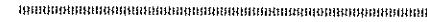




ROWS OF MEMORY

JOURNEYS OF A MIGRANT SUGAR-BEET WORKER



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networks enabled him and his family to overcome many obstacles. The author invokes the collective memory of three generations to describe migrant family life during a time when his family was expanding the geographic scope of its seasonal sojourns. This allows Sánchez to describe events that he did not actually witness, but that are nonetheless part of his family's oral tradition.

Central Themes

Some of the most captivating sections in the book deal with the tensions between the author's need for an education and his responsibilities to his family, tensions that many students (especially those from immigrant backgrounds) continue to face. Like several other recent memoirs, *Rows of Memory* is a gripping and honest portrayal of the struggles, disappointments, and triumphs of Mexican migrants. In a narrative similar to Francisco Jiménez's account of migrant life in California in *Breaking Through*, Sánchez's memoir describes the struggle that young migrant students experience while trying to balance family responsibilities and traditions with their education and other aspects of life in U.S. society. By examining the migrant experience in the Midwest, *Rows of Memory* makes an important contribution to a common topic in Latino coming-of-age memoirs.¹ The author's frank description of this tension will appeal to various readers, including those currently in school (and not just those who have immigrant backgrounds). It is rare to read such a detailed exploration of this issue from a migrant worker's perspective. Like Elva Treviño Hart in *Barefoot Heart*, Sánchez finds education to be a refuge from the poverty and the harsh labor conditions endured by his family. Although faced with numerous educational obstacles as a migrant student, Sánchez (like Jiménez and Treviño Hart) perseveres after realizing that a college education provides the types of opportunities that remain out of reach for many of his migrant peers.²

This memoir illuminates language issues for a migrant youth who grows up bilingual. Because several family members are monolingual Spanish speakers living within a monolingual English-speaking society, Sánchez often has to interpret between these two groups. Translating between English and Spanish is a common skill for children of immigrants, placing the child in a role where his double identity (one in Spanish and the other

in English) is not just emphasized, but relied upon by both family and society. Sánchez's descriptions of these distinct linguistic worlds recall those in Richard Rodriguez's memoir, *Hunger for Memory*.³ Like Rodriguez, Sánchez describes going through periods of feeling ashamed of his family's Mexican heritage and their Spanish language use in the home, while he enjoys increasing educational opportunities resulting from his command of the English language. In contrast to Rodriguez, however, who attempts to flee from his ancestral roots and becomes an opponent of affirmative action programs, Sánchez follows an educational trajectory in which he excels in school, recognizes the distinct disadvantages of his migrant education, and remains proud of his ancestral roots. The author's experience of living in these two worlds also recalls the memoir of Frances Esquibel Tywoniak, who, in *Migrant Daughter*, describes a farmworker experience similar to Sánchez's account of growing up in two distinct cultures. As historian Mario García has observed, Tywoniak occupies "multiple positions of identity" as she negotiates various social worlds that often overlap.⁴ Similarly, Sánchez assumes multiple identities in his memoir: a child of immigrants, a migrant worker, a student striving to succeed in segregated schools, a teenage boy exploring romantic love, a youth enthralled by American popular culture, and a college student. In addition to his academic studies, sports and U.S. popular culture provided a refuge for Sánchez as he struggled with feelings of guilt for abandoning the migrant circuit and interrupting his contributions to his family's income by pursuing a university education.

Historical Context

Rows of Memory covers approximately the first twenty-five years of Sánchez's life. By invoking collective memory, the author also explores his family's history beginning in the 1910s, when some of his grandparents arrived in Texas as immigrants. The memoir's twenty chapters follow a general chronological order that explains his family's origins in the Texas-Mexico border region and their migrations to various agricultural regions in the Midwest and West from grade school through college. Sánchez's individual recollections are interspersed with his family's collective memories in a way that complement one another and give a richer account of migrant agricultural life than if he had relied only on his own memory. The photographs

in *Rows of Memory*, from the author's personal collection, are a valuable addition to his written account, and help readers understand the conditions under which migrant laborers toiled.

