

FREEDOM

THE CASE FOR OPEN BORDERS



Joss Sheldon

INTRODUCTION

"The bosom of America is open to receive not only the opulent and respected stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all nations and religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges."

George Washington

It's the 16th of June, back in 2015.

Donald Trump is riding an escalator in the Manhattan tower he's named after himself. The skin beneath his chin is sagging over a generic red tie. His face is reddish-purple.

He holds his left hand aloft, and offers a thumbs-up to the press.

In the background, a couple of dozen people are standing on the level from which Trump is descending, pressed up against a golden handrail. Some wave at the reality TV star, whilst others snap photos on their phones. A few of these spectators have wandered in off the street; curious to see what's afoot. Others are being paid \$50 to attend.

Trump follows his wife, Melania, who is sporting a white dress and a stoic face. He clammers up onto a makeshift stage, positions himself, and begins in the style to which the world will soon become accustomed:

"Our country is in serious trouble. We don't have victories anymore. We used to have victories, but we don't have them. When was the last time anybody saw us beating, let's say, China in a trade deal? They kill us. I beat China all the time. All the time.

"When did we beat Japan at anything? They send their cars over by the millions, and what do we do? When was the last time you saw a Chevrolet in Tokyo? It doesn't exist, folks. They beat us all the time.

"When do we beat Mexico at the border? They're laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now they are beating us economically. They are not our friend, believe me. But they're killing us economically.

"The US has become a dumping ground for everybody else's problems.

"Thank you. It's true, and these are the best and the finest. When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.

"But I speak to border guards and they tell us what we're getting. And

it only makes common sense. It only makes common sense. They're sending us not the right people.

"It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America, and it's coming probably... probably... from the Middle East. But we don't know. Because we have no protection and we have no competence, we don't know what's happening. And it's got to stop."

These were the opening remarks from the speech that launched Trump's campaign for office.

He'd started as he meant to go on.

Less than two weeks later, when NBC dumped Trump for "Derogatory statements... regarding immigrants", the future president doubled down, claiming:

"We must have strong borders and not let illegal immigrants enter the United States... Public reports routinely state great amounts of crime are being committed by illegal immigrants."

Trump insisted that the solution was a border wall:

"I will build a great wall. And nobody builds walls better than me, believe me. And I'll build them very inexpensively. I will build a great, great wall on our southern border, and I will make Mexico pay for that wall."

And Trump took things to the next level, in December of that year – saying he'd implement a "Total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States":

"Our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people that believe only in Jihad, and have no sense of reason or respect for human life."

Things *were* pretty dire, for a significant number of Americans...

Jobs had been shipped off abroad, wages had stagnated, and living costs were spiralling out of control. The aftermath of the Global Economic Crash had been devastating for everyday folk: Around ten-million Americans had lost their homes, nine-million had lost their jobs, and over 45 million had been plunged into poverty. (Shallby, 2018).

Trump was tapping into this seam of discontent, and offering a deliciously simple answer: It's the immigrants! *They're* the bogeymen. They're

the ones who are pillaging your prosperity.

But that malaise hadn't been caused by immigrants. It was caused by the policies of Ronald Reagan, George Bush Senior, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. They were the ones who'd put corporate profits before the welfare of the American people – cutting regulation, abolishing trade barriers, and reducing union power. (Gerstle, 2022).

And the Global Economic Crash wasn't caused by immigrants either. It was the work of unscrupulous investment bankers, the credit agencies that gave triple-A ratings to subprime loans, and successive governments, who'd rolled back the very legislation which was designed to prevent that type of meltdown.

Most of the bankers at Lehman Brothers and Bear Stearns weren't immigrants. Most of the politicians who put profit before people, were born and raised in the States. It wasn't immigrants who closed around seventy-thousand American factories, and outsourced five-million manufacturing jobs. Those decisions were made by fat cat chief executives. And it wasn't immigrants who profited from the slash-and-burn approach to managing the economy. It was a tiny cabal of shareholders. (Scott et al, 2022).

But none of that mattered. In politics, the truth is secondary. *Narrative* wins the day.

