

A promotional image for the television series 'The Sopranos'. It features a group of the main cast members in formal attire, primarily suits. The central figure is James Gandolfini as Tony Soprano, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. Behind him and to the sides are other key characters, including Steven Van Zandt, Dominic Chianese, Lorraine Bracco, and Tony Danza. The background is dark and slightly out of focus, showing a hint of an ornate ceiling. The title 'THE SOPRANOS' is overlaid in a red, serif font, centered between two horizontal red lines.

THE SOPRANOS

MATT RAMPE AND BEN RACHEL
TUMUN IX

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Letter From the Crisis Director

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to The Soprano Power Grab! We are your committee directors, Benjamin Rachel and Matthew Rampe. We are both Sophomores at Tufts University and are majoring in Economics and Computer Science, and International Relations and French respectively. Our committee dives into the volatile interplay and dynamics of a Mafia conglomerate infected with an intense power struggle. This crisis committee is designed to challenge delegates through an array of unexpected twists and turns, and opportunities to flex your creativity and strategic thinking.

When choosing our committee topic, we drew inspiration from our inherent interests and previous Model UN experiences. Our goal was to choose a topic that would create a uniquely engaging and memorable experience. With an amalgamation of the romanticized idea of organized crime with the drama of one of television's most iconic series, we've crafted a scenario that invites you delegates to fully immerse yourselves into your roles. Expect to make high-stakes decisions, navigate real-life dilemmas, and engage in an unforgettable journey of negotiation, intrigue, and perhaps betrayal.

Matt and I would like to preface our guide with what our staff and us expect from our delegates and what you should expect from us. We want to be clear that even though our committee is based off The Sopranos, the overall story and plot points will not follow the show. It would be best for delegates to think of this inspiration as the basis of our committee, but not the driving force. Us as directors have a very minimal, overarching idea of how the ultimate story will unfold. We want you delegates to create your own story. Show us who you are and what you and your character want. Of course we will help move the committee along, but we hope that most of the driving is done by you all. From delegates, we expect and advise you to come to this committee with a coherent and comprehensive plan. Most of you will be plotting and fighting for the same spot - the head of the family. However, like all Mafia groups, there can only be one kingpin. Us and our staffers will create an individual and personal connection with each of you delegates ultimately watching and helping your character grow, however we also intend on being very harsh on each of your actions throughout your respective character arcs and your collective resolutions to problems. We want to be clear that we will make sure that, just like

Newton's laws of physics, every action will have an equal and opposite reaction. We advise delegates to be detailed, thoughtful, and thorough with your decisions and think about what the resulting consequences could be. Just like real-life Mafia families, one small mistake could take down the entire family.

Anyways, we are so very excited to be hosting this committee. We are confident that you delegates will have an unparalleled experience in our committee and we are excited to work with you all! Please feel free to contact either one of us with any questions, comments, or concerns about the committee topic, your specific character, or our personal and unique stances on the use of ketchup.

Best regards,

Benjamin S. Rachel benjamin.rachel@tufts.edu

Matthew K. Rampe matthew.rampe@tufts.edu

Note on Sensitivity

Since this committee will be focused on sensitive topics, we expect all delegates to conduct themselves with the utmost diplomacy and decorum. There will be a zero-tolerance policy for any sort of action that perpetuates harmful ideologies. If you see this type of behavior occurring during the conference, please bring it to the attention of the Crisis Director, the Chair, the Staff, or the Secretariat. Everyone should feel comfortable when dealing with these issues and have an overall positive attitude during committee.

Technology Policy

During moderate caucuses and debate, computers are not allowed. Your attention should be on the person speaking and the happenings of committee. However, you can use technology during unmoderated caucuses.

Mafia Dynamics

The Mafia during this period was set up in a hierarchical manner. Please refer to this as a guide when figuring out where certain characters rank in the overall hierarchy in the mafia¹.

The Boss (Don): The head of the family, making high-level decisions.

Underboss: Second in command, overseeing operations and acting as the boss's deputy. **Consigliere:** Trusted advisor to the boss, offering guidance and serving as a mediator. **Caporegimes (Captains):** Lead individual crews; report to the boss or underboss.

