

it's "only" a movie...

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

- In a contest last April, the **Washington Post** encouraged readers to give nicknames to **Vinny Cerrato**, v.p. of football operations with the Washington Redskins. Among those printed were "Vinny the Chin," "Vinny the Underboss" and "Vinny the Bull." A protest letter from **John Salamone**, the NIAF's executive director, was ignored by the newspaper's ombudsman, Deborah Howell.

- A new cartoon version of Hans Christian Andersen's, *The Ugly Duckling* introduces **Ratso**, a fast-talking rat & talent agent, who exploits the duckling. Based on a popular TV show in Denmark, it has been seen by children in Europe, the Mid-East, and North and South America. No U.S. release has been scheduled...yet.



- What do you call men's T-shirts? "Guinea-tees," according to **Margery Egan** of the Margery Egan & Jim Braudie radio talk show on WTKK-96.9 in Boston. The comment aired June 10. Complaints to the station by MA's CSJ and others were ignored. To add your voice, call 617.822.9600 or email jandm@969wtkk.com
Michael & Paul Fontecchio, Shrewsbury, MA

- In a runoff election for the U.S. Congress last April in Louisiana, candidate Steve Scalise learned his opponent had mailed voters postcards about him using "The Godfather" puppeteer image. Despite the smear, Mr. Scalise won by a 58% margin and now represents his state's first district in Washington, D.C. No U.S. postal regulations ban ethnic profiling. *Chuck Anselmo, LA*

- Public Radio's talent show, "From the Top," features young musicians under age 13. In its March 6 broad-



cast on WBEZ in Chicago, host **Christopher O'Riley** mispronounced a trio's name. "It's 'Maggiore'," one of the young musicians said. "You know, it's Italian." "Right," O'Riley said. "I can smell the garlic."

Mike Bacarella, Chicago

- **Little Italy**, a new board game for children 10 and up encourages players to "travel back to New York's golden age of gangsters" and become crime bosses who collect "protection money," while avoiding the police. Losers "sleep with the fishes." The NJ CSJ and other state CSJs have protested to the manufacturer, **Playroom Entertainment**, which has not responded. *Grace Olivo, NJ CSJ Chair*



- The two vintage photographs from 1928 posted on eBay last spring showed members of the **Sons of Italy Virginia Lodge**. Listed as "photo mafia" because the owner thought the men looked like "old-time mob guys." He apologized and changed the wording following CSJ protests.



- How do car salesmen cheat their customers? **Global Hyundai** in North Plainfield, NJ shows how in its radio ad that features Gino, speaking like a member of the Soprano crew, giving tips on how he commits consumer fraud.
- **Fordham University** in NYC has apologized for holding a four-day academic conference on the "The Sopranos" that ended with a "Sopranos" bus tour. The NY CSJ along with concerned citizens protested the event with the school's president, Fr. Joseph McShane.

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.