If you can pick at people's discontent, work your audience into a frenzy, say you've identified the issue, say you have the solutions, and promise to make life better – then you'll rack up the votes.

Donald Trump did that.

Hillary Clinton did not.

THE FACTS WHICH DISAPPEARED

But what if Hillary *had* tried such an approach? What if she had acknowledged the suffering of the American people? What if she'd gone as far as to say that immigration policy *was* to blame?

Imagine the scene, if you will...

Clinton and Trump have won their parties' nominations. Trump's rhetoric is well-known. But Hillary has been fighting fire with fire – taking an unashamedly *pro-immigration* stance. Her campaign has been just as controversial as Trump's. And it's attracted the same sort of passionate following – from regular Americans who feel they've been left behind, and who've been energised by the changes Clinton is proposing.

There are tens-of-thousands of them, packed inside this arena – a metallic old thing, which has been spruced up with blue drapes and glittery ribbons. Some of Hillary's supporters are holding placards. Others are waving an array of flags, which represent hundreds of nations and regions. Several are wearing baseball caps, decorated with four white letters: "IMAG". It stands for, "Immigrants Make America Great" – a reference to the immigration-fuelled prosperity that Clinton is promising to deliver.

A hush descends, as the audience anticipates their candidate's arrival.

There's a brief moment of confusion. Had they been mistaken? Would they have to wait for another five minutes? Another ten? Some people have been standing in here for hours.

A banner unfurls above the stage, a little haphazardly – unravelling on one side, while the other remains hidden. But the delay doesn't last for long. And now the banner can be seen – red, white and blue – star-spangled, with a three-word demand: "Open the borders!"

The crowd cheers:

Open the borders!

Make America the Land of the Free!

Clinton enters from stage left. But she doesn't just walk the boards. She doesn't just jog. She begins with a skip and ends in a sprint – sucked in towards the adoring masses, who are already chanting her name:

Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

And then:

We want jobs!

Immigrants create jobs!

Clinton savours the moment. She turns to her left, waves towards the supporters at the front, and then waves towards those at the back. She arcs around, ever so slowly – saluting the middle section, before gesturing towards her right.

She only speaks when she's ready – screaming out loud and punching the air:

"The United States is a nation of immigrants!"

Cheers.

"Thank-you, thank-you. Yes. Haven't you heard? America was built by immigrants, for immigrants. Immigrants built America. Immigrants made America great. And immigrants will make it even greater!"

Applause.

A pause.

An impatient hush.

"The founding fathers were immigrants! George Washington was an immigrant. George Washington's maternal grandfather, Joseph Ball, came here from England. George Washington was an immigrant. A third-generation immigrant.

"Thank-you... Thank-you... And he wasn't alone. Thomas Jefferson was also an immigrant. A *second-generation* immigrant. His very own mother, Jane, moved to this great nation from Shadwell, near London.

"Thank-you! You're wonderful. You're the best audience in the world. The best!

"Just like Benjamin Franklin. The best! Yes. Benjamin Franklin, the son of Josiah Franklin, a fabric dyer from Ecton, Northamptonshire, Great Britain.

"John Jay was an immigrant. Yes! John Jay was an immigrant. His father, Peter, was a French Huguenot. His mother, Mary, was Dutch. An immigrant! A *second-generation* immigrant.

"Alexander Hamilton was born on the island of Nevis. A *first-generation* immigrant! A *first-generation* immigrant! He came here as a boy. The first ever treasury secretary was an immigrant!"

Cheers.

Hillary takes a long, slow breath.

She lifts her chin, and gazes towards the bleachers, doing little to suppress a grin.

Immigrants! Immigrants! Immigrants!

"George Washington?" Clinton wails.

"Immigrant!" The crowd responds.

"Thomas Jefferson?"

Immigrant!

"Benjamin Franklin?"

Immigrant!

"John Adams?"

Immigrant!

"Alexander Hamilton?"

Immigrant!

"John Jay?"

Immigrant!

"James Maddison?"

Immigrant!

"Immigrant! Immigrant! Immigrant! Thank-you. Immigrants built America. Immigrants made America great. And immigrants will make it even greater!"

