Toma to *Baretta*: Mediating Prime-Time White Ethnicity in the Post–Civil Rights Era

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Introduction

Toma (1973–1974, ABC) was an iconoclastic one-hour dramatic series depicting the life and work of a big-city detective, David Toma. The series, starring Tony Musante, was based on *Toma: The Compassionate Cop*, the popular 1973 memoir of the real David Toma (born 1933), a legendary Italian American detective working in Newark, New Jersey, who broke dozens of high-profile cases, often using disguises and impersonations and without firing his gun (Toma 1973; "A Cop for all Seasons 1971, 40; Reddy 1973, 229). After a single season, the show's concept was completely transformed, emerging as *Baretta*, starring Robert Blake, which ran from 1975 to 1978, also on ABC. The transformation of *Toma* into *Baretta* indexed a radical shift in the understanding of the politics of white ethnicity in the post–civil rights era, from mediation and conciliation to confrontation and conflict.[1] This revision of the show's concept moved it from a liberal, social-problem-centered and cross-cultural conversation to a monologue organized around dominance of a contested cultural space, a monologue marked by strains of vigilantism. With this alteration, the show tracked white ethnic anxieties about the destabilization and devaluing of working-class urban life and offered a historical allegory of the reconquest of that space (Xavier 1999).

The real David Toma specialized in narcotics cases and frequently worked undercover. Using the undercover framework but jettisoning an exclusive focus on drug cases, *Toma* capitalized on television's post–civil rights era enthusiasm for ethnic protagonists grappling with social mobility and personal and ethical viability within the controlling institutions that were shaping civil society, such as the law, education, and politics. During these years, the police drama became a key site not only for liberal discourse about urbanism, race, and the underclass but also in physicalizing the contest over these issues in the urban space (Mitell 2004, 121–152). Analysis of *Toma*, a virtually forgotten series, makes a strong case that it can be understood as a fulcrum in the evolving media discourse on white ethnicity. *Toma* began as a social problem–domestic drama hyphenate, its title character a point of intersection between interest groups, a figure associated with both disinterested social analysis and compassionate reconciliation. In its

transformation to *Baretta*, the *Toma* concept was fully redrawn as an action show, with a charismatic loner male hero working outside existing liberal political systems to affect victim restitution and vengeance upon the guilty. In an era of white ethnic discontent, *Baretta*'s four-year run in an era of three-network hegemony and wide broadcast TV viewership encourages us to assume that these qualities of the *Baretta* formula harmonized with the feelings of many ethnic whites in the show's audience.

Italian American Cultural Defense in the Post–Civil Rights Era

Toma articulated a post-"contributions" understanding of Italian American identity as part of a broad shift from the perpetual foreignness of immigrant status to the pluralist stakeholding of ethnicity. The contributions school of public discourse on European-American ethnicity was founded on a melting pot ideology in which all immigrant populations were alleged to offer equal contributions to American identity.[2] In practice, however, "successful" non-English European immigrant ethnicities were presented as adhering to an Anglicized notion of civic nationalism, subsuming Italianness (or Irishness, or Polishness, or any distinctive national culture) within the larger sphere of "American" customs. Characteristic of the period 1920 to 1945, and encompassing the cultural schisms between Ellis Island–era immigrants and their U.S.-born children, this ideology was the opportunity for the culture as a whole to make explicit the doctrine of American exceptionalism. Enumerating doctrines of personal liberty, formalized public systems of justice, and participatory democracy as its philosophical cornerstones, free public education as its communications network, and access to capital formation through individual initiative as its proof of progress, the "contributions" school of ethnic understanding was contractual: For their effacement of immigrant cultures, ethnic groups received entry into the middle strata of American institutions. In this paradigm, "American institutions" signified a system of governance, both political and economic, that bore little trace of any particular ethnicity.

When painter Angelo Piccirilli was asked to appear on a radio show in 1941 titled *I Am an American*, he said, "I have been an American for so long—50 years—that I often forget I was born in Italy. When anyone refers to me as a foreigner, I pretend that I haven't heard and I usually don't answer. . . . All of my thoughts [are] those of an American." On the same show, Judge Ferdinand Pecora ingeniously decried as "alien-minded" systems of social organization that quashed initiative by reliance on informal, status-based mediation rather than formal systems of justice. Also on *I Am an American*, Harvard history professor Gaetano Salvemini

lauded free public education as an agent of generational advancement, which seemed to be code for assimilation to the existing cultural mainstream rather than the maintenance of cultural traditions. In his statement for the show, aircraft designer Giuseppe Bellanca celebrated entrepreneurial capitalism with its individualized risks and socialized rewards ("a gambler's chance of success") as a distinctively American form of economic organization, unknown and perhaps unknowable in his native Italy (Benjamin 1941, 36–42, 144–149, 157–163). In articulating these nodes of American exceptionalism for immigrants, Pecora, Salvemini, and Bellanca had also named sites of conflict that would come to divide first-generation Italian Americans from their children during the postwar era, as the second generation came to define itself most meaningfully in terms of American whiteness, rather than Italian origin (Campisi 1948). In the post–civil rights era, this identification would become increasingly self-conscious. In Jennifer DeVere Brody's epigram:

> The hyphen *performs*—it is never neutral or natural. Indeed, by performing the mid-point between often conflicting categories, hyphens occupy "impossible" positions. . . . Hyphens are problematic because they cannot stand alone; in fact, they do not "stand" at all: rather, they mark a de-centered if central position that perpetually presents readers with a neither/nor proposition. Hyphens locate intermediate, often invisible, and always shifting spaces between supposedly oppositional binary structures. (Brody 1995, 149)

Increasingly in the civil rights era, the hyphen's performative character began to move from one of celebration to one of assertion (Tamburri 1989, 37–42). This assertion occurred amid growing awareness of the importance of the media in perpetuating ethnocentrism. Of course, *I Am an American* was itself part of an emerging media construction of ethnicity, but its contributors did not reflect on this metarepresentational function (Lees 2007, 20–21; Cavallero 2011, 32; Savage 1999).[3] By "pretending not to hear" himself "refer[red] to as a foreigner," by claiming to be functionally ignorant of his outsider status, Piccirilli was trying to imagine away the rationale for *I Am an American*, which was as a performance of an enlightened nativist enthusiasm for an "American" listenership many of whom were skeptical of that claim. That skepticism was confirmed by the normativity of Italian American stereotypes available at that very moment throughout popular culture (Cavallero 2004). On *I Am an American* Judge Pecora described his progress through the legal profession as marked by routine invocations of these stereotypes, insults that he felt constrained to ignore, instead letting his work speak for itself (Perino 2010, 24–44).

After World War II, rights-based identity group rhetoric created a setting in which someone like Pecora was less likely to feel the need to remain silent in the face of ethnic slurs but more likely to see in film and TV images a new kind of insult, paid not only directly to him, but about him, made indirectly to unseen countless others.

Toma occurred at the junction of post–civil rights white ethnic consciousness *as* whiteness with anxieties about the power of media stereotyping. Against the background of a growing affirmation of European hyphenate identities during the early 1970s, the founding of the Italian American Civil Rights League in 1970 implied that a more discursive notion of white ethnicity was emerging. Even the name of the organization could be interpreted as a purposeful poaching on the notion of civil rights as an African American claim. (The group had first designated itself the Italian American Antidefamation League.) The league claimed chapters in seventeen states and more than 50,000 members by the summer of 1971 ("Italian American Civil Rights League" 2016). The league was most active during the period when *The Godfather* (Francis Coppola, 1972) was in production, and its most notable efforts involved controlling references to the Mafia in that film, although the league did have a program of recommendations it made to producers of other representations of Italian Americans and claimed to have organized boycotts of sponsors and advertisers associated with demeaning Italian American media stereotypes (Gage 1972, E6; Parker 1971, 13). The publicity surrounding the league's intervention in *The Godfather*'s production and the widely known connection between the league and the Colombo crime family could well have heightened the sense of conflict over injury by stereotype (Ferraro 2005, 119–120; Ferretti 1971, 64).[4] In this context, a new set of stereotypes organized around distinctions between licit and illicit definitions of American success appeared, replacing a previous generation's stereotypes of infantilized, culturally unassimilated greenhorns. In tandem, a new understanding of the influence of the mass media encouraged Italian American groups to adopt responses to these media stereotypes based on practices in media activism developed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People with *The Birth of a Nation*'s (D. W. Griffith) release in 1915 and refined in the years since (Everett 2001, 59–106). The televised Kefauver Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce hearings of 1950–1951 were definitive in establishing public-affairs programming as entertainment, and the Italian American ethnicity of the crime figures they spotlighted were linked to this entertainment/journalism nexus (Doherty 2003, 110–115). The Kefauver hearings generated a gallery of vivid portrayals of crime bosses and labor leaders in

film noirs and crime films between 1950 and 1958 and in *The Untouchables* (1959–1963, ABC)—and just as important, by the time of *The Untouchables*, a significant public discourse of ethnic outrage and media pressure tactics had begun (Kenna 2007). This new framework was conscious of the ways in which media representation controls social perceptions and thereby sought to intervene in that process to redress media stereotypes that had heretofore been tolerated. It is no accident that the first academic works on immigrant ethnicity in film and television began to emerge at this time. This first wave of indignant criticism, whether or not it has been overtaken by more sophisticated theoretical models, was a significant moment in the history of the ethnic awareness it documents and an important initiating act of the public scholarship of ethnicity (Miller 1980; Friedman 1991).

