Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF SETH HOLMES

Physician and anthropologist Seth M. Holmes grew up in eastern Washington. After studying Ecology and Spanish at the University of Washington, he earned an MD and PhD in Medical Anthropology from the combined program at UC San Francisco and UC Berkeley. He went on to complete his internship and residency at the University of Pennsylvania, and he has also held fellowships at Harvard University, Columbia University, and the University of Rochester. He is currently a professor of Public Health and Medical Anthropology at UC Berkeley, where he also directs the Berkeley Center for Social Medicine and the same joint MD/PhD program that he graduated from. Holmes has conducted in-depth research into health inequalities, immigration, and physician training across Mexico and the United States. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* was based on Holmes's dissertation research and has won numerous prizes, including the 2013 New Millennium Book Award from the Society for Medical Anthropology. Holmes also won the 2014 Margaret Mead Award for his research's public significance, and he has appeared in several popular news outlets and radio shows. His more recent research focuses on the way that doctors-in-training learn to understand social inequality in clinical settings. However, Holmes is also studying political representations of refugees in Europe and young Latinx people's experiences growing up in California.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Migrant labor has been the foundation of the American agriculture industry since its beginnings in the slave trade and indentured servitude system of the 17th century. But Mexican workers have largely driven the U.S. agriculture industry since the 1920s. The Bracero Program allowed numerous Mexican men to work on farms in the United States from the 1940s through the mid-1960s, but the U.S.-Mexico border was also increasingly militarized during this period, through joint efforts between the United States and Mexican governments. However, illegal immigration only became a prominent political issue in the United States in the 1980s, and immigration policies have become increasingly punitive and militarized ever since. Many thousands of migrants have died crossing the border since the early 1990s, and as the Border Patrol increases its reach in more populated stretches of the border, migrants are increasingly pushed to more remote and treacherous areas. Meanwhile, U.S. lawmakers have tried numerous times to pass a new guest worker policy and give agricultural workers legal permanent residency since 1997, but all have failed. The total number of undocumented migrants living in the United States has started falling since 2007, a few years after Holmes finished his research. The Triqui people Holmes lives with in *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* were specifically forced to migrate because of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which eliminated most barriers to trade between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. This included tariffs on corn, without which cheap, industrially produced American corn flooded the Mexican market. Triqui people's traditionally produced corn crop then became uncompetitive. This is not an uncommon story in Mexico: although NAFTA was touted as a likely source of new job opportunities and explosive economic growth, in reality it created few jobs and devastated the Mexican agriculture industry.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Throughout *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, Seth Holmes relies heavily on French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction and concept of symbolic violence, as presented in books like *Masculine Domination* (2001). Holmes also frequently cites the work of influential medical anthropologists Philippe Bourgois and Nancy Scheper-Hughes. Bourgois is best known for his ethnography *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio* (2002), and Scheper-Hughes is known for *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil* (1993). Other influential contemporary works of medical anthropology include Didier Fassin's *When Bodies Remember: Experiences and Politics of AIDS in South Africa* (2007) and Paul Farmer's *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues* (1999). Jason De León's *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Sonoran Desert Migrant Trail* (2015) is an influential recent anthropological study of the U.S.-Mexico border. Luis Alberto Urrea's bestseller *The Devil's Highway: A True Story* (2008) follows a group of men who tried to cross the border in 2001, with deadly consequences. Finally, David Bacon's *The Children of NAFTA: Labor Wars on the U.S./Mexico Border* (2004) documents NAFTA's crushing effect on border workers and those workers' attempts to organize for justice.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*
- **When Written:** 2003–2013
- **Where Written:** Washington and California, United States; Oaxaca, Mexico
- **When Published:** 2013

- **Literary Period:** Contemporary Anthropology
- **Genre:** Anthropology
- **Setting:** The Skagit Valley (Washington) and Central Valley (California), United States; San Miguel and Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca, Mexico
- **Climax:** Holmes and his companions get arrested while crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.
- **Antagonist:** Migrant workers' physical and psychological suffering; violence towards migrant workers; ethnic-racial hierarchy of the U.S. agriculture industry; neoliberal economic policies like NAFTA; the profit-oriented private U.S. healthcare system; the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border; poverty, unemployment, and violence in Oaxaca
- **Point of View:** First-Person Ethnographic

EXTRA CREDIT

Publishing as Activism. Seth Holmes donates the royalties and award money for *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* to unions and nonprofit organizations that advocate for migrant farm workers in the United States, including the Triqui migrants he wrote about in the book.

From Reading to Activism. Holmes emphasizes that it's not enough to simply agree with the need to improve migrant workers' lives by changing medicine, the agriculture industry, and immigration and trade policy. Instead, he wants readers moved by the stories in his book to dedicate their time, energy, and resources to migrant workers' ongoing struggle for better immigration rights, pay, and working conditions. In the book's conclusion and on his personal website, he lists organizations that work for migrant workers, like the United Farm Workers and Familias Unidas por la Justicia.

PLOT SUMMARY

In *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, physician and anthropologist Seth Holmes attempts to demonstrate how social, economic, and healthcare inequalities cause profound yet preventable suffering for undocumented migrant farmworkers in the United States. He does so by accompanying a group of Indigenous Triqui families from Oaxaca, Mexico, for 18 months as they cross the U.S.-Mexico border, work on the Tanaka Brothers Farm in Washington's Skagit Valley, and return to their hometown of San Miguel.

Holmes begins at the U.S.-Mexico border, where he shows how U.S. immigration policies deliberately create extreme danger and suffering for poor migrants. The problem is structural, not individual: the migrants are going to the U.S. because international economic policies like NAFTA have disrupted their local economies and left them without work. Now, their livelihood depends on migrating to the United States, just as the American economy—especially the agriculture industry—depends on their labor. However, the U.S. government mistakenly tries to change individual migrants' behavior by making it more and more dangerous to cross the border. In the face of extreme heat, rattlesnakes, Border Patrol agents, robbers, and armed American militias, hundreds of migrants die every year. After reaching the nearest town to the border, Holmes and his companions spend a night with a group of strangers in a dingy apartment, ride through the desert for hours in a packed van, run past a dozen barbed-wire fences, and hide out in river beds as helicopters circle overhead. Ultimately, though, the Border Patrol catches them—they throw Holmes in jail and deport all his companions back to Mexico.

In his second chapter, Holmes outlines the fundamental concerns that drive his research on the Tanaka Brothers Farm in Washington state. He explains that the American agriculture industry distributes work, wages, and worries based on an ethnic-racial hierarchy. In this hierarchy, white U.S. citizens are at the top and undocumented Indigenous Latinx migrants are at the bottom. Holmes decides to live and work with undocumented Triqui migrant workers in order to try to understand their suffering, but since he's a middle-class white man, he ends up "out of place" in the hierarchy. As a result, the farm's administrators treat him with dignity and view him as an equal, while they treat undocumented workers as subhuman animals. Holmes also explains the two crucial concepts that frame his discussion of immigration, agriculture, and healthcare: structural violence, which is the way social hierarchies cause concrete physical and mental suffering, and symbolic violence, which is the way people convince themselves to accept social hierarchies as natural, normal, or just.

In his third chapter, Holmes paints a detailed portrait of the Tanaka Brothers Farm's racial, ethnic, and citizenship hierarchy, which leads to a rigid hierarchy of labor, power, pay, and physical suffering. At the top, the farm's white and Asian American executives struggle to stay competitive with their overseas competitors and feel they have to underpay their workers and constantly cut costs in order to survive. Next, the administrative assistants, crop managers, and supervisors—who are white and Latinx U.S. citizens—help manage fruit production and coordinate between management and the fruit pickers. While many treat the workers kindly, others are openly racist. A crew of white teenagers responsible for weighing berries makes minimum wage and gets to hang out in the shade all day. Finally, the vast majority of the farm's workers are undocumented fruit pickers from Mexico, who live in tiny, unheated shacks without running water. But they're also segregated by race and ethnicity: Spanish-speaking mestizo workers have the highest-paid work picking apples, while Indigenous Triqui people have the worst jobs. For $20 a day,

seven days a week, they pick strawberries from dawn to dusk, bent over in a painful and unnatural position, with no breaks to eat or use the bathroom. They endure constant racist abuse from their supervisors, but they can't complain, lest they be deported. Holmes joins them two days a week and can barely stand the constant, excruciating pain he feels in his entire body. Holmes concludes that, while everyone in the hierarchy feels powerless, overworked, and constantly worried about *something*, those at the bottom suffer far more in every respect.

In the following chapter, Holmes shows that the farm's hierarchy metes out physical pain, which is a clear example of structural violence. He looks at three men as examples: Abelino, Crescencio, and Bernardo. After years picking berries, Abelino develops knee pain so severe that he can't walk or work. Whenever his supervisors scream at him, Crescencio gets unbearable headaches, which only go away with heavy drinking. He worries that he might take out his frustration on his family, although he's never been violent to them in the past. And Bernardo, an older Triqui man who spends part of the year in Oaxaca and part in the U.S., has had severe stomachaches ever since Mexican army officers kidnapped and tortured him, mistakenly believing that he was involved in a local militia.

Next, Holmes looks at how the U.S. medical system mishandles Abelino's, Crescencio's, and Bernardo's pain. Abelino's doctor ignores his reported symptoms, forgets his name, and decides that he "[does] not know how to bend over." She sends him to a physical therapist, who ultimately sends him back to work, even though his pain doesn't improve. Meanwhile, Crescencio's doctor decides that he's an abusive alcoholic who needs to unlearn a traditional sexist culture and should be thrown in jail if he doesn't. She sends him to therapy, which he can't afford. Finally, Bernardo's doctor doesn't call for an interpreter and misinterprets his story. Convinced his chest hurts from an old boxing injury, she refuses to give him medicine and sends him home with a $3,000 bill.

Holmes explains these deep miscommunications, pointing out that doctors learn to conceptualize disease as an objective biological problem caused by defective body parts, rather than a holistic problem with an individual, which can involve social, political, and economic causes as well. As a result, doctors often ignore patients' judgment and blame them for their own suffering, especially when they come from marginalized groups. When dealing with migrant workers, doctors often overlook cultural differences, or else exaggerate them based on racist assumptions. This leads them to perpetuate structural violence. But Holmes points out that doctors also suffer from structural violence: the pressure to be profitable leaves them stressed out, overworked, and without key resources like medicine and language interpreters.

Holmes dedicates his sixth chapter to explaining symbolic violence, or the distorted ways of thinking that people use to justify and accept social hierarchies. Racism is a powerful tool for this symbolic violence: it enables white Americans to divide themselves off from migrants, avoid empathizing with migrants, and blame migrants' suffering on supposed cultural inferiority. In fact, many white people simply assume that their own culture is inherently superior and believe that immigrants should be forced to assimilate to it. Again, this reverses cause and effect: by calling minorities inferior, white people justify forcing minorities into a subordinate position in the hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship. But this hierarchy is the real reason minorities appear to be inferior. For instance, white California and Washington residents tell Holmes they are disgusted by "dirty" Mexicans, but Holmes points out that migrant workers are often covered with dirt because they work on farms all day and don't have running water to bathe in. In other words, their poverty makes them "dirty," and because they are "dirty," white people believe they deserve poverty. Holmes ultimately discusses three main forms of symbolic violence: normalization (or getting used to other groups' suffering), naturalization (or deciding that other groups suffer because of their natural qualities), and internalization (in which oppressed people blame themselves for their low position on the hierarchy).

In his conclusion, Holmes asks how migrant workers, scholars, and activists can resolve the problems that he has outlined in his book. He admits that U.S. public policy and racial hierarchies are resistant to change. But as a social scientist, he believes it's possible to fight structural and symbolic violence with the truth: migrant workers' suffering is not normal, natural, or inevitable. Rather, specific policies and ideas cause it, and those policies and ideas can change through collective social action.

Holmes urges Americans to undo the bias in their language and public conversations about migration. For instance, the distinction between economic "immigrants" and political "refugees" doesn't hold for the Triquis, and it's prejudicial to call undocumented berry pickers "unskilled migrant workers," while calling wealthy white migrant workers "international businesspeople." Similarly, health professionals must learn to see the political, economic, and social causes of disease, not just the biological and behavioral ones.

Holmes concludes by arguing that scholars and readers also have to fight for policy change. They should join campaigns to fight for universal healthcare, legal status for migrant workers, and economic policies that support small businesses and local farmers, not massive transnational corporations.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Seth Holmes – Seth Holmes is the author of *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*. A physician and anthropologist, Holmes studied Triqui migrant farmworkers in order to understand the relationship

among immigration, healthcare, public policy, social hierarchy, and preventable physical and psychological suffering in North America. For 18 months, Holmes lived and worked with several undocumented Triqui families in Washington's Skagit Valley, where they work picking strawberries on the Tanaka Brothers Farm, as well as in California's Central Valley and in the families' hometown of San Miguel, Oaxaca. He also accompanied a group of men on the grueling, dangerous, and illegal journey across the U.S.-Mexico border. By sharing in migrant workers' suffering, Holmes hoped to clearly show how structural violence functions: specific policies and social norms cause concrete, medically identifiable, and preventable physical and psychological harm. He also explains how his privileges as a white graduate student made his life far easier than his Triqui companions', and he emphasizes that the book is not about him: it's about understanding and finding solutions to migrant workers' suffering. Although he sometimes struggles to envision alternatives to the current system, Holmes concludes that social scientists and medical practitioners should strive to reshape the public conversation about migration, healthcare, and different kinds of labor. Just as importantly, they must also concretely dedicate time, money, and energy to the ongoing struggles for policy change in these areas. Ultimately, Holmes's approach shows that, to fulfill their professional missions of understanding the social world and healing suffering, social scientists and medical practitioners must learn from each other. In particular, social scientists should focus on healing the suffering that they describe, and medical practitioners should learn to identify and treat the social causes behind individual illnesses.

Samuel – Samuel is one of Holmes's closest Triqui friends at the Tanaka Brothers Farm. Holmes stays with Samuel and his extended family in his hometown of San Miguel, as well as in California's Central Valley during the winter. His experience is relatively typical of the Triqui migrants who work on farms in the United States. Through his friendship with Samuel, Holmes learns about the undocumented people's struggle to find housing in the United States, the racist discrimination they face from local white residents there, and the violence and poverty that force Triqui people to leave Oaxaca in the first place.

Abelino – Abelino is one of Holmes's three main case studies at the Tanaka Brothers Farm. He's a Triqui man who starts suffering severe knee pain after several years working as a strawberry picker. This pain is a direct result of picking berries in an intensely uncomfortable position, crouched down and bent over forwards, for most of the day, seven days a week, several months a year. At first, his supervisors ignore his pain and nearly fire him for picking too slowly. Later, doctors and physical therapists ignore Abelino's reported symptoms (which they consider "subjective") and rely entirely on an x-ray instead (because it seems "objective"). As a result, the doctor prescribes Abelino pills that he can't take and tells him to do "light work" on the farm, such as strawberry picking (which caused his illness). Similarly, the state worker's compensation agency badly mishandles Abelino's case: it fails to provide a translator, sends documents to the wrong doctor, and eventually decide that farm work will heal his injury (even though farm work is what *caused* it). Its final determinations depend on the assessments of a radiologist who has never met Abelino. Based on Abelino's case, Holmes concludes that doctors commit structural violence by failing to address their patients' individual histories, needs, and knowledge of their own circumstances. This failure is also a response to the structural violence of an overstressed healthcare system that is designed to produce profits, not wellness. Doctors also commit symbolic violence by blaming people for their health problems, rather than addressing the obvious structural factors that cause illness.

Crescencio – One of Holmes's three case studies at the Tanaka Brothers Farm, Crescencio suffers from severe headaches that begin whenever his supervisors yell insults like "stupid Oaxacan" at him. This is a clear illustration of how social hierarchy and racist insult directly cause unequal health effects. These headaches make him miserable and irritable, and drinking 20 beers is the only thing that alleviates them. Crescencio seeks treatment because he worries that he might start taking his frustration out on his wife and children. But the doctor sends him to therapy—which he can't afford—rather than prescribing him medication. Later, Holmes interviews the doctor, who's convinced that Crescencio is an abusive alcoholic who needs to be held accountable or sent to jail. She also blames his headaches and discomfort with his bosses on him having a psychological abnormality. In other words, rather than treat Crescencio as an individual, the doctor projects her own assumptions onto him and ends up giving him the opposite of what he needs. As a result, rather than see that he works in exploitative conditions that would make most people miserable, she assumes that the racially abusive farm hierarchy is fair and blames Crescencio for not accepting his place at the very bottom. Of course, structural violence contributes to the doctor's overstressed schedule and lack of attention to her patients, but the doctor's mistreatment of Crescencio is also part of the structural violence that sickens and denies proper medical treatment to undocumented migrant laborers like him.

Bernardo – Bernardo is an older Triqui man who started migrating to the United States for work in the 1980s and was granted U.S. residency under an amnesty program. Ever since, he divides his time between his native Oaxaca and Alaska (where he works seasonally at a fish processing plant). In Oaxaca, he has witnessed severe violence related to a long conflict between the Mexican military and a local Indigenous militia. Many of his friends have died, and he was abducted and tortured by the government for several days eight years before Holmes met him. Ever since, he has suffered a severe

stomachache that makes it difficult to eat. However, when he goes to a doctor in the U.S. for help, the doctor thinks his chest is hurting (not his stomach) and that he got injured while boxing (not at the hands of the Mexican army). He asks for the medicine that he already knows to work, but the doctors ignore him and bill him $3,000. In Oaxaca, Bernardo's doctor is convinced that Triqui people make themselves sick by eating badly and sleeping in a bent-over position. Holmes explains that both doctors ignore the structural and political aspects of the violence that caused Bernardo's pain. Instead, they blame him for it, which reinforces racist ideas about Indigenous Mexicans' supposed behavioral and cultural inferiority.

Samantha – Samantha is a white administrative assistant at the Tanaka Brothers Farm who helps translate and interpret between English and Spanish. Even though she can communicate with them, she still thinks Mexican workers are "'dirty' and 'simple,'" and she constantly ignores or distracts from their suffering. For instance, she forces Abelino to go back to work even though he's in severe pain, and she complains about the cold weather freezing her horses' water trough without realizing that the farm workers have to sleep in the same conditions without heating.

Shelly – Shelly is a white manager at the Tanaka Brothers Farm who is married to one of its owners, Rob Tanaka. One of the farm's more egregiously racist workers, Shelly supervises the white teenagers who weigh berry pickers' baskets while chatting and hanging out in the shade. In a particularly horrendous incident, when a group of workers stands outside her office to shelter from the rain, she yells at them to "Shoo! Shoo! Get, get!" Whether she realizes it or not, she treats them as subhuman animals. Shelly shows how racist ideas and the racial-ethnic hierarchy of the U.S. agriculture industry reinforce each other. Because Indigenous Oaxacan workers are at the bottom of the hierarchy, Shelly and her peers consider them subhuman—but because people like Shelly consider them subhuman and unworthy, Oaxacan workers can't rise in the hierarchy.

J.R. – J.R. is an old white man in California's Central Valley who voices numerous racist beliefs about Latinx people. For instance, he says that Mexican migrant workers are "filthy" but thinks farm owners shouldn't provide them with running water, and he fondly remembers beating up Mexican men for no reason except hatred. He thinks of all Latinx people—even California-born U.S. citizens—as foreigners who refuse to follow his superior, "American" way of life. Ironically enough, J.R. moved to California as a migrant farm laborer when he was young. J.R.'s beliefs provide a clear illustration of how symbolic violence works: by sharply dividing "us" from "them" ("Americans" from "Mexicans"), he avoids recognizing structural violence or doing anything about migrant workers' suffering.

The Triqui Migrants' Coyote – An anonymous coyote helps Holmes and his Triqui companions cross the U.S.-Mexico border. He lets Holmes cross for free because of his noble intentions, while charging much poorer migrants thousands of dollars to help them cross. Holmes and his companions are forced to follow the coyote's instructions without fully understanding where they are, what they are doing, or whether they will be betrayed or sold out to thieves or the police.

Scott – Scott is a crop manager who struggles to manage field workers at the Tanaka Brothers Farm. Like most white workers at the farm, he both recognizes structural violence and naturalizes it through symbolic violence. For instance, he recognizes that federal immigration policy makes migrant workers' lives dangerous and difficult. But he also claims that it's natural for Triqui people to be low-paid berry pickers, "because they're lower to the ground."

John Tanaka – John Tanaka is the co-owner of the Tanaka Brothers Farm, along with his brother Rob Tanaka. Although he is well-meaning and charitable in some ways, John Tanaka exploits his workers to stay competitive in the market, for instance by claiming that they "don't want" basic benefits like a lunch break and fair pay, even though they clearly do.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Rob Tanaka – Rob Tanaka is Shelly's husband, John Tanaka's brother, and the co-owner of the Tanaka Brothers Farm. He manages all the fruit production and tells Holmes about how difficult it is to stay competitive with industrial farms while treating workers in a "fair and consistent" way.

TERMS

Coyote – A coyote is a guide who helps migrants illegally cross the U.S.-Mexico border.

Habitus – Habitus refers to the set of ingrained habits and dispositions that people generally learn from the society surrounding them.

Mestizo – In Spanish-speaking Latin America, people with a mixed (Indigenous and European) ethnic and cultural identity are considered "mestizo" people. In Latin America as well as the United States, mestizo people generally have more social privilege and economic opportunities than Indigenous people (including Mixtec and Triqui people).

Mixtec – Mixtec refers to an Indigenous group and language from Oaxaca. In general, Mixtec people rank higher than Triqui people in the American agriculture industry's ethnic hierarchy because they are seen as more assimilated into mestizo culture.

NAFTA – NAFTA refers to the North American Free Trade Agreement, which eliminated barriers to trade between Canada, the United States, and Mexico in 1994. As a result of NAFTA, Triqui farmers in Oaxaca can no longer compete with cheap American corn, so they have been forced to seek work as

migrant laborers instead.

Structural Violence – The term structural violence efers to the way that social hierarchies create physical and mental suffering and sickness.

Symbolic Violence – Symbolic violence efers to ways of talking, thinking, and acting that lead people to accept social injustices as natural or inevitable. Often, they do so by helping people normalize, naturalize, or internalize hierarchies.

Triqui – Triqui refers to an Indigenous people from western Oaxaca, as well as the language they speak. After NAFTA made their corn crop uncompetitive, Triqui people have largely been forced to migrate to Mexican cities or the United States in order to find work. The migrant laborers **Holmes** lives and works with throughout this book are primarily Triquis from the town of San Miguel.

THEMES

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SOCIAL HIERARCHY AND VIOLENCE

Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies focuses on a group of Indigenous Triqui families who migrate seasonally from their homes in Oaxaca, Mexico, to do the backbreaking work of picking strawberries at the Tanaka Brothers Farm in the United States. Author Seth Holmes, a physician and anthropologist, spends 18 months living and working alongside these families to investigate the connections between social inequality, physical suffering, and public policy in the United States. Through his research, Holmes realizes that the American agricultural, medical, and immigration systems all value certain human lives more than others, based on a hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship. This hierarchy puts white U.S. citizens at the top and undocumented Indigenous Mexican people at the bottom, then distributes power, resources, and suffering based on this hierarchy. By documenting this hierarchy and its effects, Holmes demonstrates how social inequalities lead to physical suffering (a process called structural violence), and how individuals reinforce inequality by learning to think of hierarchies as inevitable (a process called symbolic violence).

During his research, Holmes observes a clear but unspoken hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship in the U.S. agriculture industry. Racially, it values white and Asian American people above Latinx people. Ethnically, among Latinx people, it values mestizo (mixed-race) people above Indigenous people. And in terms of citizenship, it values U.S. citizens above non-citizen immigrants, with legal immigrants above undocumented immigrants. At the Tanaka Brothers Farm, this hierarchy determines who does what work and receives which benefits. The farm's executives are white and Asian American U.S. citizens, its middle managers are mostly Latinx U.S. citizens, and the fruit pickers are undocumented Latinx migrants. Mestizo migrants do more comfortable, better-paid work than Indigenous migrants like the Triquis. Meanwhile, the white teenagers who hang out in the shade and weigh pickers' baskets get paid much more than the adult pickers, who do difficult physical labor and have several years of experience. This shows that race and ethnicity—rather than experience, need, or ability—determine who does what work and receives what compensation on the farm.

This hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship creates structural violence, or a "hierarchy of suffering": while everyone suffers to some degree, those at the bottom of the hierarchy suffer the most severe and debilitating consequences. For instance, the Triqui berry pickers live in constant pain because they work crouched down and bent over all day, seven days a week. After several years picking berries, one Triqui man named Abelino has such severe knee pain that he can barely work or walk. This pain is the direct result of structural violence: Abelino suffers precisely because the hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship values his life the least and relegates the least desirable work to people like him who aren't white and aren't U.S. citizens. In fact, like the agricultural system, the U.S. healthcare and immigration systems also perpetuate structural violence and reinforce the ethnic-racial hierarchy. For instance, because the U.S. healthcare system is organized around profit, doctors and nurses in migrant health clinics are overworked and lack necessary resources, including interpreters. As a result, they mistreat Triqui workers' pain, leading them to have worse health outcomes than comparable mestizo or white patients. This is an indirect result of the racial-ethnic hierarchy: Indigenous Mexican people are valued less than other workers, and therefore, their needs are not prioritized in healthcare settings. Similarly, the U.S. immigration system specifically punishes Latinx migrants without official status or citizenship by forcing them to cross increasingly barren and treacherous stretches of the U.S.-Mexico border, then giving them virtually no access to legal or public services in the U.S. because they are constantly subject to deportation. As a result, undocumented Indigenous migrants suffer the worst outcomes in all three systems: they take the greatest physical and legal risks in order to work the lowest-paying, most dangerous jobs and receive the poorest medical care when they inevitably fall sick. This is the direct result of the U.S. racial, ethnic, and citizenship hierarchy, which values their lives, welfare, and labor the least.

Beyond showing how the hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship causes unequal suffering, Holmes also seeks to

explain why it remains so prevalent and powerful. He does so through the concept of symbolic violence, which refers to the ways people normalize, naturalize, and internalize hierarchies instead of fighting them. Normalization refers to the way people get used to hierarchy and stop questioning it. For instance, white families simply get used to seeing migrant berry pickers living in poorly constructed shacks, rather than recognizing these living conditions as unjust or thinking about changing them. Next, naturalization refers to the way people assume hierarchies are based on natural differences, rather than socially imposed (and therefore changeable). For instance, a farm supervisor tells Holmes that Triqui people work in the fields "because they're lower to the ground," as if shorter people are naturally destined for backbreaking agricultural work. By misperceiving social differences as natural ones, people decide to accept inequality rather than fight it. Finally, people at the bottom of the hierarchy also internalize that hierarchy by convincing themselves that they deserve their fate. For instance, many Triqui people believe that they do the most dangerous and physically punishing field work because they are the strongest. This leads them to ignore important risks, like the dangers of working around poisonous insecticides. Ultimately, by internalizing hierarchies, people accept oppression rather than fighting it.

Together, the concepts of structural violence and symbolic violence explain how social hierarchies reproduce themselves: structural violence harms those at the bottom of the social hierarchy for the benefit of those at the top, while symbolic violence justifies this harm through normalization, naturalization, and internalization. But as a physician and social scientist, Holmes hopes to fight this process. While he believes that doctors can help alleviate the suffering structural violence causes, he argues that social scientists can fight symbolic violence by explaining how structural violence works and showing the public that hierarchies are not harmless, natural, or inevitable.

GLOBAL PRESSURES AND INDIVIDUAL CHOICES

It's easy to blame farm management for exploitative working conditions, patients' poor health choices for their chronic pain, and migrant workers' greed and impatience for their decision to illegally cross the U.S.-Mexico border. However, when author and physician-anthropologist Seth Holmes actually studies these issues, he realizes that global economic pressures—not individual choices—are actually responsible for them. Because most public conversations about agriculture, medicine, and immigration view individual decisions in a vacuum, without considering these structural factors, public policy consistently tries to change individual behavior rather than global economic conditions. This is usually ineffective. Instead, Holmes shows that, in order to institute more humane and effective public policy, government officials, scholars, and activists must understand the economic pressures that globalization places on individuals and communities.

Global economic forces—not poor individual choices—have caused the interconnected problems that Holmes studies in agriculture, public health, and immigration. Most importantly, the Triqui migrant workers whom Holmes studies don't go to the U.S. because they want to strike it rich: rather, they literally have no other option. They used to farm corn, but when the North American Free Trade Deal (NAFTA) went into effect, their crop suddenly became uncompetitive with cheap, industrially produced, government subsidized corn from the U.S. Unable to keep farming or find work in Oaxaca, many Triqui people can't afford to feed themselves or send their children to school. As a result, they have no viable economic option except migrating elsewhere for work. While conventional immigration narratives suggest that people like the Triquis are responsible for the consequences of crossing the border because they've freely chosen to do so, Holmes shows that their decisions are not truly free. Rather, because of the globalizing agriculture industry, they have no choice but to migrate.

The effects of globalization are also clear at the other end of the spectrum, in the decisions of the managers and healthcare workers who mistreat the Triqui migrants once they arrive in the U.S. The Tanaka Brothers Farm exploits its workers, forcing them to live in tiny metal shacks and suffer chronic health problems, but its owners are actually charitable, well-intentioned, and generous people. The Tanakas don't improve these conditions or pay their workers more because they can't afford to: facing competition from farms overseas, they constantly need to cut corners if they want to avoid bankruptcy. In other words, the Tanaka brothers don't neglect their workers out of greed and cruelty. Rather, they have no choice because of global market forces in agriculture—the same economic pressures that forced their Triqui workers to leave Oaxaca in the first place. Similar pressures also explain why doctors and nurses provide substandard medical care to migrants. In the for-profit U.S. healthcare system, practitioners have no incentive to treat poor, uninsured immigrants like the Triqui farm workers. When they try to serve such communities out of goodwill, practitioners lack the resources they need to provide effective treatment (like medicine, language interpreters, and administrative support staff). Like the farm owners who can't afford to treat their workers better because of economic pressures in the globalizing agriculture industry, healthcare workers can't afford to adequately treat migrant workers' illnesses because of economic pressures in the profit-seeking healthcare industry. The globalization that causes these problems isn't an abstract, invisible, or unstoppable market force: rather, it's a deliberate policy decision that governments have the power and obligation to overturn.

Holmes isn't trying to say that migrant workers' suffering is inevitable because it's the result of global forces—rather, he's saying that it's impossible to alleviate this suffering simply by changing individual decisions, as systematic policy change is what's necessary.

To effectively address exploitation and human suffering in agriculture, medicine, and immigration, public policy must target broad economic change, rather than just trying to influence individuals' decisions. First, limiting undocumented immigration and healing migrants' suffering at the border requires changing economic conditions in those migrants' home countries. While many Americans assume that giving more resources, weapons, and political power to the border patrol will dissuade migrants from crossing the border, this assumption is based on a misunderstanding. For most undocumented migrants, crossing the border will nearly always be worth it, as they face worse violence and abject poverty at home. But through policy change, the U.S. government could dissuade people like the Triquis from migrating illegally. By modifying its agricultural export policies, the government could make it possible for them to stay in Mexico, and by giving them protected status as temporary guest workers, the government would make it possible for them to cross the border legally and safely. But improving migrants' lives and regulating immigration requires this kind of policy change, which targets structural conditions rather than individual decisions. Similarly, whereas the Tanaka brothers can take incremental steps to improve working conditions, they can't meaningfully improve their workers' lives unless the government implements new policies to protect workers and farms like theirs. Finally, to solve the problems with migrant healthcare, Holmes argues that it's necessary but insufficient for individual doctors to unlearn their prejudices and listen better to their immigrant patients. Rather, the U.S. needs to overhaul its healthcare system and address the systemic lack of funding where it's needed most—in the poorest and sickest communities. Again, Holmes underscores that the solution is public policy, not individual decision-making.

By emphasizing how the global economy impacts individual lives, Holmes hopes to recenter conversations about immigration, healthcare, and agriculture on the structural forces that shape people's personal decisions. As a result of these forces, the people who actually perpetuate violence and inequality on the ground—like Rob and John Tanaka, who exploit their workers, or the coyotes and Border Patrol agents who duel at the border—have little choice in the matter. As long as the public continues to view these individual decisions in a vacuum, isolated from the global economic context that causes them, the real policy changes needed to aid widespread suffering will never come about.

LABOR AND IMMIGRATION POLICY

Popular conversations about immigration in the United States tend to be structured around a distinction between "legal" immigrants, who receive official permission to live and work in the U.S., and "illegal" immigrants, who enter the country of their own accord to seek employment, usually by crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. While U.S. citizens often assume that the U.S. government wants to limit undocumented immigration because it is detrimental to the national economy, Seth Holmes argues that undocumented immigrants actually play an essential role in the U.S. economy, by design. Namely, industries like agriculture rely heavily on undocumented immigrants' low-paid labor, which provides the U.S. with all the benefits and none of the costs of legal immigration. Even though U.S. anti-immigration policies are framed as a way to reduce undocumented immigration, Holmes argues that they really make migrants more vulnerable and desperate, so that they are more willing to accept low wages and exploitation. In other words, by denying migrants the benefits of legal recognition, residency, or citizenship, U.S. immigration policies ensure that U.S. companies can draw cheap labor from a constant supply of poor, vulnerable migrants.

Undocumented migrant farmworkers play an essential part in the U.S. economy, which depends on paying them low wages while denying them basic rights and protections. Ninety-five percent of U.S. farmworkers are poor Mexican migrants, and most of them are also undocumented. This situation has emerged because, while American consumers want fresh, locally grown fruit, most U.S. citizens are unwilling to do dangerous farm work for the meager wages that competitive farms can afford to pay. As a result, undocumented migrants make an important and distinctive contribution to the U.S. economy. This situation is neither new nor unique: Mexican migrants have long made up the majority of U.S. farmworkers, as they're more economically and socially vulnerable, so willing to accept the lowest wages and worst working conditions. Similarly, other vulnerable groups—like Indigenous Canadians and Cambodian refugees—have worked on the Tanaka Brothers Farm in the past. The U.S. agriculture industry's pattern of hiring people from disenfranchised groups shows that it largely depends on exploiting people's desperation and vulnerability. Notably, farm managers explicitly recognize that their business model—and American agriculture as a whole—depends on migrants' cheap, efficient labor. For instance, a manager at the Tanaka Brothers Farm, where most workers are undocumented, tells Holmes that he sometimes struggles to find *enough* workers to hire every season, even though he knows that berry picking is arduous, dangerous, and undesirable work. He wishes that the U.S. government made it easier for workers to cross the border, but he also knows that undocumented people would not tolerate the poor working

conditions if they had legal protections. Accordingly, he knows that his farm—and the whole U.S. agriculture industry—depends on a labor situation that is technically illegal on both ends: farms are allowed to illegally abuse their workers only because those workers are in the country illegally.

Holmes shows how U.S. immigration policy shapes immigrants into the type of workers that the agriculture industry needs: it ensures that they remain highly vulnerable and willing to accept extremely low wages and few legal rights. Holmes points out that undocumented workers would not be nearly as profitable for the U.S. if laborers had access to social services. Most spend their prime years working in the U.S. but use social services back home in Mexico, like education in their youth and healthcare in old age. As a result, the Mexican public sector bears all the cost of supporting them, whereas the U.S. gains most of the economic advantages of their labor. Migrants could access most U.S. public services if they had an accessible pathway to residency or citizenship, and Holmes argues that this is precisely why the immigration system denies them such a pathway.

U.S. immigration policy also intentionally makes crossing the U.S.-Mexico border incredibly dangerous, which leads only the most vulnerable migrants to do so. For instance, by ramping up Border Patrol enforcement in more populous areas of the border, the U.S. government draws migrants to less populated and far more dangerous sections of desert, where hundreds of migrants die every year. But Holmes knows that this doesn't prevent migrants from going to the U.S.—it just makes their lives worse and further dissuades them from interacting with the government (and risking deportation) once they're already in the U.S. Similarly, as crossing the border gets more difficult and expensive, many migrants no longer return to Mexico to visit their families every year. Accordingly, even though harsh immigration enforcement might seem to be working against the economy's need for vulnerable laborers, it actually feeds it.

Finally, government and public attitudes toward undocumented immigrants serve a similar repressive role, denying their humanity in order to exploit their labor. For example, Holmes argues that the term "illegal aliens" portrays undocumented migrants as a separate category of human beings who lack basic human rights, including the right to dignified labor conditions. When such people are viewed as "illegal aliens" rather than undocumented migrant workers fleeing poverty, they can do far less to protest or improve their exploitative working conditions. Of course, the more exploitative these conditions, the more the U.S. agriculture industry profits. Therefore, Holmes shows that U.S. immigration policy is not only intended to manage the inflow of immigrants: it's also designed to

While sympathetic readers are likely to see a contradiction between U.S. industry's thirst for migrant labor and U.S. immigration policy's violence toward migrants, by breaking down how that contradiction shapes these migrants into the kind of workers that industry needs, Holmes shows that this combination of policies is actually brutally rational and effective. He also notes that conditions continue to worsen for migrant labors: notably, the border has become increasingly militarized and dangerous since 2000. In the absence of a marked legal effort to grant them official protections, it's unlikely that this trend will improve in the future.

BIAS IN HEALTHCARE

As a physician, author Seth Holmes is horrified to see Triqui migrant workers' health complaints ignored, misunderstood, or dismissed outright when they seek medical care in the United States. Based on the experiences of three men whose medical treatments he observes—Abelino, Crescencio, and Bernardo—Holmes shows that doctors and nurses consistently blame migrant workers for their own pain rather than recognizing the external factors that cause it. As a result, these doctors and nurses not only fail to treat migrant workers' medical issues, but in many scenarios, they actually make them worse. Holmes argues that, because of modern Western medicine's "clinical gaze"—or its narrow view of what causes disease—health practitioners are largely blind to the social, cultural, and other contextual factors that lead to health problems. And unless they build this awareness, they're unlikely to effectively treat many of their patients—especially those from marginalized backgrounds.

Modern Western medicine's default worldview (the "clinical gaze") assumes that disease is an objective phenomenon rather than a subjective one, which leads medical practitioners to objectify patients and overlook the contextual factors that actually cause many diseases. Citing the influential French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault, Holmes argues that the "clinical gaze" became the norm in the late 18th century, when scientists started viewing disease as an objective problem with a specific body part, rather than a subjective problem afflicting "the whole person." Accordingly, they started to prioritize "objective" criteria over "subjective" ones. For instance, doctors and nurses often view X-rays and official paperwork as more authoritative than actual conversations with their patients—but this leads them to overlook important elements of their patients' conditions or personal history.

Similarly, because doctors view their own observations as "objective" and their patients' as "subjective," they frequently assume that patients are wrong for not conforming to their expectations—rather than seeing that their expectations sometimes do not reflect people's real experiences. For instance, Holmes notes that doctors once sent a Triqui man to a mental asylum because he couldn't communicate in Spanish, so they thought he was insane. In reality, the man only spoke Triqui and never learned Spanish. This shows that, because of their inflexible assumptions, doctors sometimes worsen their

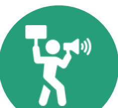
patients' condition rather than improving it. Moreover, because healthcare practitioners define disease as dysfunction in an individual body, they often assume that the problem lies within the patient, even when it's caused by social, cultural, or economic factors that patients do not control. For instance, a Mexican doctor tells Holmes that Triqui people are disproportionately sick because they don't cook well or shower enough—while ignoring that they don't have access to adequate food or running water in the first place. This shows that, because doctors assume that disease is caused by personal failures, they deliberately ignore the social, cultural, and economic factors that often truly cause it.

As a result of their clinical gaze, medical practitioners badly mistreat migrant workers, lose their trust, and often worsen their pain rather than healing it. Holmes illustrates this process through three case studies: Abelino's knee pain, Crescencio's headaches, and Bernardo's stomachaches. Abelino has severe knee pain from working crouched down on the Tanaka Brothers Farm for many years. However, rather than talking to Abelino, the doctor gives him an X-ray, concludes that he "[does] not know how to bend over," and says that he needs to exercise his knee by returning to work on the farm. When this worsens his pain rather than alleviating it, Abelino returns to the doctor, who decides that Abelino is unreliable and doesn't understand his own pain. Because the doctor treats him as a set of body parts and considers his "subjective" reports less reliable than her "objective" tests, she ends up wasting Abelino's time and covering up the real cause of his illness: overexertion from farm work.

Crescencio gets severe headaches whenever his managers at the farm scream racist insults at him. The only thing that helps these frustrating headaches is heavy drinking, and Crescencio worries that he'll inevitably take out this frustration on his wife and children. However, when he visits a doctor to get help, the doctor immediately decides that Crescencio is an abusive husband who needs to go to therapy, fix his drinking, and take responsibility for his problems rather than blaming his bosses. Rather than actually listening to Crescencio's individual story, the doctor simply assumes that he fits a stereotypical mold and treats the stereotype, not the person in front of her. Again, this shows how doctors are misled by their assumptions that dysfunctional bodies cause disease, and that these dysfunctions follow consistent patterns.

Finally, Bernardo has experienced severe stomach pain ever since the Mexican Army kidnapped and tortured him several years prior. When he visits a clinic, however, the doctor decides that Bernardo has "no past medical history," tries to treat him for chest pain instead of stomach pain, and attributes his ailment to a boxing accident. They ask him to wait for several hours, but he needs to return to work, so he leaves—and the insurance company bills him $3,000 because he voluntarily left the clinic without finishing his treatment. Like Abelino and Crescencio, Bernardo primarily experiences health practitioners and institutions as distant and indifferent: they refuse to acknowledge his actual medical problems or explain their decisions, because they view him as a biological puzzle to solve rather than a human being to treat.

Based on their experiences, it's no wonder that many Triqui people believe that "doctors don't know anything." Doctors learn to view patients as biological objects rather than human subjects, and this often blinds them to the social factors that actually can cause disease. Of course, structural pressures often make it even more difficult for them to provide adequate care. By combining his two fields, anthropology and medicine, Holmes hopes to help other physicians see how their medicalized worldview is limiting and sometimes counterproductive. Instead, doctors must account for the social factors that contribute to illness.



ANTHROPOLOGY AND ACTIVISM

In *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, Seth Holmes confronts seemingly insurmountable problems in the U.S.: a globalizing agriculture industry, the broken healthcare and immigration systems, and a pervasive racial-ethnic social hierarchy. At the end of his book, he admits that it's difficult for individuals to see how they can help reform these vast social structures. Scholars like Holmes strive to explain social suffering and represent oppressed groups, like undocumented immigrants, in a positive light—but many activists see these strategies as insignificant and distracting, because they don't lead to the policies that would actually improve people's lives. Meanwhile, activists' political campaigns often fail to gain broad public support or attract policymakers' attention. Faced with these two opposing strategies, Holmes asks how people like him—writers, educated elite citizens, and especially social scientists—should confront the problems he addresses. Should they focus on campaigning for policy change, or should they try to change people's hearts and minds? Ultimately, Holmes concludes that they should do both. While policy change is the real key to improving people's lives, he argues, public conversations and attitudes must often change in order to make policy change possible. Holmes argues that anthropologists and their readers are particularly suited to helping change these conversations and attitudes, which allows them to disrupt symbolic violence—or the way that people normalize, naturalize, and internalize social hierarchies rather than fighting them. However, Holmes argues that this isn't enough: in addition to speaking the truth in the public sphere, he argues, social scientists and their readers should also join mass political movements on behalf of oppressed people.

As a social scientist, Holmes hopes that his depiction of Triqui migrant workers' experiences will show people that inequalities between social groups are the result of artificial social hierarchies, not human nature. He primarily does so by telling

migrant workers' stories, in order to disrupt the stereotypes, assumptions, and excuses that are frequently used to justify oppressing them. For instance, when the farm executive John Tanaka claims that his workers "don't want a lunch break" and "don't want to understand" the farm's confusing pay scale, Holmes asks the workers for their opinions. It turns out that they *do* want a lunch break and *do* understand the pay policy—which is that management routinely steals from their wages. John Tanaka's excuse doesn't reflect reality; rather, it's a fantasy that helps him feel better about exploiting his workers. But by accurately reporting reality, Holmes forces John and others around him to confront the true consequences of their actions and the social hierarchies they uphold. In fact, this is why Holmes decides to live alongside migrant workers: non-farmworkers prefer to forget about or rationalize away migrant workers' suffering, but Holmes hopes that they'll pay attention if an esteemed doctor and anthropologist is telling them about it. Indeed, because Holmes is "out of place" as a white U.S. citizen on the farm, he also breaks others' expectation that Mexican migrants are naturally destined for backbreaking farm labor. This allows Holmes's friends, acquaintances, and readers to recognize and challenge their implicit belief in a racial hierarchy.

Holmes also argues that scholars should change the language used to talk about migration and farm workers. For instance, farm work is generally considered "unskilled," but Holmes personally attests that picking berries is incredibly difficult and requires significant physical skill. Similarly, poor Indigenous people who travel for work are called "unskilled migrant laborers," whereas wealthy white people who do so are "international businesspeople." By attaching negative associations to poor, nonwhite, non-U.S. citizens and positive associations to wealthy white citizens, these terms normalize the racial-ethnic hierarchy. But by showing how these representations are crafted behind the scenes, Holmes points out how this hierarchy is constructed and helps his readers see the reality of exploitation that lies behind it.

However, even though scholars and readers are uniquely suited to fighting oppression with words, Holmes concludes that this isn't enough. Instead, he asks his readers and fellow scholars—who generally occupy positions of privilege—to dedicate their time and energy to farm workers' struggles for legal recognition, economic support, and fair working conditions. He suggests they get involved with organizations like the United Farm Workers, Physicians for a National Health Plan, and the Border Action Network. Holmes points out that scholars and readers often mistakenly think of farmworkers' political struggles as theoretical or separate from themselves, but he makes it clear they can actively choose to involve themselves in it. Holmes also argues that his readers can help farmworkers through "pragmatic solidarity," or collaborating based on the resources available to them. For instance, during his research, he introduced a local white resident to some of his Triqui friends, and she started writing fiery articles in the local newspaper advocating for migrant workers' rights. These examples show how activists can use their existing strengths, social networks, and resources to advance political causes like the struggle for migrant workers' rights.

Although some social scientists might think of themselves as detached observers whose fundamental goal is to objectively understand human beings, Holmes believes that their work is only valuable if it makes the world a better place. Indeed, he believes that it would be unethical to remain totally objective about human suffering, without trying to alleviate it or empathize with the people enduring it. Instead, Holmes views his job as a social scientist and his professional calling as a doctor as one and the same: to heal suffering. After dedicating several years of his life to living with migrant workers, befriending them, and understanding their suffering, Holmes cannot simply turn his back on them and move onto another project, nor can he claim neutrality in the interests of scientific objectivity. Since the purpose of his research was to understand and alleviate migrant workers' suffering, the only humane and responsible course of action is to advocate for their interests, which includes organizing campaigns to push for policy change. Holmes believes that his readers can and should do the same.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

THE CHURCH POSTERS

Beyond showing the dangers that migrants face crossing the border, the church posters represent the way common assumption about migration perpetuate symbolic violence. During their treacherous journey across the U.S.-Mexico border, Seth Holmes and his group of Triqui companions stop in the dingy desert town of Altar. In the town's church, Holmes sees a series of posters that depict the risks migrants face while crossing the border: robbers, deadly heat, and dangerous animals. Alongside these images, the posters ask, "Is it worth risking your life?"

Holmes points out that this question assumes people freely choose to cross the border, accepting the risks it involves in exchange for the financial opportunity it presents. However, through his fieldwork, Holmes realizes that many migrants don't make this kind of deliberate, self-interested decision. Rather, crossing the border is about survival: they have no other option. For instance, the Triquis migrate to work in the U.S. because they have no economic opportunities at home in Oaxaca. They can't afford to eat consistently or send their

children to school unless they migrate elsewhere to work.

Accordingly, it doesn't make sense to ask many migrants crossing the border illegally is "worth risking [their] life"—rather, they're crossing the border "to make life *less* risky" than it already is. So why do public conversations about migration tend to use this framing of individual risk versus reward? One reason, Holmes suggests, is because it allows policymakers and U.S. citizens to blame migrant workers for the violence and poverty they face, rather than taking action to avoid it. This is why the posters are an example of symbolic violence: they blame the victims of violence for their suffering rather than identifying the perpetrators.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the University of California Press edition of *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* published in 2013.

