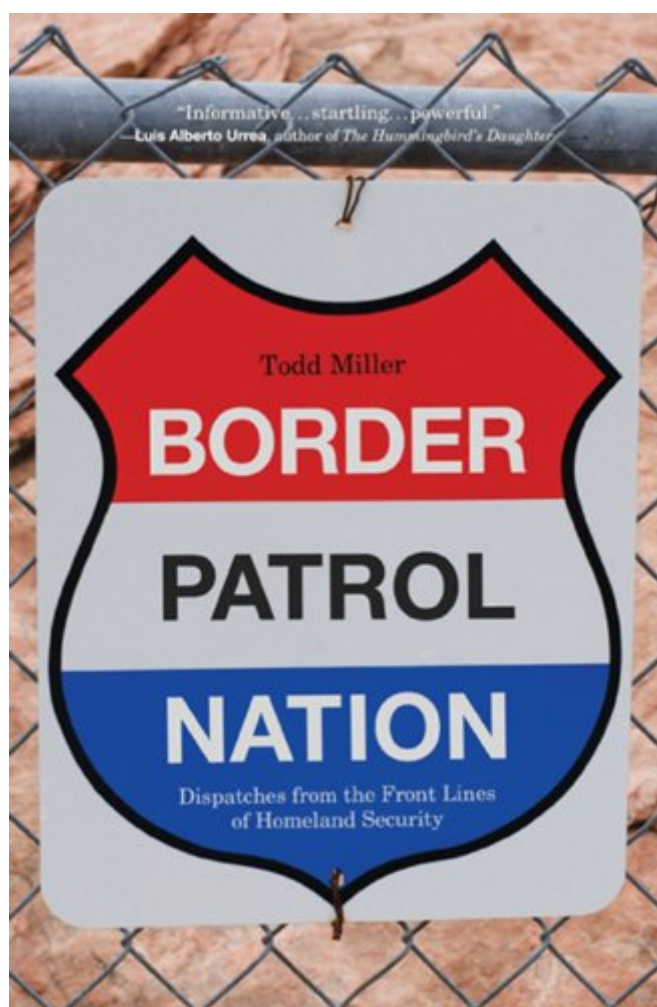


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# Border Patrol Nation: Dispatches From The Front Lines Of Homeland Security (City Lights Open Media)



## Synopsis

"In his scathing and deeply reported examination of the U.S. Border Patrol, Todd Miller argues that the agency has gone rogue since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, trampling on the dignity and rights of the undocumented with military-style tactics. . . . Miller's book arrives at a moment when it appears that part of the Homeland Security apparatus is backpedaling by promising to tone down its tactics, maybe prodded by investigative journalism, maybe by the revelations of NSA leaker Edward Snowden. . . . Border Patrol is quite possibly the right book at the right time . . ."--Tony Perry, Los Angeles Times

At the start of his unsettling and important new book, *Border Patrol Nation*, Miller observes that these days 'it is common to see the Border Patrol in places--such as Erie, Pennsylvania; Rochester, New York; or Forks, Washington--where only fifteen years ago it would have seemed far-fetched, if not unfathomable.' --Barbara Spindel, *Christian Science Monitor*

Miller's approach in *Border Patrol Nation* is to offer a glimpse into the secretive operations of the Border Patrol, reporting with a journalist's objectivity and nose for a good story. Miller's book is full of facts, and it's clear he's outraged, but he gives voices to people on every side of the issue. . . . Miller's book is a fascinating read. . . . and bring the work of Susan Orlean to mind."--Amanda Eyre Ward *Kirkus Reviews*

Todd Miller's invaluable and gripping book, *Border Patrol Nation: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Homeland Security* is the story of how this country's borders are being transformed into up-armored, heavily militarized zones run by a border-industrial complex. It's an achievement and an eye opener."--Tom Engelhardt, *TomDispatch*

What Jeremy Scahill was to *Blackwater*, Todd Miller is to the U.S. Border Patrol!"--Tom Miller, author, *On the Border: Portraits of America's Southwestern Frontier*

Todd Miller has entered a secret world, and he has gone deep. . . . Powerful."--Luis Alberto Urrea, author of *The Devil's Highway: A True Story*

Journalist Miller tells an alarming story of U.S. Border Patrol and Homeland Security's ever-widening reach into the lives of American citizens and legal immigrants as well as the undocumented. In addition to readers interested in immigration issues, those concerned about the NSA's privacy violations will likely be even more shocked by the actions of Homeland Security."--*Publishers Weekly*, *Starred Review*

