

Italian-American groups far from entertained by stereotypes on MTV's 'Jersey Shore' reality show [amNewYork, New York]

Dec. 9--Deep orange tan? Check.

Hair gelled to the max? Check.

Boobs, biceps and booze-fueled brawling? Check, check and check.

MTV plays up these and other crude stereotypes of young "Guidos" and "Guidettes" in its new reality show "Jersey Shore," and Italian-American cultural groups are far from entertained.

"It's so blatantly insulting to Italian-Americans and actually to just people in general. It's just a piece of trash ... a direct bash on the Italian heritage," said Andre DiMino, president of Unico, the nation's largest Italian-American service group, on Tuesday.

Some advertisers are similarly disheartened by the show, which features eight 20-somethings -- three from New York City -- spending a summer of fist-bumping fun down the shore. Domino's pizza has pulled its ads, slamming the show's content.

"We understand that this show is not intended for every audience and depicts just one aspect of youth culture," MTV said in a statement. "Our intention was never to stereotype, discriminate or offend."

On Facebook on Tuesday, members of the "MTV's 'Jersey Shore' is a Disgrace to the Jersey Shore and its Inhabitants" group numbered more than 56,000. The New Jersey-based UNICO, which previously condemned mob hit "The Sopranos," is joined by the Order of the Sons of Italy in America and the National Italian-American Foundation in its disapproval. UNICO tried to stop MTV from airing the show before its Dec. 3 premiere.

The Jersey Shore itself may be taking a reputation hit. The region is flattered by the attention but not by the "one-dimensional" representation, according to the Jersey Shore Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"We're in no way angry at the producers and the characters, but ... we want the world to know that there's much more to our area than singles who are clubbing," said Daniel Cappello, the bureau's executive director, on Tuesday. "The Jersey Shore is really rich in culture."

The show admittedly fosters some positives such as Italians' family values. One "Jersey Shore" star has emphasized the show isn't representative of anything in particular.

"It's not the definition of Jersey or New York," castmember Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino told EW.com last week. "It's just a bunch of kids that happen to be partying and working and living together in New Jersey."

emily.ngo@am-ny.com To see more of amNewYork, go to <http://www.amny.com>. Copyright (c) 2009, amNewYork, New York