Increasingly in urban settings by the mid-1970s, working-class white ethnics, particularly Italian Americans, Irish Americans, and Eastern European Americans, saw themselves as ranged against African Americans and Latinos in a struggle for diminishing opportunities and resources, in the wake of suburbanization, urban renewal, and controversies over unionized hiring and promotion practices in large industries and cities (Sugrue 2014, 209–230; Rae 2003, 254–360; Quadagno 1994, 89–116; Beauregard 2003, 127–209; Vecoli 1995; Barbaro 1974). Ethnic group identification in the public culture of cities, as a set of distinctions within whiteness, emerged in response to black nationalism and the recovery of black history as a major project of public culture. That project was bookended on television in the *Toma* era by Bill Cosby's *Black History: Lost, Stolen or Strayed* on CBS in 1968 and *Roots* on ABC in 1977. Both of these productions intersected with journalism, entertainment, and education to reach across their subject ethnicities to persuade white audiences of the harms done by media stereotyping and the lack of access to civil rights, respectively ("Bill Cosby's Forgotten 'Militant Documentary'" 2014). White ethnic pride movements of the post–civil rights era sought not only to affect a restoration of distinct histories of assimilation but also to create competing positions of historical victimhood: "The sudden centrality of black grievance to national discussion prompted a rapid move among white ethnics to dissociate themselves from white privilege" (Jacobson 2006, 21).

This condition was exploited by political leaders like Philadelphia political boss Frank Rizzo, who repurposed ethnic pride as white supremacism in the zero-sum contest over resources that urban policy had become by the mid-1970s (Luconi 2003; Duke, 2006). The anxieties this caused working-class white urban ethnics were summed up by Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1963) in *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*. Glazer and Moynihan

were speaking of the Irish Americans, but they channeled the melancholy of several European ethnicities, certainly including Italian Americans: "They felt it was their town. It is no longer, and they know it" (217). Glazer and Moynihan particularly noted the sense of threat perceived by Italian Americans as African Americans (and Puerto Ricans) moved into Italian American neighborhoods (190). In 1970, in the revised edition of the book, they asserted that the next ten years could be "a decade of optimism" for African Americans and Puerto Ricans—a vague way of referring to improved economic and social circumstances for these groups that, in any case, did not materialize. But Italian American urban political leaders communicated to their constituents that such improvement would only come at the expense of an Italian American social order of neighborhoods, schools, and businesses (Perlez 1983, 27).

Between July 12 and July 17, 1967, Newark was the scene of one of the nation's worst racial rebellions to date. Incited by rumors that an African American cabdriver had been killed in police custody, the rebellion in fact was a culmination of a history of economic and political disfranchisement of Newark's African Americans. In particular, Mayor Hugh Addonizio was criticized for not reforming racist hiring and enforcement practices in the city's police force; accusations of racial profiling and brutality were widespread. Twenty-six people were killed in the rebellion, hundreds were injured, and the city suffered an estimated $10 million in damaged or destroyed property. White flight from Newark, already significant, was accelerated by the violence and destruction (Mumford 2007).

In 1970, Councilman Anthony Imperiale sought to unite white working-class ethnics under the "racist" cloaking term of a "law-and-order" mayoral candidacy, the era's code for a political locus that could be either racist or anti-anti-Vietnam War, depending on local circumstances (Lipsitz 2006, 24–47; Pattillo 2007; Guglielmo 2003; Harris 1993). Imperiale used campaign slogans like "When the Black Panther comes, the White Hunter will be waiting" (Watts 2001, 358–359). Imperiale lost the divisive election to Kenneth Gibson, the city's first African American mayor, but the ethnic schisms in the city deepened as economic resources eroded. By 1975 a major quality-of-life study showed that Newark ranked last among major U.S. cities in high-school and college graduates, percentage of home ownership, amount of park space, and opportunities for recreation per capita and among the five worst cities in housing quality and over-crowding. No wonder *Harper's* could headline its story on Newark "The Worst American City" (Louis 1975).

David Roediger (1998) points out that this contest for political power was a zero-sum one in cultural terms, as well: This same identification with

white supremacy "helped to steal the vitality from immigrant communities," including Italian Americans, because of the association with negative values on which whiteness is based (21–22).

Thus, the more urban white ethnics struggled to articulate an essentialist pride as a feature of their putative group identities, the more the material features of their communities were neglected (Ehrenhalt 1995).[5] As Nathan Glazer put it in 1983, "One of the things that has bothered me most about the rise in ethnic awareness is how many people it hasn't helped" (Perlez 1983, 27). The contest for ethnic ownership over the American narrative in the civil rights era, as its most controversial contemporary chroniclers Glazer and Moynihan (1963) put it, revealed "the point about the melting pot is that it did not happen" (1).[6] Today we may go even farther: As several recent reinterpretations of immigration and ethnic history have shown, it may have been that the constantly evolving concept of race, with its shifting economic associations and consequences, operating from the earliest waves of immigration through the Ellis Island era and after, required the melting pot mythology as a justification for the continued arbitrariness of race and ethnicity as a cultural construct in America (Roediger 1991; Ignatiev 1995, 148–177; DeSalvo 2003). The distinct history of this construction in Italian America has generated a distinct set of media practices that evoke this history (Sauteman 2002).

Urban policing itself had become an index of this arbitrariness. The 1960s had seen the gradual replacement of foot patrols by squad car patrols in cities. By the time *Toma* appeared, this process, in New York as well as other large cities, was complete (Cannato 2001, 533–534; Lardner and Reppetto 2000, 293–295). Centralized law enforcement decoupled police forces from the neighborhoods being policed. The makeup of urban police forces failed to keep pace with the changing demographics of the city; so as white flight began to turn formerly multicultural white working-class districts such as Newark's West Ward into monolithic zones of the black underclass, the police force became increasingly alien. The white ethnic police(man) was now often himself an element of white flight. To beleaguered black urban dwellers, police forces now came to seem increasingly as the praetorian guard of a distant and obscure occupying power, a position articulated decades later both poetically and politically in Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* (1989) (Massoud 2003, 117–144; DeSantis 1991).

Militarized policing (SWAT teams and officers in combat gear armed with automatic and specialized weapons) was initiated in Los Angeles in 1967 under then-Inspector Darryl Gates and quickly spread to other cities, where it was deployed in disparate proportion against African American populations and political and social activists of color, including the Black

Panthers (Kraska and Kappeler 1997; Balko 2013, 43–138). (The killings of Trayvon Martin in Florida, Eric Garner in New York, and Michael Brown in Missouri show the persistent effects of this mentality of armed colonialism) (Von Drehle 2015).

Beginning with the second iteration of *Dragnet* (1967–1970, NBC) and continuing through such shows as *Adam-12* (1968–1975, NBC), *Emergency!* (1972–1979, NBC), *The Rookies* (1972–1976, ABC), *Police Story* (1973–1977, NBC), *S.W.A.T.* (1975–1976, ABC), and *CHiPs* (1977–1983, NBC), dramatic series television looked at uniformed law enforcement in cities from the characterological locus of the law enforcers, not their subject populations; audiences were routinely tutored in identifying with three-dimensional, sympathetic protagonists in law enforcement rather than with one-dimensional victims and criminal suspects, who in any case passed from these shows' narratives after a single episode (Shohat and Stam 1994, 178–219; Smith 1995, 73–110).

Shows about plainclothes city detective forces, such as *The Streets of San Francisco* (1972–1977, ABC), added another layer to this schema. Perversely, police drama shows such as *Hawaii Five-0* (1968–1975, CBS) and *Kojak* (1973–1978, CBS) leveraged growing interest in ethnicity by employing ethnic police officers as subordinate parts of this occupying force, an unconscious reference to the doctrine of indirect rule in colonialism, which frequently employed local constabularies (Brendon 2007, 372–374; Lewis 2013, 9–13). Finally, still more shows, such as *The Blue Knight* (1975–1976, CBS) and *Joe Forrester* (1975–1976, NBC) reaffirmed the mythology of the avuncular, conciliating white beat cop in an era when this mode of policing was virtually extinct. In the increasingly retrograde paradigm of the 1970s police drama, to be culturally alien to the spaces being policed was to be somehow humanly native. It was this encounter between the native and the alien, its elements given precisely opposite valuation, that set off some of the worst urban violence of the era, particularly the Watts rebellion of 1965 and the Detroit and Newark rebellions of 1967, massive civil disturbances that social critics and liberal policy makers at the time considered rebellions of the underclass against the police, a view confirmed by historians (Hayden 1967; Fogelson 1971; *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* 1968; Darden 2013; Herman 2013). By 1970 this worldview had become common enough among African Americans that it could be institutionalized in the radical black independent cinema in films such as *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* (Melvin van Peebles, 1971) and *The Spook Who Sat by the Door* (Ivan Dixon, 1973), films that took for granted the notion of law enforcement as an occupying force in black America (Van Peebles 2004; Sheppard 2013; Beale 2004).

