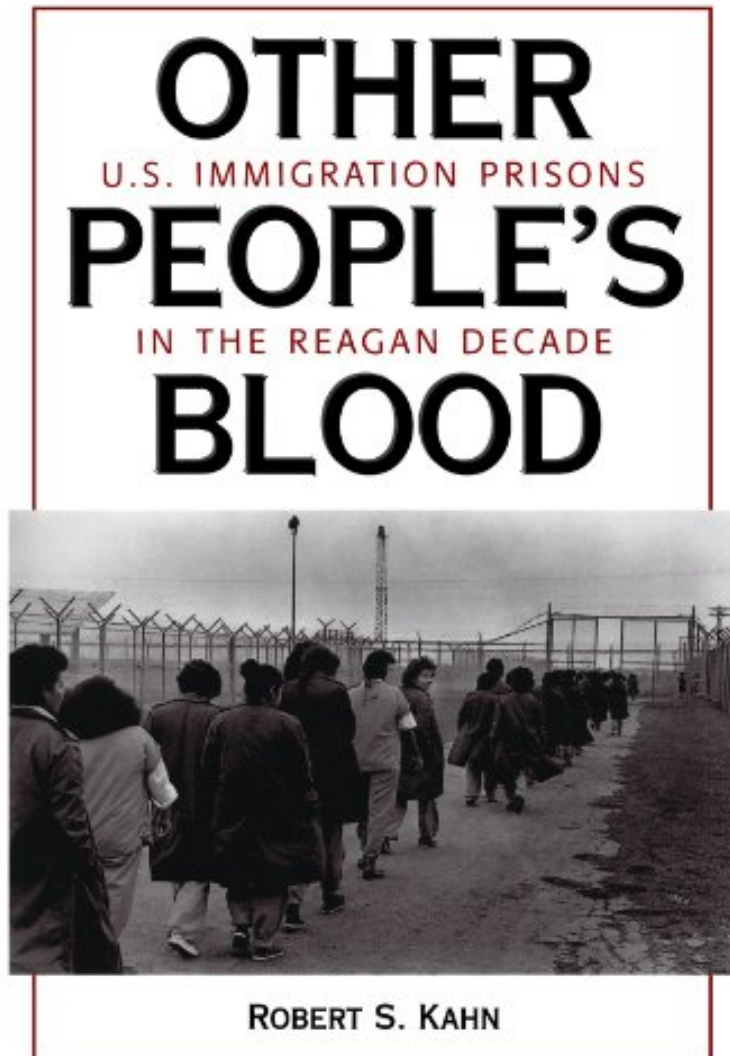


Other People's Blood: U.s. Immigration Prisons In The Reagan Decade

Robert S Kahn

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Robert S Kahn : Other People's Blood: U.s. Immigration Prisons In The Reagan Decade before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Other People's Blood: U.s. Immigration Prisons In The Reagan Decade:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A gripping look at the immigration issues of the 80s and 90sBy G BRobert Kahn's book is a must-read for anyone with an opinion on US immigration policies. Kahn draws on his

experiences as a legal-assistant for various immigration attorneys doing pro-bono work for undocumented workers captured by the INS and detained all over the US during the 80's to give the reader a very gritty and human grasp of the issues involved in US immigration policy. Kahn draws a direct correlation between US foreign policy in El Salvador (which trained the government death squads) and the subsequent waves of immigrants which came from El Salvador as a result of those policies. Then, drawing on his personal experience and documented interviews, Kahn details the civil and human rights abuses which many of these immigrants go through and are still going through at the hands of the INS. Kahn's book takes policy issues and campaign rhetoric concerning immigration and brings it down to earth with this book. By writing it in first-person the information and stories within "Other People's Blood" becomes very real and the reader is affected even more deeply. The book suffers only in it's lack of direction or focus. While the information and detailed interviews mostly stand alone, the book does not carry a climax or build up of tension which the first-person style might complement. Instead Kahn's book is a continuous detailed log of his encounters and interviews as a person volunteering his time for these immigrants who the US government and people would just as soon forget, alongside his personal analysis of how misinformed US policy and opinion have led to such ridiculous and horrifying results along our borders. It is very easy to read, despite the numerous footnotes and documentation. After reading it twice I passed it around to many of my friends, and they in turn passed it to their friends. It invariably evoked strong reactions among everyone I know who has read it, and I recommend it highly.

During the 1980s hundreds of thousands of refugees fled civil wars and death squads in Central America, seeking safe haven in the United States. Instead, thousands found themselves incarcerated in immigration prisons abused by their jailors and deprived of the most basic legal and human rights. Drawing on declassified government documents and interviews with prison officials, INS staff, and more than 3,000 Central American refugees, Robert S. Kahn reveals how the Department of Justice and its dependent agency, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, intentionally violated federal laws and regulations to deny protection to refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala who were fleeing wars financed by U.S. military aid. Kahn portrays the chilling reality of daily life in immigration prisons in Texas, Arizona, and Louisiana. Behind the razor-topped prison walls, refugees were not simply denied political asylum; they were beaten, robbed, sexually assaulted, and sometimes tortured by prison guards. *Other People's Blood* traces the ten-year legal struggle by volunteer prison workers and attorneys to stop the abuse of refugees and to force the Justice Department to concede in court that its treatment of immigrants had violated U.S. laws and the Geneva Convention for over a decade. Yet the case of *American Baptist Churches v. Thornburgh*, which overturned more judicial decisions than any other case in U.S. history, is still virtually unknown in the United States, and today the debate over illegal immigration is being carried on with little awareness of the government policies that contributed so shamefully to this country's immigration problems.

From the Back Cover For more than a decade, the debate about immigration to the United States has been framed in terms that are dishonest and willfully amnesiac. By one measure, the anti-immigration forces have already won. No politician in either party today is prepared to say a good word about immigration. Yet the recent history of immigration to the United States, and the U.S. role in it, are a blank page in our national memory. About the Author Robert S. Kahn is a newspaper editor and freelance writer in California. His investigations of INS abuses in immigration prisons have appeared in the *Boston Globe*, the *Baltimore Sun*, and the *National Catholic Reporter*.