

# AIHA Newsletter

A Publication of the *American Italian Historical Association*

An interdisciplinary association to promote understanding of the Italian experience in America



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*The American Italian Historical Association*

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*Executive Council - Term*

**Frank Alduino** (2006)

**Emelise Aleandri** (2007)

**Bruno Arcudi** (2007)

**Mario Aste**, Past President

**Mary Jo Bona** (2006)

**Frank Cavaioli** (2007)

**Teresa Cerasuola** (2007)

**Maria Elisa Ciavarelli** (2005)

**Joseph M. Conforti** (2006)

**Louise DeNardo Bender** (2006)

**Dawn Esposito** (2007)

**Fred L. Gardaphè** (2007)

**Josephine Gattuso Hendin** (2007)

**Paul Giaimo** (2007)

**Luicano Iorizzo** (2005)

**Jerome Krase** (2007)

**Salvatore LaGumina** (2007)

**Stefano Luconi** (2006)

**Edward Maruggi** (2007)

**Elizabeth Messina** (2005)

**Mario Mignone** (2003)

**Adele Negro** (CA President)

**Frank Pesci** (2007)

**Ernest E. Rossi** (2005)

**John Paul Russo** (2005)

**Stanislao Pugliese** (2007)

*Founding President*

**Rudolph J. Vecoli**

## President's Message

A little more than a year has passed since I wrote my first message as president. I remember thinking of all the things I wanted to propose, indeed with a bit of trepidation since I thought I might have been asking a bit too much of the Association and its members. Well, I was proven wrong, I am happy to say; everyone has been wonderfully cooperative. First, we began with productive conversations on what we needed to do. The first was in the realm of finances, getting the books in order and moving forward with a new economic culture in keeping the books solid. In this regard, Frank Sorrentino has been an excellent partner. He is overseeing the Association's economic revamping I outlined in my first message a year ago.

For the past few years Dominic has helped replenish the coffers with his indefatigable work as book salesman, among other things. The AIHA is fortunate to have someone in this position who portrays absolutely no self-interest in what he does. It is all done for the Association, and for this we are most fortunate and, thus, immensely grateful for such work. Because of his excellent work, AIHA has moved forward in the public sphere, I would contend. This past November, for instance, Dominic single-handedly organized a two-session workshop at the American Historical Association's annual convention. The salient issues raised and discussed during those sessions appear here in this issue of the *AIHA Newsletter*.

Angela Danzi and Angelo Tripicchio have also made significant contributions in recording our history as it develops, as well as recording and assuring the maintenance of it. We need to

*President's Message continued on page 2.*

*President's Message (cont.)*

be sure that our activities, past and present, remain part of a collective consciousness larger than the Association so that AIHA publicly figures as an on-going, proactive cultural organization with broad horizons. [Lest people think we current officers are original in concept and form, before continuing, allow me to state here, parenthetically, that what we have been able to do what we have done because we have had good models in past officers; I personally have approached at least four over the past year at various moments.]

AIHA's need and desire to attract new and younger members saw some glimmer of hope, I would like to think, at the annual convention in Boca Raton this past November. As one looked around, one noticed some newer faces alongside those familiar ones we have all been seeing over the years. Now, of course, we still need to do more. A few new faces a success does not make. We all need to contribute to this effort. If we each recruited just one new person to join, our membership would increase two-fold. This said, then, I would like to challenge each and everyone of us to get that one new member this year, so we can boast a membership of four figures in the next few years. With close to 28,000,000 Americans of Italian descent, it seems inconceivable that we can muster up a membership of only 400 people. We all need to do our part in this regard!

I am also delighted to say that we have made progress in other areas since last year. Building on past officers and executive councils, we have begun to make greater in-roads into expanding the general awareness of AIHA's existence. It seems that we have conference 2005 pretty much set, with final approval to come from the Executive Council this coming spring. I am also hopeful we can soon begin working on 2006 and 2007. For one of these future conferences, 2006, Italy may indeed be a possibility. And if not for the annual conference, perhaps we can schedule a supplemental, second edition one year in "the old country."

The publication of the proceedings remains problematic. We have two volumes dating back a few years still not published, while another ran significantly over cost. This is only proof positive that we need to formalize the relationship between the yearly editors and the Association; we simply cannot afford either to have volumes not appear for a significant amount of time nor other volumes cut into AIHA's general coffers. These are two of numerous other reasons for an electronic publication.

Developing greater relationships with other cultural organizations seems to be a successful venture. NIAF, especially, has been most responsive to our cultural activities and has proven to be very generous in helping us succeed most recently. We look forward to further collaboration as well as developing a greater rapport

with other Italian/American organizations, especially OSIA and UNICO.

As for the conference in Boca Raton, as coordinator I was happy with the turn-out and the general outcome. We had close to 130 paying participants, with a smaller number of local guests that included members of the Florida Atlantic University community. After a few days of local news releases announcing our special guest at dinner, Dion DiMucci, an additional twenty-odd people from the community asked to attend the dinner. By the way, Dion appeared *pro bono*, the reason for which we then presented him with a token of our appreciation.



AIHA President Tamburri presents a token of appreciation to Dion and Susan DiMucci at a post-conference dinner.

Overall, I am delighted with what has occurred this past year. Our conversations have been fruitful, our actions have been progressive, and the result overall has been a positive one. I look forward, obviously, to discussing all of the above and more, leading hopefully to further progress still. As I said last year, "nothing ventured nothing gained"—for *satis verborum et labor omnia vincit!*

To the members of the Executive Council, I say let us initiate much of what still needs to be done during our Spring 2004 Executive Council meeting. And to the membership at large, I look forward to our continued efforts and discussions in subsequent, general membership meetings when we are all together in Annapolis at the next annual conference.

*Arrivederci a novembre!*

Anthony Julian Tamburri

## **Executive Council Meeting**

### **Boca Raton, Florida, November 6, 2003**

Present: *Officers:* Anthony Tamburri, President; Carol Bonomo Albright, Vice-President; Frank M. Sorrentino, Treasurer; Angelo Tripicchio, Curator; Dominic Candeloro, Executive Director; Angela D. Danzi, Secretary.

*Executive Council Members:* Stefano Luconi, Salvatore LaGumina, Janet Worrall, Fred Gardaphe, Mary Jo Bona, Dawn Esposito, Maria Elisa Ciavarelli, Elizabeth G.

Messina, Ed Maruggi, Emelise Aleandri, Joseph M. Conforti, Frank B. Pesci, Sr., Frank Alduino, Frank J. Cavaoli, Luciano J. Iorizzo.

President Tamburri greeted attendees and discussed conference arrangements.

- 125-135 paid attendees.
- Dion DiMucci is appearing gratis. Reception this evening, 6-8 pm.
- \$5,000 contributions received from FAU
- \$3,000 contributions received from *NIAF* and the Italian Consulate of Miami.
- Pamphlet distributed to attendees, produced by the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, FAU, contains working papers on Italians in Florida.
- Each participant will receive a book bag complements of FAU.
- Deadline for proceedings, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

1. Organization needs to make effort to recruit new and younger members. Each of us can recruit others—undergraduates, family members, etc. Bridging the gap between scholarly and general membership has worked for us in the past and can continue.

2. Conferences:

2005: California. Committee: Luisa DelGuidice and Theresa Fiore will make a presentation at the business meeting. The conference organizing committee is a representative group of southern Californians—LA to San Diego—with members from 3 or 4 universities, *NIAF*, Sons of Italy, etc. (see also Conferences, below). 2006, 2007. We will discuss and solicit ideas this weekend and try to encourage groups to sponsor a conference.

3. Participation by the Italian Consulate: We hope that the success of this conference in getting them involved can encourage other consulates to contribute.

4. Proceedings:

- a. We need to have a discussion about the value of an electronic publication. Every year we experience problems in publishing a hard copy. We are also accused of “leaving people out.” An electronic publication would solve some of these issues.
- b. Where is the institutional organ that will represent our group? *VIA* and other journals do not fulfill this function. We need an institutional voice.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

At the May 2003 meeting, Sorrentino made a number of recommendations. He provided an update of the status of these recommendations:

1. The organization will be filing all necessary forms including tax and employment forms, and any federal or state tax forms required.
2. In a discussion with the accountant, it was agreed that it is best to proceed with an audit after this fiscal year. The records for past years are not readily available or unreliable. We will begin with 2003 since we now have all the proper forms and records.
3. Quarterly reports have been filed, generally around the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.
4. We will be completing a comprehensive budget, with micro and macro elements. We need to know our income so that we can plan effectively.
5. We have accomplished the goal of not disbursing funds without a corresponding invoice or voucher.
6. We are working on the consolidation of accounts. Membership monies should come to an account that the Treasurer controls. The Executive Director should have his own account to deal with day to day operations.
7. Additional revenue: We must consider forming an endowment for the long-term financial stability of the organization. Currently we have \$40,000, which is not sufficient.
8. There is serious concern about the liability of conferences, including the expenditures and the proceedings. Conference coordinators should have a financial plan to cover these costs

#### **BUDGET SUBMITTED BY THE TREASURER**

In the context of proposed income, we discussed the dues increase, dues categories, European membership fees, etc. There was a discussion of the difficulty of recruiting members from Italy and France because of high conference fees and expenses. Dues categories: student/senior/regular/family/institution. At the May 2003 meeting, we voted to increase dues, but failed to bring the issue to the General Meeting.

The President appointed a committee (Conforti, Cavaoli, Luconi, Albright) to formulate a new dues policy for international members to bring to the general membership.

Sorrentino noted that our margin of error is small. We need to control expenditures. Tamburri noted that electronic communication could decrease expenses.

With regard to the Scholarship Fund, an audit can only be done on funds in the Treasurer's control. Since the Scholarship Fund is not under his control, a complete audit is not possible. Currently, the Treasurer is responsible for only 60% of the organizations' funds.

Motion that we adopt the budget as submitted by the Treasurer.

Seconded, and carried.

