

# The Academy of Political Science

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this point features largely in the text, with repeated references to “your author,” his previous speeches, and admonitions to the airline industry; two sections are dedicated to his testimony during the Lockerbie trials. These read as “I told you so,” with petty attacks on the prosecuting attorney misplaced in a work of otherwise strong quality. He writes, for example, “Coddington, the epitome of a show trial lawyer, was a person given to theatrical gestures, none more so than his use of a silver chalice to contain his drinking water when all others in the courtroom used polystyrene cups” (p. 82). And later, “Coddington frequently based his questions on extracts taken from papers written by your author, but he had a tendency to misquote from the published texts” (p. 127). Wallis’s vindication of himself extends to the IATA, in a somewhat biased rendering of where fault rests for the disaster.

The final chapter introduces some of the technological achievements of the past decade, such as computerized passenger-bag matching, dual-energy technology, computed tomography, and bomb-proof aircraft. With the exception of the first, these technologies would address situations in which suicide bombers attacked aircraft, overcoming the weakness of Wallis’s main argument, which assumes that passenger-bag matching would prevent further tragedies.

The trials of Abdelbaset Ali Mohamad Al Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah came after the book was written and published, but Wallis’s indictment of Pan Am plays to his strengths. While a future edition may include discussion of these trials, it is not a noticeable gap in the current volume.

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**U.S. Immigration Policy in an Age of Rights** by *Debra L. DeLaet*. Westport, CT, Praeger-Greenwood Publishing, 2000. 168 pp. \$22.95.

American immigration policy has evolved in phases into its current construction. The open door at the Founding shut for the first time after the Civil War and the end of Reconstruction. Nativism and Chinese exclusion at the end of the nineteenth century culminated in restrictions and quotas based on national origin until the middle twentieth century. Through the 1930s and 1940s, America’s door was virtually closed, with low quotas unfilled despite the refugee crisis and Holocaust abroad. As a response to the acceleration of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, the Immigration Act of 1965 eliminated national origins quotas. The last two decades of the twentieth century saw a mixture of emerging immigrant rights and revived restrictionism.

An interesting history of legislation here combines with the author’s theory that recent U.S. policy has been liberalized at the behest of certain global but mainly domestic norms and political forces. Interest groups and public opinion have helped bring about changes in favor of family unification and nondiscrimination. This relative liberalization contributed generally to authorize higher

levels of legal immigration but did not provide “effective measures to reduce illegal immigration” (p. 3). DeLaet attempts to locate immigration policy in theories of state society relations, international relations, the role of ideas in shaping foreign policy, and global norms and relations; but she is more successful in employing domestic interest-group analysis.

The book begins with an introduction to the themes of domestic politics, liberal ideas, and U.S. immigration policy, and it quickly overviews the historical movement of policy from nativism to nondiscrimination. The heart of the book discusses the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 and its extensions in the 1990s. IRCA combined amnesty for up to three-million former “illegals” with “employer sanction” to cut down on new arrivals. Penalties for knowingly hiring illegals may have reduced border apprehensions (Figure 3.1). But “pull” attractions to the United States, such as jobs and family reunification pressures, undercut attempts to stem a greatly increased flow of illegals determined to get into the United States.

Moreover, a 1990 Government Administration Office report found that the IRCA created a “widespread pattern” of discrimination against Asians and Hispanics by nearly one employer in every five. This finding of discrimination should have triggered an expedited repeal of sanctions, but Congress left these ineffective and discriminatory rules in place. The Jordan Commission’s endorsement of reduced legal immigration has been shelved due partly to strong public support for conservative family unification. However, the sentiment behind it found expression in the Republican “Contract for America” attempt to reduce benefits to legal immigrants.

The book might have developed the irony of how the relative age of rights liberalization and nondiscrimination in the context of restriction policies toward “illegal aliens” has undermined basic rights of American citizens. The IRCA effectively extends Immigration and Naturalization Service jurisdiction to citizens by requiring documenting citizenship or government permission to work. This essentially presumes that everyone is illegal until otherwise proven and might deny jobs in the absence of documentation in a country appropriately eschewing a national ID. The dilemmas of the IRCA may be revisited in the recently suggested amnesty by the new Bush administration seeking justice and partisan advantage among Hispanics.

For those interested in a march through immigration history, this brief book focusing on the last two decades in another era of historically high immigration has revealing evidence and insights, though less so for experts. The appendix on immigration developments since George Washington’s open-door policy puts the later legislation detailed there in context. While tables and figures are helpful, they don’t show full quota, nonquota, and illegal totals. For a complex subject such as immigration, this book helps in understanding the forces that face citizens, residents, and those who aspire to somehow join them.

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