

IMMIGRATION CONTROLS, THE FAMILY AND THE WELFARE STATE

A handbook of law, theory, politics and practice for local authority, voluntary sector and welfare state workers and legal advisors


Steve Cohen, 2001
Jessica Kingsley Publishers ISBN 1 85302 723 5
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The Government seems determined to make immigration officers out of all of us. Successive laws are increasing the level of internal immigration controls. Immigration status determines entitlement to benefits, housing, health care, education and employment. More and more workers find themselves expected to carry out passport checks as part of their jobs, to police racist laws.

Steve Cohen gives a clear and comprehensive account of the interaction between welfare, immigration and refugee laws, and how these laws work together to attack Black, Asian and refugee families and communities. Too many welfare professionals see their role as neutral (at best) and are reluctant to work positively on behalf of those threatened by immigration laws. This book shows how good anti-racist practice demands workers respond positively to support those under threat. But it goes beyond that, by taking a clear political position opposed to all immigration controls. As Steve Cohen says, 'the dilemma for welfare practitioners as unwilling enforcers of

controls cannot be resolved through their reform, but only through their abolition'. He covers not only conventional legal approaches to challenging immigration decisions, but also campaigning and supporting those under threat.

'The family' of the title is not confined to traditional nuclear ones. The book looks at the impact of immigration controls on families, and what this tells us about how 'family' is constructed by Western societies, but just as importantly shows the effect of controls on those who live outside the traditional family. Chapter 7 is rather marvellously entitled 'Beyond the family: the gay, lesbian, unmarried, celibate, promiscuous, and single'.

As the subtitle suggests, this book is written mainly for welfare 'professionals'. However, it is clearly and accessibly written, and will be a valuable resource for anyone involved in campaigning against immigration control. If you are a housing officer, social worker, nurse, teacher or anyone who finds immigration controls affecting your work, you definitely need this book. 

THYROID POWER: 10 STEPS TO TOTAL HEALTH


Richard & Karilee Shames

HarperResource 2001
ISBN: 0-688-17236-9

Dr. Richard Shames believes that we are witnessing an auto-immune low-thyroid epidemic. Doctors on the Thyroid Unit at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Centre in NYC have revealed that 20 million Americans are currently being treated for thyroid problems. Synthroid, just one of the various thyroid medicines, is now either first or second most-prescribed drug in the US. The University of Colorado Health Sciences Center estimates that there are over 13 million more Americans who have undiagnosed thyroid problems that are causing many of their uncomfortable symptoms (fatigue, depression, excess weight, infertility, miscarriage, severe menopause, dry skin, constipation, hair loss).

Karilee Shames points out that a major environmental trigger of low thyroid is likely to be the fluoride added to municipal water supplies. Fluoride can depress thyroid functions with levels as low as 2.5 mg/day; adults in fluoridated areas ingest an average of 3.9 mg daily.

The authors suggest that, in a misguided attempt to help curb cavities in young children, we may be unwittingly poisoning our collective endocrine systems. In fact, as they are quick to point out, there really is no solid research on the long-term effects of fluoride on the human body, even though it has been used for over fifty years.

In 1997, 1500 scientists, engineers, and lawyers of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) joined in the release of a cautionary statement regarding fluoride: "Our members' review of the body of evidence over the last eleven years, including animal and human epidemiological studies, indicates a causal link between fluoride/fluoridation and cancer, genetic damage, neurological impairment, and bone pathology." According to the Shames', with mounting evidence of a fluoride-thyroid connection, these cautions now need to be taken more seriously. Thyroid Power cites dozens of studies to back up this point. Only 2% of Europe, and less than 5% of the world, fluoridates its water. Sweden, Denmark, Finland, India, and Japan have either rejected or banned its use in recent years. Meanwhile, in the UK, the recent York review of water fluoridation excluded all scientific references to thyroid damage. Allowing for the fact that this is a US-based book, their headlines today may just be ours tomorrow. This book hints at how they may read. 

Lobster #40 / Lobster CD

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214 Westbourne Av, Hull HU5 3JB

Lobster describes itself as the journal of parapolitics – not sure what this is. However, the slabs of lobster-grey print make for a good read – particularly for the conspiracy-inclined. Is this coffee table material? Could be easier on the eye – maybe due to aspirations towards the academic learned journal.

While Lobster is undoubtedly a handy periodical, the main emphasis is on the murky doings of governments, MI5 and other secret services, etc. All very revealing and worth it, just for the pub talk potential. However, the real star turn out now is the



Lobster CD, which has on it every issue so far (1-40), including the special issue – Clandestine Caucus. This means you have a load of old newsprint at your mousetips, without so much as a moth, dust mite, or chewed corner in sight. All these back-issues for just £50 (£100 for organisations) – er, bit steep, you can get the entire Encyclopaedia Britannica CD (legit version) for under £20.

Money no object? Then the idea of dozens of the well-

researched articles which pack Lobster within a searchable click is undoubtedly attractive. 