

The Weight of Salt (Book one) First Edition – English

A Gripping Story of Love and Courage.

AUTHOR/COPYRIGHT: Sandra Montanino

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AMAZON (+Kindle): [The Weight of Salt \(Book One\)](#)

Barnes and Noble (+Nook): [The Weight of Salt \(Book One\)](#)

TITLE DESCRIPTION:

THE WEIGHT OF SALT

A Gripping Story of Love and Courage.

Florida, 1906 – In the northeast section of Tampa, called Ybor City and known as The Cigar Capital of the World, comes an intimate part of American history that is seldom found in books and susceptible to be forgotten.

Although fiction, The Weight of Salt is inspired by a real person, a real time, and real events. Fifteen-year-old, Angelina Pirrello is bright and excited for her life to begin when she is abruptly torn from her mother's love and is left to abide by her father's rigid Italian beliefs. It is the era of unprecedented immigration, the Mafia is terrorizing Italian neighborhoods and store owners, and the fierce fight of the Suffragettes to gain the vote for women.

It is a time when dreams of American freedoms are celebrated and threatened. The old world across the sea clashes with the new, and a young girl must make a choice to fortify or forfeit her spirit. Yet, in the midst of the biggest fire in Florida's history, and the loss of legions of cigar factories, amid the chaos, Angelina unexpectedly encounters Rolando and soon discovers the force of falling in love. Yet, her dreams are quickly shattered when her father ignores her desire to marry for love and promises her hand in an arranged marriage to an older man she dislikes.

This novel touches on every human emotion, love, joy, heartbreak, passion, and the unexpected. Only because those who lived this story have passed away and cannot testify, this novel is historical fiction and not simply historical fact.

With powerful insight and sensitivity, Sandra Montanino's debut novel illuminates this long-ago story. She brings us a beautiful, warm, inspiring, yet heartbreakingly novel that celebrates the resilience of one girl. This is a novel for everyone and a tribute to those who lived through it all and those that told and retold their story.

Winner of the Southern California Writers Conference "***Outstanding Fiction Award.***"

SUBJECTS:

FICTION / Historical / Italian
FICTION / Romance / Historical / General
FICTION / Historical / 20th Century.
FICTION / Coming of Age.

