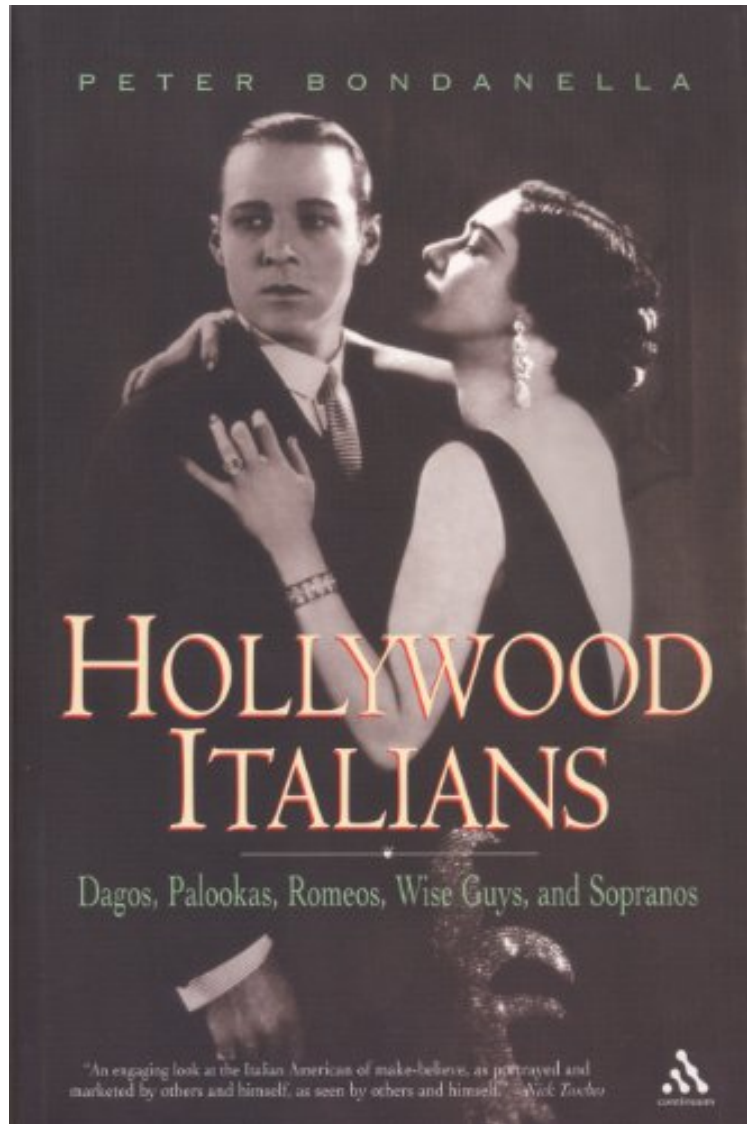


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Hollywood Italians: Dagos, Palookas, Romeos, Wise Guys, and Sopranos

Peter Bondanella

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Peter Bondanella : Hollywood Italians: Dagos, Palookas, Romeos, Wise Guys, and Sopranos before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hollywood Italians: Dagos, Palookas, Romeos, Wise Guys, and Sopranos:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy Avid ReaderInteresting take on the Italian experience.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Janet C. R. SullivanGREAT JOB2 of 4

people found the following review helpful. very good but I've read better
By Robert J. Chiarito Jr. Very good but another recent book by Fred Gardaphé -- "From Wiseguys to Wise Men" tackles a lot of this topic and does it better!

From the silent era and *The Black Hand* (1906) to HBO's hit series *The Sopranos*, Hollywood has had a love-hate affair with Italian Americans. Now in paperback, *Hollywood Italians* is a celebration of nearly a century of images of Italians in American motion pictures and their often under-appreciated, underpraised, and truly remarkable contribution to popular culture. *Hollywood Italians* covers the careers of dozens of stars among them Rudolph Valentino, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, John Travolta, Sylvester Stallone, Marisa Tomei, and James Galdolini. In addition, the book reviews the work of such Italian American directors as Francis Ford Coppola and Martin Scorsese in a fresh light. In all, *Hollywood Italians* discusses scores of films with a concentration on their literary and European-cinematic roots. The book is capped by a no-holds-barred examination of *The Godfather* and its two sequels as well as the international television phenomenon *The Sopranos*.

From Publishers Weekly
Stereotypes have their uses. Just ask Bondanella, a professor of comparative literature and Italian at Indiana University, who has organized his study of Italian-Americans in film by examining conventional roles. Italians may be prominent as immigrants, boxers, lovers and gangsters, but Bondanella employs the categories to showcase the values associated with Italian culture, such as hard work and loyalty to family. He claims negative portrayals haven't prevented Italian-Americans from receiving full acceptance in American society, and he emphasizes their rejection of victim status to gain upward mobility. His critique covers a wide range, beginning with the classic 1915 tale *The Italian*, which addresses immigration, to *Rocky* and *Saturday Night Fever*, and ends with *The Sopranos*, which he treats as film. In a few generations, Bondanella notes, Italians have gone from outsider to ordinary citizen. In fact, *The Sopranos* is his strongest argument for a multidimensional Italian-American portrayal, since its characters enjoy range: mob king to doctor, teacher to FBI agent. Not surprisingly, half the book examines the association of the Italian-American with the gangster milieu. Bondanella is intrigued by films that pair a criminal with an ethnic law-enforcement officer, the "bad-wop-and-good-wop theme," from 1909's *The Detectives of the Italian Bureau* through 1997's *Donnie Brasco*. Predictably, much of Bondanella's attention focuses on the *Godfather* trilogy and the variations in Martin Scorsese's films that deromanticized the Mafia. Throughout, Bondanella offers engaging plot lines, astute observations and compelling behind-the-scenes tidbits, which make for entertaining reading as both cultural and film history. Photos.
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An engaging look at the Italian American of make-believe, as portrayed and marketed by others and by himself, as seen by others and himself. Nick Tosches
Ironically, the author of this perceptive book about the portrayal of Italians in Hollywood films saves his most astute analysis for a TV series.
Hollywood didn't invent the stereotypes of Italian Americans according to Bondanella. Those images were the creation of Elizabethan writers who, like Shakespeare, portrayed Renaissance Italians as romantic, intensely passionate, and as scheming as Machiavelli's Prince. And Bondanella acknowledges the positive elements of these stereotypes, such as devotion to family, pride in craftsmanship and a finely tuned sense of honor. Even the gangsters, he admits, deserve some praise. St. Petersburg Times (St. Petersburg Times)
An important, insightful, and highly readable study of Hollywood's representation of Italian Americans. Bondanella provides valuable and absorbing discussions of racial tensions. Recommended. Choice
s.online (CHOICE)
With Peter Bondanella's *Hollywood Italians* we finally have a thorough survey of the ways and means Italians have made and been made by Hollywood. Bondanella has done the field and the culture a great service by taking on such a grand study. Bravo! Fra Noi (Fra Noi)
Bondanella documents the evolution of Italian American stereotyping in this interesting, well-researched book. Italian America (Italian America)
Expertly blends history, analysis, and commentary in an informative reference that is also an entertaining read. Library Journal (Library Journal)
A sweeping, scholarly, virtually film-by-film analysis of its subject. Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia Inquirer)
About the Author
George, Utah.