

Two New Books Provide Insights Into Aspects Of The Immigration Crisis

F forbes.com/sites/edwardsegal/2024/12/28/two-new-books-provide-insights-into-aspects-of-the-immigration-crisis

Edward Segal

December 28, 2024



ⓘ
BETA



Asylum seekers rush to be processed by border patrol agents at an improvised camp near the US-Mexico ... [+]
AFP via Getty Images

The more that business leaders understand about a crisis that can impact their companies and organizations, the better. Two recently published books about the history and people-related aspects of the immigration crisis provide fresh insights and perspectives about this hot-button issue.

The books, written by journalists who have covered immigration for several years, also provides a reality check for executives and may dispel some misconceptions.

‘A Stupendous Area Of Public Ignorance’

“Lack of knowledge about immigration occupies a stupendous area of public ignorance. Immigration communications are rife with confusion and are highly vulnerable to political manipulation and disinformation,” Peggy (Margaret) Sands Orchowski writes in her book, *The 5 Basics Everyone Should Know About Immigration: Confronting Confusion*.

PROMOTED

“Immigration is a surprisingly emotional topic for Americans of all ages and stages. That's because almost everyone in the United States has personal connections and family stories, both recent and distant, with immigrants. Hardly anyone is neutral nor untouched,” she observed.

An Immigration Primer

Orchowski's book is a primer that addresses five fundamental aspects of immigration and immigrants including:

- What immigration is and how it differs from migration
- Who is an immigrant
- Why the U.S. and other nations have national immigration laws, and who makes them.
- How immigration laws are enforced
- The politics of immigration

Orchowski has written two other books about immigration including *Immigration and the American Dream* and *The Law that Changed the Face of America: The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965*. She is a correspondent for *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education Magazine*.

CEO: C-suite news, analysis, and advice for top decision makers right to your inbox.

By signing up, you agree to receive this newsletter, other updates about Forbes and its affiliates' offerings, our [Terms of Service](#) (including resolving disputes on an individual basis via arbitration), and you acknowledge our [Privacy Statement](#). Forbes is protected by reCAPTCHA, and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

Orchowski said she wrote her latest book to help people understand two fundamental issues about immigration: "It's about work opportunities—temporary or permanent—and it is about creating new and loyal citizens for a dynamic country," she commented via email.

But she points out in the book that immigration comes with responsibilities.

"Managing newcomers is a core duty of every sovereign nation state in the world [which is] reflected in their immigration laws. That includes what is lawful and what isn't, and boundaries of punishment for those who break immigration laws," Orchowski concluded.



Margaret Orchowski, the author of "The 5 Basics Everyone Should Know About Immigration: Confronting ... [+]"
Photo courtesy of Margaret Orchowski

Putting A Human Face On Immigration

Putting a human face on a controversial issue such as immigration can help make it more relatable and understandable.

We Are Home: Becoming An American in the 21st Century—An Oral History by journalist Rafael Suarez, tells the stories of more than a dozen immigrants against the backdrop of the evolution of the country’s immigration laws and policies.

Suarez is a veteran broadcaster, historian, and former correspondent for *PBS NewsHour*.

“Through more than 40 years as a reporter, I have covered immigration: shadowing Border Patrol agents at the southern border, with amnesty-seeking workers in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood, [and] with Midwest farmers struggling to protect their immigrant workforce from raids,” he recalled in an email interview.

People are the central focus of Suarez’s book.

“Critically, I move immigrant stories to the center of the book. People who came to America in a wide variety of ways tell their stories. They are the book’s spine. They are the throughline. They are a reminder of what’s challenging about this issue, and a warning against the sometimes simplistic hostility to newcomers,” Suarez noted.

We Are Home includes history lessons about immigration.