At the same moment, films such as *The French Connection* (William Friedkin, 1971), *Law and Disorder* (Ivan Passer, 1974), and *Dog Day Afternoon* (Sidney Lumet, 1975) offered complex portraits of harassed white ethnics policing a city gone out of control—the policeman as victim (Grace 2007; Corkin 2011, 74–133; Sanders 2001, 357–398). *Fort Apache, The Bronx* (Daniel Petrie, 1981) and *Hill Street Blues* (1981–1987, NBC) represented the apotheosis of this meme. These narratives portrayed the failure of an older model of precinct-based policing, with the police force, a white male ethnic working-class cohort, serving a stewardship over the city in which they also lived as citizens. The collapse of this relationship occurred in parallel with a breakdown of traditional local centers of cultural authority in the city (church, family, school, workplace) and the syndication of urban violence via drug trafficking. The film *Fort Apache, The Bronx* was reviled by liberal critics, who took its sympathetic rendering of anxious white ethnicity in law enforcement as an endorsement of white supremacy, while television's *Hill Street Blues* was celebrated by the same critical establishment for the richness of its character studies of law enforcement personnel, who were shown as victims suffering from the stresses of overwork, danger, and the long-term failure of politics to anneal social trauma in the city (Kael 1981a; Kael 1981b; Ansen 1981; Jenkins 1984; Nichols-Pethick 2012, 48–74). But in fact, both *Fort Apache, The Bronx* and *Hill Street Blues* signified the exhaustion of a certain type of liberal, social problem discourse framed aesthetically in what Thomas Zynda (1986) has called "bourgeois realism," a mode in which an attention to down-class sociological detail abetted by extensive location shooting validates the viewer's position of sympathetic downward social concern (111). This ethos had characterized much of film and television's portrayal of poverty, working-class ethnicity, and urban crime since the days of postwar social problem films such as *City across the River* (Maxwell Shane, 1949) and *Crime in the Streets* (Don Siegel, 1956) and live television dramas such as *Dino* (1956, CBS).[7]

Ethnicity in the Air, on the Air

Toma appeared at a moment when network television was grappling with post-1968 social change in what was then the nation's unquestioned centerpiece of mass culture: the prime-time schedule. Like an earlier generation of ethnically based shows, including *The Goldbergs* (1949–1956, Dumont/CBS), *Mama* (1949–1957, CBS), *Beulah* (1950-1953, ABC), *Amos 'n' Andy* (1951–1953, CBS), and three Italian American sitcoms, *Papa Cellini* (1952, ABC), *Bonino* (1953, NBC), and *Life with Luigi* (1952–1953, CBS), *Toma*'s locus is in a specific ethnicity. These earlier shows traded on comic

incongruity when their protagonists made tentative moves into the ethnic mainstream (Ely 1991, 130–254; Lipsitz 2003; Cripps 2003; Weber 1997; Krampner, 1997, 86-87).[8]

Cultural historians of television have suggested that the failure of these shows to retain audiences after 1953 implied that the postwar shift from an understanding of ethnicity rooted in cultural otherness and working-class standing to assimilated and aspirational middle-classness had made these shows embarrassing (Lipsitz 1989, 40–41; Brook 1999; Sterritt 2009, 55–56). The long-running situation comedy *Make Room for Daddy* (1953–1964, ABC, CBS) straddled both these eras and had it both ways. Its protagonist, nightclub entertainer Danny Williams (played by Danny Thomas, birth name Amos Alphonsus Muzyad Yakhoob), lived a fully assimilated upper-middle-class life with his wife and children. Periodically, the family withstood visits by its immigrant relative, Uncle Tonoose (played by dialect comedian Hans Conried). Uncle Tonoose brought the humor of accented English, of premodern folkways out of synch in a modern society, the humor of the mustachioed stiff-collared patriarch without a patriarchy to rule over, to a prosperous, democratic post–World War II America. That is, he brought the humor of unassimilated ethnicity into the living room of the assimilated Williams family—and into the living rooms of millions of viewers, in twenty-three episodes from 1955 to 1964.

Beginning with the 1968 season, ethnic characters were starting to succeed within the WASP mainstream, and both comedy and conflict in these shows now sprang from scenarios of integration, not segregation. *Julia* (1968–1971, NBC), the eponymous character played by Diahann Carroll, was the widow of an Air Force pilot killed in Vietnam and the mother of a young boy. She struggles to make a life in a new community and get along with white neighbors who are basically good people but who have been shaped by the psychology of de facto segregation (Bodroghkozy 2003). The protagonist of *Arnie* (1970–1972, CBS) was Greek American Arnie Nuvo, played by Herschel Bernardi, a veteran of the Yiddish stage and cinema. Arnie was newly promoted from the loading dock to the boardroom of Continental Flange, Inc., as part of an experiment in management. The show even featured a comically stereotyped WASP executive, Hamilton Majors III, as Arnie's comic foil, an early and rare attempt to invert ethnic stereotyping. *Bridget Loves Bernie* (1972–1973, CBS) and *Angie* (1979–1980, ABC) derived their conflicts from the line between cultures in which class and ethnicity became fused.

Police dramas whose protagonists were not seen as ethnic experimented with "ethnicizing" during this period, offering individual episodes that traded on the space between acultural conservatism identified with old

country mores out of synch with modern American ways. The protagonist of *Mannix* (1967–1975, CBS) had an occasionally referred to Armenian background, and two episodes of the show showed him returning to his ethnic community in rural California to solve crimes. The character of Joe Mannix was played by Michael Connors, birth name Krekor Ohanian, and Connors/Ohanian spoke a few lines of dialog in Armenian during these episodes. Additionally, the show's opening graphic, which used the colors orange, blue, and red, was held by some Armenian Americans to be a conscious reference to the Armenian flag (Kalajian 2010).[9] In the episode of *Ironside* (1967–1975, NBC) originally aired on March 4, 1971, titled "The Summer Soldier," the show's protagonist, Detective Chief Robert Ironside (Raymond Burr), investigates a crime in which two second-generation Armenian young men use the tobacconist's shop of their elderly Armenian-born uncle to distribute PCP-laced cigarettes. But Joe Mannix's "real" ethnicity versus Robert Ironside's whiteness was a distinction without a difference. While both shows put on display a stage of ethnic assimilation that involved generational conflict over the proper place of the original cultural inheritance in the setting of mainstream postwar culture, both protagonists positioned themselves alongside a nonethnic outsider as an ideal spectator (Campisi 1948, 448; Bakalian 1993; Landy 2001; Cinotto 2013).

In both shows a "white" character (Ironside) and a nominally ethnic character who otherwise during the show's run functions as "white" (Joe Mannix) mediate between the generations in encounters that otherwise have little to do with the protagonists' identities in the arc of the series. Unlike Joe Mannix, David Toma routinely projects his ethnic orientation comfortably into a larger world. Toma does not just occasionally mediate from a disinterested position between others who are mired in an archaic portrait of struggle between stages of assimilation. Instead, he *embodies* a position of mediation between various immanent polarities of identity in his work and life.

Toma/Baretta was one of several dramatic series that ran between 1968 and 1978, each organized around an Italian American police officer (*Columbo* [1968–1978, NBC], *Serpico* [1976–1978, NBC], *Delvecchio* [1976–1977, CBS]) or attorney (*Petrocelli*, 1974–1976, NBC).[10] These shows complemented a raft of other police dramas whose protagonists were not marked as ethnic, suggesting that, as Italian Americans now had a rightful place in civil society, shows about them had a similarly rightful place in the schedule of a mass entertainment medium that at that moment was in its epoch of greatest saturation of American culture. In 1978, 98 percent of American homes had at least one television, and the vast majority of

these were tuned to broadcast television during prime time ("Television History: A Timeline" 2016). The announcement of ethnicity in the names of these shows in an era when Italian American screen actors like Anne Bancroft (birth name Anna Maria Louisa Italiano), Connie Stevens (birth name Concetta Rosalie Anna Ingolia), Connie Francis (Concetta Rosemarie Franconero), and Bobby Darin (birth name Walden Robert Cassotto) were still working under Anglicized pseudonyms was thus itself an influential statement of cultural politics. Between the end of the live-TV anthology series in the late 1950s and the appearance of such shows as *Toma*, although ethnic-surnamed characters continued to appear on broadcast television, ethnicity as a structuring feature of TV narratives was rarely evident (Ruberto 2012). The reappearance of Italian American protagonists in the 1970s, now in integrationist rather than segregationist settings, in a climate of affirmation rather than deprecation, and in dramatic rather than comedic formats, signified an opening for a new media politics of white ethnicity.

Tony Musante, born in 1936, was a member of the group of young Italian American actors who achieved success in stage, film, and series television in the 1960s and early 1970s, often playing urban and ethnic working-class characters. It was a group that included Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, John Cazale, Ben Gazzara, Richard Castellano, James Farentino, Frank Langella, and Paul Sorvino, most of whom, like Musante, identified themselves as Method actors, a performance technique that focused on externalized displays of agonized internal ambivalence, often based on remembered emotional experiences. These performers used the Method toolbox to good effect in the urban working-class characters they played. (Few Italian American women are among this cohort, other than Brenda Vaccaro and Anne Bancroft.) After *Toma*, Musante went on to a long and varied career as an actor in film, theater, and series television, during which he continued to specialize in Italian and Italian American characters, including his role as Nino Schibetta, a Mafia don, in the first season of the critically acclaimed series *Oz* (1997–2003). He died in 2013.

During *Toma*'s run Musante was acutely conscious of questions of cultural representation. He co-wrote, with his wife Jane Sparkes, two stories for the show ("50% of Normal," January 18, 1974; and "Rock-A-Bye," January 25, 1974), using the pseudonym "Peter Salerno," a combination of his own middle name and his mother's pre-marriage surname. Musante played at least a dozen Italian-surnamed characters in U.S. film and television and Italian film and was closely identified with urban stories in his work as an actor. His breakthrough film role was as one of the two thugs who terrorize a New York City subway in 1967's *The Incident*, directed by Larry Peerce, a social problem film that examined "bystander syndrome,"

the tendency of urban dwellers to become so inured to acts of violence that they disavow responsibility for intervening (Cook 2014, 164–171).