Hillary nods.

She closes and reopens her eyes:

"Immigrants built this nation.

"Chinese immigrants built the railroads! The Chinese brought their food. Such great food. American Chinese food! The best Chinese food in the world. The Chinese opened restaurants, shops and laundries. The best laundries in the world. American laundries! The best!

"Do we have any Chinese Americans in the house?"

Cheers.

"The best! The best of the best. The best Chinese people in the world come to America. The ones back in China? Not so great. Pretty mediocre. But the ones who come to America? Great! Out of this world!

"And what about the Germans? Who here had German ancestry?"

Cheers.

"Is that all? I bet there's more. One-in-seven Americans descend from German immigrants. You might be German yourself, and have absolutely no idea!

"Ah yes, the German Americans. You headed west, opening farms, feeding the nation. You gave us the kindergarten. You gave us hamburgers,

frankfurters, and some of the finest American cars.”

Cheers.

“Thank-you. Thank-you. And what about the Scandinavian Americans? Who has Swedish or Norwegian heritage?”

Cheers.

“Wow! Love you gals. Love you guys... A million Scandinavians have moved to this great land. Charles Lindbergh’s family was from Sweden. Conrad Hilton’s father came from Norway. And he set up Hilton Hotels, who employ sixty-thousand Americans. Yes! One immigrant. Sixty-thousand American jobs. Immigrants create our jobs!”

Immigrants create jobs!

The noise is deafening. But Clinton doesn’t flinch. She puffs her chest, and screams over the hubbub, like the singer in a rock band:

“Don’t listen to those charlatans who tell you otherwise. Those frauds. Those liars. Those cheats.

“Immigrants create way more jobs than they fill!

“Immigrants are 80% more likely to start businesses than local folk. Half the people who’ve set up tech firms in Silicon Valley, came here from overseas. Immigrants create new products, with loads of patents. Loads. The most patents ever. More patents than anyone else. Yes. Immigrants are the lifeblood of invention. Immigrants create jobs. Immigrants create businesses. Immigrants pay higher wages than anyone else!

“That’s what we need, America. That’s what we need: More immigrants. More businesses. More jobs. Higher wages. Employment for all. A pay rise for everyone here.

“Open the borders! Open the borders! Let the entrepreneurs in. Allow them to create our jobs. Allow them to boost our wages.”

Open the borders!

Make America the Land of the Free!

Hillary nods, stops somewhat abruptly, and taps her lower lip – as though she’s struck upon an idea. The question that follows is probably scripted. But she speaks as though it’s only just popped into her mind:

“Do we have any foreign-born entrepreneurs in the house tonight?”

Most of the responses are inaudible, but a few can be heard:

My mummy is an enter-the-preen-air.

This man from Guatemala gave me a job.

Without this Ugandan, my family would be homeless.

Hillary smiles, rests a hand on the rostrum, and arches her back:

"Did you hear that? This couple has only been here for thirteen years, and they already employ over a hundred people. Thirteen years! A hundred people! Wow! Immigrants? Wow! Immigrants create our jobs.

"We shouldn't be surprised, mind you. If you have the gumption to up sticks, wave goodbye to your loved ones, leave everything behind, and travel thousands of miles... Well, you're going to have something about you. Some good old American 'Get up and go'. You're going to be the sort of go-getter who starts businesses, creates jobs, and pays the best wages. High, high wages. Great, American wages!"

The crowd is still cheering, "*Immigrants create jobs*", but Clinton is moving on:

"Immigrants save lives... Over 1.5 million immigrants work in healthcare. Yes, that's right: Three-in-ten of our doctors were born overseas. They get out of bed each morning, with one thing on their mind: *Saving your life*. Saving your mama's life. Saving your papa's life. Saving your nana's life. Saving your children's lives.

"Yes. Immigrants save lives. Immigrants save lives.

"Let's hear it for the foreign-born doctors!"

Wahoo.

"Let's hear it for the paramedics who travelled across the globe, to save your daughter's life."

Whoop. Whoop.

