimony, dated 15 January 2005, give important insight about the daily living conditions in mafia controlled areas. Orsola writes, "I'm afraid about what I said, I don't want it to get out. I'm letting you know now that I wouldn't ever repeat it at trial because I'm afraid of winding up

just like my mother.” Carmela’s tragic life is recounted in one of the storylines in Roberto Saviano’s non-fiction novel *Gomorra: A Personal Journey into the Violent International Empire of Naples’ Organized Crime System*, and the film inspired by the book, Matteo Garrone’s *Gomorra*.

Sources: Film *Gomorra*, directed by Matteo Garrone, 2008; Roberto Saviano, *Gomorra: A Personal Journey into the Violent International Empire of Naples’ Organized Crime System*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007; “Camorra, donna accusò il clan Di Lauro minacciata, scagiona i killer della madre,” *Il Mattino*, 15 February 2007; “Delitto Attrice, sparita la testimone,” la Repubblica.it, 11 November 2006; “Napoli, agguato a Scampia. La faida uccide un’altra donna,” la Repubblica.it, 15 January 2005.

FRANCESCA ALDI



7 AUGUST 2005

On what seemed to be a carefree Sunday, Francesca was enjoying time with her husband Vincenzo Scarcella (54 years old) and daughter Maria Francesca (32 years old). They spent some time at the sports club in the area of Oppido Mamertina, Reggio Calabria, and then got into their BMW to go downtown and have dinner at a restaurant. While they drove through the outskirts of Oppido Mamertina, gun fire exploded. Francesca, 51 years old, was hit multiple times and died at the scene along with her husband. Maria Francesca, who escaped untouched, told police, “I didn’t realize what was happening. I heard the shots, and noticed my mother go limp against my father.” According to police, the trajectory of the bullets, shot by a killer hidden at the side of the road waiting for the car to pass, indicated that Francesca was not the target. Instead, the killer targeted Vincenzo, who was well known among law enforcement due to his record of arrests linked to ’ndrangheta crimes in drugs and arms dealing. Nonetheless, as one police officer commented, “To reach his objective the killer did not hesitate to involve the two women.”

Sources: “Spietato esecuzione: uccisi marito e moglie,” *Gazzetta del Sud*, 9 August 2005; “Calabria, agguato: uccisi due coniugi,” *Corriere della Sera.it*, 8 August 2005.



MARIA STRANGIO

25 DECEMBER 2006

A homemaker and mother of 3 children, ages 5, 6, and 11 years old, Maria Strangio was married to Giovanni Nirta, considered the boss of the Nirta 'ndrangheta clan in San Luca, located in Aspromonte. For over 10 years, the families belonging to the Nirta-Strangio clan had been engaged in a violent feud with families in the Pelle-Vottari clan, that had resulted in the murders of several victims in both families. On Christmas evening 2006, a hit squad with their faces covered and armed with a Kalashnikov and rifles went to Maria's home and opened fire on a group of her relatives in the open doorway. Maria, 33 years old, was critically wounded, and died during the night at the Locri hospital. Remembering Maria and the day she was killed, her sister tells us, "They treat Maria like a mafiosa . . . and instead she was a victim of the mafia. She was in her own home, she heard shots, and thought they were firecrackers. She went out the door to yell at the children playing outside and she never moved from that spot again." In the aftermath of Maria's murder, her husband portrayed himself as "Just a widower who gets breakfast ready for his 3 children every morning. I'm a man who died that Christmas night." In contrast to this image of caring father created by Nirta, as clan boss he organized and executed the infamous 'ndrangheta Duisburg Massacre in Germany (2007), as the vendetta for the Christmas Massacre in which his wife Maria was killed. Nirta's role came to light in the deposition given by the witness for justice Vincenzo Marino, an ex-member of a clan in Crotona.

Sources: "San Luca. Marino: 'Maria Strangio uccisa per errore'," *Quotidiano del Sud*, 1 December 2009; "Nella villa del capomafia 'lo non c'entro, ora basta sangue," la Repubblica.it, 18 August 2007; "Agguato a San Luca, uccisa una donna tre feriti, tra i quali un bimbo di 5 anni," la Repubblica.it, 26 December 2006.

'Ncrangheta, arrestato super latitante Sebastiano Strangio: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Guwse-JnyoM>.

[LaC Dossier - Dalla faida di San Luca alla strage di Duicburg - 24-05-2018..](#)



LIBERATA MARTIRE

29 JANUARY 2007

Liberata was of Roma ethnic descent, and lived with her husband Rocco Bevilacqua and family in the Roma village in via Degli Stadi in Cosenza. On 29 January, Liberata was at home with her son and daughter. While she busily prepared some coffee in her kitchen, she was shot in the back, and died in front of her 13 year-old daughter's eyes. Liberata was 39 years old. Her murder was committed by a hit squad that opened fire on the windows of Liberata's home, with the aim of killing her son Luca Bevilacqua, a crime that evolved in the context of criminal relations between the 'ndrangheta clans and Roma clans. In the 1990s, Rocco and members of his clan were part of the crime confederation formed between the 'ndrangheta clans and Roma clans, which divided the cocaine and heroine trade between them. In 2000 the alliance was broken with the via Popilia Massacre (9 November 2000), followed by subsequent armed conflicts.

Sources: "La strage di via Popilia," *iachite*, 4 September 2015; "L'omicidio Martire resta un giallo. La Cassazione annulla la sentenza," *Il Quotidiano del Sud*, 17 March 2013; "Cosenza: ROM uccisa a gennaio, 4 fermi," *Adnkronos*, 19 July 2007.



DOMENICA LEGATO

SPRING 2007

The little information available about Domenica describes her as a young woman, who lost her husband at an early age. While living in the Calabrian city of Rosarno with her son, Domenica developed a relationship with a man her age. On a spring day in 2007, she was found dying on the sidewalk below her home's balcony. Domenica's death appeared to be a suicide, and in fact, her son claimed that she had thrown herself off the balcony. However, subsequent testimonies given by former members of the 'ndrangheta revealed that Domenica was killed. The local clan viewed her relationship with another man as an act casting dishonor on her dead husband's memory, and punished her with death. This conclusion is supported by the medical examiner's report, which documents multiple cuts on Domenica's hands, suggesting she tried to defend herself from knife wounds before being pushed or forced to jump off the balcony.

Sources: Lirio Abbate, *Fimmine ribelli. Come le donne salveranno il paese dalla 'ndrangheta*, Milan, Rizzoli, 2013; Lirio Abbate, "Calabria, la strage delle donne," *L'Espresso*, 24 July 2012.

