

# 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

- In his July 17 column, *Macomb Daily* reporter **Chad Selweski** in Michigan complained about political “mud-slinging and mistruths,” but had no problem slinging mud at the six Republican candidates “...all with Italian names,” he observed. “The rule is if your name doesn’t end in a vowel, you don’t stand much of a chance of surviving. Just ask the Sopranos.” Contact him at [chad.selweski@macombdaily.com](mailto:chad.selweski@macombdaily.com) (*Iole Taranta, Mt. Clemens, MI*)
- “Come and get whacked,” invites **Ed Welsh** of the Mulberry Street Bar on postcards he hands out to people in NYC’s Little Italy. His website advises “If you had to whack a mob boss, you’d probably take him to this Little Italy gem.” New York’s CSJ Chair **Stella Grillo** sent him a very strong letter of protest, which he has ignored so far. Contact him at [tony@mulberrystreetbar.com](mailto:tony@mulberrystreetbar.com) or call 212/226-9345.
- “DWI” (Driving While Italian) on YouTube, features a hairy-chested man sporting gold chains, a diamond pinkie ring and an “I Love Italy” bumper sticker, who is stopped by a cop for driving alone in a carpool lane. The gangster opens his trunk to show the other passenger, who is bound and gagged. As of August, 650,000 have viewed the film written and produced by Temple Matthews. (*Philip Di Belardino, NYC*)



- The cast of MTV’s reality show “Jersey Shore” features eight young men and women of dubious character and habits, who represent themselves as Italian Americans. Fully half of them are not, however. They are: **Ronnie Ortiz**; **Jenni “JWoww” Farley**; **Angelina Pivarnick** and **Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi** who comes from South America.
- Over the protests of Italian Americans, MTV has renewed “Jersey Shore,” but decided not to air a re-run of “The Dudesons” because the **American Indian Movement (AIM)** protested the episode in which four friends from Finland wear Indian clothes and perform dangerous stunts to become honorary Indians. In its apology to AIM, MTV stated that it dropped the episode “in response to concerns raised by viewers and out of sensitivity to the Aboriginal community.” *Manny Alfano, NJ*
- There is a lot wrong with *Mafia II*, according to *Chicago Sun-Times* reporter **Misha Davenport**. In his Aug. 26 review of the game, he complains that while it is set in the 1940s, it has a mobster reading *Playboy*, which first appeared in 1953. He also faults the video game for playing songs that weren’t available in the era the game is set. Seems these “historical inaccuracies” spoiled the game for him, but not its relentless and offensive stereotyping of Italian Americans. Contact him at [mdavenport@suntimes.com](mailto:mdavenport@suntimes.com)



**SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:** “It’s Only a Movie”, Italian America Magazine, 219 E Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. E-mail: [dde sanctis@osia.org](mailto:dde sanctis@osia.org). Include name and daytime telephone number. No telephone calls please. Submissions cannot be acknowledged.