AMERICAN ITALIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION		
Treasurer's Report		
Frank M. Sorrentino		
September 30, 2003 - January 14, 2004 (4th Quarter)		
<b>HSBC Acct # 232-51625-1 2-4-yr CD</b>		
Balance 9/30/03		\$9,730.89
Interest		39.07
Balance 12/31/03		\$9,769.96
<b>HSBC Acct# 234-45035-5 4-6 yr CD</b>		
Balance 10/14/03		\$10,115.59
Interest		106.35
Balance 1/14/03		\$10,221.94
<b>HSBC Acct # 234-67636-1 Commercial Savings</b>		
Balance 9/30/03		\$18,368.55
Interest		16.20
Balance 12/31/03		\$18,384.75
<b>HSBC Acct # 234-74780-3 Business Checking</b>		
Balance 9/30/03		\$2,541.78
	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Debits</b>
ED		1,000.00
Deposit	500.00	
Deposit	1,000.00	
Amazon	15.72	
HSBC	11.41	
Amazon	15.72	
Paypal	390.22	
Deposit	380.00	
Deposit	1,000.00	
ED		1,000.00
Amazon	12.56	
HSBC	10.98	
Paypal	150.82	
ED		1,000.00
Deposit	2,695.00	
HSBC	9.84	
<b>Bal. 12/31/03</b>	<b>\$5,669.59</b>	
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		
2-4 yr CD		\$ 9,769.96
4-6 yr CD		\$10,221.94
Commercial Savings		\$18,384.75
Business Checking		<u>\$ 5,669.59</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$44,046.24</b>

#### CURATOR'S REPORT

Tripicchio presented an update on the status of our archives as the Center for Migration Studies. There are four and one-half cartons of materials not yet added to

archives, and additional materials not yet weeded. Also to be weeded out are materials donated by past-president Krase.

CMS is understaffed and under-funded. Curator suggested that we consider a special donation to CMS earmarked for processing our documents. Estimate is \$1500-2000 to complete the work and process all materials. A motion was made to allocate \$500 as an initial sum to begin the project. It was noted that as more materials are cataloged at CMS, they will be more accessible to scholars.

After discussion, it was agreed that we cannot allocate any monies until we have further clarification. Tamburri requested that Tripicchio furnish him with details so that he can write to CMS to clarify their expectations, and then take further action.

#### NEWSLETTER

Tamburri reported that Paul Giamo, who worked very hard to complete the last *Newsletter*, may no longer have local formatting assistance. Candeloro and Tamburri will work with Paul on the next *Newsletter*. In the future, the *Newsletter* may be published only electronically. We encourage members to consider assisting Paul in formatting.

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Candeloro encouraged each member to focus on selling a set of books, recruit members to the organization, etc.

Some of the out-of-print proceedings have been digitalized, and a CD is now available for sale at \$12.00 including postage. CDs will produce more revenue for the organization in the future. They cost very little to produce. The projection is that moving to electronic editions will produce more revenues.

Future proceedings should all be submitted on disk to facilitate the process of digitalizing.

Messages appearing on H-Itam are logged and can be searched using keywords. H-Itam represents a constant conversation about Italian Americana.

#### PROCEEDINGS

Vol. 31: Canistraro: Forthcoming.

Vol. 33: Aste: Editors have proofs.

Vol. 34: Bonomo-Albright: Volume completed and published.

#### MEMORIAL FUND

Scholarship Committee: Bona reports that in the past 7 years we had many submissions. In the past 3 years however no entries were received. This raises the question of whether the lack of submissions is due to the relatively low amount of scholarship award (\$500.00) and if so, should we consider increasing the amount of the award.

Advertising is not the issue, since it is better advertised today than in the past.

Suggestion that we should give one \$1,000 scholarship.

We must also encourage good students to submit an entry.

Motion: that we increase the scholarship award to \$1,000.00. Seconded and carried.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

Candeloro noted that each year we give \$500 to *VIA*, *Italian Americana*, and *Italian American Review*. Krase suggested a contribution to a Rudolph Vecoli professorship at the University of Minnesota. After discussion, the following motion was made: that the AIHA make a \$1,000 contribution to the Rudolph Vecoli Chair, University of Minnesota. It was seconded and carried.

### CONFERENCES

#### 2004: Annapolis, Nov. 4-6

Theme is Pre-immigration: "*We were always here.*"

As plans near completion, Alduino noted the following:

- Annapolis is located 30 minutes from BWI Airport, 3 1/2 hrs. from NYC, 2 hrs. from Philadelphia;
- Phil Cannistraro will give luncheon address;
- \$6000 donation from Anne Arundel College; donations expected from NIAF, Sons of Italy; \$3000 contribution from Brandywine Press for display; \$700 in private donations;
- Antonio Meucci Museum will bring materials for display at the conference;
- \* Krase, Alduino, Ciotola, and Sorrentino will edit the proceedings.

#### 2005: Los Angeles, CA

*Oral Traditions: Storytelling* (see discussion above). We are awaiting a formal proposal so that we can evaluate and make a final decision.

#### 2006: Genoa

Suzanne Branciforte once again presented the members with an offer to bring the conference to Genoa where an International Center for Migration will open in Oct. 2004.

She notes that there is great interest on the part of the Port Authority of Genoa to support an AIHA conference in November 2006 as a way of giving their new center academic weight. While sponsors cannot pay travel, there will be no conference fee. A subsidy is also possible for publication of proceedings, special rates are available on Allitalia, and hotels have competitive rates at that time of year.

Doubts were raised about whether we can get a good number of people to travel to Italy at that time of year, considering the academic calendar and the proximity of the Thanksgiving holiday. It was suggested that Branciforte prepare a proposal for a conference at another time of the year, possibly May or June, and present this again at our next Executive Council Meeting, possibly through Gardaphè as U.S. contact person.

### PUBLICATIONS

Tamburri discussed a rationale for producing both an electronic proceeding and a journal publication. With respect to an electronic proceeding, he noted "among numerous reasons":

- Cost: proceedings could be produced electronically for less money than we currently spend. This allows proceedings to be exactly that: a full record of conference presentations, etc.
- Libraries are more likely to subscribe to a less costly electronic version
- We would eliminate accusations of "unfairness" and "leaving people out."

We also discussed the merits and challenges of producing a journal. As Tamburri noted:

- Current journals cannot publish all submitted materials.
- The community of scholars and creative writers of IA has grown significantly.
- A journal can maintain analytical and theoretical rigor not expected of a proceedings.
- Such a publication will give IA studies an intellectual voice and fulfill the mission of the AIHA.

After discussion, it was agreed that the President will appoint a committee, working with the Publications Committee, to consider the matter and report.

### ELECTION COMMITTEE

Worrall reports that a candidate list has been established. Standard of membership is one year previous to election. A suggestion was made that in mailing ballots, we use standard procedures and number ballots.

### CHAPTER REPORTS

*Long Island Regional Chapter:* Danzi reporting for the chapter;  
*New York Regional Chapter:* Aleandri reporting for the chapter;  
*California Regional Chapter:* No report.

**To be discussed at the next meeting:** *At the suggestion of the Treasurer, we will discuss aggregating funds.*

Meeting adjourned. Respectfully submitted, Angela D. Danzi, Secretary

### RESULTS OF THE 2003 AIHA ELECTION

Members of the Elections Committee (Janet Worrall, Frank Sorrentino, Sal LaGumina) present the following report of the 2003 election. A total of 138 ballots were counted.

The following were elected to the Executive Council. No officers were elected this year. Emelise Aleandri, Bruno Arcudi, Frank Cavaioli, Teresa Cerasuola, Dawn Esposito, Fred Gardaphe, Paul Giaimo, Josephine Gattuso Hendin,

Jerome Krase, Salvatore LaGumina, Edward Maruggi, Mario Mignone, Frank Pesci, Stanislao Pugliese.

**WESTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER (AIHA-WRC)**

The AIHA-Western Regional Chapter in 2003 continued a full calendar of activities, with an increase of paid membership: 46 at year's end (up from 37 at the end of 2002), and a new slate of officers, including the appointive office of Vice-President, Southern Region to encourage programs in southern California. Officers during 2003 were:

- President Adele Negro
- Vice-President Teri Ann Bengiveno, Ph.D.
- Vice-President Kenneth Scambray, Ph.D.
- (Appointive)
- \*Secretary Laura Ruberto, Ph.D.
- Treasurer Theresa De Luca
- \* office created and filled in October 2003

All but Theresa De Luca will continue through 2004. Due to other pressing commitments, treasurer De Luca was obliged to step down, but we are fortunate that former treasurer Antonina Carpenter will step in for the first 6 months of 2004.

The newsletter editor is Lawrence DiStasi, who produced two issues of the *WRC Newsletter* in 2003 (copies of which were sent to the national AIHA offices).

**Treasurer's Report in brief:**

Beginning balance, 01/01/2003:	\$ 2, 640.94
Income, from membership dues:	595.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 3,235.94</b>
Expenses:	1,701.91*
<b>Ending balance, 12/31/2003:</b>	<b>\$ 1, 534.03</b>

\*Incurred as one-time printing costs for stationery, membership cards and officers' business cards; also, newsletter mailings, and operating expenses for program events.

*WRC Events Summary*

**ROSE SCHERINI**

The beginning of 2003 was sadly marked by the death of our friend and colleague Dr. Rose Scherini, whose seminal work on the Italian American community in California, particularly during WWII, launched the WRC exhibit *Una Storia Segreta*, which in 2004.

The Rose Scherini Scholarship Fund has been generated with monies donated in her name to fund student research on aspects of the WWII story (see Spring 2003 *Newsletter*.)

*Programs*

Topics featured in WRC programs and presented by various members during 2003 were, among others:

- The relationship between Italian and Mexican immigrant laboreres in the copper mining towns of Arizona from 1900 to 1930;
- A discussion of two venerable North Beach, San Francisco institutions, Cavalli's books and Ristorante Fior d'Italian;
- A focus on "the lost, the secret and the repressed in Italian American fiction" (silenced voices, hidden lives, cultural identity and invisibility), with Kenneth Scambray and his discovery of a major work of Italian American fiction: *The Invisible Glass*, by Lawrence Madalena; other Bay Area writers also spoke;
- On-going participation in the Enemy Alien Files exhibit with the Japanese American and German American communities, with emphasis on parallels to events today.

*WRC Brochure and Website*

Jennifer Lagier, poet and professor of computer sciences on the Monterey Peninsula, contributed her time and expertise to design a website for the WRC which will be linked to the AIHA national website (URL forthcoming). She has also helped us produce, at long last, a much-anticipated brochure, which serves both at WRC publicity events and to bring in new membership. A copy of the brochure will be provided under separate cover.

*10th Anniversary preparations*

On February 24, 1994, *Una Storia Segreta* began a ten-year odyssey of traveling displays, open forums and front-page coverage, culminating in national legislation signed by then-President Clinton in November 2000. Plans for celebrating these events were outlined at the last officers' meeting of 2003. An opening reception for the anniversary showing of the exhibit is planned for February 25, 2004 at Oakland City Hall, with co-sponsorship by the Italian American Federation of the East Bay. In March, *Una Storia Segreta* will travel to Milwaukee for a month-long showing there.

