

REQUIRED READING

By WILLIAM GEORGIADES

June 25, 2006 -- 'ARTISTS and Prostitutes' makes a huge statement in your library, but for a more thoughtful (and affordable) book of photography, "Profane Waste" (Gregory R. Miller & Co., \$35) is a wittily subversive collection of 28 beautiful and shocking photographs by acclaimed photographer Dana Hoey, with text by Gretchen Rubin. Pregnant women smoking on horseback, a burning \$100 bill, a bathtub filled with champagne: The images and essay point to the taboo of waste for waste's sake.



Profanely beautiful "Waste."

The collaboration is inspired, with Rubin expressing her fascination and reservation, and Hoey going full throttle, admitting she had one model jump up and down on one of her expensive photographs. It's enough to shock the precious, commercially friendly David LaChapelle.

You may have seen one of the three chilling HBO documentaries on Richard Kuklinski, the contract killer better known as the Iceman. In Philip Carlo's biography, duly called "The Iceman: Confessions of a Mafia Contract Killer" (St. Martin's Press, \$24.95), there are more revelations, including the claim that Kuklinski was involved in the death of Jimmy Hoffa.

Carlo, who wrote the best seller "The Night Stalker," spent 240 hours interviewing Kuklinski at Trenton State Prison in New Jersey before the Iceman's death this past March. He also had access to his family. Carlo effectively tells the life story of the family man who spent 30 years as a professional killer, while hosting barbecues in suburban New Jersey.

Local hero Lawrence Sanders returns with his own assassin, the somewhat less chilling John Keller, in "Hit Parade" (HarperCollins, \$24.95). Sanders has become a master of the pared-down, just-the-facts narrative, with his hero efficiently dispatching a Major League Baseball player, a jockey and a Cuban exile - all while pondering his place in the world and collecting rare stamps.

Sanders, best known for his terrific series of Matt Scudder mysteries, effectively uses Manhattan as a backdrop with a killer so sympathetic, he's a volunteer after 9/11.