

Freedom through foot voting

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1 | INTRODUCTION

Freedom of movement is one of the great issues of our time. Expanding opportunities for both international and internal migration can greatly expand freedom and opportunity for hundreds of millions of people. The same goes for expanding freedom of choice in the private sector. ‘Voting with your feet’ in any of these three ways is also, in crucial ways, superior to ballot box voting as a mechanism of political choice.

There is an extensive previous literature on all three types of foot voting, analysing them separately. But my recent book *Free to Move: Foot Voting, Migration, and Political Freedom* (Somin, 2020) combines them into a unified framework, and explores key synergies between them.

There are a variety of potential objections to expanding foot voting rights, particularly through international migration. Some hold that existing governments have a general right to exclude would-be migrants, whereas others cite the need to limit migration in order to avoid specific negative side effects, such as increasing crime or overburdening the welfare state. But these objections have serious flaws of their own. Some can be rejected outright, whereas others can be mitigated by measures other than excluding potential migrants.

In this article I summarise some of the crucial advantages of foot voting over ballot box voting, describe how they apply to the three major types of foot voting, and outline my answers to several types of standard objections to expanded migration rights. I address these issues in much greater detail in *Free to Move*, on which this article is based.

2 | ADVANTAGES OF FOOT VOTING OVER BALLOT-BOX VOTING

Most people believe ballot box voting to be the ultimate expression of political freedom. When we vote in elections, we get to decide what government policies we will live under. But ballot box voting has two serious weaknesses: individual voters have almost no chance of affecting the outcome of an election, and for that very reason they have little incentive to make well-informed decisions. These problems can be mitigated by empowering more people to ‘vote with their feet’.



People can vote with their feet through international migration, by choosing what jurisdiction to live in within a federal system, and by making decisions in the private sector, such as living in a private planned community. These three types of foot voting are often considered in isolation from each other. But they have many commonalities, including as mechanisms for exercising political choice.

The odds that an individual vote will make a meaningful difference are minuscule: about one in 60 million in an American presidential election, for example, though somewhat higher for those who live in 'swing' states, and lower for residents of others.¹ Effective freedom requires the ability to make a decisive choice. A person does not have meaningful religious freedom if she has only a one in 60 million chance of being able to determine which religion she wishes to practise. A one in 60 million chance of deciding what views you are allowed to express is not meaningful freedom of speech. What is true of freedom of speech and religion also applies to political freedom. A person with only an infinitesimal chance of affecting what kind of government policies he or she is subjected to has little, if any, genuine choice.

The near-powerlessness of individual voters also discourages them from making any effort to become informed about political issues. Surveys consistently show that voters are often ignorant even about basic aspects of the political system and government policy. For example, only about a third can even name the three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial (Somin, 2016, p. 29). Political ignorance is both widespread and extremely difficult to overcome. Perhaps even worse, voters also have incentives to be 'rationally irrational' – to do a poor job of evaluating the political information which they do possess (Somin, 2016, ch. 3; Caplan, 2007).

Voter ignorance and irrationality cannot readily be overcome by the use of 'information shortcuts' – small bits of information that substitute for larger bodies of knowledge of which voters are unaware. Many such short cuts require pre-existing knowledge to use effectively, are easily undermined by bias, or both. For example, the often-used shortcut of 'retrospective voting' – re-electing incumbents when conditions seem good and voting them out when things are going badly – works well only if voters can knowledgeably identify which outcomes incumbents are responsible for, and which ones they are not; unfortunately, the public is often ignorant of those very points (Somin, 2016, pp. 117–22).

Similar problems bedevil claims that electorates make well-informed decisions in the aggregate, even if individual voters are ignorant and biased. Such 'miracles of aggregation' are plausible only if voters achieve at least some minimal level of knowledge, and errors are randomly distributed.²

Medical ethics requires doctors to get the 'informed consent' of patients before treatment (e.g. American Medical Association, 2012). Government policies also carry serious risks. Like medical operations, they too are often matters of life and death. Yet widespread public ignorance ensures that elections rarely secure anything approaching informed consent of the governed. Elected governments are like doctors over whom you have almost no control, mandating treatments you know little about.