Through the experiences of his extended family, Saúl Sánchez is able to illustrate larger patterns of migration. Mexican immigration into the United States began shortly after the U.S.-Mexican War (1846–1848), when indebted laborers fled across the Rio Grande to escape their debts and obtain higher paying jobs. Racked by political instability in the mid-nineteenth century, Mexico witnessed crippling losses of laborers from its northeastern states. Arriving throughout southern Texas, these immigrants joined long-standing Tejano (Texas Mexican) communities with roots in colonial-era settlements. Many of the immigrants found employment in ranching, domestic service, and agriculture in southern Texas. This flow of migrants accelerated during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, as the economic policies of Mexico's dictator Porfirio Díaz increased landlessness and unemployment.⁵ By the late nineteenth century, some Mexican workers had begun participating in a pattern of circular migration in which they worked in Texas for a season, then returned to Mexico and repeated the process in subsequent years.

The turmoil of the Mexican Revolution provided the motivation for several of the author's grandparents to move to the United States. Sánchez's maternal grandfather joined this exodus during the early part of the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) and found work in Uvalde County, Texas, as a shepherd and sharecropper. In general, Sánchez's grandparents formed part of a larger stream of immigrants who left Mexico to escape the military conflicts, forced enlistments, and devastation caused by its civil war. These push factors led Mexico to lose a tenth of its population. In turn, the Mexican immigrant population in the U.S. surged, as some 119,000 entered between 1900 and 1910, while at least 206,000 immigrants immigrated legally between 1910 and 1920. Thousands more arrived as undocumented workers and refugees.⁶ Among the pull factors attracting these immigrants were social stability, political refuge, and most importantly, economic opportunities. The need for labor in the U.S. Southwest continued to increase as railroad development and irrigation projects made farming possible throughout the region. In southern Texas, these developments led to a large-scale conversion of ranch property into farming lands.⁷

The arrival of Sánchez's grandparents in the U.S. fits a larger pattern of Mexicans' chain migration and integration into existing Mexican American communities. Like that of many other immigrant families, the Sánchezes' journey began with the arrival of an unaccompanied male who found work, sent remittances to his family, and eventually paid for one sibling after another to join him. A variation in this pattern would involve a husband arriving first, and then sending for his wife, children, and extended family. This process of chain migration repeated itself multiple times, allowing communities of family and friends to reestablish themselves in the United States. Such chain migration explains the phenomenon found throughout the nation in which neighborhoods in San Antonio, Texas, or West Liberty, Iowa, are made up of immigrants from the same towns in Coahuila and Durango, Mexico, respectively. Because Mexican immigrants often settle in regions that have existing Mexican American communities, their arrival helps both Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans create new social ties based on shared work and living experiences. Like many other ethnic Mexican families, Sánchez's grandparents included a Mexican immigrant who married a Mexican American, as well as Mexican Americans who had lived on both sides of the border. Historically, the arrival of new Mexican immigrants in established Mexican American communities helped to renew cultural traditions, reinforce the Spanish language, and diversify its regional origins.⁸ In Texas, Sánchez's family contributed to this reinvigoration of Mexican cultural practices, while their journeys to the Midwest, in some cases, led to the introduction of Mexican influences in communities without a previous Mexican American presence.

The Sánchez family's immigration experience illustrates the multiple crossings of the U.S.-Mexico border experienced by so many Mexican and Mexican American families. This international boundary has symbolized various opportunities to residents of both sides, including political refuge, jobs, and social stability. While the flow of immigration was mainly northward during the reign of Díaz and the Mexican Revolution, in subsequent years, large numbers of former immigrants returned south to escape the increased racial hostility in the United States during the Great Depression. Many people found it beneficial to migrate back and forth as their personal situations changed—in response to divorces, personal disagreements, and the need for family reunification. As a result of these migrations, fami-

lies often included some members born in Mexico and others born in the United States. Several members of the Sánchez family also followed this pattern, including Saúl's paternal grandparents, who were born in the United States but later returned to Mexico, where their children were born. Thus the Sánchez family is an example of the many generational and social ties that develop within families and that create extensive links across the border.⁹