Soldiers: Ground-level operatives handling day-to-day tasks, including extortion, racketeering, and hits.

Associates: Non-initiated individuals working with the family on a temporary or task-specific basis².

During this period of Mafia dominance all members of the Mafia followed a strict code of silence called the Omertà that forbade discussing business with law enforcement and people outside of the family³. Breaking this code would result in strict and often fatal punishment. A large

theme was also of loyalty and respect, which was the basis the Mafia was built on.

Anyone who disrespected a member of the Mafia, no matter the rank, was dealt with swiftly and brutally. In addition, members who showed insubordination to those above them were met with swift action if found out.

Money was passed through the Mafia upwards, with lower members paying tribute up until it reached the boss while each keeping a small cut of the earnings. In the Soprano's case, most of the money was earned through Construction jobs, Union shakedowns, bookmaking, extortion, and truck hijacking⁴. This money was then laundered through legitimate businesses. Other Families also play an important role with the bigger and more powerful family in New York being prominently featured throughout the show.

Timing

For this Committee we are simply using the Sopranos tv show as a set up for the crisis. We highly encourage you not to follow the show's plot and take your characters in whatever direction you please.

¹ Contributors to Wake Up as Mafia Boss Wiki

² Mafia Boss Wiki

³ "Omertà." Wikipedia

⁴ Michigan Journal of Economics

To stay true to this, many of the characters we will be using may eventually die in the show due to the actions of others, but this will not be true in the committee. Thus, if a character is alive in season 1 but dies in season 6 and they are present on this committee they are not dead. We will be using the beginning of Season 2 as a base for this committee. Therefore, Junior has just been released from prison and is the Boss, while Tony is the acting underboss. All other character positions will be explained later under roles. It is also important to note that at this point the FBI is aware of the Mafia and looking into them.

FBI Involvement

The FBI during this time was highly aware of Mafia activity taking place. They took an active role in addressing this problem by trying to build cases against the bosses of major families. This involved tactics such as wiretapping, surveillance bugs, and informants who infiltrate the family⁵. It is important to note that Local police may be found easy to bribe to get your way. However, members of the FBI have full Federal backing thus making them

⁵ Kino, Pure

much more difficult to bribe and a bribe will usually lead to arrest.

Women in the Mafia

Although many of the women in the show do not play an active role in Mafia activities, the important role they play cannot be understated. Women, specifically mothers, held a high position of respect in the Mafia with specifically wives of high-ranking members holding tremendous influence⁶. In addition, there have been Women bosses in the past, so it is always a possibility.

The Crisis

Junior has just been released from prison and is now the acting boss of the DiMeo crime family however this is in name only. Junior has now contracted the ever-watchful eye of the FBI thus limiting his movements. During this time, Tony has taken over as the acting Underboss thus controlling almost all activities of the DiMeo crime family. However, this situation has created a power struggle between Tony and Junior who both want full control of the family. This struggle has opened the playing field for interference from others looking to

⁶ Ferrarin, Elena.

seize power. With the FBI taking more action there is a strong motivation for stability to be found before the FBI catches up. Who will take control of and lead the family into a new era of prosperity?

Roles

These characters have all been assembled because Junior has just been released from jail and the FBI is now on their tail. With Tony and Junior openly battling for control, you must decide who will lead this new era. This meeting will help decide who will be the new leader, but action must be taken in haste because the FBI is catching up.

Corrado "Junior" Soprano (Boss)⁷

Junior Soprano is the official boss of the DiMeo crime family, but his authority is largely symbolic, as Tony Soprano controls most of the family's day-to-day operations. Junior is bitter about his diminished influence and schemes to regain power.

Tony Soprano (De Facto Boss / Underboss)

Tony Soprano is the de facto leader of the DiMeo crime family, running all major operations and commanding loyalty

from most captains. While officially the underboss, he holds far more power than Junior, though he must navigate challenges to his authority.

Silvio Dante (Consigliere)

Silvio Dante serves as Tony's trusted advisor and consigliere, providing strategic guidance and mediating disputes within the family. He is known for his calm demeanor and loyalty to Tony.