CARMELA FASANELLA

24 JULY 2007



On 24 July, 71 year-old Carmela was in Peschici, a hilltown in the Gargano National Park that boasts breathtaking views of the sea. Carmela's 81 year-old brother Romano had arrived from Milan a few days earlier so they could spend their vacation together in their home town. As Carmela and Romano were driving in her car, they were caught in an explosive fire, described by eyewitness Maria Grazia as a "flash in which everything became a living Hell. We saw smoke, the flames leapt from the beach toward town." Carmela's car was engulfed by flames, and her charred body, together with Romano's, was found on the road by rescuers. The fire was one of several set according to a precise criminal plan, according to investigators. Although 6 people were arrested, in 2009 the case was dismissed due to lack of evidence.

Sources: "Dieci anni fa l'inferno di fuoco che sconvolse Peschici," *il Resto del Gargano*, 24 July 2017; "Fiamme e polemiche, indaga la procura. Le accuse tra Protezione Civile e sindaco," *la Repubblica.it*, 25 July 2007; "Incendi, un giorno d'inferno sul Gargano, almeno due morti e terrore a Peschici," *la Repubblica.it*, 24 July 2007.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from YouTube Video post.



CORNELIA DUANA

31 DECEMBER 2007

In 2005, 15 year-old Cornelia moved with her family from Romania to Italy, settling in Rosarno, Reggio Calabria. She lived with her parents in a home that happened to be near the residence of Giuseppe Ceravolo, who started a relationship with her. In 2007, Cornelia was living with Giuseppe, and raising their new baby daughter, who was 3 months old. Their relationship deteriorated, and Cornelia suffered physical violence at Giuseppe's hands. She decided to leave him, and moved with her baby girl back to her parents' home. Her ex-partner refused to accept Cornelia leaving him. On New Year's Eve, with Rosarno lit by holiday lights and people out celebrating the coming of the new year, Giuseppe and two of his friends showed up in front of the Duana home and Cornelia's ex-partner began shooting a pistol into the air. Cornelia's father told them to leave, which they did for a time. They later returned and made threats while shooting into the air. Cornelia and her parents decided to go elsewhere for the evening and went out of their home. An argument ensued and Giuseppe shot Cornelia in the chest. She was taken to the Polistema hospital, but died, at 17 years old. Giuseppe was arrested for Cornelia's murder, but by January 2010, he was already out of jail. During subsequent investigations tied to operation "Doppia sponda," Giuseppe's deep involvement in the 'ndrangheta drug trafficking between Messina and Reggio Calabria came to light.

Sources: "Droga: operazione 'Doppia sponda', arrestato aveva ucciso donna," cn24tv.it, 25 January 2011; "Uccisa una giovane romena arrestato l'ex convivente italiano," la Repubblica.it, 1 January 2008.

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FELICIA CASTANIERE

9 JANUARY 2009



In Casandrino, a town of some 12,000 residents on the periphery of northern Naples, Felicia was well known, having dedicated her life to aiding people who were differently abled or poverty stricken. She lived most of her time in a wheelchair, due to polio she had contracted as a baby and respiratory problems. But as her brother Alessandro notes, Felicia "transformed her disability into a life of committed action and a reason for denouncing injustices." As the Director of the local Association for the differently abled in Casandrino, every afternoon she was in the office helping her clients apply for aid and solve bureaucratic problems. She also performed volunteer work distributing food and necessities to the area's poor people. On 9 January, Felicia went to the post office in via Borsellino, where she withdrew some 1,000 Euros from her pension and paid some bills. Afterward, she went along the sidewalk in her red electric wheelchair, headed to a friend's home. At some point she noticed she was being followed by two men on a motorcycle, and tried to hide in a courtyard. They caught up with Felicia, and one of them yelled, "Quick, give us the money!". One of the men searched for the cash under her blouse, and when he found it they drove away at high speed. Terrorized, Felicia had a heart attack. Bystanders came to her aid and called an ambulance. Shortly after arriving at the hospital Felicia died. She would have celebrated her 50th birthday on 25 January.

Sources: "Disabile morta, il parroco ai funerali: 'Per i colpevoli una sedia all'inferno'," *Corriere del Mezzogiorno*, 13 January 2009; "Napoli, disabile picchiata e derubata muore d'infarto poco dopo la rapina," la Repubblica.it, 9 January 2009; "Disabile picchiata e rapinata in carrozzina muore d'infarto," *La Stampa*, 9 January 2009.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from repubblica.it.



BARBARA CORVI

27 OCTOBER 2009

Barbara was lively, with a sunny disposition and a love for freedom, dancing, and music, according to her sister Irene. Raised in the village of Montecampano in Umbria, where she lived with her parents and sister, at 15 Barbara fell in love with Roberto Logiudice, who had moved to central Italy from Reggio Calabria as a very young man, after his father Giuseppe was killed in a mafia ambush during the 'ndrangheta war of the 1990s. Barbara ultimately married Roberto, and they had two children together. They lived in a large home in Montecampano, next to Barbara's parents. Neighbors and residents in the area knew the couple as a tight-knit, hard working family, dedicated to the success of the two agricultural merchandise stores that they owned and operated. In all appearances, Roberto had cut ties with his relatives in the 'ndrangheta and their criminal affairs. In the months leading up to October 2009, Barbara had been dissatisfied with her marriage, and met a man with whom she became intimately involved, a relationship that she revealed to her parents and sister Irene. In the meantime, someone also informed Roberto about Barbara's affair and provided proof. On the morning of 27 October, Barbara and Roberto went to the bank to settle issues with their joint accounts, and later that day he accompanied her home. According to investigators, the couple also had a violent argument about their relationship, and Barbara's cell phone was smashed to pieces. Around 7:00 pm, Barbara's children arrived home. Her car was parked outside, and her purse, documents, and wallet were inside the home. But there was no trace of their mother. Investigations into the disappearance of 35 year-old Barbara failed to uncover useful information. Her family's hopes were raised in 2011, when testimony given by the ex-'ndrangheta member Antonino Lo Giudice led to the arrests of 12 clan members for the murder of Barbara's sister-in-law Angela Costantino, who had disappeared from Reggio Calabria in 1994. She had been strangled to death for having an extramarital affair. However, no new information concerning Barbara Corvi has come to light. The resultant uncertainty was especially traumatic for Barbara's children who, in Irene's words, "Feel death inside them. Living in silence and anguish, without knowing

what happened to her is killing us all day by day."

Sources: "Noi non ci rassegniamo," umbria24.it, 29 October 2017; "Quattro anni fa la scomparsa di Barbara Corvi," *Il Corriere dell'Umbria*, 26 November 2013; "La verità sulla scomparsa di Barbara Corvi," *Corriere dell'Umbria.it*, 2 December 2012; "La cognata di Angela Costantino anche lei scomparsa nel nulla," *la Repubblica.it*, 14 April 2012; *Chi l'ha visto? – Barbara Corvi*, posted 9/11/2009, www.chilhavisto.rai.it/dl/clv/Scomparsi/ContentSet-e50e72f3-4963-4bb5-b274-ee173e63d01e.html.

