Suppose you are the National Football League (NFL) Commissioner and you want to find a new way to distribute tickets to the Super Bowl. The existing *price* system is very favorable to people who can afford the tickets but prevents less fortunate fans to attend the Big Game. You also see this as an opportunity to rethink about ticket revenue, how to give the little guy a higher chance of going to the game and how to have a more diverse crowd at the stands.

Your assistants come back with two options. The first is a *rules-based* policy, in which you assign tickets to fans who meet certain criteria: how many games they have been to in the regular season, their age and income, demographics, whether their team reached the final game. The NFL will screen fans and, if they meet the criteria, they can buy tickets. In this system, more passionate fans take precedence and simply paying for tickets is not enough of a reason to attend the game; therefore, fans need to fit the profile set out in the rules.

The last option is a *lottery*. Every person who wants to go to the game signs up to the lottery and is given an equal shot at a ticket. Those people who are drawn are invited to buy a ticket for a single and affordable price. No individual characteristic matters and no one gets special treatment. All fans have equal importance.

You thus have three options on the table: *prices*, *rules* or *lotteries*. Which of these admission policies maximizes ticket revenue? And which is more just? Which policy selects fans who contribute the most to the Super Bowl? These are all valid questions you pose to your assistants.

At one end, *prices* seem to be most transparent and maximize ticket revenue. People understand supply and demand and how prices work; if there is not enough tickets, then who is willing to pay more will get the entries. *Rules* likely select people who truly love the game while also allowing the NFL to discriminate prices according to individual characteristics. Since there might be people who can afford tickets but are not really big fans of the game, requiring them to fit the profile is a way of screening who would contribute the most to the atmosphere of the Super Bowl. Finally, *lotteries* are also very transparent and particularly democratic, but nonetheless are likely to raise the least revenue neither they tell apart fans' passions.

Unsurprisingly, immigration is a very similar to this thought experiment. Assuming that countries have the right to exclude, they need policies to decide who gets in and who does not. And yet very few countries seem to take up the exercise of thinking about alternative immigration policies and their consequences. Are U.S. green card lotteries any better than auctioning off residency status? Could Canada charge different fees for the various migrants type in its skilled worker program? In this paper, I analyze market solutions to immigration policy, which were first proposed by economist Gary Becker in 1987. I am interested in evaluating whether putting prices on immigration rights is more just than current rules and lottery systems.

Becker's insight is part of his larger endeavor of applying economic theory to human behavior, which is also his most important legacy. Social scientists are likely familiar with the argument for a market for human organs, for legalizing drugs or for transacting women's reproductive rights and pollution permits. The underlying reasoning is that there are efficiency gains in negotiating rights and social goods that are untapped if left off of market exchanges. Although the argument resonates well with economists, other academics challenge it head first and their objection needs to be analyzed if a market for immigration is to be taken seriously. While economists claim that markets carry no moral judgments of the transactions they bring about, Walzer (2008) argues that free markets can corrupt moral character and crowd out valuable social norms. They should therefore be blocked from the marketplace, just like political power is limited because of its corrosive nature.