Arriving in the Winter Garden area in Zavala County, Sánchez's grandparents were part of a larger pattern of migration to a region that underwent tremendous change during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The area's development and population boomed after the railroad's arrival linked it to San Antonio in 1909. Developers had given the area its name in an effort to promote an image of agricultural abundance and a temperate climate. Encompassing Dimmitt, Maverick, Zavala, and a portion of La Salle counties, the Winter Garden area developed as a commercial farming region in the first decade of the twentieth century. Encouraged by the arrival of the railroad, developers began subdividing ranch properties into farm tracts and towns, establishing irrigation companies to provide water for farms that were sold to European American newcomers from midwestern states.¹⁰

This agricultural development created a demand for labor that could not be met by the existing resident Tejano population alone. Agricultural jobs attracted Mexican immigrants (like the Sánchezes) from Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas in particular.¹¹ Spinach and onions became the primary crops in the region, whose population boomed in the 1920s. Crystal City, where the Sánchez family settled, grew into the main commercial and population hub of the area.¹² Then, during the 1930s, Tejano agricultural workers began experiencing underemployment due both to a precipitous decline in spinach and onion production and to an increase in competition for jobs. To lower their production costs, agricultural employers had resumed labor recruitment from Mexico. In addition, the arrival of white Dust Bowl migrants displaced local Tejano workers from higher-paying jobs in packinghouses. As they faced increasing underemployment, the Tejano workers increasingly looked toward the Midwest as a region with better employment opportunities.¹³

The Midwest as Destination

Rows of Memory powerfully demonstrates the varied experiences of Tejano agricultural workers who followed interstate migrant circuits and began the gradual process of settlement in the Midwest. After following seasonal migration routes within Texas, the Sánchez family eventually began participating in circular migration between Texas and the Midwest. Agricultural work drew migrant laborers to various regions of the nation's heartland as Mexicans started harvesting sugar beets in Iowa, onions in Minnesota, cucumbers in Michigan, and potatoes in Wisconsin. Labor agents played an influential role in recruiting families like the Sánchezes to travel to the Midwest. Although ethnic Mexicans had been arriving there since the late nineteenth century to work in the agricultural fields and railroad yards, these early migrants had mostly migrated with the seasons. Few stayed there throughout the year, preferring instead to return to Texas or Mexico after a period of work. These early arrivals were also mostly unaccompanied males—either single men or married men who migrated without their wives or children.

Recruiting unaccompanied males was a purposeful strategy by the agricultural employers to depress wages, giving them an excuse not to provide the workers with a family wage. According to historian Dennis Valdés, this strategy also appeased local white residents' fears that Mexicans would form permanent settlements in regions where these workers were considered non-white, and therefore not welcomed. Agricultural employers gradually began hiring Mexicans for jobs previously performed by European immigrants such as Russian Germans, Slovaks, and Bohemians.¹⁴ The European immigrants had settled in the Midwest during an earlier period, when they were able to work toward becoming farmers after saving money or obtaining loans to purchase land. As Sánchez explains in his memoir, the sugar beet companies initially began recruiting Japanese laborers from California to offset the loss of European immigrants, but this source was not enough to fill demand. Subsequently, employers turned to Mexican immigrants to fill a labor need aggravated by a change in the nation's immigration laws in the 1920s. The arrival of European immigrants decreased after the U.S. passed the so-called "quota laws" (1921 and 1924),

which sharply curtailed the number of people who could legally migrate to the U.S. from southern and eastern Europe. By the 1920s, agricultural wages had also dropped precipitously, leaving Mexican immigrants unable to save enough money to purchase farms or even to obtain equipment so that they could work as tenant farmers.¹⁵

At the same time, companies such as the Great Western Sugar Company and the American Beet Sugar Company changed their recruiting methods in an attempt to resolve the problem of an unstable workforce. They reasoned that men with families were more stable than single males, who often abandoned their contracts to switch employers. Agricultural companies also wanted to take advantage of the extra workers provided by the use of family labor.¹⁶ The new strategy proved successful because laborers were more likely to remain with an employer when their families accompanied them.

