

# Criminal investigation of john gotti essay sample

[Law](#), [Crime](#)



## Introduction

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rate of organized crime spilled out of control in the United States. There were many well known organized criminal groups which were operating loan sharking, gambling, and other extortions. One of the most famous and controversial mafia groups in the United States was Gambino family. For a long time, US detectives had to go in an out of courts filing different charges against leaders of Gambino family but every time they found their way out of court. John Gotti is well known self made leader of the Bambino Family who used his influence and ruthlessness of this gang to intimidate jury and for a long time, he was in and out of jail. John Gotti came to be known as “ The Dapper Don” or the “ Teflon Don” after murdering the former boss of the Gambino family and assuming the leadership of the gang. Over the time, he became a media celebrity and is well know for the number of acquittals. Gotti became widely known due to his outspoken personality and a lifestyle which eventually led to his downfall after being convicted in 1992 for multiple charges of racketeering, 13 accounts of murders, obstruction of jury, hijacking, gambling, extortion, evasion of tax, loan sharking, and may other crimes which handed him life imprisonment. John Gotti criminal investigation remains one of the longest and most difficult in the history of the United States.

## Criminal investigation of John Gotti

Many of the American mafia members can be traced to families which have been involved in organized crimes for a long time. Although it is the intrigue of mafia crime and lifestyle that eventually drew most young people to join

these group, most of them usually grow in a mafia environment or under mafia influence (Davis, 1993).. According to Robert K. Merton's strain theory, most young people are draw to criminal activities due to the perceived mafia lifestyle of glorious wealth which is achieved without much struggle or hard work (Mafia Today, 2009). This theory can be used to explain the criminal life of John Gotti since he constantly showed the desire for wealth and power through this flamboyant lifestyle and murder of his former boss, although he rejected the conventional ways which could be used to achieve them.

John Gotti was born to an Italian family and as the family grew large, John Gotti Sr found it difficult to provide for the whole family. When John Gotti was 12 year, John Gotti Sr moved the family to Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn which was infested with crime and immediately John Gotti and his brothers joined a local gang (Capeci and Gene, 1996). He later married Victoria in 1962 and had five children. However, he despised his family and the FBI investigation tapes have reviewed that he subjected his wife and children to regular beatings.

John Gotti Immediately rose to the leadership of the local gang, Fulton-Rockway Boys, and this gave him channel to join the Gambino Family which was the largest organized crime group in New York (Davis, 1993). Gotti dropped out of high school and his crime record was steadily rising. Between the age of 18 and 26, Gotti was arrested more than nine times for petty crimes. As a leader of the gang, Gotti was becoming a favorite student of

Gambino Family members Carmine and Danny Fatico. From time to time, he impressed them by executing commissions of crime with high accuracy.

In 1968, Gotti was arrested for his indication in hijacking of a truck and theft of the contained cargo. John Gotti did plead guilty to the offense and was consequently handed a three years imprisonment in a federal prison. When he was released, he did not relent from crime. In many organized crimes, research has shown that for one to move up the hierarchy of the gangs, one has to prove his commitment to the group through committing high level crimes like violent crimes. In order to move up the family ladder, John Gotti was involved in the murder of James McBartney who was killed in Staten Island, New York. This murder was surrounded by various intrigues since McBartney had been mentioned in the abduction and murder of Manny Gambino, a nephew to Carlo Gambino who was the boss of the Gambino family. John Gotti pleaded guilty to manslaughter and was consequently handed a four year imprisonment. Through this act, John Gotti was formally initiated into the Gambino family as a self made man.

By the time, John Gotti was raising interest among the FBI officials for his record of crime and his possible involvement in Gambino Family. FBI surveillance indicated that he started receiving great accordance from the group members like greetings with kisses and embraces, which were gestures which were bestowed only to the leaders of the group.

By the early 1980s, the FBI raised its suspicion on the involvement of John Gotti with criminal activities. The FBI started usign Title III wiretap, mob informants, and deployed several undercover agents in an effort to gather

more information regarding the hierarchy and the insight activities of the Gambino family (Davis, 1993). In this effort, the FBI was also profiling a strong case which could be used against the organized groups as criminal enterprises and their heads to crack on their criminal activities.

A close FBI surveillance on John Gotti was finally giving impressive results. The FBI came to a close break through in 1985 when some peculiar criminal activity happened in Spark's Steak House, which was a favorite hangout for most criminals (FBI, 2007). In December 1985, the leader of the Gambino Family, Paul Castellano who was 79 years old and successor to the former deceased family boss Anieelo Delcrose, and his second in command Thomas Bilotti, were gunned down. It became apparently clear that Gotti was in full command of the criminal activity. As he watched in a safe distance inside his car, he was driven close the crime scene in order to ascertain that his orders had been executed as given.

After eliminating the main competitors, John Gotti took over the leadership of the Gambino family which was by then the biggest organized crime group in the United States. John Gotti had the wealth he had wished for throughout his life and he used it in the most appropriate way that pleased him (FBI, 2007). Due to his expensive suits, lavish parties that he threw now and then, illegal dealings, and other crimes of public interest made John Gotti a media celebrity gaining name "The Dapper Don" from the media. Although he was taken to court for many times, high number of publicized acquittals which were due to intimidation of witnesses and tampering of the jury gained him the title "Teflon Don".

However, the FBI and the police department did not give up on John Gotti. The New York Police Department applied for court authorization to use electronic surveillance, detective network and other means in order to investigate John Gotti. Eventually, the FBI and NYPD got the cooperation from Gotti's henchman Gravano, otherwise referred to as "Sammy the Bull" (FBI, 2007). The agents put the pieces together and with the new evidence, they build a very strong case against Gotti.

In 1990, the FBI and the NYPD had built enough evidence to charge John Gotti. In December 1990, John Gotti was charged with multiple crimes including racketeering, extortion, tampering with the jury procedures, 14 accounts of murder, and many others. However, the agents faced another hurdle of ensuring that they protected the jury and the witness to prevent intimidation and jury tampering. Therefore the court ordered that the jurors had to remain anonymous and were identified only through assigned numbers. This was to ensure that they were not pressured by anyone in their work. The case was kept airtight. (FBI, 2007)

The whole court process had been well arranged and this time, it worked very well. On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1992 after more than one and a half year of court process, John Gotti, the leader of the Gambino Family was convicted of 13 accounts of murder, including giving direct order for the murder of Castellano and his junior Billoti. This meant that it was the last time that Gotti evaded the due process of law through intimidation and jury tampering. Every charge stuck, and the Don was finally behind the prison bars. He was

handed a life imprisonment but he remained behind bars until his death in June 2002.

### Conclusion

For the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was an increased rise in the number of organized crime and five prominent groups emerged. One of those groups was the Gambino family which was indicated in several accounts of criminal activity. One of the prominent leaders of the group was John Gotti who started criminal activities in his teens and has been in and out of prison. From this early life, John Gotti showed increased interest in criminal activities and arose through ranks to assume the leadership of Gambino family after ordering the killing of the leaders of the family. As a leader of the group, John Gotti was charged with different criminal activities but through jury tampering and intimidation of the witnesses, he was acquitted a number of times. However, the FBI and NYPD finally got the cooperation of his henchman Gravano and with the protection of the jurors by the court, John Gotti was finally charged and convicted of multiple crimes where he was handed life sentence. John Gotti died in June 2002 after serving ten years of imprisonment.

### References

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