AUDIENCE: Adult

REGIONAL SUBJECT: (Location of book) Southeastern & South Atlantic States

THEMA SUBJECT: FICTION / Historical | FICTION / Romance / Historical

NARRATIVE THEME: Coming of Age

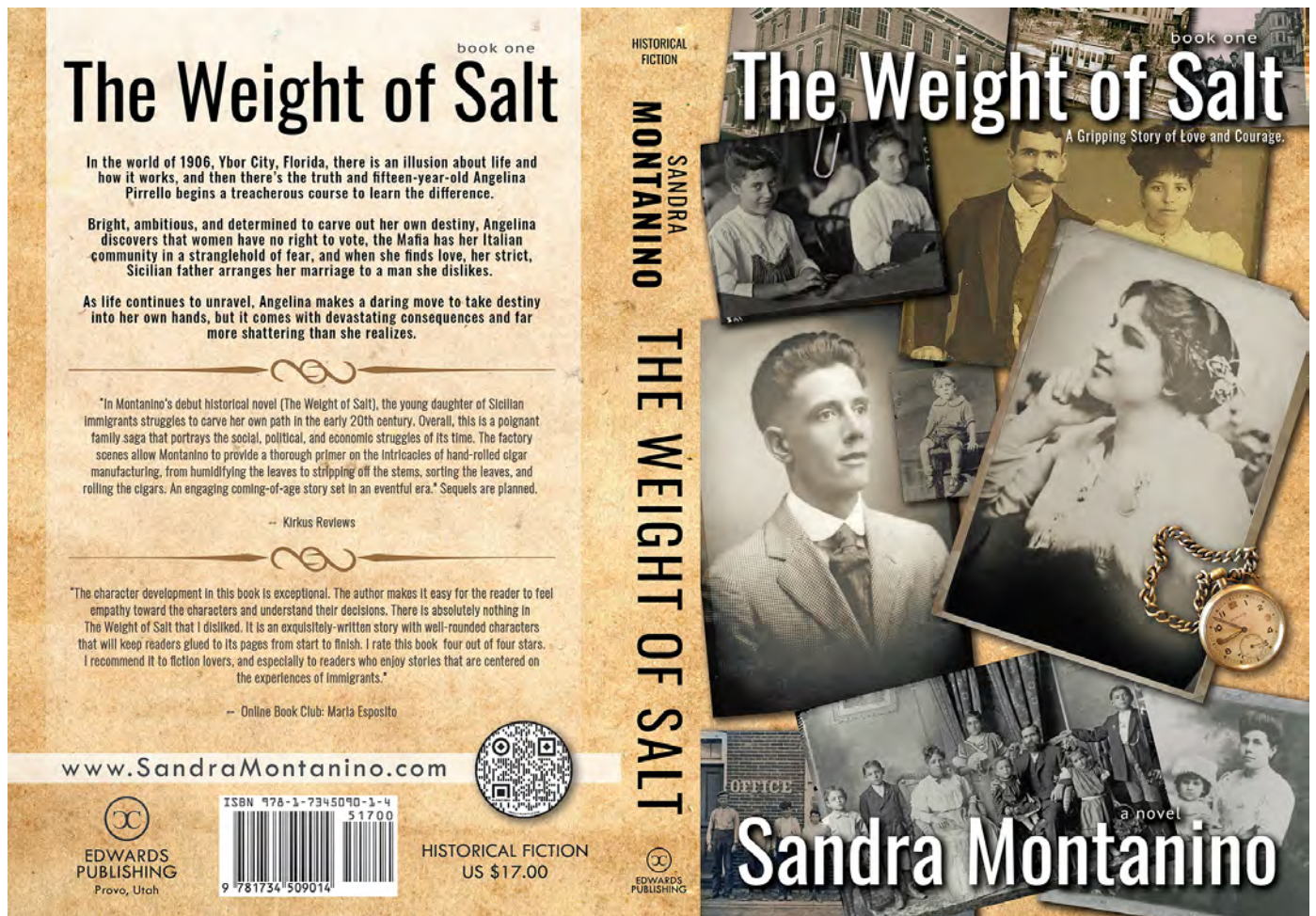
BOOK TRIM SIZE: 6.000" x 9.000" 229mm x 152mm (novel)

INTERIOR COLOR: Black and White | **INTERIOR PAPER:** Crème 50lb

BINDING: Paperback - Perfect Bound | **COVER FINISH:** Matte

BOOK TYPE: B&W 6 x 9 in or 229 x 152 mm Perfect Bound on Creme w/Matte Lam

PAGE COUNT: 356 | **MARKET:** United States (primary)



BOOK COVER: *The Weight of Salt* (Book One)



AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY:

By the age of eight, Sandra Montanino, lived in three different countries. Born into a large Italian, Basque, and Panamanian family, these rich exposures immersed her into a wealth of cultures, languages, provincial superstitions, and an endless fascination with her family of storytellers. The stories enriched her life and ignited her imagination.

The Original Recipe was an article featured in Ancestry Magazine about her family's obsession with "who makes the best pasta sauce." Sandra found that her treasure chest of tales, mystical superstitions, adventures, and wisdom came from her own family and she has committed to print for everyone to enjoy.

Sandra's longtime husband Gennaro comes from a family originating in Naples and was born into the immigrant world of Manhattan's Little Italy.

From his experiences and those of his family, she is now compiling these stories for another book. Together she and her husband have five children and fourteen grandchildren and while they lived in Southern California for most of their lives, they now reside in Provo, Utah.

AUTHOR PRIOR WORK:

"The Original Recipe" – Ancestry Magazine

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS:

League of Utah Writers | Utah Wordsmiths | Southern California Writers Conference
Ancestry Magazine

Never forget where you come from - - A Message from Sandra Montanino –

THE WEIGHT OF SALT (Book One) was inspired by both my grandmother Angelina and my great-grandfather Domenico. Their intense life stories have been a great topic of many conversations, told and retold by the family.