Toma's Three Cities

As many critics have noted, even when it is named as a "real" city, the city in any crime drama is always already an allegorical space. Thomas Zynda's reading of *Hill Street Blues* shows that series in never naming the fictionalized setting to have been self-conscious in its deployment of the city-as-metaphor, while Edward Dimendberg's historical analysis of film noirs shot in Los Angeles uses those films as a resource to examine the particulars of postwar patterns of demographic change and land use in that city (Zynda 1986; Dimendberg 2004, 11–86). But crime fiction in general, and film and TV crime narratives in particular, have long utilized the city in the manner of Robert Warshow's canonical explanation of the city as a figurative space: "not the real city, but that dangerous and sad city of the imagination which is so much more important, which is the modern world" (Warshow 2001, 101). Like Dimendberg's Los Angeles, *Toma*'s Newark is a figurative space as well as a real one.

There are really three cities in *Toma*. David Toma's autobiography is set emphatically in the Newark of the 1960s and early 1970s. Toma had grown up in an Italian American neighborhood in Newark's First Ward and watched the unraveling of the city's white ethnic hegemony as a citizen even as he policed it. Newark in those years was a national symbol of white flight, a pattern that dramatically accelerated after the 1967 rebellion. However, the trends behind that pattern had been developing for decades, stretching back, in Newark's case, to before World War II and representing, in fact, an economic disfranchisement of both African Americans and white working-class ethnics. Contrary to the inflammatory discourse of leaders like Anthony Imperiale, there had been no golden age of white ethnic economic achievement to lose in the wake of alleged African American encroachment on that success. The demographic trends that fractured Newark were sweeping, long-range, and multicausal, beginning long before the rebellion (Curvin 2014, 6–67; Tuttle 2009, 63–208; Churchill 1975).

The city's population had peaked in the 1930 Census at over 442,000. (The city's estimated population in 2013 was 278,000.) From the 1950s to 1967, the city's white population declined from 353,000 to 158,000. The postrebellion migrations gutted the city's middle class, thus accelerating trends that had already brought working-class white ethnics and people of color into conflict over shrinking resources; the percentage of non-Hispanic whites declined from 82 percent in 1950 to 11 percent in the 2010 Census. In

recent decades, working-class Irish American, Italian American, Ukrainian American, Polish American, and Jewish neighborhoods have transitioned to underclass black, Latino, and Caribbean populations, and poverty in Newark remains endemic (Winters 1979). *Toma*, book and TV show, appeared at the moment in which neighborhoods such as the First Ward's Italian American one, where David Toma grew up, once defined by ethnically inflected cultural institutions such as churches, parochial schools, social clubs, performing arts units, and fraternal organizations, were being fragmented by rapid demographic change (Immerso 1997; Tuttle 2009, 171–208; Churchill 1975).[11] Amanda Seligman, in her analysis of white flight in Chicago during this period, notes that white flight entailed not only cultural disruption by departure but also disruption by retrenchment. Remaining members of ethnic groups adopted a cultural siege mentality as they defended "their" neighborhoods (Seligman 2005, 213–214).

The influence of David Toma's real Newark on the show is subtle but strong. Toma worked closely with the creators of the show, and his forceful personality inflected the show's design and execution. Toma's as-told-to memoir of his police years was published simultaneously with the commencement of the show's run, and the fusion between the two projects is symbolized by the photo of David Toma and Tony Musante used as the book's frontispiece. The last picture in the book's photo section is of Toma signing autographs "for his young admirers on Universal's set."

The "second city" of Toma is a regional one. Each episode began with this title card: "This series is about a real detective who works in a city on the East Coast. His name is David Toma." Like *Hill Street Blues*'s regionalism (that show's street names and cityscape identified it as a Midwestern city), the characteristics of "the East" (e.g., canyon-like, narrow streets, subways, sidewalk vendors) are employed as signs of this regionalism in *Toma* but nothing that would identify these spaces as any specific eastern city (Zynda 1986). Finally, there is a third city involved in the *Toma* saga: the New York City of the popular 1970s imagination, the nation's urban showcase for failed liberal policies in housing, infrastructure, education, taxation, employment, transportation, law enforcement, and human capital, and a space to display the social and psychological dysphoria these cascading failures had generated. When *Newsweek* covered a planned layoff of New York City sanitation workers as part of the city's fiscal crisis, it headlined the story "Crisis in Stink City" (Alpern 1975; Battle 1975).

Both the nickname and the condition linked New York City as a semiotics of urban despair to many eastern and Midwestern cities in the 1970s. This third, allegorical, city was the place of such films as *Little Murders* (Alan Arkin, 1971), *Law and Disorder* (Ivan Passer, 1974), and *The Out of Towners*

(Arthur Hiller, 1970), each an absurdist parable of middle-class whiteness harassed by The City gone pathologically violent.

Fluid Cultural Boundaries in *Toma*

Structurally central to the series is the interpenetration of David Toma's home life and his work life, a narrative device in the police drama conventionally identified with *Hill Street Blues*. Approximately one-third of each episode is devoted to an extension of the plotline of the investigative activity into the private sphere. Fundamental to this intertwining is David Toma's undercover policing, which includes his assuming not merely other occupations but ethnicities as well—including (over the phone) African Americans. Michael Rogin argues that this capacity for minstrelsy is crucial to an ethnic group's assimilation. Rogin sees minstrelsy as part of an ethnic outgroup's campaign to simultaneously join an Anglo-Saxon mainstream, identifying with the mainstream's economic and cultural dominance over minority populations, while at the same time signifying on the arbitrariness of this process (Rogin 1996, 121–156; Lott 1993, 63–88). Long after blackface, minstrelsy's most notorious symptom, had become extinct in film and television, *Toma* drew on a postwar trope of racial impersonation that linked whites "going undercover" with a conformity-evading hipsterism. Norman Mailer's influential manifesto on the subject, *The White Negro* (1957), has been reviled as modern primitivism, an intellectualized racism that, in fact, restated whiteness as the locus of normative male identity (Mailer 1993; Gubar 1997, 176–182; Baldwin 1961). Yet there is no doubting the long tradition of voluntary white association with the subcultural styles and mores of black America as a means of declaring separation from the ostensible cultural restrictions associated with whiteness. White jazzmen, bluesmen, and rappers, argue several cultural critics, enact this cultural crossover, less as a way of implicating themselves in the novel culture than as a way of stating their own knowingness about culture itself (Peretti 1992, 1–4; Hewitt 1983).

In *Toma*, the employment of this voluntary separatism, when detective Toma goes underground through the means of disguise, could easily be understood as Maileresque in its narcissism. To early twenty-first-century eyes, the moment in the episode "Rock-A-Bye" (January 25, 1974) when Toma declares to a black man, "You ain't got a corner on soul!" seems at best a strained appropriation—as it indeed was, just as were many such moments throughout mainstream popular culture during this time (Winokur 1991). But it is also possible to read this moment as at least a well-intentioned gesture toward a parallel, rich cultural legacy. That such a gesture would

be awkward is inevitable, for series television in the 1970s was awakening from a long trance of racial exclusion (Graham 2001, 156–160).[12]

Essential to *Toma* is melodrama, perhaps the characteristic narrative mode of "dramatic" popular cinema and serial television (Landy 1991; Thorburn 1976). In melodrama, cinematic point-of-view strategies are used to ally us with a sympathetic central character. The melodramatic formula rests on collisions between social responsibility and personal desire in the life of the protagonist. Because the melodrama has been historically associated with female audiences, popular melodrama often contrasts the private life of the domestic sphere with the public responsibilities of the protagonist. Formal choices, particularly mise-en-scene and music, are frequently overdetermined to express the conflicted nature of the protagonist and the psychological consequences of her decisions (Hagopian 2014; Gallagher 1994).

Toma's home life anchors the show with a meaningful sense of domesticity, signified through the conventional narrational strategies of episodic television, circa 1973, that condense multiple social meanings into a single bit of business and through ellipsis ask viewers to understand that these moments stand in for an entire structure of domestic life (Mitell 2010, 213–268; Thompson 2003, 19–35). Such radical condensation and compression in storytelling necessarily means that what is actually present in the episode's on-screen plot material has great power in creating the show's assumptions of class and gender normativity (Maltby 1983, 182–217). In "Rock-A-Bye," for instance, we see the minutiae of domestic life. As Toma washes dishes with Patty, his wife, we learn that they have been married for twelve years, and we assume that their life together has been made up of many such low-key moments of prosaic tenderness. But there are also moments that treat the domestic experience in terms as operatic as a car chase. In this same episode, Toma has flashbacks of the death of his son from accidental choking, a stylistically and ideologically expressive moment characteristic of melodrama (and one based on the death of Toma's own son by accidental choking, an event treated melodramatically in Toma's autobiography and on his website). Julie D'Acci has argued that the presence of melodrama in the police show is basic to what Rick Altman refers to as the "adjectivizing" of most narrative genres—in this case, inflecting the genre narrative (such as the story of policing a city) with universalizing human and emotional loci. Writing contemporaneously with *Toma*'s airing, critic David Thorburn went farther, arguing that melodrama was series television's basic dramatic mode, and the police drama of the period was television's most vital site for this characteristic mode (Altman 1998, 1–41; D'Acci 1994, 108, 240; Thorburn 1976).