"Let's hear it for the immigrant dentists, nurses, opticians, therapists and pharmacists!"

Hooray.

"Immigrants build the homes we live in. They build our homes! Real American homes, made from the best American timber. And, by Jove, don't we need more homes? Am I right? Am I right? Have you seen the state of our housing market? Have you seen house prices? Have you seen rents? We need more immigrants, to build more houses, so that everyone can have a home.

"9.5% of immigrants work in construction. More immigrants work in construction than in any other industry. And we need them. Yes, we need more immigrants. We need more immigrants to build more homes. We need more immigrants to build more schools. We need more immigrants to build more hospitals, railroads, libraries, community centres, basketball courts and swimming pools.

"Open the borders! Allow the nation-builders to come!"

Open the borders.

Make America the Land of the Free!

The lighting dims. Then it dims a little more.

A shadow engulfs the stage.

Hillary scowls:

"Not everyone agrees... No. Not everyone is so intelligent... My opponent..."

Boo.

"My opponent... He says that immigrants are *bad*. Can you believe that? He wants to waste billions of dollars of your money. Yes, *your* money. He wants to waste your hard-earned cash, extending the border wall. He wants a big, bad, bloated nanny state. He wants to waste your money on a wall!

"This so-called 'Donald Trump' wants to stop Iraqi doctors from coming here, to save your nana's life. He wants to stop Mexican entrepreneurs from coming here, to create jobs for your siblings. He wants to stop Latino builders from crossing the border, to build homes for your children.

"This man hates America. Donald Trump hates America! He hates you. And he hates everything this country stands for."

Boooooo.

"But we *love* America. We know what America needs: We need *more* immigrants. We need more freedom. We need the right to work wherever we want. The right to travel wherever we choose. The right to retire wherever we damn well like!

"So, let's demolish the wall! Let's demolish every last darned wall on the planet! Let's welcome absolutely everyone, no matter where they were born. Let's make America the 'Land of the Free'!"

THE BETRAYAL

You can bet your bottom dollar that Fox News would've gone into meltdown, had Clinton run with such a campaign. Barack Obama would've been scratching his head, thinking "Who is this Hillary?" And such an approach would've alienated anyone who subscribed to an anti-freedom agenda.

But those people had already been won over by Trump. Clinton was *never* going to win their votes.

Other votes were on the table.

Such a campaign would've won support from millions of foreign-born residents. It would've won their children's and grandchildren's votes. It would've attracted voters who were friends with foreign nationals, voters whose lives had been saved by foreign doctors, and voters who were employed by immigrant entrepreneurs.

Come election day, 39.9% of the electorate remained at home. A campaign with some energy, *with a narrative*, could have persuaded them to get up, march to the ballot box, and cast the decisive votes.

But no such campaign existed.

Clinton did offer a few concessions.

At the launch of her campaign, she promised to "Offer hard-working, law-abiding immigrant families a path to citizenship". Her website still declares that she'd "Introduce comprehensive immigration reform", "Expand access to affordable healthcare to all families... regardless of immigration status", "Close private immigration detention centres", "Promote naturalisation", and "Support immigrant integration".

There were some clear differences. Clinton was being kinder to those immigrants *who were already in America*. But she didn't want to encourage *more* immigration. Like Trump, she still wanted to police the Mexican border. The only difference was *how*: Trump wanted to extend the border wall, whilst Hillary wanted to rely upon technology and border patrols. She didn't have any plans to remove the sections of wall which existed at the time – which

had existed whilst she was secretary of state. Clinton wanted to “Enforce immigration laws *humanely*”. But she still wanted to enforce those laws. She still bought into the idea that there were such things as “Legal” and “Illegal” immigrants. Rather than shout out that “No human is illegal”, she essentially agreed with Trump – thereby validating his claims, and the policies he was proposing.

A politician might take one of five positions, when it comes to our right to move:

- 1) FULL-FAT LIBERTARIANISM: They might champion free movement.
- 2) DIET LIBERTARIANISM: They might open our borders a little.
- 3) STATUS-QUO-ISM: They might tinker with the current system.
- 4) DIET AUTHORITARIANISM: They might restrict our ability to move.
- 5) FULL-FAT AUTHORITARIANISM: They might close the borders and trap us all inside.

