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The Irish Catholic Diaspora in America

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When Lawrence J. McCaffrey's The Irish Diaspora in America was published in 1976, it won rave reviews and quickly became the standard college and university text on the Irish-American experience. Named the "best short history of the Irish in America" by Andrew M. Greeley in a *New York Times* review, McCaffrey's work traced the experience of Irish-American Catholics from their beginnings as detested, unskilled pioneers of the urban ghetto to their rise as an essentially affluent, powerful, middle-class suburban community.

Blending his work and the contributions of other scholars, McCaffrey here adds fresh interpretations to the history of Irish American Catholics. He focuses on a number of topics, including the significance of Catholicism as the core of Irish ethnicity and the source of nativist attacks on their presence in the United States; the impact of Irish America on the course of Irish nationalism; the psychological struggle to reconcile Irish loyalties to an authoritarian religion and a liberal-democratic politics; and, more recently, the fading of the Catholic dimension of Irish identity.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Lawrence J. McCaffrey is professor emeritus of Loyola University of Chicago. He is the cofounder of the American Conference for Irish Studies and the author of numerous books and articles, including *The Irish Question: Two Centuries of Conflict, Textures of Irish America*, and *Ireland from Colony to Nation State*. He is frequently interviewed by the major television networks and is featured in an upcoming PBS documentary on Irish America.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"The reissue of McCaffrey's classic study is a tribute to his contribution to our understanding of that great migration. He has been, and remains, a major pioneering figure in the field." "A fine, moving and scholarly account of great merit and insight. The previous edition stood the test of time. This latest version will further extend and enhance McCaffrey's considerable influence and stature."?*The Heythrop Journal*

"When the original study appeared, I shared with many other historians the opinion that McCaffrey had written the best-single volume history of the American Catholic Irish; the new volume confirms that judgment. While this study will appeal to anyone with an interest in the subject, it is an historiographical gem for historians. The bibliographic essay alone justifies its acquisition."?John B. Duff, *The International History Review*

"An immensely readable book which charts the experience of Irish Catholics in America. Acknowledging his critics and in defense of the Catholic dimension to his analysis, McCaffrey argues that for the majority of Irish in America, their Catholicism proved to be an important signifier of their ethnic, cultural, and national identity."?*Journal of American Ethnic History*

"McCaffrey has been the pioneering social historian of the American Irish. This book is a survey of the territory, rethought and recast since initial publication over 20 years ago. . . . The early chapters are a very useful summary of the Irish background, and the Irish-American chapters are windows into the essential themes of this remarkable diaspora."?Prof. Charles Fanning, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

"McCaffrey's book is a seminal and indispensable resource for anyone trying to understand the Irish experience in America. A seamless blend of insight and scholarship, it manages to be sweeping without every being superficial. This is a work of enduring importance."?Peter Quinn, author of *Banished Children of Eve*

"Drawing on a lifetime of reading and research, McCaffrey has written an informative, cogent and highly readable book, which includes a splendid bibliographical essay. This is a valuable contribution to Irish studies and ethnic history, one that should appeal

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