Finally, planning was begun at the last officers' meeting of November 2003 for a historians' summit. Lawrence DiStasi and Teri Ann Bengiveno will serve as the coordinators and will host a number of historians and community leaders in a San Francisco meeting focusing on the continuing erosion of Italian American history in history texts both at the grade school and college levels. The meeting will be financed by a grant from NIAF and will take place in April. It is expected to generate a report of its findings, based on the initial survey of selected textbooks by the historians.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Adele F. Negro  
President, AIHA/WRC

## METROPOLITAN NEW YORK CHAPTER AIHA

Our chapter makes available to individuals, as well as groups and organizations, guided walking tours of Little Italy in downtown New York City in the spring and fall months each year.

### Recent Events

A television version the play production of Nofrio the Innkeeper (Nofrio Locandiere) translated by national AIHA Joseph Accardi and Joe Dieli aired 4 times in February on the Manhattan Neighborhood Network, Manhattan's public access station. The chapter co-sponsored with the American Italian Cultural Roundtable last February the production of this play as well as the *Celebrazione dei Libri*-the Italian-American Book Festival on Saturday, December 13, 2003 at Fordham University, Lincoln Center.

The Manhattan Neighborhood Network will also air in March a program sponsored by the chapter and featuring the work of painter John Bologna. The chapter is also still exploring the bilingual production of a play by Italian journalist Etta Cascini in Genoa in conjunction with the Genoa 2004 project, and is working on an exhibit on Italian-American Immigrant Music & Theatre.

Submitted by Vanessa Vacchiano, Secretary and Dr. Emelise Aleandri, President

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## NOVELS BY RITA CIRESI

*Mother Rocket*. Delta Trade Paperbacks, 1993, \$12.95.

This collection of seven short stories about love and loss won the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction and was praised by the *New York Times Book Review* as "artfully balanced and charged with currents of despair." In "The Silent Partner," a young woman is caught up in an infantilizing love affair; in "Lifelines," a young girl fights to keep herself from coming another version of her depressed mother. The linked stories "Resurrection" and "Second Coming" introduce us to two brothers who compete with one another through their relationships with women. *Kirkus Reviews* praised Ciresi for creating "sharp-eyed, gently humorous fiction whose characters linger in the mind" and *Booklist* described Ciresi's first literary foray as "elegant works of fiction."

*Blue Italian*. Delta Trade Paperbacks, 1996, \$11.95.

Rosa Salvatore comes from a working-class Italian neighborhood of narrow houses with chipped Madonnas in the front yard. Gary Fisher grew up on Long Island in a community full of blue swimming pools and overdone bar mitzvahs. This comic tale of about a woman and a man who don't quite add up to the ideal couple was praised by *Entertainment Weekly* for its "biting humor and tactile prose ... a vibrant tableau of marriage's imperfections and redemptions."

*Pink Slip*. Delta Trade Paperbacks, 1999, \$11.95.

Lisa Diodetto ditches her job as an underpaid (and oversexed) publishing drone in New York City to take a position in the editorial department of a large pharmaceutical corporation and begins writing-on company time-a novel that pokes fun at corporate life. But trouble erupts when Lisa's main character-her ultra-conservative boss, Eben Strauss -takes an interest in her that goes beyond the boundaries of professional. This best-selling novel, which won the Pirate's Alley Faulkner Prize.

*Sometimes I Dream in Italian*. Delta Trade Paperbacks, 2000, \$12.95.

This collection of linked stories is a bittersweet comedy about sisters, lovers, and an Italian-American family that doesn't quite translate. Angel and Lina Lupo long to break free from their family and become typical "American" girls. Yet the more they struggle to escape from the bonds of their family, the more they realize the powerful hold of home. *USA Today* wrote: "poignant ... an old-fashioned tale about girls with old-fashioned dreams ... Angel and Lina will charm the reader."

*Remind Me Again Why I Married You*. Delta Trade Paperbacks, 2003, \$14.00

Can love survive marriage? In this sequel to *Pink Slip*, Ciresi picks up with Lisa Diodetto and Eben Strauss five years after their steamy interoffice romance. Written in dual perspective-so readers can get inside both Lisa's and Eben's head-Ciresi examines how two people who once fell desperately in love try their best to sustain a second act. The *Dallas Morning News* praised the novel as "wickedly funny ... a great follow-up to *Pink Slip*" and the *Hartford Courant* called it, "A cutting commentary on the lasting implications of 'till death do us part.'"

## Ed Maruggi's New Book

AIHA Executive Council member Ed Maruggi through Winston Publishing has released his latest book, *Italian Heart, American Soul: An Anthology*. The publication is 258 pages in length and includes 99 tales of Italian culture, behavior, traditions, and aspects of life as experienced by Italian Americans. There are ten topics in the book covering the following areas: Family and Friends, Life's Lessons, Celebrations, Special Relationships, Games and Humor, Across Generations, Food and Drink, Superstitions, Rituals, and Remedies, Immigrant Experiences, and Snapshots of the Italian American experience. Of the seventy-two contributors, twenty tales are contributions by AIHA members. Tales are in prose and in poetry.

The book is available for \$14.95. through eamnod@osfmail.rit.edu or www.winstonpublishing.us.

## Capone: Separating Fact from Fiction

Reviewer: Frank J. Cavaioli

Scholar and expert on Italian American History and American crime, Luciano Iorizzo has provided for the reader a concise, accurate biography of the notorious Al Capone in the context of social, economic, and political developments of his time. The author delineates the factual history of an Italian American anti-hero (folk hero?). Born in Brooklyn in 1899 to Italian immigrant parents, Capone seized his opportunities in his rapid rise to power. Author Iorizzo weaves the life of Capone into an analysis of such terms as ethnicity, diversity, and organized crime, concepts that have captured the imagination of modern America. The real Capone is revealed as underdog, criminal, and family man who was generous as he was violent. If the reader wishes to become acquainted with the career of the real Capone, he/she should begin here. Outstanding features of the book that greatly enhance the volume's relevance are a timeline of Capone's life, a glossary of names and events, a bibliography, a list of motion pictures and videos, and websites that include a wealth of information on Capone.

## 37TH AIHA CONFERENCE

Annapolis Nov. 4-6, 2004

Chairman Frank Alduino has provided the following progress report on arrangements for the Annapolis Conference. As a veteran of over 20 AIHA confabs, I am dazzled by the prospect of visiting William Paca's house and eating crab cakes and meeting in the Maryland legislature and staying at an expensive

antique hotel for only \$119. Plan now to attend. Break your piggy bank, cash in you frequent flyer miles, dip into academic travel funds—do whatever you have to.—DC

Located on the Chesapeake Bay, Annapolis, Maryland is one of the best-preserved cities in the United States. With its abundance of 18th century architectural treasures, and proud seafaring traditions, Annapolis has become a major tourist attraction in the Mid-Atlantic region. The city is the home of a myriad of fascinating historical attractions, including the Maryland State House, the United States Naval Academy, and the William Paca Estate. There is also an abundance of pubs, restaurants, distinctive shops and other unique attractions in this small, charming city.

#### ANNAPOLIS CONFERENCE HOTEL

The Governor Calvert House is situated in the heart of Maryland's capital city. It is within easy walking distance to the City Dock, and other locations within the historical district. It is a beautifully restored colonial structure that faces a colonial garden on one side and the State House on the other. Room rates are \$119 for a single or double. Please contact the hotel directly at 1-800-847-8882 or log on to the following site: [www.historicinnsofannapolis.com](http://www.historicinnsofannapolis.com).

#### TRANSPORTATION

The city of Annapolis is easily accessible by automobile from the northeast. It is located approximately 200 miles from the New York Metropolitan area (a three and one-half hour drive) and only about 150 miles from Philadelphia's Center City (about a two hour drive). Those members of the American Italian Historical Association electing to travel by Amtrak can disembark at Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) and then take ground transportation to the Calvert House. Annapolis is, of course, also accessible by air. BWI, which last year accommodated 22 million domestic and international passengers, services Annapolis and the surrounding areas. Because of its size and location, BWI has a large number of carriers, including several discount airlines such as Southwest and Air Tran Airways.

For those members arriving by rail or air, there are a number of ground transportation options. The BWI Supershuttle is \$38 (round trip); taxis are available for approximately \$40 for a one-way fare.

The airport is also served by seven major car-rental companies: Avis, Hertz, Alamo, National, Budget, Thrifty and Dollar.

#### BREAKOUT SESSIONS IN MARYLAND STATE HOUSE

Recently, the Maryland General Assembly completed the construction of a new senate office building, the Miller Building, adjacent to the State House. Inside this building, which is walking distance from the hotel, is an elegant conference center that will comfortably accommodate our group.

#### CRAB CAKES GALORE!

The lunch banquet will be held at Philips Annapolis Harbor Restaurant. Known for its awarding winning crab cakes, Philips is located a short distance from the Governor Calvert House. The speaker will be Dr. Philip Cannistraro, Distinguished Professor of Italian American Studies, Queens College.

#### OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES-PACA ESTATE

As part of the scheduled program, volunteers will direct tours of historic Annapolis. On the itinerary will be the William Paca Estate. An Italian American, Paca was a prominent Revolutionary War leader, signer of the Declaration of Independence and governor of the state of Maryland. His elegant home is one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in the United States. The guided tour will also include the Maryland State House, the oldest capital building in the United States and an architectural marvel.

## ***New AIHA Bookset Deal Includes Titles from NIAF***

American Italian Historical Association  
Bookset includes 1-17 for \$100

1. *Italian American Radicalism: Old World Origins New World Developments*. Ed. R J. Vecoli (1972) pp 80.
2. *Italian Americans in the Professions*. Ed. Remigio U. Pane, Intro. by Giovanni Schiavo (1983) pp. 290.
3. *Italian Immigrants in Rural and Small Town America*. Ed. Rudolph J. Vecoli (1987) pp. 204. ISBN 093467147
4. *The Italian Americans Through the Generations*. Ed. R Caporale 1986. 250 pp, ISBN 093467155
5. *The Interaction of Italians and Irish in the United States*. Ed. Francis X. Femminella, with an Introduction by Geno Baroni (1985) pp. 308. ISBN 093467513

6. *Italian Americans: Struggle and Support*. Ed. J Tropea, James E. Miller, Cheryl Beattie Repetti (1986) 200pp ISBN 0934675171
7. *The Melting Pot and Beyond: Italian Americans in the Year 2000*. Ed. J Kruse & Wm Egelman (1987) 250pp ISBN 093467518x
8. *Italian Americans: The Search for a Usable Past*. Ed. R. Juliani and P. Cannistraro (1989) pp. 304. ISBN 0934675198
9. *Italian Ethnics: Their Languages, Literature and Life*. Ed. Candeloro, Gardaphe, & P Giordano (1990) p. 478. ISBN 093467521X
10. *A Century of Italian Immigration, 1890–1990*. Ed. Herral Landry (1994) pp.250. ISBN 0934675279
11. *New Explorations in Italian American Studies*. Ed. Richard N. Juliani and Sandra P. (1994) pp. 246 ISBN: 0934675317
12. *Through the Looking Glass*. Ed. Mary Jo Bona and Anthony J. Tamburri (1996) pp. 344. ISBN 093467535x
13. *Industry, Technology, Labor and the Italian American Communities*. Ed. Mario Aste, Jerome Kruse, Louise Napolitano-Carman, and Janet Worrall, 1997, pp.294. ISBN 0934675406
14. *Italian Americans: A Retrospective on the Twentieth Century*. Ed. Paola Alessandra Sensi-Isolani and AJ Tamburri 2001, 273 pp. ISBN 9-9434675-50-3 available only on CD. CD also contains AIHA vol. 1 on Politics, and vol. 6 on Religion .
15. *WOP: A Documentary History of Anti Italian Discrimination*. Salvatore LaGumina, 1973, 319pp \$20. ISBN 1550710478
16. *Margherita Marchione*. Ed., Philip Mazzei: My Life and Wanderings, 1980, pp. 437 ISBN 091632204.
17. Rita Ciresi, *Pink Slip*. ISBN 038532362X, 353 pp., 1999.

