



Spiro Agnew



Maria Callas



Michael Dukakis



Andreas C. Dracopoulos



Archbishop Iakovos (w. MLK)



Telly Savalas



Betty White



Elia Kazan

All Time Highly-Influential Greek-Americans

By Constantinos E. Scaros

The Atlantic magazine recently completed quite a daunting list: the 100 most influential people in American history. There is not a Greek to be found among them. Then again, there is not a Spaniard, a Frenchman, a Korean, or a Belgian in the mix, either. In fact, everyone's ancestry can be traced to Great Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, or Africa, with scant exception: social/political activists Ralph

Nader and Betty Friedan are of Lebanese and Russian/Hungarian descent, respectively; Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren's ancestors were from Norway, and Hollywood giant Sam Goldwyn's from Poland. Italians can lay claim to one of the list's honorees, Enrico Fermi. And that's it – no other nationalities are represented. Also, it is important to keep in mind that despite its profound impact on world history, the United States remains, at 238

years of age, a very young nation. Half of the people on the list exacted their influence long before the 20th century, when the first significant wave of Greek immigration to the United States occurred. That there are no Greeks on the list, then, should be no surprise. The most prevalent category in terms of occupation/field title was, predictably, president of the United States. Seventeen of our nation's chief executives made the list, including the first four,

who were among the Founding Fathers: George Washington (2), John Adams (25), Thomas Jefferson (3), and James Madison (13). Two other Founders who were not president but made the list were Alexander Hamilton (5) and Benjamin Franklin (6). Topping the list overall was President Abraham Lincoln, emblematic of a consistent theme of African-Americans' civil rights throughout the rankings, in

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Dimas Loses in 2nd Round of Voting, But Is Closing the Gap

Samaras Hopes His Presidential Pick Will Prevail; Stave off Early Elections

ATHENS – Prime Minister and New Democracy leader Antonis Samaras' hopes to get his party's Vice-President Stavros Dimas elected Greek President to stave off early national elections went down for a second time on Dec. 23, but picked up eight more votes over a first round, leaving him to gain 12 more in a final ballot on Dec. 29 to succeed. The 300-member Parliament gave Dimas 168 votes, with 131 voting present and one not voting. He had gotten 160 votes the first time but since then Samaras said he would offer national elections at the end of next year if enough lawmakers from rival parties and Independents would support his man for president. It takes 200 votes in the first two rounds in the Parliament and the coalition government, which includes the fast-fading PASOK Socialists has only 155 combined, leaving the Premier to effectively concede the first two ballots and set his sights on the last.

If that fails, national elections will be scheduled in January or February with polls showing the major opposition Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) leading. With his party leading in surveys, the Leftist leader, Alexis Tsipras is trying to thwart the election of Dimas and is being backed so far by most Independent lawmakers and the government's rival parties, chiefly the Independent Greeks (ANEL) leader, former New Democracy member Panos Kammenos.

The ANEL leader had claimed that a government intermediary had offered a bribe

to one of his lawmakers, former TV actor Pavlos Haikalis, but a prosecutor threw out the charges. The government is reeling, its popularity undercut after imposing harsh austerity measures demanded by the Troika of the European Union-International Monetary Fund-European Central Bank (EU-IMF-ECB) in return for economy bailouts of 240 billion euros (\$306 billion) that began in 2010. Tsipras has been demanding snap polls for months but Samaras argued he was leading Greece to a recovery, although stalled negotiations with the Troika over undone reforms and a how to close a hole in the 2015 budget of as much as three billion euros forced him to give up plans for an early exit from the memorandum he signed agreeing to big pay cuts, tax

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Claim of Vote Bribe in Greece Is Dismissed

ATHENS – A judicial investigation has dismissed a Greek lawmaker's allegations he was offered money to back the government candidate in the country's Presidential vote with anti-austerity parties trying to thwart the election and force early national elections during a perilous economic time. Court officials said that prosecutor Panagiotis Panagiotopoulos found the claim by Pavlos Haikalis, a lawmaker from a small opposition right-wing Independent Greeks (ANEL) party, was unfounded. Prime Minister and New Democracy Conservative leader