Trump placed himself somewhere between the fourth and fifth options. He did allow *some* kinds of movement, for the “Right” sort of person. But he also built a border wall – the kind of structure which is synonymous with authoritarian regimes, in places like the USSR, North Korea and Israel. And he would go on to pass Executive Order 13769 – closing the borders to people from six nations with Muslim majorities.

Hillary placed herself somewhere around the third option. She wanted to improve the system – to make it nicer, more humane, and more efficient. But she refused to challenge the status quo.

Neither candidate championed either of the first two options. Neither provided an alternative for voters who valued freedom.

Between them, Trump and Clinton narrowed the conversation. And that cannot be good for democracy.

I only singled out Hillary, because she just happened to be standing against Trump. Her policies weren’t terrible in isolation. And we should remember that she did win the popular vote.

It’s perhaps more telling to see how Clinton responded *in the years*

which followed, when the presidency wasn't up for grabs, and she was free to speak her mind.

Clinton didn't fight back. She didn't become more libertarian – campaigning for our right to move. She became more authoritarian – echoing the Trumpian sentiment.

Talking to The Guardian newspaper, two years after her defeat, she remarked:

"I think Europe needs to *get a handle on migration*... I admire the very generous and compassionate approaches that were taken, particularly by leaders like Angela Merkel, but I think it's fair to say Europe has done its part, and must send a very clear message: 'We are not going to be able to continue to provide refuge and support'."

She even called for deportations:

"You deport the bad actors, you deport the criminals, you deport people who (pose) some other kind of threat to our national security... For people who then keep coming, you turn them back."

And she demanded that immigrants assimilate:

"People who have been here for a long time, you have a cutoff point, and after that point they have to learn English, they have to pay taxes, they have to follow the law, they have to wait in line."

Clinton even went on to talk about "Solutions to migration" – normalising this idea that movement is bad – a problem that needs to be "Solved".

In that same article, Tony Blair – the former British prime minister – also demanded a more authoritarian stance:

"You cannot possibly stand for election unless you've got a strong position on immigration... You've got to answer those *problems*. If you don't... you leave a large space into which the populists can march." (Wintour, 2018).

Tony Blair was not a member of the Conservative Party – the British equivalent of the Republicans. He was a member of *Labour*. And here he was, buying into this Trumpian sentiment – this belief that immigration was a "Problem".

Blair and Clinton had stepped into the fourth square. They weren't even pretending to be moderates – suggesting we tinker with the status quo. They

were taking a firmly authoritarian line. And they'd left a gaping chasm behind them.

None of these mainstream politicians were saying that immigrants create more jobs than they fill, that they pay more into the exchequer than they receive in return, that they build the homes we so desperately need, that they farm the food we eat, or that they save our families' lives. No-one was demanding that we open our borders, and make it *easier* for people to move. Such opinions had been gagged.

OTHER WORLDS ARE POSSIBLE

This book fills the void which was created by this shift towards authoritarianism – to share the ideas which are missing from the mainstream narrative – making the case *for* free movement.

I want to arm you with the information you'll need to challenge the anti-freedom agenda. So that when someone repeats a Trumpian falsehood – these ideas that "Immigrants take our jobs", or that "They're not like us" – you can respond with the facts that debunk their lies.

I want to help you to challenge the politics of fear and hatred, so that we may usher in a new politics based on the humanity we all hold in common, no matter where we were born.

Does that sound crazy? Perhaps it does!

But let's not forget that this narrowing of the political spectrum has been a relatively recent occurrence. Politicians *were* willing to extend a warm welcome to their international guests, in the not-too-distant past.

Do you recall the George Washington quote at the beginning of this chapter? When he said the USA was open to strangers from "All nations and religions"? Well, that kind of statement used to be *the norm*.

Harry Truman won the 1948 presidential election, after promising to *overturn* controls on migration. He later stated: "We do not need to be 'Protected' against immigrants... On the contrary, we want to stretch out a helping hand, to save those who have managed to flee (from the USSR)... To

welcome and restore them.” (Volner, 2019).