While I inherited their joy of storytelling, it took me a long time to realize that these stories were in danger of becoming lost treasures. Since my children have married into other wonderful nationalities, they and their children will never know the passion of what it was like and what was sacrificed when their ancestors came to America. I began by writing short stories about the events of those that came before us and was honored to win numerous awards from the League of Utah Writers.

After receiving such recognition, League members asked me to reveal a bit about the book I was writing, but I was not writing a book. When the question persisted, I decided I had better get busy. I considered everything I had accomplished, everything I had failed at, and everyone I had known. Like all inspirations, the vision came in a flash of my Sicilian grandmother, Angelina. I rushed to the computer and outlined the first eighteen chapters.

Although everyone had died, the compelling drama of their lives still lit a powerful fire. I gathered all the information I knew and connected the remainder with my imagination and my knowledge of their powerful personalities.

My cousin told me once, "Never forget you come from strong stock, and you are much stronger than you think." This novel is a story about such strength, and it began in a corner of Tampa, Florida known as Ybor City and named "The Cigar Capital of the World."

In the late 1800s and early 1900s newly arrived Italian immigrants were drawn to the prospects of work and a better life for their families.

In my book, *The Weight of Salt*, I recount the story of my great-grandfather, Domenico, who before he could speak English, carried a small wood burning stove to the Ybor City train terminal and timed cooking his sausage sandwiches in line with the arrival and departure of trains. He said, "If you are going to sell something, sell food, so you will never go hungry." The smell of sausages lured hungry travelers and Domenico was able to earn enough to build a small grocery and sandwich shop at the edge of the terminal. He later built a home attached to the grocery store where he raised his six children. This is where the story really begins.

THE JOURNEY TO AMERICA

Between 1876 and 1930, more than five million Italians immigrated to the United States—the majority fleeing grinding rural poverty in Southern Italy and Sicily. These immigrants were desperate enough to leave everything behind and journey to a new country with only a few dollars in their pockets, knowing no one, and unable to speak the language. Today, Americans of Italian ancestry are the nation's fifth-largest ethnic group.

THE ITALIANS IN TAMPA (Ybor City)

The Italians of Ybor City arrived almost exclusively from Sicily. Life was unimaginably hard in the mid-to late 1800s. Most of the immigrants came from Sicily's southwestern region, a hilly area containing the towns of Santo Stefano Quisquina, Alessandria della Rocca, Cianciana and Bivona. These villagers struggled with poor soil, malaria, bandits, low birth rates, high land rents from absentee landlords, and even wolves.

The completion of the Plant Railway to Tampa (1884) and Vicente Martinez Ybor's development of Ybor City (1886) made the Tampa area an attractive destination for these immigrants. Thousands—including the many Sicilians who either came directly to Tampa or moved there from their initial U.S. "landing spots"—found work in the cigar trade, as well as in the myriad of other enterprises that supported Italians in the community.

SOURCE: CIGAR CITY MAGAZINE

Italians mostly brought their entire families with them, unlike many of the other immigrants. Once arriving in Ybor City (pronounced ee-bor), Italians settled mainly in the eastern and southern fringes of the city. It was referred to as *La Pachata*, after a Cuban rent collector. It also became known as "Little Italy."

THE CIGAR CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

At first, Italians found it difficult to find employment in the cigar industry, which was dominated by Hispanic workers. The Italians arrived in the cigar town without cigar-making skills and started at the bottom of the ladder, positions which did not involve handling tobacco. Working beside unskilled Cubans, they swept, hauled, and were porters and doorkeepers. Most of the Italian women worked as cigar strippers, a monotonous and undesirable position. Eventually, many Italian women became skilled cigar makers, earning as much as their male counterparts. In the end, approximately 20% of the cigar factory workers were Italian Americans.

BOOKS



The Weight of Salt (Book One)
A Gripping Story of Love and Courage.
2020/2021 Release

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***The Weight of Betrayal
(Book Two)***
{working title} 2021 Release.

Author: Sandra Montanino
Edwards Publishing



***The Weight of War
(Book Three)***
{working title} 2022 Release.

Author: Sandra Montanino
Edwards Publishing



Pirrello Family – (Angelina Pirrello – center) Circa 1906



Author Sandra Montanino and husband, Gennaro – Circa 1960