



Undocumented Fears: Immigration and the Politics of Divide and Conquer in Hazleton, Pennsylvania

Jamie Longazel

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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.

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