Deluxe bookset includes the above plus all five of the following for \$150

18. Edward Cifelli, Editor, *The Selected Letters of John Ciardi*. 1991, 475 pp, ISBN 1-55728-171-8, \$15.
19. *Italian Immigrants Go West: The Impact of Locale on Ethnicity*. Worrall, Bonomo-Albright, DiFabio, 2003, 232 pp, ISBN 093467552x. \$20.
20. *Italian Americans: Looking Back—Moving Forward, A Study Guide for all levels prepared by the State Education Department of New York*. 541 pages.

Supplied to AIHA through the National Italian American Foundation. \$20.

21. Gay Talese (with a forward by Leon Panetta), *Italian Americans: A Celebration*. 2001, 207 pages, Coffee table format, published by and supplied to AIHA by NIAF. \$25.
22. *Milestones of the Italian American Experience*. 1492-2003, CD Rom, produced by NIAF. \$12.
23. CD Rom of AIHA out-of-print volumes 4 *Power and Class*, 11 *Pane e Lavoro*, 21 *Italian Americans in Transition*, 22 *Italian Americans Celebrate Life*. Total approximately 700 pages. \$12.

Ask your librarian to purchase the set, have your local IA club buy a set for the library and buy a set for yourself. Unless specified each book is available individually for \$12. Make checks payable to American Italian Historical Association.

Order from: AIHA Books, 169 Country Club Road, Chicago Heights, IL 60411, 708 756-7168; or email D-Candeloro@govst.edu

## AIHA at AHA Future of Italian-American Studies at U.S. Universities

In early January 2004, AIHA sponsored two sessions at the American Historical Association Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. In the items that follow, some of the participants summarize their presentations on this important topic.

The sessions were organized by Dominic Candeloro and figure, we hope, as the beginning of a much longer and sustained discussion on the future of Italian/American Studies in US colleges and universities. To this end, then, we will entertain well-thought-out responses to what is included in this issue of the *Newsletter*. Our ultimate goal should be one of an articulate discourse on what we, first, consider to be the *pros & cons* of an Italian/American discourse, before we allow *others* to define us. [AJT]

### *Thoughts on the Future of Italian American Studies in our Universities*

Rudolph Vecoli

As an historian, I am skeptical of prophecy, including my own. Looking to the future, I suggest we begin by looking backward to our origins. Italian American Studies (IAS) was not hatched from

the egg of cultural studies by an act of immaculate conception. During the twenties and thirties, scholars, writers, and propagandists such as Leonard Covello, Giuseppe Prezzolini, Giovanni Schiavo, and Jerre Mangione were pioneers in our field of study. While some of their work might have carried the taint of philo-fascism (perhaps ethnic nationalism), they made enduring contributions to what we now call Italian American Studies.

When I began my own researches in the 1950s, I was regarded by some as engaged in an idiosyncratic, if not filiopietistic, enterprise, a lonely enterprise. No monographs, no research tools, no bibliographies, no archives or libraries, and certainly no historical organization to stimulate and aid the would-be student of IAS. At that time, I had no reason to believe that IAS had a future. If anyone had predicated that a half century later we would have courses, programs, centers, and even chairs in IAS, I would have thought *questo è pazzo!*

Perhaps the founding of the AIHA in 1965 can be regarded as the birthdate of IAS. The AIHA by bringing us together, created a community of scholars and a culture of scholarship. Its proceedings themselves constitute a library. As important has been breaking down the walls of intellectual segregation. The works in IAS have entered the mainstream and contributed important, innovative understandings to a range of social science and humanities disciplines. They have contributed significantly to the displacement of the dominant assimilationist paradigm (think Melting Pot) with our contemporary pluralistic, multicultural conception of America, both past and present.

But enough self-congratulation. What is the perspective for IAS studies in the 21st century? I will list the factors, which in my opinion are shaping the field in "positive" and "negative" categories.

#### POSITIVES:

The emergence of the current generation of smart, well educated scholars (not all Italian Americans) who are engaged in exciting, cutting edge IAS. Their openness to both theoretical and methodological innovations, e.g., diaspora, transnationalism, cultural syncretism. But I would offer a word of caution: beware of faddishness. At least be acquainted with the work of your predecessors before condemning it to the trash can.

A greater receptivity and respect on the part of universities, departments, and colleagues, towards ISA. Related to that is the belated, but welcome, recognition by Italian American leaders and organizations that academic, intellectual excellence is essential to raising the status of the ethnic group, and therefore a newborn willingness to support IAS financially.

The growth of an historical consciousness on the part of many Italian Americans as expressed through family history, attendance at lectures, and community-based historical projects. More Italian American scholars are espousing the role of "public intellectuals," not restricting their teaching (and learning) within the walls of academe, but engaging a wider public.

A renewed interest on the part of Italians (in Italy) regarding the "altreitalie", stems in part from political and economic considerations, but among many it is motivated by a genuine desire to reestablish ties with long lost cugini. One expression of this "rediscovery" of Italian America (a prior effort under Fascism ended in disaster) is the development of a scholarship devoted to the emigration to the USA and elsewhere. Work of high excellence has been (and is) being done by our Italian colleagues. Regrettably these contributions, published in Italian, are too little known by us.

#### NEGATIVES:

The emergence of a peculiar definition of multiculturalism which is restricted to "people of color," and assumes European immigrants and ethnics have readily assimilated into a common Euro/white population. The frequent dominance of this ideology in departments, universities, and foundations, even among scholars whose work addresses IAS.

The obsession of some Italian Americans with the "Soprano Syndrome." From this standpoint, the sole purpose of IAS should be to refute defamatory stereotypes and to advance a positive view of Italian Americans. Studies which deal honestly with the Italian American experience, including of necessity "unsavory aspects," are denounced, and their authors condemned as so many "zii Tommasi." Related is the passion with which such activists embrace a celebratory "history," focusing on heroes, contributions, etc.

The historic relationship between Italian Language and Literature Departments and ISA has been characterized by snobbishness on the part of the former. On the whole, their faculties have regarded

Italian immigrants and their descendants as beneath their dignity. With the growing appeal of IAS (and new opportunities for funding), some of these departments have warmed up to these poor relations. A word of caution to colleagues and prospective donors regarding hybrid departments /programs of Italian and Italian American Studies: the burden of proof that the relationship is truly mutually beneficial and equitable rests upon the Italianists.

I could go on, but Basta! A final word, when I weigh up these “positives” and “negatives” the scale tips in favor of the former by a long shot. Let our motto be: “Sempre Avanti!”

### *The View from Seton Hall*

by William J. Connell, La Motta Chair in Italian Studies and Director of the Alberto Italian Studies Institute, Seton Hall University, and Co-Chair, New Jersey Institute for Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies. [connelwi@shu.edu](mailto:connelwi@shu.edu)

Recently I have had several discussions with a Seton Hall alumnus and donor who happens to be Italian American and who is also passionate about Roman history. These discussions have reminded me of some problems that the field of Italian American Studies will need to overcome as it attempts to take advantage of what everyone recognizes is a new willingness of Italian American individuals and organizations to invest in higher education.

Some of these problems are related to the way Italian American Studies was created as a new field and discipline in the turmoil of the 1960s and 70s. In the beginning, African American Studies served as the principal model for most Italian American Studies Programs, and the model worked fairly well in certain contexts, especially in some of the public universities in New York, where ethnic studies programs and university budgets are highly politicized. Because they were able, after much struggle, to win state recognition as a minority ethnic group, Italian Americans in New York have been able to secure substantial state funding for, among other things, the Calandra Institute.

It is clear that the “me-too” approach is going to remain important in New York, and recently it has been of some use in New Jersey, where the

new Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission was able to win state funding on a par with the state’s Holocaust Commission and Martin Luther King Commission. It is possible to imagine similar initiatives in states like Pennsylvania, Illinois, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, which have substantial populations of Italian ancestry. However, if the New Jersey case is to serve as a guide, then the sums made available will be relatively small compared to what New York State’s politicians dedicate annually to Italian American programs. The New Jersey Commission receives 135,000 dollars a year from the state, only a portion of which is dedicated to higher education, and it is reliant on private sources to fund the rest of its budget.

Another limitation of the “me-too,” ethnic studies approach is that it does not necessarily coincide with the ideals and aspirations of private donors. It is true that Italian American Studies has largely shifted away from the radical political agenda that characterized much early work in the field. Most historians of Italian Americans now work on the broad mass of immigrants and consider themselves specialists in immigration history, and few now dedicate themselves to the socialist and anarchist activists that seemed so attractive in the sixties and seventies. Still, I can say from personal experience that there are many Italian American donors who are turned off by the idea of contributing to what they fear will be simply another ghettoized ethnic studies department.

They worry about programs in which Italian American students (and only Italian American students) are taught by Italian American professors (and only Italian American professors) about the meaning of victimhood and the importance of self-esteem, and little else. In all seriousness, I don’t know of any such programs in Italian American Studies, which really has become a substantial discipline in the past two decades, but these worries and impressions are certainly present among Italian American donors—and also among Italian American parents who are sending their children to college. Meanwhile, there is a real history of discrimination against Italian Americans that even in Italian American Studies programs has not received the sort of serious attention from historians that it deserves. (All are invited to attend the Alberto Institute’s conference, “Real Stories: Discrimination and Defamation in the History of Italian Americans,” at Seton Hall University, December 4, 2004).