John F Kennedy once said: “Immigrants have enriched and strengthened the fabric of American life.”

He also declared: “We are a nation of immigrants.”

And Barack Obama echoed his predecessor, when he stated: “We are and always will be a nation of immigrants.”

But it wasn’t only Democrats who used to speak in such a manner. Take these quotes from the three *Republican* presidents who preceded Donald Trump, beginning with Ronald Reagan, who said this in 1980:

“(Rather than) talking about putting up a fence, why don’t we work out some recognition of our mutual problems, make it possible for them to come here legally with a work permit, and then, while they’re working and earning here, they pay taxes.”

Reagan’s successor, George Bush Senior, reminded the nation that the USA was built by immigrants, when he said this in 1990:

“Our nation is the enduring dream of every immigrant who ever set foot on these shores, and the millions still struggling to be free. This nation, this idea called America, was and always will be a new world — *our* new world.”

And Bush’s son, George Junior, extolled the immigrant work ethic, while speaking in 2004:

“As a Texan, I have known many immigrant families, mainly from Mexico, and I’ve seen what they add to our country. They bring to America the values of faith in God, love of family, hard work, and self-reliance – the values that made us a great nation.”

George W. Bush also admitted that, “Nearly all Americans have ancestors who braved the oceans – liberty-loving risk takers in search of an ideal... Immigration is not just a link to America’s past – it’s also a bridge to America’s future.” (Ortiz, 2016).

If these *Republican* politicians – who certainly weren’t a bunch of “Bleeding heart liberals” – could’ve spoken so glowingly about immigration in the recent past, then they should be able to do so again in the future. You never know: This book might swing them back in the right direction!

EVERYONE HAS A STORY

I suppose I have skin in the game...

I was born in Barnet – a fairly anonymous suburb on London’s outermost fringe. My father grew up in the area. But my mother moved around a little – she grew up in Oxford, went to study in Liverpool, and headed down to London when she began her career. My grandparents were also born in England. So, it’d be easy for me to consider myself British through-and-through. My family speak English with an English accent. We eat fish and chips, go to football matches, and whinge about the weather. I’ve never heard any of my relatives refer to themselves as “Immigrants”.

In reality, all eight of my great-grandparents moved to England from Eastern Europe, between the two World Wars – fleeing from antisemitism. If they hadn’t made that journey, they might’ve been murdered by the Nazis. I wouldn’t be here today, writing this book.

How many other lives were saved, thanks to similar journeys? And how many of the six-million Jews who *were* slaughtered, would’ve been saved had there been open borders, providing them with a passageway to safety? It’s sobering to think.

But free movement, for me, isn’t something that’s limited to the dark annals of history. It’d be fair to say that without international travel, you wouldn’t be reading this book for a *second*, entirely different reason...

In December 2012, I left my job at Northampton Town Football Club. I was determined to write and release my debut novel. But I only had a few thousand pounds in the bank.

Would that money have sufficed, had I remained in England? No way! I’d have spent it in a few months, whilst I was only a fraction of the way through the first draft, and I’d have been forced to get another job to pay the bills. Perhaps I could’ve written part-time. But that book – “Involution & Evolution” – took almost two years to complete. Distracted by a job, and by fatigue, it would’ve taken even longer. Given that it was a bit of a flop, I’d have probably lacked the motivation to keep writing. The chances are that I

wouldn't have made it to book number eight, and you wouldn't be reading it today.

So, what happened?

Well, I "Moved", of course.

I put the word in quotation marks, because I didn't take up permanent residence abroad. I was more of a *nomad*. I went to India – one of the cheapest countries on the planet. I rented a rather basic room, for around £70 a month. I washed my clothes by hand, on the floor beneath the shower. I cooked porridge in a kettle for breakfast, and ate my other meals at the cheapest restaurants. All in all, I survived on about £5 a day. Even when you add in the cost of flights and visas, it's not hard to see how I made my money last for around eighteen months – enough time to complete the first two drafts of my novel.

Moving to another country, helped me to launch my new career.

