An aerial photograph of a densely populated town in Guatemala, with mountains in the background under a blue sky with white clouds. The town is built on a hillside, and the buildings are closely packed. The text is overlaid on the image.

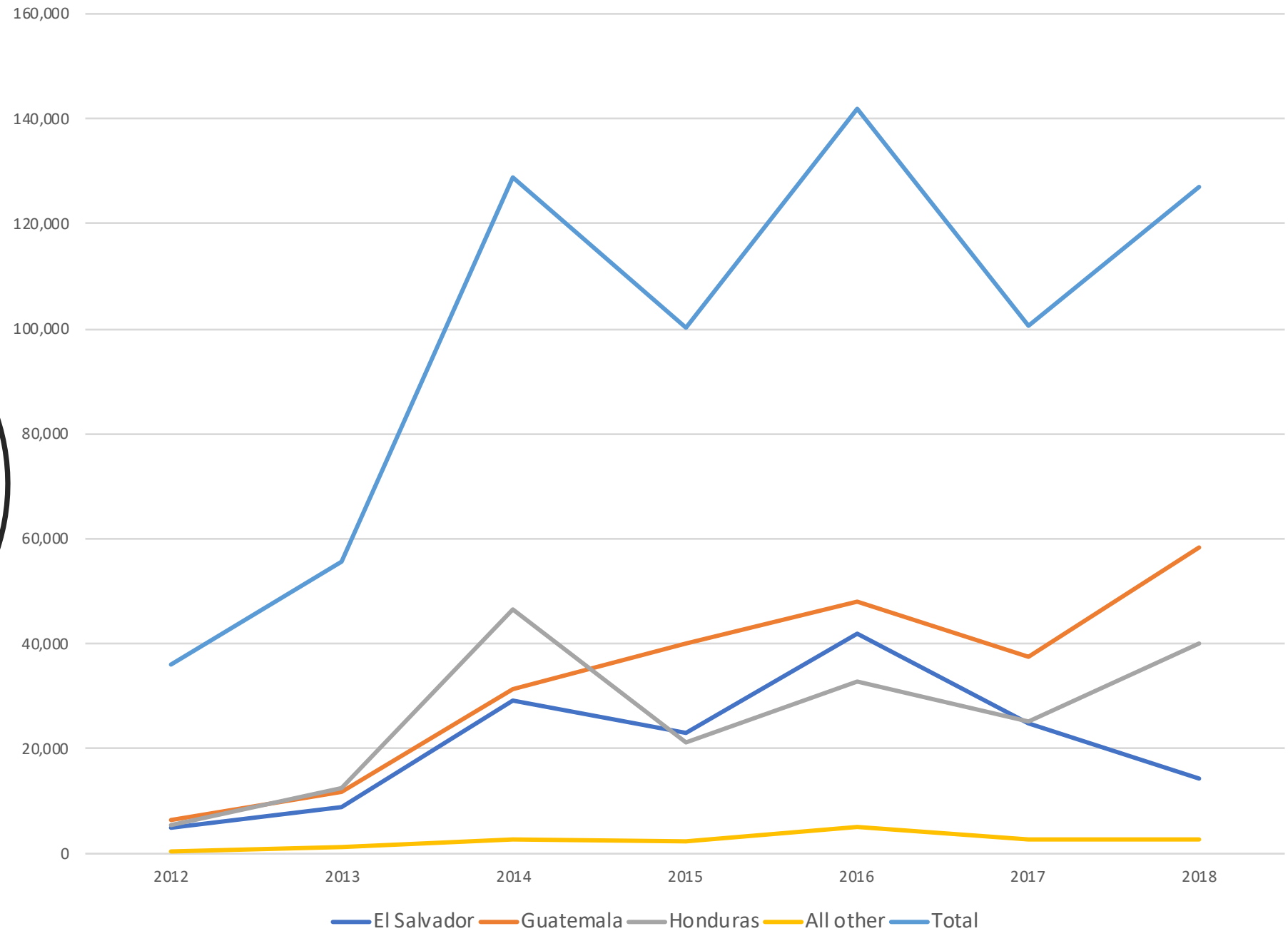
# Displacement of Refugee and Migrant Children from Guatemala

Lauren Heidbrink, PhD, MA/MS

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California State U., Long Beach

Total number of  
Child Deportations  
from the U.S. and  
Mexico  
(unaccompanied  
and in families)