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Barbara Corvi, *Chi l'ha visto* 30/11/2011: <http://www.rai.it/dl/RaiTV/programmi/media/ContentItem-50b4597c-ffb2-4862-bd9e-a9382e80519c.html>.

Amelia - Tgr3 - Inaugurazione pubblica per Barbara Corvi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qxjgnpV7il>.



LEA GAROFALO

24 NOVEMBER 2009

Today parks, libraries, and plaques throughout Italy bear Lea Garofalo's name, paying tribute to her as a woman of courage who rebelled against 'ndrangheta, and was killed by members of the clan as punishment. Her life story also exemplifies how rebelling against 'ndrangheta often means making a complete break with one's own family. Lea was born and raised in a prominent 'ndrangheta family of Pagliarelle, a village in the municipality of Petilia Policastro, in the Crotona province. While just an infant she experienced the cycle of deadly conflict and deep loss caused by the unwritten criminal laws of behavior and vendetta. When she was 9 months old, her father, Antonio Garofalo, was murdered, giving rise to Pagliarelle clan warfare, which resulted in some 40 victims. Lea grew up under the guidance of her mother Santina, paternal grandmother, older sister Marisa, and brother Floriano. At the same time, she was subjected to the family's criminal activities. At 9 years of age she was forced to help her brother hide a handgun, and later, in 1989, she witnessed the murder of Carmine Ruperto, a friend of the Garofalo family. Following the mafia law that only blood can wash away blood and the dishonor of having a member of one's family killed, Lea's brother Floriano murdered Mario Garofalo. Years later, Lea described growing up in her criminal family, telling the carabinieri, "You don't live, you survive somehow, dream of who knows what that might exist outside it, that surely must be better, because nothing could be worse." While still a young girl, Lea became involved with Carlo Cosco, and escaped to Milan, where she lived with him, and at 17 years of age had a daughter, Denise. Despite Lea's attempts to create a different life for herself and especially Denise, Carlo Cosco, also a member of 'ndrangheta, ran the criminal business in the so-called "little fort" (*fortino*), an area of popular housing buildings in downtown Milan that the clan had taken over. The clan was involved in drug and arms trafficking, counterfeit goods, and homicides. Determined to break away from 'ndrangheta and give Denise the chance to have a future, Lea left Carlo. She later became a witness for justice, who provided information on her own family's criminal activities as well as Cosco's. Lea and Denise were placed in the witness protection

program and relocated in Campobasso, and for some 7 years lived solitary lives, always afraid and on the alert not to let anyone know their true identities or reveal their location to family or friends. Nonetheless, Lea's car was set afire in Campobasso, and she was also the victim of attempted murder, when one of Cosco's men arrived at her apartment disguised as a repair man sent to fix the washing machine. On that occasion Denise saved her life. In 2009, deeply disillusioned that her testimony and extreme sacrifices had not resulted in charges against clan members, Lea wrote a letter to Giorgio Napolitano, then President of Italy, expressing her thoughts and emotional state: "Today I find myself with my daughter, isolated from everything and everyone, my family, I've lost my job [. . .] I've lost my home, I've lost all of my many friends, I've lost every possibility for a future, but I took that into account, I knew what I was up against by making that kind of choice. [. . .] The worst thing is that I already know the destiny awaiting me, after having my material and emotional well being destroyed, death will arrive! Unexpected, unworthy, inexorable". Believing that no one would attempt to kill her while Denise was at her side, Lea decided to meet with Cosco in Milan, in order to discuss their daughter's plans to attend university and economic support for her. Lea and Denise spent the day of 24 November 2009 seeing the sights in Milan. In the early evening Carlo took Denise to her aunt's home to visit with her relatives. At 6:39, surveillance camera's in downtown Milan captured the last images of Lea alive. Carlo picked up Lea, but instead of going to dinner to discuss Denise's future, he took her to an apartment where he beat her, and then strangled her with a chord. Lea's body was taken to a rural area of Monza, where it was set afire and burned for 3 days, until just bone fragments, along with Lea's necklace, remained. Ultimately, police arrested Carlo Cosco and five others for Lea Garofalo's murder. Denise was a key witness at the trial, providing strong testimony against her father, who, along with his accomplices, was found guilty. Cosco is currently serving a life sentence. Denise continues to live in the witness protection program.

Sources: Robin Pickering-Iazzi, "Il femminicidio e il genere della biografia testimoniale come pratica sociale e simbolica," in *Rappresentare la violenza di genere. Sguardi femministi tra critica, attivismo, e scrittura*, edited by Marina Bettaglio, Nicoletta Mandolini, and Silvia Ross, Milan, Mimesis, 2018; Iaria Ferramasca, Chiara Abastanotte, *Lea Garofalo – una madre contro la 'ndrangheta*, Padua, Becco Giallo, 2016; film *Lea*, directed by Marco Tullio Giordana, 2015; "The Tragedy and Courage of a Mobster's Daughter," *La Stampa.it*, 17 April 2014; Marika Demaria, *La scelta di Lea. Lea Garofalo. La ribellione di una donna alla 'ndrangheta*, Milan, Melampo 2013; Paolo De Chiara, *Il coraggio di dire no. Lea Garofalo, la donna che sfidò la 'ndrangheta*, Cosenza, Falco Editore, 2012.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from milano.repubblica.it.

Lea Garofalo e Denise Cosco - La tredicesima ora (parzialmente censurato): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezdvmqXR2Tw>.

Un giorno in pretura - Lea Garofalo sangue lava sangue: <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2016/04/Lea-Garofalo-Sangue-lava-sangue---Un-giorno-in-pretura-del-17042016-fb319132-7203-4095-8ccd-b517fbca1cb1.html>.

“Lea” di Marco Tullio Giordana: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9YW3XKfP00>.

TERESA BUONOCORE



20 SEPTEMBER 2010

Teresa became known as “mother courage” (*Mamma coraggio*) for many in the area of Naples and beyond when she publicly defended her young daughter against the sexual abuse committed by Enrico Perillo, in appearances an upstanding member of the Portici community. Teresa had four children, two of them older and from her former marriage, and two young daughters with her second husband. In 2008, Teresa’s younger daughter broke down and told her what Perillo had been doing to her when she went to play with his daughter, her best friend. Teresa filed a police report and her testimony was a key factor in the conviction of Perillo for the sexual abuse of her daughter, as well as 2 other children. He received a 15 year sentence that he was serving in the Modena prison. On the morning of 20 September 2010, Teresa, who supported her family by working two jobs, was driving to work when men on 2 motorcycles pulled alongside of her car and opened fire. Shot 4 times, 51 year-old Teresa died instantly, and her car went out of control, striking a cement barrier. According to investigators, Teresa was killed as a vendetta, executed on behalf of Perillo, who had hired Alberto Amendola and Giuseppe Avolio to commit the murder. Both killers were found guilty, and sentenced respectively to 22 and 18 years in jail. Perillo received a life sentence for arranging the murder.