In my own experience, the best way to reach out to Italian American donors, and also to the large public of Italian Americans in northern New Jersey, has been to try to connect them with the historical experience of an *italianità* that certainly comprises the field of Italian American Studies as it currently exists, but that also reaches well beyond it. Thus at Seton Hall University, where I teach, we include courses on Italian American subjects under the broader and much better funded institutional umbrella of Italian Studies. Our Italian Studies program currently includes a course in Italian American history taught in the History Department, and we recently were able to hire a specialist in Italian American religion in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology. But our Italian Studies program also includes Italian language, art and music, the history of medieval and modern Italy, and of the Italian *diaspora* in such places as Canada, Argentina and Australia, as well as the United States), and it will soon include Roman history and the history of the Catholic Church.

Now I know that there are Italian Americanists who look aghast at this sort of broad Italian Studies program. In fact, a good deal of the energy that they put into establishing Italian American Studies programs in the 60s and 70s unfortunately had to be directed against an elitism that used to predominate (and at some universities still does) in Italian language and literature departments, usually run by natives of northern Italy, who saw most things Italian American (including, sometimes, Italian American students) as unwelcome intruders.

Yet these barriers are now in the process of being torn down. The recent rise to prominence of literary history and criticism within the field of Italian American Studies is I think one especially strong indication of this. As any number of scholars have pointed out, a familiarity with the Italian language is vital to an understanding of the meaning and nuances in the writing of important Italian American authors. Also contributing to this interdisciplinary push has been the fact that more Italian Americans are working as professors in Italian language departments, and that more Italian American students are taking Italian language classes.

To sum up, I think the most prosperous future for Italian American Studies is going to be found

wherever Italian American Studies participates in a broad-based Italian Studies movement. This is what will permit it to distinguish itself and to rise above the many other ethnic studies programs that now exist in our universities. When my donor who is interested in Roman history says he wants to participate in our Italian Studies drive—which has raised approximately 5 million dollars over the past ten years—I want him with us.

“Jerry Krase” *What kind of Italian Name is That?*

What’s Italian/American? Who’s Italian/American? What’s in name?

JerryKrase@aol.com

I was honored to be asked to contribute my ideas about “Strategies and Tactics for Implementing the Future of Italian American Studies” at the 2004 American Historical Association Annual Meeting in Washington DC. The National Italian American Foundation and the American Italian Historical Association had organized “A Summit on Italian American Studies at U.S. Universities.” It was also convenient as well as ironic. Convenient, because I was already scheduled to present two papers at the Conference, one of which was for the Polish American Historical Association of which I am also a proud and active member.

Ironically, in both organizations I am frequently queried about why I am interested in the ethnic group to which, because of my name KRASE, they assume I don’t belong. It is this issue, in the form of the three questions that title this essay, which I would like to address here. The answers are crucial to the future of Italian Americans, and Italian American Studies, which to some share indistinguishable fates. I strongly believe that the most important and urgent tasks for Italian American organizations are to firstly reflect the increasingly multicultural character of people by expanding its outreach to all those who trace even the smallest portion of their roots to Italy; and secondly, to vigorously engage other ethnically focused, but similarly interested, associations.

To answer the question of “What’s Italian?” I begin with the words of my good friend Fred Gardaphe who defined “an Italian sign as one signifying *italianità*, or the qualities associated with Italian culture. The most obvious signs will be the lexical units that appear in the Italian language or dialectal variants.

Beyond language, there are two cultural codes that govern public behavior: *omertà*, the code of silence that governs what is spoken and not spoken about in public, and *bella figura*, the code of proper presence or social behavior that governs an individual's public presence." (1996: 20)

An Agnelli Foundation study identified Italian cultural values as: "the importance attached to intermediate groups: the family, the neighborhood, the community"; "germane to the quality of domestic life: the importance of the home, the dinner table, holidays"; "relating to interpersonal supportiveness: religious faith understood as love of neighbour, as actions in this world; a feeling for group and village ties; hospitality, and the importance of personal relationships"; and "a realistic view of life: anti-dogmatic skepticism, political realism: higher education choices made pragmatically." (1980: 36-37) Might we therefore say that people who follow these cultural norms are Italian American and those who don't are not?

As to "Who's Italian/American?" I note that the discipline of Italian American Studies emerged during the what Michael Novak termed "Rise of the UnMeltable Ethnics" and was viewed by many scholars as a hostile reaction to a rising tide of Black nationalism and Afro/American cultural revival. As a "working class style", Italian American ethnic consciousness was seen merely as "defensive ethnicity." (Gans, 1991) Italian Americans, like Italians, are a difficult group to study. Some argue that they don't exist as an "authentic" ethnic group at all. For example, Italian Americans are presented in many textbooks as a perfect example of Melting Pot Assimilation. Yet, in both the 1990 and 2000 Census over 16,000,000 people in the United States identified themselves as Italian American. Perhaps we should add that Italian Americans defy logic.

Even though most agree that Italian Americans are well integrated into America's social structure, they are still distinct. Other than by self-identification, how do we ascertain membership in the putative ethnic group? Who should do the defining? As I have incessantly argued "despite the practical disunity of Italian Americans, they are united by shared images in the minds of people about who "they" are. The fact that these re-presentations of Italian Americans can be contradictory is to be expected because Italian America itself, despite stereotypes to the contrary, is extremely diverse. As

other large American "ethnic" groups, Italian Americans do not comprise a monolithic, cohesive group but are members of disparate collectivities; that is, collections of social actors who share a varying number of socially relevant demographic attributes such as: national origins, cultural values, practices, language uses, and religion. In many cases Italian Americans have more in common with non-Italian Americans than with each other." (2003: 31)

The questions of whom is Italian American, and how many Italian Americans there are varies considerably by the method used to identify and count them. A hundred years ago Italians in America were defined by their place of birth. Italians in America were then simply those persons who had been born in "Italy." Italian American Studies was the study of people born in Italy. Then, nationality and race were virtually synonymous, so Italians were seen as a "racial" group. By the 1940s the Census Bureau had added the category of "Foreign Stock," or persons who had at least one foreign-born parent, to that of "Foreign-born". After World War II ethnic groups were more seen as cultural, and less as genetic groups. During the 1980 Census a sample of the population was asked to identify themselves ethnically. In 1990 this sample survey was included in the full enumeration and as a large sample in 2000. In this way ethnicity, as a research concept, had moved from a genetic to a symbolic term. From each of these different definitions we could assemble a different Italian American collectivity and a different Italian American Studies discipline. I must note here that born in Italy is a misleading concept as "culturally Italian" people have consistently migrated to the US from places other than the country of Italy. As the number of Italian immigrants and the foreign born Italians have been contracting decreasing the definition of Italian American has been expanding, and I argue should continue to expand.

What's in a Name? We live in society, and a world, where despite occasional protestations to the contrary, Ethnic Identity matters. In Ethnic Studies it matters even more. Among many other ethnicized positions I have held titles of Director of the Center for Italian American Studies at Brooklyn College, President of the American Italian Historical Association, and Vice President of the American Italian Coalition of Organizations of New York City. In every case I have been challenged as to "fitness" for the role. I was also a member of the Selection Committee for the Distinguished Professor of Italian

American Studies at The City University of New York. Someone who mistook my membership on the selection committee as an indication that I was a candidate for the position, and incredibly questioned my “ethnic” suitability for the job. I thank God that another friend, Phil Canistraro, hadn’t changed his name to Johnson. In passing I note that when I ran for President of the AIHA, another one of my well-meaning friends put Jerry “Cangelosi” Krase on the ballot, as a way of enhancing my candidacy. More comically, my late half fellow Sicilian, Jerre Mangione, spelled my name as Jerre as a way of ethnically christening me.

We Italian Americans, Krases included, are an extremely varied lot and if we recognize this we will see that our contribution to the United States, and the world is even more enormous. It is not that I favor one side or another. I don’t think people can be “part” anything. We are all whole persons who honor our unique, and increasingly complex, heritages. I am and my children are proud of every drop of us yet much of what we do would not be seen by others as “Italian American” accomplishments. My oldest daughter Kristin Martha Krase, was Vice President of her senior class at Vassar College and is an Educational Psychologist mother of two; Spencer Rocco Letizia and Leander Jerome Letizia. Her children will be seen as Italian American but as she maintains her “maiden” name she will not. My next daughter, Karen Rose Krase (now Delgado), was a scholar athlete at Manhattanville College and is an accomplished Pediatric Occupational Therapist. I am sure that she will be seen as a role model for Latinos, but regrettably not Italian Americans. Finally there is my baby, Kathryn Suzanne Krase, a Cornell graduate, with a joint MSW-JD degree who is on staff at Fordham University and about to marry a Cahill. Whether Krase or Cahill she is beyond the Pale. My wife Suzanne Nicoletti RN, BA, MS, Ed.D. is a hospital administrator as well as an Adjunct Associate Professor. Until she dropped the Krase from her hyphenated, and incredibly long, last name most people probably thought she was Jewish. All these fine citizens can trace their roots to Sicily, Campania, and Calabria. But they also have Russyn-Carpathian, Polish, Slovak, Czechoslovak, Croatian, Yugoslavian, Austrian, and Galician roots. By narrowly defining Italian Americans we miss out on the contributions of additional tens of millions of people who can trace their roots to Italy.

Finally, Italy is changing rapidly and is struggling to reach consensus on who is, and is not, Italian. I have conducted visual research on the effects of immigration to Italy and have recognized the Italian diversity that mirrors some of our Italian American variety. I have suggested that the meaning of Italy is already contested as evidenced in a story about “dark-skinned” beauty Denny Mendez: who is a naturalized Italian citizen having moved from the Dominican Republic when her mother married an Italian. Ms. Mendez won the Miss Italy 1996 beauty contest. This generated a number of reflections on racial tolerance in Italy, what it means to be Italian, and “Italian beauty.”

Two of the judges were initially suspended for saying, before the competition, that a black woman could not represent Italian beauty. According to one judge, “I would happily elect her Miss Universe. But what has she got to do with Italy? She is not Mediterranean.” During the pageant, one-third of the one million Italians who called in their vote gave it to Mendez. Prime Minister Romano Prodi had a comment on the Miss Italy results, “Italy is changing,” he said. “We also have black soccer players, and now this too is a sign.”

Those who study Italy know it has always been diverse, even if not recognized officially as multicultural. For them Italy now has a new mix and perhaps a new recognition. Parallel to this reality is that of Italian America, which has also increasingly become more diverse and struggling with its connection to an outmoded notion of *italianità*. We must reach out to all those people who can be tied to Italy and at the same time open the doors of our organizations to cooperation and joint efforts with other ethnic groups who share our same values for historical accuracy and creative excellence.

