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Elizabeth R. Escobedo. From Coveralls to Zoot Suits: The Lives of Mexican American Women on the World War II Home Front.

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Jencks," Lorence notes, "was in fact an integral part of a larger account of an ethnic community's struggle to win social, economic, and gender equality against steep odds in an unforgiving social environment" (p. xv). *Palomino* tells that story, and much more.

Lorence structures *Palomino* within a chronological framework that begins with Jencks's childhood. Jencks's father was a distant, conflicted figure who had great ambitions that went almost totally unfulfilled. His failures estranged him from his children, especially Clinton, and ultimately the senior Jencks had a mental breakdown. Jencks's mother was the mirror opposite of his father: warm, gracious, and a tireless worker at her church. From her, Clint Jencks developed a sense of helping others and championing the downtrodden. He channeled that formative knowledge into labor activism.

Jencks bounced from job to job as a youth and an adult until he found employment with the American Smelting and Refining Company and joined Mine-Mill Local 557. As a new member of Local 557, Jencks found a purpose and solidarity he had long desired. His wife, Virginia, also helped catalyze his labor militancy. An outspoken activist in her own right, Virginia Jencks was a progressive who pushed her husband from membership to employment with the union. The union soon transferred him to New Mexico, where local Mexican American leaders such as Juan Chacón were already involved in a bitter dispute with Empire Zinc over working conditions and safety, hours, and the racist "Mexican wage" (e.g., lower pay, no promotions). After a prolonged strike, which saw numerous striking men arrested and replaced on the picket lines by their spouses, the workers won a victory against Empire. From them Jencks earned the nickname "El Palomino."

A number of scholars have told the story of the Mine-Mill strike against Empire, and it does not need repeating here. What I found most fascinating was the persecution of Jencks during and after the strike. He was harassed by local white leaders, probed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and ultimately prosecuted for making allegedly false statements to the National Labor Relations Board. In reality, his prosecution proved a show trial, a common occurrence in the Cold War United States. The jury found Jencks guilty of perjury based largely on the testimony of FBI informant and professional liar Harvey Matusow, who initially verified Jencks's ties to the Communist Party, only to recant later. Matusow then joined forces with Jencks to reveal the government's duplicity. Jencks appealed the case all the way up to the Supreme Court, which reversed the lower court's conviction. The state decided not to retry.

In later life Jencks left professional union work and, after years of partial employment, entered graduate school. He earned a doctorate in economics and secured a position at San Diego State University (SDSU). His transition to college teaching was timed perfectly to coincide with New Left student activism, the antiwar movement, and the development of the black and Chicano power movements. He helped form the Center for Radical Economics to assist this rising militancy on the SDSU campus. Jencks remained active in the early twenty-first century and shortly before his death could still respond to a question such as "How is it going?" with the answer " 'I still think we can beat the bastards' " (p. 190).

This is a fine book, and Lorence is to be commended for the extensive research and attention to detail that went into it. It is more than a biography of Jencks. Rather, it is in many ways the biography of a movement and of a difficult moment in American history. Lorence died shortly before the book went into production. I am sure he would have been proud of its high production values, and of its reception.

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Elizabeth R. Escobedo. *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits: The Lives of Mexican American Women on the World War II Home Front*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2013. Pp. xv, 229. $34.95.

Elizabeth R. Escobedo has written a fine addition to an ever-growing body of work on Mexican Americans during World War II, in the tradition of the culture-conscious social historians George Sanchez and, especially, Vicki Ruiz. The author draws on newspapers, periodicals, and primary sources from local, state, and federal archives and manuscript collections, including over 250 juvenile court case files; she also uses forty oral histories, the majority of which she conducted herself, and fifteen period photographs to re-create the everyday lived experiences, "simultaneously liberating and limiting" (p. 3), of Mexican American women. In Escobedo's narrative, the war itself feels like another character, providing opportunities and opening doors, in a Los Angeles setting with shifting demographics and changing racial politics. Meanwhile, the much-maligned and misunderstood historical actors of the subtitle navigate social landscapes, negotiate new realities, flaunt emergent identities, and refute racial stereotypes.

Chapter one shines new light on defiant *pachuca* displays of culturally separatist difference and gender role disobedience, with a nod to scholar Catherine Ramírez. Chapter two shows how the Office of War Information created *Americanos Todos*, a Spanish-language version of the Americans All propaganda campaign. Chapter three presents fresh details on Rosita the Riveters, who used the Fair Employment Practices Committee to fight discrimination inside aircraft factories, and who placed themselves "more firmly on the white side of the color line" (p. 75). Chapter four illustrates how these wage earners demanded "new rights and privileges" (p. 105) at home, circumventing "patriarchal authority" (p. 106) and "familial control over the Mexican female body" (p. 122). Chapter five traces postwar Mexican American women's entry into blue-collar suburbs, pink-collar positions, interracial marriages, and civil rights activism.

