

DEAN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
STUDENT VENTURE GRANT APPLICATION

Please read all instructions and regulations on the reverse side of this sheet prior to the completion of this form. The original plus 6 copies of your proposal are due in the Dean's Office on the 2nd Friday of the Block by 1:00 p.m.

DATE SUBMITTED Friday, September 17, 2004
NAME [REDACTED] CLASS 4 WORNER BOX [REDACTED] EXT. [REDACTED]
ID # [REDACTED] HOMETOWN (Not Address) Boulder, Colorado
NAME _____ CLASS _____ WORNER BOX _____ EXT. _____
ID # _____ HOMETOWN (Not Address) _____
NAME OF ORGANIZATION Romance Language Department
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF INTENDED USE OF FUNDS
See attached.

PROPOSED DATE/BLOCK OF USE December 26-January 7, 2005
NAME OF FACULTY SPONSOR Dana Renga

HAVE YOU BEEN THE RECIPIENT OF A PREVIOUS VENTURE GRANT Yes No
IF SO, WHAT AMOUNT? _____ WHEN? _____ REPORT SUBMITTED? _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF VENTURE FUNDS NOW REQUESTED \$ 1507.52
ARE YOU SEEKING OTHER FUNDING FOR THIS PROPOSAL? Yes No
IF YES, WHAT IS THE SOURCE? The Romance Language Department

If this proposal is approved, I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the Dean's Office immediately if I do not pursue my project as proposed to the Dean's Advisory Committee. I further understand that all funds are to be used according to the proposal as submitted and approved by the Dean's Advisory Committee. Any changes to an approved project must be submitted to the Chair of the Committee for approval. Please note: the IRS requires that we report Venture Funds as taxable income.

SIGNATURE [REDACTED] DATE September 17, 2004
***** DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE *****

DATE _____ ACTION TAKEN _____ DATE _____

LOCKS TO BE USED _____ REPORT SUBMITTED _____
COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Dean's Advisory Committee
Student Venture Grant Application

Italy's Nonfictions:
Italy and America's Contrasting Conceptions of Italian Culture

Name: [REDACTED]
Name of Organization: Romance Languages Department

Brief description of intended use of funds

I plan to conduct a series of interviews in Orvieto, Italy to explore native perspectives on three specific aspects of Italian culture: the mafia, fascism, and gender relations. I am an Italian Studies major and will write my thesis on Italian culture as described by Italians versus that imagined by Americans. In my interviews I will examine the way in which Italians imagine their own culture. In addition to conducting private interviews, I will hold two public film screenings with open discussions and give a public lecture of my thesis to the community of Orvieto.

Proposed date: December 26 – January 7, 2005

Name of Faculty Sponsor: Dana Renga

Total Amount of Venture Funds requested: \$1507.52

Source of other funding for this proposal: I am also submitting a request for funding to the Romance Languages Department.

Description of proposed use of funds

While many idealized aspects of Italian culture are straightforward and easily identified (its food, wine, fashion, and cars), I will examine stereotypes of some of the more controversial issues in Italian society and history, specifically: the mafia, fascism, and gender relations. These issues continue to be sources of political and social conflict in Italy, and due to their contemporary nature, interviews are essential to understanding the most recent views on these matters. Ironically, *The Godfather* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1972) inspires sympathy for the Mafiosi while the Italian government continues its struggle against the violent organization. Many Americans overlook Italy's history of Fascism when in fact the government is currently being infiltrated by what Gianfranco Fini has dubbed "Post-Fascists." The situation of Italian women is often ignored, as well, and although the treatment of women in Italy has improved, the nation is still governed by misogynistic ideals. Only five and a half years ago the Supreme Court of Appeal in Rome overturned a rape accusation, concluding that since the victim was wearing jeans the rape could not have occurred: "It is common knowledge ... that jeans cannot even be partly removed without the effective help of the person wearing them ... and it is impossible if the victim is struggling with all her might"

(<http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9902/11/jeans.rape.02/>).

