

it's "only" a movie . . .

How stereotyping shapes the public image of today's Italian Americans. Contributors' names, when known, are in parenthesis.

- The Italians “looked down their garlic noses” at Christ, according to Rev. Jeremiah Wright, who described the Crucifixion as “a public lynching Italian style, executed in apartheid Rome,” in a 2007 magazine article. The OSIA & CSJ’s official statement that went to all the major news outlets, called for an apology. *To see the full statement, go to www.osia.org.*
- Three *cafoni* present “authentic” Italian cuisine on their new reality show, *Cooking and Cursing with the Grandsons of Italy*. Liberally peppered with profanity in Italian and English, the show has spawned a cook book. To complain, contact Vinnie Corbo at 323/960-2030 or pacforce@aol.com. (John Dabbene)
- Denny’s restaurant chain’s new TV ads feature Tony Sirico, (Paulie Walnuts on *The Sopranos*), complaining about fast-food breakfasts. Proof that a fictitious, violent character can become a pseudo-spokesman for Italian Americans. (Alyson Mari)



- MTV’s new sitcom, *That’s Amore*, presents an Italian American man who is looking for love. The series shows enormous disrespect for Italy’s culture and flag. (G. Pecchia)
- In a satire of the U.S. Supreme Court last October, NPR’s *All Things Considered* portrayed Justice Antonin Scalia as a mob boss who invites another juror to meet him in “the back room” of an Ital-

ian restaurant and threatens him if he doesn’t vote “the right way.” The theme from *The Godfather* was played. The program is broadcast nationally and funded by tax dollars. (Brian Gianangeli)

APOLOGY ACCEPTED

- “This is Staten Island—I could swing a dead cat around my head and every fifth person I would hit is organized crime,” radio shock-jock Curtis Sliwa told a NY tabloid. The NY borough has about 500,000 residents, mostly Italian American. The NY CSJ and the Sons of Italy’s Garibaldi-Meucci Museum protested to NY City Council Members Vincent Ignizio, James Oddo and Michael McMahon. They contacted Sliwa, who has apologized.
- Kevin Nathan, sports director on Hartford’s NBC affiliate in Connecticut, commented on Tony Sparano’s appointment as Miami Dolphins head coach, saying, “He’s not Tony Soprano...if I made that mistake Sparano’s family might have taken me out.” OSIA member Frank Travisano emailed a protest. Within 30 minutes, Nathan called him to apologize.
- The NY State Lottery has apologized for radio and TV ads promoting a scratch-off game, “Ba Da Bling” that featured Italian American mobsters. The ads were removed from the airways following a letter campaign, launched by the NY CSJ under Chairwoman Stella Grillo.
- A NJ grocery store, Super Foodtown of Ocean Township, has apologized and removed posters of products by Joe Gannascoli, the gay gangster on *The Sopranos* after learning that NJ CSJ Chairwoman Grace Olivo and NJ Grand Lodge President Tom Bergbauer had launched a letter-writing campaign.

Compiled by Dona De Sanctis

GOT A GRIPE? SEND IT TO: “It’s Only a Movie”, Italian America Magazine, 219 E Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. E-mail: ddeanctis@osia.org. Include name and daytime telephone number. No telephone calls please. Submissions cannot be acknowledged. *Compiled by Dona De Sanctis*