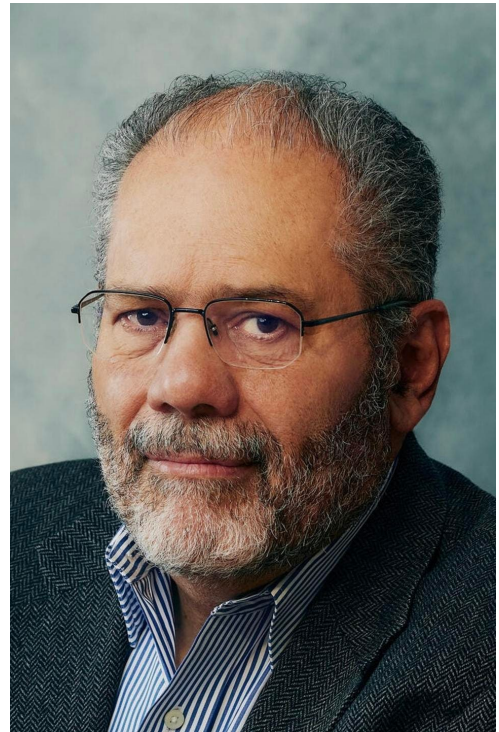
“I try to give the reader a grounding in the long history of evolution in America’s immigration law, and explain the way changing laws interacted with the changes in the way we think about immigration,” Suarez pointed out.

Expressing Strong Opinions

Orchowski and Suarez have strong opinions about immigration and immigrants.

Suarez’s book includes his plea “to stop the so far unproductive habit of treating what to do [about immigration]...and how to deal with the long term undocumented population, as the same thing.

“Somebody standing passport in hand at America’s front door needs a new approach because the system as it exists today is too complicated, too expensive, too unwieldy, and way too slow. We, all of us, have to come to some common wisdom about what to do with that person or family in a world pockmarked by crisis with tens of millions of people fleeing their homes,” he observed.



Rafael Suarez, author of “We Are Home.”

Photo credit: Robert Bredvad

‘An Important Job’

“The next time you see the words ‘comprehensive immigration reform,’ just roll your eyes. In a pretty evenly divided nation, doing really hard things doesn’t get easier,” according to Suarez.

“The heavy lift of a single set of initiatives that answers the needs of refugees, long-term undocumented, childhood arrivals, mixed-status families, citizenship versus legal permanent residence, just isn’t going to happen in this era of American politics. It will simply continue to be a running sore, an important job that remains forever on the to-do list,” he concluded.

‘Business Owners Have A Crucial Say’

“The U.S. has been a world model of successful immigration policies that have made our country strong and prosperous,” according to Orchowski.

“Because immigration is essentially about work...business owners have a crucial say via their Congressional representatives and lobbying contacts about how immigration laws evolve,” she noted.

Potential Impact

There is a strong likelihood that immigration will continue to make headlines in 2025 and beyond. One precursor is President-elect Donald Trump’s plans to deport millions of immigrants, which, if he goes through with it could trigger crisis situations for companies and organizations across the country.

“The ripple effects of a mass deportation would include labor shortages in agriculture, construction, hospitality, and other industries, according to Usha Haley, the W. Frank Barton Distinguished Chair in International Business and a professor of management at the Barton School of Business at Wichita State University, pointed out via email.

Challenges And Obstacles

As is the case with many crisis situations, there can be challenges and obstacles in addressing them,

“With Donald Trump returning to the White House, there is intense interest in how the Republican will carry out his immigration agenda, including a campaign pledge of mass deportations. His priorities could run into the realities faced by agents focused on enforcement and removals, including the unit in New York that offered The Associated Press a glimpse into its operations: The number of people already on its lists to target eclipses the number of officers available to do the work,” the Associated Press reported.

A Window Of Opportunity

There appears to be no end in sight to the immigration roller coaster crisis.

There is an important window of opportunity now for corporate executives to become as well-informed as possible about all aspects of immigration before the crisis morphs into something larger and disruptive for companies and organizations,

As is the case with all crisis situations, having a 360-degree understanding about a crisis can help business leaders do a better job in responding to it. And that's exactly what the books by Suarez and Orchowski seek to do by informing executives about the history and laws behind the crisis,

Follow me on [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#). Check out my [website](#) or some of my other work [here](#).



Edward Segal

Edward Segal is the bestselling author of the award-winning book *Crisis Ahead: 101 Ways to Prepare for and Bounce Back from Disasters, Scandals, and Other*