



The Horseshoe Virus: How the Anti-Immigration Movement Spread from Left-Wing to Right-Wing America

Bob Worsley

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Characterized by passionate flourishes and a commitment to seeing immigrants treated fairly, The Horseshoe Virus is a knowledgeable political text that exposes the mechanizations of anti-immigrant operatives.

The personal is inseparable from the political in Arizona state Senator Bob Worsley's compassionate treatise against anti-immigration politics, *The Horseshoe Virus*.

Worsley, who was persuaded to run for an Arizona Senate seat against an anti-immigrant opponent, begins his book with an explanation of why xenophobia in American politics bothers him to his core: active in both charities and LDS church life, he witnessed how cold political policies impacted, and in some cases destroyed, Latino families in his community. He asserts that the racism behind the anti-immigrant movement has society wide implications, and this compelling notion undergirds the whole of his work.

Though it includes a useful primer on the history of anti-immigration and eugenicist movements in the US, the text distinguishes itself most by centering its explorations in a world that Worsley knows well: Arizona's community and politics. Both are treated as microcosms of contemporary anti-immigration movements across the country. Such comparisons come to seem fitting, both because of addressed Arizona immigration controversies that made national news, including those involving Jan Brewer and Joe Arpaio, and because money and ideologies are shown to have been funnelled into Arizona from outside of its borders. Indeed, the influence of outside people and organizations—including the text's looming contemporary villain, pseudo-environmentalist and eugenicist John Tanton, whose impact on the political landscape is chillingly detailed—with a vested interest in punishing undocumented immigrants for their presence is shown to be large.

Early chapters set the stage with nuance, doing the dual work of humanizing immigrants, documented or not, who come to the US most often to work, while also showing how US citizens in suddenly bustling and diverse communities along the border came to resent their new neighbors, and how their sentiments transformed into unfeeling laws. The text is replete with statistics that counter misleading suggestions put forth by anti-immigrant campaigners. Worsley's own local political race wends in with explorations of immigration issues on the national stage.

When it comes to discussions of the promises of the US, the text exhibits contagious enthusiasm that edges on patriotic fervor, forwarding a promising if somewhat dichotomous picture of those who come to the US from outside of its borders that clashes noticeably with contemporary political claims: "America is made up of self-selected, self-motivated optimists who want to make more of their lives." Such passionate flourishes characterize much of the text.

Metaphors are employed throughout—some based in Worsley's work history, as of examining policy as being an audit; some more generally evocative, as with the running suggestion that anti-immigration sentiment is a virus—and are effective in prompting both emotional investment and understanding. Worsley is a down to earth, even playful guide through his serious subject matter (one chapter is titled "Razing Arizona"), and he encourages empathy by

including his own family's immigration story—a potent reminder that everyone in the US who is not Native comes from somewhere else. All of this works toward a reasonable ending: a proposal for a humane approach to immigration policy reform.

Part memoir, part insider's guide to how immigration influences local and national races, *The Horseshoe Virus* is a fascinating political text that's guided by a desire to defeat xenophobia for the betterment of all.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (October 7, 2020)

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