

## FIRST DRAFT

# ALL WORK AND NO PLAY



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS NATIONAL CHILD LABOR COMMITTEE COLLECTION

Images like this 1909 photo by Lewis Hines of the National Child Labor Committee, showing even young children working in a Maryland bean processing factory, helped spark a nationwide effort to restrict child labor.

## Child labor and migrant living conditions were a major concern 100 years ago

In June of 1924, researchers with the National Child Labor Committee spread out across Mesa, Montrose and Delta counties, talking to families whose children — some as young as six years old — worked as farm laborers.

They contacted 330 families in the three counties who had a total of 650 children performing farm work. The researchers found that the greatest number of children worked in sugar beet production, followed by harvesting hay, onions, potatoes and fruit.

They also found living conditions atrocious for children of contract migrant workers, who were mostly Mexican, and schooling for those children was often nonexistent.

Conditions for the children of farm owners and farm renters were better. Even so, many of these children were engaged in long hours of difficult work. And local attitudes toward this form of labor were lax.

Among the locals contacted, there was little concern about children — even very young children — working long hours in physically demanding jobs, the report said. “Very few [people] recognized that the use of children as workers constitutes any problem whatever.”

Perhaps among the people interviewed that was true. But by 1924, child labor in factories and on farms were matters of considerable concern around the country.

A century ago, a constitutional amendment was approved by Congress that would have allowed Congress to regulate child labor and would have prohibited

children under age 18 from working in most occupations. By 1933, it had been ratified by 28 states, including Colorado. But it didn’t receive the necessary approval of three-fourths of the states to become part of the Constitution.

It won support in The Daily Sentinel, however. The newspaper said on Aug. 10, 1924, that “The federal child labor amendment now pending

before the various legislatures is a vital social issue ... The right of little ones to their day of happy childhood should be as fundamental as the adults’ right to liberty and free speech.”

The National Child Labor Committee, a New York based organization formed in 1904 and chartered by Congress in 1907, was one of the leading backers of the amendment.

Since its earliest days, the group had been conducting on-site research into child labor. Often the group had to use subterfuge to gain access to places where children were employed in dangerous jobs at long hours for low pay.

One committee worker, photographer Lewis Hines, posed as a Bible salesman, a postcard salesman and an industrial photographer to gain access to factories, farms, canneries and other places where children were employed. His photographs of children working in sweatshops helped spark public demands for legal restraints on child labor.

Demanding an end to children working in factory sweatshops was one thing, however. Taking on farm labor in the West was another matter.

As a Fort Collins newspaper put it early in 1924, “The child labor agitators are again abroad in the land, spreading false propaganda.”



BOB SILBERNAGEL



THE MUSEUMS OF WESTERN COLORADO

Workers packing peaches at a Palisade peach orchard early in the 20th century included adults, teen-agers and some younger children.

Sugar beets were then a major crop on the Front Range, as well as in Western Colorado, and the Fort Collins paper harbored no doubt that the work was beneficial.

“It is outdoor work in pure air, in contrast to the indoor work of child labor in the sweat shops of the cities,” the paper said. “The children are working for or with their parents in contrast to working under strange bosses in factories.”

Even so, the 1924 report from Mesa, Montrose and Delta counties found that “The children who worked in beets had a lower median age than that found in any other crop,” just over 12 years old. Roughly a quarter of the children

working in beet fields were from six to nine years old.

Additionally, the report said, “The work day was longer in beets than any other crops, the average for all children being 10 hours per day.”

Furthermore, a larger percentage of contract migrant workers — mostly people who had come directly from Mexico or were descendants of Mexican immigrants, but also German-Russians — worked in sugar beets than any other crop.

In contrast, more than 80 percent of child workers in fruit orchards of the time were children of orchard owners or those who rented orchards. Only 2.2 percent were contract or migrant workers.

The work day for children in fruit production was measurably shorter as well, averaging 8.6 hours a day. And there were no children working in fruit under nine years of age.

Housing for local families with child workers were primarily frame houses, according to the report, and were “fairly typical of the average American rural community.”