CASA DEL MIGRANTE











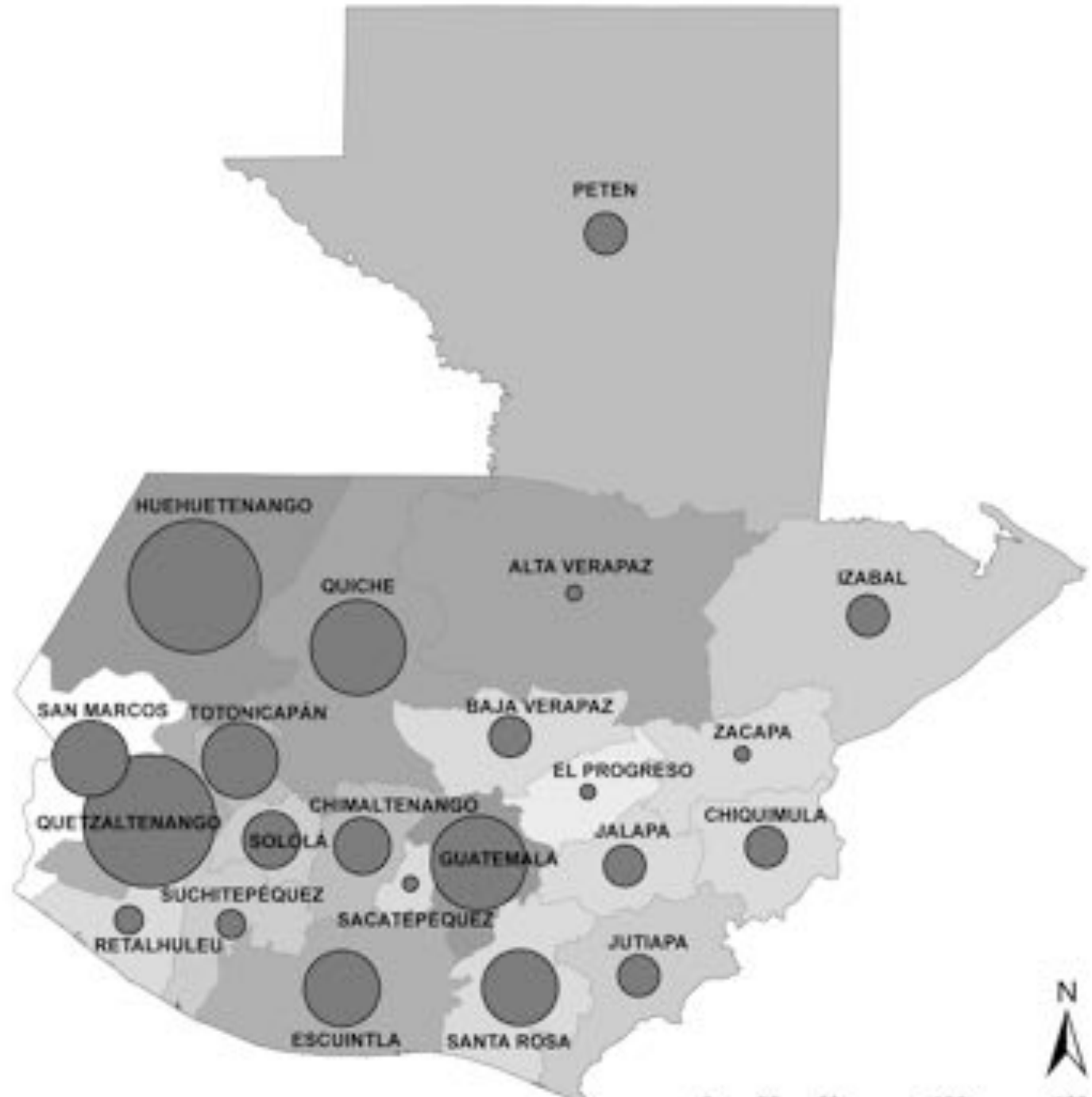






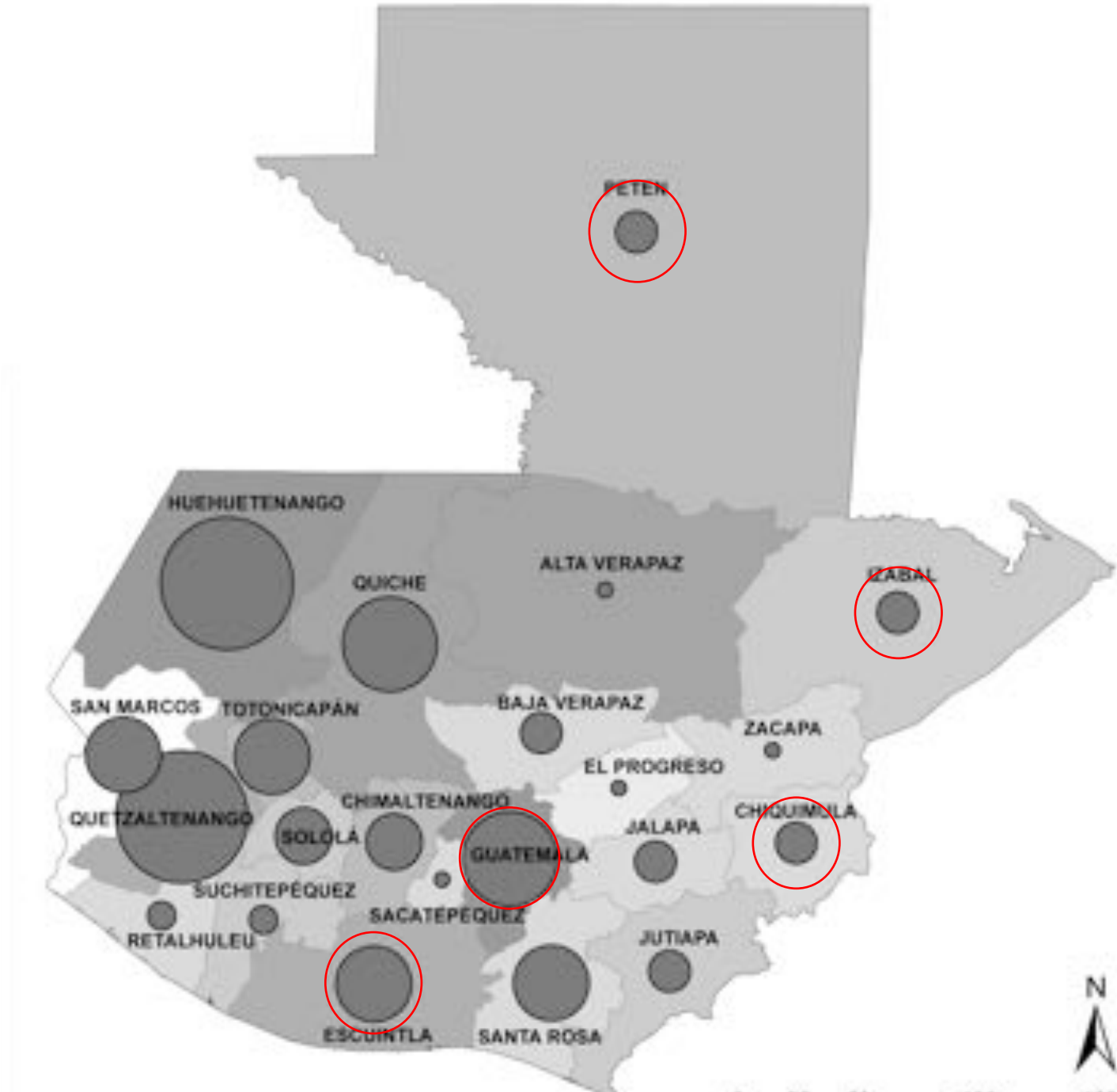
# REASONS FOR MIGRATION

Departments of  
Origin of  
Unaccompanied  
Children to the  
U.S.  
(2007-2017)





Homicides by  
Departments of  
Origin  
(2007-2017)



“The Guatemalan government treats us like we don’t belong--even on the lands of our ancestors--and blocks us at every turn. Bad schools, no work, no medical care. They treat us like *indios sucios* while they rob gold from under our lands. Believe me, I never wanted to migrate. I’d heard the stories from my cousin--about the dangers of the journey, living in a cramped apartment, working twenty hours a day and never saving--but I had no choice. My mother and sister got sick; the mine contaminated our water and spoiled the crops. They call it ‘*desarrollo*’, but it is not developing our communities; it is devastating them. They are killing us slowly.”

- Juan Gabriel, seventeen years old, Dept. of San Marcos



# DEVELOPMENT VIOLENCE







STRUCTURAL  
VIOLENCE

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It was unexpected. My father died in a car accident and my mother was left with the four of us to care for alone. We sold the few things that remained in the house--the bed, the dresser, the stove, our *güipiles*--so we could pay for the funeral. We still did not have enough, so we mortgaged the house. We buried my father, but not even properly, and we took the rest to pay for my passage. I'm the second daughter; my sister did not want to go, but I did. I wanted to support my family, to help my mother, and to send my little brothers to school...I was scared though, worried about getting raped, but I knew I must go. I figured it's better to die trying than to die here not able to contribute. It didn't go as planned. I was caught and returned three times. The debt was heavy; we could not pay it off. The bank took our home and the land underneath it. That was three years ago. Now we live here in my uncle's home. We lost everything--our father, our home, my reputation. My sister says she will try. God willing, she will find better luck.