In light of the many attractive aspects of Italy (food, wine, Renaissance art, etc.) it is not surprising that the more obscure issues of Italian culture are often ignored or misunderstood by Americans. The romantic appeal of the country is mirrored in recent trends in enrollment in Italian courses: from 1998 to 2002 enrollment in Italian language classes in United States Institutions of Higher Education increased by 29.6 percent (Welles). Inspired by this study, I distributed a questionnaire to students in a summer block course called "Sex and Politics in Contemporary Italian Culture," as well as to each first and second year Italian class at CU Boulder. For the first question, "What are three things that come to mind at the mention of Italy?" 66 per cent of the 128 students named food in their response. The second two most common responses were art and the beauty of the landscape. Although this poll was very informal, it nonetheless demonstrates a romantic image of Italy held by university students, even after visiting Italy. I myself did not question the romantic view of Italy culture until many months into my studies of the country.

Italy, having just become unified in 1870, is a new nation. Perhaps outsiders emphasize simplistic elements as food and wine because Italian culture itself is so complex. Although the country was officially unified politically and linguistically, its citizens are still divided. Not only does this division exist between the northern and southern Italy in their notorious rivalry, but even from town to town. For example, it is more common that an Italian will refer to him or herself as Barese (from Bari) or Napolitano (from Naples) than as simply Italian.

Through my interviews and public discussions I will address the following issues:

1. Italian perspective on the Mafia (in comparison to the American myth of the Mafia)
2. Italian political views and response to Neo or Post-Fascism
3. Women in Italy: how they view their position in society versus how Italian males view their roles – as female employment rates increase (from 40.1 in 1994 to 55.4 in 2002) the birth rate of Italy continues to decline (currently .09 per cent) (http://www.eustat.es/elem/ele0002500/tbl0002546_i.html).

Personal Background Information

My name is [REDACTED], although my great-grandfather originally came to the United States with the name Panebianco ("white bread"). As an Italian-American I have always been fascinated by Italy, but it wasn't until I took Beginning Italian with Dana Renga my freshman year of college that I committed myself to learning all that I could about the country. My semester in Orvieto and gradual immersion into the culture only made me more curious, for I left the country with more questions than answers about Italian culture.

Location

My choice of Orvieto, Italy is a practical one in that:

1. I will benefit from Colorado College's connection with Orvieto – the location of our semester program – in particular with the Centro Studi and its rectory, where I plan to stay, and the school Lingua Si. With the help of the college and the contacts that I made on my own in the city it has been easy to contact people who are eager to be interviewed:
 - a. From I Centro Studi: Stefano Talamoni (director)
 - b. From Lingua Si: Piero Salituri, Claudia Wiegleb, Lucianna Coppola
 - c. High school and university students: Alice Sciuchino, Daniele Petrollini, Federico Spallaccia, Claudia Pantarelli
 - d. Other citizens of Orvieto: Teresa Equitani (librarian), Marino Moretti (ceramicist)
 - e. With the help of Lingua Si I will easily contact other interviewees upon my arrival.
2. I plan to hold two public screening of Italian films and will follow them up with discussion, using Lingua Si' facilities. Cinema is a powerful medium that easily perpetuates discussion, and I plan to incorporate questions about particular Italian films in my interviews, and to discuss contrasts between Italians as portrayed in Italian cinema and those portrayed in American cinema. My thesis is based on literature as well as film, but I choose to use film as a vehicle for discussion.
3. Orvieto is one of the easiest and most affordable places to travel to upon arrival in the Rome Fiumicino airport (only a one hour train ride), and ideal for day trips to cities such as Perugia and Siena, where I will be conducting interviews, as well.
4. It will benefit me to study Orvieto because, although the city has experienced the infiltration of American culture, its citizens maintain traditional values (we observed this most superficially in the afternoon closure of all businesses). At Lingua Si I will contact people of all ages in order to get as much diversity as possible in my studies.

Forum through which results will be presented to the college community

I will give two presentations, one in Italy, and the other upon my return to Colorado College. In these presentations I will explain my interests and studies and the results of my research: I will present excerpts of interviews to the Colorado College community, biographical profiles of the interviewees, as well as a slide show of the pictures that I will take of the people and town of Orvieto. With the information that I bring back with me, I will be able to give a description of the culture that goes beyond the typical stereotypes of the country, providing Colorado College students with a wider perception of Italian culture. Sharing my results with Americans is important, since the principle objective of my research is to offer a vision of Italy that surpasses the usual stereotypes.