Beyond its dramatic formula, *Toma* also traced its melodramatic lineage to the self-presentation of the real David Toma, who was involved with the development of the series, was credited with writing one of the show's episodes, and was frequently present on the set. The real David Toma retired from the Newark Police Department to be a motivational speaker to school groups on the dangers of drug addiction. His accounts of his life in both his autobiography and on his website are highly melodramatized.[13] Toma's second autobiography is called *Toma Tells It Straight—With Love* and like his website gives attention to the anguish his sessions with students caused him. A photo in the book depicts Toma, slumped over, head in hand, and is captioned, "Tired and hurting—between sessions" (Toma 1981, 168; McMurran 1980).

Toma's iconic postwar middle-class domestic setting (the layout of the house suggests a suburban tract home) strongly alludes to white flight. Is Toma merely a commuter, driving to the city only to police it and then returning home every night? Or is he truly invested in the city's future? This ambivalence courted ideological bipolarity, an ambivalence the show sought ways to resolve. The "Rock-A-Bye" episode revolves around an adoption racket, which is inadvertently uncovered when Toma and his wife see suspicious activity late at night on a city bus. Their presence on the bus is not explained because of a suburban emergency, such as a family car being repaired. Rather, Toma and his wife are laughing and cuddling. The moment reads as if they are returning from a restaurant, or the theater, or a nightclub. Whatever their junket, it has been downtown, voluntary, and not work-related.

Toma's aesthetic was rougher and less polished than studio-based police dramas, such as *The F.B.I.* (1965–1974, ABC). And it was also not self-consciously visually stylish, as in the obvious debts to film noir's photographic techniques and mise-en-scene in *The Fugitive* (1963–1967, ABC), particularly during that show's first three seasons, which were shot in black and white. These choices reflected the various economies of a first-season TV shoot. Visually, the show was characterized by low lighting, practical settings, and extensive nighttime photography. Even where standing sets are used and lights might have been more easily rigged (such as Inspector Spooner's office) spaces are relatively underilluminated. When interiors of *Toma*'s house are depicted in the evening, even in sequences meant to showcase the detective's comfortable and loving family life, the borders of those spaces are in shadow, and even the center of the frame is darker than was conventional in dramatic series, avoiding any "spotlighting" effect on Musante. The show is stingy with close-ups of its main character; dialog sequences usually occur in long two-shots,

with eventual cut-ins to Musante often staged in medium shot, rather than close-ups. (Viewers did not know Musante well before the series started, so there was little incentive to utilize a star-driven aesthetic.) The effect of these choices is to visually and psychologically integrate *Toma* in the various worlds he inhabits. The show's theme music was written by Pete Carpenter and Mike Post and with a funk bass line intended to evoke the soundtracks of Blaxploitation films such as *Superfly* (1972). (An early title for the show while in development was *Supercop*.) Indeed, the aesthetic described above has loose commonality with the Blaxploitation cinema of the period, and like the heroes of the time in films like *Shaft* (Gordon Parks, 1971), David Toma is a man of his environment, less anxious to physically command or conquer it than master it ideationally (Guerrero 1993, 69–113).

For that purpose, Toma's disguises are an effective signifier. *Toma* subverted the marginal "swarthy Italian" outlaw ethnicity of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, identifying again with secretive activity and undercover work, but now in the name of the law. *Toma* is also indebted to the rogue undercover cop cycle of the period, particularly *The French Connection* (William Friedkin, 1971), *The Seven-Ups* (Philip D'Antoni, 1973), and, penultimately, *Serpico* (Sidney Lumet, 1973), in which individual guardians of the law frequently have to fight conservative institutions of social order—including occasionally the police force itself—to restore a more deeply felt social justice. Several canonical film noirs, including *T-Men* (Anthony Mann, 1947), *Cry of the City* (Robert Siodmak, 1948), *The Black Hand* (Richard Thorpe, 1950), and *Pay or Die* (Richard Wilson, 1960) traded on Italian American police officers going undercover in the Italian American slum to solve crimes against the formal Anglo-Saxon legal order, and the dangers of being exposed as traitors to their culture. In the process, the perception among these films' idealized audiences that the officers, ethnic or not, represent the civic interests of an Anglo-Saxon "us" rather than an ethnic "them" is strengthened. By contrast, *Toma* utilizes under-cover work to create bridges between disempowered identity groups and the power structure. David Toma's transitive function in the urban ecology presented in the show thus ingeniously uses stereotyped Italian American "dark" ethnicity and its in-group habits to at least gesture toward new possibilities of intergroup identification.

Toma as Social Problem Television

A self-consciously urban series, *Toma* also draws on the traditions of the postwar social problem film, as individual episodes deal with issues such as illegal adoption (in "Rock-A-Bye") and "race riots" (in "The Street,"

May 3, 1974) (Friedman et al. 2014, 446–483; Patton 2007, 31–36; Roffman and Purdy 1981, 227–299). As Lesley Henderson has written of the production circumstances of social problem television, production teams are self-aware of the educational function their dramatization of social issues will fulfill (Henderson 2007, 31–54). As an agent of the restoration of justice within these narratives, the Italian American police officer carried with him unique ethnic and class associations that complicated his whiteness.

The social problem film's heirs in television included live TV dramas such as *12 Angry Men* (1954, CBS) and *Tragedy in a Temporary Town* (1956, NBC), both of which dealt with prejudice against people of color, and both of which implicated white, working-class ethnicity as central not only to that prejudice but also essential to its working-through. (Musante's 1967 breakthrough film *The Incident* began life as "Ride with Terror," a 1963 *DuPont Show of the Week*. *Show of the Week*, though shot on film, had strong institutional and thematic ties to the liberal ethos of live TV drama of the 1950s.) Shows such as *Naked City* (1958–1963, ABC), *The Defenders* (1961–1965, CBS), *Ben Casey* (1961–1965, ABC), *Mr. Novak* (1963–1965, NBC), *East Side, West Side* (1963–1964, CBS), *Arrest and Trial* (1963–1964, ABC), *For the People* (1965, CBS), and *The Nurses* (1965–1967, CBS) continued this tradition of liberal social problem television through the civil rights years (Watson 1988).[14] In the political microcosms conjured up by these shows, idealistic representatives of official order (law enforcement, medicine, education) displayed a commitment to liberal communitarian ideals (Mamet 2006). In episodes of these shows, "the city" began as Warshow's "dangerous and sad city of the imagination," but its violent allegorical space was, during each individual episode, transformed by the work of its police officers, attorneys, teachers, doctors, and nurses into a democratic, ethical, and hopeful place. The city's pressures often generated the tensions that led to the individual episode's problem, but the city also provided the space within which the show's dedicated protagonist and his or her equally dedicated mentors and colleagues could "work it out" in concert with the victims of those urban pressures, in a fashion that rewarded compromise with mutual understanding. In this setting, everyone, even nominal perpetrators and the representatives of the forces of order, were victims. Race, as understood from a liberal integrationist perspective, was among the most frequently addressed social roles in this paradigm and in fact became a crucial test of the good intentions of social problem television. *Toma*'s inclusiveness, its fundamental optimism about the capacity of the established order to serve as a setting for compromise between injured parties (and crucially, its understanding of criminal behaviors as literally "antisocial," as species of urban victimhood rather than character flaws, solvable

by compassion as much as force), link it to a tradition of multicultural humanism in the narrative arts that had originated in the New Deal and U.S. culture of the Popular Front (Wall 2008; Matthews 1975; Denning 2010, 38–50, 445–453; Meyer 2002; Hagopian 2001).

In this humane realm, ethnicity of any kind was a claim on that compassion. David Toma's first autobiography is titled *Toma: The Compassionate Cop*. In it, he recounts incidents of his own outspoken advocacy of African American officers on Newark's police force and his own courageous behavior toward African American citizens and even suspects. He implicitly links their suffering as an ethnic group to his private traumas, psychologizing the race as he frequently psychologizes himself. The image of his first child that appears in the book's photo section is captioned thus:

> Little David, Jr., who died of asphyxiation in Newark General Hospital within forty-five minutes of the time that his father, while on duty, had saved with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation the life of a black youngster who had choked and was apparently lifeless. (Toma 1973, 79)

Using third-person narration, author David Toma here recruits the devices of melodrama—coincidence, meticulous point-of-view strategies, and particularly, anecdotes of self-sacrifice—to create an empathetic identification with himself as the tale's protagonist.

After the rebellions in Detroit and Newark, after the "Long Hot Summer" of 1967, and following the urban devastation provoked by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968, media coverage accorded white flight and urban renewal's visible devastation of black neighborhoods failed to present the white urban ethnic experience as one of parallel displacement, visualizing it instead simply as one of migration (McLaughlin 2014; Caro 1975, 520–525, 851–894; Riccio 2006, 404–434). David Toma had been on duty throughout the Newark rebellions, and he refers several times to Newark's postrebellion white flight. In *Toma: The Compassionate Cop*, the names of white police officers and criminals alike are so explicitly ethnic (mostly Italian American) that they seem to crowd out Anglo-Saxon-derived names. Toma's position as an interlocutor between white working-class ethnics and the city's African American population is a rhetorical foundation of the book. At one point, his wife Patty refers to the family having "lived in the ghetto." It is clear that she does not mean one of Newark's Italian American neighborhoods (Toma 1973, 274). *Toma*—show, book, and even the detective himself—all struggled to craft a post–civil rights identification between ethnicities at a moment of hostility to this ideal.