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## *Focus on Youth*

Gina Miele, Director

*Coccia Institute at Montclair State University*

This is a progress report of sorts on the initiatives of the new Joseph and Elda Coccia Institute for the Italian Experience in America at Montclair State University. Cavaliere Joseph Coccia has dedicated himself to the promulgation of Italian and Italian American heritage for over forty-four years, most notably as Past National President and former chair of the "Italian Studies Chairs and Fellowships Committee" of Unico National. With this, his latest endeavor at Montclair State, Mr. Coccia hopes to facilitate the exchange of scholarly discourse about the current state of Italian American studies.

As the Institute's first director, I have the unique opportunity to actively develop, with the support of a rotating Board of Advisors, an organization whose principal purpose is to promote an understanding of the historical and contemporary interplay of the Italian and American cultures and people.

Dedicated to academic, cultural, and outreach programming, our Institute will partner with MSU (Montclair State University), and work collaboratively with other regional and national organizations, to encourage the study of the Italian language, as well as Italian and Italian American literature and history in our universities.

As Susan Cole, the President of MSU, has acknowledged in the Institute's first newsletter, "the people of New York have benefited from the presence of several Italian and Italian American institutes and centers at institutions of higher education. The Coccia Institute represents the first such educational and cultural force in New Jersey." Along with Seton Hall's "Alberto Italian American Institute," we envision becoming New Jersey's "go-to" resource for current information and a center of excellence for programming on a host of Italian-American issues and interests.

In these, our inaugural months, MSU, the Advisory Board, Joseph Coccia, and I have made a concerted effort to articulate our short and long-term vision and goals. While the Institute will engage all age groups and interests, our primary mission to support the growing number of young

Italian Americans who have embarked upon a quest to (re)search themselves and their heritage is both fundamental to our purpose and crucial to the future of Italian-American Studies. It is imperative that we direct our attention to these "emerging adults" who will ultimately contribute both to Italian-American culture, as well as the economic, political and socio-cultural ties between Italy and the US.

As an increasing number of students study the Italian language, we must make them aware of its practical use after they have completed their schooling. To this end, the Coccia Institute is currently organizing educational programs, conferences, lectures, and seminars which bring together students and prominent members of the political and business communities in the New York and New Jersey metropolitan areas. Our charge to support the future generations of Italian Americans begins at MSU, where the Coccia Institute is working closely with Italian American students to revive the defunct Italian American Student Organization on campus. Student members will have a voice on our Board, will be instrumental in creating specialized programming for students, and will ultimately assist in the development of a state-wide symposium for Italian American student groups from a myriad of universities and colleges. In addition, the Coccia Institute plans to publish an annual journal exclusively for undergraduates engaging in research on Italian American studies.

By October of 2004, on the first anniversary of our founding, the Coccia Institute intends to launch an initiative that supplies student and scholarly grants for research supporting the Institute's mission. One such scholarship will be the "Coccia all' estero" grant. In conjunction with the Italian Faculty at MSU, the Institute is devising a semester long study abroad program in Italy, which will allow students to study in a traditional classroom setting, while simultaneously learning about a work-related field of interest through an internship at a local business.

Taking a cue from MSU's original identity as a teacher's college, and as part of our ongoing effort to support our key constituency of youth and emerging adults, the Coccia Institute will leverage programming to reach out both to Italian teachers and MSU undergraduates training to become educators to help enrich their classroom and school-based activities. As an example, based on the recognized state-wide need for qualified teachers of the Italian language, the Coccia Institute is collaborating with Dr. Marisa

Trubiano (Chair of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission's Higher Education Committee), NIAF, the American Association of the Teachers of Italian, and the Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey, to offer at Montclair State University in June of 2004 the second annual "Teach the Teachers" event. The two-day long series of workshops will suggest ways to infuse Italian American studies into lesson plans and to enhance teaching style through emerging technologies, new publications and methodologies, while reminding teachers of their mission as cultural ambassadors.

I would like to conclude this brief report with the mention of the promising partnership between the Coccia Institute and Montclair State University. MSU is the ideal state for the seminal work which the Institute has undertaken. Boasting a strong and growing program in Italian language, literature, and culture, Montclair offers a major and a minor in Italian, as well as a teacher certification program. Six hundred students take Italian courses each semester with the six full-time faculty members in the Italian Department. Because the university seeks to expand its curriculum by including courses and research on Italian American issues, it recently hired a professor of Italian American history and continues its campaign with UNICO to endow a chair in Italian and Italian American studies.

Armed with the support of MSU's President Susan Cole and Dean Richard Gigliotti of the College of the Humanities and Social Sciences, the Coccia Institute seeks most importantly to operate in tandem with American universities and with the growing family of Italian American organizations. We welcome input from AIHA members, and look forward to collaborating with you in a joint effort to foster new opportunities for future generations. Please visit our website for information about our upcoming events and initiatives ([www.vchss2.montclair.edu/cocciainstitute](http://www.vchss2.montclair.edu/cocciainstitute)).

### *Do We Need Italian American Studies?*

by Dona De Sanctis, Ph.D., Dep. Executive Director  
Order Sons of Italy in America

**A**s America enters its third century of existence, there is a growing unease among our cultural observers about the Balkanization of our society.

Daily it seems, we find evidence that the United States is divided into special interest groups of "hyphenated Americans" who define themselves according to their race, religion or ethnic heritage rather than simply as "Americans."

They also appear to have a stronger identity and allegiance to their ancestors' past rather than their American present. So the question I would pose to you is "Do we need Italian American studies programs and if we do, would they contribute to the current Balkanization and fragmentation of American society."

As a person who has been immersed in Italian American issues at the community, state, national and international levels for more than a decade, my answer to the first question is a resounding "yes." Yes! Yes! Yes! We need Italian American studies.

In my past position of director of research at the National Italian American Foundation as well as in my current post with the Sons of Italy, I have had a unique opportunity and privilege to devote all of my working hours and days to thinking and studying the place of Italian Americans in our society both past and present.

The experience is both exhilarating and depressing. Exhilarating because daily I learn new facts that reveal the remarkable record of achievement and contributions of Italians and Italian Americans to this nation since its founding. Depressing because along with other Americans including most of you in this room, I never learned about this in the classrooms I sat in from elementary school through graduate school.

I never read about them in books reviewed in the *New York Times* and *Publisher's Weekly*. I never see them in TV documentaries and never hear about them on National Public Radio.

Instead, I see Italian Americans and their culture hijacked by Hollywood, television and Madison Avenue where our rich and complex heritage is reduced to all-too-familiar stereotyping.

The movies, TV programs and commercials present Italian American men as violent morally bankrupt gangsters or dumb-but-lovable blue-collar buffoons that actors like Tony Danza and John Travolta have made popular.

Italian American women are also stereotyped either as elderly, overweight housewives and grandmothers dressed in black and fixated on feeding people or as young, uneducated women with big hair, long nails and tight pants.

There is nothing in our education process that neutralizes or balances such stereotyping. In elementary school, Italian Americans are largely absent from social studies programs about our “multi-cultural” society.

With the exception of course of Columbus whose reputation in the space of one generation has gone from heroic discoverer of a new continent to demonic Hitler of the 15th century, “who killed all the Indians,” as a nephew of mine, age 16, informed me when I gave him a book about Columbus for his birthday. Elementary school children never learn that Giovanni Caboto aka John Cabot and his son, Sebastiano discovered North America. Or that Giovanni da Verrazzano entered New York Bay 85 years before the Dutch seaman, Henry Hudson, for whom New York’s river is now named. Or that the American southwest and California were explored and mapped almost solely by Eusebio Chino, an Italian Jesuit, in the 17th century.

The situation is even graver in American high schools and colleges. For example, the text book, *A Different Mirror: A History Of Multicultural America* by Ronald Takaki, is used at most American universities and colleges to teach the cultural histories of immigrant America. It explores in great depth the rich racial, religious and cultural diversity America offers. It features historic photographs and devotes chapters to a penetrating historical analysis of the trials and burdens faced by Americans of Indian, African, Latino, Irish, Jewish and Asian descent.

The index reveals two references to Italian Americans. One in a sentence about the ethnic groups that passed through Ellis Island. The other in a caption of early immigrants at work.

As a result, most Americans including people of our own heritage do not know that when they first came to this country, Italian Americans were lynched in the South, paid less than white AND black workers in the north, relegated to living in ghettos, now colorfully known as “Little Italies” and interned during WW II.

They don’t know that at one point in our history, at the beginning of the 20th century, social scientists proposed that we were the “missing link” between the white and black races.

But they do learn that sometime in the 1920s, Italian Americans became associated with organized crime as did people of Jewish, Irish, and

other heritages. Today students know all about Al Capone and Lucky Luciano and the Mafia. They know much less about Meyer Lansky, Bugsy Siegal, Legs Diamond, John Dillenger and Frank O’Donnell, who are rarely if ever mentioned in these text books.

Yes, they know about Al Capone and Lucky Luciano. But not about Col. Luigi Palma di Cesnola, a Union officer, one of several thousand Italian Americans who fought in the Civil War. He earned one of the first Medals of Honor and became the first director of New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art.

They never heard of Charlie Angelo Siringo, a Pinkerton detective who infiltrated Butch Cassidy’s Hole in the Wall gang and pursued Billy the Kid. And the first American saint? Mother Cabrini, who founded 14 colleges, 98 schools, 28 orphanages and 8 hospitals.

And what about Ella Grasso, the first woman elected governor in her own right? Dr. Catherine DeAngelis, the first woman editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association. Or Angela Bambace, who as vice president, became the first woman to penetrate the all-male leadership of the Ladies Garment Workers Union (1956).

These women somehow didn’t make the cut in *Women Who Dared*, a two-volume collection of historic postcards compiled by the Library of Congress for Pomegranate Books. Aiming for the youth market and inspired by multi-culturalism, the books recognize over 62 influential women living and dead from more than 12 nations.

These include women of Jewish, African, Russian, Greek, Czech, French, American, Mexican, Irish, Native American, English and Indian heritage who have made a difference.

There was not one Italian or Italian American woman mentioned. Not Maria Montessori, not Mother Cabrini, not Geraldine Ferraro. Not one. And the reason I suspect is that since as young people, the historians at the Library of Congress and the editors at Pomegranate Books, learned nothing about Italian Americans, and, as adults are familiar only with the aforementioned stereotypes, we were not even on their radar screens!

This happens all too frequently. In a recent documentary I saw on the History Channel about Medal of Honor recipients of World War II, I learned about Irish, Jewish, African American and Japanese American heroes.

No mention was made about John Basilone, the only enlisted Marine in WW II to receive both the

Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross, the nation's two highest military honors.

Nor were the names of any of the other 22 men of Italian heritage who earned the Medal of Honor—13 of them in World War II.

This, despite the fact that Italian Americans constituted at least 10% of the U.S. Armed Forces during that terrible war.

