

States—was reached during Italy's imperialist war of conquest against Ethiopia in 1935–1936. But most of that support evaporated when Italy waged war against the United States and Great Britain, Canada, and the rest of the Dominions in 1940–1943, a development that proved Italian immigrants and their progeny understood on which side their bread was buttered, notwithstanding twenty years of fascist propaganda and influence in their communities. Pretelli concludes that fascist policies toward Italians abroad had failed.

Although Pretelli has utilized documents from various collections at the Archivio del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the Archivio Centrale dello Stato (Central Archives of the State), and the National Archives of the United States, the preponderance of Pretelli's source material is secondary. More extensive utilization of archival documents would have significantly enhanced the importance of this study, but Pretelli's mastery of the scholarly literature as it pertains to nearly a dozen countries and their Italian communities is quite impressive. Knowledge derived from these sources could have enabled Pretelli to provide a more thorough account of fascist institutions abroad and how they differed from each other, but his treatment in this regard is exceedingly thin. Pretelli also chose to exclude anti-Fascism from his study, an ill-conceived decision considering that so much of fascist strategy and effort abroad was aimed at the suppression of the *soversivi* (left-wing radicals).

Pretelli's writing style is eminently accessible, but the net result is a dissatisfying read because his narrative consists of fact after fact after fact, with little analysis or original insight. A more ambitious undertaking (particularly more archival research on the 1930s) would have produced a superior book. With its present scope and treatment, Pretelli's slender volume qualifies primarily as an introductory account useful to scholars and students who possess little familiarity with Italian Fascism and the myriad means by which Mussolini's regime sought hegemony over the *patria lontana*.

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For Both Cross and Flag: Catholic Action, Anti-Catholicism, and National Security Politics in World War II San Francisco

By William Issel.

Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 2010.

216 pages.

William Issel is Professor Emeritus of History at San Francisco State University and a long-time resident of San Francisco. In his previous works, Issel has focused on politics and power in the U.S. post-World War II period. In his Introduction, however, he tells us that this book is mainly about "the ordeal of Sylvester Andriano" (2), whose story Issel came across while researching "the competition between the Communist Party

and the Catholic Church in San Francisco during the 1930s and 1940s.” Andriano was an Italian American very much involved with Catholic Action activities and a confidante of Archbishop John Mitty “who was forcibly removed from the West Coast in 1942 on the basis of politically inspired false charges that he was a Fascist agent” (1). Issel wants to clear Andriano’s name but also to show how the events in which Andriano was enmeshed in San Francisco were shaped by political processes playing themselves out both in the United States more generally and in Europe.

Although I very much enjoyed reading this book, I have to say at the outset that it is not really a book about Sylvester Andriano at all. Andriano, to be sure, appears as a character in the story that Issel tells, especially in the beginning of the book, but Andriano is really only one character among many in that story, and there are long narrative episodes where Andriano is mentioned only in passing. For the most part, Issel is telling a story about the Catholic Action movement.

Issel tells us that the term *Catholic Action* “came into general usage after 1901” (35), mainly on account of the writings of Leo XIII (1878–1903) and Pius X (1903–1914). In my view, this is an overstatement. The original *Catholic Encyclopedia* (published in 1912), for example, has no entry in its index for “Catholic Action.” It seems evident that “Catholic Action” started life as a label that was applied more or less indiscriminately to any political activity involving Catholic laity (typically in concert with church officials) that could be seen as deriving from Catholic values. Over time, however, Catholic Action became something more tangible, as particular individuals in particular locations took on particular causes. It is Issel’s description of the process of Catholic Action becoming something “concrete” in the San Francisco area during the 1930s and 1940s that gives value to this book. Thus, after a relatively brief account of the internal divisions within the North Beach Italian community in San Francisco (mainly between Italian Americans who saw Catholicism as an essential element in Italian identity and Italian Americans who forcefully associated themselves with a tradition of Italian anticlericalism), Issel broadens the focus to San Francisco rather than just North Beach.

Issel’s account of the long-running dockworkers strike of 1934 is central to his account of the development of Catholic Action in San Francisco. Carefully and methodically, Issel shows how Catholic leaders—including Andriano, but also Archbishops Edward Hanna and John Mitty along with Mayor Angelo Rossi—worked to secure a just resolution of worker demands because they saw those demands as legitimate given Catholic teaching. If there is a problem with Issel’s analysis here, it is that he is less concerned with fleshing out characters if they are non-Catholics. Harry Bridges, for example, the well-known labor activist, gets short shrift.