Armed authorities watch from a military-grade surveillance tower as lines of people stream toward the security checkpoint, tickets in hand, anxious and excited to get through the gate. Few seem to notice or care that the US Border Patrol is monitoring the Super Bowl, as they have for years, one of the many ways that forces created to police the borders are now being used, in an increasingly militarized fashion, to survey and monitor the whole of American society. In fast-paced prose, Todd Miller sounds an alarm as he chronicles the changing landscape. Traveling the country and beyond; to speak with

the people most involved with and impacted by the Border Patrol, he combines these first-hand encounters with careful research to expose a vast and booming industry for high-end technology, weapons, surveillance, and prisons. While politicians and corporations reap substantial profits, the experiences of millions of men, women, and children point to staggering humanitarian consequences. Border Patrol Nation shows us in stark relief how the entire country has become a militarized border zone, with consequences that affect us all. Todd Miller has worked on and written about US border issues for over fifteen years.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Todd Miller did extensive research for this book. It is non-fiction but reads easily because he tells stories about the people he met and the conversations he engaged in. The data is from government statistics or well researched documents. His overall theme is serious and chilling. It reminds me of the early days of the Holocaust when people from Germany and Poland were sharing their horror stories but no one believed them. I live near the border part time and can attest to the militarization of our border and the impunity in which the BP can act. There is a line between security from

terrorists, drug cartels, etc., and our democratic rights as citizens. In my opinion, Todd Miller's book suggests that line has been crossed, or soon will be.

Miller's beliefs got in the way of what had the potential to be a reasonable analysis of the expansion of the Border Patrol's presence in the United States. He will turn a lot of readers off with his approach. He states that the existence and expansion of the Border Patrol is similar to an attempt to divide the American people into the haves and have-nots. His entire book sends the general message that the Border Patrol is evil. It appears as though he is calling for open borders, and even portrays U.S. Border Patrol agents as people who have little regard for human and civil rights. He had a lot of negative things to say, but did not present alternative solutions. I personally would not recommend this book solely based on his one-sided approach.

Border Patrol Nation is a quick read. I appreciate the personal stories Miller added by both border patrol agents and civilians to create authenticity. However, he fails to show both sides of how a border patrol presence affects communities across the United States. This book is completely biased and only portrays negative aspects of the U.S. Border Patrol. Miller chooses to tell the side opposing a secure border. He glorifies illegal immigrants and demonizes the agents giving the reader the assumption that the majority of border patrol agents are bigoted robotic racists. Miller depicts illegal immigration as a victimless crime. Using someone else's social security number is wrong and can have serious repercussions for the owner of the social being used. Miller also fails to mention any crime that occurs along the border such as smuggling and trafficking. His entire book is about the poor and poverty-stricken trying to find work versus the "men in green" and all their efforts to keep the United States safe.

Whenever I see a book with a split between 1 and 5 stars with almost none in between, I run out to purchase it as fast as I can. Here's why: My first career was in the United States Senate; while most people are aware of the polarized nature of our legislative branch, many do not know of the more troubling instances when everyone agrees. Most of the legislation that is actually passed through Congress does so by unanimous consent - basically the legislature's way of saying: "This bill is so inconsequential that no one cares enough to try to stop it." In the case of Todd Miller's work on the Border Patrol, there are plenty of people who are trying to stop it, and that should tell you that it is by no means inconsequential. People have strong opinions on this issue, and that is good - but look past those opinions that are obviously uninformed. Todd has done a great deal of objective

investigative work to produce this book, and it is well worth a read. You may not like what he has to say - but you don't have to. All good books create discussion, and this is a very, very good book.

Todd Miller creates a story from various different accounts from people who have dealt with Border Patrol from another side. While it is interesting and enlightening to read of these various accounts, it creates a biased and unflattering view of the U.S Border Patrol and its Officers, and should be taken with a grain of salt. While I do not agree with his view and the way that the book portrays Border Patrol, it was thought-provoking to read and learn of the other side, from those people who have come into contact with various different aspects of the Border Patrol department. While throughout the book he shows different negative accounts, he at the same time he also expresses that our border does need to be protected and that Border Patrol is needed. However, his writing makes it seem that the best way to do this is the same way that was done before 9/11, when we have seen that this can be detrimental to our national security. While this is a biased book that comes off as anti-border patrol, just like anything it is something that can be used and learned from. Not everyone has negative contacts with Immigration and Border Patrol, just like not everyone has positive contacts with the police, but they serve a purpose and that is to keep us and the nation safe. Just as he quotes in his book about the North Dakota Senator Byron Dorgan in 2001, "Dorgan held up an orange cone at the congressional hearing and said: This is America's security at our border crossing". America can't effectively combat terrorism if it doesn't control its borders.

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