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Denver Post's Al Lewis Falsely Flogs Immigrants As The Key To Capitalism's Success.

By [Donald A. Collins](#)

Recently I was in one of my favorite cities, Denver. My eye was caught by the lead Business Section column by Al Lewis [send him [mail](#)] in the December 3rd *Denver Post* "[Capitalism thrives with immigration](#)" caught my eye. Lewis' selective citing of statistics proves once again that **"figures don't lie, but liars can figure."**

Mr. Lewis begins with [familiar open border canards](#),

"Immigrants don't just take jobs. They create them. Of U.S. publicly traded companies that got their start with venture capital financing over the past 15 years, one out of every four boasted an immigrant founder, [according to a recent study](#) by the National Venture Capital Association, based in Arlington, Va.

"Today, these companies are valued at more than \$500 billion. Many are among the world's most technologically sophisticated, and some are household names.

"Imagine life without Intel, founded by Hungarian Andy Grove; or Google, founded by Russian Sergey Brin; or Yahoo, founded by Jerry Yang of Taiwan; or eBay, founded by Pierre Omidyar of France; or Sun Microsystems, founded by Andreas Bechtolsheim of Germany and [Vinod Khosla](#) of India."

Mr. Lewis apparently wants us to believe that Mr. Grove and the others cited above are in the same group as the vast majority of the [30-million plus](#) uneducated masses who have come here since our immigration laws were reformed in 1965. To be sure, many of these immigrants are employed by [American businesses](#), but often at the [slave wage](#) level.

Traipsing around the world and around the US as I [frequently do](#) can be tiring, but also enlightening. The conditions I see in so many places around the planet demand serious efforts at restraint. Developing nations are often doing better, but are still sending vast numbers of their excess populations to developed countries. The Mexican government, not doing that well for its lower classes, has become hooked on the symbolic drugs of illegal alien export and [illegal alien remittances](#), as well as overlooking real drug

trafficking.

Lewis is correct in citing the economic value to the US of these inventive, educated, entrepreneurial souls. But these folks for the most part are here *legally*. For example, Lewis cites a local Denver immigrant's wonderful history:

''People who immigrate, by their very nature, are risk takers.....They've given up what they've known to go somewhere totally unknown. It's not a big leap for them to put it all on the line and say, 'I'm going to create a company on my own and this is how I'm going to do it.'

''Martha Rubi-Byers came as an exchange student from Mexico. She graduated from Denver's Metropolitan State College with a degree in marketing in 1994 and became a naturalized citizen in 2002. Her father had his own engineering firm. Her mother had a dentistry practice. Starting a business was something she was brought up to do. America was the place to do it. After graduation, she received a new visa for an extended stay, went to work for a bilingual newspaper and started her own business by 1996. With a partner, Peruvian-born [Monica Vega-Christie](#), she founded 'Paginas Amarillas de Colorado' or 'The Colorado Yellow Pages' in Spanish.''

Folks, this woman is not an illegal border crosser with no education or talent beyond that of strong physical limbs. And, as Lewis' prime example of local Denver success, Ms. Rubi-Byers became a US citizen and presumably came here legally with her [student visa](#) which permitted her to commit to further education and the success she earned. Note her parents were [successful business people](#) already, folks who could afford to send her to college. Not quite an ascent from hard scrabble poverty!

Let's look at Lewis's prime example of an immigrant who made it spectacularly, Andy Grove.

As CNN's Richard S. Tedlow wrote in his 12/1/05 essay, [''The Education of Andy Grove,''](#)

''To be born a Hungarian Jew in 1936 was to be born on the wrong side of history. Grove was forced to adapt to a succession of threatening realities from the very beginning.

''Transformations were the story of Grove's young life. When the Nazis invaded Hungary in 1944, his mother changed his name from Andras Grof to the Slavic Andras Malesevic. When the communists arrived the following year, he once again became Andras Grof. As a young man, he switched from journalism to chemistry after publishers started rejecting his articles for political reasons.