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Behrakis Establishes Plan For a Smoke-Free Greece

By Theodore Kalmoukos

LOWELL, MA – George D. Behrakis, a prominent Greek-American businessman and philanthropist from Lowell, MA is on a sacred and patriotic mission these days trying to save Greece's children from dying from illnesses linked to smoking cigarettes. He has spent a lot of time traveling back and forth to Greece over the past six years, and devoted over \$10 million in an antismoking campaign aimed at Greek students, to convince them to quit smoking or never start. Behrakis created a package called "The Truth about Smoking" and has funded the writing, publishing, and continuous distribution a series of booklets accordingly.

One of the books is called Education for a World without Smoking; another is I Learned Not to Smoke. Behrakis is also concerned about adults, especially the pregnant women, who are hooked on smoking. Thus, he funded a book depicting on its cover a young mother holding her newborn baby. The book is called Because I love You, I Don't Smoke. It is actually "guide of self-help to stop smoking during pregnancy and forever." It all began about six years ago, Behrakis told TNH, "during one of trips my to Greece because of the riots that were taken place in the center of Athens, at that time I stayed in a small hotel in Kifisia. I woke up one day very early in the morning and I walked around the block and I happened to come in front of a school and there were two women dressed in black giving free cigarettes to little girls. I walked up to them: they couldn't speak Greek or English, and I wanted to know what they were doing. They

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TNH/COSTAS BEJ

Students of Spyropoulos Day School Spread Christmas Cheer

Eleftherios Eleftheriades, chanter and teacher at the St. Nicholas Shrine Church, leads the students of the parish's William Spyropoulos Greek-American School as they sing carols while Father Paul Palesty, parish staff, and the children's families enjoy the program.

Community Responds to Cuba Policy

By Constantine S. Sirigos
TNH Staff Writer

NEW YORK – When President Obama called for the restoration of full diplomatic relations with Cuba, he unleashed floods of both hope and anger among Cuban-Americans. The decision also stimulated interest in the Orthodox Christian community in the United States in renewing ties with their co-religionists in the Caribbean nation. In 2004, the Greek Orthodox church that was built in 1950 as Sts. Constantine and Helen but was never used as anything but a children's theater was reopened after renovations as the

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All-Time Highly-Influential U.S. Greeks on American Society Overall

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which abolitionists ranked very highly, as did civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., who finished 8th overall. Other notable African-Americans included baseball great Jackie Robinson (35), activist W.E.B. DuBois (43), abolitionist Frederick Douglass (47), Musician Louie Armstrong (74), Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall (84), and educator Booker T. Washington (98). Barack Obama, the current and first African-American president, is not on the list.

GREXCCELLENCE
Though some names arguably could have been shuffled to present a more appropriate overall ranking, it does not appear that anyone on the list is undeserving. Nonetheless, there have been countless Greek-Americans whose influence has greatly affected this country. Even if they didn't make Atlantic's Top 100, they deserve our attention.

An influential list does not necessarily mean most successful

(note: megastar Jennifer Aniston and prestigious news chief George Stephanopoulos are not included), nor does the influence have to be based on a positive accomplishment (the list includes Spiro Agnew's scandal-induced resignation as U.S. vice president, for example).

In no particular order of ranking and by no means an exhaustive anthology, here are 15 Greeks who were born and/or lived in the United States, in alphabetical order, who influenced not specifically Greek America, but America as a whole.

SPIRO AGNEW
Perhaps no one exemplifies what this list is all about than Spiro Agnew. If this were a list about the most influential Greek-Americans, then certainly Agnew would be at or near the top. After all, having served as Vice President of the United States, Agnew held a position more powerful in American politics than any Greek before or since.