My Goals

My study in Orvieto will ultimately help me to solidify the ideas for my thesis. It will allow me to integrate contemporary Italian views, as well as my own cultural observations, into my studies. By the time I depart for Italy, in late December, I will have

already taken my research methods class with Dana Renga, and will therefore have a good portion of my thesis work finished, and will only need to incorporate results of my interviews and discussions. When I return from Italy, I will have all of seventh block to integrate my findings from the trip into my thesis.

Schedule

Sunday, December 26

Travel from Denver to Orvieto

Monday, December 27

Arrive in Orvieto

Tuesday, December 28

Interviews: Piero Salituri (Lingua Si)

Claudia Wiegleb (Lingua Si)

Wednesday, December 29

Interviews: Alice Sciuchino (female student)

Teresa Equitani (female adult)

Thursday, December 30

Public Film Screening at Lingua Si – *I cento passi (One Hundred Steps)*

Presentation

Public discussion

Friday, December 31

Interviews: Federico Spallaccia (male student)

Stefano Talamoni (Centro Studi)

Saturday, January 1

Travel to Siena

Interview: Claudia Pantarelli (female student)

Sunday, January 2

Interview: Daniele Petrollini (male student)

Monday, January 3

Public Film Screening – *The Godfather*

Public discussion

Tuesday, January 4

Interview: Lucianna Coppola (Lingua Si)

Wednesday, January 5

Travel to Perugia

Interview Giorgia Lanza (female student)

Thursday, January 6

Travel to Rome

Friday, January 7

Return to Colorado

Between scheduled interviews and screenings I will contact people through Lingua Si and Centro Studi for interviews in order to acquire a larger pool of perspective.

Budget

Exchange Rate as of 9/14/04: \$1.227 = 1 euro (<http://x-rates.com/>)

Airfare

from DIA to Rome Fiumicino from December 26 to January 7

Total: **\$600-650** Airfare

Lodging

Villa Mercede, rectory of Orvieto

29 euros per night = \$35.58 per night

Total: **\$355.8** Lodging

Food

Because I will not have a kitchen, I will be eating most of my meals in restaurants and cafes. I estimate three euros for breakfast, 10 euros for lunch, and 17 euros for dinner.

30 euros a day, 360 euros for 12 days

Total: **\$441.72** Food

Photos and slides, plus developing

I will include a slide show in my presentation to the CC community.

Total: **\$50** Photos

Tapes

To record interviews

Total: **\$10** Tapes

Total: \$ 1507.52

I am aware that the maximum fund received from a Venture Grant is 850 dollars and plan to request additional funding from the Romance Languages Department.

Sample Interview Questions and Responses

1. *Spesso, quando molti americani descrivono le immagini tipiche evocate da "Italia" parlano delle montagne, del mare, del cibo, e della gente amichevole. Cosa pensate di questa visione romantica dell'Italia? E' piu' una realta' o uno stereotipo? Quali sono gli stereotipi che gli americani hanno d'Italia?*

Often when Americans describe typical ideas of Italy they talk about the mountains, the sea, the food, and the friendly people of the country. What do you think of this romantic vision of Italy? It is a reality or a stereotype? What are stereotypes that Americans have of Italy?

2. *Quali sono i suoi film preferiti? Preferisce il cinema italiano o quello americano? Crede che uno sia piu' artistico? Cosa significa la parola "Hollywood" per Lei?*

What are your favorite films? Do you prefer Italian or American cinema? Do you believe that one is more artistic than the other? What does the word "Hollywood" mean to you?

Interview questions regarding the movie *I cento passi* (*One Hundred Steps*)

I cento passi is a movie based on the true story of Peppino Impastato, who grew up in Cinisi, a small Italian town that was completely dominated by the local Mafia. Peppino rebelled against the Mafia by holding rallies, protesting, and creating his own radio station, and was tragically killed by the mob in his twenties. The movie includes many ideas of Italian culture that interest me, such as the role of the "Mamma," the family life, and the system of the Mafia.

3. *Quanto e' realistico il film I cento passi? In quale senso?*

How realistic is the film and why?

4. *Nel film c'e' un legame forte fra Peppino Impastato e Pasolini. Loro due rappresentano il mito del ribelle che e' spesso presente nella storia italiana. Potete pensare ad altre figure (storiche, mitiche, filmiche ecc) simili? Conosce personalmente una persona del genere?*

In the film there is a strong tie between Peppino Impastato and Pasolini. They both are representations of the myth of rebellion that is often present in Italian history. Can you think of other figures (historical, mythical, cinematic) who are similar? Do you know anyone personally with the same ideas of rebellion?