Voting is not the only mechanism of traditional political participation. Some can also try to influence government policy by lobbying, campaign contributions, and political activism. But opportunities for such participation 'beyond voting' are highly unequal, with only an estimated 25 per cent of Americans engaging in it at all (Oser, Leightley, & Winneg, 2014). Even if access to such participation could somehow be equalised, we would still be left with the reality that each individual citizen would have only a minuscule chance of influencing policy outcomes. If

participation beyond voting were fully equal, individual participants would have no better odds of changing things by that mechanism than they do by voting. In both cases, increasing the influence of some necessarily means diminishing that of others.

Things are very different when people vote with their feet. When you decide what jurisdiction to live in, that is a decision over which you have real control. That in turn creates strong incentives to seek out relevant information. The same applies to private-sector decisions, and choices about international migration. Most people probably devote more time and effort to deciding what television set or smartphone to buy than to deciding who to vote for in any election. The reason is not that the television set is more important than who governs the country, but that *your* decision about the TV has real effects.

I do not claim that foot voting can completely displace the ballot box as a mechanism of political choice. In *Free to Move*, I describe several constraints on foot voting, and also explain how the two mechanisms can be mutually reinforcing in some ways. But the advantages of foot voting over ballot box voting do justify greatly expanding the role of the former.

3 | THREE TYPES OF FOOT VOTING

There are three major types of foot voting: inter-jurisdictional choice in federal systems, foot voting in the private sector, and international migration. Each makes important contributions to political freedom and human welfare.

3.1 | Foot voting under federalism

Foot voting in a federal system is what most people think of when they hear the phrase ‘voting with your feet’. People can choose which state or local government to live under based on government policies such as taxation, education, law enforcement, and economic regulation. In the United States, there are 50 states to choose from, and many thousands of local governments. This offers the obvious advantage of creating a lot of options for foot voters, without having to move to a different country.

It is often claimed that foot voting works only for the relatively affluent. But throughout American history, it has actually been a boon to the poor and oppressed. The most famous example is the Great Migration of African-Americans from the segregationist South.³ But there are many others in both the US and abroad. Examples include gays and lesbians moving to more egalitarian jurisdictions, western states seeking to attract female settlers in the nineteenth century by extending them equal rights, the migration of the Mormons to Utah, and the way in which foot voting lifted millions out of poverty in China.⁴

Foot voting under federalism can work even better when state and local governments have incentives to compete for residents by offering lower taxes, cheaper housing, and better public services. In *Free to Move*, I describe ways to incentivise such competition. But even in its absence, inter-jurisdictional diversity, combined with freedom of movement, can do much to enhance political freedom and increase opportunity.

There are various criticisms of inter-jurisdictional foot voting, such as claims that it is undermined by high moving costs, the danger of ‘races to the bottom’, and long-standing concerns that it is bad for racial and ethnic minorities. These arguments have some



merit, but are often overblown. In many cases, they can also be mitigated by reform measures.⁵

For example, moving costs can be reduced by decentralising power to lower levels of government. It is usually cheaper and easier to move from one town to another in the same region than to move to a wholly different regional government. Similarly, far from being harmful to minorities, foot voting is often actually a boon to them, as it historically has enabled many to move to more tolerant jurisdictions. ‘Race to the bottom’ problems are greatly overstated and can be further reduced by incentivising local and regional governments to compete for a wide range of migrants in order to stimulate economic development and increase their tax base.

In recent decades inter-jurisdictional mobility in the US and some other nations has been reduced, particularly for the poor. Among the main culprits are exclusionary zoning and occupational licensing laws. The former makes it difficult or impossible to build new housing in response to demand (including demand from migrants),⁶ while the latter make it hard for workers to get jobs in their chosen professions upon arrival in a new jurisdiction.⁷ Both problems can be mitigated by eliminating or at least cutting back on the regulations in question.