Sources: “Ergastolo per il mandante dell’omicidio della mamma coraggio a Portici,” napoli.repubblica.it, 12 June 2015; “Teresa Buonocore, ammazzata a Napoli,” *Il Post*, 21 September 2010; “Napoli, donna assassinata nel porto incastrò lo stupratore della figlia,” ilmattino.it, 20 September 2010.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from ilmattino.it.

Napoli - Le istituzioni ricordano Teresa Buonocore: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrNipHkgKs0>.



ORSOLA FALLARA

17 DECEMBER 2010

Photo, ilmetropolitano.it, 12 December 2010, https://bergamo.corriere.it/notizie/cronaca/18_aprile_07/duplici-omicidio-caravaggio-condannato-mafia-contatti-carlo-novembrini-47c0a500-3a65-11e8-a94c-7.

A sangue freddo, i misteri di Reggio: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foQSf4gVthM>.

By the time she was 44, Orsola appeared to wield extraordinary power as an executive in the Reggio Calabria City Council. As the trusted assistant of mayor Giuseppe Scopelliti from 2002 to 2010, she implemented his directives and was privy to the insider financial affairs of the city council. On 9 October 2010, the illusion of the Reggio economic and cultural miracle came crashing down around Orsola. At a press conference organized by the center-left Democratic Party (Partito Democratico), Orsola and Scopelliti, members of the center-right People of Freedom Party (Partito della libertà), were accused of creating a huge deficit in the city budget, totaling some 170 million Euros. Orsola was accused of wrongfully paying herself some 750,000 Euros as an external consultant. She was suspended from her position, but decided to fight the accusations. On 15 December 2010, Orsola called her own press conference and rebutted the accusations against her. She concluded by giving her own resignation. Orsola went straight to her car, which had been vandalized, drove to the port, and drank a vile of muriatic acid. Regretting the drastic step, she called the carabinieri for help and was transported to the hospital, where she died on 17 December. In the controversial aftermath, various judicial investigations were conducted and discovered evidence that Scopelliti abused the office of mayor and was responsible for the falsification of city accounts resulting in the budget shortfall of some 170 million Euros. Furthermore, antimafia investigators discovered links between Scopelliti, Silvio Berlusconi's protégé, and the 'ndrangheta boss De Stefano in Milan as well as Paolo Romeo, considered one of the minds behind the Calabrian mafia. Scopelliti was found guilty and sentenced to over 4 years in prison. On 9 October 2012, the Reggio Calabria City Council was dissolved due to the infiltration of the 'ndrangheta.

Sources: "Giuseppe Scopelliti, Cassazione condanna ex governatore della Calabria a 4 anni e 7 mesi," ilfattoquotidiano.it, 4 April 2018; Associazione daSud, *Sdisonorate*, 2012.



ROSELLINA
INDRIERI

BARBARA
DE MARCO

16 FEBRUARY 2011

The evening of 16 February 2011 began like many others in the home of Rosellina and her daughter Barbara, located on the third floor of an apartment building in San Lorenzo del Vallo, in the Cosenza province. Everyone was home, including Rosellina's husband Gaetano De Marco, sleeping in the bedroom, her 20 year-old son Silos, and Barbara, 26 years old. At around 8:00 pm, their front door was smashed down and 2 to 3 men burst in, armed with a shotgun, submachine gun, and revolver. They opened fire and instantly killed Rosellina, 45 years old. Barbara attempted to escape by running out onto the balcony. Police found her body hanging lifeless over the railing. Silos was wounded, but survived, as did Gaetano. The murders of Rosellina and Barbara, now known as the Massacre of San Lorenzo del Vallo, were committed upon order of the 'ndrangheta boss Franco Presta as a vendetta for the murder of his son by Gaetano's brother precisely one month earlier. Following the arrest of Presta, Silos provided statements that helped identify the killers, Domenico Scarda (30 years old) and Salvatore Francesco Scorza (34 years old), who both received life sentences.

Sources: "Strage di San Lorenzo del Vallo, la Cassazione conferma: ergastolo per gli assassini," cn24tv.it, 12 October 2017; "Ndrangheta, assassinio di madre e figlia. Due fermati, forse sono loro i killer," la Repubblica.it, 19 September 2012; "Killer in azione a San Lorenzo del Vallo, due donne freddate senza pietà," cn24tv.it, 17 February 2011.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) ©

Cosenza: Strage San Lorenzo del Vallo, fermati presunti autori: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXNrKS8TWy8>.

SANTA TITA BUCCAFUSCA



18 APRIL 2011

Known by her family and friends as Tita, Santa was born in Nicotera on 7 February 1974, and grew up in an honest family of fishermen. Her life changed drastically when she married Pantaleone Mancuso, alias "Scarpuni," one of the most powerful and violent bosses of 'ndrangheta, and was expected to adhere to the oppressive code of behavior imposed on women. Moreover, she had to confront the constant anxiety of living in a state of fear for herself and family caused by clan conflicts and reprisals. On 14 March 2011, Tita arrived at the carabinieri station with her 16 month-old baby boy in her arms, and pounded on the door, yelling "They're killing each other like dogs". Having fled her home, she asked for protection, and wished to become a witness for justice. She was taken to the command headquarters in Catanzaro in order to make her statement. Tita phoned her husband to tell him that she and their son would not be returning home, and urged him to collaborate with the law. While giving her statement on what she had seen and heard living inside the 'ndrangheta clan, Tita became tired and on edge, and she did not sign the document. The next day, the judges, carabinieri, and a psychiatrist gathered to go over Tita's statement and have her sign it. Tita was overcome by doubt, and left just part of her signature on the first page. Given the ultimatum to sign or to leave the headquarters, Tita called her sister, and after a calm conversation concluded, "I'm not signing, I'm absolutely not signing." Her sister and brother-in-law accompanied her home to her husband on 15 March 2011. One month later, on 16 April, Pantaleone knocked on the door of the Nicotera carabinieri station, and told the officers that his wife had swallowed muriatic acid. Tita died 2 days later in the Polistena hospital. Though initially ruled a suicide, the case of Tita's death has been reopened as a homicide investigation, with the idea that she was "suicided" by her family as punishment for betrayal of her husband and his clan.

Sources: "Morte di Tita Buccafusca, la Dda riapre il caso e indaga per omicidio," ilvibonese.it, 24 May 2016; "Santa Tita Buccafusca," www.impronteombre.it/volto_a.

[php?id=159](#).

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](#) ©

tita buccafusca riaperto il caso ok: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8ZuitakIBM>.