Chapter 1 Quotes

My Triqui companions often explain their everyday lives in terms of *sufrimiento* (suffering). But one of the sites of *sufrimiento* most frequently described by Triqui migrants is crossing the border from Mexico into the United States. Many times throughout my fieldwork, my migrant companions told me stories of their harrowing experiences. One of my friends was kidnapped for ransom with her four-year-old boy. [...] One young man I know described burns on his skin and in his lungs after being pushed by his coyote into a chemical tank on a train. Another man explained that he was raped by a Border Patrol agent in exchange for his freedom. All my migrant companions have multiple stories of suffering, fear, danger, and violence at the border.
Early in my fieldwork, I realized that an ethnography of suffering and migration would be incomplete without witnessing firsthand such an important site of suffering for Latin American migrants.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 8-9

Explanation and Analysis

In the introduction to *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, author Seth Holmes explains why he chose to illegally cross the U.S.-Mexico border with his Triqui migrant companions. Although the border is incredibly dangerous—and frequently deadly—for the thousands of migrants who cross it each year, Holmes decides that it's worth taking the risk. In fact, witnessing, enduring, and understanding this risk is precisely the point for Holmes. Combining his training as a doctor and an anthropologist, Holmes views his research as a way to diagnose and heal social suffering. However, in order to truly understand this suffering, he decides, he has to experience some version of it for himself. This is why he chooses to pick berries on the Tanaka Brothers Farm and live in the labor camp alongside the Triqui workers. By extension, if he wants to understand what the border signifies for these migrant workers, he feels he has to cross it himself.

As Holmes explains here, the border is one of the most important "sites of *sufrimiento* [suffering]" for the Triqui migrants. In addition to being incredibly dangerous, it also represents the extent and needlessness of their suffering. When violence strikes, it's random and unpredictable. There is no clear distinction between criminals and law-abiding citizens—or even law enforcement agents, who also commit horrendous crimes. Perhaps most disturbingly of all, as Holmes later points out, none of this is necessary: the U.S. could establish a legal guest worker program and save millions of people the hassle and danger of crossing the border. There's no question that these people, including the Triquis, will cross the border regardless: the U.S. agriculture industry relies on undocumented migrants' cheap labor, and the same industry's dominance has created a large pool of poor Indigenous farmers in southern Mexico and Central America. As a result, migrants go to the U.S. out of legitimate economic need and prop up an essential industry that would not survive without their labor. And yet the U.S. repays them by subjecting them to horrific, random violence. This is a prime example of what Holmes calls structural violence: the way social hierarchies and inequities cause measurable physical and psychological suffering.

Systems of migrant labor are characterized by a physical and temporal separation of the processes of reproduction of the labor force and the production from that labor force. The migrant laborer can survive on low wages while contributing to economic production in one context because the family, community, and state in the other context provide education, health care, and other services necessary for reproduction. In this way, the host state externalizes the costs of labor force renewal and benefits even further from the phenomenon of labor migration.
[...]
The separation of these processes is not a natural or a voluntarily chosen phenomenon but must be enforced through the meeting of contradictory political and economic forces. Systems of labor migration involve economic forces inviting and even requiring the cheap labor of migrants at the same time that political forces ban migrants from entering the country.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 12-13

Explanation and Analysis

Holmes points out that migrant labor always relies on a structural inequality between two countries. In the case of Indigenous Triqui migrants, the U.S. takes advantage of the sizable gap in economic and political power between itself and Mexico. Namely, it attracts Mexican workers by offering them work at wages that are reasonable by Mexican standards, but extremely low for the U.S. As a result, during their prime working years, Triqui people and other migrants contribute to the U.S. economy and *not* the Mexican economy. However, in their youth and old age—in addition to whenever they might not be able to work—Triqui people rely on Mexican public services because they don't have legal status in the U.S.

As Holmes explains here, the U.S. gains and Mexico loses from this migration arrangement, which amounts to the U.S. using its leverage as a wealthy and powerful country to extract human capital from Mexico. This resembles the way structural violence functions on the Tanaka Brothers Farm: those with the most power use their power to extract ever-greater profits from those with less power. As a result, working conditions and inequality generally get worse over time—and so do conditions at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Holmes also emphasizes that the U.S. can only maintain this arrangement as long as its economic and immigration policies consciously contradict. Namely, in order for U.S. companies to exploit migrant workers, the U.S. government must deny them legal protections. Therefore U.S. economic policy relies on workers entering, but only so long as U.S. immigration policy treats them as unwelcome criminals. These two policies work together and carry tragic consequences for migrants, who risk their lives crossing the border and their health working in the U.S.

Traditional migration studies assumes a dichotomy between voluntary, economic, and migrant on the one hand and forced, political, and refugee on the other. The logic behind this dichotomy states that refugees are afforded political and social rights in the host country because they were forced to migrate for political reasons. Conversely, migrants are not allowed these rights because they are understood to voluntarily choose to migrate for economic reasons. The "push" and "pull" factor school of migration studies tends to assume that labor migration is entirely chosen, voluntary, and economic.
However, my Triqui companions experience their labor migration as anything but voluntary. Rather, they have told me repeatedly that they are forced to migrate in order for themselves and their families to survive. At one point during our trek across the border desert, Macario told me, "There is no other option left for us."

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 17-18

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Holmes argues that the U.S. public and government implement ineffective policy solutions to the migration crisis because they wrongly assume that people decide to migrate based on individual economic calculations, rather than in response to overwhelming social pressures or desperation. (This much like the doctors who mistreat migrants' health problems because they assume all illness results from individual biological dysfunction.) The Triqui people break the dichotomy between economic migrants and political refugees because they are, in essence, economic refugees: they have to migrate for work in order to make enough money to survive. But because migration policy is still built around this false dichotomy, Triqui people are left with no clear recourse, so they end up choosing to cross the border illegally.

This misunderstanding provides one clear example of how Holmes thinks social scientists can meaningfully change

policy. Namely, they can replace broken concepts with accurate ones. Whether designed to limit or enable immigration, policies based on the dichotomy between economic migrants and political refugees often fail to meet their goals because they're based on a false dichotomy. But social scientists like Holmes can point this out and propose new, more fruitful ways of conceptualizing immigration. For Holmes, this involves starting to think about immigration as a collective social phenomenon, rather than an individual decision.

❝❝ I attempt to portray and analyze the lives and experiences of Macario and my other Triqui companions in order to understand better the social and symbolic context of suffering among migrant laborers. I hope that understanding the mechanisms by which certain classes of people become written off and social inequalities become taken for granted will play a part in undoing these very mechanisms and the structures of which they are part. It is my hope that those who read these pages will be moved in mutual humanity, such that representations of and policies toward migrant laborers become more humane, just, and responsive to migrant laborers as people themselves. The American public could begin to see Mexican migrant workers as fellow humans, skilled and hard workers, people treated unfairly with the odds against them. I hope these recognitions will change public opinion and employer and clinical practices, as well as policies related to economics, immigration, and labor. In addition, I hope this book will help anthropologists and other social scientists understand the ways in which perception, social hierarchy, and naturalization work more broadly.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 29

Explanation and Analysis

At the end of his introduction, Holmes lays out his research's high stakes and goals. In doing so, he also explains his theory of social change. Holmes's fundamental aim is to understand, prevent, and heal migrants' suffering, and he plans to do that by contributing to policy change. As a social scientist, he believes the best way he can fight for policy change is by representing migrant workers and their struggles in a faithful, sympathetic, and positive light.

But this plan is not mere speculation or wishful thinking: rather, it's deeply connected to the theory of social reproduction that Holmes presents through his concepts of structural and symbolic violence. In a nutshell, Holmes's analysis of structural violence shows that the people who initially appear responsible for violence against marginalized people are often themselves responding to social pressures that come from higher up. Broad social and economic forces are the true cause of this suffering, not individual decisions. Public policy is designed to channel these forces, and in Holmes's eyes, it's the only way to achieve long-term social transformation. This is why Holmes concludes that healing migrant laborers' suffering requires aiming for policy change.

Next, Holmes draws on the concept of symbolic violence to explain why social scientists can achieve policy change by changing representations. Essentially, his discussion of symbolic violence shows how people accept and reinforce hierarchies that inflict structural violence on marginalized people. They do so by choosing certain representations of those people that normalize and naturalize their suffering. For instance, they justify migrant workers' long hours, low pay, and severe health consequences by saying that those workers deserve worse jobs. However, social scientists can disrupt symbolic violence by presenting more accurate and positive representations of marginalized people. Therefore, Holmes hopes that his depiction of Triqui migrants' lives and experiences will replace the negative representations that justify the mistreatment of migrant workers. In turn, this will force Holmes's readers to confront the full injustice of this mistreatment and encourage them to fight for the policy changes that are the only effective solution to it.

Chapter 2 Quotes

❝❝ My body offered insights not only via experiences of the living and working conditions of migrant laborers but also as I generated particular responses from those around me. In many circumstances, my light-skinned, tall, student-dressed, English-speaking body was treated very differently from the bodies of my Triqui companions. The supervisors on the farms never called me deprecatory names like they did the Oaxacan workers. Instead, they often stopped to talk and joke with me, all the while picking berries and putting them into my bucket to help me make the minimum required weight. The social categories inscribed on bodies led to my being treated as an equal a friend, even a superior, while the Oaxacans were treated most often as inferiors, sometimes as animals, or machines. [...] My body was treated as though it had and deserved power, whereas theirs have been treated repeatedly as underlings, undeserving of respect.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 36

Explanation and Analysis

In his fieldwork with the Triqui migrant laborers, Holmes specifically emphasizes the human body for a number of important, overlapping reasons. Holmes is both an anthropologist and a physician, and he's specifically studying the way that certain social structures produce physical pain, so it's essential for him to pay attention to the way his and his companions' bodies move, feel, and function on the farm. In this sense, the body provides Holmes with a specific way of learning about the Triquis. This is why Holmes chooses to live and work with them: by feeling their pain—or at least a version of it—Holmes can understand it much better than he ever could by simply listening to them describe their symptoms.

However, as he points out in this passage, bodies serve another important function on the farm. In addition to serving as a vehicle for knowledge, they are also a kind of surface or object on which "social categories [are] inscribed." For instance, because of the way Holmes's body looks, certain privileges are immediately attached to him on the farm. This is because, in the farm's hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship, Holmes's white male body gets associated with authority, expertise, and competence. Unlike the Triqui workers, he never has to face racial slurs, language barriers, or the constant, terrifying possibly of missing the daily weight minimum and getting fired. So while the physical body becomes Holmes's way of sharing in the Triquis' experience, it is also the limiting factor that prevents him from ever fully understanding what they go through.

Chapter 3 Quotes

❝❝ A few thousand [laborers] migrate here for the tulip-cutting and apple- and berry-picking seasons in the spring and live several months in squatter shacks made of cardboard, plastic sheets, and broken-down cars or in company-owned labor camps, often in close proximity to the multilevel houses of the local upper class that have picturesque views of the valley. The migrant camps look like rusted tin-roofed tool sheds lined up within a few feet of each other or small chicken coops in long rows. In the labor camp where I came to live, the plywood walls are semi-covered by peeling and chipping brown-pink paint. There is no insulation, and the wind blows easily through holes and cracks, especially at night. [...] During summer days, the rusty tin roofs of the units conduct the sun's heat like an oven, regularly bringing the inside to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. At night, the air is damp and cold, reaching below 32 degrees Fahrenheit during the blueberry season in the fall.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work47

Explanation and Analysis

After introducing his readers to the Skagit Valley, the fertile agricultural region where the Tanaka Brothers Farm is located, Holmes describes the Triqui migrants' living conditions there. Their shacks are substandard and they lack the most basic facilities necessary to live a safe and dignified life, especially in the Skagit Valley's extreme temperatures. With this passage, Holmes is implicitly challenging readers to ask themselves why the farm management does not invest in improving these living conditions, which make it clear that the migrant workers are severely marginalized. The migrant workers are clearly valued for their labor, but not for their humanity. These conditions also show that the region is extremely unequal, even if this might not be apparent to white residents who don't often see the labor camps. Indeed, the contrast between those white residents' luxurious homes and the laborers' shacks is the first hint that life in the Skagit Valley is heavily stratified by race, ethnicity, and citizenship.

After my first few weeks living in a migrant camp and picking berries, I began to notice the intricate structuring of labor on the farm into a complicated hierarchy. In the case of contemporary U.S. agriculture, the primary fault lines of power tend to fall along categories of race, class, and citizenship. The structure of labor on the Tanaka farm is both determined by the asymmetries in society at large—specifically around race, class, and citizenship—and reinforces those larger inequalities. The complex of farm labor involves several hundred workers occupying many distinct positions, from owner to receptionist, field manager to tractor drivel, berry checker to berry picker. People on the farm often described the hierarchy in vertical metaphors, speaking of those "above" or "below" them, of "overseeing" or of being "at the bottom."

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work50

Explanation and Analysis

In this paragraph, Holmes introduces the specific social hierarchy of race, class, and citizenship that is the focus of his research. Although he primarily focuses on how this hierarchy dictates the labor structure at the Tanaka Brothers Farm, he later goes on to show how it shapes *all* dimensions of migrant laborers' lives, both in the U.S. and in Mexico. Holmes points out that the hierarchy is both very complex and deceptively simple: it's made up of hundreds of people whose positions are determined by slight variations on race, class, and citizenship, but everyone essentially understands that it exists and certain people are "'above' or 'below'" others. Moreover, he shows that this hierarchy seems to reproduce itself: it's both the effect of social inequities and a causal factor that multiplies these inequities. In other words, it's a self-reinforcing cycle. This leads him to one of the book's central questions: how does the cycle work, and what will it take to disrupt it? He ultimately answers this question by arguing that structural and symbolic violence work together to maintain the cycle, which means that stopping the cycle means either interfering with symbolic violence or healing structural violence.

Over the course of my fieldwork, many of my friends and family who visited me in the labor camp quickly blamed the farm management for the poor living and working conditions of berry pickers.
[...]
The stark reality and precarious future of the farm serve as reminders that the situation is more complex. The corporatization of U.S. agriculture and the growth of international free markets squeeze growers such that they cannot easily imagine increasing the pay of the pickers or improving the labor camps without bankrupting the farm. In other words, many of the most powerful inputs into the suffering of farmworkers are structural, not willed by individual agents. In this case, structural violence is enacted by market rule and later channeled by international and domestic racism, classism, sexism, and anti-immigrant prejudice. However, structural violence is not just a simple, unidirectional phenomenon; rather macro social and economic structures produce vulnerability at every level of the farm hierarchy.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work52

Explanation and Analysis

It's easy to blame the farm owners for Triqui workers' poor wages and working conditions, since they are the most easily identifiable representatives of the farm's labor hierarchy. But if the farm owners set up the hierarchy, then ending the hierarchy is easy: it just requires farm owners to change their minds.

Unfortunately, as Holmes explains here, the farms are also stuck in a hierarchy of their own, which forces them to act in certain ways. Namely, they have to respond to extreme market pressures by significantly cutting costs. This means that, while the owners wish that they could afford to pay their workers more and improve working conditions, they feel that they can't. If they did, they'd have to raise their fruit prices and they'd no longer be competitive, which would cost them their business.

This analysis of structural violence might initially feel incomplete because it lacks an obvious culprit, which makes it difficult to envision changing the system. If farm owners are also responding to coercive forces when they exploit workers, then it may seem as though *nobody* is responsible for this exploitation. In a way, Holmes thinks this is accurate: no individual is solely responsible for exploiting the Triquis. Rather, the agriculture industry as a whole is responsible.

However, Holmes insists that this doesn't make it impossible to fix migrant workers' predicament; instead, it just means that this will require wide-ranging policy changes that transform the whole industry.

John recognizes that the living and working conditions of pickers are so undesirable that each group will move out of this position as quickly as possible. The pickers come from the most vulnerable populations at any given time. As each group advances socially and economically, a more exploited and oppressed group takes its place. [...] In one sense, this narrative of ethnic succession functions to justify the plight of the group currently at the bottom of the hierarchy. That is, it appears to foster the sense that it is all right that certain categories of people are suffering under poor living and working conditions at present because other groups have had to endure these conditions in the past. Some people begin to perceive this as a natural, evolutionary story.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker), John Tanaka

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work56

Explanation and Analysis

John Tanaka, who co-owns the farm where Holmes conducts his research, admits that his workers' labor conditions are far from hospitable. However, he justifies his labor practices—employing vulnerable undocumented immigrants, functionally paying them less than minimum wage for backbreaking physical labor, and housing them in dilapidated shacks—by arguing that this ultimately does a service to their families in the long term. Each group that works on the farm does so for a generation, but their children, who grow up in the U.S., invariably leave and do other work. A new group invariably comes around to replace the first group, so the Tanaka Brothers Farm always has workers, but those workers are always in the process of securing a better life for their children.

In fact, this is a common story about immigration to the U.S., and it certainly paints an accurate picture of how immigrants achieve upward mobility from one generation to the next. However, Holmes takes issue with the way John Tanaka *uses* this story: he turns it into a justification for the farm's poor labor conditions. Because he presents it as natural that one generation struggles so that their children can live middle-class lives, Tanaka concludes that it's acceptable for him to make one generation of berry pickers struggle. This story is a clear example of symbolic violence because it presents exploitation and hierarchy as part of a "natural, evolutionary" process. As a result, it helps John Tanaka and the farm's other executives justify and lock in inequitable, exploitative labor conditions rather than search for alternatives. Even if those alternatives might be hard to find—after all, the Tanakas have little choice but to underpay their workers if they want to make a profit—John Tanaka essentially gives up on improving the system he's created.

The physical dirt from the labor of the indigenous pickers had become symbolically linked with their character, and at the same time the limited possibility of relationships between Shelly and the indigenous workers because of the language barriers had become symbolically projected as assumed character flaws onto the indigenous pickers themselves. In addition to bringing into relief the "de facto apartheid" on the farm, the profiles of the supervisors exemplify the range of responses to ethnic and class difference within an exploitative system.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker), Shelly

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work68

Explanation and Analysis

Shelly, a supervisor at the Tanaka Brothers Farm who's married to one of its owners, tells Holmes that she considers the Mexican mestizos who work at the farm culturally and behaviorally superior to the Indigenous Oaxacans who do the same. She comes up with a number of explanations for this: she thinks Indigenous pickers are lazy, dirty, disrespectful, and insufficiently family-oriented. But Holmes points out that all of these judgments are demonstrably false: Oaxacan workers were taking jobs from mestizo workers because they worked harder and faster; they brought their whole families to Washington, unlike mestizo workers; and they never disrespected their supervisors, at least to Holmes's knowledge. There is one exception: they *are* physically covered in dirt, because they work in the fields. But it doesn't make sense that Shelly would hold this against them—it's practically part of the job description.

Having shown that Shelly's beliefs about the Indigenous workers are demonstrably false, Holmes asks why she's so

attached to them anyway. He concludes that Shelly's ideas about mestizo and Indigenous workers are her way of justifying the farm's unequal hierarchy and making sense of her frustration at being unable to communicate with Indigenous people. In short, these ideas are a strategy for symbolic violence: they allow Shelly to blame the victims for their language barrier and marginalization in the work hierarchy.

❝ During my fieldwork, I picked once or twice a week and experienced gastritis, headaches, and knee, back, and hip pain for days afterward. I wrote in a field note after picking, "It honestly felt like pure torture." Triqui pickers work seven days a week, rain or shine, without a day off until the last strawberry is processed. Occupying the bottom of the ethnic-labor hierarchy, Triqui pickers bear an unequal share of health problems, from idiopathic back and knee pains to slipped vertebral disks, from type 2 diabetes to premature births and developmental malformations.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work74

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Holmes explains that picking berries left him in such severe physical pain that he struggled to do much of anything on his days off. Most importantly, he points out that his experience doesn't even compare to the Triqui migrant workers', since they had to work seven days a week for several months every year, while he only worked two days a week for one season. He can only guess at how it feels to have one's body destroyed by years of farm work, but he certainly knows how painful farm work *can* be.

This passage serves a few important functions in the context of Holmes's book as a whole. First, it shows the reader that structural violence really is about physical pain and suffering. Because the social structures that cause this suffering are large and abstract, it can be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that structural violence only causes abstract, theoretical, or intellectual suffering. Instead, Holmes shows that its effects are as physical as any other kind of violence—which means doctors should also take it far more seriously.

Secondly, this passage shows both the advantages and the limits of Holmes's methodological focus on the body. On the one hand, by putting his own body on the line, he understands and bears witness to a pattern of profound physical suffering that people in the U.S.—especially doctors—tend to overlook, deny, or cover up. But on the other hand, Holmes also sees that he will never be able to fully experience migrant workers' lives, fears, and suffering, so his attempt to feel their pain can only go so far. This is why he's careful to remind the reader that his book is about migrant workers' long-term suffering, not his own temporary suffering for a few months one summer.

❝ Thus marginalization begets marginalization. The indigenous Mexicans live in the migrant camps because they do not have the resources to rent apartments in town. Because they live in the camps, they are given only the worst jobs on the farm. Unofficial farm policies and practices subtly reinforce labor and ethnic hierarchies. The position of the Triqui workers, at the bottom of the hierarchy, is multiply determined by poverty, education level, language, citizenship status, and ethnicity. In addition these factors produce each other. For example, a family's poverty cuts short an individual's education, which limits one's ability to learn Spanish (much less English), which limits one's ability to leave the bottom rung of labor and housing. Poverty, at the same time, is determined in part by the institutional racism at work against Triqui people in the first place. Segregation on the farm is the result of a complex system of feedback and feed-forward loops organized around these multiple nodes of inequality.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work78

Explanation and Analysis

Holmes explains that the only people who are able to escape berry picking are those whom the management deems special because, in some way, they're above the undocumented Triqui workers in the racial-ethnic, class, and citizenship hierarchy. During Holmes's time at the farm, those people include Holmes himself—who gets all sorts of benefits because he's a middle-class white man—and one picker who gets promoted because he doesn't live in the labor camp, but instead has an apartment in town with his family. This man is a terribly slow berry picker, but Holmes points out that his relative privilege is a more important

determiner of whether he gets promoted than his talent.

Based on the example of this promotion, Holmes concludes that "marginalization begets marginalization" for the Triquis. This is arguably the central principle that explains why social hierarchies hold together, or even strengthen over time. Structural and symbolic violence work together: those with power blame people at the bottom for being at the bottom (symbolic violence), and then make sure that they stay at the bottom (structural violence). The logic is just as circular as it sounds: Triqui workers can't escape poverty because they have the worst jobs, but they can't get better jobs because others see that they are living in poverty. Therefore, every single indicator, from education and English-language skills to wealth and chronic pain, gets progressively worse toward the bottom of the hierarchy.

❝❞ The ethnic-labor hierarchy seen here—white and Asian American U.S. citizen, Latino U.S. citizen or resident, undocumented mestizo Mexican, undocumented indigenous Mexican—is common in much of North American farming. [...] Yet this is only a small piece of the global hierarchy. The continuum of structural vulnerability can be understood as a zoom lens, moving through many such hierarchies. When the continuum is seen from farthest away, it becomes clear that the local family farm owners are relatively low on the global corporate agribusiness hierarchy. When looked at more closely, we see the hierarchy on this particular farm. addition, perceptions of ethnicity change as the zoom lens is moved in and out. As mentioned above, many of the farm executives (as well as area residents) considered all migrant farmworkers "Mexican," whereas those in closer contact with the farmworkers came to distinguish between "regular Mexicans" and "Oaxacans," and those working in the fields themselves often differentiated among mestizo, Triqui, and Mixtec people.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 3: Segregation on the Farm: Ethnic Hierarchies at Work83-84

Explanation and Analysis

Holmes concludes his chapter on the agriculture industry's hierarchy of race, ethnicity, class, and citizenship by reminding his readers that "this is only a small piece of the global hierarchy," which is really controlled by a set of policymakers and agribusiness corporations at the top. This is why even the Tanaka brothers, who own the farm, feel a strong sense of "structural vulnerability"—meaning they are vulnerable (in their case, to bankruptcy) because of their place in the structure (above the workers but below the major corporations who are their competitors). However, the hundreds of berry pickers who work under the Tanaka brothers and are arguably at the true bottom of the hierarchy feel a much more acute sense of structural vulnerability: at any time, they can lose their jobs, get deported, or fall sick and be unable to work. All of these possibilities mean they risk starvation.

