



Overall Rating:
☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Did you complete the book?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Almost

What was your overall opinion of the book?

What was your favorite part of the book?

What did you not like?

Your favorite quotes:

01. How much did you know about the tumultuous histories of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala and their relationships with the United States before reading this book? Why was it important for this history to be included?

02. How does the book depict the trauma that many Central American migrants have faced in their countries of birth and their reasons for coming to the United States?

03. How has the evolving political situation in these countries over the years changed the type of migrants we see at our borders?

04. The book describes the experiences of several Central Americans caught up in these issues, including Juan Ramagoza, Eddie Anzara, and Lucretia Mack. How did learning about each of their circumstances and experiences shape your feelings about the migrant crisis more broadly?

05. Do you believe the sanctuary workers featured in the book are justified in breaking the law to help migrants?

06. How did the creation of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) after September 11 change the way immigration is handled?

07. What were your impressions of people working within the government, especially those in the Clinton and Obama Administrations, who tried to improve the situation for migrants and refugees? Were they effective?

08. How do US corporations benefit when English-speaking migrants are deported back to their home countries?

09. How has the perception of migrants among members of the public the United States changed over the past 50 years?

10. What role has the media played in changing the perceptions, especially in recent years with increased coverage of crimes committed by immigrants and gangs like MS-13?

11. How have recent US policies like “remain in Mexico” changed the situation for refugees and migrants?

12. Do you think this book could influence public opinion on immigration issues?

QUOTES

“Law enforcement had all sorts of leeway to police the border. The US had been ‘outmanned, under-budgeted, and confronted by a growing, silent invasion of illegal aliens,’ Nixon’s outgoing INS head, a former marine commander named Leonard Chapman, wrote in a portentous essay in Reader’s Digest, in 1976. Immigration officials were not alone in hyping the perils of a porous border. William Colby, the head of the CIA, called the transit of undocumented Mexican’s into the country ‘a greater threat to the future of the United States than the Soviet Union.’”

“Throughout the twentieth century, American leaders touted the US as a nation of immigrants, but for most of that time the country never had a formal refugee or asylum policy written in law. It wasn’t until 1965, with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), that Congress officially contemplated the idea. But the measures were paltry: each year, 17,400 people were given ‘conditional entry,’ as long as they were either fleeing communism or trying to escape a country in the Middle East. The Cold War, rather than any principle of law or humanitarianism, accounted for the narrowness of these terms.”

“The Refugee Act [of 1980] was supposed to standardize the terms by which the INS administered asylum law. But, paradoxically, it also supplied the government with a legal pretext for issuing denials. According to the INS, asylum was available only to individuals facing persecution. A crippled economy and an atmosphere of generalized violence were not enough. As the agency’s commissioner went on to say, ‘Basically everyone in the world would be better off in the US.’”

“When Reagan became president, his administration effectively ignored the 1980 Refugee Act. The result wasn’t just legal and political jumble but also a kind of operational vacuum that the sanctuary workers tried to fill. Both admirers and detractors of the movement often portrayed it as an exercise in mass civil disobedience. Yet the activists were trying to act on the law and make practical sense of its untested principles.”



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QUOTES

“The 1990 [Immigration Act] was the last major immigration reform package the US Congress would pass. In the following two decades, the only other significant measures to become law involved enforcement: tools to increase deportations, funding bills to expand border security, and an act to overhaul the Immigration and Naturalization Service. [Temporary protected status] holders would become permanently stuck with a status that was meant to be provisional.”

“Obama had entered the White House vowing to protect the undocumented and restrain ICE, but deportations increased steadily during his first two years in office. An average of a thousand immigrants were being removed every day, a large share of them the very people the president had promised to spare.”

“By the fall [of 2017], when the [Trump] administration presented its final number to Congress, the refugee cap was forty-five thousand, the lowest in the history of the program and below the explicit recommendations made by the State Department, the military, and the vice president’s office. Yet the number itself mattered less than the warped new process that had generated it. By the end of Trump’s term in office, the cap would drop several more times, to fifteen thousand refugees—so low that refugee resettlement agencies had to lay off much of their staff.”



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