The Fear of No Future: Guatemalan Migrants, Dispossession and Dislocation

Linda Green *University of Arizona*

Abstract: This article examines the relationship between neoliberal economic policies and practices, state-sponsored violence and international migration through the lived experiences of a Mayan Indian from Guatemala. The Arizona-Mexico border has become "ground-zero" on the war on migrants as tens of thousands cross monthly without legal documents in the hope of creating a future for themselves and their families in the United States. Migration to the U.S. has become one of their last, best options, albeit a dangerous and violent one. This essay explores both the causes and consequences of international migration in the Guatemalan case through the lens of historical political economy to trace how national and international economic policies and practices associated with free trade agreements and peace accords have displaced and dispossessed Guatemala's indigenous people, and coupled with militarized immigration practices, are in reality an extension of war by other means.

Keywords: migration, Guatemala, United States, Mayan Indians, neoliberalism, violence

Résumé : Cet essai examine les relations entre les politiques et les pratiques économiques néolibérales, la violence d'État et les migrations internationales à partir des expériences vécues d'un Indien maya du Guatemala. La frontière entre le Mexique et l'Arizona est devenue un « point zéro » dans la guerre contre les immigrants, alors que des dizaines de milliers d'entre eux la traversent chaque mois sans papiers dans l'espoir de se créer un avenir, pour eux et leur famille, aux États-Unis. La émigration vers les États-Unis est devenue une de leurs dernières et meilleures possibilités, pour violente et dangereuse qu'elle soit. Le présent article explore les causes et les conséquences des migrations internationales dans le cas du Guatemala, par la lorgnette de l'histoire de l'économie politique, pour établir comment les politiques et les pratiques économiques nationales et internationales associées aux accords de libre-échange et aux accords de paix ont déplacé et dépossédé les peuples indigènes du Guatemala, tandis que, couplés avec des pratiques d'immigration militarisées, ces accords sont en fait une extension de la guerre par d'autres moyens.

Mots-clés : émigration, Guatemala, États-Unis, Indiens maya, néolibéralisme, violence

> Foreign direct investment in particular is associated with an increase in inequality. The available evidence does suggest that income inequality has risen across most countries and regions over the past few decades.
> —IMF 2007

> How can this inequality be maintained if not through jolts of electric shock?
> —Eduardo Galeano 1983

Introduction

This essay, at heart, is the story of Antonio, a middle-aged Mayan Indian from Guatemala whom I met several days after he was rescued by a humanitarian group from the Sonoran desert along the Arizona Borderlands. While Antonio's narrative is a disturbing one, it is not simply a singular tale of woe. Rather Antonio embodies through his lived experiences an articulation of Guatemalan and American political economy and history.

The central conceptual preoccupation that motivates this essay is the intricate relationship between neoliberal economic polices and practices, state-sponsored violence and international migration. While the processes and forces that have produced each of these phenomena have been extensively explored in the social science literature, the dialectics of the three taken together have largely gone unexamined. David Harvey, for example, has brilliantly documented the rise of neoliberal theory as a hegemonic economic practice with its attendant discourse of the "free market," that, contrary to popular understanding, depends extensively on state involvement for its advancement. He does so, however, without exploring the experiential fallout on the lives of ordinary people (Harvey 1989, 2005). Numerous anthropological works have illuminated the causes and consequences of state-sponsored violence across the globe, bringing to light not only how domination and resistance operate but the vital role of local actors in processes of accommodation and complicity, as well as the numerous ways in which structural violence has remained hidden all the while undermining the livelihood and lives of the world's poor (Farmer 2003; Green 1999, 2002; Nordstrom 2004). Yet the dispossession and dislocation of large swaths of people across the globe—fueling contemporary labour migrations—have not been fully examined through the conceptual lens of state-sponsored or structural violence.

Importantly, migration studies (Kearney 1986) have examined the push and pull factors over the past half century that have contributed to an exponential rise in the number of people crossing borders worldwide. Some 200 million people, over 3% of the world's population, lived outside their country of birth in 2006 (International Monetary Fund 2007). Scholars in the 1980s recognized that many of the migrants from Mexico in particular were not temporary but were increasingly settling in the U.S. even while they maintained "circuits" between their home communities in Mexico and their locales in the U.S. (Chavez 1992; Fink 2003; Rouse 1991). Heyman (1991) has been particularly insightful in understanding the historical dynamics of the U.S.-Mexico boundary where processes of identity, illegality and militarization have been crucial in the formation and maintenance of locality. Yet, here too, the historical and political-economic linkages between large-scale labour migrations and human rights violations have not been fully articulated.

When taken together these phenomena importantly point us toward an understanding of the historical dimensions and power dynamics of "profiteering off the poor" through the production and reproduction of inequalities and vulnerabilities[1] (Chacon and Davis 2006). An examination of migration across the Americas and its relationship to neoliberalism as both an economic model and a mode of domination (Gilly 2005), reveals the multiple and often brutal ways "disposable people" fit into a system in which violence, fear and impunity are crucial components. Immigration can be thought of as (1) a consequence of a complex set of global economic doctrines and geopolitical practices that produces both desperate workers—in the context of this essay, from Guatemala—*and* low wage jobs in the U.S.; (2) a strategy of survival for millions of Guatemalans who have no viable means of a livelihood—that is no future—in their own country; and (3) a set of punitive laws and practices that have reconfigured the U.S.-Mexico border and beyond into a militarized zone, a space of death, that punishes—with utter disregard and unbeknownst to most U.S. citizens—the very people who are dispossessed and dislocated by these policies.

This triple lens illuminates more clearly how free trade agreements—in this case, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)—have created the conditions for the U.S. to become a magnet for cheap, exploitable and "illegal" migrant labour. State-sponsored violence becomes integral, not incidental, to both dislocation and dispossession of millions of working people *and* militarization at the U.S.-Mexico border and, beyond that, is a necessary component to disciplining the working class on both sides of the border.

In this essay I explore how these processes have given shape to the lived experiences of Antònio and the millions of migrants who have crossed the U.S.-Mexico border over the course of the past decade. Insofar as the majority of the people crossing the Arizona-Mexico border are indigenous, as anecdotal evidence suggests, then these processes can also be thought of, in part, as an ethnocide in which people are torn from their history, their kin, their sense of place and space, and their work and livelihood are decimated.

The men and women who migrate from Guatemala to the U.S.—the subjects of this article—are part of a worldwide phenomenon of "surplus" people produced through neoliberalism and its attendant structural adjustment. These are not the reserve army of the poor in Marx's terms, but disposable people who are no longer necessary or needed in their home countries (see Robinson 2003). The fear of no future and the hope of creating a viable life for themselves and their kin propel migrants to "voluntarily" take on unimaginable debt and expose themselves to both known and unexpected levels of violence, exploitation, virulent racism and, increasingly, incarceration. The rub, of course, is that they are simultaneously vital—as migrants—in propping up the failed economy of Guatemala through their remittances and in the U.S. where they are the highly exploitable, expendable workforce without any protection as workers or, increasingly, as human beings.