However, “the living quarters provided for the contract families are almost universally bad,” the report said. “Very few of these habitations deserve the dignity of the term, house, for most of them are miserably tumbledown shacks.”

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# WORK: Child labor, migrant living conditions a major concern 100 years ago

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School for Mexican children working as contract laborers was equally problematic. Few people, including the children's parents, expected the Mexican children to attend school when there was still beet work to be done. Even then, the report said, "the children are not wanted [in schools] on the grounds that they are Mexican."

In fact, the report said, "The attitude which the local people take toward those of Mexican descent is the most serious finding of this study ... There cannot be a sympathetic approach to the question of child labor until there is a better understanding between the two groups of people."

In 1924, there were few restrictions on immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries, even though existing laws set strict limitations on immigrants from Southern European and Asian countries.

Consequently, sugar companies actively recruited workers in Mexico. One video, made by a Front Range sugar company about 1920, showed mostly adult Mexicans working in Colorado beet fields. But it also showed them playing baseball, celebrating holidays, attending carnivals and living in well-kept adobe cottages. Life was good for migrant sugar-beet workers, was the message.

Not everyone believed that, however, and despite the failure of the Child Labor Amendment,



THE MUSEUMS OF WESTERN COLORADO

Sugar beet workers, including children, on the job in a Mesa County sugar beet field early in the 20th century.

the National Child Labor Committee continued to push for laws to restrict child labor.

Success finally occurred in 1938, with passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act that included prohibitions on children under 14 working in most occupations. Separate rules were adopted for agricultural operations, and they still allow children as young as 10 to do non-hazardous

farm work for limited hours when not in school. Children age 14 and above are granted more leeway in the farm jobs they can perform and the hours they may work.

However, as a 2023 federal investigation into Guatemalan children working in meat-packing firms in 11 U.S. states showed, problems continue. And organizations that track worker

protections say federal agencies don't have enough resources to enforce child labor laws.

Sources: "Children Working on Farms in Certain Sections of the Western Slope of Colorado," by Charles E. Gibbons, National Child Labor Committee; "Child Labor Factsheet," by the National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc.; "National Child Labor Committee," by Catherine A.

Paul, www.socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu; "How U.S. immigration laws and rules have changed through history," by D'Vera Cohn, www.pewresearch.org; "Great Western Sugar Beetworker's Training Film, circa 1920." Information was also provided by Jacob Richards and Tom Acker.

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## BOOKS

### Indigenous author explores charged issue of blood lines in debut novel 'Fire Exit'

### BOOK NOTES SENTINEL STAFF

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Morgan Talty has followed up on the success of his prize-winning story collection "Night of the Living Rez" with a poignant first novel that explores the charged question of what constitutes identity — family or tribe?

"Fire Exit" is narrated by a white man named Charles, who lives across the river from the Penobscot Nation in Maine. For years he has watched from afar as Elizabeth, the child he fathered with a Native woman, grows up on the reservation with her mother, Mary, and her Native stepfather, Roger. He longs to tell her the truth about her paternity, but Mary insists on keeping it a secret.

Charles' desire is driven in part by a history of mental illness in his family. When the novel opens, his mother, Louise, who has suffered for years from bouts of severe depression, is also exhibiting symptoms of dementia. She is at risk of losing any memory of their shared history as a family, a history that Charles wants Elizabeth to know.

Sadly for Charles, biology has been destiny. The son of a white



"FIRE EXIT" Morgan Talty (Tin House)

mother and father, he was raised on the reservation by Louise and her second husband, Fredrick, a Native man. But at age 18, he had to leave the reservation because of a tribal law that barred anyone

who was not Native from living on the land. It was that same law that prompted Mary to tell him, after she found out she was pregnant with his child, "The baby can't be yours."

Charles, however, has little use for the complicated, controversial "blood quantum" rules that many tribes use to keep track of citizenship, which are based on the idea that the amount of "Indian blood" in an individual can be quantified. Despite his racial identity as a white man, he feels connected to the people and the land where he grew up. "It was Fredrick's love that made me feel Native. He loved me so much that I was, and still am, convinced that I was from him, part of him... That was how I felt about Elizabeth."