MARIA CONCETTA CACCIOLA



20 AUGUST 2011

Born in Rosarno, Maria Concetta was raised in a powerful 'ndrangheta clan. Her father Michele Cacciola was the brother-in-law of the feared clan boss Gregorio Bellocchio, and her brother Giuseppe followed his father's footsteps, with a long list of convictions for such crimes as mafia association, loan sharking, and arms trafficking. As a little girl, Maria Concetta was forced to obey the oppressive rules of the clan, her movements always monitored and restricted to contact with family members. When she was 13 she met Salvatore Figliuzzi, who began courting her. Seeing the relationship as a means to escape her own family and gain some freedom, Maria Concetta married him at 13 years of age, and just 2 years later had their first child. However, the relationship was loveless on both of their parts; Salvatore had married her in order to enter the clan. Moreover, she was subjected to extreme physical and psychological violence at the hands of her husband. On one occasion he pointed a gun at Maria Concetta so she would stay quiet during one of their arguments. Thinking her parents would help her, she went to their home. Her father's response summarized the criminal code for women's behavior: "It's your marriage and you're in it for life." He expected his daughter to obey her husband as a matter of respect and honor for Salvatore, for himself, and the clan. Maria Concetta had three children by 2005, when her husband received an 8 year prison sentence. In his absence, the men in her family monitored her movements again, permitting her to leave her house only to take the children to school and back and do the grocery shopping. Describing her captivity, Maria Concetta wrote, "I go out in the morning to take the children to school . . . I can't have contact with anyone else, what good is my life when I can't have any human contact?". In her hours of solitude Maria Concetta began spending time on Facebook, and made friends with a man from Reggio Calabria who worked in Germany. Through their online chatting she fell in love, though the relationship remained platonic. In June of 2010, anonymous letters began to arrive for the Cacciola family, denouncing the relationship. Outraged at the dishonor his daughter had cast on the Cacciola family, her father, along with Giuseppe, beat

Maria Concetta nearly to death, then had her treated by a doctor trusted by the clan. After 3 months recovering, and living in fear for her life, in May of 2011, when she was called to the carabinieri station to answer questions about her son's stolen motorbike, the young woman asked the officer for help and told him about living in the 'ndrangheta clan. She concluded, "If my family finds out that I'm here talking about all of this they'll kill me." Four days later, Maria Concetta was called back to the station and began her life as a witness for justice. She wrote a letter to her mother, entrusting her 3 children to her, and on 29 May 2011, was picked up secretly at her home and placed in the witness protection program. Ultimately, while living in Genoa, Maria Concetta was desperate to hear about her children and contacted her mother, wanting to meet with her. Her mother and father went to Genoa and convinced their daughter to return home. During the car trip back to Rosarno, Maria Concetta realized she had been trapped, and called the carabinieri, who came to get her. Later, after numerous phone conversations with her mother and other relatives, Maria Concetta bent to their pressure, and ultimately returned to Rosarno. On 20 August 2011, her mother, Anna Rosalba Lazzaro, and father reported to the carabinieri that they found their daughter dead in the bathroom. Maria Concetta, just 31 years old, had ingested muriatic acid, causing her mouth and esophagus to be destroyed, and her organs to shut down. On the basis of carabinieri reports and tapes that documented the pressures family members placed on Maria Concetta to retract her statement, in February 2012, a judge issued the warrants for the arrests of Michele and Giuseppe Cacciola, and house arrest for Anna Rosalba, for inducing Maria Concetta to ingest the muriatic acid, essentially "suiciding" her. They were found guilty in 2014.

Sources: Milka Kahn, Anne Véron, *Women of Honor: Madonnas, Godmothers and Informers in the Italian Mafia*, translated by James Ferguson, London, Hurst & Company, 2017; "Maria Concetta Cacciola's life and death offers a window into mafia women," abc.net, 2 December 2016; "Maria Concetta Cacciola sognava la libertà," *L'Espresso*, 18 February 2014.

Photo, impronteombre.it, [Creative Commons License](#) ©

Cristina Parodi Live - Maria Concetta Cacciola: la sfida alla 'ndrangheta (26/09/2012): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhqSvSuOZ98>.

Teatro, va in scena la storia di Maria Concetta Cacciola, 'suicidata' dalla 'ndrangheta: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AeXTZItW4xg>.

A Sangue Freddo: O cu nnui, o cu iddi. La storia Maria Concetta Cacciola (24-05-2015): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB1boLHqy9Y>.

FRANCESCA BELLOCCO

12 AUGUST 2013

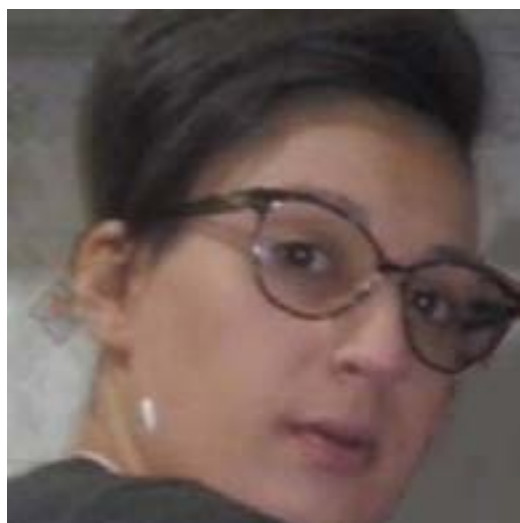


Since she was born, Francesca had lived with the privileges and oppressive rules of the 'ndrangheta. As the daughter of Pietro Bellocco, the former boss who died of natural causes in 2011, her last name inspired fear among many in Rosarno, where she grew up. Francesca married Salvatore Barone, a prominent figure in the Barone family, which was part of the Bellocco clan, operating in Calabria, Emilia Romagna, and Lombardy, among other regions of Italy and foreign territories. In fact, for years Salvatore lived in Lombardy, and Francesca divided her time between there and Rosarno. While in Rosarno, Francesca became involved in an intimate relationship with Domenico Cacciola (51 years old), the boss of a different 'ndrangheta clan in Rosarno. According to reconstructions of events that took place on 12 August 2013, at around 2:00 in the morning, Francesca's son, Francesco Barone, surprised her together with Domenico. A police officer who witnessed 3 men with their faces covered enter the Bellocco home then heard Francesca say "Forgive me, forgive me!". Both Francesca and Domenico were killed, and their bodies hidden away in the Rosarno countryside. Two years later, investigators arrested Francesco Barone, who in their words, with "Lucid homicidal fury organized the deadly ambush carried out by the hit squad that he himself led," and killed his mother as punishment for her extramarital relationship.

Sources: "La donna ha una relazione segreta e chiede perdono al figlio, lui la uccide," *Blasting News*, 9 September 2017; "Relazione con un boss di Rosarno, uccise la madre per 'punizione'," [cn24tv.it](#), 15 April 2015; "Rosarno, gli amanti sono stati uccisi dai clan," *L'Espresso*, 31 October 2014.

