



# Immigration Law in the Cross Hairs ... As Usual

As other fields of law deal with money, property, and liberty, immigration law addresses the existential question of who we are as a nation: which fortunate souls may enjoy the bounty of our land as stakeholders and which are merely passing through. In a sense, our body of immigration law *answers* that question, because it reflects the accumulated judgment of our nation, across the ages, and up to the latest legislative enactment, about who is “us” and who is “them.” The task of administering this elaborate system

“A nation that cannot control its borders is not a nation.”

– Ronald Reagan

“The land flourished because it was fed from so many sources—because it was nourished by so many cultures and traditions and peoples.”


– Lyndon Johnson

thetic clients, the complex thicket of laws and regulations, the suspicious and sometimes hostile attitudes of other participants in the process (as well as the public), and, most of all, the high stakes of the game—none could be higher.

falls to immigration lawyers, to whom my work on this issue of *The Hennepin Lawyer* is dedicated.

Although I’m not an immigration lawyer, early in my career I handled, pro bono, a few gut-wrenching asylum cases. Armed with a full day of training and, OK, good facts, I managed to win asylum for: a woman fleeing a civil war in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo, who then used her status as a U.S. asylee to rescue her husband and five children from a refugee camp; a Coptic Christian who had been kidnapped and tortured for weeks by Cairo police until his family ransomed him and put him on a plane to the United States; a teenaged Nicaraguan who had walked across Mexico with a government soldier’s bullet hole in his leg and a dream of making a life for himself in America. These clients still live in the Twin Cities, and remain part of the tapestry of my life.

The experience gave me an appreciation of the lot of immigration lawyers. The sympa-

And so I am proud to edit an issue of *The Hennepin Lawyer* that hits all these themes. We lead with a commentary piece by Laura Danielson that provides both a history of immigration law and observations on its politicization. Other authors present a triptych of articles for non-immigration practitioners on how immigration law intersects with other fields (Sandra Feist), specifically with family law (Charlie Goldstein and Michael Davis), and how it has become integral to the job of the criminal defense lawyer (Kathy Moccio). The issue contains two articles directed to immigration specialists but which might also be useful to practitioners in other areas of the law: bonds for clients in immigration detention (Sarah Brenes) and the little-known alternative to foreign adoption called special immigrant juvenile status (Jessica Maher). Separate from the theme of immigration, we also include a short opinion piece from a member (Kevin Conneely) taking an opposing position on the call to action around the marriage amendment that appeared in the March issue. I hope you enjoy the lineup. 



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