''Communism nauseated him. One of his most vivid recollections is the May

Day parade of 1950. Cheering was broadcast from loudspeakers around Budapest. But when Andy and his schoolmates arrived at Heroes' Square, they discovered there was no crowd at all: The cheering was recorded. Six years later, when [the Hungarian Revolution caused the border](#) with Austria to be open for a brief period, Grove faced an immediate and unanticipated decision. He had never been outside Hungary. An only child, he would be leaving parents he might never see again. He had little idea of what he'd be running to. If ever there was a plunge into the unknown, that was it.

“He arrived in the U.S. on Jan. 7, 1957--the [same day](#) that Time's ‘Man of the Year’ issue featured THE HUNGARIAN FREEDOM FIGHTER on its cover. Soon he would change his name for a third and final time. At the City College of New York, where he enrolled, Andras Istvan Grof was struck from the transcript and above it was written Andrew Stephen Grove. He had [left behind his home](#), and he needed a name people could pronounce.

“By the late 1960s Grove had earned a Ph.D. in chemical engineering at the University of California at Berkeley and joined [Fairchild Semiconductor](#), birthplace of the integrated circuit. When colleagues Robert Noyce and Gordon Moore quit to start Intel, Grove declared he was coming too. In 1968 they put their 32-year-old protégé in charge of operations.”

These folks Lewis lionizes in his column were committed to America and to a nation of laws that could properly protect their work. Of course, we need people of this caliber. But then, even more, so do the nations from which they emigrated.

Lewis and I agree that we need a continuing stream of legal immigrants. But setting this policy correctly remains elusive and complex. Lewis cavils for more H1-B's. “[Our policy] **was too focused on illegal immigration, ignoring American enterprises' need for more legal immigrants.**” Lewis quotes the business party line, **“stumping for bills that would allow more immigrants to come here on [H-1B visas](#), which are for skilled workers.”**

The problem seems often defined by its schizophrenic nature. Silicon Valley wants more smart Asians or others, the ones trained at Stanford, UC Berkeley, California Institute of Technology and MIT, to be able to stay here. No surprise in that attitude. Lewis notes that

“After 9/11, the government reduced the number of H-1B visas from 195,000 to 65,000 per year. New legislation would expand the number of H-1B visas to 125,000— a drop in the sea of an estimated 12 million immigrants who are said to be here illegally.”

But, he omits, a real cheap way to cut out American trained engineers and others technical types.

And, like panning for [gold](#), nuggets are the exception not the rule. How many of those of million aliens coming here since 1965 are ones he cites?

Then Lewis springs the classic non sequitur: **“Meanwhile, too many other parts of the world are becoming fertile ground for innovation. What’s not invented here will be invented somewhere else.”** Whoa, Mr. Lewis, we know the [Chinese](#) and many others are [just as bright or brighter](#) than our [native stock](#) and coming on strong. So what do you want to do? Would you let our brightest languish in unemployment while we train [bright ethnics](#) who may not stay beyond the term of their special visas? And when they do go home, they take knowledge of all those new advances with them.

We can’t stop that entirely, but we can slow it down by making the granting of these [H1-Bs](#) a matter of very careful scrutiny. However, anyone who has studied the prevalence of these special visas knows this provision and others like it have been badly abused—especially the requirement that businesses really look for qualified American techies to fill jobs before bleating for more H1-B’s.

Americans now seem to understand that the need to reform immigration policies is great. That reform must embrace all [legal immigration](#) laws.

Just stopping rampant illegal immigration is only the first step toward the complete overhaul of our immigration policies. We need to start thinking in terms of need, real need, not just bodies which can make particular businesses rich, partly because these imported slaves onto the [public rolls](#) necessitate tax supported services of all kinds.

If the present situation has taught Americans anything, it is that real reform won’t get done until the Congress and the White House know for sure that their continuance in office is contingent on their doing the right thing for all Americans—not just the [paymasters](#) who finance their reelections.

How about you, Mr. Lewis? If you figure we don’t get the drift of your column as a paean for open borders, forget it! Our [broken school systems](#) and the [mounting use by illegal aliens](#) of all our other public services are now well understood by the vast majority of Americans.

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