Not all government policies can be decentralised sufficiently to subject them to inter-jurisdictional foot voting. Some problems are so large-scale they can be addressed only by national governments, or even at an international level. Global warming is one obvious example. But a wide variety of government policies can be decentralised far more than is currently the case.

This is especially true for relatively large nations, such as the United States and India, or even medium-size ones such as Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Each of these countries has regional and local governments with populations comparable to those of successful smaller nations, such as Denmark, Switzerland, or New Zealand. If these nations can have their own independent policies on education, health care, pensions, and many other issues, the same is likely to be true for many sub-national governments in larger nations.

3.2 | Foot voting in the private sector

Foot voting in the private sector is a less familiar idea than foot voting in federal systems. Nonetheless, it is an important phenomenon. Private organisations of various types can offer a wide variety of services traditionally associated with regional and local governments. The most significant examples are private planned communities, such as condominiums and homeowners’ associations, which provide services such as environmental amenities, garbage disposal, education, and security. Some 69 million Americans lived in such private communities, as of 2016.⁸ This amounts to about 21 per cent of the population of the United States, a figure that gives the lie to often-heard claims that private communities are just a tool for the very wealthy to wall themselves off from the rest of society. Private planned communities have also become common in Canada, some European countries, and even many developing nations.

As a source of foot-voting opportunities, private communities have important advantages over traditional state and local governments. A big one is lower moving costs: a given area can accommodate many more private communities than political jurisdictions. As a result, it is often possible to move from one to another without giving up jobs, family connections, or other opportunities. Another benefit of private communities is that the services they provide are often of better quality than those offered by the state.



While private communities are far from being the exclusive preserve of the wealthy, it is true they are much less available to the poor than to the middle and upper classes. A variety of reforms can potentially make this form of social organisation more widely available. They include eliminating the double taxation under which private-planned community residents must pay for government services they do not use (because they instead consume similar services from their private providers) and cutting back on land-use regulations that make it difficult to establish new private communities.

What is true of private communities also applies to various other forms of private provision of what are traditionally government services. These include private school choice, private security services, and many others. Private-sector foot voting cannot fully replace government services. But much can still be done to expand its scope.

3.3 | Foot voting through international migration

The most controversial type of foot voting is international migration. But it is also the mechanism with the greatest benefits. The potential gains are truly enormous, far surpassing the already large advantages of internal foot voting. The reason is that the differences in quality of government between nations are much larger than those between jurisdictions within any single country. The differences between whatever you believe to be the best US state and whatever you think is the worst are small compared with the difference between the US and Cuba, Western Europe and Syria, or North Korea and South Korea. The likely gains are especially large for many of the world's poorest and most oppressed people – those living under the domination of the worst and most repressive governments, or facing civil war and terrorism.

Economists estimate that free migration throughout the world could roughly double world GDP, with massive increases in wealth for both migrants and natives, who benefit from the increased production and innovation (Clemens, 2011). The reason is that so many millions of people are trapped in societies where – no matter how talented and hard-working they might be – oppressive and corrupt government policies make it virtually impossible for them to ever escape poverty. Such people potentially become vastly more productive if given the chance to live and work in a freer society with greater opportunities.

In *Free to Move*, I consider various criticisms of the doubling world GDP estimate, and explain why they are likely wrong (Somin, 2020, pp. 68–70). Ironically, critics argue both that the estimate is flawed because too few people would migrate (even if given the chance) *and* that it is wrong because there would be so many migrants that they would overwhelm destination countries' political and economic institutions. But even if opening the borders would increase the world's wealth by 'only' 25 per cent or 50 per cent, it would still be an enormous gain, far beyond anything that could be achieved by virtually any other conceivable policy change.

The potential gains here go far beyond the narrowly economic. They encompass vast increases in human freedom and well-being of all kinds. Consider such examples as refugees fleeing racial, ethnic and religious oppression, women escaping patriarchal societies, and so on. For millions of people, the opportunity to vote with their feet through international migration is literally a matter of life and death. For many more, it can positively impact nearly everything that makes life worth living.