But if this list is about highly influential Americans whose Greek descent is only incidental,

what makes Agnew so important? Why not any of the other 46 American vice presidents (only one of which, John Adams – who later became president – made Atlantic's list)?

Was it that Agnew was a particularly great vice president? Not exactly. In fact, he tarnished his own political career by resigning amid a bribery scandal, a year before his boss, Richard Nixon, resigned the presidency. In fact, that whole sequence of events is what makes Agnew so influential.

One of the reasons Nixon was essentially forced to resign – facing near-certain impeachment and conviction – was because of the alternative: Gerald Ford. Ford was widely liked and respected, not just by Democrats but by Republicans as well. Agnew, by contrast, had become quite adept at being Nixon's "hatchet man." Accordingly, there is good reason to believe that Congressional Democrats would have been less willing to impeach Nixon if that would have resulted in President Agnew. During George W. Bush's presidency, when some on the left, angered by his decision to use military force in Iraq, called for his impeachment, others said: "do you want to wind up with Dick Cheney as president? That would be worse!" Consider, instead, if Bush's vice president had been, say, John McCain.

McCain is to Ford as Cheney is to Agnew. Without Agnew resigning, we might never have had Watergate. Or President Ford....etc.

ANDREWS SISTERS
Okay, there were three of them – LaVerne, Maxene, and Patty – but here we count them as one, for it was as a trio that these three singers not only were preeminent in the entertaining of American troops overseas during World War II, but inspired



Dr. George Papanicolaou

Americans to stand united behind their country's war effort and purchase war bonds, in turn inspiring other celebrities – most notably Bette Davis – also to undertake that initiative. They starred in 17 Hollywood films – more than any other singing group in history.

MARIA CALLAS
Maria Callas is not simply the greatest female opera singer of Greek descent: along with Renata Tebaldi, she is considered arguably the greatest soprano in history. Moreover, her temperamental demeanor offstage as well as her commanding presence on it classifies her as the quintessential diva. Louie Armstrong and composer Stephen Foster were the only two musicians on Atlantic's list. It is plausible to suggest that Callas should have been on it, too.

TOM CARVEL
Most people take the simple things in life, like an ice cream sandwich, for granted. Or the notion that they can find multiple locations of their favorite store – whether it sells, ice cream, toys, or power drills – because of the franchising model. Both of those concepts were in great part inspired and implemented by Tom Carvel. He turned ice cream in America from an eclectic dessert for the elite into the quintessential American treat. And when he started running the stores to which he sold his patented freezers himself, that was a prototype for modern-day franchising.

KELLY CLARKSON
Kelly Clarkson is a singer/songwriter whose albums have sold in the millions. That's great, but what makes Clarkson more influential to America than countless other musicians who have done the same thing? How she got there. Clarkson was the first winner of American Idol – and so Americans got a chance to watch her rise from obscurity to superstardom. They were part of it – they saw the American dream unfold right before their every eyes – on the television screens in their living rooms. Sure, we hear about how music legends Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley went from rags to riches, but with Clarkson, we didn't just hear it, we witnessed it.

ANDREAS DRACPOULOS
Though not a high-profile celebrity, Andreas C. Dracopoulos, co-President of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, through his cultural, education, and philanthropic initiatives, has certainly affected the lives of a great many Americans.

In particular, Dracopoulos' contributions to education – his support of Greek schools, but also his work in establishing programs for young learners at the New York Public Library, and his major donations to Johns Hopkins and Rockefeller Universities, two of the foremost research institutions in the world – render him one of the most significant benefactors of American culture, education, and philanthropy.

MICHAEL DUKAKIS
As in the case of Spiro Agnew, one can certainly consider Massachusetts Governor and 1988 Democratic Presidential nominee Michael Dukakis one of our country's all-time successful Greek-Americans. But how is he one of the most influential Americans who just happens to be Greek? What makes the ran-and-lost Dukakis any more influential than, say, Mitt Romney? It wasn't just that Dukakis lost, but it was how he lost. He took the high road and stayed on it throughout the campaign, all the way up to Election Day. When mud was thrown his way, he didn't throw any back.