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The epilogue effectively uses Ken Burns's World War II documentary *The War* (2007) as a historical flashpoint, because the film originally excluded Mexican Americans, even though one of its four focus cities, Sacramento, California, produced many *veteranos*. By analyzing history through a black-and-white racial paradigm, Burns rendered Mexican Americans, and their patriotic service, invisible. In response to protests, the filmmaker tacked on new interview footage to the two episode endings, as an afterthought. By correcting this omission, Escobedo's book ends as it began, with a nuanced assessment of "the contradictory nature" of Mexican Americans' wartime experiences, particularly their newfound "sense of belonging" (p. 150).

Throughout the chapters, Escobedo chronicles both the contributions of Mexican Americans and the continuation of discrimination, segregation, and second-class citizenship. The book closes on a note of acceptance, recognition, pride, and belonging, but it remains unclear whether Mexican Americans won a double victory over foreign fascism and domestic racism, whether they were, in the end, Americans all, unified as an integral part of a common culture. If not, were their children, or their grandchildren? Although Escobedo argues for the inadequacy of equating European American and Mexican experiences, the epilogue neither makes a final statement about whether Mexican Americans still occupy the same "unique racial position" (p. 152), with the same "not-black, almost white status" (p. 10), nor revisits the book's excellent analysis of racial liberalism. Similarly, although the cumulative proof of Mexican American women's agency and their "broadened public presence and sense of empowerment" (p. 123) is compelling, Escobedo could have restated her arguments about gender ideologies and constructions of womanhood in a proper conclusion. Instead, the five-page epilogue centers on male military veterans. Finally, the book could be questioned regarding Southern California exceptionalism, particularly whether the socioeconomic and political gains by Mexican American women were due to the "unique wartime character" (p. 13) of Los Angeles, and hence may not have been matched by Chicanas or Latinas in other U.S. cities.

Future scholarship can address such questions by following Escobedo's fruitful research leads. Her book should appeal to non-specialist academic and general readers interested in Mexican Americans' role in the "Greatest Generation" of the Depression–World War II era. It is well suited for courses in U.S., World War II, Chicano, California, Los Angeles, or women's history, and perhaps courses in American studies, comparative ethnicity, or intersectionality. As the author concludes, echoing Vicki Ruiz, "Latino history is not a subset of U.S. history" (p. 154). Escobedo's greatest strength is revealing the range of variation among the Mexican-descent population, contrasting Mexican Americans' defiant identities and racial consciousness with their selective acculturation and incomplete inclusion during a period of state-supported ethnic pluralism. She skillfully deploys an impressive array of archival and oral evidence to craft "a more comprehensive" (p. 13) understanding of Mexican American women during World War II, "from the shop floors where they worked to the dance floors where they played" (p. 14). Ultimately, Elizabeth Escobedo successfully demonstrates the "proper representation of Latina/os in history" (p. 153), telling "a richer and more accurate story" of our complex collective past by painting these everyday, working-class women into "the picture of America" (p. 154).

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R. Scott Appleby and Kathleen Sprows Cummings, editors. *Catholics in the American Century: Recasting Narratives of U.S. History*. (Cushwa Center Studies of Catholicism in Twentieth-Century America.) Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press. 2012. Pp. v, 218. Cloth $69.95, paper $21.95.

Historiography-lovers, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, should find this edited volume a welcome challenge to standard accounts of American history. The eight contributors (mostly non-Catholics) propose that professional historians have mistakenly omitted Catholics and Catholicism from scholarly journal articles, monographs, and textbooks. Thus, *Catholics in the American Century* offers inspiration for historians of Catholicism in the United States. But non-Catholic scholars can also appreciate this book's eight chapters. Just as African American and women's studies programs have helped historians produce a richer and more authentic account of America's past, Catholic history deserves greater consideration within the profession.

For historians of American Catholicism and Catholics, this venture seems long overdue. Kudos to the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism at the University of Notre Dame for sponsoring the conference that brought these scholars together. It should come as no surprise that John McGreevy and R. Scott Appleby provide the book's introduction and conclusion, respectively. These historians have pioneered "crossover" historical research and writing by exploring the multiple intersections between Catholicism and American culture. McGreevy's introduction reminds the reader of how *Time* magazine's founding editor, Henry Luce, who popularized the notion of the 1900s as the "American Century," befriended Jesuit priest John Courtney Murray. The Luce-Murray relationship, based on shared values and respect for religious differences, serves as a metaphor for the Cushwa conference, which Appleby celebrates in his conclusion as a collegial partnership to improve the history profession.

Historian Thomas Sugrue demonstrates this open and honest tone by discouraging Catholic historians from segregating themselves. Catholics often select topics and approaches that fail to align with the larger historical community, Sugrue argues. Thus, historians

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