For the one-third of the world's population (some 2.8 billion people) who live under authoritarian regimes,⁹ foot voting through international migration is likely their only hope of



exercising any political freedom of any kind. Things are often only modestly better for the 1.9 billion people who live in societies which Freedom House (2020) classifies as ‘partly free’, meaning they have very weak democratic institutions. Most of the people in these two categories don’t even have the extremely limited version of political freedom offered by ballot-box voting.

Foot voting through international migration has limitations, most notably higher moving costs than the other two types of foot voting. There are potential ways to mitigate those limitations. But these drawbacks cannot be eliminated completely. Still, the best should not be the enemy of the extraordinarily good. Expanded migration rights cannot right all the world’s wrongs. But they can generate enormous increases in human freedom and welfare – particularly for many of the world’s poorest and most oppressed people.

There are important synergies between the three types of foot voting. Private-sector institutions can expand the range of choices for foot voters considering moving to a particular jurisdiction. Similarly, a federal system with numerous sub-national governments can increase the potential options for international migrants moving to a given country. Nations such as Canada and Australia authorise their provincial and state governments to admit international migrants who might not otherwise have received authorisation from the central government. US President Joe Biden and others have proposed somewhat similar systems for the United States. In each of these different ways, foot voting of one type can enhance the value of others.

4 | OBJECTIONS TO MIGRATION RIGHTS

There are many different objections to expanded migration rights. I divide such arguments into two broad categories: claims that natives have a general right to exclude migrants based on some type of right to self-determination and claims that there is a right to exclude in order to forestall specific harmful consequences of migration. Today, such arguments are usually advanced to justify restricting international migration. But, as we shall see, most can also be used to justify restricting internal migration, something which few actually wish to see.

4.1 | Do governments have a general right to exclude migrants?

A standard objection to foot-voting rights is that the existing population within a jurisdiction has a right of self-determination that entitles it to keep out migrants. The political freedom of migrants, it is said, must be restricted to protect that of natives.

Perhaps the most common justification for a power to restrict immigration is based on the rights of distinct ethnic, racial, or cultural groups to self-determination. Thus, France is the rightful property of the French, Germany of Germans, and so on.

Arguments for restrictions on migration based on group membership founder on the flaws inherent in claims that there is a right to live in a polity that privileges a particular culture or ethnic group. Such a right might seem to imply the power to coerce even currently existing residents and dictate their cultural practices.

After all, a culture can be transformed through internal change no less than through immigration. Older generations often complain about the cultural changes created by the choices of

the young. Yet few argue that their elders have a right to use force to prevent it, much less to the point of expelling anyone who fails to conform.

Another problem with the group self-determination argument is trying to determine which group has the 'right' to control which territory. Perhaps such rights are created when a group that has acquired previously unoccupied territory, and then developed it, without forcibly displacing anyone else. But, if so, virtually no actual government can claim such a right, as nearly all are the products of repeated conquest or coercion, and most rule territories occupied by multiple cultural or ethnic groups, not just one.

Ethnic and cultural group-based claims for a right to exclude are particularly problematic for those committed to the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity. The standard defence of racial and ethnic non-discrimination is that race and ethnicity are morally irrelevant characteristics that people have no control over. Whether a person is black, Asian, white, or Hispanic says nothing about her moral worth, or what rights she should have. Most liberal democrats recoil at the idea that we should restrict people's freedom because they chose the wrong parents. As Martin Luther King (1963) famously put it, people should "not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character".

What is true of race and ethnicity is also true of place of birth. Whether people were born in the United States, Britain, Mexico, or China is also a morally arbitrary characteristic that people have no control over, and which should not determine how much freedom they are entitled to. Place of birth is no more indicative of 'the content of their character' than race of birth. The same point applies to migration restrictions keyed not to place of birth but parentage (whether the would-be migrant's parents were citizens of the receiving nation). People have no more control over their ancestry than they do over place of birth. Neither should determine how much freedom people are allowed to have, or where they are allowed to live.