The conflict between Mary and Charles comes to a head when Elizabeth, who has grown up to be a deeply troubled young woman, goes missing and Charles is enlisted to help find her during a nor'easter of epic proportions. It is a gripping ending to a thoughtful, heartfelt exploration of what it means to be part of a family and a community. Is it a matter of blood, biology or simply the bonds of love?

### Event features 'Truths of the Trail' author

Rick Kempa, editor of Deep Wild Journal, has a new collection of essays titled "Truths of the Trail."

Kempa and his book will be featured at a book event at 6 p.m. Tuesday at Grand Valley Books, 350 Main St.

Kempa will read from and chat about his book, which has "27 compact, entertaining essays about the core realities of backpacking: the pains and pleasures, surprises and simplicities, soul-satisfying rhythms and just plain joy familiar to all who take to the trail," according to deepwildjournal.com.

### June Poetry Night puts focus on verb use

The June Poetry Night will be from 6-7:45 p.m. Wednesday in the Mesa Room at Mesa County Libraries' Central Library, 443 N. Sixth St.

"Verb use in poetry" will be the topic for June. Last month's challenge to be brought to this meeting was to craft a poem using details from your backyard and a current event or elegy. Bring the poem you wrote or another poem to share.

Info: mesacountylibraries.libcal.com/event/10050239.

### Artist in residence leads creative project

Limited seats remain for "Ephemeral Inspirations: Creating Meaning Out of the Mundane" at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at Mesa County Libraries' Palisade Branch, 119 S. Third St., in Palisade.

This workshop will be led by Nicole Rivas, Mesa County Libraries' current artist in residence.

"Participants will explore ephemeral objects like postcards or photographs and use provided story starter prompts to create a poem, collage, or painting," according to a workshop description.

RSVP is required and can be made at mesacountylibraries.libcal.com/event/12200926.

