



January, 2015
No. 58

The Officers' Log

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OUR FILM STUDY IS UPDATED

1,500 Hollywood Films
Depicting Italians Over a Century



Of the 1,514 film titles that were researched, the results reveal an overall negative attitude toward Italian Americans and Italian culture in general (68.5%). Images of Italians as violent criminals predominate (34.9%), followed by images of unsavory characters (33.6%). Images of Italians in positive, heroic, or complex roles occur less often (31.5%).

The figures indicate an entrenched, institutionalized bias in Hollywood against Americans of Italian descent. The diversity of the Italian American experience has been

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TIME TO RENEW

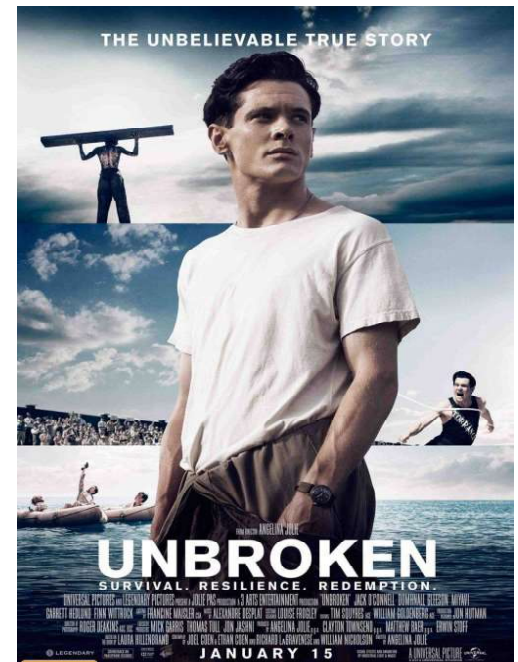
January is renewal month for all Institute members. Dues remain at \$50 per annum payable to The Italic Institute of America.

Some members have already paid their 2015 dues. For the rest, we are asking you to use the enclosed envelope to pay now, which will help keep costs down. Otherwise, we will have to print invoices and use more postage.

We practice Roman *frugalitas* at the Italic Institute!

UNBROKEN IS A REALITY

Finally, a Movie About
a Real Italian American



It took 58 years but Hollywood finally acknowledged Italic war hero Louis Zamperini, thanks to Angelina Jolie.

“Ms. Jolie has won my praise by immediately and convincingly—yet subtly—underscoring Louis Zamperini’s bedrock Italianness,” says Chairman Rosario Iaconis.

“We must salute an Anglo-Irishman (actor Jack O’Connell) for restoring the dignity of the Italian American male,” observes President Bill Dal Cerro, “unlike most of our Italic actors.”

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YOUR GENEROSITY

Benefactors of the Institute (\$15,000 +)

Steven Napolitano & Lisa Carcaterra

Patrons of Italian Heritage (\$250 +)

Gennaro Pupa

Sustainers of the Institute (\$100 +)

Stephen Aiello
Dona DeSanctis Bracone
John G. Villanella

Supporters of the Institute (\$50 +)

S.M. Apollo
William J. Dal Cerro
Frank S. Gutta, Sr.
Maria Peluso
Silvio Venturi

Got a Friend or Relative

who would appreciate our classical perspective?

We are not for everyone. Our members are the more discerning type. Their intellectual curiosity is a cut above most Americans.

But let's not keep the Italic Institute a secret.

We are the Alternative!

- Enroll the person below as a member (\$50 check enclosed)
 Renew my membership for 2015 (\$50 check enclosed)
 Enclosed is a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

**Italic Institute of America, PO Box 818,
Floral Park, NY 11002
516.488.7400 www.italic.org**

IS ITALY REALLY THIS BAD?

Under the headline, **“Italy Gasps as Inquiry Reveal Mob’s Long Reach,”** *The New York Times* reported in December yet another shocking story of Italian crime and corruption, this time right in its capital.

