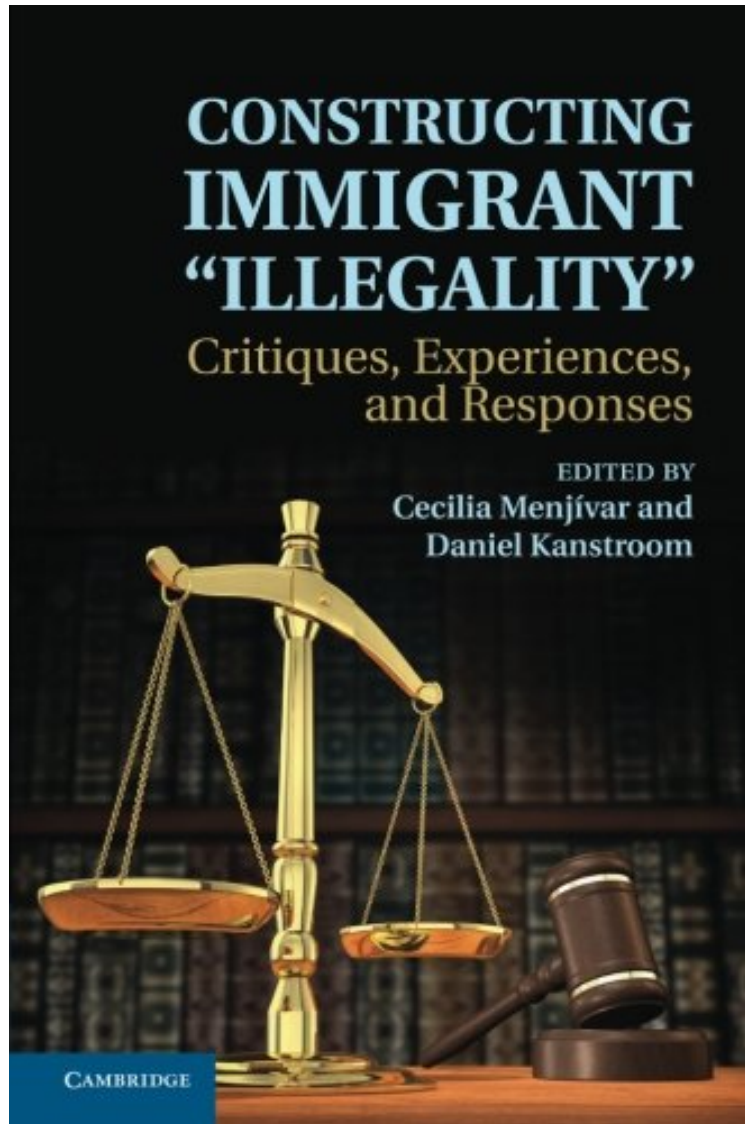


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The topic of "illegal" immigration has been a major aspect of public discourse in the United States and many other immigrant-receiving countries. From the beginning of its modern invocation in the early twentieth century, the often ill-defined epithet of human "illegality" has figured prominently in the media; in vigorous public debates at the national, state, and local levels; and in presidential campaigns. In this collection of essays, contributors from a variety of disciplines - anthropology, law, political science, religious studies, and sociology - examine how immigration law shapes immigrant illegality, how the concept of immigrant illegality is deployed and lived, and how its power is wielded and resisted. The authors conclude that the current concept of immigrant illegality is in need of sustained critique, as careful analysis will aid policy discussions and lead to more just solutions.

"This is an important and timely book. An array of distinguished scholars from a variety of disciplines - inter alia, anthropology, psychology, and sociology, but also education, law, and religious studies - come together and perform the best a sharply focused and intelligent interdisciplinary dialogue can offer on the phenomena of 'illegality' in contemporary American immigration. The individual chapters - some eloquent but all indispensable - engage, with rigorous data and conceptual clarity, the empire of suffering created by our anachronistic and barbarian immigration system. It is a book every concerned citizen should read before opining on the decisive immigration challenge of our era." Marcelo M. Surez-Orozco, Dean and Distinguished Professor, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies

"Owing to America's dysfunctional immigration system, mass illegality has become the new norm for Latino immigrants in the United States. Not since the days of slavery have so many people lacked any rights in this country. In *Constructing Illegality in America*, Cecilia Menjvar and Daniel Kanstroom offer a definitive account of how misplaced US policies led to this lamentable state of affairs and the horrific costs it imposes on Latino immigrants and their families, as well as the responses undertaken by immigrants and natives to this untenable status quo, and possible pathways forward to a humane and practical resolution. It should be read by all Americans who care about the fate of civil and human rights in the United States." Douglas S. Massey, Henry G. Bryant Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs, Princeton University

"More than eleven million people live in the United States with the constant fear of deportation, the lack of most civil and political rights, and a very uncertain future. How do they live? How does this affect their children? What are the consequences of this human rights disaster for our democracy? This book brings together the very best scholars from many disciplines to begin to answer these questions. Comprehensive in scope, rich in the analysis and description of the everyday lives of those defined as 'illegal', this collection defines the field of immigrant illegality studies. It documents the human, legal, and civic costs of our broken immigration system and brings lives lived in the shadows out into the open. This groundbreaking book should be required reading for policy makers, students and scholars of immigration, and anyone who cares about the future of American society." Mary C. Waters, M. E. Zukerman Professor of Sociology, Harvard University

"At the core of debates about immigration reform - and indeed about immigration and immigrants in the United States - is what it means to be without lawful immigration status. *Constructing Illegality in America*, edited by Cecilia Menjvar and Daniel Kanstroom, is a pathbreaking study of the role of law in the American immigration system, showing that the very idea of illegality is far more complex than is often appreciated. Menjvar and Kanstroom have brought together a superbly perceptive set of analyses by leading scholars from a rich variety of disciplinary perspectives. Just as importantly, Menjvar and Kanstroom have deftly assembled these individual contributions into a must-read volume of remarkable comprehensiveness and depth." Hiroshi Motomura, UCLA School of Law

About the Author

Cecilia Menjvar is Cowden Distinguished Professor at the T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics at Arizona State University. In her work she has examined the social consequences of immigration enforcement and how the law positions immigrants to live in legal ambiguity. She is the author of *Enduring Violence: Ladina Women's Everyday Lives in Guatemala* (2011) and *Fragmented Ties: Salvadoran Immigrant Networks in America* (2000).

Daniel Kanstroom is Professor of Law at Boston College Law School where he teaches immigration and refugee law, international human rights law, and administrative law. He is Director of the International Human Rights Program and the Post-Deportation Human Rights Project. He also founded the Boston College Immigration and Asylum Clinic, where students represent indigent migrants and asylum-seekers. He is the author of *Aftermath: Deportation Law and the New American Diaspora* (2012) and *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History* (2007).