5. *Qual'e' la vostra opinione sulla mafia contemporanea? Pensate sia un problema solo del sud d'Italia?*

What is your opinion of the contemporary mafia? Do you think that it is a problem only in northern Italy?

Translation of responses to sample interview questions via email

Reponses from Daniele Petrollini (email attached)
July 26, 2004

Dear [REDACTED]

As I said, I will definitely be in Orvieto during the time that you will be there. Christmas is sacred here, so I will definitely be [at home] in Orvieto. I am very happy and honored to be interviewed and to respond to your questions.

1.) Often when Americans describe typical ideas of Italy they talk about the mountains, the sea, the food, and the friendly people of the country. What do you think of this romantic vision of Italy? It is a reality or a stereotype? What are some stereotypes of Americans?

The romantic vision of Italy is a characteristic that renders it marvelous; it is not a stereotype, because anyone who truly understands our country knows that our riches are not economic but instead they are the warmth of the people, the beauty of our land, the quality of life. Our true richness is the capacity to show our emotions, the capacity to ... and to help one another; the most beautiful thing that we have is that most of us content ourselves with the few and small things that surround us, but that coincide with the needs of every human, such as nature, good food, friendship, etc.

The stereotypes of Americans that we have, but that generally all other European countries have, is one of the conquerors, also warmongers, for the arrogance with which your government imposes itself in the confrontations of the rest of the world, and obviously because of the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and in Iraq. This is a very negative stereotype, but unfortunately true that it is imposed in this period.

Other stereotypes are tied to a more positive aspect of your country, your voracity and ease that you have in exciting intelligence, the genius that some people have, the grandeur of your cities, the seriousness in work, the respect of rules, your great communicative abilities, your ignorance, and your ability to do business, the big steaks that you see in films from a couple of years ago, the cowboys, Fozie and Happy Days, and macho men! Maybe one that is not very nice, Italians think that American women are very "easy," you know? Hollywood, Woodstock, "The American Life, the American Dream," exactly what Madonna talks about, is one of the stereotypes.

2.) What is your opinion of the contemporary mafia? Do you think that it is a problem only in northern Italy?

The Mafia in Italy was at its height 30 year ago. Actually we have witnessed a strong decline in its power, particularly that of assassination.

But this country, because of what I was saying earlier, is a Mafia country and always will be. The roots of the Mafia, aside from its assassin side, is part of all of us. The governments here, and also in the rest of the world, tend to occupy themselves with their own affairs and to neglect the needs of the population.

In southern Italy it is and has been much stronger with respect to the north, therefore the Mafia organizations, often, have taken the place of the state with their rules. The Mafia originally came about to have business without rules, to evade the rules, and to help one another.

As in the rest of the world, but for the most part here, if you have a friend who has an important position, beyond your capacity, you are at an advantage

This is how it works in Milan and Palermo.

This, in my opinion, is the Mafia, as I repeat, not including the assassin side. We help each other, and if this evades or violates a rule, then it is the Mafia. I don't believe that it is something that can be stopped, at any rate. Actually, the government that we have now is tied in a double knot with the Mafia, a few of the ministers and even Berlusconi are "friends" of the most powerful Mafiosi, and they look after their interests.

Responses from Teresa Equitani, September 1, 2004 (email attached)

1.) Yes, the Italian countryside and landscape is very beautiful and awe-inspiring, the sea is splendid, the food is good, the people are friendly...but...there are other aspects to consider, for example, more than friendly perhaps you could say that we communicate warmly and effectively, and this I believe is true, but not with everyone. There is a lot of racism, especially towards the immigrants who come here in large numbers to find work and fortune from poor neighboring countries: Albania, Macedonia, North Africa, etc. Of course we are friendly to Americans – you are a rich and allied people! However, I am modestly different!

2.) The film *I cento passi* is a story of a real event, so more than being realistic it is "true." Anyway it also portrayed the political situation in Sicily of those years very well, the way the mafia works and the idea of honesty, the rebellion and frankness of some of the youth of the left at the time. Also the arrival of the hippy community powerfully recounts the circulation of various schools of thought that were beginning to spread. The protagonist's rigorous political commitment and the refusal of every compromise are characteristic of some young militants of the extreme left in the 70's.

