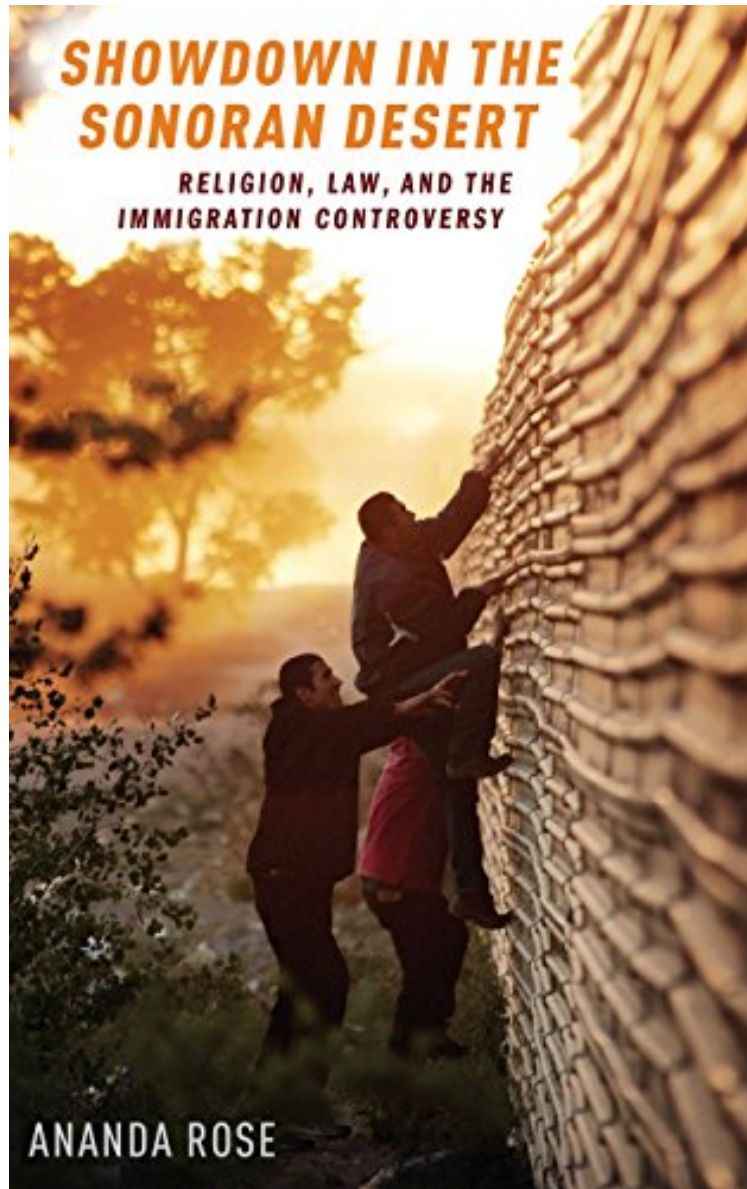


(Mobile library) Showdown in the Sonoran Desert: Religion, Law, and the Immigration Controversy

Showdown in the Sonoran Desert: Religion, Law, and the Immigration Controversy

Ananda Rose

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The U.S. immigration debate has raised some of the most difficult questions our nation has ever faced: How can we preserve the integrity of sovereign borders while also respecting the dignity of human beings? How should a border—that imaginary line in the sand—be humanely and effectively maintained? And how should we regard "the stranger" in our midst? To understand the experience of those directly impacted by the immigration crisis, Ananda Rose traveled to the Sonoran desert, a border region where the remains of some 2,000 migrants have been recovered over the past decade. There she interviewed Minutemen, Border Patrol agents, Catholic nuns, humanitarian aid workers, left-wing protestors, ranchers, and many other ordinary citizens of southern Arizona. She discovers two starkly opposed ideological perspectives: that of religious activists who embrace a biblically inspired hospitality that stresses love of strangers and a "borderless" compassion; and that of law enforcement, which insists on safety, security, and strict respect for international borders. But by embracing the stories these people tell about their lived experience—whether the rancher angered over seeing his property damaged by trespassing migrants, or the migrant who has left three children behind in a violent shantytown in the hope of providing them a better life through southbound remittances, or the Border Patrol agent stuck between his loyalty to law and the pain of finding a baby girl dead in the desert—Rose takes readers beyond predictable and entrenched partisan views to offer a more nuanced portrait of the conflict on the border. Ultimately, she argues, the immigration question turns on how we choose to view "the other"—with compassion or with fear. In writing that is intimate, insightful, even-handed, and often gut-wrenchingly vivid, *Showdown in the Sonoran Desert* offers a fresh new way to frame one of the most important debates of our time.

"With a poet's knack for words, a journalist's observational skills and a theologian's insights into religion's moving force even if it pushes people in opposite directions, Ananda Rose humanizes the complexities and controversies of the U.S. immigration debate." --Catholic News Service "In Ananda Rose's work, the human face of immigration includes American citizens in Tucson on both sides of the issue - those who stand in solidarity with migrants, and those who defend the integrity of the border. The result is a wide range of emotions and opinions that reflects the complexity on the ground throughout Arizona. ... Rose writes well, and the mix of personal stories and commentary makes for an attractive read. ... An irenic, evenhanded work that gets the conversation going in the right direction." -- Christianity Today "Attempts to tackle one of the most urgent yet intractable national problems... Provides a good overview of the clashing viewpoints involved in the debacle in the desert. Until the U.S. resolves its immigration mess, the opportunities and conundrums for people of faith who want to try to save lives in the desert seem likely only to expand." -- America "There is no better time to read this groundbreaking book than right now. *Showdown in the Sonoran Desert* offers a powerful, nuanced ethnographic analysis of a seemingly irresolvable problem in contemporary U.S. society: immigration, and all of the urgent moral and political dilemmas it embodies. This study is unflinching in its exploration of the central question of social, and governmental, responsibility for the suffering and death that continues to mark the terrain of the US/Mexico borderland in southern Arizona. Author Ananda Rose shows us that a meaningful response to this human rights crisis is possible, but it requires genuine dialogue and the hard work of listening carefully to a multiplicity of voices--especially those that are least likely to be heard above the din of combative rhetoric."-- Amy E. Den Ouden, author of *Beyond Conquest: Native Peoples and the Struggle for History in New England* "A profound, poetic and passionate work of scholarship, this is one of the best books I have read on religion and migration. Thoroughly research, yet engaging and illuminating, Ananda Rose gives a rich, ethnographic account and fresh, theological insight into a complex and controversial drama at the border. It challenges not only the way we understand the journey of migration but also our journey with God and each other." -- Daniel Groody, Associate Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame "On what basis do people assume the right to seek their fortunes in a place where, strictly speaking, they have no place? And what do we owe these strangers? In accessible prose and illuminating detail, Ananda Rose explores the contending politico-legal and ethical issues that arise whenever the poor and oppressed cross international frontiers in search of a better life." -- Michael Jackson, author of *The Palm at the End of the Mind* "The author leaves the reader with this challenge: "And there is you, reading this, asking yourself, what should we do?" The author believes that solutions that end migrant deaths and suffering on the border also will lead to a healthier global economy. I couldn't agree more."--National Catholic Reporter About the Author Ananda Rose is a published poet and journalist. She recently received a doctorate in Religion and Society from