Migrants are not taking jobs away from U.S. citizens in the way the far right would have us believe. Rather they are a disempowered workforce who are continually foiled in their attempts to organize, unionize or make demands for health and safety in the workplace—which, not surprisingly, is a boon to capitalist profits. Current violent and vicious border policies and practices are, in part, necessary accompaniments to Guatemalan-style structural adjustment with its attendant repressive apparatus, as well as to U.S. American style neoliberalism—orchestrated in part through deindustrialization and deunionization—that has led to a massive decline in jobs and wages, as "mass termination [of employees has become] a reasonable profit-maximizing strategy" (Wypijewski 2006:141).[2] Together, these processes—U.S. American and Guatemalan—work synergistically to produce a surplus of "disposable people" in Guatemala and a plethora of low wage jobs in the U.S., all the while throwing millions of U.S. workers out of their jobs. This reworked economy has also made in Marable's words, "the historical demand for black labour superfluous" (Marable 2000; see Sider 2003), while simultaneously creating the conditions for the largest prison system in the world (Chomsky 2003; Pager 2007)—what Parenti referred to as "Lockdown America" (1999).

Before turning to Antonio's story, I highlight some key facets of Guatemalan history. The current desperate situation in which Mayan people find themselves is at once singular and part of a larger set of processes of dispossession, violence and its attendant impunity that arguably have their origins in the 16th century. This current iteration may be the final phase in this 500-year history of dispossession and dislocation for Guatemala's indigenous peoples as their social relations are reworked from a sense of social solidarity to modern individualism, what Anderson (1992) refers to as the commodification of social relations. Of necessity, Antonio's story must be placed within that context as it allows us to understand the shape of a Mayan history beset by patterns of exploitation and brutality, yet that is also one of continued, albeit reworked, survival and dignity.

Dispossession, Dislocation, Repression in Indigenous Guatemala

Primitive accumulation cuts through traditional lifeways like scissors. The first blade serves to undermine the ability of people to provide for themselves. The second is a system of stern measures required to keep people from finding alternative strategies outside the system of labour (Perelman 2000).

Primitive accumulation, according to Marx, is a process where people are dispossessed often violently of their land and resources, the locus of their survival, and then subsequently fully integrated into a wage economy (Perelman 2000). Rather than a one time occurrence, dispossession in Guatemala has been a long, slow and uneven process, taking well over 500 years. In part, this is due to the ways in which dispossession took place. Involuntary labour practices were the mechanisms—utilizing violence and repression when necessary—through which Mayan land and the social relations attached to that land were extracted.[3] Ever since the Spanish Invasion in the 16th century and up to the present, the Mayas of Guatemala have been the major source—often through violent means—of non-Indian wealth and privilege as a cheap, exploitable labour force. Because of the peculiarities of colonization in Guatemala and continuing over the ensuing centuries, labour not land was crucial to the enrichment of the dominant classes. Each epoch further diminished the bases from which the Mayas were able to pursue a "collective enterprise of survival" (Farriss 1984). Land was not expropriated per se in the highlands; a more subtle chipping away at land holdings took place through labour extraction often in conjunction with coercion, militarization and, when necessary, outright repression.

By the end of the 19th century, Mayan labour had become crucial to the Guatemalan state for the creation of coffee plantations for large-scale export production. The demands of plantation work led to increasing impoverishment among highland Mayas. Because of the long absences required by cyclical migration to cultivate coffee on the piedmont, Mayas were unable to attend adequately to the diverse economic activities necessary for survival. Increasingly drawn into debt, a vicious cycle was created whereby their absences led to further neglect of their subsistence agriculture in the highlands. As early as the 1920s, many Mayan families could no longer survive on subsistence agriculture alone—having lost much of their land base—and the annual migratory trek to the coastal plantations to earn cash, however minimal, had become a necessary way of life. The changes produced increased stratification among Mayas themselves: between those who did have sufficient land resources to meet the minimum requirement for exemption from state-mandated obligatory work and those who did not (Britnall 1979; McCreery 1994). A repressive state apparatus was expanded to include an increasingly militarized presence in the *altiplano* (high plains) to quell resistance to the expropriation or privatization of community-held lands and increased labour demands (Cambranes 1985; Handy 1994; McCreery 1994). Moreover, land, particularly for the production of corn and beans, had been crucial to maintaining a nexus of social relations that formed the fabric of kin-based and community social organization. The subordination of subsistence production to the market had a devastating impact on these relations.

The only serious interruption in this historic dynamic was during the 1944-54 period known as the "ten years of spring," when two successive, democratically elected presidents attempted to redress the plight of the majority indigenous population through significant land reform and political enfranchisement (Gleijese 1991; Handy 1994). These processes were rolled back violently with the 1954 CIA-sponsored coup d'état which unleashed a reign of terror against the Mayan population that has not abated despite the signing of Peace Accords in 1996. The repression reached its pinnacle during the late 1970s and 1980s in Guatemalan military counterinsurgency, particularly pronounced in the countryside, that resulted in what the UN-sponsored Truth Commission called "a genocide against the Mayan people." Moreover there are two oft unacknowledged partners in the crimes waged against the Mayan people—crimes of both wartime and peacetime—international development agencies, notably the World Bank and USAID, and the U.S. military (Green 2006a).[4]

Robinson (2003) has argued that the end stage of dispossession of indigenous lands was only fully accomplished in the 1980s through counterinsurgency which delivered what economic measures alone had failed to do—the full capitalization of indigenous lands and social relations. In conflict areas, small scattered peasant communities were forcibly relocated by the military into nucleated settlements reminiscent of the colonial era, leaving them without sufficient land to farm and forcing many to seek wage work in order to survive.

The signing of the Peace Accords in Guatemala in 1996 ended a 36-year internal war, where, in addition to over a quarter million people killed or disappeared, over one million people were internally displaced for some period during the 1980s and another one million sought refugee status outside Guatemala's borders. Yet, by design, the Accords did little to redress marked inequalities and racism directed against the Mayan majority. The Peace Accords were, in fact, an arrangement between the business elites, the military and the leaders of the guerrilla group, known by their Spanish acronym as the URNG. Ordinary people were mostly excluded from the benefits. The negotiated settlement put into effect two conditions favourable to the continuation of war against the poor, mostly Mayan, population: (1) impunity for those responsible for the orchestration of a brutal counterinsurgency war, which even ten years later, facilitated an ongoing militarized state structure in civilian guise (as the 2007 the candidacy of retired General Otto Perez Molina for president illustrates)[5]; (2) a neoliberal economic model that created conditions most favourable for transnational elites while economically strangulating the poor. Thus, the Accords have become the newest iteration in the ongoing production of inequality and vulnerability for the majority of Guatemalans. With impunity intact, the Guatemalan military retains de facto power and remains intent on quelling the first sign of social protest (Schirmer 1998).[6] Thus, the Peace Accords facilitated the successful rhetorical de-linking of these two instruments of violence, impunity and international development, utilized against the poor.