If the global agriculture industry is really a massive vertical hierarchy in which everyone is structurally vulnerable, the zoom lens shows how smaller sub-hierarchies are nested inside of the global one. For instance, "zooming in" explains how mestizo people work better jobs than Mixtec people, who in turn work better jobs than Triqui people. Meanwhile, "zooming out" shows the whole farm in relation to the global agribusiness industry. The zoom lens also shows how different people focus on different parts of the hierarchy, depending on their jobs and needs. For instance, Triqui workers might not care how the global agribusiness market works, while the Tanaka brothers might not care which workers are Triqui and which are Mixtec.

Chapter 4 Quotes

❝❞ The suffering of Triqui migrant laborers is an embodiment of multiple forms of violence. The political violence of land wars has pushed them to live in inhospitable climates without easy access to water for crops. The structural violence of global neoliberal capitalism forces them to leave home and family members, suffer through a long and deadly desert border crossing, and search for a means to survive in a new land. The structural violence of labor hierarchies in the United States organized around ethnicity and citizenship positions them at the bottom, with the most dangerous and backbreaking occupations and the worst accommodations. Due to their location at the bottom of the pecking order, the undocumented Triqui migrant workers endure disproportionate injury and sickness.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker), Bernardo, Crescencio , Abelino

Related Themes:

Page Number: 109

Explanation and Analysis

In his fourth chapter, Holmes explains how structural violence caused Abelino's, Crescencio's, and Bernardo's severe injuries. To conclude this chapter, Holmes points out

that Triqui people don't just suffer this structural violence on U.S. farms. Rather, it's built into every part of their lives, which are largely determined by global forces entirely outside their control. In fact, their origin story is based on their history of repeated, cyclical displacement from one place to another, ever since the Spanish conquest of the Americas. Today, they continue to suffer because they're caught up in a number of huge global structures (like the wars in Mexico; neoliberal capitalism; and the U.S. agriculture, immigration, and healthcare systems). They also happen to be at the bottom of almost all these systems.

In fact, Triqui people's historical marginalization and their current marginalization are clearly connected: at each stage of their history, Holmes argues, Indigenous people are the easiest for settlers to exploit because they're "at the bottom of the pecking order," and each cycle of exploitation leaves them as marginalized as before (or even more than before). This shows how structural violence accumulates in individuals and communities over time. It also illustrates how the cycle of social reproduction works: structural and symbolic violence produce the same hierarchies that enable them to exist in the first place.

Chapter 5 Quotes

Why did the Triqui people think that the physicians working with them did not know anything? What was wrong with the doctor-patient relationship? Why was it so unhelpful in its present form? Could it be changed to be more helpful for my Triqui companions? What were the economic, social, and symbolic structures impeding such change? And how might anthropology speak to clinical medicine and public health?

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 113

Explanation and Analysis

Readers might expect doctors to be among the few people who both care about marginalized migrant workers' suffering and have the power to do something about it. However, in this chapter, Holmes explains that doctors consistently fail on both these counts: they neither care about nor heal his Triqui companions' suffering. In fact, doctors frequently end up causing more suffering instead. Their misunderstandings with Triqui patients are so severe that Triqui people frequently tell Holmes that "doctors don't know anything." This, along with the other questions Holmes asks here, is the driving question behind the book's fifth chapter.

Holmes ultimately attributes the pervasive misunderstandings between doctors and Triqui patients to doctors' "medical gaze," a worldview that carries certain assumptions about what illness is and how it functions. This passage is also important because it shows how Holmes's approach to the problem fights back against the worst tendencies of the "clinical gaze." Namely, Holmes takes Triqui people's assessment of their pain at face value and treats their problems with doctors as a meaningful puzzle to solve, rather than assuming that they need to change their behavior. In contrast, according to the clinical or medical gaze worldview, doctors have access to objective biological information about their patients, which means their scientific assessments of medical problems are more accurate than patients' self-reports of pain or injury. Similarly, according to the medical gaze, a patient's failure to understand and follow the doctor's orders shows that the patient doesn't understand medicine. From the perspective of the medical gaze, it doesn't make sense to ask if the doctor is communicating correctly or the doctor-patient relationship is supportive, because the doctor's job is to identify and fix a medical problem (kind of like a mechanic fixes a car).

As an anthropologist and a physician, I am concerned both with theorizing social categories and their relationships with bodies and with the possibility that suffering might be alleviated in a more respectful, egalitarian, and effective manner. My dual training has been at once stimulating and disorienting. The lenses through which cultural anthropologists and physicians are trained to see the world are significantly different, and at times contradictory. I have found the critical social analyses of anthropology incredibly important at the same time that I have valued the grounded human concerns of clinical medicine.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 114

Explanation and Analysis

Holmes emphasizes that his unique perspective on labor, migration, and chronic pain is a result of the way he combines two distinct fields: medicine and anthropology. These fields have very different areas of focus, in general,

and very different ways of explaining people's suffering, in particular. But where some scholars might struggle to reconcile anthropology's focus on collective social forces with medicine's emphasis on individual illnesses, Holmes integrates these two perspectives by studying how social forces create individual illnesses and prevent them from being adequately treated in the healthcare system. In fact, Holmes's anthropology is what makes his medicine successful, and vice versa. He innovates within medicine by rejecting the "clinical gaze" and structural violence seriously as a cause of disease. Meanwhile, he innovates within the social sciences by arguing that anthropology, like medicine, is fundamentally based on a social responsibility to heal people's pain and suffering. Holmes isn't just doing research that happens to lie at the intersection of anthropology and medicine; rather, he's showing how each discipline can complement the other and striving to make both more effective in the long run.

❝ Around the time of the advent of the dissection of cadavers, the conception of disease transformed from an entity affecting the whole person to an anatomically localized lesion. It was no longer considered necessary for doctors to listen to patients describe their experience of the illness—their symptoms—in order to diagnose and treat. Instead, physicians began to focus on the isolated, diseased organs, treating the patient increasingly as a body, a series of anatomical objects, and ignoring the social and personal realities of the patient, the person. In the paradigm of the clinical gaze, physicians examine and talk about the patient's diseases, while the patient remains largely silent. In many ways, this can be seen as the advent of modern positivist science in which human, social, and historical contexts are considered irrelevant.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 115

Explanation and Analysis

Holmes cites the French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault to explain how the "clinical gaze" became doctors' primary lens for understanding and treating illness in the late 18th century. During this period, technological advances presented doctors with a host of new medical tools for diagnosing and treating illness. Doctors increasingly realized that many diseases could be treated through localized attention to certain body parts and that they could provide this treatment to different people in a consistent and regular way, no matter whom their patient happened to be. This approach clearly makes sense for many diseases—for instance, patients with certain bacterial infections can heal with antibiotics regardless of how severe their reported symptoms are. However, the medical gaze is not always the best way to treat diseases, especially when they are less clear-cut than a well-known infection or when curing patients' symptoms will not actually get rid of the disease's underlying cause.

Holmes critiques the clinical gaze because doctors tend to apply it blindly to all situations, including many circumstances in which it actually *prevents* them from understanding their patients' suffering. Because the clinical gaze deliberately ignores patients' personal narratives and erases the context of their lives, patients have no way to steer doctors out of it when it's inappropriate: doctors often don't listen to patients long enough to realize that their personal context matters deeply to their illness. Therefore, as the clinical gaze has become a one-size-fits-all solution, patients find that, unless they happen to be ill in precisely the way the doctor expects, their voices become excluded and their interests get ignored in decisions about their own treatment. This is the central problem with U.S. healthcare that Holmes wants to resolve.

❝ Years later, Abelino still tells me that he has knee pain and that "doctors don't know anything" (*los medicos no saben nada*).
After considering in some detail the course of Abelino's interactions with health care institutions, this common statement makes more sense. Several assumptions were made along the way, from the absence of stomach problems to his first return to work being "light duty," from his ability to read English to his being paid as an hourly worker, from his incorrect picking as the cause of his injury to his faking of the pain, from the importance of "Objective" biotechnical tests to the disqualification of his words and experiences.

Related Characters: Abelino, Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 124

Explanation and Analysis

Abelino's convoluted, fruitless attempts to receive adequate medical attention for his knee pain demonstrate how the medical gaze blinds doctors to migrant workers' specific

social and cultural contexts. As a result, doctors fail to effectively treat those migrant workers' pain and, in many cases, impose further structural violence on them. As Holmes points out here, the most consistent problem Abelino experiences is that medical professionals substitute their own assumptions about his case for the reality of his experience. Accordingly, they effectively end up treating a figment of their imagination, rather than the patient sitting in front of them.

Because they're stuck in the "clinical gaze," Abelino's doctors assume that his knee injury is the result of some deviation from proper functioning, like a problem in the way he bends over, or one specific accident at work. What they don't see is that his injury is actually the result of everything in his life functioning normally: fruit pickers' job inevitably wears down their bodies over the years, because the labor is physically strenuous and constant. The doctors fundamentally assume that nobody's job would require that kind of stress—just as they assume that all their patients will understand English and have legal employment. But none of these assumptions apply to Abelino and other marginalized migrant workers like him. As Abelino's situation shows, migrant workers' marginalization leads them to fall outside of doctors' expectations, which leads them to experience further marginalization in the process of seeking care.

❝ Crescencio's headache is a result most distally of the international economic inequalities forcing him to migrate and become a farmworker in the first place and more proximally of the racialized mistreatment he endures in the farm's ethnicity and citizenship hierarchy. These socially produced headaches lead Crescencio to become agitated and angry with his family and to drink, thus embodying the stereotype of Mexican migrants as alcoholic and potentially violent. The racialized mistreatment that produces his headaches is then justified through the embodied stereotypes that were produced in part by that mistreatment in the first place. Finally, due to powerful economic structures affecting the migrant clinic as well as limited lenses of perception in biomedicine, this justifying symbolic violence is subtly reinforced throughout Crescencio's health care experiences.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker), Crescencio

Related Themes:

Page Number: 135

Explanation and Analysis

Crescencio's headache is unique because it can't be traced back to specific physical injuries; rather, it comes from the psychological injury of constantly being told he's less than human. In other words, it's caused by the structural violence of participating in a hierarchy that devalues his life, and not by any additional structural violence that hierarchy puts on him. However, Holmes strongly emphasizes that Crescencio's physical pain is not any less real or important just because its causes are mainly psychological. Instead, he points out that understanding Crescencio's injury absolutely requires paying close attention to the social, cultural, and economic context in which he lives. Unfortunately, the clinical gaze is designed precisely not to do that, so doctors end up misunderstanding and even exacerbating Crescencio's symptoms.

Specifically, Crescencio's doctor ignores his headaches and decides that he's an abusive alcoholic who needs talk therapy. This plays into the real cause behind Crescencio's headaches: people reduce him to stereotypes instead of treating him with dignity and respect as an individual. In short, his medical treatment replicates the structural violence that caused his injury in the first place.

❝ Health care professionals cannot be blamed for their acontextuality. They, too, are affected by social, economic, and political structures. Much of their blindness to social and political context is caused by the difficult, hectic, and emotionally exhausting circumstances in which they work. It is caused also by the way medical science is thought and taught in the contemporary world. Most of these individuals have chosen their positions in migrant clinics because they want to help. They have a great deal of compassion and a sense of calling to this work. Yet the lenses they have been given through which to understand their patients have been narrowly focused, individualistic, and asocial.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 152

Explanation and Analysis

Holmes focuses the bulk of his chapter on migrant health on the clinical gaze, or the set of assumptions about illness that leads health practitioners to misdiagnose and mistreat marginalized patients like the Triqui migrant laborers. However, he also repeatedly points to another essential factor that compounds the problem: the structural violence that *doctors* face in the U.S. healthcare system.

It may sound strange to talk about privileged people like doctors being the victims of structural violence, but just like the owners of the Tanaka brothers farm constantly have to cut corners because of market pressures, the doctors who treat migrant laborers are overworked and under-resourced. According to Holmes, this is principally because the U.S. healthcare system is private and profit-oriented: it distributes resources in a way that maximizes profits, whereas doctors really need resources to be distributed in a way that maximizes their patients' and communities' health outcomes.

Although healthcare is a difficult and perennial topic of policy discussion in the U.S., Holmes does not hesitate to make a case for universal healthcare. From his perspective this would be the best way to relieve financial pressures on doctors and nurses and allow them to focus on what they do best: healing patients.

Chapter 6 Quotes

Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence has proven especially helpful for my understanding of the ways in which the order of inequalities described thus far has become unquestioned and unchallenged, even by those most oppressed. Symbolic violence is the naturalization, including internalization, of social asymmetries. Bourdieu explains that we experience the world through doxa (mental schemata) and habitus (historically accreted bodily comportments) that are issued forth from that very social world and, therefore, make the social order—including its hierarchies—appear natural. Thus we misrecognize oppression as natural because it fits our mental and bodily schemata through which we perceive it. [...] Symbolic violence acts within the process of perception, hidden from the conscious mind.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 6: "Because They're Lower to the Ground": Naturalizing Social Suffering156-157

Explanation and Analysis

Holmes focuses his sixth chapter on symbolic violence, a complex theoretical concept that is nevertheless absolutely essential to his argument. In the last several chapters, Holmes has shown how specific policies and social hierarchies create systematic inequality and suffering, which disproportionately affects marginalized people like the migrant farmworkers he studied. However, it's perfectly natural to ask why people haven't put an end to these hierarchies and the horrific suffering they cause.

Symbolic violence provides an answer to that question: it explains how and why people choose to accept inequity and social hierarchy rather than fighting them. Sometimes, people accept hierarchies because they directly benefit from them (like farm owners who justify mistreating their workers or white people who accept racist hierarchies that put them on top). In other instances, people accept hierarchies because they have no real power to change them and want to avoid feeling guilty all the time (like the administrative assistants and middle managers who understand that the farm's labor structure is racist but can't do anything about it). And finally, in some cases, people even internalize hierarchies in order to make their own lives and work seem meaningful (like the Triqui workers who decide that they have the worst jobs because they are the strongest group around).

In all these cases, people use certain ways of thinking (doxa) and physically acting (habitus) to "make the social order—including its hierarchies—appear natural." That's why they're all examples of symbolic violence. Truly interrupting hierarchies and creating social change, Holmes argues, requires first getting people to see injustice clearly rather than use symbolic violence to explain it away. Fortunately, he believes that anthropologists are particularly well-suited to doing this because they are trained to understand, evaluate, and communicate theories about society's structure.

Much like sand is considered "clean" when it is on a beach or in a sandbox but "dirty" when it is inside a house or on a child's hands, those considered Mexican, and therefore out of their proper place, are often referred to as dirty. Area residents and local newspapers used metaphors of "cleaning up the neighborhood" to indicate a project that functionally displaced those considered Mexican from their area by shutting down a labor camp, a day laborer pickup spot and an apartment building occupied primarily by Mexican migrants or U.S. Latinos.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: Chapter 6: "Because They're Lower to the Ground": Naturalizing Social Suffering163

Explanation and Analysis

In his chapter on symbolic violence, Holmes confronts one of the most common racist insults he hears from the white people he meets in Washington and California: Mexican migrants are "dirty" and don't belong. He points out that, on one level, migrant workers often *are* physically dirty because they work on farms all day and often lack running water. At the same time, when white people call Mexican people "dirty," they really mean something far more metaphorical and sinister. It's their way of saying that Latinx people don't belong in places where they believe white people should have power. "Cleaning up the neighborhood" is really just a small-scale form of ethnic cleansing. In other words, when white people talk about "dirty" Mexicans, they're really trying to preserve and impose a racist hierarchy that gives white people disproportionate power. However, by disguising their symbolic violence in the language of dirt and purity, they make their racism appear natural (rather than socially constructed). Accordingly, this example illustrates how symbolic violence can be far more sinister than it initially seems. It consistently uses coded language in order to subtly enforce explicit racial hierarchies.

Chapter 7 Quotes

❝ If we social scientists are to research, theorize, and confront socially structured suffering, we must join with others in a broad effort to denaturalize social inequalities, uncovering linkages between symbolic violence and suffering. In this way, the lenses of perception as well as the social inequalities they reinforce can be recognized, challenged, and transformed. This book endeavors to denaturalize ethnic and citizenship inequalities in agricultural labor, health disparities in the clinic, and biologized and racialized inequities in society at large.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 185

Explanation and Analysis

In the last chapter of *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies*, Holmes asks what he, other social scientists, and his readers can do alleviate migrant workers' suffering. Because this suffering has its roots in powerful social forces and government policies, activism to heal it has to focus on policy change. Nevertheless, in this passage, Holmes argues that social scientists can also make a meaningful contribution to struggles for social justice by exposing the workings of structural violence and disrupting symbolic violence. He views these as important prerequisites to policy change.

By showing how structural violence functions—or "denaturaliz[ing] social inequalities"—scholars can help others see that much of the suffering that surrounds them in society is neither natural nor necessary. Rather than taking structural violence for granted, then, people can identify and fight it. Similarly, scholars can also "uncover[] linkages between symbolic violence and suffering," or show how people use the techniques of symbolic violence (like normalization, naturalization, and internalization) to justify social hierarchies and perpetuate structural violence against others. This allows scholars to debunk people's excuses for passively accepting unjust hierarchies. On a large enough scale, Holmes hopes, these changes could transform public perception about important issues and make a critical difference in efforts for policy change.

❝ If health professionals responded to sickness by treating not only its current manifestations but also its social, economic, and political causes, we could create a realistically critical public health and a "liberation medicine." This latter term alludes to liberation theology, in which a reflective engagement with those who are poor and suffering leads to new ways of thinking and practicing theology in order to achieve social justice. While there is genuine need for the skills of narrowly trained, competent biomedical physicians, I am convinced this is not enough.
As shown by the health care experiences of Abelino, Crescencio, and Bernardo, medical skills practiced without recognition of the social structures causing sickness are doomed to address only the downstream, biological and behavioral inputs into disease. This leads to ineffective health care at best and complicit, injurious health care at worst.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker), Bernardo, Crescencio , Abelino

Related Themes:

Page Number: 193-194

Explanation and Analysis

In his conclusion, Holmes also offers concrete recommendations for how the U.S. medical system can change to more effectively treat marginalized people like the Triqui migrant workers he studied. He argues that the U.S. should establish a universal healthcare system, and he presents this vision of "liberation medicine."

The concept of "liberation medicine" connects Holmes's medical and anthropological training: he sees both his disciplines as different ways of trying to heal people's suffering. Medicine has clinical tools and traditionally looks at individuals, while anthropology has analytical tools and traditionally looks at groups. However, Holmes thinks that both fields would gain significantly if they worked together and analyzed how social structures and collective experiences cause individual suffering, so that they could heal that suffering in clinical and policy settings.

In particular, Holmes argues that doctors should significantly rethink their attitudes toward illness and medical schools should teach "structural competency"—which he describes here as "recognition of the social structures causing sickness." As long as doctors continue to narrowly define their profession as purely biological, he contends, they will not shed the medical gaze that leads them to often dehumanize and injure the very patients they are supposed to be healing.

❝ Globally, and perhaps most important, the formation of broad coalitions of people is necessary in order to envision and work for a more equitable international economy such that people would not be forced to leave their homes to migrate in the first place.

Related Characters: Seth Holmes (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 197-198

Explanation and Analysis

At the very end of his book, Holmes focuses on the single most important step that his readers can take to help heal migrant workers' suffering: they can become activists. Although Holmes absolutely believes in words' power to heal social inequalities, he only thinks this can happen when those words work to change policies. Structural violence is, by definition, imposed on people by massive social structures like the U.S. medical system, U.S. immigration policy, the global agriculture industry, and the system of neoliberal capitalism that underlies them all. Because these structures are so massive, individuals are extremely unlikely to make a significant or lasting impact on their own. Instead, the best way for an individual to make a difference is to join a collective: changing these systems requires large-scale political mobilization.

Concretely, if Holmes's readers really want to make a difference in migrant workers' lives, they should join the "broad coalitions of people" who are "work[ing] for a more equitable international economy." Holmes provides a list of such organizations at the end of his book and he strongly encourages readers who are moved by the stories of the people in his book to translate their compassion and sense of justice into real political action.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: "WORTH RISKING YOUR LIFE?"

The Road from San Miguel. Seth Holmes recounts traveling from the small town of San Miguel to the U.S.-Mexico border with a group of Indigenous Triqui laborers. He brings a change of clothes, a little food, and money for transport and coyotes. The journey is 49 hours by bus. At military checkpoints on the way, the migrants lie about their destination and Holmes pretends to be a tourist. Three soldiers on the bus tell Holmes how the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency funds these checkpoints. They assume that Holmes is a coyote.

Holmes opens with a story that his readers are likely to already strongly associate with undocumented migrant labor: the harrowing illegal journey across the U.S.-Mexico border. The military checkpoints and the passengers' deceptiveness about their plans show how the border is both militarized and regulated—while crossing is illegal and dangerous, it's also exceedingly common and there are set procedures for doing it. Even government officials understand its unwritten rules. Holmes also emphasizes how he stands out in relation to the other migrants—this shows how his research involves breaking social norms and hierarchies. It also suggests that his personal experience living with migrant workers for a year is very different from migrant workers' own experience.

Fieldwork on the Move. Holmes explains that this book is based on the 18 months he spent living and working with Triqui Indigenous migrant workers from rural Oaxaca, Mexico. When Holmes first goes to visit San Miguel, the Triqui workers' hometown, locals warn him that it would be dangerous and town leaders give him the silent treatment. He points out that, because of their colonial history, Indigenous Latin American communities tend to distrust outsiders.

Holmes's difficult visit to San Miguel is a sign of Triqui people's unique and difficult history. Specifically, because powerful outsiders have oppressed and exploited them repeatedly over the centuries, they have learned to distrust outsiders, including seemingly well-intentioned ones like Holmes. However, mixed-race, Spanish speaking Mexicans also distrust and look down on the Triquis because of this history. This shows how social structures and political forces strongly shape people's lives, relationships, and beliefs.

Holmes began his fieldwork by working alongside Triqui migrants on a farm in Washington for a summer. Next, he spent a winter in California's Central Valley, living with an extended Triqui family of 18 people in a three-bedroom apartment. He passed the spring with his friend Samuel's extended family in San Miguel, where he received plenty of threats and suspicion, and then crossed the border alongside nine Triqui men in the spring. After the Border Patrol arrested them, Holmes spent a month doing research in the borderlands. Finally, he returned to Washington for another summer on the farm.

Holmes deliberately lived, work, and migrated alongside the Triquis in order to understand their lives, their suffering, and the causes of that suffering. His trajectory is typical of how a migrant worker might spend their year, although not necessarily representative of how all migrant workers do. Mexican migrant workers' lifestyle challenges common-sense ideas about home, community, and immigration—rather than moving once from a place of origin to a single destination, they live in many places and belong to a transnational community located throughout Mexico and the U.S.

Traveling to the Border. Holmes remembers eating at dingy roadside restaurants during the bus ride to the border. His friends discuss the dangers of crossing and worry about dying or getting caught. During other breaks, the passengers scramble to use ramshackle bathrooms. They barely manage to rest on the long bus ride.

The migrants clearly understand that crossing the border will be dangerous and stressful—after all, many of them have possibly done it before. But this doesn't affect their decision to migrate, which suggests that they aren't making this decision based on the benefits versus risks of migration—rather, they're doing it out of a sense of obligation.

Suffering the Border. Holmes explains that hundreds of people die crossing the border every year. The dangers are numerous: criminals, excessive heat, snakes, heavily armed militias, and the Border Patrol. The Triqui migrants tell Holmes horror stories about getting kidnapped, raped, and worse. To truly understand their suffering, Holmes feels he needs to cross the border, which was aggressively militarized and became much more dangerous in the early 2000s. Migrants, lawyers, and relatives all emphasized the dangers of crossing, but Holmes decided that it was worth the risk.

The border's dangers leave an enduring mark on migrants. But Holmes suggests that these dangers are totally preventable: they're a result of the U.S.'s closed-off immigration policy. Accordingly, migrant suffering on the border demonstrates how public policy creates inequity and inflicts real, measurable pain on people. While Holmes is privileged and can choose not to cross the border, he believes that accompanying the migrants will allow him to understand and ultimately better heal suffering. This shows how anthropology is uniquely suited to fixing social problems: it starts with researchers putting themselves in other people's shoes.

Spring in San Miguel. Holmes profiles the nine Triqui men whom he accompanies on his trip to the border. They include 29-year-old Macario, who worked with Holmes in Washington the previous year. The border splits up Macario's family: two of his children live in California and two others live in San Miguel. Holmes struggles to find a group, because the other migrants are suspicious of him. However, it's easy to find a bus to the border: they run weekly, all spring. Ultimately, Holmes attempts to cross under ideal circumstances: his companions are young and fit, and they know their coyotes personally. Older and non-Mexican migrants are usually less fortunate.