The migration of families led to the gradual creation of new Mexican settlements throughout the Midwest, including Iowa, because laborers found they could remain in the region after the agricultural harvests, working in nonagricultural jobs during the off-season. While some migrants continued to participate in circular migration, others found more stable jobs in railroad maintenance, industrial factories, and packinghouses. The Mexican population in the Midwest increased dramatically during the 1920s. In 1900, Mexicans barely registered in the census totals for Kansas (71) and Illinois (156). By 1927, the Mexican population in the Midwest stood at 63,700.¹⁷ Iowa saw a corresponding rapid growth in its Mexican population. Approximately 2,720 Mexicans lived in the state by the mid-1920s. They lived in various towns, with approximately 544 in the Manly and Mason City area, but the largest concentration (1,055) resided in the Mississippi River towns of Bettendorf, Davenport, and Fort Madison.¹⁸

Several of the Mexican settlements in Iowa began as company towns. Agricultural concerns, railroad companies, and industrial factories established rental housing for their workers on company-owned land. The Bettendorf Company, for example, constructed housing in Holy City to rent to its laborers, while the Lehigh Portland Company did the same for its workers in Mason City, although the housing ordinarily consisted mostly of shacks, flats, cottages, and old railroad boxcars. Some enclaves, like Cook's Point in Davenport, were prone to flooding. Living conditions were rudi-

mentary, as most houses lacked electricity and running water.¹⁹ Among the company towns were some, like Cook's Point, that housed mostly Mexicans, while others, like Lehigh Row in Mason City, were home to a mix of southern and eastern Europeans in addition to Mexicans and Mexican Americans. Like many other migrant families, the Sánchez family lived in railroad boxcars, shacks, and makeshift labor camps. In addition to relying on their employers for housing, laborers also had to depend on them for medical care, transportation, and food. As Sánchez explains in chapter 2, Mexican immigrants obtained credit at company stores to buy food and supplies. A distinguishing characteristic that set these Mexican workers apart from their counterparts in larger midwestern cities was the high level of control exerted by their employers.

Educational and Occupational Challenges

As a native Spanish speaker in a migrant family, Saúl Sánchez faced significant educational challenges. By the time he began primary school in Texas, the state had replaced "additive" Americanization in its public school curriculum with "subtractive" Americanization. With the additive model, teachers introduced English-language instruction in core subjects but respected and even nurtured a student's native culture and language. By contrast, the subtractive Americanization model featured English-only instruction, punishments for children who spoke their native language, and the belief that the maintenance of ethnic differences was un-American.²⁰ Like other schoolchildren of his generation, Sánchez endured emotional trauma from the punishments administered by school officials whenever he spoke Spanish. He describes the humiliations and feelings of being rejected by his teachers, who enforced the prohibition against Spanish even on school playgrounds. In addition to reprimands, school children guilty of infractions incurred spankings, ear pinchings, and even expulsions.²¹

The most significant outcome of the state's English-only instruction was the convenient rationale for maintaining segregated schools. Because Mexicans were legally classified as white, they were entitled to the same educational rights as other whites. According to historian Carlos Blanton, however, school officials justified the segregation of Mexican school children, by arguing that these students needed to learn the English language before they could join mainstream classrooms. Inadequate funding, poor facilities,

and substandard instruction plagued the so-called Mexican schools that became common throughout Texas and the Southwest. This policy is behind the author's recollection of attending a segregated primary school along with other migrant students in old dilapidated barracks that had housed Japanese, Italian, and German internees during World War II.²²

Throughout the Winter Garden area, schools implemented an unofficial skills tracking system in which Mexicans were relegated to the lower skills tracks. Not surprisingly, Sánchez mentions (in chapter 16) the low expectations for Mexican students held by the high school counselors in Crystal City. The European American teachers and administrators of these schools often believed in Mexicans' inferiority and sought to enforce a policy that stipulated that so-called ignorant Mexicans made better laborers.²³ Many school districts in Texas, including the one in Crystal City, continued to segregate Mexican schoolchildren even after the landmark 1948 *Delgado v. Bastrop Independent School District* case that prohibited the segregation of students of "Mexican or Latin descent."²⁴ In a moving and revealing passage in chapter 7, the author describes the shame and sense of self-hatred that gripped him as a child, comparing his own experience to the psychological trauma experienced by the plaintiffs in the *Brown v. the Board of Education* case (1954).

