**Chapter 5**

**Key Concepts**

cantina

gossip

marital bargain

personal fulfillment

pleasure-danger continuum

romance

secrets

sexual adventure

socially acceptable rule-breaking

stigmatized work

youth culture

widow

**Discussion Questions**

1. What are the dangers and pleasures migration made available to Calakmuleños? How were these distributed across genders and generations? What explains this distribution?

2. What exactly is gossip? What role does gossip play in international migration? Why do people gossip about families participating in migration?

3. What was the connection between the pleasures offered by international migration and the pleasures increasingly sought out by young Calakmuleños participating in youth culture?

4. Some researchers argue that intimate relationships built on open and honest dialogue as well as shared emotional worlds constitutes a “feminization of intimacy.” Furthermore, they argue this feminization is especially suited to economies that require mobile workers, because such mobility *precludes* the kinds of shared labor typical of peasant families before the arrival of international migration. Do you agree that dialogue and shared feelings are essential to keeping relationships going, especially relationships in which the partners spend periods of time apart? Do you agree such relationships emphasize women’s social skills and, therefore, constitute a kind of “feminization of intimacy”?

*Personal reflection*

Are pleasures and dangers also gendered in your social world? Are any of these pleasures and dangers travel-related? Do people in your social world ever travel elsewhere to behave in ways that would be unacceptable at home?

**Activities**

1. This chapter discusses women’s search for personal fulfillment, an effort that intersects with the idea of freedom. This activity asks you to explore the relationship between personal fulfillment and social freedom. First, write down your own personal goals for the next five years of your life. Then, examine one of the “Human Freedom Indexes” compiled by various private think tanks and posted on the internet. How do these indices define freedom? Which of the elements that they describe are required for you to enact your personal fulfillment goals? Thinking back to the backlash against Calakmueño women’s expansion in freedoms, do you anticipate your goals being supported by or conflicting with any of the elements described in the indices?

2. This chapter shows how a husband’s absence can force a wife to rely on stigmatized work to survive. What jobs are women in the United States most likely to occupy? To what extent are these jobs stigmatized or valued? One way of assessing a job’s worth in society is to consider its associated salary. Choose one job that tends to be filled by women and that you believes is valued. What are the salaries associated with that job?

3. Migrant deaths at the border don’t actually take on the border. They take place within United States and Mexican territory. [Use this website](https://humaneborders.org/migrant-death-mapping/) to examine where bodies of the deceased have been found. Recalling from this chapter Juan Diego’s warnings to his children, who is most likely to find the body of a deceased border crosser? What challenges are there to identifying the deceased?

**Delve Deeper**

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