Today, in the neoliberal global economy, large numbers of people need wages to survive but have no visible means to secure that cash and thus, they have increasingly no "value" as workers or as human beings. Bereft of land and livelihood in their homeland, migration is one of the last options for procuring a future, what Chacon and Davis poignantly describe as "informal survival" (2006). Migration implies a seemingly voluntary, individual decision and to a certain extent it is: where to go, when to go, how to go, if one is able to go, or even if one should go. But beyond that, a migrant's freedom, as Berger (1975) suggested, is that of really only being free to sell their labour power. Although Guatemala generates 35% of all the wealth in Central America, a staggering 75% of the labour force works in the informal sector. For the Maya, who make up the majority of the population in Guatemala—a status they have never relinquished since conquest—80% live in poverty, 50% are illiterate and 70% suffer from chronic malnutrition. Thus, if these surplus people—people without any value in Guatemala—stay in place, they have no future. Migration for many is undoubtedly a journey circumscribed by apprehension and fear, but is also one of hope: the hope of creating a future for themselves and their families. Moreover, by the very act of migrating these disposable people refuse the fate assigned to them in a neo-Social Darwinist world of "survival of the fittest." Yet, by the mere act of crossing borders, they are transformed into "illegal aliens" who accrue significant value for both the U.S. and Guatemalan economies, a point I elaborate below.

Antonio's Story: The Border and Beyond

Here I draw on the story of an indigenous Guatemalan migrant, whom I have come to know over the past two years, to underscore the lived realities of migration and the processes and forces that have produced the circumstances in which over 4,000 people have died trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border over the past decade.[7]

Antonio is a 43-year-old Mayan Indian whom I met in early July 2005 some days after he had been rescued from the punishing 115°F degree heat of the Sonora Desert in southern Arizona. Exhausted and confused, Antonio had been walking almost two days without food or water, having been abandoned by his *coyote* (coyote, a term used to refer to those who transport migrants across the U.S.-Mexico border) whom he and 20 other migrants had hired to guide them across the Mexico-Arizona border.

In 1970, a then five-year-old Antonio, his mother, stepfather and four brothers and sisters moved from the highlands where they had no land to the Ixcan jungle where they joined other mostly indigenous "pioneers" in a colonization project under the auspices of U.S. Maryknoll priests with the support of the provincial diocese of the

Catholic Church. This was to be an alternative economic response to the Guatemalan state's refusal to enact a land reform—where even today 2% of the population own of 80% of the arable land (the most unequal distribution of land in all of Latin America). The project began in the late 1960s and by the mid-1970s over 30,000 mostly Mayan Indians had migrated internally to develop the land. Each family was given a parcel of land and each was a member of a co-operative that sold their coffee and cardamom. Within a few years, the co-operatives were showing signs of fiscal success as the international market prices for these products climbed (Falla 1994).

Soon after the land was cleared, oil was discovered in an area that included the Ixcan. Multinational oil corporations began exploration in the region. By the mid-1970s these companies were drilling for oil on colonized land and procuring land titles granted by the Guatemalan Institute of Agrarian Transformation that the co-operatives had applied for but had never received. Soon thereafter, the Guatemalan military and paramilitary death squads arrived to enforce oil company claims. During a three-month period in 1975, 28 men from the Ixcan co-operatives were "disappeared" (Anonymous 1993).

In 1981-82, the Guatemalan military carried out 15 massacres of unarmed civilians. Antonio, along with other members of the Communities in Resistance (CPR of the Ixcan), fled to the mountains but refused to leave the country. The people of the CPR refused to be resettled into model villages after their own communities were razed, nor were they willing to participate in local civil militias under the auspices of the military, or collaborate in any way with the military's counterinsurgency. As a result, they were ruthlessly persecuted as military targets, even though their resistance was unarmed. For over a decade tens of thousands of internally displaced peoples in Guatemala hid in the jungles of the Ixcan and the Peten and in the mountains of the Ixil Triangle where they were bombed by army helicopters. After the CPR publicly broke the silence about their existence in 1993, they continued to be pursued by the military in direct violation of international human rights law that protects civilian, internal refugees (Anonymous 1993; see Falla 1994).

Ricardo Falla, a Guatemalan Jesuit priest and American-trained anthropologist lived among them for over five years and it was during this time, according to both Falla and Antonio, that a sense of collectivity and political consciousness emerged (Falla 1994). Survival in the CPR meant creating new forms of social organization to withstand relentless army persecution. The equitable redistribution of food, for example, generated new forms of social consciousness as people shifted their social relations based on cooperation to relations based on collectivity[8] (see Manz 1988, 2004).

In the late 1990s, the people of the CPR were resettled onto new lands as part of an agreement reached through the Peace Accords. Their lands in the Ixcan, which they abandoned to save their lives, have been usurped by the military and by private businessmen who were often one and the same. Antonio and 30 other families in his subgroup were thus resettled onto land purchased by the Belgian government and each family was given a two-room concrete block house, a solar panel with batteries for electricity and a plot of land. Although the group returned to growing cardamom, this time collectively, it was no longer a viable project and nor was coffee production because of they ways in which agricultural production has been remapped on a global scale. Peasant agricultural production in rural Guatemala is thus moribund.[9]

For the past five years, over 10% of families in Antonio's co-operative settlement have someone working in the U.S. because they are increasingly unable to pursue a collective, or even individual, enterprise of survival. This is true for most all communities of the CPR and other returned refugees. The exceptions are the poorest, most especially widows, who do not even have the resources to secure a loan to migrate or send a family member.