Holmes shows that U.S. immigration policies again force unnecessary suffering on migrants—here, they separate Macario's family across the border. Holmes highlights the way he stands out as a privileged white man in order to emphasize how race, ethnicity, class, and citizenship determine the roles different people take at the border. He appears suspicious because he's out of place—the implication is that white people don't need to cross the border illegally, so it doesn't make sense to others that he's there unless he's doing something *illegal.*

The Mexican Side of the Border. Holmes remembers disembarking the bus near the border in Altar, a scorching-hot desert town full of thieves, coyotes, and prospective migrants. In the local church, **posters** depict the deadly animals, extreme heat, and vicious criminals that migrants face when they cross the border and ask, "Is it worth risking your life?" Holmes is surprised that American authorities haven't raided the town.

In addition to informing migrants about the specific dangers they face, the posters in the church reminds them that they can always turn back. However, this does not accurately reflect the attitude of the people Holmes meets: they have long ago decided to cross the border because they feel they have no other choice. Holmes's surprise that the Americans haven't raided Altar, which is obviously a waypoint for migrants, further suggests that U.S. immigration policy is either ineffective at or uninterested in stopping illegal immigration.

Externalization and Extraction. Holmes explains that migrant labor systems rely on migrants contributing to rich countries' economies during their prime working years, while depending on their home countries' social services—namely, education in their youth and healthcare in old age. This is only possible because economic policies welcome migrants into wealthy countries as a source of cheap labor, while immigration policies prevent migrants from permanently settling in those countries. These complementary policies constantly evolve, usually becoming more brutal over time.

In the context of Holmes's research, the Mexican government educates and supports migrant workers while the U.S. benefits from their labor (including their tax dollars). To Holmes, this is yet another way that global inequity leads to exploitation: even though Mexico's government has far fewer resources than the U.S.'s, it pays while the U.S. profits. Therefore, this inequality perpetuates itself—or even worsens—over time. According to this perspective, immigration policy is not really trying to prevent people from entering illegally; rather, it's trying to manage that flow of entries to maximize the benefits to the U.S. Therefore, economic and immigration policies work together to exploit undocumented migrants in ways that it wouldn't be legal to exploit legal U.S. residents.

From Border Town to Border. Holmes remembers waiting in an empty, filthy apartment in Altar. His group's coyote lets Holmes cross for free because of his noble purposes. The apartment's owner comes to demand money, and three recently-deported men show up in the middle of the night and wake everyone up. In the morning, the group hides their money in mayonnaise jars. Then, they crowd into a tiny, scorching hot van and take off. After three hours, they stop in the middle of the desert. The driver and coyote negotiate with some heavily armed men and then send the migrants deeper into the desert in a pickup truck. A group of Mexican soldiers aggressively questions Holmes but lets him go free.

Uncertainty, confusion, and a pervasive sense of danger define this portion of the migrants' journey. Holmes and his companions are vulnerable and have absolutely no control over their circumstances. Of course, this is all because crossing the border is illegal, and therefore migrants have essentially no legal protections. This shows how their marginalization leads them to be put in danger and even more marginalized. In contrast, Holmes's privilege wins him privileges: although he's likely the wealthiest among the whole group of migrants, he's the only one who doesn't have to pay the coyote's fee.

Individualism in Migration Studies. Holmes explains that most researchers view migration as an individual decision. They assume that people rationally examine the costs and benefits of migration, and they divide migrants into two groups: immigrants (who voluntarily migrate for economic reasons) and refugees (who are forced to migrate for political reasons). But this model is inaccurate. Triqui migrants cross the border for economic reasons, but they are forced to migrate to support their families—they have no other choice.

Holmes later points out that this simplistic view of migration isn't just incorrect—it's also dangerous, as it leads to ineffective policy responses. Namely, if policymakers assume that economic migrants are weighing costs and benefits, then they assume that it's possible to dissuade people from migrating by reducing the benefits (or increasing the costs) of migration. However, for the Triquis, this simply isn't true. Accordingly, the U.S. policies intended to dissuade migration—like militarizing the border—just create unnecessary suffering.

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Crossing. Holmes recounts getting off the pickup truck and waiting for the coyote's signal. His group has to pass through a dozen barbed-wire fences and run to avoid the Border Patrol. After sunset, they spend several hours marching through the pitch-black, cactus-filled desert. They briefly stop for food in a dry riverbed, and they hear a helicopter circling above, hunting for migrants like prey. After a few more hours, they reach another creek bed, where they try to sleep but soon learn that their planned ride is cancelled. When the coyote goes to look for other transport options, Border Patrol agents track him down. They approach the group with their guns drawn.

Physically crossing the border is exhausting, perilous, and full of uncertainty. The circling helicopter terrifies Holmes and his companions because it reminds them that heavily armed law enforcement officers view them as expendable and less than fully human. When the Border Patrol actually catches them at the end of this scene, it again becomes clear that public policy is responsible for the pain that Holmes and his companions have to endure.

Framing Risk on the Border. Holmes remembers **the church posters** that asked migrants, "Is it worth risking your life?" This question suggests that individuals freely choose to cross the border and accept the risks in exchange for the rewards. Based on this assumption, many Americans blame migrants for their deaths at the border. But in reality, Holmes's companions knew that crossing the border was actually a way "to make life *less* risky" than staying at home.

Holmes shows that the church posters and U.S. migration policy are ineffective because of the faulty assumptions they're based on: namely, the idea that individuals choose to cross the border having calculated the risks and rewards. These assumptions don't just come from the U.S.'s cultural bias towards individualism; such assumptions are also an effective way for U.S. Americans to deny responsibility for the violence their government inflicts on migrants. In other words, the U.S. public blames the victims of violence in order to avoid stopping that violence.

Apprehended. Holmes recounts going to jail along with his Triqui companions. Confused about Holmes's research, the Border Patrol charges him with "alien smuggling" and "Entry Without Inspection." He's frightened, and he's confused that the agents spend so much time and energy harassing him instead of catching criminals. They deny him his legal right to a phone call for many hours. When he finally gets ahold of his lawyer, she reveals that he might be stuck in detention for up to a month. Distraught and exhausted, he breaks down in tears. He also sees the Border Patrol take his Triqui friends away to deport them back to Mexico.

Just like the soldiers whom Holmes met in Mexico, the Border Patrol agents don't execute the law faithfully. Instead, they seem more interested in exerting power over others than in regulating immigration. In fact, the entire system appears needlessly cruel. As a result, the agents don't understand or care about Holmes's research, even though it's addressing the same problem as their jobs.

Holmes eventually learns that he will be able to go free and pay a $5,000 fine. He files a formal complaint against the officers who denied him his phone call, but the officer who takes his complaint repeatedly reminds him that *he's* the criminal. Holmes laments that officers of the law don't see his or his companions' humanity, and he wonders how the Triqui migrants are feeling right now.

While the police judge who's worthy of respect and dignity based on who follows and breaks the law, Holmes and the police officer end up in a debate over who is the true criminal: Holmes, for illegally crossing the border into his own country, or the officers who denied Holmes his constitutional civil rights. This shows that rigid categories of good and evil do not stand in complex situations like illegal immigration. Because the law victimizes, marginalizes, and inflicts violence on people like the Triquis, police officers' assumption that they're automatically enforcing good against the forces of evil ends up being a cover for them to inflict further violence and dodge responsibility for their actions.

"Is it Worth Risking Your Life?" Holmes reiterates that crossing the border isn't an individual economic decision—the binary of (free) economic versus (forced) political migration does not apply to people like the Triquis, who have started migrating ever since their corn crop became unprofitable. This was a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which flooded Mexican markets with cheap, subsidized, industrially produced corn from the U.S. The Triquis' livelihood disappeared, and now they can't afford to eat or buy school uniforms for their children in San Miguel.

Conventional thinking assumes migrants are choosing better economic opportunities over worse ones—not any economic opportunity over none at all. Accordingly, without accounting for the structural factors that force poor and marginalized people to make desperate decisions, U.S. immigration policy will never achieve its aims of regulating immigration. So just as the U.S. economy relies on the undocumented migrants whom U.S. immigration policies prevent from legally staying in the country, U.S. economic policies force people to become undocumented migrants in the first place.

Holmes argues that social scientists and health professionals must show how "social, political, and economic structures" create the conditions for migration, rather than letting the public continue to wrongly think of it as an individual decision. In fact, this mistaken mindset leads to ineffective solutions that try to change individuals' behavior, without accounting for the conditions to which those individuals are responding.

In this section of his introduction, Holmes summarizes one of his research's main goals. By shedding a light on structural violence, or the suffering created by "social, political, and economic structures," he hopes to make policy conversations about immigration more effective.

After Being Released. Holmes visits a friend in Phoenix, Arizona, and then returns home to California. His Triqui friends meet him a week later and report that their second crossing was grueling. Holmes's friend Macario explains that the Border Patrol made him sign a declaration in English about Holmes, but he couldn't understand it.

Whereas Holmes gets to go home to the United States on a plane, the migrants have to repeat their grueling trip across the border all over again. This is striking evidence of Holmes's privilege and reminds his readers that migrant workers endure far more grueling conditions than he does.

Book Organization. Holmes gives a brief map of his book's structure. Chapter Two explains the importance of U.S.-Mexico migration and Holmes's focus on the body. Chapter Three looks at the U.S. agriculture industry's racial-ethnic hierarchy. Chapter Four looks at that hierarchy's health effects on workers, and Chapter Five examines how health practitioners (mis)treat those workers. Chapter Six discusses the way people normalize and naturalize hierarchies and inequalities, and the concluding chapter focuses on how people can fight the exploitation of migrant workers.

Holmes structures his book in order to move gradually and systematically through his central argument about social hierarchies and violence in the U.S. agriculture, immigration, and medical systems. He starts by describing social hierarchies (in Chapter Two and Chapter Three), and then he shows how those hierarchies create structural violence (in Chapter Four and Chapter Five). Next, he explains how symbolic violence holds up those hierarchies and prevents people from dismantling them (in Chapter Six), and then he looks at how people can dismantle those hierarchies once they're educated about structural and symbolic violence (in his conclusion).

CHAPTER 2: "WE ARE FIELD WORKERS": EMBODIED ANTHROPOLOGY OF MIGRATION

Samuel, one of the Triqui workers, explains that he and other migrants sacrifice their families, bodies, and identities in order harvest produce in the U.S. Meanwhile, Holmes does a different kind of field-work: as a doctor and social scientist, he's researching migrant workers' experiences in order to help reduce their suffering. This requires him to explain the American agriculture industry's racial-ethnic hierarchy, then demonstrate that hierarchy's harmful effects, and finally show how people normalize and perpetuate that hierarchy.

Holmes draws a direct connection between U.S. residents' access to inexpensive fresh produce and the mistreatment that migrants like the Triquis endure. This is no coincidence: the produce is cheap and fresh because farms exploited the workers who picked it. By pointing out that both he and the migrants do "fieldwork," Holmes highlights both the similarities and differences between his experiences and his Triqui companions'. Namely, while he worked and lived alongside them, he only did so temporarily—he didn't fully experience their pain, fear, or poverty. He also didn't share their position on the racial-ethnic hierarchy, which he later argues defines how this pain, fear, and poverty are meted out. Finally, Holmes also suggests that doctors and social scientists share the same fundamental mission: reducing human suffering. They just use different tools (doctors use medicine and social scientists use scholarship, teaching, and public-facing activism).

Explaining and Being Explained. Holmes notes that anthropologists use a specialized vocabulary and often struggle to explain their work to non-anthropologists. This is because they use long-term participant observation to try to understand social phenomena that can't be fully understood through other methods. Still, most of the people Holmes met during his fieldwork didn't fully understand his job. As a middle-class white man alongside Indigenous Mexican migrant workers, Holmes looks out of place to many people. For instance, when he goes to the laundromat with his Triqui friend Samuel, another migrant assumes that he's Samuel's boss. Samuel and many of the other migrants explain Holmes's research by saying that "he wants to experience for himself how the poor suffer."

Because he doesn't adopt the same place in the farm's labor hierarchy as most white men—who are executives and managers, not berry pickers—Holmes confuses people who have internalized the racial-ethnic hierarchy he mentioned above. He also points out that there's a class and education divide between him and all the people who surrounded him during fieldwork. However, unlike anthropologists of the past, he does not assume that his class, education, and whiteness mean that he will automatically understand the people he studies better than they understand themselves. Rather, he views the difference between anthropology and his audience as a communication problem: anthropologists fail to effectively communicate what they do to people who aren't anthropologists. Therefore, while it's not how Holmes would explain his project to his academic colleagues, Samuel gives a reasonable summary of Holmes's project when he says that Holmes "wants to experience for himself how the poor suffer."

Embodied Anthropology. Holmes notes that many anthropologists view themselves as "invisible" objective observers, while ignoring the role their bodies play in fieldwork. Instead, Holmes wants to emphasize the experience of being and feeling in his body. This is why he highlights sights and sounds, aches and pains, and sensations of anxiety and exhaustion.

Holmes's attention to the body reflects his training as a doctor. Importantly, it also bolsters his argument that social inequity and violence should be understood as akin to physical violence: as a harm inflicted on the body that produces pain and suffering.

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While Holmes shares many experiences with the Triqui migrants, there are also significant differences. For instance, he chooses to sleep alone in a cramped closet rather than share a spacious living room with others because he specifically values privacy over comfort. This illustrates how people's social and economic groups influence their habitus, or the ingrained bodily dispositions and preferences they learn and adopt throughout their lives.

The concept of habitus is another way of explaining how social and cultural forces shape people's bodies. Because Holmes grew up in a culture that values privacy over comfort, his choice to sleep in a closet looks strange to the migrants, whose culture generally values comfort over privacy. Throughout the book, Holmes also depicts many moments when this works the other way around: white Americans view Latinx migrant workers as culturally inferior because of the way they use their bodies.

Similarly, people treat Holmes differently because he's a white man. Farm supervisors and community members treat him as an equal, while looking down on Indigenous workers. Whereas Burger King workers wouldn't correct an error with Samuel's order, they immediately do so when Holmes asks. While medical staff ignore Triqui workers' questions and give them the wrong bills, they immediately resolve any issues Holmes raises. Facing the constant risk of deportation, the Triquis maintain their cars perfectly so they won't be pulled over, whereas Holmes doesn't worry about his. In short, U.S. society values white male citizens like Holmes more than undocumented Indigenous Latinx people like the Triquis.

Holmes's white privilege shapes his experience working on the farm because it allows him to avoid many of the problems and dangers that Triqui migrants face. As a white U.S. citizen, Holmes is higher on the racial-ethnic hierarchy than the Triqui workers. When he works and associates with the Triquis, however, this disorients those around him, because they are so used to living within this hierarchy and have forgotten that migrant workers are fundamentally equal to white people. This applies both on and off the farm—police, medical staff, and even service workers also look down on Triqui people. This shows that the racial-ethnic hierarchy is really a general feature of life in the U.S., and it suggests that most U.S. Americans have learned to view the systematic abuse of nonwhite immigrant workers as normal, natural, or at least inevitable.

Next, Holmes explains how the friendships he built with Triqui workers during his fieldwork remain important in his life. He still visits them regularly, helps them navigate U.S. bureaucracy, and brings food, documents, money, and possessions across the border for them. In addition, Holmes's research has transformed his personal feelings about fresh fruit, rural landscapes, and chronic pain. It has also made him an activist for migrant workers' rights.

While many academics briefly meet the people they research and then drop out of those people's lives forever, Holmes considers it essential to form a lasting bond of friendship and solidarity with the Triqui migrant workers. In particular, he helps them with things that he can do more easily as a white man, U.S. citizen, and native English speaker. This fits with his view of social science as a way to heal suffering, not just a way to understand social problems. Of course, healing suffering requires policy change, which requires committed long-term activism.

The Importance of Migrant Farmworkers. Holmes points out that migration is rapidly increasing across the globe. For instance, 95% of U.S. agricultural laborers are Mexican migrants, most of whom are undocumented. Nevertheless, the U.S. deports and detains them in large numbers while denying them access to public services. Economic policies like NAFTA are the migration crisis's true root cause: they have created the rural poverty and violent conflict that people from southern Mexico are now fleeing. Researchers have frequently studied the global problems linked to migration, but seldom studied migrants themselves.

Holmes lays out the political stakes of his research: it speaks to central issues in global migration policy, the U.S. agriculture industry, and North American trade policies. Crucially, these policies caused Triqui people to migrate in the first place, which bolsters Holmes's argument from the previous chapter that migration should be seen as a collective structural phenomenon, not just an individual decision. While this means that current public and political conversations about migration are missing an important element, it also means that policy changes can directly solve the problems Holmes studies.

Triqui people started migrating to Washington state to pick berries in the 1980s. They visit Oaxaca whenever possible, but it's too expensive to go every year. At least a million Indigenous Mexicans now live in the United States. Many of their families have suffered generations of violence and displacement by Spanish, American, mestizo, and other Indigenous groups. Their stories are important for many reasons, including the fact that they literally touch much of the fresh produce that U.S. Americans eat every day.

Triqui people's history of migration is central to their identity as a group. Although the current phase of this history began with their migration to the U.S., they have also been historically oppressed and forced to migrate in Mexico, where they are also considered inferior and subhuman because of their ethnicity. By pointing out that Triqui and other Indigenous Mexican workers touch much of the produce that Americans eat, Holmes reminds his readers that structural violence is all around them in the world, even if it's often hidden.

The Violence of Migrant Farmwork. Holmes wants to show how migrants suffer because of a combination of structural violence and symbolic violence. Structural violence is the way that social inequalities physically injure and degrade people's bodies. Symbolic violence describes how people perceive the world in ways that justify inequality—in particular, dominant groups paint social hierarchies as natural hierarchies, which strengthens those hierarchies.

Structural and symbolic violence are the two core concepts in Holmes's book. In a nutshell, Holmes wants to understand why social inequities and hierarchies persist (such as the racial-ethnic hierarchy in the U.S. agriculture industry). His answer to this question is based on how structural and symbolic violence work together. Structural violence harms those at the bottom for the benefit of those at the top. (For instance, the agriculture industry's unequal structure inflicts debilitating physical pain on migrant workers, while allowing executives to profit and the public to eat fresh fruit.) Hierarchies also disempower those in the middle, such as farm administrators and small business owners who feel powerless to improve undocumented laborers' working conditions. As a result, everyone participates in the hierarchy, even though nobody chose it. Symbolic violence—a set of stories, explanations, and cognitive distortions—helps people justify their participation in this hierarchy. This allows hierarchies to continue and often gain strength (for instance, when people blame poor migrant workers for their poverty and then institute more punitive immigration policies).

CHAPTER 3: SEGREGATION ON THE FARM: ETHNIC HIERARCHIES AT WORK

The Skagit Valley. Holmes describes the stunningly beautiful agricultural region located north of Seattle. The Skagit Valley faced hard times in the 1990s and 2000s, when its small factory farms could no longer compete with midwestern agribusiness or overseas farmers.

Globalization created problems for Skagit Valley farmers in the 1990s, just like it did for Triqui people during the same time period. This shows how, first, nobody is exempt from the pressures of globalization, and secondly, these forces affect different places unequally. In this case, Skagit Valley farms managed to survive, while Triqui people's small corn farms did not.

Migrant Farmworkers in the Skagit Valley. Holmes explains that thousands of Mexican migrants work on Skagit Valley farms every spring and summer. They live in nearby shacks, cars, and labor camps. In fact, the camp where Holmes lives with the Triqui migrants is really just a collection of tiny, dilapidated shacks. His shack is barely 100 square feet, but normally it would house a whole family.

The Triqui migrants' labor camp defies the common assumption that people migrate in order to improve their quality of life. But as Holmes shows, these shacks are at least as bad as (and usually worse than) Triqui people's living conditions in Oaxaca. The disparity between the labor camp's conditions and local white Americans' larger, more comfortable homes reflects the Skagit Valley's racial, ethnic, and citizenship hierarchy.

The Tanaka Brothers Farm. Holmes describes the farm where he works alongside the Triqui migrants. The Skagit Valley's largest, the farm employs 500 people from May to November. It mainly produces strawberries, which it sells to major corporations, but also grows raspberries, apples, and blueberries. The workers live in three ramshackle labor camps, while the Tanakas live in larger houses nearby. While the farm's mission statement claims that the whole staff works together harmoniously, the farm is actually strictly segregated into a hierarchy defined by "race, class, and citizenship." This chapter focuses on this hierarchy, which Holmes will trace down from the top.

The Tanaka Brothers Farm is both family owned and relatively large-scale. While not run by a massive corporation, it does sell to massive corporations. Therefore, the farm is plugged into the globalized agriculture industry and subject to that industry's pressures. The farm's mission statement acknowledges the staff's diversity while conveniently omitting its hierarchy. This is an example of symbolic violence: the mission statement misrepresents an oppressive and exploitative labor situation as though it were amicable to everyone involved.

Farm Executives. The executives at the top of the farm's are the Japanese American Tanaka brothers and the white agribusiness professionals who consult for them. It's easy to blame these managers' greed and cruelty for their migrant workers' terrible living conditions, but in reality, it's far more complicated. Due to overseas competition, the managers can't afford to pay their workers better or invest in remodeling the labor camps. This, Holmes says, is a clear example of structural violence.

Even though they're at the top of the local hierarchy on the farm, the executives are relatively low in the hierarchy of the global agriculture industry. Accordingly, they face the same kind of downward pressures—or structural violence—as everyone under them (and most of the people above them) in this massive global hierarchy. They're not exploiting their workers out of greed; rather, they feel that they're doing it out of necessity.

In fact, the Tanakas genuinely care about their workers and ask Holmes for advice about improving their living conditions. The farm's president is the longtime army officer, local nonprofit leader, and avid churchgoer John Tanaka. He works from 6:00 a.m. to the late afternoon, including weekends, mostly from his desk. He focuses on the business's finances; he hopes that his children can take it over someday.

John Tanaka clearly doesn't meet the stereotype of someone who would ruthlessly exploit undocumented immigrant labor. However, using the concept of structural violence, Holmes explains how noble, hardworking, upright community members like John Tanaka can perpetuate severe structural violence. Namely, because of the social structures they're involved in (like the global agriculture industry), people like John have no choice but to exploit workers. Because of pressure from above, John Tanaka has to increase the pressure he puts on those down below. He is both a victim and a perpetrator of structural violence—just like everyone else in the hierarchy.

At a community meeting, John Tanaka explains his feelings about his migrant workers. He admits that it's difficult to pay Washington's high minimum wage of $7.16 per hour while staying competitive with farms in other countries, like China and Chile. He also notes that migrant workers' children generally avoid farm work, which creates a generational cycle: he is always looking for new groups who are willing to do farmwork. Over the years, these have included Cambodian refugees and Indigenous Canadians. Holmes points out that even though there's a pattern—first-generation immigrants suffer, their children find better jobs, and then another group replaces them on the farm—this doesn't make farmworkers' suffering natural or justifiable.

The pressures of international competition show how structural violence acts on John Tanaka and other U.S. farm owners, but the poor working conditions John creates show how he inflicts this same structural violence on his workers. The fact that most workers leave after a generation is a clear sign that their conditions are undesirable, and John's speech makes it clear that the U.S. agriculture industry would struggle to survive if it couldn't rely on desperate, poor laborers like undocumented immigrants. Meanwhile, to Holmes, John's belief that first-generation immigrants always suffer for their children is an example of symbolic violence. Specifically, John presents exploitative labor arrangements as the natural order of things, which allows him to absolve himself of guilt for the way he treats his workers.

John Tanaka's brother Rob Tanaka oversees all the fruit production. He tells Holmes that he worries about labor, weather, government regulations, and the sprawling suburbs eating up nearby land. To maintain their profit margins, the Tanakas constantly have to innovate and cut corners, for instance by trying out new crops. Rob is frustrated that other farms put shareholder profits first, which forces him to do the same. This makes it harder to be "fair and consistent" to his family, workers, and community. Similarly, a white executive who negotiates with produce buyers tells Holmes that it's getting harder to sell the Tanakas' famously juicy strawberries, as food companies are increasingly replacing them with cheaper alternatives.

Just like his brother, Rob Tanaka has a difficult job and faces legitimate challenges at work. However, his worries and working conditions don't compare to the berry pickers'. Rob worries about losing money and compromising his values, while the berry pickers risk losing their health and lives. Rob works long hours, but he's not doing physical labor in the fields like his berry pickers. This shows how social hierarchies inflict structural violence on everyone, but that they do so unequally: the people near the top (like John and Rob) suffer, but those at the bottom (like the berry pickers) suffer much more.

