The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility. By Rebecca M. Schreiber. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018. 388 pages. Hardcover $120.00, paperback $30.00.

During a February 2019 press conference from the White House Rose Garden, President Donald Trump declared the situation at the US-Mexico border a national emergency. Using the word *invasion* seven times, Trump justified his national emergency declaration and his unwavering demand for a border wall by claiming that migrants entering the United States via the southern border without documentation constitute an "invasion of our country with drugs, with human traffickers, with all types of criminals and gangs." Despite his campaign promises that he would build a border wall and that the Mexican government would pay for it, Trump's national emergency declaration was a strategy to divert, without congressional approval, $3.6 billion of US taxpayer money from military construction accounts to fund the wall. Unsuccessful in his attempts to coerce Congress—by means of the longest US government shutdown in history—into approving $5.7 billion for construction, Trump decided a state of emergency would expedite matters: "I could do the wall over a longer period of time. I didn't need to do this [national emergency declaration], but I'd rather do it much faster." During his rambling speech, Trump also referred to former presidents' uses of the National Emergencies Act of 1976. "In fact," he boasted, "we may be using one of the emergencies [that President Obama] signed having to do with . . . criminal cartels."

Since its inauguration, the Trump administration has fabricated what Nicholas De Genova terms a "spectacle of enforcement" at the US-Mexico border, a scene where migrant "illegality" is hypervisibilized in mass media representations of immigration enforcement and border policing (quoted in Schreiber 2018, 136). Many activists, scholars, journalists, lawyers, and politicians have denounced the exceptional and explicit cruelty of Trump's 2017 Muslim ban and zero tolerance policy, but this spectacle of enforcement has created a dynamic whereby many in the mainstream media describe Trump's policies as if they were new, obscuring the more covert operations of the Obama administration that laid the groundwork

for Trump's actions. In reality, Trump's extreme anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies are a continuation and expansion of nearly two decades of heightened surveillance and US border security since September 11, 2001 (9/11).

In *The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility*, Rebecca Schreiber historicizes the post-9/11 transformation of US immigration enforcement. Her comprehensive analysis of the George W. Bush and Obama administrations' neoliberal methods of immigration enforcement provides essential historical context for the current regime of documentation, detention, and deportation under Trump. For example, Schreiber describes how in an effort to deter Central American and Mexican migrants from entering, the Secure Fence Act of 2006 mandated the construction of seven hundred miles of fencing on the US-Mexico border (23). Quoting political theorist Wendy Brown's *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (Zone Books, 2010), Schreiber explains that the Secure Fence and other policies implemented after 9/11 "situate[d] the U.S. walling project as a response to a 'state of emergency,' bidding to protect the vulnerable nation under siege" (23).

Schreiber's policy analysis serves as the background for her study of how undocumented Central American and Mexican migrants have employed strategies, both political and aesthetic, to respond to increased racialization and criminalization of Latinx migrants through immigration enforcement in the post-9/11 US and US-Mexico borderlands. Engaging works of photography, film, and video by artists and activists, Schreiber examines undocumented migrants' self-representation through documentary forms. Her analysis carefully positions these projects within "their locations, their modes of address, and their contexts of production" (6). Her point of departure is her assertion that cultural production is crucial to social justice struggles (xii). Studying the relationships between visual culture, political visibility, and power, she interrogates the dynamics of representation and the structures that determine which events are visible within popular consciousness and which events are obscured from view. Schreiber considers processes of mediation, curation, and distribution in exhibitions, publications, screenings, and social media, arguing that the migrants who participated in these projects not only employed the conventions of documentary form "but also *revised* the aesthetics of documentary" (3, emphasis in original). Exploring the objectives of individual artists and activists as well as of political advocacy groups and nonprofit organizations, Schreiber points to the limitations of liberal humanist understandings of documentary as a form of objective, authentic, realist representation of an

individual. Throughout *The Undocumented Everyday*, Schreiber interprets the work of undocumented artists and activists who trouble the claim that visibility yields "empowerment, identitarian affirmation, and inclusion" (5). Defining documentary as "a form of knowledge and a technique of power," Schreiber demonstrates that the liberal trope of individual visibility obscures the ways in which the collective experience of undocumented migrants is actually produced by state policies and practices (4).