Since 2004, this section of the U.S.-Mexico border, 60 miles south of Tucson, Arizona, has the distinction of being the site of the highest number of border crossings and deaths annually.[10] This has not happened accidentally. Since the passage of the Immigration and Reform Control Act (IRC) of 1996, coming two years after the passage of the free trade agreement known as NAFTA, there has been a significant rise in the number of migrants without legal documents crossing and dying along the U.S.-Mexico border. Simultaneous to the IRC, the Department of Defense Center for Low Intensity Conflict produced a policy of "prevention through deterrence"—known as the Border Strategic Plan—that advocated pushing immigrants away from the "traditional" urban crossing points of San Diego, El Paso and Nogales into the remote, dangerous areas of the high mountains of California, the Sonora Desert of Arizona and the more difficult sections of the Rio Grande (Massey et al. 2003; Nevins 2002). What these policies and practices have done is to create a death zone on a border that has, over the past decade, been thoroughly militarized and is host to human rights violations so extensive that they have been characterized as "preemptive counterinsurgency" (Parenti 1999). Although these policies have done nothing to deter the number of migrants crossing—in fact the numbers have risen exponentially—they have had two disturbing effects: first, they have removed migrant detentions from public scrutiny; and second, they have made these same detentions more difficult because of the harsh terrain thus justifying more extensive militarization.[11]

At noon, on the second day of Antonio's border crossing trek with the coyote, the group stopped to rest under the shade of a mesquite tree. Antonio fell asleep and when he awoke the group was gone. By his own account Antonio had been lagging behind the group, finding it more and more difficult to keep pace.[12] Two days later, weakened, sick and seemingly defeated by the heat, Antonio made his way to State Highway 286 to wait for U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) to pick him up. Hundreds of Border Patrol (BP) agents patrol the vast open spaces of the Altar valley each day in search of migrants. This area of the Sonora Desert—the Buenos Aires National Monument—is delineated by paved roads and desert footpaths well-worn by human and animal traffic, and more recently by tens of miles of border fencing.[13]

Antonio sat on the side of the road, making numerous attempts to flag down BP vehicles as they raced past him, all to no avail. Several BP agents I have spoken with admit to only stopping for ten or more migrants, otherwise as one noted sardonically, "it's not worth the paper work." However, when BP agents do apprehend migrants some agents reportedly commit unnecessary, seemingly petty, acts of violence against them. For example, almost all migrants I have talked with, after being detained by BP agents, were denied water, were pushed into cactus, desert brush or rocks, or were made to roll in sand filled with biting ants. I have witnessed BP apprehensions in which the migrants were forced to kneel with their hands crossed behind their heads in the hot sun, while the agents awaited a bus to transport them for processing and eventual return to the border.[14] On several occasions BP agents, standing idly by, have refused to allow humanitarian groups to give the migrants food, water and first aid.[15] After some hours of waiting by the side of the road Antonio was "rescued" by one such humanitarian group from Tucson, a group that regularly searches migrant routes and roads for people in need, offering food, water and medical aid.

Antonio's journey began in his mountain village in western Guatemala. For 30 days he travelled by foot, truck and bus, wading across the Suchiate River that divides Guatemala from Mexico. This border has become a hotbed of organized crime and corruption, where trafficking in drugs and people is the modus operandi. This is a corridor of death where gangs and Mexican law enforcement officials co-mingle and crimes of the most egregious nature are committed; where almost everyone who passes through becomes a victim of robbery, rape, assault, kidnapping or violent "accidents." The 1500-mile route from the Guatemala-Mexico border to the Mexico-U.S. border is a particularly perilous one and an extremely dangerous and violent passage for women—some of whom reportedly begin taking birth control pills before starting out. Without exception, all of the 15 women I have interviewed over the last few years, have told me of their experiences of being raped at least once during the journey. According to reports by a respected human rights group in Mexico, somewhat fewer than 90% of Central American women who migrate through Mexico are raped, many at the hands of security forces (Vasquez and Garcia 2006). As increasing numbers of women from Central America and Mexico migrate alone to find work to survive economically, they embody a process that has been called the "feminization of migration."[16] According to a recent study, the majority of these women are between 18 and 29 years old, head their households and have left children under 12 behind with family members (Diaz and Kuhner 2007). Additionally, the rise in numbers of unaccompanied children who cross the border each year has been dramatic. Reportedly, many of them come in search of mothers they have not seen in years. They were left as young children when their mothers migrated with the hopes of providing them with a future. The children come to find the women they feel inexplicably abandoned them (Nazario 2007). The BP estimates that 30-40,000 unaccompanied minors attempt to cross the border each year.

Having left his wife and seven children with a six-month supply of wood and corn and bean plots planted, Antonio sold off anything he could and borrowed the rest to pay the coyote the US$5,000 he needed to reach the small dusty town of Altar, Mexico, 60 miles south of the Arizona border. As it has become more dangerous both to traverse Mexico and to cross the border into the U.S., the necessity and the price of securing a coyote has risen exponentially. Thus, U.S. border policies and practices have had the consequence of creating multi-billion dollar mafia-like enterprises for human smuggling that hardly existed 15 years ago. Although the actual coyotes who arrange for and lead the migrants on the routes through Mexico and across the border are often poor local men with little power or influence, the larger structures of human smuggling are increasingly tied to mafia and drug running cartels.[17]

Altar itself is emblematic of the kinds of forces that are produced by the free market economy, violence and migration. A former cattle ranching town of some 10,000 people, moribund in the wake of NAFTA, Altar is now booming again as it has transformed into a service economy for human and drug smuggling for the 1,500-2,000 people who pass through daily. Altar is a dry dusty town with only a few blocks on either side of the highway where buses from all across Mexico pull up every half hour to the central plaza in the shadow of the Spanish colonial church to offload dozens of mostly young men, although there are increasingly more women, some with babies or young children in tow. Townspeople have become merchants along this migrant route, with booths catering to migrant needs: gloves, hats, backpacks, water bottles and numerous bunkhouses scattered all over town where migrants rest, waiting aimlessly for their coyote to signal the time to move up to the border town of Sassabe, a staging area for crossing into the U.S. Many local people are quite sympathetic to the plight of the migrants, noting that they have been a boon to their own flagging economy. Yet, others I spoke with, particularly mothers, were distressed that the large influx of drugs and smuggling was having a negative impact on the town's youth, luring them with fast, easily made money.

Antonio, without money to afford the luxury of a night's rest (about US$1) hastily bought two gallons of water, tortillas and beans and a backpack and set off the same day to cross into southern Arizona. Packed into a van with 30 other migrants who each pay US$10 for the 60-mile ride to the U.S.-Mexico border, Antonio met up with the hired coyote who would lead him and his group across the border. The cost was to be US$1,500 for what was billed as a one- to two-day walk in the desert to meet up with another van for a ride to Phoenix. The price continues to rise as increased militarization of the border has forced migrants to cross in ever more desolate areas of the desert. These include the Tohono O'dahm Reservation, a sovereign nation itself now militarized by U.S. BP and the U.S. military, the even more remote Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument further west and the Barry Goldwater Firing Range where there is no chance of being found or rescued (Annenno 1999; Urrea 2004). If Antonio had made it to Phoenix, he would have called his family contact in the U.S. to wire the contract money and he would have been free to leave. While waiting for the money to arrive, migrants are kept in "safe houses" with armed guards. Those who are unable to pay off their debt, work it off or are sold off at the discretion of the smugglers.

Antonio told me that he survived his two-day ordeal in the desert because of the survival skills he had learned while evading the Guatemalan military during the scorched earth counterinsurgency. He spoke of the helicopters flying overhead scouring the desert for migrants, recalling how it reminded him of the Guatemalan army helicopters that searched for internally displaced people during the counterinsurgency war.