In addition to enrolling in segregated schools, many migrant children in Texas could not attend school regularly because of their family's participation in the migratory labor circuit. At various points in his memoir, Sánchez describes the challenges of arriving at school in Texas in October or November, long after the school year had started, and leaving school in April, before the school year ended. He describes his first days back at school as chaotic and disorienting. Unlike most migrant students, Sánchez persevered in school even though he believed he had never quite caught up with some of his fellow students. For many migrant schoolchildren, these interruptions created insurmountable obstacles because they fell behind in their classes and were not able to catch up. As a result, some of them would eventually drop out of school. Even if they persevered, migrant students faced additional challenges in the Midwest because they were expected to contribute to their family's income. Despite the passage of the Sugar Act of 1937, which prohibited children under fourteen from working in the sugar beet harvest, farmers routinely ignored this law. Midwestern school admin-

istrators failed to enforce the child labor provisions because they supported farmers' requests for additional labor. In addition, administrators did not want to ask teachers to spend more class time on Mexican migrant children who might need additional instruction and supervision. Some white teachers and parents claimed that allowing Mexican students in schools would lower educational standards. Not surprisingly, many migrant school children failed to attend school during their stay in the Midwest.²⁵

As migrant families journeyed north, they continued to experience segregation in many aspects of their lives. Migrants learned to avoid specific towns along the way because of the antagonisms they encountered. Many restaurants refused to serve traveling Mexican laborers. At those restaurants that did serve them, Mexicans were required to sit in segregated sections or were ordered to eat outside. As Sánchez explains, drivers often avoided such segregated restaurants, and they also restricted who could get off the trucks when visiting gas stations in hostile regions.

If traveling migrants were involved in traffic accidents, medical personnel in certain towns refused to treat them. Drivers also encountered hostile law enforcement officials who staged raids to stop trucks with Texas license plates. To make matters worse, officials occasionally jailed stranded migrants on spurious charges or while they confirmed that the laborers had valid work contracts.²⁶ Once they reached their destinations, Mexican migrants typically lived in segregated camps, removed from local residents. As Sánchez notes in several chapters, residential segregation was intentional to keep Mexicans separated from local white residents. Labor camp housing typically consisted of makeshift and dilapidated structures, including old barns, chicken coops, and abandoned houses. Migrant families often had to haul their own water for cooking and washing because employers failed to provide running water and proper sanitation.²⁷

The journey north also involved other risks. In chapters 6 and 10, Sánchez describes the dehumanizing and dangerous transportation of workers in open-stake trucks. Beginning in the 1930s, such trucks were used by labor contractors, some of whom were former migrant workers themselves, to transport laborers to the beet fields. According to Dennis Valdés, this *troquero* system (named for the crew leader who served as the troquero, or truck driver) emerged because of the wide availability of open-stake trucks and in order to transport various families in one vehicle. The labor force

during the Great Depression began to include several extended families that often came from the same town. The troquero collected a registration fee from each worker and charged for transportation, a system that resulted in workers becoming indebted before they even arrived at their destination. A crew leader would establish oral contracts with the workers that specified the wages and the type of work required. Sánchez's account corroborates research showing that up to fifty workers were required to stand in the bed of a truck, and drivers often avoided stopping except when absolutely necessary for fuel or emergencies. The 1935 Motor Vehicle Act further complicated the multi-day trips from Texas. Because it stipulated that drivers register their trucks, limit their driving time to ten hours, and submit their vehicles to regular inspections, truck drivers would drive at night, choose back roads, and cover the truck beds (including passengers) with tarps to conceal workers from authorities. These strategies to avoid detection and stops made the 1,600 to 2,000-mile trips even more dangerous than they had been before the MVA and resulted in several tragic deaths from truck accidents.²⁸

By creating labor shortages as Americans left civilian industrial jobs to join the military, World War II led to new opportunities that would have a long-term impact on farmworkers like the Sánchez family. In turn, the agricultural industry struggled to find laborers because rural workers migrated to cities for better-paying and more stable jobs. Moving to California for nonagricultural jobs, the Sánchezes were part of this movement, as described in chapters 4 and 5. After the war, many veterans returned to their old jobs, displacing those who had been more recently hired. It is unclear from *Rows of Memory* if Saúl Sánchez's family was among those who lost their wartime employment to returning soldiers, but the end result was that part of the family resumed their work as migrant agricultural laborers, while others remained in cities.²⁹