Issel goes on to describe the various meanings that Catholic leaders came to associate with Catholic Action and the organization crusades they took on during the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s. Occasionally, his focus on telling the story of how Catholic Action evolved produces a slight tunnel vision that leads him to overlook possibly interrelated patterns that would otherwise draw comment. For example, consider three things. First, almost all of the individuals who Issel identifies as the leaders who shaped Catholic Action were men. Second, two of the issues that help crystallize Catholic Action campaigns in San Francisco were the campaign for “decent reading” and the campaign against individuals and groups trying to promote birth

control. Third, the only woman who is described in any detail (92–97) and who seems to possess any substantial degree of agency in Issel’s account is Oleta O’Connor. O’Connor had been raised Catholic and had attended a Catholic grammar school. After graduating from high school, she went on to attend the University of California at Berkeley, where she became president of the Women’s Debating Club, graduating in 1913. Very quickly, she became active in the local Communist Party and started to critique Catholicism in her role as “CP [Communist Party] county educator” (94). Is there a basis here for thinking that the Catholic Action leadership, overwhelmingly male, was influenced by prevailing ideologies about gender, gender relations, and sexuality in deciding what causes to champion and what causes to ignore, and that this may have conditioned the reaction of some people, possibly young women like Oleta O’Connor, to Catholic Action? It seems a distinct possibility, but it is not a possibility that Issel explores.

Toward the end of the book, Andriano again becomes the focus for Issel. The U.S. government issued an “Individual Exclusion Order” in September 1942 that banned Andriano from all coastal areas in the United States. In Issel’s account, the order derived partly from the biased testimony of an Italian anticlericalist but also from J. Edgar Hoover’s desire to expand the jurisdictional influence of the FBI. Issel argues forcefully that Andriano’s woes derived from opposition to his Catholic Action activities and so constituted evidence of “the persistence of anti-Catholicism in American history” (168). Likely, the Communist Party members who criticized Andriano were indeed motivated by hostility to the Catholic Church, but I do not see that Issel presents any convincing evidence to suggest that the government leaders who went after Andriano did so because of his association with Catholicism. If anything, it was his support for Italy—and thus, in the minds of many, implicit support for Mussolini and Fascism—not his “Catholicism” that did him in. Then too, it is worth noting that the legislative committees that went after Andriano for his putative Fascist ties did not go after the many other Catholic leaders and public officials (mainly non-Italian Americans) who rushed to Andriano’s defense in very public ways and who themselves actively participated in Catholic Action.

Finally, the government was hardly monolithic in its attitude toward Andriano. Thus, when Andriano refused to abide by the conditions of his exclusion from the West Coast (for example, when he refused to be fingerprinted and to report his whereabouts to authorities), Hoover and Secretary of War Henry Stimson pressed Attorney General Francis Biddle to indict Andriano. Biddle refused, arguing that there was absolutely no evidence in the case of Andriano, who had been a leading citizen of San Francisco for thirty years, that he ever had anything to do either with espionage or sabotage. He was merely pro-Mussolini before the war. He was harmless. I see nothing in Issel’s book suggesting that Biddle’s view of Andriano was the minority view among government officials familiar with the Andriano case.

In his Epilogue, Issel tells us that “Andriano was a prominent Catholic who happened to be Italian.” I suspect that we can better understand what happened to Sylvester Andriano if we think of him as a prominent Italian American who happened to be Catholic.

Still, while I do not believe that Issel has established a convincing case for the interpretative framework that he adopts in regard to Andriano, there is no denying that his

book, in its details, brings to life a period in which San Francisco's Catholics, and the Catholic Church in San Francisco, faced a set of circumstances, locally and globally, dramatically different from what is currently the case. Many readers, like myself, will enjoy the book for this reason alone.

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The Urban Colonists: Italian American Identity and Politics in Utica, New York.

By Philip A. Bean.

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479 pages.

Philip A. Bean's *The Urban Colonists: Italian American Identity and Politics in Utica, New York* is more than the story of Italian Americans in a town in upstate New York. It accomplishes what virtually every other "case study" on Italian Americans and politics has failed to do. By telling the story of Italian Americans in Utica, it tells the wider story of Italian Americans as a major ethnic group in the United States, thus providing a significant contribution to the history of the country as a whole.

From the story of John Marchisi, who left his native Turin to join the Napoleonic army and, through a series of fortuitous events, became the first Italian to settle in Utica, to the activities of a well-established community during the Cold War era, Bean details how an ethnic group comes into being in an American city — the transformation from a group of Italians *in* Utica into the community of the Italians *of* Utica. There is no way to identify the exact moment in the book when this transformation takes place. Nonetheless, the various aspects of social life and interactions covered by the author provide an excellent explanation and a detailed description of this process.

Bean examines different facets of the social and economic lives of Italian immigrants, from culture, nationalism, and religion to their professional and business-related activities. In doing so, he is attentive to the often-turbulent relations with other ethnic groups in the area, exploring conflict and cooperation between Italian Americans in Utica and members of other groups.

The extensive discussion of the social and economic aspects of the Italian-American community in Utica serves as a foundation upon which the author builds the core of the work: the analysis of the political activities of the community. The discussion of the Italian-American political machine in Utica provides an account of a lesser-known urban machine than some of its overstudied counterparts, such as the Albany Regency in the neighboring state capital or Tammany Hall in New York City. The meticulous account of the idiosyncrasies of the Italian-American political machine in Utica is useful for a general understanding of the functioning of not only the large-city machines mentioned above but also of the equally important, and arguably more widespread, machines that ruled smaller (and far more numerous) urban areas, such as the Pendergast machine in Kansas City, Missouri. In other words, this careful analysis of