- Leticia, sixteen years old , Dept. of Quetzaltenango

# DEBT-DRIVEN MIGRATION





# Use & Prevalence of Debt

- 36 percent of surveyed households reported utilizing loans
- Uses: family business, agricultural, household appliance, medical services, funeral expenses
- 40.6% continue paying ( $> 1/3$  renegotiate) and 6.3% defaulted







*“Forget about your debt.”*

*- pro bono attorney to Julian, a 15yo from San Marcos*

*“Ignore it (debt) and focus on your studies.”*

*- social worker to Juana, a 16yo from Tacaná*

*“Let your parents worry about it (repayment). You worry about being a kid.”*

*- legal aid paralegal to Edwin, a 14 yo from Cajolá*

*“Do what you can but don’t let it (interest of debt) worry you too much.”*

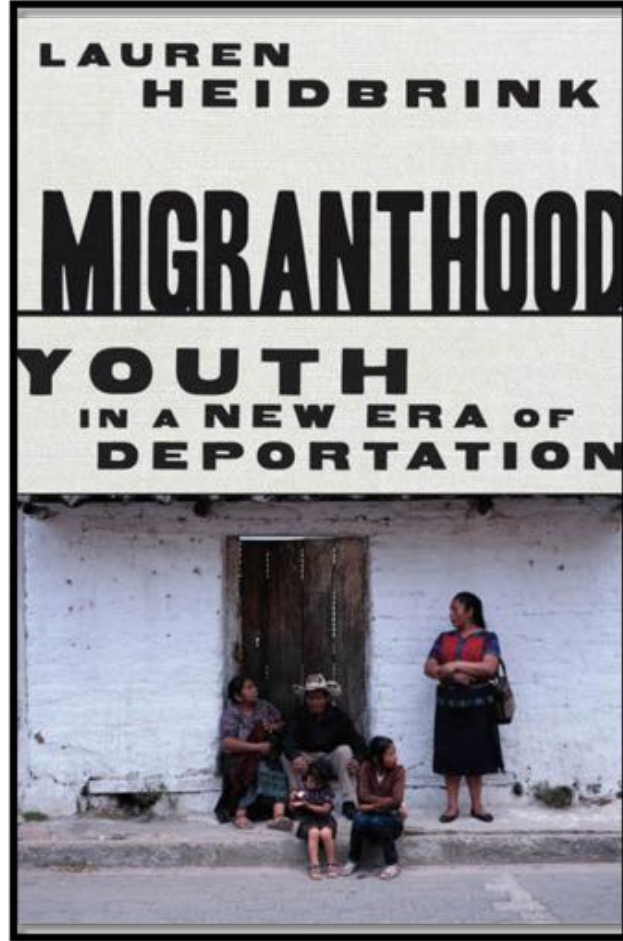
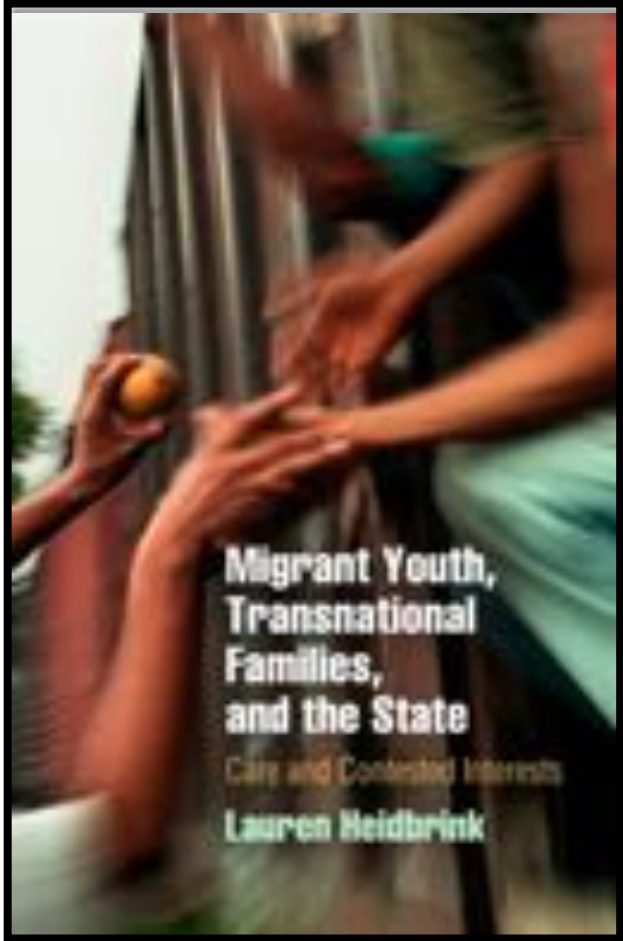
*- pro bono attorney to Isaias, a 17yo from Tajumulco*

*“It’s not your responsibility. It’s not your debt.”*

*- ORR federal field specialist to Yasmin, a 16yo from San Marcos*







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