Photo, [napolitan.it](#).

Uccise la madre per gelosia, condannato all'ergastolo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TJGbcfbk8>.



CARLA MARIA FORNARI

18 MARCH 2014

Carla Maria's life was intimately intertwined with members of the United Sacred Crown clan that operated in the town of Palagiano, near Taranto in southeastern Italy. She married Domenico Petruzzelli, the trusted driver and right-hand man of Domenico Attorre, recognized as a high-level boss of the Putignano clan. On 9 May 2011, she became a young widow, left to support and raise their 3 small children on her own. While driving the car for Attorre, Domenico and the boss were riddled with bullets in an ambush. Carla later became seriously involved with clan member Cosimo Orlando, who was serving an eighteen-year prison sentence for a double homicide committed in 2000. On the evening of 18 March, Carla was driving Orlando, who was on day release, back to prison for the night. Her children, ages 2 1/2, 6, and 7 years old, were sitting in the back seat. A car with armed men pulled up alongside Carla's car and, according to her older children, "They were shooting at us, we were scared to death, they were yelling and we got down between the seats, behind our mom." Carla attempted to put the car into reverse, in a desperate bid to escape. After the killers drove off, one of Carla's little boys opened the door to check on his mother, who was slumped over. Shot some 9 times, Carla was dead, at 30 years of age. Her youngest son, Domenico, had been sitting on Cosimo Orlando's lap, and was fatally wounded in the ambush, along with Orlando. At the funeral for Carla and Domenico, lovingly nicknamed Dodò, the priest commented that mafia killers "are ready to do anything to achieve their goals, often tied to personal profits and illegal riches." Based upon evidence gathered later, police charged clan member Giovanni Di Napoli with ordering the ambush to kill Orlando, and perhaps Carla Fornari as well. In the trial against her husband's killers, Carla had given important court testimony that helped convict the accused men. Following this line of thought, Di Napoli may have wanted to eliminate her as an eyewitness.

Sources: "Operazione 'infame': I dettagli che hanno portato all'arresto Di Napoli," pugliapress.org, 16 March 2015; "Strage Taranto, funerali delle vittime," tgcom24.

mediaset.it, 20 March 2014; Giusi Fasano, "'Ci sparavano adosso', il racconto dei fratellini," corriere.it, 20 March 2014; Giulio Fosenini, "Mafia, strage a Taranto: tre morti, giustiziato anche un bambino di 3 anni," bari.repubblica.it, 18 March 2014.

Photo, "Una giovane madre," www.extramagazine.eu.

Diretta Strage mafia Palagiano: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7L_lyXnUJLs.



GIUSEPPINA PRONESTÌ

29 MARCH 2016

Very little information has been reported about Giuseppina's early life in Rosarno, where she was born, or the years leading up to her death. A young woman of 42 years of age, Giuseppina was the mother of 3 children, and married to Tonino Digiglio, an affiliated member of the powerful 'ndrangheta Ferrentino-Chindamo clans that ruled Laureana di Borrello, where she lived with her family. On 29 March 2016, only a few news sources carried the story of Giuseppina's death, which seemed to be a case of suicide. However, investigators had serious doubts, largely because, as they commented, the members of the 'ndrangheta are able to skillfully disguise their homicides as suicides. Giuseppina's case has been reopened as a possible homicide. Indeed, Giuseppina's family has stated they hold her husband Tonino as "morally responsible". Giuseppina's death testifies to the impossible conditions to which girls and women are subjected by members of the 'ndrangheta who impose their criminal code of loyalty and obedience to the clan.

Sources: "Morte di Giuseppina Pronestì a Laureana: la Dda riapre il caso," lacnews24.it, 13 October 2017; "Laureana di Borello, giovane donna (G.P.) originaria di Rosarno si toglie la vita," Pianainforma.it, 30 March 2016.

Vittime di 'ndrangheta: un (altro) suicidio oscuro: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=51&v=Fs8Ky_6EFx0.



MARIA CHINDAMO

6 MAY 2016

Maria worked in the farming industry in Laureana di Borrello, an area dominated by the Chindamo and Ferrentino 'ndrangheta clans and their system of belief. At 44 years old, her marriage with Ferdinando Punturiero had fallen apart, and she wanted a separation. Unable to accept the end of his marriage, Ferdinando committed suicide in 2015, leaving Maria on her own to run the business and raise their 3 children. The Punturiero family held Maria responsible for their son's death. A year later, at dawn on 6 May, Maria was alone driving her car in Vibonese, where she often went for reasons related to her business. Video surveillance cameras captured her last images alive in Vibonese, and then she disappeared in Nicotera. Her car was found with the engine running, and traces of blood inside. Investigators followed up on information provided by the collaborator with justice Giuseppe Dimasi, who was tied to the Ferrentino-Chindamo clan. According to him, Marco Ferrentino, the head of the clan in Laureana di Borello, had referred to Maria and said, "They made her pay for it". In September 2018, the actual motive for Maria's presumed murder by *lupara bianca* and killers are still a mystery. Maria's brother, Vincenzo Chindamo, travels throughout Italy to inform the public about his sister's story and the culture of legality.

Sources: "Scomparsa di Maria Chindamo, nel testamento del suocero una traccia verso la verità?," ilvibonese.it, 12 March 2018; "Donne scomparse: indaga pure la Dda. Da Maria Chindamo a Giuseppina Pronestì e Tina Buccafusca," ilvibonese.it, 13 October 2017; Claudio Cordova, "Mi dissero che a Maria Chindamo gliel'hanno fatta pagare," *Il Dispaccio*, 10 October 2017; "La figlia di Maria Chindamo si appella al viceministro: 'Verità per mia madre'," ilvibonese.it, 6 November 2016.

Photo, Facebook Page Giallo Maria Chindamo.