3.) Other rebellious figures in Italian history: the Red Brigades come to mind. But also, going back in history, one thinks of the partisans, Giordano Bruno, and San Francesco. In the theatrical world I think of Dario Fo, actor and contemporary comedian, still alive, whose work I advise you to read.

4.) Naturally I don't think that the mafia is a problem of only Southern Italy. It reaches its tentacles of power from places where it is already powerful, from there to all places of national territory. Certainly in everyday life we don't see it, while in Sicily or other regions of the south they notice it all around them. For them life is very difficult because of this problem. But we must be aware that the "mafia" style drenches our culture. The mafia is not only a problem in Italy. Also in the States, where I think we brought it, the mafia is terribly powerful and dangerous, also in other countries such as China, Thailand, etc.

Bibliography of sources for preparation and support

Italian Culture

I have researched these books on Italian culture and will continue using them:

Baránski, Zygmunt G., and Rebecca J. West, eds. The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Through analysis of Italian art, politics, and history, this book gives a concise description of Italian culture.

Forgacs, David, and Robert Lumley, eds. Italian Cultural Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

This collection of articles contains important studies on stereotypes of Italy, such as John Dickie's "Imagined Italies," Gabriella Gribaudi's "Images of the South," and Vanessa Maher's "Immigration and Social Identities."

Jones, Tobias. The Dark Heart of Italy: An incisive portrait of Europe's most beautiful, most disconcerting country. New York: North Point Press, 2003.

Jones, who moved to Parma in 1999, writes of the parts of Italian culture often ignored by tourists, much along the lines of the study that I interest me.

Leone, Giovanni. Italia e italiani dal 1945 a oggi. Palermo: Dario Flaccovio Editore, 1997.

A chronological study of important events and people who have shaped the country.

White, Jonathan. Italy: The Enduring Culture. New York: Leicester University Press, 2000.

White offers a perspective on Italian culture with relation to Italian arts.

Italy Romanticized

I will use a series of books and films that paint a romantic portrait of Italian culture including:

Captain Corelli's Mandolin. Dir. John Madden. Perf. Penelope Cruz, Nicholas Cage, and John Hurt. Universal Pictures, 2001.

Forster, E.M. A Room with a View. New York: Vintage Books, 1986.

Italian – American Perspective

I will use a series of television programs, videos, and books to evaluate Italian-American culture and perspective:

Casino. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Perf. Robert De Niro and Sharon Stone. Universal Studios, 1998.

GoodFellas. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Perf. Robert De Niro, Ray Liotto, Joe Pesci, and Lorraine Brocco. Warner Brothers, 1997.

Puzo, Mario. The Godfather. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1969.

The Godfather. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola. Perf. Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, Robert Duvall, Diane Keaton, and James Caan. Paramount Pictures, 2001.

The Sopranos. HBO Original Programming. HBO Home Video. 2000.

Sociological Studies on Stereotyping

Dickie, John. Darkest Italy: the nation and stereotypes of the Mezzogiorno, 1860-1900. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Moe, Nelson. The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Reich, Jacqueline. Beyond the Latin Lover: Marcello Mastroianni, Masculinity, and Italian Cinema. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

Statistical Studies

Welles, Elizabeth B. "Foreign Language Enrollments in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2002." ADFL Bulletin 35.2 (2004): 1-20.

Theorists

I will use literary, cinematic, and political theorists to define my notion of "realism" (concerning "real" Italian culture) as well as artistic notions of Neorealism in film, and to study Italian theory concerning women:

Bazin, André. What is Cinema?. Berkely and Los Angeles: Univeristy of California Press, 1967.

Bono, Paola, and Sandra Kemp, eds. Italian Feminist Thought: A Reader. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1991.

Duggan, Christopher. Fascism and the Mafia. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

Federici, Nicole, and Nicole Cox. Counter – Planning from the Kitchen; Wages for Housework: A perspective on capital and the left. New York: Falling Wall Press, 1976.

Lukács, Georg. Realism in our Time: Literature and Class Struggle. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964.

Marcus, Millicent. Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Parati, Graziella, and Rebecca West. Italian Feminist Theory and Practice: Equality and Sexual Difference. London: Associated University Presses, 2002.