With Richard Nixon's and George Wallace's mobilizing of whiteness in the 1968 presidential campaign, white working-class ethnicity became a bitter defensive stance against both social change and the liberal politics that struggled without success to alleviate the worst consequences of that change for the underclass (Pearlstein 2008, 274–294). Glazer and Moynihan, as paralyzed by conflicting understandings of domination and subordination as the populations they wrote about, made a lexically revealing distinction between "positive discrimination" (the expression of naked prejudice) and "negative discrimination" (de facto prejudice as part of a defense of ethnic "values") (Glazer and Moynihan 1963, xxxviii). This posture was made most visible by the media in the Boston public-school integration crisis in which working-class white ethnics were portrayed simplistically as engaged in a turf war with the city's black population (Buell 1982). This monocular perspective renarrativized the failure of urban school integration policies to serve their intended beneficiaries, African American children, not only in Boston, but in Newark and around the nation, into a tale of the erosion of stable cultural enclaves by an alien presence. This renarrativization, in turn, worked to fragment urban working-class identity across race. Emphasis on anecdote and incident in TV journalism contributed to reconfiguring life in urban America as divisive figures such as Newark's Imperiale hoped it would, as a racialist contest taking place over a line in the sand, ignoring the cumulative and interlocking effects of housing, redevelopment, infrastructure, transportation, employment, and education policies on larger questions of economics, class, and cultural identity (Rich 1996; Golin 2002). In the process, another racialist narrative was effaced, one that could have created political alliances between working-class whites and African Americans: a tale of white suburban elites whose housing, zoning, and other policies created economic barriers to regional mobility that condemned urban dwellers of all ethnicities to substandard resources, making many ethnic whites collateral victims of white-on-black racism (Massey et al. 2013).

A cycle of white urban revenge films, popular during *Toma*'s gestation and run, positioned whiteness against an allegorical "darkness"—the dark nightscapes of the city inhabited by shadowy figures who embodied pathological violence and criminality. Derived from the gangster film and film noir, and before those, American naturalist fiction, the white revenge film expressed an inarticulate rage at the perception that liberal social policies and attitudes were abetting the dangers of urban life (Dixon 2007). Iconic figures borrowed from the western, including Clint Eastwood (*Dirty Harry*, Don Siegel, 1971), Charles Bronson (*Death Wish*, Michael Winner, 1974), and John Wayne (*McQ*, John Sturges, 1974), were deployed to reorganize

the relationship of the white male to the urban space in the morally less ambivalent terms of the cinematic western (Desser 2007; Traficante 2012; Edwards 2013; Drummond 1997, 69–73).

The trailer for *The Detective* (Gordon Douglas, 1968) condenses the tropes of this revenge cycle into less than four minutes of screen time. In this primer for the white revenge film, we see the city as a former white homeland, now grown "dangerous and sad," even foreign. Further, we are asked to share frustration at the insensitivity of liberal policies to white victimhood and to endorse a Manichean view of social forces in conflict, to which political elites seem to pay no attention. *The Detective* trailer begins with an explicit invitation to identify with its protagonist. Over an image of Frank Sinatra, the star of the film, in detective's plain clothes (indistinguishable from a suburban commuter in a business suit) driving through an urban tunnel, we hear this voice-over: "You're Joe Leland, detective, prowling a city sick with violence, full of junkies, prostitutes, and perverts." In a second vignette, Leland snarls about one of his collars, a white kid who has been captured by the city's dark soul: "She's a whore, she's a pusher, she's an addict and she's nineteen years old! This town's crawlin' with kids the same age, all goin' the same route—part of the Great Society!" In another vignette, Leland expresses grudging sympathy for "agitators" who are protesting outside a precinct house, saying to his police superior, "They do not like living in garbage cans . . . Somebody doesn't do something about those garbage cans, you're goin' to see the goddamndest explosion—gonna tear this nation right down the middle!" (Tony Musante, star of *Toma*, has a role in *The Detective* as an anguished gay man under arrest. He can be seen in the trailer.)

It is impossible to overestimate Sinatra's emblematic relationship, not merely to Italian Americanness but to working-class white ethnicity as a whole at this historical moment. His move from Popular Front inclusiveness in the World War II years to post–civil rights exclusiveness precisely tracked white ethnic disaffection (Frontani 2005; Tamburri 2010; Meyer 2002; Simon 2007; Hamill 1998, 37–65).

It was on television that the ambivalence between a white ethnic *laager* mentality and the possibility of mutuality rooted in multicultural awareness was presented intact. The remarkable double-edged popularity of Norman Lear's masterwork of cultural satire *All in the Family* (1971–1979, CBS) among both white liberals who recognized it as satire and white working-class ethnics who adopted its protagonist, Queens, New York, loading-dock foreman Archie Bunker (Carroll O'Connor) as their standard bearer, is an icon of the political and cultural schizophrenia of white ethnicity in the post–civil rights years. Archie Bunker is an increasingly

culturally dispossessed working-class character, rhetorically harried by his son-in-law, an archetype of liberal youth culture. He is positioned by the norms of the show to be a comic exponent of retrograde ideas on ethnic (and gender and sexual and class and intellectual) identity, and yet his anguish at this dispossession is palpably real and sympathetic (Nussbaum 2014; Austerlitz 2014, 113–128; Adler, 1979).[15]

In *Toma*, the limitations of the formal social order to contain unrest are expressed by the presence of Inspector Spooner (played by Simon Oakland) as the harassed custodian of that order, to whom detective Toma reports and with whom he frequently disagrees over protocol. By the time *Toma* appeared, this character, standing in for the sclerotic, politically timid authority structure of the city, was a fixture of the police drama genre. Its presence in *Toma* reveals what could be a longing by the show's producers for a formulaic consistency that would fit the show's plot to a rapidly solidifying white ethnic cultural narrative in the United States. That reactionary cultural narrative would be at the core of the revision of the show's concept beginning with the first episode of *Baretta* in early 1975.

From *Toma* to *Baretta*

Musante had signed to do *Toma* under unusual circumstances. Anxious to leave himself open for other opportunities that the demanding schedule of an ongoing series would limit, Musante contracted to do the role for only one season. He agreed to return only if the following season was limited to ten episodes or to six ninety-minute *Movies of the Week*. The show's producers were confident he would reconsider if the show was a hit, but when *Toma* was renewed after its first season, Musante refused to alter the terms of his original contract (O'Connor 1974, 83). Internet apocrypha has it that the real David Toma offered to take over the role but was refused by the show's producers ("*Toma* (1973–1974)" 2016; Caruba 1977, 361).[16] Actor Robert Blake (birth name Michael James Vincenzo Gubitosi) was brought in to replace Musante, but Blake insisted on major changes to the show's concept. *Toma*, which had first aired on March 21, 1973, was last broadcast on May 10, 1974.

What emerged after these disruptions midway through the 1974–1975 TV season was titled *Baretta*, after the show's new protagonist, Detective Tony Baretta. The new show was aired in the same Friday 10:00 PM (EST) slot that *Toma* had occupied. Since *Toma* was a property of Roy Huggins-Public Arts Productions, Public Arts was able to revise the series concept as it saw fit when the company could not come to terms with Musante.[17] Between the end of *Toma*'s run in May 1974 and the premiere of *Baretta* on

January 17, 1975, ABC screened the hyphenate horror-science fiction-detective show *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, from September 13, 1974, to March 28, 1975. This show was derived from two successful made-for-television movies that first used its characters and plot. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* was prepared during 1973 and was awaiting a time slot; ABC may well have used it in the *Toma* slot to give *Baretta*'s producers time to put completed episodes in the can. In any case, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* series had poor ratings, though it became a cult favorite in syndication (Dawidziak 1997).

Screenwriter Steven J. Cannell would forge a new ideological brand for the show. Cannell had written five episodes for *Toma*, and now he was listed as *Baretta*'s creator and producer. He would leave behind *Toma*'s garbled liberalism to align *Baretta* consistently with reactionary trends in white ethnic perceptions about the city and its denizens. Under Cannell, the new show maintained the protagonist's ethnicity and his undercover detective occupation, but little else. In keeping with its liberal forebears like *Naked City* and *The Defenders*, *Toma* had been a show about social problems that manifested themselves each week in a troubled character's antisocial behavior. In the ideological frame of these shows (what Ella Shohat and Robert Stam refer to as "the norms of the text") (Shohat and Stam 1994, 208), this behavior was consistently misdiagnosed as criminal until Toma intervened and sympathetically recategorized it within the symptomology of modern urban life, a condition more than a crime. *Toma*'s construal of the city as a space where social identities were in flux rather than in simple conflict, and where each week brought a new social problem to be addressed, was exchanged for *Baretta*'s narcissistic character-focused narrative in which other people now represented only themselves, not instruments of complex social forces. In this setting, criminal behavior was a matter of individual greed or cruelty or stupidity and easily ascertained. Social problems became lapses in character, as *Toma*'s communitarian liberalism became *Baretta*'s individualist neoliberalism.