[I fatti in diretta - Maria Chindamo spettacolo: Armonie d'arte.](#)

[Svolta nel caso di Maria Chindamo, l'imprenditrice scomparsa - La vita in diretta 10/04/2018.](#)



IDA
ATTANASIO



ESSA
COSTABILE

30 OCTOBER 2016

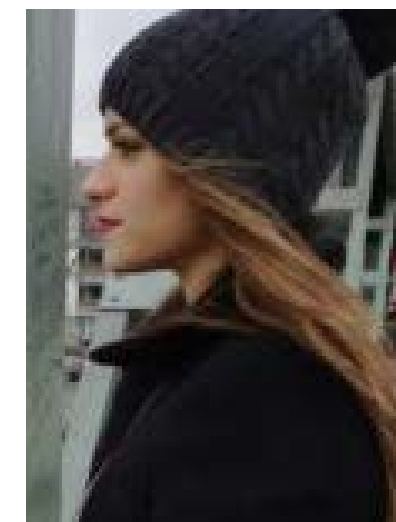
The breaking news stories that reported the final moments of Essa and Ida's lives have discrepancies in the spelling of their first names. Essa Costabile is also identified with the first name Edda in some articles, and Ida's first name frequently appears as Iole. Essa, 77 years old, and Ida, 52, were respectively mother and daughter, living in San Lorenzo del Vallo, a town in the province of Cosenza. Every Sunday, the two women would go to the cemetery to clean the family tomb and place fresh flowers on the headstones of their loved ones. On 30 October, Essa and Ida went to the cemetery as usual, and began washing the tomb's marble. A man approached Essa first, and opened fire, killing her instantly. Ida attempted to escape and was chased some 30 yards, and then shot in the back. She too died on the spot. The cemetery was relatively crowded, but when investigators arrived on the scene everyone claimed that they had not seen anything. One bystander commented that the Attanasio family was "upstanding, keeping a distance from relations with the local mafia." Nonetheless, Essa and Ida were apparently killed as a transversal vendetta, performed to avenge the murder of Damiano Galizia, committed the prior year by Francesco Attanasio in the course of an argument over an unpaid debt.

Sources: Carlo Macrì, "Calabria: due donne uccise per vendetta al cimitero," *Corriere della Sera*, 30 October 2016; "Madre e figlia uccise in Calabria. Procura, dinamica omicidio complessa," [ANSA.it](https://www.ansa.it) Calabria, 30 October 2016.

Strage a San Lorenzo del Vallo, una vendetta trasversale RTC Telecalabria: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biXwx7G6SPI>.

MARIA RITA LOGIUDICE¹

2 APRIL 2017



The story of Maria Rita's life and death tells us much about the often unbearable conflicts lived by girls, boys, women, and men born into mafia families who want to break away and become part of civil communities, yet also have deep emotional bonds to their parents or siblings. In all appearances, 24 year-old Maria Rita had a fulfilling life ahead of her. A smart, friendly, beautiful young woman, she excelled in her courses at the university and finished up her degree in Economics with top grades. She had decided to continue her studies in Law at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria, and in February of 2017 completed a study abroad program, attending events in Frankfurt and Brussels at the Central Bank and European Commission. Shortly before 7:00 Sunday morning, 2 April 2017, Maria Rita took her own life, jumping off the balcony of her family's home in Reggio Calabria, where she lived with her mother. On the wake of Maria Rita's tragic death, friends, journalists, and investigators proposed that she died in part from solitude and isolation, caused by her last name, Logiudice. Maria Rita was the daughter of Giovanni Logiudice, boss of the renowned 'ndrangheta clan in Reggio Calabria, that continues to be involved in arms and drug trafficking, the extortion racket, and public contracts. This clan also has a long history of using physical violence to force women to adhere to its criminal code of loyalty to the clan and obedience to male figures. In 1994, when Maria Rita was 2 years old, her aunt Angela Costantino was killed by relatives as punishment for having an extramarital relationship, and in 2009, another aunt, Barbara Corvi, mysteriously disappeared, a presumed victim of *lupara bianca*, after she decided to separate from her husband Roberto Logiudice. In contrast, Maria Rita's uncle Nino Logiudice, had become a collaborator with justice. According to Maria Rita's mother and the family attorney, the young woman had not publically distanced herself from the family and its criminal affairs. In fact, she took an active interest in her father's legal

¹ The surname of the Logiudice family sometimes appears written as Lo Giudice.

proceedings. At the same time, her friends told investigators that she often felt the heavy burden of her last name, even in the course of her life at the university, where her studies and future profession represented a means for her to achieve economic and social independence from the 'ndrangheta. Commenting upon the responsibilities of honest members of society to support young people like Maria Rita, the head Public Prosecutor of Reggio Calabria stated, "Maria Rita Lo Giudice took her life and this must touch everyone's conscience. If there's a young girl who has achieved academic success by honest merit, earned her degree, which is a means to break away from the 'ndrangheta family she was raised in, and we're not able to integrate her into society, then we've all lost." Ironically, most newspaper headlines reporting Maria Rita's death identify her as the daughter of a 'ndrangheta boss, the very identity she was likely attempting to escape and remake on her own terms.

Sources: Donatella D'Acapito, "Maria Rita Lo Giudice: un suicidio che ci riguarda," liberainformazione.org, 12 April 2017; "Figlia del boss suicida, Maria Rita Logiudice è morta di solitudine," IlFattoQuotidiano.it, 4 April 2017; Alessia Candito, "Reggio Calabria, il suicidio di Maria Rita Lo Giudice, figlia di una famiglia di 'ndrangheta," repubblica.it, 4 April 2017.

Photo, napolitan.it.

Si toglie la vita la figlia del boss Lo Giudice: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsRDQD_jb1g.

Maria Rita, una ferita aperta: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_oeRb8qzDI.

IMMACOLATA DE ROSA



28 NOVEMBER 2017

At 55 years of age, Immacolata was already a widow, with 4 children. She lived with her family in Casalnuovo, a small city in the northern metropolitan area of Naples, nicknamed the "triangle of death" for the high rate of tumors among the population, linked to the camorra's illegal disposal of toxic waste. On the evening of 28 November, Immacolata was sitting in a car with her son Clemente (34 years old) at the wheel, parked in the street below the family home. Armed men approached the car and opened fire. Immacolata raised her hands against the hail of bullets trying to protect herself, but was struck in the heart and died instantly. Her son Clemente, apparently the target of the camorra ambush, died after being shot some 5 times in the face and neck. As police discovered during the ongoing investigation, Clemente, who had a record for receiving stolen goods, owned a waste disposal company that transported waste from all parts of the peninsula, a field of high illegal activity and profits for the camorra. According to some reports, the ambush that killed Immacolata and her son was meant as a message between the Rea and Veneruso clans, who in 2017 were engaged in a war for power over the northern Naples area.

Sources: "Madre e figlio uccisi a Casalnuovo, i funerali nel cimitero di Volla," ilmattino.it, 5 December 2017; "Madre e figlio uccisi dalla camorra: è guerra tra i clan vesuviani ed i loro 'scissionisti'," ilfattovesuviano.it, 2 December 2017; "Agguato di camorra nel Napoletano, uccisi a Casalnuovo un uomo e sua madre," napoli.repubblica.it, 28 November 2017; "Napoli, killer in azione in strada: ucciso un uomo, ammazzata anche la madre per sbaglio," ilmessaggero.it, 28 November 2017.

Agguato a Casalnuovo, uccisi madre e figlio in auto: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pn5ymJg1xFl>.