Holmes summarizes how farm executives' place atop the hierarchy determines their jobs, lifestyle, and worries. They struggle to cope with difficult trends in global agricultural markets, while trying to balance profitability with ethics. They live comfortably and mostly control their own work schedules.

Holmes's description of the executives' work situation might seem obvious or overly simplistic. However, he's providing this description because it will allow him to compare different farm employees' working conditions later on and show how structural violence affects different groups differently. Therefore, in order to eventually compare one group of workers in the hierarchy to another, Holmes summarizes a few key factors to compare across groups. These factors include people's main preoccupations at work, their freedom to set their work schedules, the body positions they work in, their long-term job security, and the negative physical or psychological consequences of their work.

Administrative Assistants. The next category in the labor hierarchy are administrative assistants. Mostly middle-aged white women, they work in an open office and take various attitudes toward the farm's Indigenous migrant workers. The receptionist is kind to them, whereas the bilingual assistant Samantha believes that they are "'dirty' and 'simple.'" Another assistant, Maria, is Mexican American and picked berries for four years, before getting promoted for her bilingualism. Holmes notes that the administrative assistants work long hours for minimum wage, with little privacy.

Although they have much less power over the farm than the executives, the administrative assistants share many of their privileges, like working sitting down (rather than in the fields) and enjoying relative job security. Samantha's attitude toward the berry pickers suggests that she considers herself superior to them; this justifies her position above them in the farm's labor hierarchy. In contrast, Maria's promotion shows that the hierarchy is not totally fixed and can change over time.

Crop Managers. Next in the hierarchy are the crop managers, who oversee fruit growing and harvesting. They control their own schedules but work long hours, splitting their time between their offices and the fields. They have significant power over the field workers. One crop manager tells Holmes that he wishes the farm hierarchy were clearer and admits that he can't distinguish between Latinx workers from Texas and those from Oaxaca.

The crop managers are halfway between the executives and the field workers, in terms of both their place in the hierarchy and the nature of their work. They have some of the executives' luxuries (such an office and control over their time) but also have to work in the fields and deal with day-to-day farm business that the executives avoid. This particular crop manager's inability to distinguish between different groups of Latinx workers suggests that, in order to oversee the workers, he does not need to view or treat them as individuals.

Scott, a crop manager in charge of apples and strawberries, tells Holmes that he often struggles to find enough workers. Scott believes the Tanakas treat their workers well and points out that they personally investigated working conditions when their strawberry pickers went on strike. Aware of the enormous risks migrants run in crossing the border, Scott also thinks the government should make it possible for them to migrate legally. He strongly discourages Holmes from crossing the border. The crop managers' dilemmas show that there's always a tension between treating workers ethically and keeping the farm profitable.

Scott is under no illusions about the difficult conditions facing everyone in the agriculture industry, from the executives to the workers. His difficulty finding people to hire suggests that the work is so undesirable that few people are willing to do it—indeed, the Triquis only work on the Tanaka Brothers Farm because they are extremely desperate for work. Nevertheless, Scott also sees how U.S. immigration policy unfairly punishes people like the Triquis for no reason besides their poverty and believes in the same structural policy changes that Holmes calls for. This shows that it's possible for people in different parts of the hierarchy to work together for political change, if they all understand how structural violence constrains them.

Supervisors. Next, supervisors, or crew bosses, oversee pickers and report to crop managers. They are mostly Latinx U.S. citizens and work outside all day. Some respect the Indigenous workers, while others bombard them with racist insults. But the Indigenous pickers can't complain about this treatment, or they'll get fired. They also can't attend the farm's nightly English classes. Mateo, a Oaxacan employee who learned English and became a crew boss, tells Holmes that the work often harms pregnant women and their babies. He also complains that wages are going down, not up. Mateo's perspective shows that many of the crew bosses understand the injustice in the farm's structure and strive to be as fair as possible.

The crew bosses are one step below the crop managers and one step above the field workers in terms of their position on the farm's labor hierarchy, as well as its racial-ethnic one. Namely, they have to work outside, but their jobs aren't particularly physically difficult. Crew bosses have direct power over them, but they have direct power over field workers. Crucially, while the Latinx U.S. citizen crew bosses are below white U.S. citizens in the hierarchy because of their race, the crew bosses are above the field workers because of their citizenship and ethnicity (as "mestizo," not Indigenous). Again, this shows how the race, ethnicity, and citizenship hierarchy determines the labor hierarchy on the Tanaka Brothers Farm, just like throughout the U.S. agriculture industry.

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However, other crew bosses are more openly racist, notably Rob Tanaka's wife, Shelly, a white woman who supervises the crews of white teenagers. Shelly tells Holmes that she prefers "traditional [mestizo] Mexicans" to Oaxacans, whom she considers filthy, disrespectful, lazy, and not family oriented. Holmes points out that the Oaxacans get dirty because they spend all day working in the fields, and the other stereotypes are demonstrably false. He shows that Shelly made a judgment about Oaxacans' humanity based on physical dirt and the language barrier, which are really the effects of their low status in the farm hierarchy.

Holmes compares Shelly's firm beliefs about Indigenous Oaxacans against his empirical observations as a social scientist. He concludes that Shelly's beliefs reflect her own racism—meaning her belief in a hierarchy of some groups above others. But this makes sense, as the farm's whole labor structure is based on a racist hierarchy. While the Oaxacan workers are physically covered in dirt, Shelly clearly sees this as a problem with them, *not with their jobs. This is an example of symbolic violence, or a belief that excuses and justifies social inequities. It's a circular process: the racial labor hierarchy forces Oaxacans to get dirty at work, but Shelly decides that they are dirty because they are inferior people. She then uses her belief that they're inferior people to explain why they have the worst and dirtiest jobs. Accordingly, Shelly mixes up cause and effect, and her way of thinking lets social hierarchy justify itself.*

Checkers. Next, the checkers are white teenagers who record pickers' hours and weigh their harvests. Actually, the checkers just mark the same start and end time for all the pickers, which significantly undercounts their hours. Checkers spend their days hanging out under umbrellas, chatting, and occasionally yelling racist insults at the pickers (who are as old as the checkers' parents). In fact, they learn to view themselves as inherently superior to Mexican people. They also undercount pickers' berries, while admonishing pickers for being "lazy." By constantly disrespecting pickers, they enforce the farm's racial hierarchy and help others view it as natural, which is an example of symbolic violence.

More than any other group, the checkers show how the farm's labor hierarchy is based primarily on race, ethnicity, and citizenship. The checkers' only qualification is their whiteness: they're young, inexperienced, and unprofessional, but none of this prevents them from securing and keeping their jobs. Meanwhile, the pickers' jobs require far more skill, energy, and experience. Therefore, it's deeply ironic that the checkers spend all day doing nothing but still call the workers "lazy." Like Shelly's belief that Oaxacans are dirty, the checkers' belief that the workers are the lazy ones shows that they measure white workers by one standard and Mexican workers by another. Similarly, although most white teenagers would probably feel uncomfortable insulting white adults of their parents' age, the checkers consider it acceptable to yell racist slurs at Mexican workers of the same generation. These examples show why Holmes concludes that checkers both internalize and spread the farm's racial hierarchy.

Field Workers Paid Per Hour. Next, there are the field workers, who make minimum wage and are paid hourly. They are mostly mestizos who do farm tasks besides fruit-picking, like driving tractors and spraying pesticides. The raspberry pickers, who harvest raspberries by machine, are from Texas and also make minimum wage.

Just like Latinx U.S. citizens get to work as crew bosses (while Latinx migrants pick fruit in the fields), "mestizo" migrants get the most desirable fieldwork, while Indigenous migrants do more dangerous, lower-paying work. This is why Holmes ultimately concludes that the farm's hierarchy is based on ethnicity as well as race and nationality.

Field Workers Paid by Weight. Finally, there are the pickers, or the field workers who are paid by weight. There's a "White Crew" of local teenagers who pick berries on summer vacation from school. The white crew can work as much or as little as they want, while Mexican workers have to meet a daily minimum or else they'll get fired. Still, because of the white crew, local white residents believe that farm work is "not that bad."

Like the checkers, the teenagers on the white crew have special privileges on the farm simply because of their whiteness. They contribute to symbolic violence in two ways. First, they normalize the idea that inexperienced white teenagers' labor is worth more than experienced Latinx adults' labor. Secondly, they encourage the surrounding community to underestimate and overlook migrant workers' suffering. Therefore, they make the racial hierarchy stronger while helping conceal its effects.

The Mexican Crew. Most of the farm's workers belong to the "Mexican Crew," who work in the dilapidated work camp, far from the farm. If they miss the daily minimum weight twice, they lose their jobs. A few Mixtec and mestizo workers pick apples. But the 350–400 strawberry and blueberry pickers are nearly all Triqui people from San Miguel. They make 14 cents per pound of strawberries and have to pick 51 pounds per hour to meet the minimum wage. This is extremely difficult: they have to work incredibly fast and can't take breaks. They work seven days a week and suffer severe health problems. In fact, from working just two days a week, Holmes experiences severe pain that "[feels] like pure torture."

In comparison to the rest of the farm's employees, the Indigenous berry pickers work in the poorest conditions for the least money, with the least job security. In this passage, Holmes implicitly asks his readers to consider whether saving a few cents on strawberries is worth this degree of suffering for migrant workers. Using his own experience of pain (after just two days per week of picking) as a measuring stick, he also asks his readers to imagine the Triqui workers' symptoms after picking for months straight, year after year. The other employees' suffering is mostly psychological, and it simply doesn't compare to the field workers' severe physical pain. This pain is a direct result of structural violence: the Triquis work in such poor conditions due to a combination of the farm's hierarchy, which puts them at the bottom, and the economic forces that force the farm's managers to impose a rigid and unusually exacting work schedule on them.

At a conference on migrants' issues, a picker named Marcelina explained that she can't support her children on such low pay. The checkers undercount her harvest and throw rotten berries at her. She hasn't returned home to see her son for four years, and she can't get better farm jobs in California because she doesn't speak Spanish well.

Marcelina's testimony demonstrates farm work's human cost for migrant workers. The farm never pays her enough to fulfill her fundamental goal—supporting her children—but she also has no way to leave or find other work. In part, this is becuase racism and language-based discrimination inflict structural violence on her. Accordingly, Marcelina ends up stuck in this degrading job becuase of the social structures and forces that surround her and make her labor profitable for the U.S. economy.

Similarly, Samuel tells Holmes that he only really gets paid $20 a day, which comes out to $3,000–$5,000 per year. But the pickers will get fired or deported if they complain about the pay or the degrading conditions, like the way supervisors call them "dumb donkeys" and "dogs" and complain if the Triquis work too slow *or* too fast. In contrast, they sympathize with Holmes (who picks very slowly) and promote another picker because he has his own apartment.

Samuel's actual pay is far less than the minimum wage that he's technically supposed to earn. But the fact that he can't complain shows how U.S. immigration policy makes migrant workers easier to exploit by denying them legal protections. In other words, farm owners have an incentive to employ undocumented workers over legal residents. U.S. immigration policy therefore protects this advantage for business owners, even at the expense of migrants' wellbeing.

In summary, the Triqui pickers' situation shows how "marginalization begets marginalization." They can't get better work on the farm because they can't get afford apartments, but can't get apartments because they can't get better work. This helps show how "poverty, education level, language, citizenship status, and ethnicity" are all interrelated.

"Marginalization begets marginalization" because of symbolic violence. When others wrongly blame marginalized people's marginalization on their own inferiority, this justifies marginalizing them further. This shows how social hierarchies reproduce themselves: they teach citizens to reward privileged people and punish disadvantaged people.

Out of Place. Holmes explains how the managers treated him favorably. He never meets the weight minimum but keeps his job. The executives consult him about management decisions, and the supervisors add berries to his bucket to boost his pay. Meanwhile, Triqui workers think he's a spy or criminal, and they point out that he works very slowly. Others admire him—Samuel even jokes that Holmes could become the mayor of San Miguel. But Samuel also knows that Holmes will eventually leave the farm to go "be rich and live in a luxury house." (He means one with indoor plumbing.)

Much like the white teenage crews and checkers, Holmes receives favorable treatment simply because he's white. Others pity him because he's choosing to work below his place in the racial-ethnic hierarchy, but they disdain migrant workers who do the same jobs. Ironically, then, Holmes gets rewarded for his privilege even when he tries to temporarily step out of it. Samuel's admiration for him suggests that, to some extent, the Triqui people also internalize the ethnic-racial hierarchy.

California. Holmes remembers driving from Washington to California's Central Valley with Samuel and his family. For a week, they sleep in their cars and struggle to find an apartment. When they manage to rent a three-bedroom apartment, 19 of them move in. But like in Washington, they're at the bottom of the ethnic hierarchy here, which means they struggle to find work. They make just $10 a day, but also have to pay for rent and childcare (unlike in Washington).

Because they lack legal residency, the Triqui migrants are again forced to live outside the law, on the margins of society. Excluded from the ordinary housing market because of their immigration status, they end up in substandard housing that exacerbates their marginalization. Similarly, because they are marginalized and lack legal status, they end up making far less than the minimum wage. This also shows how restrictive immigration laws are highly profitable for the U.S. economy: by denying legal protections to undocumented migrants, the U.S. government essentially allows U.S. business owners to illegally exploit migrant workers.

Hierarchies at Work. Holmes analyzes the Tanaka farm's labor structure. Everyone is constantly worried about something and vulnerable to losing their job, but those at the top of the hierarchy have much less to lose and much more freedom at work. (For instance, they can take breaks.) This hierarchy is explicitly ethnic: white and Asian American citizens are at the top and undocumented Indigenous people at the bottom. Latinx Americans and Mexican mestizos are in the middle. Among Indigenous people, Mixtecs are above Triquis, who are seen as "more purely Indigenous." Citizens are also above noncitizens.

Now that he has introduced his readers to all the people on the Tanaka Brothers Farm, Holmes summarizes the clear labor hierarchy that he observed based on race, ethnicity, and citizenship. These three factors work together to create a complex vertical ranking system, in which certain groups are considered superior to others, receive better treatment as a result, and ultimately experience better outcomes in life and work (which in turn feeds the belief in those groups' superiority). Crucially, Holmes points out that this ranking isn't random. Instead, it's closely connected to long tradition of white supremacism in the U.S.

Holmes compares this social hierarchy to a zoom lens. By zooming out, one sees that the farm is really embedded in the agriculture industry's much larger global hierarchy. By zooming in, one can see sub-hierarchies within each category (like different Indigenous groups). This hierarchy determines what kind of "labor, respect, and suffering" that different people receive. Gender also affects people's status: men are sometimes promoted above their place in this hierarchy, and because Triqui women are less likely than Triqui men to speak Spanish well, they have fewer work opportunities.

Holmes's zoom lens metaphor captures the way hierarchy is both fine-grained and widespread. In other words, it affects everyone differently, but it still affects virtually everyone. By zooming in and out, it's possible to understand how global forces have local effects. Zooming in shows the immediate causes behind a certain hierarchy (like management's decision to assign harder work to Triquis than Mixtecs), while zooming out shows the more distant causes that make certain hierarchies necessary (like the global agricultural policies that make it necessary for small farms to exploit their workers to survive). Conversely, focusing on just one or the other makes it easy to forget the broader context behind individual decisions, or else the way broad political and economic forces ultimately affect people's lives by shaping their day-to-day decisions.

In conclusion, Holmes points out that the hierarchy doesn't come from the farm owners: rather, *everyone* on the farm must accept the hierarchy to survive. To avoid recognizing this reality, people on and around the farm frequently use bad faith, or self-deception. For instance, white adults who picked berries for a summer in high school pretend that they understand Mexican migrants' lives. Through this self-deception, people start to justify and defend social hierarchies.

The "bad faith" Holmes discusses here is one version of the symbolic violence he focuses on in Chapter Six. Notably, here he suggests that it's perfectly understandable for people to use bad faith: they have to participate in the hierarchy and don't want to feel like they're harming others just by doing their jobs. However, Holmes knows that it's necessary to show people this ugly truth in order to convince them to undo inequities and structural violence.

CHAPTER 4: "HOW THE POOR SUFFER": EMBODYING THE VIOLENCE CONTINUUM

Social Suffering and the Violence Continuum. Holmes discusses the severe stomach, knee, neck, and back pain he felt from working two days a week on the Takana Brothers Farm. The Triqui workers have it much worse: one says that she can't feel anything at all in her body, and another reports that he can't run anymore. This is example of structural violence, or the way social hierarchy creates physical suffering. Anthropologists Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois argue that there is a continuum among different kinds of violence—physical, structural, and symbolic. Bourgois argues that anthropologists must seek to explain what causes violence. In this chapter, Holmes wants to do so by examining the injuries of three men: Abelino, Crescencio, and Bernardo.

Bourgeois discusses structural violence in order to connect the racial-ethnic hierarchy he discussed in the previous chapter to the berry pickers' severe pain, the focus of this chapter. Namely, because of the hierarchy, Triqui people end up with the worst jobs, which cause them severe pain. This shows why such hierarchies are unjust and should be eliminated. Holmes emphasizes that this structural violence is just as real as than ordinary physical violence: even though it's indirect, structural violence also causes significant, measurable, and preventable physical and psychological suffering. Symbolic violence, or the ways of thinking and viewing the world that justify and normalize structural violence, is even more indirect but also still has real-world effects.

Abelino and the Pain of Picking. Holmes explains that Abelino lives with his wife and four children in a shack on the Tanaka Brothers Farm's labor camp. Unable to find work in Oaxaca, he could barely afford to buy shoes or clothing. But life in the United States is only slightly better. Crossing the border is incredibly dangerous, and migrants make far less than Americans for far more strenuous work. While they look for other jobs, nobody will hire them except the berry farm, where they are crouched down and bent over forwards essentially all day, every day.

Like many of the Triqui workers Holmes meets, Abelino has to migrate because he's born into poverty and has no economic opportunities at home. He will cross the border regardless of the dangers there, which means stricter immigration enforcement won't stop him and his fellow Triquis from going to the U.S. (It will just worsen the structural violence they experience by making their journeys more perilous and their lives more difficult.) Similarly, Abelino has no tangible work opportunities besides picking berries, which means he has to endure the grueling conditions that farm management imposes on him in order to keep the farm profitable. In sum, Abelino experiences structural violence both at the border and on the farm because powerful forces outside his control force him into a subordinate social position that causes him physical and psychological suffering.

One day, Abelino has such severe knee pain that he can't move his foot and feels like something is rattling around inside his joint. But he has to keep working, and because he's slower than usual, he nearly gets fired. He reports the pain, but his supervisor ignores him. He then goes to several doctors and gets diagnosed with tendonitis. Clearly, it's a result of his physically traumatic job. This shows how structural violence functions: economic policies forced Abelino to migrate, put repeated stress on his joints, and live in constant fear of dying in the border region, getting deported, or becoming homeless. So despite his pain, he has to continue working.

In addition to causing Abelino's pain, the farm's social hierarchy also leads his supervisors to downplay and ignore it. On the farm, migrant workers' suffering isn't considered a significant problem because migrant workers aren't considered fully human. Although he's able to get medical attention, the doctor only diagnoses the immediate cause of his injury, his knee's inflammation, while ignoring the underlying cause that would have to change for his pain to truly go away: his job and the social hierarchies that force him into it.

Suffering the Hierarchy. Holmes argues that the ethnic-citizenship hierarchy of farmworkers also creates "a hierarchy of suffering." Namely, being "more Mexican" and "more 'indigenous'" means suffering more physical and psychological pain. For instance, executives worry about profitability and heart disease, assistants worry about disrespectful bosses and carpal tunnel syndrome, and berry pickers worry about survival and face severe chronic pain and pesticide poisoning. Triqui people are at the very bottom of this hierarchy.

Most directly, the hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship is a way of determining people's jobs. However, it ends up indirectly affecting all the things that people's jobs usually determine in a modern capitalist society: their power, income, freedom, day-to-day worries, and bodily practices. As Holmes emphasized in the previous chapter, everyone on the farm suffers pressures from this hierarchy—even the farm owners feel they have to structure their business in a certain way to meet the market's demands. But everyone also participates in the hierarchy and therefore perpetuates it to some extent—the executives employ everyone else in poor conditions, for instance, and the field workers frequently internalize and reinforce the hierarchy between Mexican and Indigenous workers.

Crescencio and the Anguish of Insult. After a health fair for migrant workers, a Triqui worker named Crescencio approached Holmes to ask for help with his severe headache, which he had been suffering every day since he left Oaxaca seven years before. Specifically, the headaches came on when his supervisors insulted him, and he worried that he would take his anger out on his family. Treatments in Oaxaca helped temporarily, but the only thing that consistently relieved Crescencio's pain was drinking more than 20 beers at night.

Crescencio's headaches show that the farm doesn't just physically injure its workers through the labor it makes them perform. Rather, racism itself also causes physical injury: Crescencio feels pain whenever others remind him that he's at the bottom of the hierarchy. This is similar to the anguish Holmes felt when the Border Patrol apprehended him and he realized they dehumanized him and his migrant companions, viewing them as criminals worthy of abuse. Therefore, the hierarchy's very existence *causes suffering, in addition to the way it distributes work, wealth, and power.*

Holmes points out that structural and symbolic violence are working together in a cycle to cause Crescencio's pain. Crescencio suffers because he is at the bottom of the labor hierarchy and his bosses disrespect and insult him. In fact, this disrespect leads him to drink and might lead him mistreat his family, which inadvertently confirms his bosses' racist stereotypes about Mexicans. Of course, such stereotypes are part of symbolic violence because they in turn justify the ethnic hierarchy.

The cycle of structural and symbolic violence ultimately strengthens hierarchies over time. Structural violence causes hierarchies and injuries, and symbolic violence portrays those hierarchies as natural and those injuries as signs of the injured people's natural inferiority. This justifies people with power in making the hierarchy even more rigid and punitive, which worsens structural violence and calls for worse symbolic violence as a result. Holmes's fundamental goal is to figure out how to break this cycle—either to heal the suffering caused by structural violence or prevent symbolic violence from covering up that structural violence.

Migrant Farmwork and Health Disparities in Context. Holmes explains that migrant farmworkers—largely young Mexican men—get sick much more often than the rest of the population (even though it's difficult to collect accurate statistics). Latinx people suffer certain health problems at higher rates that non-Latinx people, and immigrants' health tends to worsen the longer they stay in the United States, including from generation to generation. The dangers of crossing the border, stress of being undocumented, and difficulties of living under the poverty line all affect migrant farmworkers' health.

Abelino and Crescencio's health problems accurately represent the broader trend that Holmes hopes to address. This trend shows how social hierarchies and political, economic, and health policies cause disease on a mass scale. Therefore, addressing these problems requires healing society as a whole, not healing individuals. This requires changing policy and social hierarchies. However, most people aren't used to thinking of illness this way—as Holmes goes on to argue, even most doctors tend to view illness as an individual problem, with individual causes and individual solutions.

As a result of all these pressures, compared to other workers, migrant farmworkers are much more likely to face severe injury at work and suffer chronic illnesses ranging from hypertension to sterility, acute problems like kidney infections and heat stroke, and infectious diseases like tuberculosis and HIV. They are generally excluded from labor laws and struggle to unionize. They can barely access social services, even those specifically designed to help them, and they are overwhelmingly unlikely to have insurance. These effects are generally worse for indigenous workers than mestizo ones.

By specifically listing farm workers' long-term health problems, Holmes shows that structural and symbolic violence are real, concrete problems, not just abstract theoretical concepts. Notably, farmworkers don't just experience negative health effects because of their jobs—they also suffer because of the broader social hierarchy in U.S. society, which denies them access to services and protections which are considered basic rights for U.S. citizens. Therefore, it's not enough to change the racial-ethnic labor hierarchy at workplaces like the Tanaka Brothers Farm; rather, truly improving farmworkers' lives requires changing the hierarchy in society as a whole.

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Bernardo and the Damage of Torture. Holmes introduces Bernardo, a Triqui man who received U.S. residency in the 1980s. He now divides his time between work in Alaska and home in Oaxaca. Holmes first met Bernardo after driving 3,000 miles from Washington to Oaxaca with his relatives. Bernardo has left his hometown, San Pedro, because of a long conflict between the government and an armed Indigenous militia. Bernardo tells Holmes that many of his acquaintances were killed in San Pedro and he was too afraid to leave his home at night.