In addition to group rights claims for states' authority to exclude migrants, there are also individual rights theories, which draw an analogy between the nation-state and a private house or club.¹⁰ If homeowners have the right to bar outsiders from their property, the same reasoning gives a national government the power to exclude migrants.

Despite its widespread use, the house analogy has severe flaws. It appeals to property rights. But it actually ends up undermining private property. Far from protecting property rights, immigration restrictions actually abrogate the rights of property owners who want to let their property to migrants, associate with them, or employ them on their land.

Perhaps, however, the government is a kind of super-owner that has the right to supersede the decisions of private owners whenever it passes a law that does so. With this modification, the house analogy could indeed potentially justify almost any immigration restrictions a government might choose to set up. But it would also justify a variety of repressive government policies that target natives as well.

If a state has the same powers over land as a homeowner has over her house, then the state has broad power to suppress speech and religion the rulers disapprove of. A homeowner has every right to mandate that only Muslim prayer will be permitted in his house, or that only left-wing political speech be tolerated within its walls.

We might potentially forestall some of the illiberal implications of the house analogy by establishing constitutional rights against them. But if the analogy is valid, such guarantees are not morally required. They can be granted or withheld at the discretion of the government.

The club analogy has the same implications as the house version. Private clubs can and do restrict membership on the basis of speech, religion, and other similar criteria. A Republican



club can exclude Democrats, a Labour club can exclude Conservatives, a Muslim club can exclude Christians and Jews, and so on.

4.2 | Consequentialist justifications for exclusion

Many advocates of migration restrictions claim not that there is a general right to exclude migrants for any reasons, but instead that exclusion is often justified by the need to avoid specific negative consequences of migration. These include such dangers as overburdening the welfare state, increased crime and terrorism, and undermining of a nation's political institutions by new citizens who vote for harmful policies. The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the danger that migrants might spread deadly diseases.

Other possible negative side effects of migration include the danger of spreading harmful cultural values, the possibility that migration will damage the environment, and the risk that immigrants will undermine social trust and damage receiving nations' political institutions.

In chapter 6 of *Free to Move*, I go over these and other objections in detail. Here, I briefly summarise my three-stage approach for addressing such issues.

First, we should ask how serious the supposed problem actually is. Many of the standard objections to free migration are significantly overstated. If there is little or no problem to begin with, we should not be willing to make any significant sacrifices to 'solve' it. For example, it turns out that, far from increasing crime, immigrants to the United States and Canada (including undocumented immigrants) have significantly lower crime rates than natives do, while the data for Europe is equivocal (Somin, 2020, pp. 130–2).

Second, where migration creates genuine problems, it is often possible to deal with the issue by means of 'keyhole solutions' which minimise the risk without barring migrants. Instead of applying a meat cleaver that undermines political freedom and inflicts great sacrifices on potential migrants, it is better to apply a scalpel.

Finally, where keyhole solutions are inadequate, policymakers should consider tapping the vast wealth created by expanded migration to mitigate negative side effects that cannot be addressed in other ways.

I do not claim this approach can solve all conceivable problems potentially caused by foot voting. There are likely to be extreme cases where it fails. But the framework can be effectively applied to a wide range of issues often seen as strong justifications for imposing migration restrictions.

Consider, for example, claims that immigration will overburden the welfare state. Evidence from both the US and Europe indicates that this problem is greatly exaggerated, as jurisdictions with more immigrants do not have higher per capita welfare spending than those with fewer.¹¹ A study of 23 advanced economies by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2013) found that immigrants have a net positive fiscal impact in 20 of those countries – on average \$4,400 per migrant per year, including \$11,000 per migrant per year in the United States.

But to the extent this is a problem, there are several keyhole solutions, most notably restricting immigrants' eligibility for various welfare state benefits, as many nations – including the US – already do. Finally, if keyhole mechanisms prove insufficient, we have the option of taxing some of the new wealth created by immigration and using it to defray any additional welfare expenses.