ANNA ROSA TARANTINO

30 DECEMBER 2017

At 84 years old, Anna Rosa lived a fairly independent life in the city of Bitonto, surrounded by olive groves and located in the province of Bari. On the morning of 31 December 2017, Anna Rosa had just come out of church and was on her way home. When the elderly woman was just a few steps away from her door, gunfire broke out in the downtown street. She was struck by a bullet that lodged in her side, and died. In April 2018, a pomegranate tree was planted in Bitonto in honor of Anna Rosa's memory, by the European Language School of Bitonto, in collaboration with *Libera, nomi e numeri contro le mafie* (Libera, names and numbers against the mafias) and similar antimafia associations. One of Anna Rosa's grandchildren helped to plant the tree, called "the tree of the just," planted "as a good seed. The seed of life that even reaches beyond death." In May 2018, Domenico Conte, the boss of the Conte clan in Bitonto, was arrested for ordering the ambush that claimed Anna Rosa's life, and was intended to kill Giuseppe Casadei, a drug dealer. The Conte and the Cipriano clans were in the midst of warfare for control over the drug and arms markets in the region.

Sources: "Anziana uccisa, in 10 a processo: anche il boss Domenico Conte," bitontoviva.it, 2 August 2018; "In memoria di Anna Rosa Tarantino l'albero dei 'giusti' in piazza Marconi," dabitonto.com, 19 April 2018; "Bitonto: Anna Rosa Tarantino uccisa da un proiettile in un fianco," noinotizie.it, 31 December 2017.

Photo courtesy of vittimemafia.it, drawn from <http://www.necrologiweb.it/necrologio/5616/anna-rosa-tarantino>.

A Bitonto i funerali di Anna Rosa, vittima di una sparatoria: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfB-iORWw_E.

Bitonto ricorda Anna Rosa Tarantino: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CghzStyDzil>.

ANNAMARIA PALMIERI

22 JANUARY 2018



Annamaria's short blond hair earned her the nickname "nino D'Angelo" in the rough neighborhood of San Giovanni a Teduccio in Naples, where she was a familiar face. Married and with one son, Annamaria lived by expedients on the fringes of the camorra's illegal operations, taking care of various tasks for the clans. By 54 years of age she had a record for mafia association, drugs and extortion, and was aligned with the Formicola clan, but not an affiliated member. At around 9:00 on the evening of Monday, 22 January, Annamaria was on her way to her son's home, and heading down the street near the complex of buildings dubbed the "Bronx" for its high rate of street violence, an area ruled by the Silenzio clan. Two men approached Annamaria and shot her 5 times at close range, aiming two shots directly at her face, a kind of execution generally reserved for clan bosses. She died instantly. Reported as the first camorra killing of 2018, Annamaria's case is still open as of December 2018. However, investigators have evidence suggesting Annamaria was caught in the middle of a deepening conflict between the interlinked Formicola and Silenzio clans, and was killed as punishment for offending Francesco "Franco" Silenzio, the boss of the Silenzio family.

Sources: "Annamaria Palmieri uccisa per vendicare il boss tradito," vocedinapoli.it, 25 January 2018; "Uccisa come un boss: l'agguato alla 54enne Annamaria Palmieri," napolitoday.it, 23 January 2018.



FORTUNATA FORTIGNO

16 MARCH 2018

Fortunata was a seamstress by profession, living in the neighborhood of Vito, in Reggio Calabria, with her husband and children, who were devoted to sports. Fortunata's family and her husband's appeared to have no ties to the 'ndrangheta clans. However, Fortunata became intimately involved with Demetrio Lo Giudice (53 years old), the head of a clan associated with the De Stefano-Tegano clans, which were engaged in a lethal battle for control over Reggio Calabria. One expert described the city as a territory "controlled militarily by the 'ndrangheta whose old members and new recruits want to make new mafia arrangements." On the evening of 16 March 2018, Fortunata and Demetrio went to an isolated area in Gallico, a northern suburb of the city, to have time to themselves. Based on surveillance video in the area, the killers approached their car, and when Demetrio caught sight of them he used Fortunata as a shield. She was shot in the head and he was wounded in the arm. He managed to escape and drove Fortunata to the emergency room, but she was already dead. Police took 4 people into custody and suspected Paolo Chindemi to be the shooter.

Sources: "Omicidio Fortunata Fortugno, fermato il killer: lei usata come scudo dal boss vero obiettivo dell'agguato," ilfattoquotidiano.it, 4 July 2018; "Fortunata Fortugno, arresti per omicidio: 'Uccisa per errore'," corriere.it, 4 July 2018; "L'ultimo saluto a Donatella Fortugno, uccisa in auto nel torrente gallico," lacnews24.it, 25 March 2018; "Reggio Calabria, spari contro il boss e la sua amante: lui ferito, lei uccisa. L'incognita del movente," ilfattoquotidiano.it, 17 March 2018.

Gallico di Reggio Calabria: si indaga sull'omicidio di Fortunata Fortugno: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2G-WvF96lQo>.

MARIA ROSA FORTINI

4 APRIL 2018



Born in Crema, in the province of Cremona, Maria Rosa worked at a construction company. For over 2 years, she had been seriously involved with Carlo Novembrini, and lived with him in the enchanting town of Sergnano, located in the Lombardy region. Carlo, originally from Gela, Sicily, had been affiliated with the Madonia clan of Cosa Nostra, and in the early 1990s was the subject of investigations into the extortion racket and drug trade. He served several years in prison under the 41 bis strict solitary confinement. In Sergnano, he worked as an artisan. On Wednesday evening, 4 April, Maria Rosa and Carlo went to the town of Caravaggio, in the province of Bergamo, to enjoy themselves at the slot machine hall, which was crowded with other patrons. At around 6:15 pm, Carlo's sister entered the hall and began arguing with Maria Rosa. Carlo's younger brother, Maurizio, intervened and then pulled out a gun and fired 4 shots, killing Maria Rosa on the spot, as well as Carlo. Maurizio Novembrini was arrested for the murders. According to investigators, Maurizio had had a relationship with Maria Rosa in the past, and couldn't stand the idea of her being with another man. Maria Rosa, 40 years old, was survived by her father Luigi Fortini, mother Ida Bianchessi, and brothers Valentino and Daniele.

Sources: Armando Di Landro and Pietro Tosca, "Sparatoria a Caravaggio: lei lo protegge, entrambi uccisi confessa il fratello tradito," corriere.it, 4 April 2018; "Coppia cremasca uccisa a Caravaggio," Crema-News.it, 4 April 2018; "Quattro colpi di pistola, uccisa coppia omicidio di Caravaggio," ecodibergamo.it, 4 April 2018.

Photo, bergamo.corriere.it, 7 April 2018, https://bergamo.corriere.it/notizie/cronaca/18_aprile_07/duplici-omicidio-caravaggio-condannato-mafia-contatti-carlo-novembrini-47c0a500-3a65-11e8-a94c-7.

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