The U.S. Postal Service has released more than 150 commemorative stamps and postcards on African Americans, their history and culture. Jewish American themes are on 36 stamps. Italian Americans? Fifteen stamps. Since 1869.

Clearly we are the invisible minority—seen only in movies, TV shows and commercials as goons and buffoons. As a result a recent Zogby International poll of American teenagers 13 to 18 years old revealed that 78% associate Italian Americans with either criminal activities or blue-collar work. An earlier poll by the Princeton-based Response Analysis Corporation revealed that 74% of adult Americans believe most Italian Americans have some connection to organized crime.

The facts are that the U.S. Department of Justice estimates that less than .0025 percent of the 26 million Americans of Italian descent are involved in organized crime. And the U.S. Census Bureau reports that more than two-thirds of the Italian Americans in the work force are in white-collar jobs as executives, physicians, teachers, attorneys, administrators, etc.

Which brings me, in conclusion to the second question I posed at the beginning of this discussion: "Would courses on Italian American studies further contribute to the fragmentation of American society?"

I don't think they will. First, because you would be hard-pressed to find an ethnic group in America more patriotic than Italian Americans. Even three and four generations after the first immigrants arrived here, we have never lost our gratitude to this country for giving us opportunities that Italy denied us.

Any reputable course on Italian American studies would have to reflect this gratitude and the fact that only in America were millions of poor and largely uneducated Italian immigrants given the chance to move up the ladder of success as were millions of other poor, ill-educated immigrants of other races, religions and cultures. History and cul-

ture clearly show, Italian Americans are living proof of America's promise fulfilled.

So I urge all who are in a position to lobby, campaign and promote Italian American studies. The Order Sons of Italy stands ready to help this initiative in any way possible. Because we live for the day when an American child will ask, "Al Capone? Who's he?"

### *Endowed Professorships are an Answer--The Growth Of Italian American Philanthropy*

By Frank G. Cannata FIST (Funding Italian Studies Together)

Over the course of the last 18 years, we have participated in nine endowment campaigns. The names of the Chairs, their locations, and accompanying fellowships, book collections, and Italian-American Institutes are well known to all of you.

In the beginning we were challenged by a community that did not seem to grasp the significance of the need to drive higher education towards Italian and Italian-American Studies. It was slow to develop, and until quite recently had become a long and arduous process.

What is the phenomenon that has altered the thinking of the Italian-American and caused them to eagerly seek out the opportunity to play the role of benefactors? You can sum it all up in one descriptive title, "The Soprano Syndrome."

For years successful Italian-Americans have quietly endured the denigration of their heritage in the electronic and print media. A common occurrence found in all types of prejudice are members of the maligned group that attack those who are vocal in their protest against the negative stereotyping. They are not content with acting passively in the matter, but feel the need to show the world that not all Italian-Americans lack a sense of proportion or humor.

In his book, *Chutzpah*, Alan Dershowitz identified this practice as, "Shanda Fur De Goyim." A Yiddish term, loosely translated meaning, "Shame in front of the non-believer." We believe this is exactly what is happening among Italian-Americans. There are far too many that think we protest too much and suggest we should do something productive. They are fearful that we will make spectacles of ourselves. I had a very successful Italian American say that I represented the image that he and his kind were trying to get away from.

Our detractors also fail to understand that all Italian-Americans activists are multifaceted individuals who not only raise our voices when blatant acts of bigotry are perpetrated against us, but raise a considerable amount of money for charity.

We also have a large number of Italian-Americans who have stood on the sidelines and remained silent. Thanks to HBO and the Soprano's we have an increasing number of our brethren while reluctant to shout at the defamers are now reaching into their pocketbooks to endow Chairs, Fellowships, and Italian-American Institutes. They have come to truly understand the only way to combat negative stereotyping is through the support of higher education. They are learning the lesson of the old admonition that it is better to light one candle than curse the darkness.

How can educators benefit from this newfound desire to support educational endowments? It is really very simple. First and foremost you have to clearly present or outline the benefit to the IA Community. Those benefits can take many forms. These can include IA curricula, symposiums addressing the real contributions of Italy and Italian Americans. I also believe we need a widening dialog on the growing fascination of the Mafia Mythology. For those of us who actively engage in raising money for education our objective is relatively narrow. What we are looking for is an accurate historical record of the real contributions, whatever they may be of Italy and Italian-Americans.

It is of paramount importance that you understand that these potential benefactors are looking to you to become our academic champions. They are looking to you to provide an intellectual response to these absurd characterizations of Italian-Americans as gangsters, illiterates, or buffoons. Take that role seriously and you will gather a legion of supporters. They do not want you to join picket lines. They want you to attack the basic premise of the Italian American stereotype, that we are illiterate and totally corrupt.

A good example has been the relationship all the benefactors have enjoyed with Seton Hall. The University valued what UNICO and the other major benefactors had contributed. They were and continue to be very responsive to whatever the benefactors might suggest or require. The result is the endowment for Italian and Italian-American Studies is now the fourth largest in the country.

We believe the other three are Columbia, New York University, and UC Berkeley.

The SHU La Motta Chair has a broad umbrella that covers the Valente Book Collection, the Alberto Italian-American Institute, the Camille Vecchio Scholarship in Italian Studies (to study abroad), and two full four-year scholarships underwritten by a benefactor. Based on recent conversations at the University, the endowment could easily exceed \$4 million within the next two years. Bear in mind that this endowment campaign started in 1993 and was completed in 1998. In ten years time it has gone from zero to \$3 million.

It has been my good fortune to work with many educators and for the most part they have been wonderful partners, friends, and allies in a very noble cause. However, there have been others who have looked upon us as unable to contribute (other than by giving money) to a meaningful dialog on Italian-American education. I have personally been insulted on several occasions by those people. It is not our interest to tell any institution what they must do to. We can only suggest and strongly advise the institution of the benefits of a particular course of action.

Unfortunately, conflicts have arisen. When such a conflict arises, I urge you to sincerely and respectfully review the request or the concerns of the potential benefactor. If what is being asked is not feasible, then explain why. Do not treat them as people incapable of understanding. Ultimately, it is the university that has control of the situation.

Another important factor to consider is the enduring aspects of an endowment and the commitment of the university to maintaining viability in that course of study. By and large, those of us who choose to give and raise money for a University are business people. We tend to be very cautious and have learned that there is always a need to protect your interests and always to receive a return on the investment.

The ROI can come in the form of an annual report on the state of IA Studies at a University. You must continue to communicate with the benefactors. Do not make the mistake of only writing or calling when the pledge is due. All of us who give believe the real benefit comes from the enrichment of minds that will in turn widen the ever-increasing knowledge of our Italian-American culture. My hope is that one day we will see a growing number of Italian-American authors write about their experiences and truly describe the Italian-American character, culture, and

household. My hope is that an author will make the breakthrough and publish a series of best selling novels that will cause the publishing houses to recognize a burgeoning new market. It is only a matter of time.

That is where things are today. There is likelihood that in the months and years ahead Italian-American benefactors' will continue to grow in number. They will also increase the amount of the average gift. Today, it is relatively small. The thousands who give modest amounts and carry a disproportionate share of the burden make up what we lack in major donors. There is more than ample reason for hope. At two Universities, single benefactors have given substantial gifts to endow Italian-American Institutes. That is only the beginning.

My greatest concern is that some University will emulate what was done at Dartmouth and Colby with the Paganucci endowments. It is a sad story of two Universities who were given a collective \$3 million to endow Italian Studies. The benefactor has long since passed away. Today, all that remains of the rich endowment is a book prize at Dartmouth and an associate Professorship at Colby. In light of today's communication capabilities such a happenstance would result in a crashing halt in the rise of Italian-American benefactors.

I urge you to become aware of this new breed of benefactor. For those who are new to the ways of academia, it can and often is a difficult and sometimes unpleasant experience. Help them to understand the great good they are doing. All of the campaigns that I have personally been involved in had one kind of problem or another. We understood that going in but it is always disheartening when they occur. I might add that all of the problems were resolved.

In these cases you (the educator) should take on the role of mediator and advisor. As I said before, you need to help the benefactors understand the nature of the conflict and how it could possibly be corrected or altered to reach a more agreeable outcome.

I want to leave you with this final thought. Italian-Americans need to be further educated on the importance and needs of higher education. We must look to others who come to deal with this whole issue of ethnicity, culture, and education. One bright example is the Jewish people who are so wise in this fundamental approach to

maintaining historical accuracy, perspective, and the survival of a gifted race.

It is no accident that a people who poured honey on their children's books to teach them that learning is sweet remain the largest single collection of benefactors on this continent. The two go hand-in-hand. We can and must learn from them.

There are many encouraging signs that this in fact is happening. We are beginning to find it much less onerous to seek out major gift benefactors. Because of this, the future for Italian-American education is very bright. We no longer need to ask where is the funding to come from.

I applaud what you are doing and thank God that we have such fine minds willing to give of themselves. By your efforts you are insuring the promulgation and a preservation of the Italian-American experience.

## ***Alla riscossa!***

### *Italian American Studies in Italy*

by Stefano Luconi

Universities of Florence & Bologna-Forlì

**E**migration was one of the most remarkable social phenomena in the Italian post-unification history. Yet the study of that experience has long been a neglected dimension of Italian historiography. The mass relocation of people who left Italy for the United States has been no exception to this attitude.

While several Italian research institutes carry out projects involving emigration, few focus only on such a topic. None is devoted exclusively to the case of the United States and the Italian presence in this country, as also shown by a recent study [*Quale futuro per lo studio dell'emigrazione? L'attività dei centri di ricerca: Bilanci e prospettive*, ed. Noemi Ugolini (San Marino: Guardagli, 2003)]. But the Italian mass departures for the United States and the Italian-American experience there are obviously key matters for institutes addressing emigration-related issues. The most prominent among the latter are the Centro Studi Emigrazione di Roma (CSER) and the Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli. The Centro Studi Emigrazione di Roma (<http://www.cser.it/cser@cser.it>), which explores and documents national and international migrations with a special emphasis on their pastoral and theological aspects but without neglecting a sociological, historical, and political perspective, promotes re-

search on Italian communities abroad including the United States. The CSER is home to a special library, with roughly 35,000 volumes and more than 200 periodicals, historical archives as well as photographic and multimedia collections. The CSER also publishes the authoritative and refereed journal *Studi Emigrazione*. The Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli (<http://www.fga.it/> [staff@fga.it](mailto:staff@fga.it)) carries out research on Italian Americans within the much broader context of both migration studies and the examination of Italian communities and cultures in the world. It operates the Centro di Documentazione sulle Popolazioni e le Culture Italiane nel Mondo and publishes *Altreitalie*, a scholarly journal devoted to such issues. This list may also include the Fondazione Cassamarca (<http://www.fondazione-cassamarca.it/> [fondazione@fondazione-cassamarca.it](mailto:fondazione@fondazione-cassamarca.it)), although its interests are primarily in high-brow issues such as the spread of the ideals of the Italian Renaissance throughout the world and in emigration from Veneto to Australia.