It also helped me to put down roots...

Even as a relatively successful author, there was no way I could've bought a house back in Barnet. According to Right Move, the average property in my hometown sold for £891,938 (in 2022). The average apartment cost £509,664. At the same time, according to Words Rated, the average indie author was only making a thousand dollars a year. You do the maths!

So, what did I do?

I wrote my first two books in India and Nepal, before writing my third – "The Little Voice" – while house-sitting for friends in Spain. When that began to sell, I treated myself. I wrote my fourth novel – "Money Power Love" – in the food-lovers paradise of Thailand. It was there that I met my (now) wife. We moved to the Philippines and then to Bulgaria, where we bought a three-bedroom house on the edge of the Pirin National Park. With beautiful mountain views, that little slice of paradise was a short drive away from a ski resort and an assortment of hot springs. It cost me around £30,000 – the sort of price that a moderately successful indie author *could* afford to pay.

After a few years, my wife began to miss the land of her birth – the Philippines. I could tell that she'd be happier if we returned to that island nation.

So here we are today. We've bought a little under two hectares of land, for about £25,000, and a team of builders are erecting our home as I type –

replete with a well, water-filtration system, solar panels and wind turbine. We plan to grow our food, live off-grid, and be fairly self-sufficient.

It's not the sort of life everyone would wish for themselves, and it certainly has its downsides. But it's the life we've chosen. And there's no way we could've afforded it back in Britain.

We *had* to move, to enjoy this lifestyle. We've been incredibly fortunate, to be able to do such a thing. The British passport is a powerful tool – it makes it easy for Brits to relocate. But still, there's a part of me that feels conflicted. I feel like a spoilt brat, hopping from one place to the next, whilst other people are forced to remain where they are, and accept circumstances which were imposed upon them at birth.

There's one rule for one group of people, and another rule for everyone else. That's not right, it's not just, and it's not fair.

Everyone has a story. They tend to be fairly unique. And the nuance is often lost.

We rarely hear about those people who move abroad to enjoy a cheaper cost of living. We seldom speak about those people who move for the sake of a homesick spouse. Have you ever come across anyone else who moved from Britain to India, to launch a career as an author?

Discussions about migration tend to focus on the negatives. But not everyone who moves is a victim – a "Refugee", "Asylum Seeker", or an impoverished "Economic Migrant". People relocate for thousands of reasons – most of which we never stop to consider – most of which are *positive* and *beautiful*. People move to study, retire, or make a fresh start – to experience different cultures, climates and lifestyles. It's true that some of us only make single journeys – emigrating from one place, and immigrating into another. But plenty of "Returnees" do head back in the other direction. Other people are more "Nomadic". Some move around their regions, whilst others traverse the globe. They might settle down for a few weeks, a few years, or a few decades.

Whatever the case, one fact remains: No-one chooses the place where they were born. It's a lottery. You might be fortunate. You might be born in

the perfect nation for you – one with all the opportunities you'll need to become the best version of yourself. Then again, you might not.

It seems inherently unjust to trap people in particular lands, simply because they were born there, when they could attain self-fulfilment elsewhere.

It's also a historic anomaly...

THE CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK

Our love of exploration is nothing new. *Homo sapiens* have been moving about, establishing homes in various locations, for at least eighty-thousand years. Earlier humans, such as *Homo habilis*, were wandering the Earth around two-million years ago!

Unless you live in a few specific places in Africa, you're not truly indigenous to the land you call "Home". You're the descendant of ancient travellers – people who left Africa, found new places to reside, moved on again, and established communities in different territories – spreading out further and wider, until they'd populated most of the globe.

The first chapter of this book will recount their journey – showing how we became who we are by moving about – free from the artificial restraints that borders try to impose. And it'll document the history of the border, the border wall, and the passport – recounting the ways in which we shackled ourselves to the lands of our births.

Having established that humans have always liked to travel, the following three chapters shall ask *why*: Why do we want to move, visit new regions, and live in different locales?

Is it a matter of *nature*?