The working conditions under which they labored after 1945 would continue to be influenced by wartime policies. The need for labor in U.S. agriculture had risen sharply in the early 1940s because agricultural production expanded as the war reduced competition from Europe and many agricultural workers moved to the cities to take nonagricultural jobs. To meet this increased need, in 1942 Mexico and the U.S. established the Bracero Program, a guest-worker program that employed Mexican male work-

ers in agriculture and railroad maintenance on a contract basis. The program's success in supplying workers through managed migration prompted Congress to continue the program in the agricultural industry even after the war. In 1951, the U.S. and Mexico formalized a new agreement, Public Law 78, which extended the Bracero Program to meet the labor shortages caused by the Korean War. Renegotiated in 1954, Public Law 78 would be renewed continuously until it expired in 1964. Ultimately, the result of the Bracero Program was to push many Mexican Americans out of agricultural work. For those families like the Sánchezes who continued as farmworkers, the availability of guest workers through the Bracero Program meant that employers were able to keep wages low and had little motivation to improve living and working conditions.³⁰

By the 1960s, Mexican Americans' limited educational opportunities and political disenfranchisement in places like Crystal City sparked their civil rights activism. Throughout the Winter Garden area, ethnic Mexican workers were socially and residentially segregated from Anglo Americans during the first half of the twentieth century. Although they were a minority of the population, Anglo Americans controlled county and municipal offices through a combination of intimidation and legal obstacles like poll taxes. In the 1950s, Mexican Americans had waged electoral campaigns for school board, but they had failed to win elected office. With the assistance of the American GI Forum (a Mexican American veterans' organization), they had also attempted to desegregate local schools, but they were unsuccessful. By 1960, Mexican Americans constituted 85 percent of Crystal City's population. However, many continued to live in poverty, which forced some 80 percent of Mexicans, like the Sánchezes, to migrate annually as agricultural workers.³¹

In addition to school segregation, students faced teachers and administrators who had limited educational expectations for Mexican Americans as Sánchez confirms in chapters 11 and 16. Despite substantial challenges, Mexican American school enrollment had increased in the 1950s when parents began changing their migration practices to lessen the number of school absences for their children. Private neighborhood preschools and schools, like the one that Sánchez mentions in chapter 5, became more popular as parents sought to prepare their children for English instruction. By 1960, the majority of Crystal City's high school students were Mexican

Americans, and they began to increase their participation in school activities, clubs, and sports. They also ran successful campaigns for student government office, and in the process learned about organizing and civic participation. In response, school administrators began reserving distinctions and honors (such as “most beautiful” and “most handsome”) for European American students as Sánchez mentions in chapter 13. Certain activities and clubs (such as cheerleading) had unofficial quotas to limit participation by Mexican Americans. The administrators’ attempts to manipulate awards to preserve white privilege created resentment among Mexican Americans and motivated them to organize.³² Although too young to vote, these students played a pivotal role when the Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations (PASSO) and the Teamsters Union came together to support a slate of five Mexican American candidates for city council in 1963. The students helped register voters, promoted candidates through their social networks, and held fundraisers to pay poll taxes. As Sánchez recounts in chapter 16, the 1963 electoral win of the five-candidate slate of former migrant workers led to an increased confidence among Mexican Americans in Crystal City and throughout Texas.³³

Today, laborers in the agricultural industry continue to face similar challenges to those described in *Rows of Memory*. Agricultural work remains among the lowest paid in the nation, and it is the second most hazardous occupation after mining. In addition to exposure to pesticides, agricultural laborers are subject to heat and sun exposure, poor sanitation, and working conditions in which accidents are commonplace. Farmworkers, therefore, tend to suffer from health problems more than the general population, but they lack access to affordable healthcare.³⁴ The low wages and dangerous working conditions have led to an exodus of U.S. citizens from farm labor and to the industry’s increasing reliance on immigrant and foreign workers. The number of agricultural laborers has declined steadily over the last century, and presently stands at approximately one million. Approximately 33 percent of these are U.S. citizens, 50 percent are unauthorized immigrants, and the remaining are permanent residents. The majority (83 percent) of farmworkers today are Latino—most are Mexicans (72 percent), but there are also some Mexican Americans (8 percent), and other Latinos (3 percent).³⁵ The number of migrants who follow the crops, as did the Sánchez family, has steadily declined—they make up only 5 percent of cur-

