

Mama's Boys of the Bronx: New Reality Show on TLC

Natasha Lardera (March 29, 2012)



Anthony, Frankie, Giovanni, Peter and Chip are grown-up Italian-American men who still live at home. They are in their 30's yet they let their mothers do everything for them. They work, they party and they go out on the prowl, looking for the Italian woman of their dreams.

Momma's boy:

One who cannot make decisions for himself and has to have his mothers approval no matter right or wrong.

One who needs to hear from or see his mother on a daily basis and definitely more then once.



One who will die at the same point and time his mother does because he simply cannot live without her and would be lost in his life as he does not have his mother directing him.

One who would slice the throat of his wife at his mothers request.

One who was born without a doctor present that did not cut the umbilical cord.

This is how the term is defined on [Urban Dictionary](#) [2].

[Wikipedia](#) [3] gives a more serious definition: "Mother's boy, also mummy's boy or mama's boy, is a term for a man who is excessively attached to his mother at an age when men are expected to be independent (e.g. live on their own, be economically independent). Being mother-bonded is sometimes seen as a sign of weakness, and has a social stigma attached to it in many places, although in other places it may be more acceptable or perceived as normal. A mother-bonded man is seen to give control of his own life to his mother, in exchange for a sense of security. If the mother has more than one son, then she will have, at the most, one mother's boy, usually the eldest or youngest son. The relationship between mother and mother's boy is thought to be 'symbiotic:' the mother enjoys controlling her mother's boy. Alternatively, in recent years, some have begun using the term in a milder sense, merely meaning a man who is emotionally attached to his mother. Though this sense of the phrase is still uncommon compared to the original pejorative intent, mothers in particular may state their pride in their 'mama's boy' sons."

Supposedly all Italian men are mama's boys. The general view of the so called Italian mammoni is that "Men, who are used to being pampered, therefore never grow up. The Mammoni—attractive, employed, successful men in the 30s and 40s—don't get married anymore. They depend on their moms to take care of them because that's what they're used to. They only move out once—and if—they get married," Tom Matlack writes in the [Good Men Project](#) [4]. Many blame the recent economic crisis but the truth is that Italian men have always been that way. An article on the BBC titled Italians slow to leave the nest dated February 1st 2005, for example, explains how "Between 1990 and 2000 the rate of those aged between 30 and 34 still sharing the parental home rose from 14% to 27%, Eurispes says in its annual report," and that "Sons linger even longer than daughters, the government says, with 36.5% of men aged 30 to 34 remaining at home, compared to just 18.1% of women."

The data confirms it, the stereotype definitely is a truth and this stereotype is going to be the brought to life in a new television show. Mama's Boys of the Bronx, premieres April 9, on TLC. "Forget about fresh baked bread, pasta and cannoli - [Arthur Avenue](#) [5] is the place where growing up means never having to leave your mama," the channel writes.

The eight-episode series captures the every day life of five proud Italian-American men who grew up together and still live with their mothers. Anthony, Frankie, Giovanni, Peter and Chip are attractive, employed, in their 30's and don't have to clean their rooms or buy gel for their hair. Their mothers take care of everything. "The mothers would love to see their sons married off to 'good Italian girls,' but until that day comes, they're perfectly happy having their precious boys at home."

Giovanni is one of them. He is 38, and is known as Johnny Margarita (because his father's bar, where all the mobsters hung out, was called Café Margarita). He is an aspiring fashion designer. Frankie is also 38 and he grew up as a street kid. He now is a construction worker and he wants to find a girl just like his Italian mother, Gina, to start a family with. Peter is the youngest, 28, and he is a math teacher who aspires to be an actor. Chip, 36, is a personal trainer and Anthony, 35, is constantly on the prowl.

The five men are portrayed at work, at home, out on the town and on their street, Arthur Avenue. The show is supposed to be a glimpse into the Italian-American culture in the Bronx, yet, let's not forget it is a show designed to entertain, even if it is called reality-TV it is still TV. How these men decide to live their life is their own decision and not all Italian and Italian-American men do not know how to iron their underwear.



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