

IT'S "ONLY" A MOVIE . . .

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

- **A DIPLOMATIC VICTORY** During his ABC radio show February 26, NYC talk show host **Curtis Sliwa** complained that \$475,000 of the economic stimulus funding went to expanding the Italian American Museum in the city's Little Italy. He suggested that instead of using federal dollars, the museum could get funding by having Italian gangsters shake down visitors.



Dr. Joseph Scelsa, president, the Italian American Museum

Instead of returning the insult, the museum's president and founder, **Dr. Joseph Scelsa** formed a coalition of Italian American leaders, including the **NYS CSJ President Stella Grillo**, and invited Sliwa to tour the museum on March 30. He described the exhibits, the achievements of Italians to America and proved that the grant the museum received was not part of the Economic Recovery Program.

Sliwa, whose mother is Italian American, apologized for targeting the museum and associating it with organized crime. He also agreed to speak about the matter on the air and perhaps invite Dr. Scelsa on his show to discuss Italian American contributions. Instead of an enemy, Dr. Scelsa created an ally. *Bravissimo!*

- **GODFATHER FOR SEC'Y OF STATE?**

Some scholars will do anything to sell a book. Witness "The Godfather Doctrine: A Foreign Policy Parable" by John C. Hulsman and A. Wess Mitchell.



Its premise "...draws essential lessons from perhaps the greatest Hollywood movie ever made to illustrate America's changing geopolitical predicament," according to the authors in their introduction. They claim to have written a "serious study of American foreign policy" and quote extensively from the script of "The Godfather." The book was published by Princeton University Press.

To complain, contact Princeton Press Director Peter Dougherty at peter_dougherty@press.princeton.edu (*Frank Travisano, Connecticut*)

- **MOBSTER "LIFESTYLE" MAGAZINE**

Billing itself as "the entertainment magazine of Mafia politics, pleasures and power," Mob Candy celebrates the "Mafia lifestyle," which apparently features dead gangsters, contract killing and weapons along with cocktails, cars, cigars, men's fashions and half naked women. Its target readership is men 18 to 35 who are wise guy wannabes.



It was launched in 2007 by Tyrone Christopher, an African American graphic designer from Milwaukee, and Frank DiMatteo, an Italian American from Brooklyn. The name comes from a line of mafia-inspired clothing owned by Christopher. (*Anthony Baratta, Chicago*)

- **GOOD-BYE COLUMBUS** Bowing to pressure from a small group of Native American activists, the faculty of



Native Americans protesting Columbus Day at Brown University

Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island voted last April to discontinue celebrating Columbus Day and replace it with a "Fall Weekend" that coincides with Columbus Day.

In a letter explaining the university's position, President Ruth Simmons said the vote "was the culmination of an extensive campus debate" that involved students, faculty and the university board. Brown University was founded in 1764 as Rhode Island College, but the name was changed in 1804 after the school received an endowment from one of the four Brown brothers, who were wealthy slave traders.

To protest, contact President Ruth Simmons at: PH 401-863-2234; FAX: 401-863-7737; Email: president@brown.edu (*Manny Alfano, New Jersey*)

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO: "It's Only a Movie", Italian America Magazine, 219 E Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. E-mail: ddesanctis@osia.org. Include name and daytime telephone number. No telephone calls please. Submissions cannot be acknowledged.