Today the Arizona desert, too, looks like a war zone, a space where Blackhawk helicopters, unmanned spy drones, ground-based sensors, real and virtual fences and armed BP agents, military personnel, National Guardsmen, and armed civilian militias—the American Border Patrol, Border Guardians and the now infamous Minutemen, sometimes accompanied by local folks "sport hunting for illegals" at night—scour the desert in search of so-called "aliens." The newest iteration of this violence on the U.S. side of the border is the active presence of the Mexican drug mafia from the in the State of Sonora, as they battle their rivals from the Juarez cartel across the terrain of migrant bodies.[18]

What is important to note is that this recent construction of a materially and ideologically violent boundary between the U.S. and Mexico is not unique. In fact this border has a long sordid history of violent dispossession and dislocation that began soon after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in the 1840s. Indigenous peoples of the southwest were dispossessed of their land and their labour forcibly appropriated by armed militias. The BP was created by the Immigration Act of 1924 with the mandate to catch tequila smugglers and later to regulate the numbers of undocumented immigrants entering the country, in reality acting as a gatekeeper controlling the flow of a cheap, exploitable labour force from Mexico (Behdad 1998; Ngai 2004). For much of the next 60 years the BP languished as a backwater agency until, in the early 1980s, then president Ronald Reagan declared that "this country has lost control of its borders. And no country can sustain that kind of position." National security in the fight against communism became the new rhetorical mission of the BP, while in practical terms the southern border became increasingly militarized. The Reagan administration introduced a number of punitive policies designed to "regain control of borders" and a discourse that demonized undocumented migrants as the primary threat to that security. Ironically, perhaps, the majority of those crossing the borders in the early 1980s were in fact refugees fleeing state-sponsored counterinsurgency wars in Guatemala and El Salvador as well as the violence perpetrated by U.S.-backed Contras in Nicaragua and Honduras all of whom were receiving—in some cases illegal—funds and training by the U.S. military.[19]

Illegality has been a crucial mechanism for instituting a series of immigration policies and laws that provide loopholes of impunity to employers who hire people without valid immigration documents, while increasingly criminalizing and punishing the migrants' transgressions of rather inconsequential immigration rules that transform them into "illegal" human beings.[20] This "illegality" has had a number of far-reaching effects. The militarization of the borderlands has been profound over the past decade. In southern Arizona, desert and border communities are now surrounded with high-tech equipment: motion-detection sensors, high-intensity cameras, high-intensity stadium lighting, new roads and miles of steel fencing. This technology is of military origin and the military continue to be involved in construction, maintenance and operation of the equipment (Meyers 2006). Illegality has not only produced a docile workforce increasingly under surveillance and driven further underground into "shadowed lives," which is a necessary component in disciplining it (Behdad 1998), but has created a fertile terrain for human and civil rights abuses to flourish. As a result, "illegality" has encouraged racial profiling along the border, such that Hispanics whatever their documentation status are increasingly harassed by CBP and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE, the interior enforcement arm of CBP). Illegality, moreover, fosters a climate where hate crimes can flourish. The rise in armed civilian militias like the infamous Minuteman Project in southern Arizona is a case in point.[21] In its most recent iteration, migrant "illegality" is creating a growth industry in immigration detention centres, as CBP policies are detaining rather than immediately releasing many more of the migrants who are apprehended both along the border and in the interior of the country.

Antonio left Tucson at the end of July after having fully recovered from his ordeal. He was enroute to join his brother-in-law in the agricultural fields of Maryland, when he was apprehended by ICE at a Greyhound bus station. Greyhound allows ICE agents to regularly board its buses and ask for documentation from "suspicious looking" people. Antonio was "voluntarily" repatriated to Mexico as he claimed he was from Chiapas. Antonio spent the next four months, working and travelling back and forth along the Mexico side of the border, from Tijuana to El Paso, looking for a way to cross. Finally, Antonio recrossed successfully in Texas in November 2005. Afraid to travel very far for fear of being detained, Antonio found work picking tobacco in Kentucky. He remains in Kentucky now working in a factory, earning US$40 per day for ten-hour shifts.

In 2006, during one of our phone conversations, he told me that more than one year into his migrant life, he had paid off US$400 of his remaining US$3500 debt and sent US$100 per month to his family. Initially, he desperately wanted to return to Tucson—where he stayed for three weeks and became particularly attached to my husband who is also indigenous from Guatemala—but it was too dangerous. Antonio, like so many other migrants, is dispossessed of his family and community, of his collective attachments to place and to his kin and extended network. This is a profoundly individual dispossession without accumulation, yet with major social ramifications for indigenous peoples and their communities. As another Guatemalan migrant told me recently, "I left Guatemala five years ago and the loneliness is killing me. I still have a wife and children in Guatemala, but I am no longer a part of that family, I only send back the money." As the border becomes more militarized, making it both more dangerous and more expensive to cross, migrants stay longer in the U.S. and do not return at all to Guatemala, not even for visits or for the death of family members which leaves them ever more distant from their kin ties. Even as some migrants are able to bring their immediate families to the U.S., at great risk and cost, at the same time they are involuntarily losing their kin and community based social networks at home. While new communication technologies such as cell phones and computers, much heralded in the anthropological literature, make distant contact possible, the integrity of face-to-face relations—the crucial basis of organized collective struggles—is weakened. This isolation and fracturing of social relations continues a process which began in Guatemala during the counterinsurgency war.

One of the profound consequences of counterinsurgency war and displacement was how violence and its attendant impunity further divided Mayan people from one another in rural Guatemala in new and brutal ways, as some local people were complicit in human rights violations against their neighbours and kin. Fear became an effective mechanism of social control by the state as it destabilized social relations, driving a wedge of distrust between family, neighbours and friends. Fear divided communities by creating suspicion and apprehension not only of strangers but of each other. These processes continue today. Impunity, in new guises, has permeated the social fabric, even in the rural countryside, as gangs, drugs and guns have become a way of life—circumstances that were unimaginable even 20 years ago (Green 1999, 2002). The fear of no future has made migration one of the few remaining survival strategies. At the same time, migration has exacerbated the economic and social divisions as the built landscape in migrant sending communities attests, further eroding any sense of collective solidarity or possibility of struggle.

Sunday, Not Monday

Deportation raids by ICE, known as Operation Return to Sender, began in earnest in May 2006 shortly after a spring in which millions of migrant workers and supporters took to the streets in major cities and small towns in what were some of the largest public demonstrations in U.S. history. ICE has captured, detained and deported over 50,000 people since then. Formally, CBP policy had been to "catch and release," detaining migrants in the U.S. and dropping them off in Mexico. Now, increasingly, the policy is to "catch and detain," and the construction of private detention centres along the border in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona has become a new growth industry.[22] Haliburton Inc., for example, was awarded a no-bid contract of US$350 million to take part in these construction efforts. These policies have had a significant and chilling effect on local organizing efforts among undocumented migrants for their rights as workers and as human beings.