Unlike most of the Triqui migrants Holmes meets, Bernardo legally resides in the U.S. In fact, the 1980s residency program shows how U.S. immigration policy has become stricter and more antagonistic towards immigrants over time. However, even with his residency, Bernardo chooses to return home to Oaxaca as much as possible—like most Triquis, he doesn't want to build a home in the U.S., but rather just make enough money to build himself a home back in Mexico. The violence he witnesses in San Pedro is really the product of a centuries-long conflict between Mexico's Indigenous people and the people who have sought to control them and take their land: Spanish settlers and their descendants. This shows that the social forces and hierarchies that cause widespread suffering often operate on a grand historical scale, for instance over the course of centuries.

Bernardo also tells Holmes that he's had a horrible stomachache for eight years straight. It sometimes improves with injections from the doctor, but in general it hurts so much that he struggles to eat and is losing weight. He initially blames this on having worked constantly his whole life, then adds that the federal police kidnapped him eight years before, beat him mercilessly, left him without food for days, and then locked him in prison for several months.

Bernardo's stomachache is also a clear example of structural violence, but it's not an obvious result of farmwork, unlike Abelino's and Crescencio's pains. Rather, in his explanation, Bernardo connects economic and political forces (his lifetime of hard work and his torture at the hands of the police). This reminds readers that migrants like the Triquis face multiple overlapping forms of hierarchy and violence, at once social, political, and economic.

Holmes explains that Bernardo's suffering is also the result of structural violence: global economic policies impoverished Oaxacans and led to the local conflict over land, and then the U.S. funded the Mexican police in order to help them repress poor Indigenous people's movements.

While global forces are responsible for Oaxacans' poverty, these global forces aren't some abstract or intangible concept: rather, they're specific policies that created political and economic advantages for some people at the expense of others. In Bernardo's case, the culprit was specifically U.S. policy. This makes it all the more ironic that U.S. immigration policies now prevent people like him from gaining legal residency in the U.S.

The Impossibly Heavy Statue. Holmes retells the Triqui people's origin story: a family got kicked off their native land and had to carry a heavy statue of Jesus to a new place, where they briefly settled but were kicked out again. This process repeated many times, until the family got to the mountains of Oaxaca, where little grows. Of course, this is similar to how Triqui people frequently migrate to flee violence and make a living today.

Structural violence is central to Triqui people's long-term history and ethnic identity: they have always been displaced and oppressed by other, more powerful groups. Their origin story also breaks conventional assumptions about migration—namely, that people originate in one place and then leave that place for another. Rather, Triqui people have always been on the move and been treated as unwelcome everywhere they have gone.

Holmes views the pervasive violence among Triqui communities as the indirect product or "mirror image of" all the violence they have suffered. This includes violent armed conflicts as well as structural violence, like the implosion of Oaxaca's rural economy due to economic polices and the ethnic-citizenship hierarchy of U.S. agriculture. Symbolic violence also plays an important role by normalizing structural violence and also directly compounding the suffering of Triqui people like Crescencio. The healthcare system, the subject of Holmes's next chapter, also plays a key part in this structural and symbolic violence.

Holmes does not try to minimize or excuse the Triqui people's violence: rather, he places it in a wider historical context in order to show how larger social and political forces created the conditions for it to spread. In other words, he shows how structural violence begets further violence and asks what it would take to break this cycle. Of course, this cycle is similar to the way that structural violence justifies itself with symbolic violence and thereby calls for more structural violence.

CHAPTER 5: "DOCTORS DON'T KNOW ANYTHING": THE CLINICAL GAZE IN MIGRANT HEALTH

When Holmes first arrived in San Miguel, local officials invited him to help out in the town's small medical clinic. They complained that the doctor working there doesn't speak Triqui and "doesn't know anything." In fact, Triqui workers repeatedly told Holmes that both Mexican and U.S. doctors "don't know anything." In this chapter, Holmes wants to explain why they feel this way by showing how doctors treated Abelino, Crescencio, and Bernardo.

To Holmes, Triqui people's suspicion of doctors reflects a deep clash between the two group's worldviews. When Triqui people say that doctors "don't know anything," this suggests that they don't see, understand, or benefit from doctors' expertise. As both an anthropologist and a physician, Holmes is particularly suited to understanding how this divide came to be.

The Clinical Gaze. Holmes explains that his two fields, medicine and anthropology, view the world in very different ways. But by combining them, scholars have examined how patients tell stories about illness and how structural violence causes it. Holmes wants to show how both these things also apply to healthcare professionals: social structures affect the way they do their jobs and the way they tell stories and understand illness shapes whether they effectively treat patients.

Medicine is biological and focuses on individual humans' bodies and minds, while anthropology is qualitative and focuses on groups of people (communities and societies). This is why their fundamental worldview often clashes, but also why they can complement one another in such fruitful ways. Analyses of how patients narrate illness use anthropological tools to improve medicine. Meanwhile, social analyses of how structural violence causes illness—like the one that Holmes provided in his previous chapter—examine health and illness through an anthropological lens. Holmes combines both these approaches and takes them one step further by examining medical practitioners' side of the story, too.

The influential philosopher and historian Michel Foucault argued that, at the end of the 18th century, doctors switched from viewing disease as a problem with "the whole person" to seeing it as located in a specific body part. As a result of this new "medical gaze," they stopped paying attention to patients' perceptions and stories. Today, many doctors try to work against this norm. But the "medical gaze" still leads most practitioners to objectify patients, viewing them as collections of body parts and diseases rather than individuals. This often prevents doctors from forming genuine relationships with their patients.

Foucault's theory of the "medical gaze" allows Holmes to explain why doctors systematically ignore the social factors that make Triqui migrant workers sick. Namely, it's about their perspective and assumptions—doctors are specifically trained to assume that illnesses are biological, not social. This is similar to how white Americans frequently think that Triqui people are lazy and stupid, when they're really impoverished, forced to work in terrible conditions, and unable to communicate across a language barrier. Holmes describes this as a form of symbolic violence, which suggests that the medical gaze is, too: by assuming that all medical suffering is biological, doctors cover up, justify, and exacerbate social suffering.

Abelino's Knee: Structure and Gaze in Migrant Health Care. Holmes explains what happens when Abelino seeks medical care. The doctor X-rays his knee, tells him to stop working in the fields, and sends him to physical therapy instead of giving him an injection that Abelino knows will alleviate his pain. Later, a different doctor tells Abelino to do lighter farm work, but Samantha, the administrative assistant, refuses to change his schedule. Abelino visits a traditional Triqui healer and his pain slightly improves, but not enough for him to return to work.

Abelino's experience shows how doctors' medical gaze leads them to give Triqui people ineffective medical treatment in the United States. Namely, because Abelino's doctor assumes that his severe pain is merely biological, he ignores the way Abelino's job forces him to overwork his knees. The doctor also ignores Abelino's personal knowledge of his condition, as he assumes that his medical expertise makes his own analysis more accurate. As a result, he denies Abelino the treatment he already knows to work. Meanwhile, the traditional healer does help Abelino because he shares Abelino's cultural context and is more likely to understand Abelino's story. This shows that the personal aspect of medicine can often be as important as the biological aspect in treating people's pain.

Abelino tries to file for worker's compensation. But the state asks him to work "lite duty" (which doesn't exist on the farm), and the farm understates his pay and hours, so he gets little compensation. His knee doesn't improve after weeks of physical therapy, so he goes to a rehabilitation clinic, where the doctor again sends him back to work. The doctor also decides that he bends over improperly and is an unreliable source, even though she never directly talks to him.

The state agency also offers Abelino ineffective solutions and inadequate compensation because it uses a one-size-fits-all approach and does not take his specific work circumstances into account. In other words, the system is not set up for migrant workers like Abelino, and as a result, it perpetuates structural violence on them by denying them the benefits it is supposed to provide. The rehabilitation doctor also assumes that medical practitioners always know best and thereby discounts Abelino's understanding of his own experience. Ultimately, Abelino effectively gets denied medical treatment by a system that deliberately excludes him.

During a meeting about Abelino's compensation, Samantha complains about having to go outside in the freezing winter temperatures to feed her horses. Holmes points out that the workers have neither heating nor insulation in their shacks, but through her complaints, Samantha diverts attention from this greater suffering. In the meeting, Abelino learns that he'll lose his worker's compensation when he leaves Washington to spend the winter in California. The government representative also tells him he can continue to do light work on the farm—which he later learns means picking strawberries.

Samantha's story is a clear example of what Holmes calls symbolic violence: by focusing on her own limited suffering, she distracts from Abelino and the other migrant workers' far greater suffering sleeping outside in freezing temperatures. Holmes suggests that she's really doing this for herself, so that she can avoid thinking about her responsibility for the workers' pain and suffering. Then, the state essentially repeats the same process: based on a technicality, it rejects Abelino's call for help and mixes up the cause of his illness with the cure.

Abelino finally gets the injections he's been asking for, and his pain significantly improves. His physical therapist notes that the doctors prioritized their "Objective" scans over his "Subjective" reports of pain, and Holmes concludes that this led them to mix up cause and effect, prescribing Abelino more work for a work-related injury. While the government reports that Abelino has healed, his doctor claims that Abelino is lying, and the injections aren't actually helping. When Abelino returns to Washington the next year, his knee pain comes back, too. However, based on an MRI scan, the government declares that he's healed and denies him compensation.

Like Holmes, Abelino's physical therapist understands how the medical gaze—or the preference for "Objective" measures of illness over "Subjective" ones—prevents doctors from adequately treating their patients' illnesses. But Abelino's doctor would rather assume that Abelino is lying than admit that her "Objective" treatments were ineffective, while the treatment he asked for actually worked. Similarly, the state decides whether Abelino is in pain by looking at a scan, rather than listening to his report of how he feels. This shows how deeply doctors and the medical establishment have internalized the medical gaze: they seem incapable of recognizing a medical problem that they can't measure through their "Objective" methods. Of course, these methods only seem "Objective" because they focus on people's biology, not their experiences.

It makes sense that Abelino thinks "doctors don't know anything"—the medical system totally failed him. Holmes draws three conclusions about Abelino's experience. First, Abelino's doctors only trusted their own observations, while ignoring Abelino's personal history, needs, and reported symptoms. Second, doctors blamed Abelino for his pain rather than seeing the structural factors behind it. Finally, because of the market forces in the U.S.'s for-profit healthcare industry, doctors have to make important decisions very quickly, with very little information or support. This shows that structural violence also affects healthcare professionals and compromises their work.

Holmes's conclusions about Abelino's treatment make it clear that the medical gaze often limits doctors as much as it helps them. However, much like farm executives implement exploitative working conditions because of economic pressures, doctors operate under the medical gaze because of certain practical pressures and limits on their profession. For instance, they didn't have the time or energy to truly listen to Abelino and treat him as an individual (rather than as a body, interchangeable with anyone else). Similarly, they blame Abelino for his illness in part because they can't do anything to change the social conditions that really caused it—the most they can do is advise him how to change his behavior as an individual.

The Field of Migrant Health. Holmes summarizes the health services his Triqui companions can access. In the Skagit Valley, a local clinic treats migrant workers and other local poor people one night a week for a $15 copay. A similar clinic in the Central Valley charges $30. In San Miguel, one nurse and one doctor alternate days at the government clinic, but they don't speak Triqui. While nearby mestizo cities have better healthcare, the Oaxaca state government prevents other Triqui towns from getting clinics. Triqui people also visit traditional healers in both Oaxaca and the U.S.

While Triqui people have some access to medical care in both the U.S. and Mexico, they receive the worst care available in each respective country's healthcare system. Similar to migrants' health problems, migrant health clinics' problems aren't technical or scientific, but rather structural and distributional. Namely, migrant clinics need more staff and money. The fact that they don't have enough suggests that the U.S. and Mexican governments do not consider Triqui people's health a priority.

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Structural Factors Affecting Migrant Health Clinicians. Holmes explains that migrant health clinics generally lack the necessary funding, equipment, and staff to provide a reasonable standard of care. One doctor tells Holmes how young migrants work themselves to the point of irreversible injury. Because the workers lack health insurance, the clinics can't cover their costs and must spend valuable time cutting their budgets, seeking donations, and doing paperwork. Workers frequently miss appointments, move towns, and face language barriers—qualified translators are seldom available, especially for Triqui. In short, while migrant health clinicians sincerely care about their patients, the medical system is failing them.

Just as the global agriculture industry imposes structural violence on farm workers and managers by forcing them to minimize costs by any means necessary, the for-profit U.S. healthcare industry forces medical practitioners to prioritize cost over quality. This means that those unable to pay—like the Triqui migrants—end up with substandard care and nowhere to turn. Ultimately, clinics pass the structural violence they face from their economic conditions onto their patients, much like farm owners do to their workers. This multiplies the issues that doctors' clinical gaze and prejudice create for patients.

Crescencio's Headache: Structure and Gaze in Migrant Health Care. Rather than prescribing him medication, the doctor sends Crescencio to talk therapy, which he obviously can't afford. Holmes later visits this doctor, who doesn't remember Crescencio, but then looks at his file and explains that he has to take responsibility for his anger issues and stop beating his wife (which he isn't doing). She never mentions the constant racist abuse that's really causing his headaches, and she thinks he should stop drinking—even though the drinking *alleviates* his headaches. Ultimately, she assumes that Crescencio conforms to the racist stereotype of a violent, alcoholic Mexican domestic abuser. This reinforces the structural and symbolic violence that caused his headaches in the first place.

Crescencio's doctor doesn't even remember his case, which shows that she treats him more as a stereotype than as a patient. This fits with the idea of the medical gaze: she assumes that all men who present the same symptoms (drinking and anger towards their families) have the same basic problem (domestic abuse). However, in viewing Crescencio as interchangeable with her mental stereotype, she ends up ignoring his specific story, treating him inadequately, and compounding his sense of racial injury. This again shows how the medical gaze creates structural violence (by harming people at the bottom of social hierarchies, like Crescencio) and symbolic violence (by covering up those hierarchies and their effects).

The Gaze of Migrant Health Clinicians: Washington and California. Holmes argues that the way medical professionals perceive migrant workers strongly affects the way they treat them. Some doctors praise farmworkers for their bravery, perseverance, and respectfulness, while others complain that they don't understand Western medicine and still visit traditional healers. These are really just deep cultural misunderstandings. Some are more severe than others: for instance, some doctors and nurses believe Mexicans have different kinds of bones or are predisposed to domestic violence, depression, and alcoholism. Other medical professionals point out that they almost never see these problems among migrant men.

Holmes emphasizes the diversity in medical professionals' perspectives on migrant workers. Nevertheless, these varying perspectives are often based on strong stereotypes and unfounded assumptions. This leads doctors to treat migrants as interchangeable, rather than paying attention to their individual stories and needs. Holmes certainly hopes doctors can shed their empirically false negative beliefs about migrant workers and their bodies, but he also wants them to rethink their understanding of cultural sensitivity. This should mean understanding the way culture affects individuals, not assuming that everyone who belongs to a certain racial, ethnic, or cultural group has exactly the same beliefs.

Americans' varying assumptions about migrants often have drastic consequences. For instance, Triqui people traditionally marry in their teens and usually do not register their marriages, so 17-year-old Triqui men often get imprisoned for years for having children with their 16-year-old wives. Doctors and social workers believe that migrant workers take advantage of social services like welfare and free healthcare—but the Triqui migrants didn't mention using social services to Holmes even once. Similarly, one doctor complains that Mexican workers visit multiple doctors in the U.S., but another points out that this is because they face a severe language barrier and physicians who assume they're lying. In short, public and medical attitudes toward migrants are varied and contradictory.

These deep cultural misunderstandings contribute to Triqui people's marginalization in the U.S. As on the Tanaka Brothers Farm, structural and symbolic violence work together in the examples Holmes gives here. For instance, doctors' cultural insensitivity forces Triqui people to visit multiple doctors in order to get adequate care (which is a form of structural violence because it prolongs and worsens their suffering). But these multiple visits lead insensitive doctors to assume that Triqui people are taking advantage of the system (which is a form of symbolic violence) and treat them even worse (which intensifies structural violence). This cycle of misunderstandings is similar to the way the structural violence of labor exploitation and the symbolic violence of racism work together on the Tanaka Brothers Farm and in U.S. immigration policy.

Bernardo's Stomachache: Structure and Gaze in Migrant Health Care. Bernardo only speaks Triqui, so his Spanish-speaking daughter-in-law struggles to translate his broken Spanish into English for the English-speaking doctor. The doctor concludes that Bernardo has "no past medical history" and describes him as "an old boxer" with severe chest pain. (He really has stomach pain because the police tortured him.) Bernardo asks for the medicine he usually takes for his pain, but the doctors ignore him, so Bernardo leaves and returns to work. He later gets a $3,000 bill. In short, because he was overworked and lacked a translator, the doctor ignores Bernardo's real complaint and blames him for his own injury.

Holmes shows that the doctor fails to treat Bernardo's symptoms because of a severe language barrier. However, the doctor is either unaware of how this barrier distorts the information he receives, or is uninterested in overcoming the barrier and accurately understanding Bernardo's condition. As with Abelino and Crescencio's doctors, this shows how the medical gaze leads doctors to ignore social factors and amplify their patients' suffering as a result. While financial and organizational pressures are also partially responsible for the inadequate treatment Bernardo receives, the consequences of the doctor's medical gaze and these organizational failures ultimately fall on Bernardo's shoulders. His $3,000 bill for a useless doctor's visit shows how structural violence gets passed down social hierarchies, leaving people at the bottom to suffer the worst of it.

Holmes also interviews Bernardo's doctor in Oaxaca, who blames Bernardo's pain on Triqui people's poor eating habits. Rather than seeing the specific political and economic causes behind Bernardo's pain, this doctor attributes it to his belief that Indigenous people are behaviorally and culturally inferior.

Healthcare perpetuates structural and symbolic violence similarly in different places: mestizo doctors in Mexico look down on Triqui patients much like white English-speaking doctors in the U.S.

The Gaze of Migrant Health Clinicians: San Miguel, Oaxaca. Holmes describes San Miguel's small, government-funded health clinic. Poor local women supply water to the clinic, which is usually closed, even during its official hours. Its mestizo staff misunderstands and looks down on the local Triqui people's culture. For instance, they criticize Triqui people's resistance to family planning but don't care about the town's widespread illiteracy. They blame local health problems on the community's "custom[s]"—like living three families to a house, burning their trash, and using toilets inconsistently. Of course, these are the result of poverty and poor infrastructure, not Triqui culture.

Although the health clinic is supposed to serve the town community, in reality, the town ends up serving the health clinic (for instance, by providing its staff with water and changing community norms in order to meet the clinic's expectations). Like the U.S. doctors who mistreated Abelino, Crescencio, and Bernardo, the staff at the San Miguel health clinic blames the victims and reverses cause and effect. Specifically, they wrongly assume that people choose living conditions that are really the product of poverty. This is also similar to the way the U.S. public and politicians frequently blame immigrants for choosing to cross the border illegally, instead of understanding the real social, political, and economic factors that drive them to migrate.

The local nurse blames mothers for feeding their children poorly, but she doesn't understand that the mothers can't afford to buy nutritious food. In fact, this nurse classifies Triqui children as malnourished based on an index developed for mestizo children in Mexico City. She openly tells Holmes that she wants to leave San Miguel, where she feels the locals don't recognize or appreciate her efforts. She talks down to her patients, gives them the wrong medicine, and closes the clinic early, but she justifies this by claiming that Triqui people "are lazy, dirty, ignorant, mean gossipers" unworthy of her time and energy. In fact, they are often dirty, but only becuase they don't have running water and it's very difficult for them to bathe. (In San Miguel, Holmes can only bathe once a week.) Eventually, this nurse gets fired and replaced.

More than any of the other health professionals Holmes has interviewed in this chapter, the mestizo nurse in San Miguel openly shares her insensitivity and prejudice towards the people she's supposed to treat. Her attitudes clearly illustrate how health workers can easily miss relevant context about their patients' lives. This can lead them to blame people for health problems that are really the result of structural violence. In fact, as Holmes explains in the next chapter, blaming the victim is one of the most common and pervasive forms of symbolic violence.

The new nurse in San Miguel also views Triquis as inferior: she thinks they're overindulgent, lawless, and primitive, which is why they cross the border. In fact, she even blames Triqui people for the clinic's own failures: when a mother loses her baby after the clinic doctor refuses to treat its infection, the nurse claims that it was the woman's fault for not seeking proper medical attention in town. Ultimately, San Miguel's medical staff lack resources, are forced to work hours away from home by the government, and don't understand Triqui people's culture, history, or social context. As a result, just like the doctors Triqui migrants visit in the U.S., these mestizo doctors blame patients for their illnesses, perpetuate racist stereotypes, and provide inadequate and sometimes outright harmful treatment.

The new nurse mostly agrees with the old nurse's beliefs about Triqui people, which signals that their prejudices are not uncommon. Holmes strongly implies that Triqui people probably don't readily seek medical care or trust doctors because of their past interactions with the clinic. In turn, this might give new nurses and doctors the impression that Triqui people don't understand or believe in Western medicine. Regardless, the pattern of distrust and misunderstanding leads doctors and nurses to abdicate their duty to help and Triqui people to conclude, like Abelino, that "doctors don't know anything." The infant's death shows how this can have tragic consequences.

Acontextual Medicine and Apolitical Cultural Competency. Holmes concludes that doctors almost never examine how their patients' social and economic contexts contribute to illness. In fact, clinicians fail to understand these contexts *because of* social, political, and economic forces like their busy schedules, their lack of resources, and the "medical gaze" they're trained to adopt. This leads them to prioritize data over people's experiences and blame disease on malfunctioning bodies, not social, cultural, or political factors. In turn, they blame patients for their own suffering.

Ultimately, Holmes's central problem with the medical gaze is that it's "acontextual." This means that doctors view people's bodies in isolation: they try to understand and fix the body's problems without trying to understand what created *those problems. Of course, fixing these problems often requires social and political change, not just biological interventions, which means that medicine is not always enough to solve them. Nevertheless, Holmes thinks that doctors can heal suffering more effectively if they acknowledge these limits than if they pretend they don't exist.*

Many doctors try to address this problem through cultural competency training, which often reinforces stereotypes and teaches doctors to view patients' cultural beliefs as a barrier to effective treatment. But Holmes's research shows that healthcare's culture is the real problem. He proposes "structural competency" instead. When they don't understand structural violence, doctors tend to reinforce it. They also often justify the hierarchies that cause it through symbolic violence. However, the U.S. also needs to restructure its healthcare system to make it more accessible and equitable.

As Holmes shows, doctors often conflate cultural competency with harmful stereotypes. This prevents them from treating their patients adequately. For instance, Abelino's doctor insisted that he was an unreliable source, incapable of really understanding his own body because he did not think like her, in terms of the medical gaze. In other words, the doctor viewed cultural competency as meaning that some people think about their bodies incorrectly because of their culture. However, Holmes's structural competency means doctors learning how to put their own *incorrect assumptions about the body aside, so that they can treat patients as individuals with complete lives, rather than collections of body parts.*

CHAPTER 6: "BECAUSE THEY'RE LOWER TO THE GROUND": NATURALIZING SOCIAL SUFFERING

The Hiddenness of Migrant Bodies. Holmes recounts meeting a public health worker who doesn't know migrant workers live in the Skagit Valley. He wonders how this is possible. The answer is that the local white public simply doesn't see, interact with, or think about migrant workers. In fact, U.S. society deliberately hides migrants' existence because that makes it easier to mistreat them. Conversely, if they learn about migrant workers' struggles, the U.S. public might decide to take action.

Migrant workers' invisibility in the Skagit Valley is a key example of symbolic violence, the phenomenon Holmes focuses on in this chapter. Because they literally don't see migrant workers, Skagit Valley residents simply don't understand that the local economy—and national agriculture industry—totally depends on brutally exploiting them. Invisibility allows inequities to continue unchecked, which is why the first step towards political change is making migrant workers' lives and struggles visible to the public.

Symbolic Violence. Holmes briefly defines symbolic violence, which refers to the way people incorrectly and often unconsciously view social hierarchies as natural. Symbolic violence lets people "buy into […] the rules of the game," or agree to define themselves and others through social hierarchies. In fact, most people in society take these hierarchies for granted, including the people at the bottom of them.