These days, Italy’s greatest export is not food or fast cars, it’s bad image. *“The Times and the world media just echo Italian commentators,”* insists Executive Director John Mancini. *“But they add the extra spin with openers like ‘Even for a country where corruption is taken for granted as a part of daily life...’ Nothing is local in Italy, the whole nation is a criminal cesspool, according to our press.”*



“If crime and corruption are as endemic as the Gray Lady contends,” asserts Chairman Rosario Iaconis, *“then the Magic Boot would be the mirror image of Russia under Yeltsin (in the 1990s). ‘But it isn’t. Yes, the socio-economic problems are serious. Yet Italy somehow survives. And its people continue to meet the challenges of the age—just as they have for 2,500 years.’”*

Our Institute is not alone in its confidence in Italy’s underlying strength. Two noteworthy economists agree: *NY Times* columnist Paul Krugman blames Germany, not Italy, for the eurozone slump. And the author of *Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century* (2014), Frenchman Thomas Piketty, confirms that Italy’s national debt is mainly owed to Italian citizens, unlike Greece or the United States. In fact, Italians still have the highest savings rate and private wealth per capita than most of the G-20.

Says Iaconis, *“The media needs to stop treating Italy like a banana republic. And Italian diplomats really need to work on an image adjustment.”* ****

Unbroken, from p. 1

“It’s not an easy movie to watch,” observes Executive Director John Mancini, *“more like ‘The Passion of the Christ’ than ‘Sgt. York’, but ‘Unbroken’ chronicles the triumph of an Italian American boy over bigotry, war, nature, and human brutality. At times, the story defies logic but at its core is the documented reality of a remarkable veteran who not only survived adversity but lived to age 97.”*

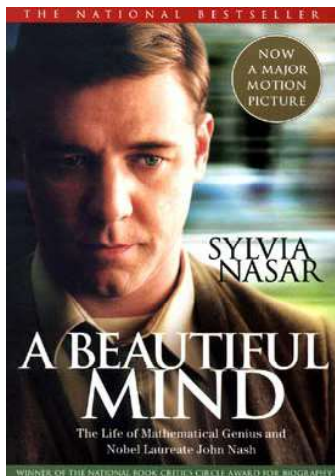
CONNED AGAIN!

With echoes of our Institute’s lost battle with that renowned university over *La Casa Italiana*, a Columbia professor sued her own university for waylaying some \$4.5 million allocated to her Chair in Business Journalism. Like our Institute, the suit was dismissed for “lack of standing” (translation: The loss didn’t hurt her personally.)

We don’t know why Prof. Sylvia Nasar decided to sue her own school. It may have been that the actual donor, the Knight Foundation, did not want the publicity a suit would bring.

Despite Nasar’s court defeat, Columbia privately owned up to the misappropriation and promised the Knight Foundation it would sin no more. For whatever reason, Prof. Nasar no longer teaches at Columbia.

Our Institute had hoped for a similar compromise but Columbia didn’t see us as a font of money *a la* the Knight Foundation.



Prof. Sylvia Nasar recently lost her suit against Columbia. She is famous for writing *A Beautiful Mind*, which became a hit movie.

GARIBALDI SEARCH: D.O.A.

D.O.A. means Dead on Arrival. That’s what we believe happened to our written appeals to New York’s Consul General Natalia Quintavalle and a follow-up letter to Italian Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero asking for help in finding Giuseppe Garibaldi’s 1850 *Application for U.S. Citizenship*—not even the courtesy of a reply from these professional diplomats.

The Italian Republic is the owner and landlord of *La Casa Italiana* at Columbia University. The document may have gone missing at the time of the sale in 1990 and the subsequent renovations. Clearly, the Italian government should be interested in locating a document related to their national hero. We shall keep you posted.

MUSLIMS FIRST?

Turkish President Erdogan has launched a jihad of his own — against history. Claiming that Muslim sailors reached the Americas 300 years before Columbus, Erdogan has ordered Turkish schools to teach its students this wondrous revelation.

Erdogan came by this revelation from a reference in Columbus’ journals to a man-made object that looked like a mosque or minaret. Close enough! (Scholars dispute his interpretation.)

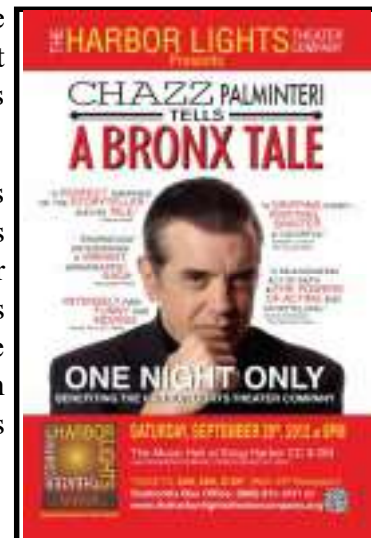
And, some Chinese believe their Muslim eunuch, Zheng He, led a fleet to the Americas some 50 years before Columbus. Sure!

