



The Immigration Crucible: Transforming Race, Nation, and the Limits of the Law

By Philip Kretsedemas

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In the debate over U. S. immigration, all sides now support policy and practice that expand the parameters of enforcement. Philip Kretsedemas examines this development from several different perspectives, exploring recent trends in U.S. immigration policy, the rise in extralegal state power over the course of the twentieth century, and discourses on race, nation, and cultural difference that have influenced politics and academia. He also analyzes the recent expansion of local immigration law and explains how forms of extralegal discretionary authority have become more prevalent in federal immigration policy, making the dispersion of local immigration laws possible.

While connecting such extralegal state powers to a free flow position on immigration, Kretsedemas also observes how these same discretionary powers have been used historically to control racial minority populations, particularly African Americans under Jim Crow. This kind of discretionary authority often appeals to "states rights" arguments, recently revived by immigration control advocates. Using these and other examples, Kretsedemas explains how both sides of the immigration debate have converged on the issue of enforcement and how, despite differing interests, each faction has shaped the commonsense assumptions defining the debate.

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Editorial Review

Review

This book recovers the complexity of immigration and government efforts to govern it. One of the most exciting and well-written books on the subject.

(Saskia Sassen, author of *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*)

An ambitious and sophisticated account of how U.S. law treats the most vulnerable among us.

(David Cole, author of *Enemy Aliens: Double Standards and Constitutional Freedoms in the War on Terrorism*)

What does the Emancipation Proclamation have to do with the Patriot Act, or Jim Crow with Bush Administration memos about immigration enforcement? Why have Democrats been tougher than Republicans on 'border control,' and how did a Haitian-born, naturalized U.S. citizen's loss of 'the right to have rights' foreshadow Arizona's controversial profiling law? In an even-handed tone, Philip Kretsedemas answers these and other surprising questions. His book challenges thoughtful readers of all political positions to rethink their assumptions about immigration—and immigrants—and to ask what it really means to be part of twenty-first-century America.

(Mark Dow, author of *American Gulag: Inside U.S. Immigration Prisons*)

Even though comprehensive immigration reform has become a political football over the last few decades, there are only a few Americans who understand the evolution of immigration legal policy within the United States over the course of our history. Kretsedemas takes the reader on a sobering narrative history of immigration policy in America in modern times. His book is a must-read for anyone seeking to overhaul our flawed immigration policies.

(Arsalan Iftikhar, international human rights lawyer, global media commentator, and managing editor of *The Crescent Post*)

You can gain much insight on these and other issues relating to immigration through this book for which the author done much research and reflects his prior acquired knowledge and insight. This is a must-read for anyone who seeks to understand the U.S. immigration dilemma.

(Sonu Chandiram *BizIndia*)

A sophisticated, clear-eyed analysis and critique of the limits of our current understandings of immigration policy... Kretsedemas has made a significant contribution... Highly recommended.

(*American Journal of Sociology*)

This thought-provoking book would fit in well in graduate courses on twentieth-century North American immigration history, as well as political science courses on migration and citizenship.

(*Journal of American Ethnic History*)

About the Author

Philip Kretsedemas is associate professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. He is the coeditor of *Keeping Out the Other: A Critical Introduction to Immigration Enforcement Today and Immigrants, Welfare Reform, and the Poverty of Policy*.

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