People stopped on routine traffic checks in Arizona are asked for immigration documents—if they are Hispanic looking—by local police. For example, a Guatemalan woman was involved in a fender-bender at an intersection in Tucson. The man who hit her car called the police. When she could not produce her documents—although she did have a driver's licence—the police officer called the ICE. The woman had her two small children in the car with her, both U.S. citizens. She called family members to come get the kids because the border patrol was about to detain her. Her family members, all undocumented, were too afraid to come. So this woman and her two children were deported to Mexico, and now wait on the other side of the line, trying to figure out how to get back. More recently, a high school student in Tucson was caught in school with a small amount of marijuana in his backpack. The school authorities called the Tucson police. When the boy's father came to the school the police asked for his driver's licence. Frightened, the father admitted he did not have legal documents. The Tucson police called ICE and the entire family was deported to Mexico that day. Initially, the Tucson Unified School District stood by its actions, which allowed the Tucson Police Department and BP agents onto the school campus. A week later, when 100 students marched from their school to police headquarters in protest, the school district quickly rescinded its policy.

Fear engendered by ICE raids at the workplace and at home has driven migrants further into the shadows. They are being hunted down, furthering what Chacon and Davis (2006) have called "neoliberal immigration" policies in which state-sponsored violence, virulent racism and segregation of the migrant population in the U.S. act in tandem to create a de facto apartheid.[23]

I have gotten to know a small cadre of Zapatistas from the Lacandon area who live in Tucson. They work as day labourers and wait most days on street corners looking for work. On Sundays, they are increasingly afraid to leave their apartment. Sunday is the day that there is an especially heavy presence of ICE patrols in their neighbourhood. They live in South Tucson where the majority of the residents are Hispanic. So, on the one day a week that these men, well versed in collective struggle like Antonio, would have the opportunity to meet up with other migrants or sympathizers, they remain hidden. They are afraid, afraid they may lose their opportunity to create their future. This surveillance of migrants on Sunday however, has no effect on their work schedule on Monday nor on the undocumented labour supply, as thousands of migrants cross the Arizona border daily. Thus, the choices migrants must make to meet their family obligations force them into seclusion and inscribe individualism (see Mahler 1995). They live mostly hidden away but under surveillance. Moreover, this inscribed individualism places migrants in the untenable position of acting against other impoverished workers, thus, mitigating their desire and ability to struggle collectively for dignity and justice.

Perhaps it is ironic that Antonio laboured in the tobacco fields of Kentucky earning less than minimum wage under deplorable conditions reminiscent of the black sharecroppers whose descendants now live in urban ghettos and the increasingly forgotten rural south, themselves displaced and dispossessed. Antonio must now struggle on his own as he is pitted against his own people and other disenfranchised people if he and his family are to have a future.

When I spoke with Antonio in March 2008, he had just been diagnosed with a rare blood disorder. A priest has befriended him and is helping him receive necessary medical treatments. Antonio is still working, sending home as much money as he can; his future and that of his family is now more precarious than ever. We spoke again in August and Antonio's health has been improving. His debt for his medical care is US$3,000, which he is slowly paying off with the help of the priest and some parishioners. The priest told me that Antonio lives on next to nothing, as he is committed to paying his debt to the hospital that helped him. He is anxious to return home to his wife who is sick. "Perhaps next summer," he says over and over to me, in a voice mixed with hope and sadness.

Remittances

Guatemalan Indians as migrants do have value in Guatemala but only as long as they shore up the Guatemalan economy. They send home remittances worth over US$3 billion annually, second only to export agriculture and tourism in foreign export earnings. Before the 1980s, Guatemala received most of its foreign exchange from commodity exports (coffee, cotton, sugar), but now one of its major export commodities is its own "disposable workers," who only gain in "value" when they are transformed into "illegal aliens" as they cross the border into the U.S.

According to a study by the World Bank, remittances are sent home in installments of US$200. While the World Bank and the Guatemalan government celebrate remittances as a new development strategy because it substantially dwarfs the amount of money invested by G7 countries in development aid to Latin America, migrants are now encouraged to reinvest their savings in their own communities. Of course, for many, this is their only source of hope, the basis of their social organization and a key matrix of their indigenous identity, no matter how partial and flawed. How cynical it is that the very people who have been condemned by policies of dispossession that produce "planned misery," first by violence and repression and now by migration, are being heralded as the new entrepreneurs by the very institutions that ravage them.[24]

Moreover, migrants act as a release valve for social disruption, as many are men and women who might have followed in their parents' footsteps—parents who organized and struggled in the 1970s and 1980s for a more equitable way of life. Although there continue to be social protests in Guatemala by indigenous people, those who do speak out are often murdered.

Many migrants are successful in their efforts to improve the possibilities for those family members left behind. The physical landscape—in particular, the often partially built two-story block houses in many rural communities—is testimony to their labour. Behind their successes, however, are often bitter tales of individual and collective violence both imposed upon them and, at times, directed against one another.

These Mayan migrants also have value in the U.S. not only as a cheap exploitable workforce, but also because they conveniently provide a scapegoat for a virulent nativism that deflects attention away from the increasingly ruthless and brutal social and economic policies directed against U.S. citizens. Migrant communities and families in Guatemala also bear the brunt of the social costs of their reproduction, a boon to U.S. capital. Moreover, if injured or sick, most migrants return to Guatemala, which relieves the U.S. social and health care system of any costs. One consistent provision of all the proposed immigration reform bills considered in the U.S. Congress over the past few years, including guest worker programs, allows for no social or health care services and mandates immediate return of sick or injured migrant workers to their country of origin.

Conclusion

Historically, the U.S.-Mexico border, since its creation in the early 20th century, has been a key locus of labour control for mostly Mexican migrants and increasingly, over the past two decades, for Central Americans. Border repression continues to be a useful mechanism for the reproduction of social inequalities for all working class people in the U.S., whatever their documentation status. Moreover, the border continues to be the material and symbolic site for the enactment of state policies and practices that continually rework the parameters of impunity and of solidarity

There are thousands of migrants who have died trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border over the past decade; 4,000 bodies have been found while another 25,000 Central Americans are unaccounted for over a five-year period (Navarro 2004), and still others including children are disappeared, abused, raped, murdered and mutilated. All of this remains unknown to the U.S. public. Instead they are fed a steady diet of virulent and vitriolic rhetoric that passes for news; Lou Dobbs' "Broken Borders" on CNN regularly features "immigration experts" who spout white nationalist verbiage without properly identifying themselves or their views as part of white supremacist organizations.