Similar points apply to claims that immigration of lower-skilled workers harms lesser-educated native-born workers. The available evidence suggests this is true for only small subsets of the latter (generally those who lack high-school diplomas).¹² To the extent that this is a problem, there is a simple keyhole solution: compensate for any negative effects on wages by increasing wage subsidies (such as the Earned Income Tax Credit in the United States) for whatever category of native-born workers we conclude are adversely affected and morally entitled to compensate. Such wage subsidies can be funded by tapping a portion of the extra wealth created by migration.

The three-step framework similarly undercuts claims that the beneficial economic effects of immigration will be forestalled by such factors as immigrants damaging political institutions, spreading harmful cultural values, or voting for politicians who institute bad policies. Most such claims are greatly overblown.¹³ In unusual cases where there is a genuine risk, a variety of keyhole solutions are available.¹⁴

This approach also works for claims that migration needs to be restricted in order to contain the spread of diseases, such as the ongoing coronavirus pandemic – the ostensible justification for former US President Donald Trump's near-total suspension of entry into the United States by migrants seeking permanent residency.¹⁵

Here, there is a genuine problem, as COVID-19 really is an unusually dangerous public health threat. But it is not clear that travel restrictions can do much to slow its spread, especially when there is already extensive 'community spread' in the destination country.¹⁶ Pandemics such as the Black Death devastated the world even in eras when the vast majority of people were peasants or serfs who rarely left the villages where they were born.

Moreover, in the long run immigration boosts medical and other innovations that make combatting pandemics (and other health risks) easier. For example, the first two COVID-19 vaccines approved by US regulatory authorities were both developed by firms led by immigrants from poor nations who probably could not have made their vital contributions to these medical breakthroughs had they been forced to live out their lives in their countries of origin.¹⁷ More generally, immigrants to the US and Europe make disproportionate contributions to a variety of medical, scientific, and technological innovations, and present immigration restrictions block many additional such advances.¹⁸

In cases where it turns out that migration does pose a risk of spreading disease, there is a keyhole alternative to excluding migrants: impose a 14-day quarantine on entrants, as has been done by South Korea, which has done a far better job of constraining COVID-19 than the US. By that means, migrants can be isolated until it is clear they do not have the virus or are no longer contagious. The US Center for Disease Control recently concluded that even a seven to ten-day quarantine may be enough to guarantee against further spread of the disease.¹⁹ If so, the 14-day period could be reduced.

A ten- or 14-day quarantine may be a deal-breaker for tourists or business travelers. But, for most migrants, it is a small price to pay for the opportunity to live in a society that offers greater freedom and opportunity. And unlike migration restrictions, the combination of free migration and the quarantine keyhole solution does not create a large population of undocumented migrants, who in turn have strong incentives to avoid vaccination and testing, lest they come to the attention of authorities seeking to deport them. Such perverse incentives facilitate the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases. In the long run, the wealth created by migration also facilitates improvements in public health, including increased medical innovation to combat diseases.²⁰



Today, most standard arguments for barring migration are usually used only to justify excluding international migrants. But they apply just as readily to internal foot voting. If the US is analogous to a private club and can therefore bar migrants from Cuba or Mexico, then the same analogy can justify Texas in barring Californians. If the dominant ethnic group of France can bar foreigners with different cultures, then the majority ethnic group of a given US state should be able to exclude people from other parts of the United States who have different cultural and ethnic backgrounds; similarly, the Scots and Welsh should be able to exclude other UK citizens from their respective jurisdictions. And if the US government can bar foreigners lest they overburden its welfare system or compete with native-born workers, then wealthier states should be able to bar internal migrants from poorer ones. The latter, too, might burden receiving states' welfare systems, and compete for jobs with natives.