The character of Tony Baretta abandoned David Toma's role as a conduit for the audience's understanding of the relationship between antisocial behavior and its sources in the anxieties of modern urban life. *Baretta* replaced this with a simpler avenging/rectifying ethos in which Tony Baretta became a solitary figure apart from, even in conflict with, the liberal society that employed him. The enhanced violence and extensive action sequences of the new show further situated Baretta as judge and jury, investigating crime, assigning guilt, determining punishment, and then meting it out. (That the name chosen for the character was a homophone for a well-known brand of firearms, the Beretta, cannot have escaped the notice of the show's producers.) Emphasis on recurring street characters

such as ex-cop Billy Truman (Tom Ewell) and pimp/informant Rooster (Michael D. Roberts) destroyed the productive tension in *Toma* between professional and domestic life. Indeed, the latter was reduced to satire, as the bachelor Baretta's only domestic partner was his pet cockatoo, Fred, with whom he conversed at length. In reorganizing the show's presentation of street culture, *Baretta* changed from *Toma*'s use of relatively unknown performers in one-off roles to highly recognizable character actors such as Strother Martin, Elisha Cook, Jr., Timothy Carey, Vito Scotti, Ray Bolger, Eddie Quillan, Woodrow Parfrey, Ned Glass, and Slim Pickens, some of them in recurring roles. These were actors whose screen personae contained strong elements of parody; Carey and Cook were among film noir's great gargoyles, while Pickens and Martin were familiar as comic relief in many westerns. *Baretta* was now more about the interplay between Tony Baretta and these characters, with the individual criminal case serving as a pretext for seriocomic interaction (Roof 2002, 23–34). The regular appearances of characters such as Billy Truman, Rooster, and Baretta's girlfriend Mimi (Sharon Cintron), as well as the reduction of the importance of disguise, were signs of a conceptual shift, not merely in the show but in the way the police drama as a genre in the post-*Toma* years came to foreground the psychological and visual distinctions between its three-dimensional protagonist and the flat characterizations of the urban ethnic Other(s).

Disguise was foundational to the *Toma* concept. One of the show's creators, composer Mike Post, stated that the essence of the show was David Toma as "the great pretender, the master of disguise" (Post 2005). In a book written after the demise of the original show, the signal way David Toma recollects his career as an undercover cop is through a suite of images of himself in disguise, in photos credited to Universal Studios. It is probable that these were taken as publicity for the show. One of them, captioned "Afro," depicts Toma as an African American hipster, circa 1973 (Toma 1981, 22–23). Unlike Tony Baretta, David Toma was not an endangered loner on the streets. Rather, his disguises signified his going out among a varied community that included but was not limited to lawbreakers. The trope's cumulative effect was to define community as a mosaic of types rather than to serve as a bravura display of Toma's inventiveness as a crime fighter. (The real David Toma appeared in a cameo role in each episode, usually in a disguise. His name appeared in the credits, and the audience's difficulty in spotting the "real" Toma added an extradiegetic warrant to the show's realism.) In *Baretta*, when disguise is used, it highlights the lead character's fundamental difference between himself and the space he polices: He is righteous and clever, and they are criminals and merely feral in their intelligence, as is proven by their failure to know they're being

deceived by Baretta. Disguise emphasizes that David Toma's relationship with the city and its denizens is transitive, dialogic. Tony Baretta, on the other hand, commands the undercity, using guile and force to get it to do what he wants.[18] He is engaged in as one-sided a conversation with the city as he is with Fred, his bird.

For all its action sequences, *Baretta*'s violence was less culturally transgressive than *Toma*'s. Toma had been criticized for the disturbing intimacy of its violence, such as the near-rape of Toma's wife by a traumatized Vietnam veteran in the episode "50% Normal" (January 18, 1974). The emphasis in *Baretta* on comic or romantic supporting characters also helped to draw the show away from *Toma*'s formula of using individual episodes to treat a specific social problem. The drug trade was featured prominently in *Toma*. Five of the show's twenty-four episodes had narcotics crimes as a major element of their plots. These, however, were often used as levers to engage other complex issues. Narcotics in *Baretta*, on the other hand, was rarely an occasion for disquisitions on the sources of social problems. Instead, narcotics served as a stand-in for an idealized middle-class white viewer's notion of urban life as a problem in itself, a perspective that confirmed racist and classist aspects of the emerging discourse of the "epidemic of narcotics" (Frydl 2013, 289–365.).

At the historical moment in which white flight was reaching its apogee and working-class white ethnics were made to feel anxious about being economically and socially left behind in declining cities, the police drama genre of the era, in which series such as *Starsky & Hutch* (1975–1979, ABC) joined *Baretta*, did much both to reinforce this anxiety and to articulate a white, ethnic, and specifically male fantasy of control over this dissolution (D'Acci 1994, 108–120). For Jason Mittell, the cycle had become ossified into a genre-wide glyph: "the maverick cop bucking an unyielding system to effectively dole out justice in unconventional terms" (Mittell 2010, 238). Such shows followed on the heels of a cycle of city films that foregrounded a much more anxious white masculinity in a decaying city. *Madigan* (Don Siegel, 1968), *The Anderson Tapes* (Sidney Lumet, 1971), and Musante's film *The Incident* could be read as constituting a nervous query for which shows like *Starsky & Hutch* were the confident answer. A few series, notably MTM Productions' *The Bob Newhart Show* (1972–1978, CBS) and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* (1970–1977, CBS), offered a contrasting, less toxic view of the city, but these were comedies about educated professionals, and both were explicitly located in Midwestern cities, Chicago and Minneapolis, respectively, which were seen as nonthreatening in contrast to New York in its nadir of bankruptcy, infrastructure decay, and well-publicized "epidemics" of crime (Tabb 1982; Alcaly and Mermelstein 1977; Auletta 1975; Ferretti

1976).[19] The protagonists of these shows were socially upper-middle-class professionals and not specifically ethnic. Both of these choices were closely tied to MTM and CBS's pioneering work in tailoring show content to desirable advertising demographics, choices that Gerard Jones suggests severely limited the shows' potential for meaningful social criticism, or for understanding class difference within whiteness (Jones 1992, 193–202; Feuer 1984). Except for credit sequences, these shows were not shot on location but relied on studio sets and interior shooting. Among dramas, only the little-noticed *American Dream* (1981, ABC) consciously interrogated white flight in its account of the Novak family. The Novaks decide to move back to Chicago after recognizing that suburban life was culturally and psychologically arid, but they can only afford to live in a decaying building in a marginal neighborhood. The adjustment issues in the change from suburbs to city were the source of the show's drama, and the show was shot on location. *American Dream* was canceled after just nine episodes.

The character of Tony Baretta became a collection of repeated catchphrases expressed in working-class accented English ("And dat's the name a' dat tune!"), a conventionalized working-class costume (jeans, a black T-shirt, and a cloth cap), and a stereotypically streetwise persona. The David Toma character's Italian American ethnicity had been intrinsic to the show's concept. In the episode "50% Normal," Toma and his longtime friend Freddie Bardini converse at the dinner table in untranslated Italian, and there is some Italian dialog in almost every episode. Baretta's backstory was that he was the orphaned son of Italian immigrants, but, like Joe Mannix's Armenianness, this personal history was used only sporadically in the show.

Baretta was a compendium of wise-cracking banter between Tony Baretta and his street companions, action sequences, and ritualized confrontations between Baretta and his harassed superiors, first Inspector Shiller (Dana Elcar) and then Lieutenant Brubaker (Edward Grover), both of whom enlarged the generic role played by Simon Oakland in *Toma*. Without *Toma*'s grounding in a home life for its protagonist, these elements were easily decoded by audiences as a "cop show," with its precisely proportioned mixture of comedy, action, and mystery. As a much more recognizable star than Tony Musante, Robert Blake was accorded close-ups that regularly broke into the visual logic of dialog scenes. In particular, Blake's two stock expressions, one of intensity and concern, the other a broad smile, are used semiotically in the show, making the character's emotions seem less organic to the specific situation and more in keeping with a set of character traits used across the run of the show, regardless of the individual dramatic situation. *Baretta*'s changes to the *Toma* inheritance

were so deep that it is likely that even those viewers who knew of the former show did not link the two (Brody 2005, 161–173).

The popularity of *Baretta*, like *Starsky & Hutch* and similar parables of white working-class conquest, masked the genuinely multicultural possibilities that *Toma* and even lesser-known projects might have brought to prime time. *Nakia* (1974, ABC), a police drama about a Navajo deputy sheriff (played by Robert Forster), was set and shot in New Mexico and dealt with issues of Native American civil rights, culture, and economics. The show's co-creator was Christopher Trumbo, son of blacklisted screenwriter Dalton Trumbo; the senior Trumbo was a well-known advocate of Native American cultural and civil rights. The show lasted only from September to December of 1974. A police drama starring Hal Linden and Tony LoBianco titled *Mr. Inside, Mr. Outside* seems to have concentrated seriously on ethnic and urban issues when it appeared as a pilot made-for-television-movie (William Graham, 1973) but it was not picked up as a regular series.[20] *Tenafly* (1973–1974, CBS) was part of the *NBC Mystery Movie* omnibus. Its four episodes were built around Harry Tenafly, an African American private detective described as "a happily married, middle-class suburban family man [who] preferred to avoid car chases and gunfights and use brain over brawn in solving cases." (The character's name may have been a signifying play on the hyper-violent, hyper-sexual *Superfly*.) Unlike other shows in the *NBC Mystery Movie* setting, *Tenafly* was not picked up as a regular series ("*Tenafly* [TV Series]" 2016). Likewise, attempts were made to convert the Blaxploitation formula to television. *Shaft* (1973–1974, CBS) and *Get Christie Love!* (1974–1975, ABC) each lasted only one season. *Shaft* was alternated in its time slot with the James Stewart-starring drama *Hawkins* (1973–1974, CBS), a show about a wily country lawyer set in rural West Virginia. The split time slot created a schizophrenic image of race that accurately, if unintentionally, portrayed network television's struggles with changing racial mores.