The political debate on the granting of the right to vote in Italian elections to Italian citizens residing abroad and the subsequent establishment of the Ministry of Italians in the World have recently contributed to a surge of interest in Italian emigration and related issues. As a result, Italy has witnessed the development of a number of locally-oriented "emigration studies centers." Most of them are primarily repositories for archival sources and memorabilia about migrants from small subnational and even subregional areas. Nonetheless, especially if these centers can manage to overcome financial constraints, they may exploit their potentials for scholarly enterprises to turn into full-fledged research institutes.

This is definitely the case of the Museo Regionale dell'Emigrazione in Gualdo Tadino, province of Perugia (<http://www.emigrazione.it/info@emigrazione.it>). Affiliated with the Istituto per la Storia dell' Umbria Contemporanea and boasting a scientific committee of prominent scholars that includes Emilio Franzina, Federico Romero, Ercole Sori and Silvano Tosi, it intends to stand as a permanent research center on emigration from Umbria. Other centers in this range comprise the Fondazione Paolo Cresci per la Storia dell'Emigrazione Italiana (<http://www.provincia.lucca.it/archiviocresci/archiviocresci@provincia.lucca.it>) for emigration from the province of Lucca; the

Archivio Storico dell'Emigrazione Marchigiana (<http://www.marchigianamdp.org.ar/archivio.htm/raimondo.orsetti@regione.marche.it>) for emigration from Marche; the Centro Studi sui Molisani nel Mondo (<http://www.provincia.campobasso.it/bibliotecaold/link/centrostudi.php/centroemigrazione@provincia.campobasso.it>) for emigration from Molise; and the Museo Eoliano dell'Emigrazione in Salina, which is operated by the Centro Internazionale di Ricerca per la Cultura Eoliana and directed by Professor Marcello Saija ([saija3@interfree.it](mailto:saija3@interfree.it)), for emigration from the Eolian islands. It is also worth mentioning the Centro Studi Permanente sull'Emigrazione of the Republic of San Marino (<http://www.museo-emigrante.sm/emigrante@omniway.sm>), although it is strictly-speaking located outside the Italian borders, for emigration from San Marino. Last but not least, the Centro Internazionale Studi Emigrazione Italiana ([s.brancaforte@wind.it.net/s.martini@porto.genova.it](mailto:s.brancaforte@wind.it.net/s.martini@porto.genova.it)) is scheduled to open in Genoa in October 2004 and will operate as both a museum and a research center documenting Italian emigration throughout the world.

The highly-bureaucratized Italian academia offers an even bleaker scenario for Italian-American studies. No doctoral programs or *corsi di laurea* in Italian-American studies or related disciplines are available at Italian universities. The official list of academic disciplines of the Ministry of Education, University and Research does not list anything with such denomination as "Italian-American history," "Italian-American literature," "Italian-American culture," or the like. Nonetheless, thanks to the personal initiative of a handful of professors, students at Italian universities have a few chances of taking classes dealing with these issues under the label of more conventional or traditional disciplines like "English literature" or "history of North America." To mention just a few examples from the university catalogues of the current academic year, Franco Mulas teaches a monographic course in the Italian-American novel within the framework of "English literature" at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the University of Sassari and Alessandro Trojani teaches a modulo (namely a subdivision of a broader course of instruction) about Italians in the Gold Rush within "history of North America" at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Florence. Moreover, Giuliana Muscio has recently taught a modulo about Italian Americans in pre-World War II movies within the master program in "Transatlantic studies" at the University

of Padua. Finally, this year, the University of Eastern Piedmont offers a “special seminar” about Italian emigration to the United States. Yet, since a visiting professor from the University of Paris 7, Bénédicte Deschamps, teaches this seminar, it unlikely that such a class will have an encore next year.

One may conclude that the scenario is hardly rosier for Italian-Canadian studies. For instance, the one modulo in Italian-Canadian literature available this academic year at the University of Venice “Ca’ Foscari” is taught by another foreign visiting scholar, Professor Antonio Franceschetti from the University of Toronto.

### **Guida’s Paesant and the Pen**

*The Peasant and the Pen Men, Enterprise, and the Recovery of Culture in Italian American Narrative*

by George Guida

Peter Lang USA

Italian American men have been among the most misrepresented and misunderstood ethnic groups of the past century. This book provides a deeper understanding of Italian American manhood through careful readings of Italian, Italian American, and other narrative texts. Beginning with an analysis of Giovanni Verga’s late-nineteenth-century Sicilian peasant tales, it follows the journey of Italian American men as depicted in Horatio Alger’s rags-to-riches stories, immigrant autobiographies, John Fante’s realistic novels of first-generation male angst, and Anthony Valerio’s narratives of the struggle for personal and cultural identity in contemporary America.

*George Guida is Assistant Professor of English at New York City College of Technology of the City University of New York in Brooklyn, New York, and Lecturer in Italian American and Immigration Studies at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.*

John Felix Clissa. *The Fountain and the Squeezebox: La Fontana e L’Organetto: Funda as Orginet*. West Perth: Piction Press, 2001. 290 pp. ISBN 0-646-40956-5

The survival of local dialects—sometimes contaminated by other languages as a result of the waves of foreign invasions and dominations that long plagued the Italian peninsula—has been a consequence of Italy’s belated political unification and a legacy that Italian emigrants have continued to experience even after they moved abroad. A case in point is the Albanian-speaking enclaves of immigrants from Spezzano Albanese, a Calabrian

village in the province of Cosenza, who settled in the United States especially in the Philadelphia area [Nick Myers, Belmont Hills and the Albanese Immigrant (Philadelphia, 1988); Mary Pecoraro Cawton, “Ethnic Identity and Language: The Case of the Italo-Albanians,” *Italian Ethnics: Their Languages, Literature, and Lives*, ed. Dominic Candeloro, Fred L. Gardaphe, and Paolo A. Giordano (Staten Island, 1990, 51-61)].

The book under review here is about another Italian linguistic minority. It focuses on the Italian Croats of Molise, the offspring of the refugees from Dalmatia who sought sanctuary mostly in Acquaviva Collecroce, Montemitro and San Felice to escape the Turkish spread into the Balkans during the first half of the sixteenth century. The descendants of these expatriates undertook a two-stage additional migration process four hundred years later. In the early twentieth century, roughly 1,300 people, more than one fourth of the total population of the three villages, left home for the United States. After further departures in the 1920s, a second emigration wave gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s and drained Acquaviva Collecroce, Montemitro and San Felice of more than half of their inhabitants. Most of these emigrants went to Western Australia and settled in Perth and surrounding areas, where the goldfields and the exploitation of other mineral resources offered plenty of job opportunities.

John Felix Clissa stresses the key role of chain migration in the Italian-Croatian relocation, providing detailed statistics about the exodus from Molise and the arrivals in Western Australia. He also documents the emigrants’ experience especially by resorting to the publication of extensive bilingual (Italian-Croatian and English) oral narratives about family life, housing, work, religious practices, and education. These interviews reveal in particular the female perspective because all Clissa’s informants but one are women.

While the great bulk of the volume is devoted to Western Australia, Adele Miletti Cusimano’s recollections highlight the American side of the Italian-Croatian emigration. Cusimano points to the newcomers’ itinerant lives in search of temporary jobs between Pennsylvania and New York State, their hardships during the Depression of the 1930s, the centrality of family and religious values in their existence, and the upward social mobility of the immigrants’ U.S.-born children, who—unlike their parents—managed to receive a college education regardless of their gender.

Linguistic concerns are key to Clissa's volume, which also includes a brief Molisan-Croatian/English vocabulary. Yet *The Fountain* and the *Squeezebox* will be of interest to scholars of Italian immigration to Australia and the United States, too, because it breaks the silence about a heretofore ignored minority within a minority.

Stefano Luconi



### *Editors' announcement*

This issue of the *Newsletter* was assembled through a collaborative effort led by our Executive Director, Dominic Candeloro. The deadline for the next issue of the *Newsletter* is August 20, 2004.

In order to assure receipt of all submissions to be considered for the *AIHA Newsletter*, for the immediate future, please send all correspondence, preferably via email, to Dominic Candeloro <D-Candeloro@govst.edu> with copies to Paul Giaimo <Paul.Giaimo@highland.edu>, and Anthony Julian Tamburri <tamburri@fau.edu>.

We thank you for your submissions thus far and look forward to receiving more material, especially news about our members. [AJT]

JUST PUBLISHED

## ***Italian Immigrants Go West The Impact of Locale on Ethnicity***

edited by

Janet Worrall

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Carol Bonomo-Albright

EDITOR OF *Italian Americana*

Elvira DiFabio

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

AIHA, Volume 34, 2003, 232 pages  
ISBN 093467552x. \$20 paper, \$22 hardcover  
15% discount on 5 or more copies.

Immigrants are often thought of as arriving in New York and settling there. This volume of essays focuses on a variety of topics including the internal migration to the Western areas of the United States and to other countries, such as Australia and South America and presents interesting information on the religious emigration of the Waldensians, the relationship between Italians and Mexicans in the Arizona copper industry; major league baseball players from the West Coast; opposing fascism in San Francisco in the late '30s; locale in Italian-Australian writing; role of religion in emigration and assimilation of Waldensians and Mormons. The volume also examines communities in Pueblo, CO; San Diego, Mendocino County, Calaveras County, and Oakland, CA; Westchester County, NY; and Galveston, TX.

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Proposals for papers should have a title and be no more than one typed page in length. Proposals for panels and other presentations should include a title, and be no more than two typed pages. A 150-word biography of each presenter must be included with address, telephone number and e-mail address. Special equipment, such as video, PowerPoint, etc., must be requested as part of the proposal. Electronic submission is encouraged.

**The proposal DEADLINE is  
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*Photo courtesy of the Garribalbi-Meucci Museum*

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*All presenters must be members of AIHA and pay the required registration fee by Oct. 1, 2004*

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By  
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*Grazie mille!*

The printing of this issue of the AIHA Newsletter is coming to us from the Anne Arundel Community College. For this generous offer, we are most grateful to the following:

- Dr. Andrew Meyer, Vice President for Learning, Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Maryland;
- Dr. Jean Turner-Schreier, Dean of Arts and Sciences, Anne Arundel Community College;
- Mr. William Reem, Director, General Services/Learning Resources, Anne Arundel Community College;
- Dr. Frank Alduino, Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Maryland.

Their largesse is further coupled by their hosting of the 2004 annual conference, which will be organized by Dr. Alduino.



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