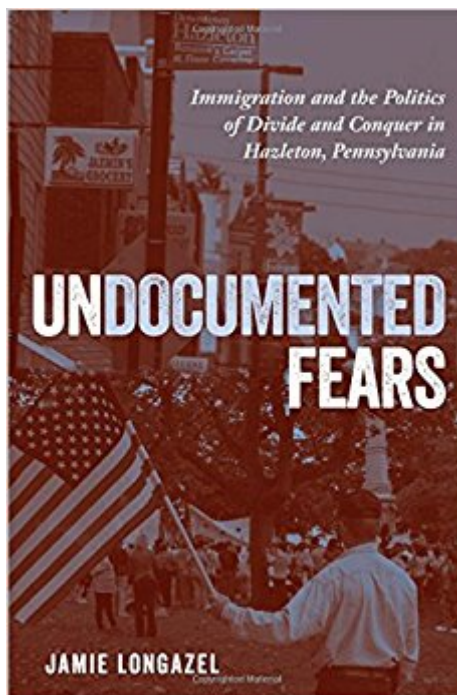




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Undocumented Fears: Immigration And The Politics Of Divide And Conquer In Hazleton, Pennsylvania



Synopsis

The Illegal Immigration Relief Act (IIRA), passed in the small Rustbelt city of Hazleton, Pennsylvania in 2006, was a local ordinance that laid out penalties for renting to or hiring undocumented immigrants and declared English the city's official language. The notorious IIRA gained national prominence and kicked off a parade of local and state-level legislative initiatives designed to crack down on undocumented immigrants. In his cogent and timely book, *Undocumented Fears*, Jamie Longazel uses the debate around Hazleton's controversial ordinance as a case study that reveals the mechanics of contemporary divide and conquer politics. He shows how neoliberal ideology, misconceptions about Latina/o immigrants, and nostalgic imagery of "Small Town, America" led to a racialized account of an undocumented immigrant "invasion," masking the real story of a city beset by large-scale loss of manufacturing jobs. Offering an up-close look at how the local debate unfolded in the city that set off this broader trend, *Undocumented Fears* makes an important connection between immigration politics and the perpetuation of racial and economic inequality.

Book Information

Paperback: 206 pages

Publisher: Temple University Press (March 1, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1439912688

ISBN-13: 978-1439912683

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #240,752 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #191 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Caribbean & Latin American #211 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Hispanic American Studies #420 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Emigration & Immigration

Customer Reviews

"Using a magnifying lens to study immigrant bashing in his hometown, Jamie Longazel brings into sharp focus the anti-Latino racism at the heart of national politics today. Even as we as a society struggle to build solidarity across racial divisions, powerful forces seek advantage in tearing

us farther apart. The concentrated focus of *Undocumented Fears* helps us understand not only why this occurs but also how we might help replace fear with friendship, social division with a sense of shared humanity.

— Ian F. Haney Lopez, author of *Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class*

“*Undocumented Fears* offers an incredibly rich and insightful analysis of how the political dynamics in a struggling former coal mining town resulted in its becoming ground zero in the raging national debate over immigration. Longazel provides a bird’s-eye view of the politics that led Hazleton, Pennsylvania, to enact laws designed to punish undocumented immigrants, with Latino migrants in the crosshairs. The clash of Latino immigrants with the small town America ideal is a gripping story that deserves the scholarly attention offered by Longazel. As some might say after reading *Undocumented Fears*, *Only in America*.”

— Kevin Johnson, author of *The Huddled Masses Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights*

Jamie Longazel is Assistant Professor of Sociology and a Human Rights Center Research Fellow at the University of Dayton and co-author (with Benjamin Fleury-Steiner) of *The Pains of Mass Imprisonment*.

An easy read about the sad recent history of my hometown, and the even sadder distant history that was never taught in our schools of the Latimer Mines Massacre. It’s well written and an easy read, but the price seems a bit high for what is essentially a long essay.

Fantastic. Highly informative.

Finally a true look at the abusive right wing political games.

This is a highly readable, and still deeply theoretical, look at the way that a politics of divide and conquer can turn economic anxiety into racial animus. Grounded in one town’s politics, it is a story that has resonance for contemporary American rhetoric around immigration, race, and threat. I highly recommend it - to read, to assign, and to share.

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