Baretta was among the most popular shows of its era, was well-syndicated in reruns, and its entire run has been released on DVD.[21] *Toma* has had no such afterlife. *Baretta*'s dozen descendants included such successful nonethnic tableaus of police drama whiteness as *T.J. Hooker* (1982–1986, ABC/CBS), *Hunter* (1984–1991, NBC), and *Walker, Texas Ranger* (1993–2001, CBS). *Toma* has had no comparable visible progeny.

Steven J. Cannell would go on to produce several more police dramas, including *Hardcastle and McCormick* (1983–1986, ABC), *The A-Team* (1983–1987, NBC), *21 Jump Street* (1987–1991, Fox), and *Broken Badges* (1990, CBS). Cannell's shows routinized the "unconventional cop working outside/against the conventions of the justice system" formula and repeated the

Baretta norm of character-based comic action at the expense of meaningful exploration of social issues. Only Cannell's *The Rockford Files* (1974–1980, NBC) showed the imprint of *Toma*'s character ambivalences, but Jim Rockford's weekly cases functioned primarily to express the psychological complexity of his character, not the complexity of the society in which he lived.[22]

Even when the lightest genre elements of the police drama were at their most ritualized, such as comic *shtick* between the protagonist and show regulars, colorful but nonthreatening city denizens, musically accompanied pursuits of suspects, and well-choreographed fight scenes, many of the later Cannell shows assumed the basic duality outlined by *Toma*: The undercover cop could simultaneously act as an agent of order in the larger world and engage sloth and timidity within the institutions charged with policing that order. But none of Cannell's later shows, or the police drama generally, sustained even the tentative political ends to which this duality was put in *Toma*.

Conclusion

In the episode "Rock-A-Bye," Toma's boss is surprised at Toma's having been in the right place at the right time, on a city bus, at night, to intervene in a stolen baby racket. Toma's impertinent response—"Maybe that's because you don't ride busses, inspector"—does not simply identify Toma with the subject population of the modern city, although that would be remarkable enough. It also implies a politics of the underclass that ranges across ethnicities, a potential cross-cultural militancy. Toma's appearance on the bus is not touristic, and his intervention is not colonialist. *Toma*, the show, creates an idealized/idealistic space in which the interests of white ethnics and African American city dwellers can (conceivably) be reconciled. *Baretta* and its successors refused this idealism, positioning white ethnics as permanently apart from African Americans in the destiny of the city. Matthew Frye Jacobson speaks of the post–civil rights era white ethnic revival as an "ethnic reverie," a remembrance of cultural unities that had never existed but whose remembering served a unifying political purpose in the present (Jacobsen 2006, 26). *Toma*'s vision may have been a liberal reverie, a relic of Popular Front hopefulness, impossible of realization in a nation becoming as politically fragmented as the United States in the 1970s. But it was also an affirmation of possibility, of a modern Italian American ethnicity that could attain a truly dynamic cultural power only when it identified with ethnicity itself. In concluding his analysis of ethnicity in America in 1981, sociologist Stephen Steinberg chose to speak not as a

scholar but as a citizen-participant in the drama of ethnic identity he had witnessed as well as studied in the previous two decades: "All members of this society must fear what Frantz Fanon called 'the rage of the oppressed.'. . . As a nation we must give up our ethnic heroes and racial villains and wage a frontal assault against the divisions of race and class that rend our society" (Steinberg, 2001, 302).

No one, including me, has argued that *Toma* is a landmark in the development of series television form. But that is because the road the series staked out, one of intergroup conciliation in the contest over the urban space, was neither fully articulated in the series's short run nor taken up by its police drama successors. In *Toma*'s weekly episodes, the struggles to fuse police drama excitement to social problem discourses are always evident. In *Toma*'s tumultuous historical moment, coherence in the sphere of representation was as chimerical as it was in the sphere of social theory. *Baretta* would achieve that coherence, but at the cost of the messy vitality and boundary crossing that always characterizes real conversations between disparate yet equally meaningful interests.

Notes

1. The term "post–civil rights era" in this article designates the period after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, when U.S. citizens had been fully exposed to the vocabulary and ideology of the civil rights movement. It does not argue the final success of the civil rights movement in achieving its goals.
2. Throughout this article, the terms "America" and "American" refer to conscious constructions of national identity, not to a geographical place or an actual culture.
3. In 1940 NBC developed *I Am an American* at the behest of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of Justice. The show featured testimonials to ethnic pluralism and immigrant assimilation, while Congress designated the third Sunday in May as "I am an American Day." Celebrated Italian American film director Frank Capra was a guest on the program. The statements quoted at the head of this article by Giuseppe Bellanca, Ferdinand Pecora, Attilio Piccirilli, and Gaetano Salvemini were originally made as part of the *I Am an American* and appeared in print in a collection of highlights from the show, *I Am an American by Famous Naturalized Americans,*

edited by Robert Spiers Benjamin (New York: Alliance Press, 1941). *I Am an American* complemented *Americans All-Immigrants All*, a similar program, also developed in concert with the U.S. government for commercial broadcast. This quasi-official discourse of immigrant assimilation and pluralism was widely propagated throughout the media and politics during the years 1938–1945.

4. In fact, *The Godfather* engages the Italian American/African American conflict over post–World War II urban turf with great ambivalence. In the film, a Mafia summit occurs in which the coming trade in narcotics is discussed. Don Zaluchi (Louis Guss), head of a crime family, demands that drugs be kept away from children and schools, and then adds, "In my city we would keep it in the dark peoples.' They're animals anyway; let them lose their souls." The film encourages us to find this attitude not only repulsive but hypocritical.

5. Ehrenhalt's study of middle-class and working-class Chicago suburbs unintentionally confirms the role of racialist thought in the destruction of white ethnic neighborhoods. Documenting the difference between the ostensible stability of neighborhood institutions in the past versus their atomization in the present, he fails to credit ethnic exclusiveness as a source of past strength, or the obsession over its loss as a reason for the decay of neighborhood integrity.

6. For many scholars and activists, Glazer and Moynihan's analysis is itself a symptom of the racism it claims to deconstruct.

7. I make a distinction here between rare, shot-on-location series such as *Naked City*, discussed above, and shows such as *Hill Street Blues*, which were studio-shot and "wrapped" with location-shot credit sequences and occasional stock exteriors. *Toma* was liminal in this respect, mixing both studio sets and shots in which the principals are plainly photographed in practical settings.

8. *Life with Luigi* starred J. Carrol Naish, and *Papa Cellini* starred Tito Vuolo, two performers who had made careers of playing unassimilated Italian Americans in film.

9. The author's Armenian-born grandfather, Garabed Hagopian, understood *Mannix* in exactly this way and eagerly awaited the show each week.

10. *Columbo* aired on NBC but was revived by ABC in a different format from 1989 to 2001.

11. Churchill's work is a reprint of a 1942 New York University doctoral dissertation in sociology that gives a portrait of this enclave at its most stable.

12. As an example, *The Andy Griffith Show*, ostensibly set in North Carolina, ran from 1960 to 1968, 249 episodes, and never included a black cast member in any role.

13. Toma's website refers to him as "one of the most influential humanitarians of our time," and notes that "often times many teenagers and adults would start to cry . . ." during his presentations. See http://davidtoma.com/liffe-story/.

14. Watson relates these political attitudes specifically to the executive branch policies of the Kennedy administration, 1961–1963. Watson's analysis does not account for the presence of similar liberal discourses in earlier cultural and media practices, particularly radio drama, or their persistence after the Kennedy years in shows such as *Room 222* (1969–1972, ABC), *The Man and the City* (1971–1972, ABC), and *The White Shadow* (1978–1981, CBS).

15. Other series emerging in the wake of *All in the Family* also used this same trope of ethnic and cultural difference within the cast with less influence on the culture at large, such as *Chico and the Man* (1974–1978, ABC).

16. In 1977, independent producer Bob Roberts and Toma had plans to shoot a feature based on Toma's life, starring Toma as himself and shot in Newark, but the project never came to fruition.

17. Huggins (1914–2002) was a prolific screenwriter, television writer, and television producer whose specialties were police dramas and western series such as *Maverick* (1957–1962, ABC) and *Alias Smith and Jones* (1971–1973, ABC).

18. David Thorburn's (1976) essay "Television Melodrama," quoted above, uses the phrase ". . . engaged in a kind of joyful contest for recognition and even mastery with the environment that surrounds him" (605) to describe the relationship *Kojak*'s eponymous protagonist has with the city around him, a condition Thorburn compares to *Baretta*.

19. Contemporary popular accounts of the fiscal crisis such as Auletta's and Ferretti's stress the importance of journalistic media narratives at propagating the mythology of New York City as a city in social as well as economic chaos.

20. The series *Hawk*, starring Burt Reynolds as a full-blooded Iroquois who served as a detective in the New York City District Attorney's office and who occasionally investigated cases dealing with racism, had aired during part of the 1966–1967 season on ABC. *Hawk* was, like *Nakia*, a ratings failure.

21. During the 1976–1977 season, *Baretta* was the ninth highest-rated show. Toma had not been among the top 30 programs in its single season. See http://www.classictvhits.com/tvratings/1976.htm.

22. Jim Rockford began as a character in an episode of *Toma*. David Chase (birth name David DeCesare), creator/producer/writer of *The Sopranos* (1999–2007, HBO) began his career as a writer and producer on *The Rockford Files*. Like *The Rockford Files*, *The Sopranos* emphasized the psychological complexity of its protagonist rather than the complexity of the society in which he lived and worked.

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