Those unwilling to bite such bullets in the domestic context should carefully consider whether international migration is really so different. Indeed, historically these kinds of arguments were used to justify state-government restrictions on the entry of African-Americans, 'paupers', and others.²¹

5 | CONCLUSION

Expanding opportunities for foot voting can greatly increase freedom and well-being throughout the world. I do not claim migration rights are absolute. A sufficiently great evil that can only be prevented by such restrictions might justify imposing them, just as similar tragic situations might justify violating other important human rights – including rights of internal freedom of movement. But the immense value of foot voting should at least create a strong presumption against restriction. The right to vote with your feet cannot be absolute. But it should not be lightly set aside.

NOTES

¹ See Gelman, Silver, and Edlin (2012). For more detailed discussion of this and alternative methods of estimating the odds that a vote might be decisive, see Somin (2016, pp. 75–9).

² For more detailed discussion of various aggregation theories, see Somin (2016, pp. 127–34).

³ For a summary of the evidence, see Somin (2011, pp. 215–21).

⁴ For the Chinese case, see Gardner (2017); on the others, see Somin (2020, 47–8).

⁵ For more detailed discussion of each of these issues, as well as some other potential downsides of foot voting under federalism, see Somin (2020, pp. 48–60).

⁶ For recent overviews of the evidence, see e.g. Schleicher (2018); Lindsey and Teles (2017); Glaeser (2017).

⁷ See Schleicher (2018); Department of Treasury, Council of Economic Advisers, and Department of Labor (2015); Kleiner (2015).

⁸ Community Associations Institute (2017). This figure is up from 62 million in 2010 (Stringham, 2015, p. 131).

⁹ This figure encompasses the population in the 'not free' category in Freedom House (2020).

¹⁰ See e.g. Altman and Wellman (2011, ch. 7); Kershner (2000); Wellman (2008, 2016).

¹¹ See e.g. Nowrasteh and Gochenour (2014); Alesina and Glaeser (2004); Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote (2001).

¹² For citations to relevant literature and data, see Somin (2020, pp. 138–9).

¹³ For an extensive state-of-the-art overview of the evidence, see Nowrasteh and Powell (2020); see also Somin (2020, ch. 6).

- ¹⁴ For descriptions of many such keyhole strategies, see Somin (2020, ch. 6).
- ¹⁵ For more detailed discussion, see Ilya Somin, 'The Danger of America's Coronavirus Immigration Bans', *Atlantic*, 28 June. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/06/danger-americas-coronavirus-immigration-bans/613537/> (accessed 31 December 2020).
- ¹⁶ For a recent wide-ranging study finding that international migration restrictions are unlikely to more than minimally slow pandemics or reduce death tolls, see Clemens and Ginn (2020). See also David J. Bier, 'How Travel Bans Failed to Stop the Spread of Covid-19', *Washington Examiner*, 14 May 2020. <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/how-travel-bans-failed-stop-spread-covid-19> (accessed 31 December 2020).
- ¹⁷ See Ilya Somin, 'Thank Immigration for the New Covid-19 Vaccines', *Reason* (Volokh Conspiracy blog), 22 November 2020. <https://reason.com/volokh/2020/11/22/thank-immigration-for-the-new-covid-19-vaccines/> (accessed 31 December 2020).
- ¹⁸ See *ibid.* and Ilya Somin, 'How Immigration Restrictions Harm US Citizens, Too', *Regulatory Review*, 15 December 2020. <https://www.theregreview.org/2020/12/15/somin-immigration-restrictions-harm-citizens/> (accessed 31 December 2020).
- ¹⁹ Jamie Gumbrecht and Naomi Thomas, 'CDC says 14-day Covid-19 protocol can be shortened to 7 to 10 days', CNN, 2 December 2020. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/02/health/cdc-shorter-quarantine-guidance/index.html> (accessed 31 December 2020).
- ²⁰ For more detailed discussion, see Somin, 'The Danger of America's Coronavirus Immigration Bans'.
- ²¹ See Somin (2020, p. 149). On the history of racially exclusionary zoning in the United States, see Rothstein (2017).

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