rent farmworkers. About 75 percent of farmworkers today live permanently near their workplaces.³⁶ These trends have increasingly led the agricultural industry to turn to the guest worker program to hire foreign contract laborers, and to lobby for the inclusion of an expanded guest worker program in the current immigration reform proposals. As the United States considers expanding the agricultural guest worker program, it is important to remember that contract farmworkers have had very limited labor rights (for example, unionization is prohibited), unenforceable protections for working conditions, and severely restricted avenues for workplace complaints. In addition, critics have accused farmers using the guest worker program of racial bias for favoring malleable foreign workers over local African Americans.³⁷ An expansion of a guest worker program would permit agricultural employers to keep wages low and working conditions poor for domestic farmworkers, just as those described in *Rows of Memory*. Ultimately, Saúl Sánchez’s memoir is valuable for its insights into the considerable obstacles that continue to confront farmworkers and for the unique story of one migrant’s ability to overcome such challenges.

Notes

1. Examples of such memoirs include Ernesto Galarza, *Barrio Boy* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971); Francisco Jiménez, *Breaking Through* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001); Piri Thomas, *Down These Mean Streets* (New York: Knopf, 1967); and Esmeralda Santiago, *When I Was Puerto Rican* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994). Explorations of multiple identities, acculturation, and linguistic adaptation also occur in Sandra Cisneros, *House on Mango Street* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991) and Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: The New Mestiza = La Frontera* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987), although these are not strictly memoirs.
2. Elsa Treviño Hart, *Barefoot Heart: Stories of a Migrant Child* (Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Review Press, 1999).
3. Richard Rodriguez, *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez, an Autobiography* (Boston: D. R. Godine, 1981).
4. Frances Esquibel Tywoniak, *Migrant Daughter: Coming of Age as a Mexican American Woman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
5. Omar S. Valerio-Jiménez, *River of Hope: Forging Identity and Nation in the Rio Grande Borderlands* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 182–84.
6. David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 45; Paul Ganster and David Lorey, *The U.S.-Mexican Border into the Twenty-first Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 66–67.

7. David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836–1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 106–10.
8. Manuel G. Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 133–38; George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 188–206.
9. Omar S. Valerio-Jiménez, “The United States-Mexico Border as Material and Cultural Barrier,” in *Migrants and Migration in Modern North America: Cross-Border Lives, Labor Markets, and Politics in Canada, the Caribbean, Mexico, and the United States*, ed. Dirk Hoerder and Nora Faires (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 228–50.
10. Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas*, 106–107.
11. Marc Rodriguez, *The Tejano Diaspora: Mexican Americanism and Ethnic Politics in Texas and Wisconsin* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 16–17.
12. Rodriguez, *Tejano Diaspora*, 16–17; Valdés, *Al Norte: Agricultural Workers in the Great Lakes Region, 1917–1970* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), 52.
13. Valdés, *Al Norte*, 52.
14. Dennis Nodín Valdés, “Settlers, Sojourners, and Proletarians: Social Formation in the Great Plains Sugar Beet Industry, 1890–1940,” *Great Plains Quarterly* 10 (Spring 1990), 113; Zaragosa Vargas, *Proletarians of the North: A History of Mexican Industrial Workers in Detroit and the Midwest, 1917–1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 20–25.
15. Zaragosa Vargas, “Armies in the Fields: The Mexican Working Classes in the Midwest in the 1920s,” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 7:1 (Winter 1999), 52; Valdés, “Settlers, Sojourners, and Proletarians,” 111–14.
16. Valdés, “Settlers, Sojourners, and Proletarians,” 112–13; Vargas, *Proletarians of the North*, 26.
17. Juan R. García, *Mexicans in the Midwest: 1900–1932* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 27; Vargas, *Proletarians of the North*, 21.
18. George T. Edson, “Mexicans in the North Central States,” *Perspectives in Mexican American Studies* 2 (1989), 107–108; Teresa A. García, “Mexican Room: Public Schooling and the Children of Mexican Railroad Workers in Fort Madison, Iowa, 1923–1930” (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 2008), 58, 61.
19. Peter Vega interview in “Lehigh Row Remembered,” *The Forum: Sunday Registrar*, April 29, 1990, in Vega Family Papers, Mujeres Latinas Project—Iowa Women’s Archives; García, “Mexican Room,” 63; Janet Weaver, “From Barrio to ‘Boicoteo!’: The Emergence of Mexican American Activism in Davenport, 1917–1970,” *The Annals of Iowa* 68:3 (Summer 2009), 218.
20. The additive Americanization model tended to emphasize cultural pluralism, while the subtractive model was informed by nativist sentiments. Carlos Blanton, *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas, 1836–1981* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 59–62.