These reports vilify migrants as "illegal aliens" and accuse them of carrying out an invasion with the intent of a *reconquista* (reconquest), of taking jobs away from U.S. citizens, and of criminal activity (see Chavez 2001)—accusations that have been repeatedly disproved by respected academic research. The de-linking of immigration policies and practices from economics and geopolitics is accomplished through "illegality" and impunity. What is produced is fear of the other with little or no empathy for the suffering of the migrant population. Moreover, these vicious media attacks disguised as news give the ordinary U.S. citizen no sense of a shared responsibility for that suffering. Our own geopolitics have gone a long way in producing the economic and political upheavals that make life in Central American and Mexico increasingly untenable. These are crimes of far-reaching human rights magnitude, as we increasingly deny a segment of our population, as well as people in Central America and Mexico, the right to life (as defined by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission as a "dignified existence") through policies that are backed by a state repressive apparatus.

Fear and hatred are stirred up to further divide us from each other. All the while, the real attack on workers, on whatever side of the border and regardless of their documentation status, goes on unabated.

Postscript

By the mid-17th century, England had established what Foucault referred to as the "great confinement," workhouses for the sick, the insane and the destitute, not with the intent of improving their fate, but as a mechanism to extract a profit from their "free" labour (Foucault 1965). Later, prison labour was captured in the form of chain gangs, a practice that has waxed and waned over the centuries as a popular mode of production and of discipline and punishment (Foucault 1977). A recent iteration of these processes is now notable in the agricultural fields of Arizona. As migrants flee ICE raids at the workplace, leaving farmers with a shortage of employees at harvest time, prison populations are the "new" workers filling that gap. They work for a pittance of what it costs for undocumented migrants. In Arizona, for instance, migrants are paid about US$40 per day for a 10- to 12-hour shift picking chilies, while prisoners are paid only US$20 per day. As migrants are increasingly being locked up not only in the ICE detention centres—with a substantial number confined in state and local prisons—one can only imagine that some of those prisoners working on the chain gangs are migrants, who, in a perverse Orwellian twist, have replaced themselves at a much lower wage, even as they await deportation for their "crime": their refusal to be disposed of.

Linda Green, Department of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721, U.S.A. E-mail: lbgreen@email.arizona.edu.

Notes

1 I borrow Gerald Sider's (2006) definition of vulnerability to mean the inability of people to completely secure their collective social reproduction with their own social, cultural and material resources.

2 According to Louis Uchitelle (2006), more people were laid-off from their jobs during the "economic expansion" of the Clinton years than during the 1980s, with no efforts made at job creation, labour law reform or investment in employment-led growth.

3 Since Independence, strategies such as forced labour drafts, debt peonage and vagrancy laws have been used by the state to appropriate Mayan labour for capital.

4 The World Bank's involvement in funding the construction of the Chixoy hydroelectric project—taking place during two of the most brutal regimes in Guatemalan history—is instructive. Initial funding was approved in 1975 without conducting a comprehensive census of the affected people, well over 40,000 Mayans. A number of communities refused to move. The army declared the communities subversive and a number of people were disappeared. When the dam was finished in 1983, the army again forced removal of the population. In one village alone, 444 of the 791 residents were killed. Ten communities were destroyed by massacres. In 1984, the Bank funded a second loan. In 1996, a World Bank staff-conducted evaluation concluded that their obligation to the resettled population had been met. Notably, the World Bank also made a profit: it invested US$72 million in loans including US$11 million in interest and other charges. Interest income from the Chixoy loans were revalued by the International Development Bank in 1994 at US$140 million (see Johnston 2005). Moreover, the World Bank has recently been involved in making loans to private gold mining companies based in Canada. One community in the province of San Marcos held a community referendum against exploration and development on their lands. Both the World Bank, through its continuing support, and the Guatemalan state continued to back the rights of the mining company over those of indigenous citizens in direct violation of ILO Convention 169.

5 General Otto Perez Molina, 2007 presidential candidate who narrowly lost the elections in the second round in November 2007, was a key player in the counterinsurgency war and a graduate of the School of the Americas. Recently, evidence has emerged that he was directly involved in the murder of Bishop Juan Geraldi. Bishop Geraldi was bludgeoned to death 1998 two days after the Office of Human Rights of the Catholic Church, which he headed, released an exhaustive report, *Guatemala: Nunca Mas*, accusing the military of over 90% of the human rights violations committed during the counterinsurgency campaign (see Goldman 2007). Moreover, weeks before the run-off elections, two Guatemalan investigative journalists for *El Periodico* revealed the intimate connections between Molina and drug trafficking. Seventy percent of all cocaine from South America enroute to the U.S. goes through Guatemala. Amnesty International (2002) characterized Guatemala as a "human rights meltdown" presided over by a corporate mafia-state in which the military had shifted from being funded by the CIA to benefitting from the largesse of drug traffickers.

6 Emblematic of this have been military incursions into returned refugee communities and communities where genocide-case witnesses live. There is a pending genocide case against General Efrain Rios Montt in the Spanish courts while the same case languishes in the Guatemalan court system for most of a decade. These eye-witnesses to genocide are crucial to the cases. In October 2007, the Guatemala military entered a community in Chajul Quiche allegedly to recruit youth into its "volunteer" army. Illom is a community of people who survived the massacres of the 1980s.The army stayed in the community for over seven hours, going door-to-door and in some cases, entering houses. They returned for three consecutive days. In a similar incident in July 2006, Guatemalan soldiers with blackened faces dropped out of helicopters into several refugee communities in the Ixcan under the pretext of searching for terrorists, weapons and guns. They used similar tactics of intimidation and terror as had been used against the

same people 20 years earlier. Unsurprisingly, nothing was found.

7 These are recorded deaths. No one knows for sure how many people have actually died, nor the numbers of people who have died enroute across Mexico for which there are no statistics.

8 When referring to co-operative work relations I mean that people worked their plots of land, for instance, individually or with kin, sold the harvest together as a co-operative, yet the profits accured to individuals. In constrast, the CPRs laboured collectively and shared equitably all the resources that accrued.

9 The importation of cheap corn and beans from the U.S. has had a devastating effect on local economies as prices undercut the domestic market and local food security. Moreover, by the mid-1990s a crisis of overproduction and speculation on the world coffee market, alongside ecological catastrophes had occurred in Central America, hitherto one of the leading coffee production regions of the world. For the first time in over a decade, coffee prices fell below $50/100 pounds. In a sign of the deregulation times, in 1989 the International Coffee Organization lifted strict price controls and the world market began to fluctuate culminating in overproduction, which in Central America and Mexico left millions of small producers as well as landless labourers on large coffee plantations in dire economic straits.

