



"Cannoli vs. Couture." Italian American Activists Incensed by New York Post's Article and Photo

The Editors (February 20, 2011)



In reporting about the controversy over the San Gennaro Feast in Little Italy, the New York Post portrays Italians in an offensive way "inflaming an unnecessary cultural battle", Italian American activist says.



February 20. New York Post's Susan Edelman writes about "[Nolita boutiques fighting 'greasy' Feast of San Gennaro](#) [2]." The picture above illustrates the article, and here is its incipit:

It's a clash of cannoli vs. couture.

Supporters of Little Italy's famed Feast of San Gennaro -- set to celebrate its 85th year in September -- are fighting a newly passed Community Board 2 resolution urging the city to consider shrinking the boisterous, sausage-filled festival by three blocks -- including one that includes beloved St. Patrick's basilica.

The recommended cutback -- blasphemous to Italian-Americans who revere the celebration -- stems from gripes by owners of snooty Nolita boutiques about the noise, crowds, cooking smoke -- and even customers attracted to the 11-day event.

As soon as the article hit the web, a well-known local Italian American activist -- whose name we are not authorized to disclose -- sent the journalist the following letter:

Susan:

Your choice of pictures and slant in writing your article shows you are striving towards the new wave of journalist who spin stories in accordance to their own personal beliefs or for rating reasons. The name "journalist" should be changed to a more lower standard.

Your choice of using words (and the comparison photos) in the portrayal of Italians is offensive and meant to make us look like cartoon characters. I will be reading your future articles only for purposes of seeing how you may slant other stories of other groups. There were so many different positive things you could have stated but you felt very comfortable in your use of using all the "greasy & fried" words for the portrayal of Italian Americans.

Your article is short of inflaming an unnecessary cultural battle against New York groups of people who are trying to find common ground. I am widely circulating a copy of my email to you for further discussion of which I believe you and your article caused.

If this is now what the NY Post has stooped to I believe it should be noted and made aware to all New Yorkers and beyond.

[Signed letter]

The contrast between the two images is too great to ignore, regardless of what side of the issue you might defend. Indeed, a picture is worth much more than the proverbial 1,000 words. Similarly, we can see that some words can in fact "hurt." Here at i-Italy.org we shall revisit both this specific issue as well as the more general issue of how Italians and Italian Americans are viewed in contemporary media, what opportunities they may or may not have, why the very few television programs that exist remain limited in development and growth, and why an Italian-language television program is



so difficult to launch.

In the meantime, we ask you to send us your comments below. We ask only that you identify yourself and be courteous in your indignation if that is what you are feeling. No name calling, please!



Source URL: <http://108.61.128.93/magazine/focus/facts-stories/article/cannoli-vs-couture-italian-american-activists-incensed-new-york>

Links

[1] <http://108.61.128.93/files/robertokim1298221900jpg>

[2] http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/manhattan/boot_for_italy_fest_HDMmIFfHD8yN1ZZ3zMFWUj?sms_ss=email&at_xt=4d611c77ab208fee%2C0