Symbolic violence is, above all, a distorted way of thinking. It involves stories that people tell themselves about other people and cognitive tricks people play on themselves in order to avoid recognizing other people's humanity. Since symbolic violence is often unconscious and collective, the distorted and factually incorrect beliefs it produces often becomes accepted as common sense. This makes it even harder to combat.

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Citizenship, Culture, and Difference. Holmes points out that white Skagit Valley residents implicitly divide themselves ("us") from migrant workers ("them"). Similarly, Holmes's elderly white friend J.R. considers as Latinx people as "foreigners," including those born and raised in the California town where he lives. (Ironically, J.R. first moved there as a migrant farmworker.) J.R. believes that minorities should be forced to adopt white people's "American" culture. In fact, this is a common belief in the U.S—even many doctors and nurses assume that minority groups will inevitably give up their "ethnic" cultures and choose "mainstream" (white middle-class) culture over time. In contrast, the Triqui migrants generally don't *want* to be Americans: they want to live decent lives in Mexico, but this requires them to work in the U.S.

When white Americans think in terms of "us" versus "them," or "Americans" and "foreigners," they're really talking about race and ethnicity. In other words, these terms are white people's way of disguising their underlying belief in white supremacy—or the idea that white people should have political, economic, and social power in the places where they live. However, Holmes does not think all these people are hateful. Rather, his point is that they unconsciously choose these racist ideas as a way to justify inequities that benefit them. For example, when J.R. sees his town's Latinx population growing, he refuses to recognize that Latinx people are equal to white people and should therefore be equally represented in the local government and culture. Instead, he decides that white people are California's true owners and therefore nonwhite people must assimilate. This is how he ends up ironically believing that he's the true "local" (despite being a migrant farmworker) while local Latinx people are "foreign" (despite growing up in town).

Race, Place, and Exclusion. Holmes explains that Skagit and Central Valley residents view migrant workers differently depending on their own identities. Most people view all Latinx people as "Mexican," while those in the agriculture industry distinguish between Latinx U.S. citizens, mestizos, and Indigenous Oaxacans (including Mixtecs and Triquis).

In his third chapter, Holmes argued that a zoom lens is a useful metaphor for thinking about how people view social hierarchy. People can zoom in to see smaller and smaller segments of the hierarchy, like the hierarchy between mestizos, Mixtecs, and Triquis, or they can zoom out and see the bigger picture, like the overall status of white people above Latinx ("Mexican") people. This metaphor shows that, while the racial-ethnic hierarchy determines people's status in Washington and California, the people who live there aren't aware of the entire hierarchy or attentive to everyone's place in it. Instead, people enforce the hierarchy in bits and pieces, depending on who they are and where they work. The categories that they use to think about others depend on context, and symbolic violence is important because it is one of the contextual factors that shapes these categories.

Often, "Mexican" just becomes a general label for racial and cultural difference. For instance, a group of local Washington high schoolers formed a gang called "Whites Against Mexicans" (or "WAM" for short) and started attacking other students. One Latino "WAM" member insists that "Mexican" is an "attitude," not an ethnicity, and so claims that he's not "Mexican" because he's not a "gangster." His friend explains that the people they hate are "dirty Mexican[s]." Holmes points out that anthropologists see "dirt" as humans' way of talking about things that are out of place—for instance, sand is "clean" on the beach but "dirty" in the house. So when white people say that "Mexicans" are "dirty," this implies that they do not belong and should be removed.

In this deeply ironic example, a Latino teenager joins the "Whites Against Mexicans" gang because he believes he's not a "gangster." This example shows how the teenagers' underlying belief in a social hierarchy takes precedence over the reality they live in. Therefore, the "WAM" gang provides a clear example of how symbolic violence supports hierarchies. "WAM" gangsters don't care that their worldview makes no logical sense and they can't even clearly define whom they are dedicated to hating. They maintain their worldview and hatred in order to justify their feeling that they deserve superior status and power compared to another group of people.

J.R. also complains about "filthy-ass Mexicans" in his area. Specifically, he's furious that they blame "their filthiness" on farm owners who don't give them running water. A local Latina woman complains that migrants bathe in the river, and Holmes remembers that he used to do the same when he was homeless in California with Samuel's family. He points out that poor people tend to live and work in dirtier conditions all across the world.

J.R.'s prejudice is based on mixing up literal dirt with metaphorical dirt. Namely, he concludes that Latinx people are out of place and should be treated as criminals (or are metaphorically dirty) because, due to their jobs and their poverty, they are often covered in literal soil. Through this cognitive maneuver, J.R. starts viewing the effects of structural violence—literal dirt—as a justification for further structural violence, or cleaning out metaphorical dirt. This is a textbook example of symbolic violence: it's a cognitive distortion that helps J.R. justify and reinforce a racial-ethnic hierarchy that puts him at the top.

Notably, while white U.S. citizens often use the word "Mexican" to disparage those they see as other, Latinx U.S. citizens and Mexican mestizos use the word to define themselves in opposition to Indigenous people from Oaxaca. Regardless, people use these racial categories to separate themselves from others and, ultimately, ignore those others' suffering. Therefore, race and ethnicity aren't fixed categories: rather, they depend on both who's talking and who they're talking about.

Because California and Washington's social hierarchy depends on both race and ethnicity, "Mexican" ends up having negative connotations when used by white people but positive connotations when used by mestizos. However, in both situations, people use the word in a way that allows them to justify their own position in the hierarchy and another group's inferiority in it. White people use "Mexican" to disparage all Latinx people as inferior, while mestizo people use "Mexican" to proclaim their superiority to Indigenous Mexican people. In other words, the word becomes a tool for symbolic violence in both situations. This shows that, while race and ethnicity categories are flexible, they don't just change randomly: instead, groups mold them to fit their specific, self-interested goals.

Blamed for Suffering. Holmes catalogues numerous ways that migrant workers get "Blamed for Suffering." Rather than seeing the social hierarchy behind migrants' suffering, white people often attribute it to migrants' stupidity, incompetence, or laziness. For instance, one farm administrator hates that the workers don't learn English, even though they're not allowed to participate in the farm's English classes. Similarly, J.R. sees the U.S. as "a classless, individualistic society" where anyone can succeed through hard work, but conveniently ignores how poverty and racial hierarchy create barriers for nonwhite people, especially in agriculture.

Blaming the victim allows people to simultaneously reinforce structural violence and blind themselves to it. For instance, because J.R. assumes that U.S. society isn't racist, he concludes that Mexicans are simply inferior to white people and justifies treating them as subordinates. In other words, because he starts out by telling himself that there is no unjust social hierarchy, he concludes that the social hierarchy he observes must be just—and should be perpetuated, not overturned. This shows why blaming the victim is such an effective symbolic violence strategy: it helps people continue to believe that the world is fair and convinces them that they deserve their power and privileges.

Meanwhile, U.S. Americans often blame Mexico's "corruption" for making rural Indigenous Mexicans poor, but this was really the result of U.S.-led policies like NAFTA. Similarly, mestizo Mexicans blame Triqui people for their poverty—for example, one nun says that Triqui people don't work hard enough. She suggests they open stores in San Miguel, but Holmes points out that many did—and then failed due to a lack of demand. One final common stereotype is that Triqui people are violent. This common misconception comes from the fact that they've been invaded and displaced repeatedly and had to defend themselves.

The U.S. public's beliefs about Mexican society and mestizo Mexicans' beliefs about Indigenous people are ways of blaming the victim. Just like J.R.'s bigotry, these distorted ideas enable symbolic violence by pretending that unjust social hierarchies are really a reflection of just natural hierarchies. But these beliefs also fall apart as soon as they're challenged by facts, which is why Holmes believes social scientists can make a difference. For instance, it makes no sense to say that Indigenous Mexicans should be punished for the corruption of Mexico's mestizo-dominated, Spanish-speaking government. (If anything, they should be able to apply for political asylum.)

Powerful people also commonly blame powerless people for their suffering by claiming that they "want" it. For example, John Tanaka says that the pickers "don't want a lunch break" (but they *do* want one) and "don't want to understand" the farm's confusing pay scale (but they *do* understand it).

When analyzed out of context, John Tanaka's insistence that his impoverished, low-paid workers don't want better conditions looks nonsensical. In context, it becomes clear that it's a way for him to justify his failure to improve their conditions and avoid a guilty conscience.

In addition to blaming migrants' suffering on migrants themselves, U.S. Americans also blame their *own* suffering on migrants. For instance, J.R. blames his migrant worker neighbors for taking away his farm job—rather than the farmer who hired them or the economic policies that forced the farmer to cut costs.

J.R.'s thought process is very similar to how the U.S. public blames individual migrants for crossing the border, rather than trying to understand the economic forces that compel them to migrate. It also resembles the way Holmes assumes that his readers will initially blame the Tanaka brothers for exploiting their workers, rather than seeing the market pressures that leave them with no option. In all these cases, symbolic violence leads people to blame the victims because it's easier than blaming the perpetrators.

Normalization. Holmes explains that white people in California and Washington learn to view migrant workers' suffering as normal, acceptable, or even beneficial. They get used to seeing labor camps, which they assume are better than people's housing in Mexico. They also claim that migrant workers are participating in a universal cycle of immigration, in which one generation works hard in poor conditions so that the next can have more privilege. Finally, because of the farm's physical segregation, many white workers don't acknowledge the migrant workers or understand their suffering.

As a symbolic violence strategy, normalization often involves simply forgetting about inequities until they fade into the background. In other instances, normalization involves deliberately reinterpreting social inequities and structural violence so that they appear to be just. This allows people to avoid feeling guilty about or acting to stop the suffering they observe. For instance, by assuming that migrant labor camps are an improvement in people's housing and the next generation will have better chances, people reinterpret migrant workers' suffering as meaningful or even necessary.

Naturalization. Holmes has variously heard that "Oaxacans like to work bent over," that Triqui people are the most "brutish" and efficient pickers, and that Indigenous people should naturally work as berry pickers simply "because they're lower to the ground." These statements show how powerful people blame social hierarchies of race and ethnicity on supposed natural characteristics, which makes those social hierarchies appear justified. This is a powerful kind of symbolic violence, which justifies and sometimes multiplies structural violence. For instance, the crop manager Scott justifies exposing pickers to dangerous pesticides by saying that those who get sick from this exposure are just oversensitive.

Naturalization allows people who enforce social hierarchies and impose structural violence on others to argue that they are not truly responsible for the consequences of violence, because they are just carrying out the natural order of things. Of course, people can freely define what they consider "natural," depending on what they stand to gain from exploiting others. For instance, Scott would never randomly expose Triqui people to pesticides becuase he believes they're naturally resistant to it; instead, because his job requires him to expose people to pesticides, he decides that this is natural and allows himself to abdicate responsibility for poisoning people.

Internalization. Holmes argues that people at the bottom of the hierarchy also often internalize a belief in their own inferiority. For example, the pickers work around highly toxic insecticides. Although management technically showed them a safety video, nobody takes the risk seriously. When Holmes tries to explain the risks, his Triqui friends say they're too strong to get sick. Their belief that they have special ethnic characteristics actually exacerbates the health risks they face.

The Triquis internalize the hierarchy of race, ethnicity, and citizenship by declaring that their natural strength destines them for the most grueling farm work. Although they believe in their physical superiority, this leads them to accept the inferior position they're given on the farm and in U.S. society more generally. Of course, when it comes to pesticides, it also leads them to accept unreasonable health risks. By doing so, they are perpetuating structural violence against themselves *on behalf of the racial, ethnic, and citizenship hierarchy.*

Body Position in Labor. Holmes argues that the physical positions that people assume at work reflect their place in social hierarchies. The top workers (like the farm executives) work at desks, while those at the bottom (like the pickers) do physical labor in uncomfortable conditions. The white workers often treat berry pickers like animals—for instance, Shelly yells at a group of workers to "Shoo! Shoo! Get, get!" In short, by treating migrants as inferior, people like Shelly reinforce the hierarchy that makes those migrants suffer disproportionately.

Body position isn't just important becuase of its health effects on different kinds of workers—it also becomes a symbol of people's relative status. People who sit at a desk all day (like the farm executives) are more likely to be seen and treated as authorities, while Shelly associates berry pickers with nonhuman animals in part because they spend their time doing physical labor in the fields. This shows how symbolic violence also affects the way people's bodies get perceived: people with power get perceived as having high-status bodies, while Shelly perceives people at the bottom of the hierarchy as more akin to animals than humans.

Resistances and Refusals. Holmes points out that locals occasionally do break with the racial hierarchy. For example, some white locals point out that the bank's policy of serving white customers before migrants is discriminatory, and others admit that they feel guilty about the nearby migrant camps. Some even understand how global economic forces put pressure on farm owners and workers alike. For instance, a local bed-and-breakfast owner comments that farmers might eventually replace workers with machines, and in San Miguel, Triqui people insist on drinking local sodas instead of Pepsi, which they believe to contain human beings. Holmes sees this as a metaphor for the way "corporations thrive while grinding up living human beings," including workers and small business owners.

These small "resistances and refusals" show that people are capable of spontaneously breaking through symbolic violence. This means that they perceive unjust social hierarchies, and then confront them instead of immediately justifying or defending them. The Triqui people's resistance to drinking Pepsi shows how it's possible for a whole group to do this together, in an organized way, and start resisting structural violence to whatever extent they can. The Triquis also show how it's possible to respond to symbolic violence's stories—which normalize, naturalize, and internalize structural violence—with counter-stories that personify the evil that lurks behind social hierarchies.

The Strike and the Memo. Holmes explains what happens when the strawberry pickers go on strike. The executives meet with the pickers and are astonished to learn about the racism they face. The Triqui workers temporarily win lunch breaks and a raise, but the Tanakas take these benefits away the next summer. Again, the managers constantly have to choose between their workers' dignity and their farm's market viability.

The strawberry pickers' strike shows how it's possible for migrant workers and other oppressed groups to win better conditions through political organizing. Crucially, by pointing out mistreatment, the pickers show the executives that they're presiding over a racist and exploitative system. In other words, they successfully—if temporarily—disrupt symbolic violence.

Social Change and Social Reproduction. Holmes admits that the racial-ethnic-citizenship hierarchy is an unchallenged norm in the agriculture industry. So is the horrendous racism migrant workers face from managers and the local community. Beyond the pain and danger they suffer because of their work, they also get blamed for that pain and danger through the symbolic violence of normalization, naturalization, and internalization. But understanding this symbolic violence can be a first step towards changing social hierarchies.

Holmes sets the stage for his conclusion by admitting that changing the social hierarchies he's studied is an enormous and incredibly difficult undertaking. But just like the Triqui strikers, he hopes that his research can at least help challenge the symbolic violence that holds these hierarchy together. Specifically, by challenging his readers' incorrect assumptions about the U.S. agriculture, immigration, and healthcare systems, he hopes that he can spur them to recognize those hierarchies and ultimately act to change them. In brief, he hopes that his research will turn people into activists.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION: CHANGE, PRAGMATIC SOLIDARITY, AND BEYOND

Possibilities for Hope and Change. During his fieldwork, Holmes started to question whether the U.S. agriculture industry's social hierarchy can ever change. Even the people it harms tend to normalize, naturalize, and internalize it. Doctors don't understand the social inequalities that make migrant workers sick, and even well-intentioned farmers have no choice but to exploit their workers. This shows that the political, social, and economic forces that cause structural violence are extremely powerful. These forces justify the inequalities they create through symbolic violence and don't let people really choose whether to participate in the system. This is why Holmes struggles to find hope.

Holmes returns to his primary research goal as a physician and anthropologist: to heal migrant workers' suffering and prevent it in the future. But structural violence is very difficult to stop because it implicates nearly everyone in a social hierarchy as both victim and perpetrator. If they want to improve migrant workers' labor conditions, medical care, and legal rights, activists have to fight widespread distorted thinking—or symbolic violence—before they can ever hope to change policy. Therefore, they have to fight both structural and symbolic violence, which means both *educating the public and organizing people to push for policy change.*

Holmes cites the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who explained how unequal social structures reproduce themselves through structural and symbolic violence. Specifically, social structures give people certain kinds of bodily habits (or habitus) and certain systems of symbolic meaning (including "metaphors, stereotypes, meanings, connotations"). Then, these habits and systems of meaning reinforce the unequal society that created them. However, this means that by changing any of these three elements—social structures, bodily actions, and symbolic meanings—we can also affect the other two.

Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction also includes a theory of social change. In his research, Holmes hopes to address all three of the factors that Bourdieu emphasizes: meanings, social structures, and bodily habitus. He hopes to change the "metaphors, stereotypes, meanings, [and] connotations" through which people discuss migrant workers by portraying their experiences in his book. He tries to change social structures by fighting for policy change. And during his research, he exposed the people around him to migrant workers' plight by briefly putting himself in their shoes, feeling some of the suffering that largely defines their lives, and showing white Americans how normalized racial hierarchy has become in the U.S.

Holmes argues that social scientists' job is to disrupt the symbolic meanings that allow social inequalities to continue. Specifically, they can do so by "denaturaliz[ing]" inequalities and showing how symbolic violence creates suffering. Holmes hopes that his research can help fight the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border and health professionals' complicity in structural violence.

Because social scientists are trained to understand symbolic meanings and social inequalities, Holmes argues that they can help people let go of their prejudices and thereby reverse symbolic violence. In order to do so effectively, however, they need to speak to the public and actively shape political conversations about the issues they study.

Im/migration Studies, Binaries, and Meanings. While the public often assumes migration involves people freely choosing to move between two separate places and communities, Triqui people *have* to migrate to survive, and they belong to one interlinked, international community. Similarly, although the public often assumes that immigrants should "assimilat[e]" into mainstream white culture, in reality, immigrants "both maintain[] and transform[]" their native cultures in their destination countries.

The language people use to talk about immigration matters because it shapes policies that in turn determine how immigrants live and work. The conventional assumptions that Holmes discusses here are the core of U.S. immigration policy. For instance, based on the assumption that people migrate once and for all, cutting contact with their home places to set up new homes in their destination countries, the U.S. public assumes that giving immigrants legal standing really means giving them permanent residency leading to citizenship. Instead, Holmes thinks that workers like the Triquis could benefit from legal status as guest workers. Similarly, the assumption that they make individual decisions to migrate based on risks and rewards leads U.S. immigration policy to focus on securing the border in an attempt to dissuade people from migrating. But in reality, this militarization only makes migrants' lives more dangerous—it doesn't prevent them from crossing.

The U.S. public also uses specific terms—like "farmworker," "migrant," and "unskilled labor"—as a coded way of talking about poor nonwhite immigrants. In reality, the white administrators who run the farm are also "farmworkers," wealthy white "international businesspeople" are also migrant workers, and berry pickers' jobs require incredible skill and dexterity. Similarly, so-called "illegal aliens" even though they commit far fewer crimes than U.S. citizens and prop up the Social Security system. Holmes also rejects the false dichotomy between "political" refugees and "economic" migrants—people like the Triquis are essentially economic refugees. Finally, he notes that Indigenous languages like Triqui and Mixtec shouldn't be confused with "dialects" of European languages.

In reality, the only thing separating "unskilled migrant labor" from "international businesspeople" or European "languages" with Indigenous "dialects" is social hierarchy. Prejudicial terms reinforce this social hierarchy by attaching positive connotations to those on top and negative connotations to those on the bottom. Accordingly, when the U.S. public uses prejudicial terms to talk about migrants, this is a form of symbolic violence—by dehumanizing migrants, terms like "illegal alien" prevent the U.S. public from sympathizing with migrants or recognizing U.S. immigration policy's devastating effects on them.

The War of Position Through Words. Holmes cites the philosopher Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony—the ruling class's domination of political, economic, and symbolic life. Gramsci argues that people can fight hegemony either through weapons or through words. Scholars are particularly suited to fight through words. They can represent oppressed people like migrant workers more positively in the public sphere.

The concept of hegemony is related to those of structural and symbolic violence, which is why the war of words that scholars can use to fight symbolic violence is also a way for them to fight hegemony. Namely, structural violence refers to how a hegemonic hierarchy functions: in a society dominated by a ruling class, everyone else has to both obey the ruling class's power and enforce that power on those below them. This is similar to how everyone on the Tanaka Brothers Farm, from its owners to its berry pickers, has no choice but to participate in the rigid labor hierarchy and is forced to help pressure anyone below them to work harder for less pay. Meanwhile, symbolic violence comprises the ideas that the ruling class uses to convince everyone else to buy into that hegemonic structure. When Holmes talks about the ruling class, he is specifically talking about the class of political and economic elites who run governments and major transnational corporations.

Pragmatic Solidarity and Beyond on the Farm. Holmes argues that scholars and readers should also actively join oppressed people's struggles for justice. During Holmes's research, this meant helping pickers learn English and communicating their grievances to management. These efforts briefly made a small difference, but weren't enough and didn't last. Rather than just taking the most obvious and practical steps in the short term, scholars should also look for ways to build lasting solidarity. For instance Holmes introduced a local white woman to some of his Triqui friends and their children, and the white woman began writing articles defending the Triqui workers in the local newspaper.

Thus far, Holmes's conclusion has focused on the way scholars can help migrant workers through words. (Concretely, he was talking about strategies like research, publication, and media appearances.) But in this section, he argues that it's also essential for social scientists to become political activists and get involved in movements to change the issues they work on and care about. In making this argument, he's implicitly responding to the common assumption that scientists and scholars are supposed to stay neutral and objective about the topics they research. Instead, Holmes has a competing vision of scholarship's purpose: he thinks it's supposed to heal suffering, just like medicine. This requires scholars to involve themselves in politics in a meaningful, enduring, and dedicated way.

Critical Public Health and Liberation Medicine. Holmes reiterates that health professionals wrongly blame Triqui workers' symptoms on medical problems with their bodies, rather than the social, economic, and political problems in their lives. Holmes argues that medical professionals must be trained to see and treat *all* the causes behind illness, not just biology and individual behavior. Medical schools should teach their students about social inequalities and their effects on health. Moreover, the U.S. must create a universal healthcare system to replace its profit-based system, which gives the poorest and sickest people the worst healthcare and the highest prices. Finally, doctors must stop assuming that immigrants' "traditional" cultures are incompatible with "modern" medicine.

Holmes is both an anthropologist and a doctor, so he reiterates that both of his fields can make an important contribution to ending migrant workers' suffering. As a doctor, he hopes that he's proven that structural violence causes real and significant suffering, just like the biological problems that doctors usually treat. Therefore, if doctors' are to prevent and heal suffering, they must learn to sometimes put aside their medical gaze and view patients on their own terms, as complex individuals caught between powerful social and cultural forces. However, Holmes also reiterates that the profit-based U.S. healthcare system significantly constrains doctors, who need long-term policy reform in order to truly meet their professional calling to the fullest.

Solidarity from Society to Globe. Holmes clearly lays out how his readers can help migrant farmworkers. They can buy fair-trade produce, campaign for more inclusive immigration laws, and fight for universal healthcare. They can work with organizations like the United Farm Workers, Physicians for a National Health Plan, and the Border Action Network. Currently, the U.S. benefits from migrant workers' hard work, while paying them back with "criminalization, stress, and injury." Readers should fight to give them legal status as temporary workers. Readers should also strive to support ethical local industries and fight predatory multinational agribusiness corporations. In conclusion, large-scale political organizing is crucial to build a better future for migrants like the Triquis.

Like Holmes himself, readers of Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies *might struggle to see what they can do as individuals to change the massive inequalities that cause millions of people like the Triqui migrant workers to suffer in North America. In fact, Holmes argues that they shouldn't try to act as individuals, but rather as members of a community: they should join the organized campaigns that are already fighting for justice. This is the only way to create lasting policy change and heal the suffering caused by U.S. immigration, health, and agriculture policy in the long term.*

Appendix On Ethnographic Writing and Contextual Knowledge. Holmes explains why medicine's rigorous, formulaic, impersonal methods clash with anthropology's in-depth presentation of experiences and interpretations that often can't be quantified. He has chosen to write this book in an anthropological style, by interweaving people's stories with analysis and theory. This allows him to show how data collection and analysis were really interwoven during his fieldwork, and it allows readers to interpret the data he presents on their own terms.

Holmes's brief appendix is designed primarily for medical practitioners and students who might not be familiar with anthropological methods or communication styles. Holmes again points out that medicine and anthropology clash over key methodological issues, even though they're ultimately trying to do the same thing: end human suffering. By choosing an anthropological style for this book, he's not arguing that anthropology's methods are superior in general to medicine's—rather, he's showing that they're better suited to explaining structural violence and collective suffering, which makes them more appropriate for this project.

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