## TV LISTINGS - Tuesday, June 11, 2024

TUESDAY Evening													
	B	6:00	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
BROADCAST	5	CBS	3 News (N)	Big Bang	FBI "Sacrifice"	FBI: International "Cowboy Behavior"	FBI: Most Wanted "Desperate"	News (N)	(:35) Late Show-Colbert (N)	(:35) After Mid. (N)			
	18	PBS	6 PBS NewsHour (N)		Finding Your Roots "Mean Streets"	Roots "Songs of the Past"	Frontline "Crisis on Campus" (N) (SP)	Frontline "Israel's Second Front"	Amanpour and Company (N)				
	4	FOX	7 Family Feud	Fox 4 News (N)	Shazam "Father's Day Face-Off" (N)	Quiz-Balls "A Family Affair" (N)	Fox 4 at 9pm	Fox 31 News at Nine O'Clock (N)	Big Bang	Young Sheldon	Modern Family		
	11	NBC	9 KKCO 11 Ne	Wheel of Fortune	America's Got Talent "Auditions 3" (N)				11 News (N)	(:35) Tonight Show (N)	(:35) Meyers (N)		
	8	ABC	10 Inside Edition (N)	Ent. Tonight (N)	**** "Air" (23) Ben Affleck, Jason Bateman, Matt Damon.				The \$100,000 Pyramid	The Ten News (N)	(:35) Jimmy Kimmel Live! (N)	(:35) Nightline (N)	
	27	MNT	16 Chicago Fire	Chicago Fire	Chicago Fire	Last Man	Last Man	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Friends	Friends	Sports Night (N)	The Goldbergs
	25	TBN	17 Praise	Joyce Meyer	Living Proof With	Better Together	Stakelbeck	Praise	Joseph Prince	Michael Yousef	Sekulow	Christine (N)	
	82	CW	13 Dish Nation (N)	TMZ (N)	Police 24/7 "Outrunning the Law" (N)	Hostage "A Robbery Gone Wrong" (N)	Dish Nation (N)	TMZ (N)	Dish Nation (N)	TMZ (N)	Family Guy	Bob's Burgers	Bob's Burgers
		WTBS	12 (5:00) MLB Baseball Philadelphia Phillies at Boston Red Sox (N) (Live)		MLB Close (N)	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family
		UNI	14 Golpe de suerte (N)		El amor no tiene receta (N)	Noticiero	SaborDe/ Noticiero	Contacto deportivo (N) (Live)	La gata "Renovación de votos"				
	TELE	18 (5:00) Top Chef VIP (N)		El señor de los cielos (N)	Noticias	(:35) Noticias (N)	Acércate a Rocio						
	FNC	19 Jesse Watters Primetime (N) (Live)		Hannity (N) (Live)	Gutfeld! (N)		Fox News at Night (N) (Live)	The Five				Jesse Watters Primetime	
	PARMT	20 ** "Movie"					** "Movie"					** "Movie"	
	TNT	21 **** "Doctor Strange" (16) Chiwetel Ejiofor, Rachel McAdams, Benedict Cumberbatch.		**** "Ant-Man and The Wasp" (18) Evangeline Lilly, Michael Douglas, Paul Rudd.								Cold Case "Static"	
	HALL	22 (5:00) ** "A Whitewater Romance"		** "Sand Dollar Cove" (21) Chad Michael Murray, Clare Bowen, Aly Michalka.				The Golden Girls	The Golden Girls	The Golden Girls	The Golden Girls	The Golden Girls	
	OXY	25 Snapped "Brenda Delgado"		Snapped "Pamela Moss"				Snapped "Eric Christensen"				Deadly Waters "Ghost Ship"	
	NICK	26 SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	
	FREE	28 **** "Smallfoot" (18) Voices of James Corden, Zendaya, Channing Tatum.		**** "A Bug's Life" (98) Voices of Kevin Spacey, Dave Foley.				**** "Hercules" (97) Voices of Josh Keaton, Roger Bart, Tate Donovan.					
	CNN	29 Anderson Cooper 360 (N) (Live)		The Source With (N) (Live)				Laura Coates Live (N) (Live)				Anderson Cooper 360	
	FX	30 **** "Black Widow" (21) Florence Pugh, David Harbour, Scarlett Johansson.						**** "Eternals" (21) Salma Hayek, Kit Harington, Angelina Jolie.				Erin Burnett OutFront	
	TOON	31 Ed, Edd 'n Eddy	Ed, Edd 'n Eddy	Billy & Mandy	Billy & Mandy	King of the Hill	King of the Hill	Bob's Burgers	Bob's Burgers	Bob's Burgers	American Dad!	American Dad!	
	A&E	32 Neighbor.	Neighbor.	Neighbor. (N)	Neighbor. (N)	Customer (N)	Neighbor.	(:05) Neighbor.	(:35) Neighbor.	(:05) Neighbor.	(:35) Neighbor.	(:35) Neighbor.	
	ESPN	33 (5:00) 30 for 30 False Positive (N)		The Ultimate Fighter		The Ultimate Fighter (N)		SportsCenter (N) (Live)		SportsCenter (N) (Live)		SportsCenter (N) (Live)	