21. Blanton, *Strange Career of Bilingual Education*, 82–84, 90–91.
22. The United States interned some 3,000 Italians, Germans, and Japanese who were deported from twelve Latin American countries to the United States. The Crystal City camp housed 2,264 Japanese from Latin America. The official reasons given by U.S. authorities for interning these Latin Americans was to prevent sabotage in the Western Hemisphere, and to use the internees to bargain with Japan for captured American prisoners. The internment, scholars have argued, was the result of wartime hysteria, ingrained stereotypes, and widespread anti-Japanese sentiments. Alice Yang-Murray, “The Internment of Japanese Americans,” in *What Did the Internment of Japanese Americans Mean?* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 3–5; Michi Weglyn, “Why Did U.S. Officials Intern People of Japanese Ancestry from Central and South America?” in *What Did the Internment of Japanese Americans Mean?* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 84–99; Emily Brosveen, “World War II Internment Camps,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/quwby>. Accessed April 23, 2013.
23. Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas*, 168–69, 191–95; Rodriguez, *Tejano Diaspora*, 43; Blanton, *Strange Career of Bilingual Education*, 88–89.
24. Rodriguez, *Tejano Diaspora*, 35–36; Blanton, *Strange Career of Bilingual Education*, 114–17; Neil Foley, *Quest for Equality: The Failed Promise of Black-Brown Solidarity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 109–111.
25. Vargas, *Proletarians of the North*, 26; Valdés, *Al Norte*, 82–84.
26. Zaragosa Vargas, *Crucible of Struggle: A History of Mexican Americans from the Colonial Period to the Present Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 194–95; Valdés, *Al Norte*, 56–57.
27. Valdés, *Al Norte*, 64–65.
28. Valdés, *Al Norte*, 54–56.
29. Vargas, *Crucible of Struggle*, 260–63; Vargas, *Proletarians of the North*, 37.
30. The Bracero Program, which ended in 1964, employed approximately 4.8 million Mexicans. Some workers agreed to multiple contracts over the course of several years. Most braceros found employment in border states (three quarters of the total worked in California and Texas), but a few obtained jobs in the Midwest and the Pacific Northwest. Garcia y Griego, “The Importation of Mexican Contract Laborers to the United States, 1942–1964,” in *Between Two Worlds: Mexican Immigrants in the United States*, ed. David Gutiérrez (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1996), 45–85; Manuel G. Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 170–75; Omar Valerio-Jiménez, “The United States-Mexico Border as Material and Cultural Barrier,” 228–50; Vargas, *Crucible of Struggle*, 263; Rodriguez, *Tejano Diaspora*, 24–36.
31. Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas*, 143–45; Rodriguez, *Tejano Diaspora*, 16–18.
32. Rodriguez, *Tejano Diaspora*, 43–46.

33. Vargas, *Crucible of Struggle*, 294–95; Rodriguez, *Tejano Diaspora*, 46–53.

34. “Farmworkers in the United States,” *Migrant Health Promotion*, http://www.migranthealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38&Itemid=30#3. Accessed May 2, 2013.

35. National Agricultural Workers Survey, U.S. Department of Labor, <http://www.doleta.gov/agworker/report9/chapter1.cfm>. Accessed May 2, 2013.

36. “Farm Labor: Background,” USDA Economic Research Service, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-labor/background.aspx#Numbers>. Accessed May 2, 2013.

37. Ethan Bronner, “Workers Claim Race Bias as Farms Rely on Immigrants,” *New York Times*, May 6, 2013.

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