10 Deaths by calendar year recorded by Pima County Medical Examiner's Office, where 90% of the bodies found in the Tucson sector are processed, are as follows: 75 in 2001, 147 in 2002, 156 in 2003, 170 in 2004, 196 in 2005, 175 in 2006, and 201 in 2007 (to 1 November) (Personal communication, Dr. Bruce Anderson).

11 Through June 2007, there were 13,000 Custom and Border Protection (CBP) agents nationwide (under the auspices of Department of Homeland Security) with over 12,000 stationed along the Southwest border and 3,000 in the Tucson sector. The CPB budget has grown from US$6.7 billion in 2006 to over US$10 billion in the 2008 fiscal year. In contrast, in 1994 there were only 300 agents in the Tucson sector.

12 Coyotes often tell migrants that the trek across the Mexican border to their pick up along one of the state highways in Arizona will take only a day or two. In reality the shortest trek is three to four days without incident. To walk in the desert in the summer where temperatures often exceed 110°F, a migrant would need to carry two gallons of water per day, which is, of course, impossible. The most common cause of migrant death in the Arizona desert is dehydration.

13 Border Patrol agents include the more militarized BORTAC (Border Patrol Tactical Unit), a specially trained tactical unit as well as BORSTAR (Border Patrol Search, Trauma and Rescue), the "humanitarian response team." BORTAC's website is illustrative with regard to the delusional quality of their self-described mission to halt terrorism at the border: "But it's in the desert where BORTAC teams are really in their element. Agents hide in the desert brush and wait for illegal immigrants or drug smugglers to sneak down centuries [*sic*] old secret trails used by Spanish gold prospectors and Indian raiding parties" (www.cbp.gov/linkhandler/cgov/newsroom/fact_sheets/border/border_patrol/bortac.ctt/bortac.pdf).

14 There have been several incidents in the past five years in which BP agents have been indicted on murder charges stemming from killings while apprehending migrants. None have resulted in convictions. The most recent in southern Arizona was in January 2007 when a BP agent shot a 22-year-old man from Puebla, Mexico at point blank range while he was kneeling on the ground (Green 2008). After two hung jury trials, the prosecution dropped the case and the BP agent has resumed his position.

15 In 2005, 23-year-old Daniel Stauss and Shanti Sellz, two volunteers for the humanitarian group based in Tucson, No More Deaths, were apprehended by BP agents as they were transporting three migrants in critical condition from the 105°F heat of the Arizona desert to a hospital in Tucson for emergency care. They had received clearance from a medical doctor and a lawyer via satellite phone, following protocols that had been agreed upon between No More Deaths and the BP. Notwithstanding, Straus and Sellz were arrested and prosecuted for a felony crime of transporting "illegal aliens" with intent, which could have resulted in a 15-year prison sentence. The charges were dismissed in September 2006. However, the arrest and prosecution initially had a, perhaps intentional, chilling effect on organizations that provide humanitarian assistance to migrants. No More Deaths has historical ties to the Sanctuary Movement that began in Tucson in the 1980s to offer legal and humanitarian assistance to Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees. In 1984, the Department of Justice initiated criminal prosecutions against two activists of the Sanctuary Movement in Texas and 16 activists in Tucson.

16 Some women take their children with them. Two devastating stories, both witnessed by my husband, are illustrative of the tragedies occurring repeatedly in the Tucson sector. A woman from Guatemala was found dead, propped up on a rock on the Tohono O'dham reservation in July 2007 with her ten-year-old son sitting by her side waiting for someone to find them. The boy had refused to leave his mother who died of dehydration. In 2006, the BP had just apprehended a large group of migrants, approximately 20 people, when my husband arrived as part of a humanitarian group. A woman was sobbing uncontrollably. While the helicopter had circled overhead, the coyote had grabbed her four-year-old out of her arms and ran. The coyote and child were not caught in the sweep.

17 The *Arizona Daily Star* reported that Mexican drug cartels are increasingly using human decoys to facilitate cocaine shipments in the Arizona desert. According to the *Star*, drug lords are increasingly taking over the business of smuggling migrants as more of the drugs are being transported on foot as the BP has increasingly sealed off the usual drug routes and erected vehicle barriers. (Arizona Daily Star 2007b). However, large quantities of drugs enter the U.S. through ports of entry. An FBI sting in Tucson in 2005 entrapped over 40 law enforcement officials including BP agents and active duty military personnel transporting drugs from the border to Phoenix. In several instances, U.S. military vehicles were used in the operation.(Arizona Daily Star 2007a). There have been several convictions, but no one implicated higher up the chain of command.

18 In a rather strange co-mingling of drugs, violence and impunity, a news article (Smyth 2005) reported that a Department of Homeland Security warning was issued to south Texas law enforcement, including CBP, that some former members of the Guatemalan special forces, the "Kaibiles"—self-described "messengers of death" during the counterinsurgency war in Guatemala—had resurfaced in Mexico and were training members of the Zetas, the paramilitary force of the Mexican Gulf drug cartel.

19 Reagan claimed they were "economic" migrants and the then Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) routinely denied asylum to refugees from Guatemala and El Salvador. Less than 3% of Guatemalans and Salvadorans seeking refugee status in the U.S. were granted in 1984. Given the widely reported human rights violations taking place in both countries, these policies were a violation of U.S. obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention (Gzesh 2006). See Scott and Marshall (1991) for an examination of the complicity of the CIA with cocaine smuggling during the Central American wars.

20 Over 40% of people in the U.S. without documents first entered the country through U.S. ports of entry and then overstayed their visas.

21 There is widespread documentation of militia abuses against both undocumented and documented people, including U.S. citizens of Amerindian and Hispanic origin in southern Arizona (see Border Action Network 2002). In 2003, an undocumented migrant escaped from a mobile home in Three Points, Arizona, a town 25 miles from the border, where he and two others had been held and tortured by several local men. According to Pima County Sheriff's violent crime unit, the migrant who escaped had "torture wounds of a screwdriver and pliers under his toes" and "his front teeth were beaten out of his head with some implement." The fate of the other two men, at the time of the report, was unknown (Arizona Daily Star 2003:1).

22 With the introduction of the Secure Borders Initiative in 2005, the Department of Homeland Security has been a boon to U.S.-based defense industries such as Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman and Boeing as they compete for multi-billion dollar contracts to install a sophisticated array of high-tech surveillance technologies, including a "virtual fence," along the southern border.

23 ICE raids in three factories during 2006 in Colorado, Nebraska and Massachusetts resulted in over 900 migrants being arrested at work, leaving behind children and infants without a mother or father. A recent report by the National Council of La Raza and the Urban Institute noted that 500 children were directly affected in these raids, the majority of whom are U.S. citizens, and that many are suffering from trauma-related illnesses.

24 Perhaps this is only matched by the fact that private construction firms holding government contracts with the Department of Homeland Security have hired "illegal immigrants" to build the fences along the U.S.-Mexico border designed to keep them out (Desert Sun 2007).

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