Negative campaigning in America began with the John Adams-Thomas Jefferson presidential race of 1796. But there have been ebbs and flows, and the nastiness in America had subsided considerably from 1912 to 1988. In fact, in the Summer of 1988, Dukakis held a double-digit lead over incumbent Vice President George H.W. Bush, but then Bush's campaign manager, Lee Atwater, reinvented negative campaigning. Dukakis didn't fight back, and he lost. The lesson learned: fight dirty. Since then, negative campaigning, unfortunately, has flourished. By behaving like a gentleman and proceeding to lose the election, Dukakis highly influenced others not to do the same.

TINA FEY
There are bigger TV stars than Tina Fey, even among her

fellow Greek-Americans. But Fey's spot-on imitation of GOP VP nominee Sarah Palin in the 2008 campaign may have been just what was needed to tip the election in Barack Obama's favor for good. Granted, there were many reasons Americans had determined they would vote for a Democrat. But many were gunshy about choosing the first ever African-American president, and one with an exotic-sounding name who, as a relative newcomer to American national politics, was largely an unknown entity.

John McCain, by comparison, was the safe choice. But Fey, playing Sarah Palin, saying "I can see Russia from my house" sealed the Alaska governor as a caricature of herself. To this day, many Americans think Palin herself actually uttered those words.

Tina Fey was just being funny, on Saturday Night Live. But her performance had farther-reaching implications than even she ever would have imagined.

ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS
The National Herald has written countless times about what an influence on Greek America Archbishop Iakovos was throughout his tenure. But what made him so influential on America as a whole? His march from the Alabama city Selma, to the capital Montgomery, in 1965, standing side-by-side with Martin Luther King, which made the cover of Life magazine. Sure, that was a boon for Greek Orthodoxy, but how did that influ-



Tina "Sarah Palin" Fey

ence America overall? It demonstrated that King's initiative was ecumenical. Here was a man, largely unknown to most of America, dressed in an imposing black gown and headpiece, and an ostentatious Christian medal, standing by King's side. If a picture is worth 1000 words, a front-page cover on a magazine as prestigious as Life is worth a million.

ELIA KAZAN
Elia Kazan was a great director, but so are Steven Spielberg, Francis Ford-Coppola, Martin Scorsese, and countless others. How did Kazan, in particular, in-



Kelly Clarkson

fluence America? Not so much because of his great films – and there were many – but because he named names. He testified before the House of Representatives Un-American Activities committee, about certain of his fellow actors and actresses who at one time or another – like he did, as a young man – had ties to the Communist Party. Kazan quit the communists, hated them, and said he wasn't about to give up his professional career to defend something he didn't believe in. Some despised him for being selfish, others applauded his blunt sincerity. He influenced a large handful of actors as a director, but millions more as a government witness. Through his testimony, he was effectively saying: it's okay to cooperate with the feds.

GEORGE PAPANICOLAOU
Along with Maria Callas, Dr. George Papanicolaou is arguably

the most "obvious" choice for this list, for lack of a better word, and a plausible argument can be made for his inclusion on Atlantic's 100. He was the discoverer of the Pap Smear (or Pap Test), which can detect cervical cancer and other reproductive diseases. The very future of the perpetuation of civilization, in terms of reproduction, owes a great deal to Dr. Papanicolaou. That is more than enough to place him among America's all-time most influential individuals.

PETE SAMPRAS
Like Maria Callas, Pete Sampras was, quite simply, the best at what he did. Widely considered one of the greatest tennis players of all time, few would dispute he is the best of the lot out of those born in the United States. He had a versatile style and was dominant in three of



Tom Carvel

the four grand slam competitions, the French Open the only one he never won. That, and a workmanlike but not gregarious personality – like Jimmy Connors or John McEnroe – perhaps tempered his superstardom, but he is undoubtedly one of the greatest ever to play the game of tennis.

