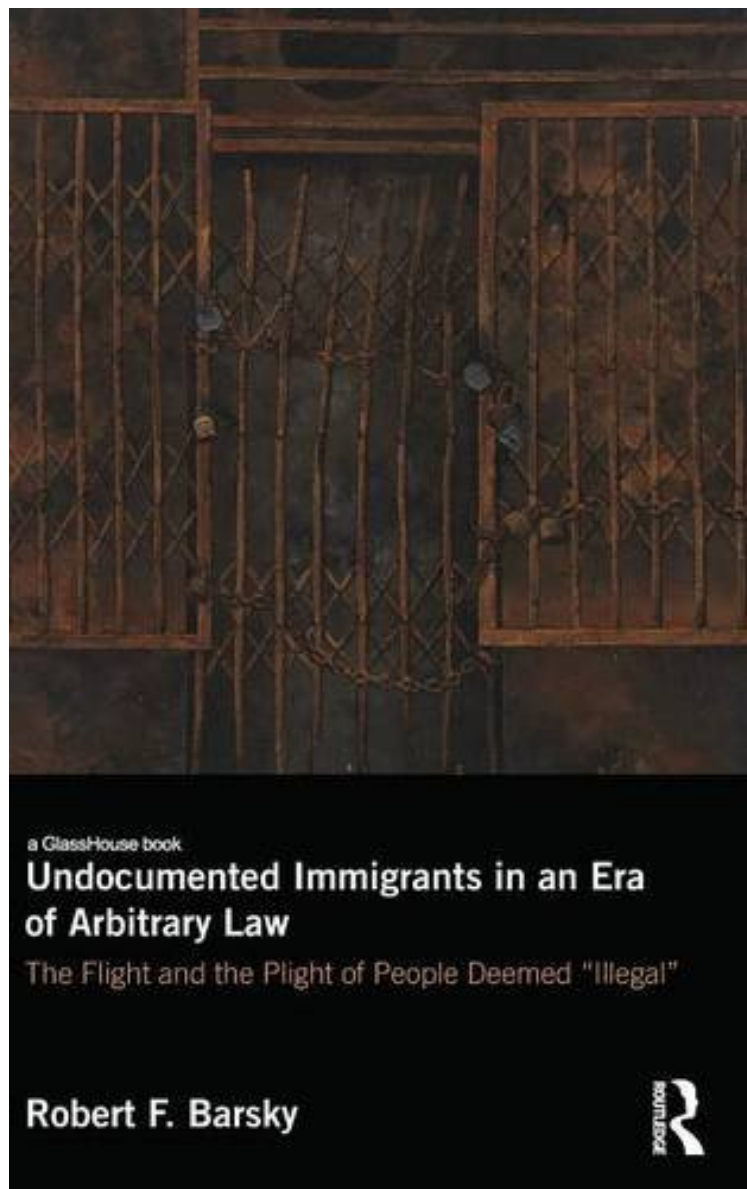


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Undocumented Immigrants in an Era of Arbitrary Law: The Flight and the Plight of People Deemed 'Illegal'

Robert F. Barsky

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Undocumented Immigrants in an Era of Arbitrary Law: The Flight and the Plight of People Deemed 'Illegal':

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Professional, Insightful, and Poignant By Ana Luquerna Professional, insightful, and poignant, *Undocumented Immigrants in an Era of Arbitrary Law* describes the arbitrariness and impunity found within the realm of immigration around the world. Barsky describes a myriad of factors that disadvantage undocumented immigrants while at the same time emphasizing the value and inherent rights that each immigrant possesses simply by existing. Barsky combats the status quo, the wealthy privileged, and the racism and social profiling that disadvantage legal and illegal immigrants throughout the world. Courageous and passionate about his work, Barsky is not afraid to describe the internal contradictions and failures of states in terms of their immigration policies. He explains that immigration is a fact of life and will not be able to be stopped. Thus, a change of mindset must occur. Instead of trying to pretend we can control borders, people should acknowledge the porosity of borders. Instead of assuming that all immigrants are criminals, people should become aware of the inherent rights that every human being possesses, whether immigrants or not. An advocate for the humane treatment of people, Barsky proposes open borders in order to protect the most vulnerable. While this may seem paradoxical to those who believe that open borders will put the safety of a country in jeopardy, Barsky thoroughly demonstrates through facts, case studies, and statistics, that this is simply not the case. Instead, a push for open borders will create a system that benefits both the sending and receiving country and that respects common human norms and values.

2 of 11 people found the following review helpful. I want my money back By Hektik If you're an illegal alien you'll love this book, if you know English that is. If you somehow find a copy in Spanish at a library that you don't pay for, tax-paying American citizens do that, you'll learn why you shouldn't have to fill out a piece of paper and become a citizen legally. If you're a liberal that lives a fairy tale you will love this book and you'll even quote it all the time and try to use it to make yourself seem smarter and more compassionate. Please disregard the fact that all the stories are made up to accomplish a liberal agenda, that doesn't matter, what matters is the message.

This book describes the experiences of undocumented migrants, all around the world, bringing to life the challenges they face from the moment they consider leaving their country of origin, until the time they are deported back to it. Drawing on a broad array of academic studies, including law, interpretation and translation studies, border studies, human rights, communication, critical discourse analysis and sociology, Robert Barsky argues that the arrays of actions that are taken against undocumented migrants are often arbitrary, and exercised by an array of officials who can and do exercise considerable discretion, both positive and negative. Employing insights from a decade-long research project, Barsky also finds that every stop along the migrants pathway into, and inside of, the host country is strewn with language issues, relating to intercultural communication, interpretation, gossip, hearsay, and the challenges of peddling of linguistic wares in the social discourse marketplace. These language issues are almost always impediments to anodyne or productive interactions with host country officials, particularly on the "front-lines" where migrants encounter border patrol and law enforcement officers without adequate means of communicating their situation or understanding their rights. Since undocumented people are categorized as illegal, they can be subjected to abuse and exploitation by host country officials, who can choose to either tolerate or punish them on the basis of unpredictable, changeable, and even illusory or "arbitrary" laws and regulations. Citing experts at every level of the undocumented immigrant apparatuses worldwide, from public defenders to interpreters, Barsky concludes that the only viable policy to address prevailing abuses and inequalities is to move towards open borders, an approach that would address prevailing issues and, surprisingly, provide security and economic benefits to both host and home countries.

"[T]his richly investigated book will be eminently useful to a broad audience including scholars of critical discourse, legal studies, and migration as well as the general public. Barsky's theoretical depth and approachable writing style would also make this book a valuable addition to academic syllabi for both undergraduate and graduate courses." Maher, S. (2016) Book : *Undocumented Immigrants in an Era of Arbitrary Law*. Available at: law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/centre-criminology/centreborder-criminologies/blog/2016/01/book-review