Equality without documents: political justice and the right to amnesty

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How does the concept of justice apply to the situation of undocumented immigrants?

Do some undocumented immigrants have a right to remain? Is deportation a violation of their rights?

In this presentation, Michael Blake, associate professor of philosophy at the University of Washington, will take on some recent arguments supporting a right to amnesty. He will argue, to the contrary, that undocumented immigrants have accepted the risk of deportation and do not acquire right to remain after long residency. This conclusion, however, leads us to a distinct interpretation of the morality of deportation, in which the state has good reason to let undocumented immigrants remain — not because this is demanded by justice, but because of more general humanitarian duties. Just because someone has no justice-based right to remain is no reason to think we are morally right to deport them.