ONE TRICK TOO MANY

Many Italian American actors who are acclaimed as “great talents” are, in fact, really one-trick ponies peddling prejudice to the masses.

One such fellow who wallows in mob stereotypes is Chazz Palminteri, who has sucked dry his Mafia lore *Bronx Tale* for the past twenty-two years, going from screenplay to film to musical to monologue. Palminteri is no longer a starving actor. He has been “eating very well” for over twenty years—even literally, opening up his own restaurant in Baltimore, Maryland, called “Chazz: A Bronx Original.” But he knows where his bread is buttered. So, it comes as no surprise that he became involved in a film scam recently that cost a naive Irish American investor \$2 million. Billed as the unknown story of “the Italian Mafia running Wall Street in the mid-1990s,” and aptly titled *Mob Street* with a (very) creative script written by Chazz himself, the project turned into a money pit for investor Fay Devlin. Clearly, this project was meant to blow the lid off the “real power” behind the U.S. financial system - not power brokers but high school drop-outs from the old neighborhood. The FBI and a local prosecutor want to know more about this bogus film project.

Chazz may be innocent in this scam but he continues to milk his mob legacy and poison our image. Hollywood may love this ethnic defamer, but why do the leaders of our Italian American organizations regularly honor this one-trick pony?



KEEPING AT IT

You have to admire the spunk in many Americans of Italian stock. What we lack in powerful organizations or helpful politicians we make up for in individual pride and a strong work ethic, even as we age. Our own members are perfect examples.

Gennaro Pupa of Redondo Beach, CA, has been a long-time member of our Institute, insisting that it is the only organization worth supporting. He spreads our message whether by making generous donations toward our work, dashing off letters to bigoted journalists or sending our *Italy and the Holocaust Report* to local Jewish Museums. Above all, he says he's raised his two sons Will and John, pictured in this old family photo, "alla italiana."

Will (left) was featured in Log #53 and *The Italic Way* for his life-size sculpture of Italian saint **Roberto Bellarmino**.



Richard Vannucci, another California native, belongs to other Italic organizations to stay active in *la causa*, as he puts it. He appreciated the recent *Italic Way* article on A.P. Giannini because it gave the West Coast some emphasis. And he is anxious to market the issue among local clubs within his Italian American Federation. By all means, spread the word!

We mentioned New Jersey member **Bill Fanciullo** in a previous *Log*, but we must report that Bill has given 22 gift memberships to date. Such is the commitment many of our members have to propagating our movement for the Classical heritage.

Check out the Page 2 list of donors to see more commitment.

Film Study, from p. 1

obscured by one-dimensional stereotypes equating Italian culture with criminality. With the success of *The Godfather* (1972), these distorted images gained popular acceptance on an unprecedented scale.

The 87-page *Film Study* is being made available to the public for \$20. This landmark study provides the documentation that is sorely lacking in any debate about ethnic profiling of Italic people. "Researcher Bill Dal Cerro has given our community a tool to combat Hollywood's central casting defamation," asserts Chairman Rosario Iaconis. "His efforts help keep the Italic Institute more than a cut above the rest." ****

RESISTING THE CALL



Not everyone thinks that the former HBO series *The Sopranos* is benign entertainment. Certainly not New York City Councilman James Vacca from the Bronx. Vacca (below) criticized an ad campaign by an animal-rights group that features actress Edie Falco, who portrayed Carmela Soprano (above with film hubby Tony) in that controversial series.

The ad is designed to persuade Vacca to vote to ban horse-drawn carriages in Manhattan. Vacca told the *New York Daily News* that he would decide how to vote on the carriage legislation based on its merits, not the opinions of celebrities, adding that he was offended by the use of Falco's image in ads plastered around his district. "I believe the choice of a star from 'The Sopranos' to persuade an Italian-American council member in a district with a large Italian-American population is profiling, and I resent it," Vacca said.

Councilman Vacca was a supporter of the Italic Institute's *Aurora Youth Program* with grants for two classes in the Bronx. He definitely shares our concern for positive image.