Invoking scholars such as Amalia Pallares, Alicia Schmidt Camacho, Diana Taylor, Nicholas De Genova, and Jonathan X. Inda, Schreiber argues that undocumented Central American and Mexican migrants in the post-9/11 United States utilized and revised the genre of documentary to visually represent forms of belonging beyond mainstream narratives of citizenship and worthiness. Schreiber organizes her arguments around concepts of subjectivity, presence, and mobility, positing that undocumented migrants represented themselves in a way that defied some of their collaborators' aims to "'humanize' them for a broader audience or as part of efforts to gain the 'gift' of citizenship or some other form of immigration status" (xiii). Schreiber concludes that in documentary photographs, films, videos, and performances, undocumented Central American and Mexican migrants did not promote liberal humanist understandings of visibility as a strategy for recognition, inclusion, and political representation, but rather produced images that performed belonging outside of official state recognition (6). In other instances, says Schreiber, undocumented migrants employed and revised documentary forms to actually refuse state recognition (6). While these conclusions function as critical theoretical interventions into academic, activist, political, and popular media discourses about the advantages of political visibility for undocumented migrants, Schreiber leaves unanswered crucial questions about how these revised documentary forms refuse state recognition.

The Undocumented Everyday is neatly structured in three parts, with each part containing two chapters. Arranged chronologically and spanning the years 2000–12, the chapters focus on particular case studies. Schreiber views each case study as a "struggle in meaning," and she includes works "produced within highly mediated contexts" as well as works that explicitly critique mainstream anti-immigrant discourses and intervene in the spectacle of immigration enforcement (34). In part 1, Schreiber engages two Unseen America photography projects produced by the cultural division of 1199SEIU, the largest health care union in the country. In the early 2000s, Unseen America partnered with the Workplace Project (Centro

de Derechos Laborales), a Long Island, New York, organization of Central American and Mexican day laborers and domestic workers, to produce local and national exhibitions of photographs taken by Workplace Project day laborers. Unseen America's aim was to bring visibility to the lives of low-wage workers in the United States. Schreiber argues that migrant participants employed mixed-genre and translocal aesthetics, and in doing so revised the genre of documentary, created alternative representations of themselves, and formed new meanings of local and translocal belonging.

In part 2, Schreiber builds on Jonathan X. Inda and Julie Dowling's theory of "migrant counter-conducts" as she engages collaborative photography and film projects through lenses of absence, presence, disruption, and mobility. This section focuses on the film *Maquilápolis: City of Factories* and on the Border Film Project photography exhibition, both of which depict the consequences of neoliberal policies in the US-Mexico borderlands. Schreiber contrasts these projects in terms of their target audiences and distinct approaches to collaboration, concluding that the Border Film Project ultimately concealed the migrant participants' point of view. By contrast, in *Maquilápolis*, migrant activists combined documentary with performance, thus altering the traditional documentary form to prioritize the perspective of maquila workers and migrants.

Part 3 takes on the multimedia exhibition *Sanctuary City/Ciudad Santuario, 1989–2009*, as well as migrant activists' employment of documentary aesthetics and performance, to challenge anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric. Here Schreiber continues troubling the notion that increased visibility equals increased recognition and protection for undocumented migrants. She argues that undocumented migrants created "counter-surveillance" strategies by documenting the arrests and detention of other migrants. Schreiber uses the term *counter-visibility* to describe the tactic of publicizing political actions in order to avoid detention and deportation. She also develops a theory of "counter-documentation," whereby migrants mix documentary and performance aesthetics as a way of challenging "official forms of documentation" and the state's targeting of undocumented migrants for exclusion from the nation (18).

Schreiber's visual and performance analysis of photographs taken by undocumented Central American and Mexican migrants is a significant contribution to the study of undocumented migration. Throughout the text, readers view full- and half-page black and white images in which migrants portray their own experiences. Interestingly, one of Schreiber's most original insights emerges from her analysis of photographs captured

not by undocumented migrants but by members of the nativist Minuteman Project, a group founded in 2004 by violent vigilantes who patrol the US-Mexico border. In chapter 3, Schreiber describes how organizers of the Border Film Project provided disposable cameras to Central American and Mexican migrants en route to the United States, as well as to members of the Minuteman Project. Schreiber's analysis of images captured by Minutemen illuminates the complex ways in which "nativist movements have used images of the natural environment to gain support for their cause" (137), a politically paradoxical phenomenon that warrants further study. In our current moment of accelerated environmental devastation due to the same neoliberal policies that produce undocumented migrations into the United States, as well as extreme climate conditions that force people to migrate, Schreiber makes original and important connections between Anglo nativism and the physical landscape of the US-Mexico border*lands*. However, a framework that addresses white settler colonialism is absent from Schreiber's conclusions about nativism and land. Incorporating critiques of the multiple layers of colonization in the occupied US-Mexico borderlands would bring more depth and complexity to her analysis of nativist claims.

The Undocumented Everyday contributes to the fields of American studies, visual culture studies, media studies, Latinx studies, US-Mexico border studies, and immigration studies. Schreiber's interdisciplinary approach will attract students and scholars interested in immigration, governmentality, surveillance, administrative law, popular media, Latinx visual culture and politics, performance, documentation, curation, and exhibition.

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