TELLY SAVALAS
Remember, this is not a list of the most successful Greek-Americans. Why, then, Telly Savalas, who played TV Cop Kojak, and not other TV cops, like Peter Falk (Columbo), Paul Michael Glaser and David Soul (Starsky & Hutch), Robert Blake (Baretta), Mike Connors (Man-nix), or Andy Griffith – America's most beloved sheriff – Andy Taylor? Because Savalas made bald sexy and lollipops manly. In the original decade of big hair, Savalas had a scalp and smooth as a cue ball, compared to Columbo's floppy hair, Starsky's curly locks, and the other police pompadours of the seventies. With a wardrobe and a smart mouth that made him quintessentially New York City, Lieutenant Kojak was a sex symbol, and men with receding hairlines no longer had to feel hopeless. Moreover, Savalas also quit smoking, and so did his character – who turned to lollipops. Kojak made lollipop licking cool, inspiring others to put out their butts and stogies, too.

SPYROS SKOURAS
Like George Papanicolaou, say the name "Spyros Skouras" and a lot of people might respond: "who's he?" But hardly anyone would fail to recognize the name of his most famous creation, Marilyn Monroe. Skouras achieved tremendous success in establishing the merger between motion picture companies Fox and Twentieth Century, and was responsible for countless classic films. But what sets Skouras apart from most of his peers is turning Monroe from unknown Norman Jean Mortenson into Marilyn Monroe, the world's most famous sex symbol. His other monumental accomplishment was keeping the film industry not only alive, but thriving, in the 1950s, when for a while it seemed as if the new craze of television would render it obsolete.

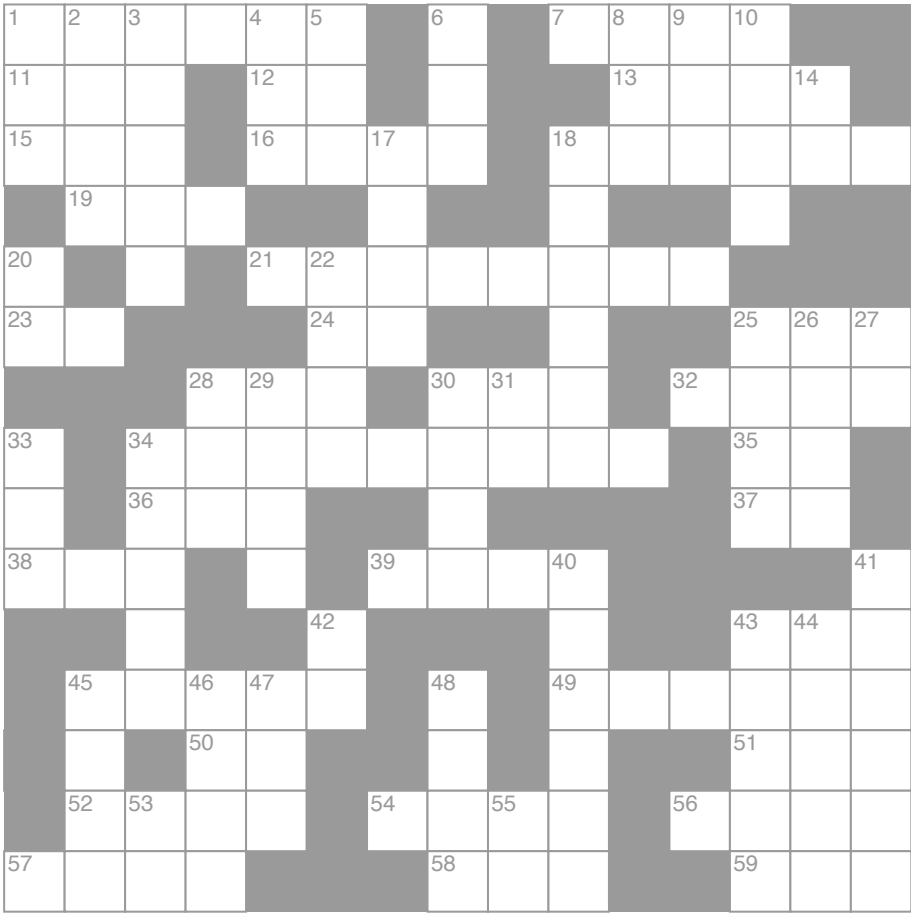
BETTY WHITE
Betty White became well-known when she starred on the Mary Tyler Moore Show in the 1970s, and she had attained nowhere near the fame of some of her costars, not least of which Moore herself. That she debuted on that show in 1973 at age 51 was no big deal. That she continues to go to work every day, starting on Hot in Cleveland, at age 92, is a big deal – very big. White has become the toast of television in her golden years – appropriately, having starred on The Golden Girls in the eighties and nineties – as, now in her own nineties, she has long outlasted most of her contemporaries onscreen. She is an inspiration to men and women of mature years everywhere.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Again, the list is not based on how any of these individuals (or others not on the list) have influenced Greek America, but rather, how they influenced America as a whole. If you wish to share your thoughts about others who ought to be included on this list, by all means, let us know. We welcome your ideas.