Paulie "Walnuts" Gualtieri (Capo)

Paulie Gualtieri is a captain in Tony's crew, responsible for leading operations and collecting tributes. He is fiercely loyal to Tony but also ambitious and focused on his own reputation.

Richie Aprile (Returning Veteran / Loose Cannon)

Richie Aprile, recently released from prison, is a former captain eager to reclaim his old status in the family. His volatile personality and ambition make him a dangerous rival to Tony's leadership.

Christopher Moltisanti (Soldier / Tony's Protégé)

Christopher Moltisanti is a soldier in Tony's crew and his favored protégé. Ambitious and eager to prove himself, Christopher's impulsive nature often causes problems within the family.

⁷ Contributors to The Sopranos Characters."Characters."

Salvatore Bonpensiero (Soldier / Informant)

Salvatore Bonpensiero is a soldier in Tony's crew who secretly works as an informant for the FBI. He is torn between his loyalty to the family and his fear of being exposed.

Furio Giunta (Enforcer)

Furio Giunta is a brutal and efficient enforcer brought over from Naples to strengthen Tony's crew. His loyalty and effectiveness make him a valuable asset.

Bobby "Bacala" Baccalieri (Junior's Driver / Soldier)

Bobby Bacala serves as Junior's driver and soldier, showing unwavering loyalty to Junior despite often being underestimated by others in the family.

Livia Soprano (Tony's Mother / Manipulator)

Livia Soprano, Tony's mother, is a master manipulator who's scheming previously caused a rift between Tony and Junior. She continues to wield significant influence over Junior and others around her.

Carmela Soprano (Tony's Wife)

Carmela Soprano, Tony's wife, is not directly involved in the family business but serves as a moral compass for Tony. She

struggles to reconcile her luxurious lifestyle with the source of its funding.

Summary of Season 1

The first season of The Sopranos is packed with pivotal events that establish the show's central conflicts and character arcs. Tony Soprano's journey begins with debilitating panic attacks, which lead him to see Dr. Jennifer Melfi for therapy. Through their sessions, Tony reflects on the challenges of balancing his criminal empire with his personal life. His struggles are deeply rooted in his toxic relationship with his manipulative mother, Livia, whose actions create ongoing tension throughout the season. Meanwhile, Tony navigates the dangerous politics of his mob family by supporting his uncle Junior as the figurehead boss to deflect law enforcement attention. However, Junior quickly grows power-hungry, culminating in an attempted hit on Tony orchestrated with Livia's encouragement⁸. Tony survives and retaliates, eliminating key members of Junior's crew and solidifying his control.

At home, Tony's family faces their own set of challenges. Carmela struggles with the moral compromises of her life as

⁸ Wiki, Contributors to The Sopranos

the wife of a mob boss, while their daughter Meadow begins to suspect the truth about the family's wealth and its connections to crime. Their son A.J., in contrast, remains blissfully unaware, providing moments of humor amidst the darker storylines. Outside the immediate family, Tony's close friend Artie Bucco faces heartbreak when Tony secretly arranges to burn down his restaurant to prevent it from being used for a mob hit. Meanwhile, tensions within Tony's crew escalate as Christopher Moltisanti grows impatient with his lack of recognition, and suspicions arise that Tony's old friend Salvatore Bonpensiero might be working with the FBI.

By the end of the season, the power dynamics within the Soprano family and crew have shifted dramatically. Junior is arrested by the FBI, leaving him isolated and powerless, while Livia's betrayal becomes clear to Tony, irreparably damaging their relationship. Tony's position as boss is stronger than ever, but the personal cost is high as he grapples with the fractures in his family and the betrayal of those closest to him. The season concludes with a family dinner, a moment of unity overshadowed by the simmering tensions and unresolved conflicts that set the stage for future seasons.

Questions to Consider

Who should be the head of the DeMio crime family?

What alliances would give a person the most support for this role?

How should the FBI be dealt with?

How could one earn support from the other crime families such as New York?

What measures can be taken to prevent an all-out war?

Family comes first so how can it be maintained while still gaining power?

Useful Links

Sopranos' Wiki Page :

https://sopranos.fandom.com/wiki/Main_Page

History of the Mafia:

<https://www.history.com/topics/crime/mafia-in-the-united-states>

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