Do some of us have a genetic inclination to explore the world, live in new places, and experience different cultures? Are we *all* built with the propensity to move – with a curious imagination, that makes us wonder, "What's over there?" – and the physical attributes, that enable us to go and find out? Or should we be kept apart? Are there any genetic differences,

between the groups of people who live on either side of a border?

Is it a matter of *nurture*?

Do the members of some societies *encourage* their offspring to get restless and take to the road? Shouldn't we respect the cultures of nomadic people such as the Kazakh horsemen, and their modern equivalents – the digital nomads? Why are countries like Canada and Japan enticing people to their shores? Why are "Returnees" heading back to China and India? And why is there a culture in the Philippines, which inspires people to leave?

Or is it a matter of *necessity*?

What about all those individuals who are forced to move – to escape from poverty, disease, war, persecution, and environmental disasters? Could we eradicate global poverty, by allowing impoverished people to move to wealthier nations? Could we bring down despotic regimes, by opening our doors to their dissidents?

Those three chapters champion *emigration* and *circular migration*.

The next four chapters will flip things on their head. Rather than ask why we should have the right to move, they'll look at the benefits we'll enjoy when we welcome *others* – making the case for *immigration* and *internal migration*.

In the chapter entitled "Integrate? Or Contribute?", we'll look at how foreign nationals have enriched our *cultures*. Did you know that British labourers took football to Brazil? Or that fish and chips, the UK's national dish, was introduced by Portuguese refugees? Where do you think our languages came from? Who do you think invented Hollywood, and the idea of the "American dream"? And how many genres of music, do you think were invented by people who'd moved from one place to another?

In "They Create Our Jobs", we'll revisit the ideas we introduced in Hillary's speech: Immigrants launch businesses, which create millions of jobs. They inspire *other* entrepreneurs. They launch platforms, such as YouTube, which create a second tranche of jobs. And they create jobs as *consumers* – spending their money, and creating consumer demand – forcing firms to recruit more workers.

The next chapter – “It’s Win, Win, Win” – introduces some of the other economic benefits which accrue from inward migration. Overseas workers tend to do highly skilled work, or arduous physical labour – plugging shortages in our labour supply. They *complement* the work we’re already doing, making our economies more efficient. This boosts economic output, and leads to higher wages. Immigration is also a boon for the government. New arrivals tend to pay more in taxes than they receive back from the state. They plug a demographic timebomb. And abolishing borders would also save us a fortune – because we wouldn’t have to pay for border walls, guards, detention centres, or deportation flights.

The final chapter in this section – “But Why? (Oh Why, Oh Why?)” – looks at the *reasons* our foreign-born cousins offer so much more than you might expect: “Travel opens the mind” – it gives us new perspectives. With a foot in two cultures, international citizens can draw lessons from both. They’re also uniquely positioned to trade across borders – using the contacts they’ve accrued in various lands. They receive support from their diaspora networks. And if they don’t get ahead themselves, there’s a strong chance that they’ll propel their children on to success – overachieving, relative to their peers, thanks to the “Second generation advantage”.

Having stated the historical, biological, cultural, political and economic cases for free movement – and having dedicated several pages, extolling the virtues of both emigration *and* immigration – our journey will be drawing to an end.

We’ll just have a couple of loose ends to tie.

In the penultimate chapter, we’ll examine the *philosophical* case for open borders, asking: “Why freedom?” Why should we have the right to move about, and live wherever we choose? Why not cocoon ourselves within the confines of a single territory?

We’ll consider both the *capitalist* and *anti-capitalist* cases for free movement. We’ll look at the religious arguments for open borders. And we’ll introduce some secular philosophies.

Finally, we’ll wrap things up with a conclusion – suggesting some of the ways through which we might usher in another era of free movement – by shifting public opinion, applying pressure on our governments, and taking

direct action – helping people to cross borders ourselves.

We'll also discuss the infrastructure we'd need to make life easier for people *after* they've reached their destination – granting them equal rights – including the right to vote in whichever country they choose, the right to buy a home wherever they like, and the right to claim welfare no matter where they live – with international passports and driving licences, which would allow us to become genuine citizens of the world.

Without any further ado, let's get things underway...