Maxene, Patty, and LaVerne Andrews

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ACROSS

- 1 Lindos is on this island
- 7 Seaver and Selleck
- 11 President Jefferson, informally
- 12 Strrd. in American Pie (init.)
- 13 "...and a partridge in a ____ tree"
- 15 End of Engagmnt. (abbrev.)
- 16 Book unit
- 18 Starred in Angels with Dirty Faces
- 19 Flanked by E and I
- 21 Cigar size
- 23 Tulsa's st. (abbrev.)
- 24 Unit Equip. (abbrev.)
- 25 Supporter
- 28 Ralph Kramden drove one
- 30 Electr. Mail Host (abbrev.)
- 32 Tsiouro
- 34 Lasagna's Greek counterpart
- 35 "White Wedding" sngr. (init.)
- 36 One, in Greek
- 37 Not out
- 38 Asst. Attorney General (abbrev.)
- 39 Washington St. Arts Commission (abbrev.)
- 43 Greek prefix meaning earth
- 45 Type of red wine
- 49 Ms. Bacall
- 50 HB's Casablanca co-star (init.)
- 51 Christina's tycoon dad
- 52 Eng. as a Second Lang. Institute (abbrev.)
- 54 Sliced Greek cheese?
- 56 Asian and Pacific Islander Amer. (abbrev.)
- 57 "At ____, solidier!"
- 58 Remote Access Serv. (abbrev.)
- 59 Female chicken

DOWN

- 1 Alt. name for highway or road (abbrev.)
- 2 Rudolph's foot
- 3 "Ultimate" wristwatch brand?
- 4 Ment. Telepathy (abbrev)
- 5 Poseidon's domain
- 6 He's counterpart
- 8 Greek cheer
- 9 Actress Ryan
- 10 Without
- 14 "In ____" about
- 17 Match Game Host Rayburn

- 18 Joanie Loves ____ (Happy Days spinoff)
- 20 Hawaiian musician Don
- 22 Displace
- 25 Teo of Indy 500
- 26 Similar
- 27 Chemical symbol for nickel
- 28 Prohibit
- 29 United States Aviary Lge. (abbrev.)
- 30 Est.Times of Arrival (abbrev.)
- 31 Biloxi's st. (abbrev.)
- 33 Doctors' org. (init.)
- 34 "____ Sue" Buddy Holly Song
- 40 Charlie or Maria
- 41 Group of islands containing Corfu
- 42 Sang "Oh Boy " (init.)
- 43 Greek suffix meaning something written or drawn
- 44 Spooky
- 45 Mets' prior residence
- 46 Anger
- 47 American Bankruptcy Institute (init.)
- 48 Under's opposite
- 53 Initials on American sea vessels
- 55 Cowboys' Super Bowl QB Init.)