	ESPN2	34 (5:00) AU Softball AUX		E60		NFL Live		30 for 30 False Positive				Good Guy (N)	
	AMC	35 **** "Uncle Buck" (89) Amy Madigan, Jean Louisa Kelly, John Candy.		(:15) **** "The Great Outdoors" (98) John Candy, Dan Aykroyd.				(:15) ** "Mr. Deeds" (02) Winona Ryder, Peter Gallagher, Adam Sandler.					
	ATTSP	36 World Poker Tour: Alpha8		World Poker Tour		World Poker Tour		World Poker Tour		United Fight Alliance		United Fight Alliance	
	USA	37 WWE NXT (N) (Live)				(:10) **** "2 Fast 2 Furious" (03) Tyrese Gibson, Eva Mendes, Paul Walker.		(:10) **** "2 Fast 2 Furious" (03) Tyrese Gibson, Eva Mendes, Paul Walker.					
	ION	39 Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire "My Lucky Day"		Chicago Fire "Blow This up Somehow"		Chicago Fire "Dead of Winter"		Chicago Fire "Escape Route"		Chicago Fire "Double Red"	
	DISN	40 Bluey	Bluey	Bluey	Big City Greens	Big City Greens	Big City Greens	Ladybug	Ladybug	Marvel's	Hailey's on It!	Hailey's on It!	
	CMTV	42 Mama's Family	Mama's Family	Mama's Family	Mama's Family	Mom	Mom	Mom	Mom	Mom	Reba	Reba	
	COM	45 Seinfeld	Seinfeld	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	
	LIFE	46 Castle "Secret's Safe With Me"		Castle "Murder, He Wrote"		(:05) Castle "Probable Cause"		(:05) Castle "The Final Frontier"		Castle "Secret's Safe With Me"		Castle "Murder, He Wrote"	
	ALT	48 Planet X	Poker Night	Best of Moser	18 Holes (N)	Golf at Altitude	Golf at Altitude	Poker WPT L.A. Poker Classic - Part 3		Best of Moser	Altitude Extra	Grand Sumo Tokyo, Japan: Show 2 (N)	
	DISC	49 Deadliest Catch "King Crab Derby" (N) (SP)		(:10) Deadliest Catch		(:05) Catch "The Twenty-Season Toll"		Deadliest Catch "King Crab Derby"					
	HGTV	50 Farmhouse Fixer "Berry Farm Charm"		Farmhouse Fixer "Episode 8" (N)		Hunters Int'l (N)	Hunters Int'l (N)	Zillow Gone Wild	Zillow Gone Wild	Supermarket Stakeout		Hunters Int'l	
	FOOD	51 Chopped "Drag Brunch" (N)		Supermarket Stakeout		Super. Stakeout "Grilled to Perfection"		Chopped "Ribeye on the Prize"		Supermarket Stakeout		Super. Stakeout "Grilled to Perfection"	
	TRAVEL	52 Believers "Buyer Beware"		Believers "Hell's Honky-Tonk"		Believers "House of Pain"		Believers "Paranormal Playdate"		Believers "Buyer Beware"		Believers "Hell's Honky-Tonk"	
	ANPL	53 Yellowstone Wardens "CSI Warden"		Yellowstone Wardens "Open Season"		Wardens "A Warden Celebration"		Wardens "A Buck's Blood"		Yellowstone Wardens "CSI Warden"		Yellowstone Wardens "Open Season"	
	TLC	54 Doubling Down With the Derricos (N)		OutDaughtered "Trick or Retreat" (N)		7 Little Johnstons (N)		Unexpected		Doubling Down With the Derricos		OutDaughtered "Trick or Retreat"	
	HIST	55 Skinwalker Ranch "Beaming Up"		Skinwalker "The Cone Zone" (N)		(:05) Beyond Skinwalker Ranch (N)		(:05) Skinwalker Ranch "The Flash"		(:05) Skinwalker Ranch "Beaming Up"		Skinwalker Ranch "The Cone Zone"	
	EI	57 Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	Modern Family	EI News (N)	Sex and the City	Sex and the City	Sex and the City	Sex and the City	
	TCM	59 **** "Blood and Sand" (41) Linda Damell, Rita Hayworth, Tyrone Power.		(:15) **** "Forever Amber" (47) Cornel Wilde, Richard Greene, Linda Damell.				(:45) **** "Broken Lance" (54) Spencer Tracy.					
	TVL	60 Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	King	King	King	King	King	King	
	SYFY	61 **** "Star Trek Beyond" (16) Zachary Quinto, Karl Urban, Chris Pine.		**** "Elysium" (13) Jodie Foster, Sharlto Copley, Matt Damon.								**** "Apollo 13" (95) Tom Hanks.	
	MSNBC	63 All In With Chris Hayes (N) (Live)		Alex Wagner Tonight (N) (Live)		Last Word With Lawrence (N) (Live)		11th Hour (N) (Live)		The Beat With Ari Melber		Last Word With Lawrence O'Donnell	
	CSPAN	78 (2:30) U.S. House (N) (Live)		Public Affairs Events						Public Affairs Events			