

Book Review of *Bean Pickers*

“*Bean Pickers* is an intimate window on an Italian family who immigrated to Utica, New York in the early twentieth century. Vivid portrayals of childhood summers lost to labor in sweltering bean fields, ethnic discrimination on athletic fields and teeming factory floors, reveal real people in their struggles and triumphs striving for their version of the American dream. The rich yet often harsh lives of the author’s ancestors serve as a reminder to us, as Americans, to greet a new generation of immigrants with compassion and assistance.”

Judith McGinn, Free-lance writer

Hempson’s creative non-fiction *Bean Pickers* would be an important book in any time in our social, cultural, and political life, but now is the perfect time for this book to appear on the national scene. Hempson’s beautiful narrative of her Italian American family who came as immigrants is the recipe for understanding our new wave of immigrants and the critical importance of looking beyond prejudices to the mighty contributions of those who have come and will continue to come from other shores.

Nancy Dafoe, Dafoe Writing and Consulting
Author of six published books

"This informative history text presents a factual account of an Italian immigrant family. It is an important record of the Italian immigrant experience that should be read by every American. The photos and documents add a great deal to a better understanding of this period of history."

Prof./Cav. Philip J. DiNovo, Founder and president
of the American Italian Heritage Association &
Museum

Karen Hempson has written a charming and insightful book about her family’s journey from Italy to upstate New York. *Bean Pickers*, tells the story of a family who struggled through poverty and deprivation to work long, hard days picking beans so that their children would have a better chance at life. Enduring hardships in substandard shacks in upstate, New York, immigrants and children of immigrants seek ways of escaping their destitute lives during the Great Depression. The book is especially appealing because of family photographs and documents reflecting life in the early to mid-twentieth century. *Bean Pickers* has the depth and clarity that transcends one family’s narrative into what is America’s story.”

Erik J. Bitterbaum, President, SUNY Cortland