

# An Ethnography of Visions: Masculinity and Fragility in the American South

In the American South, masculinity is often defined by violence, poverty, and racism. These three forces have shaped the lives of men in the region for centuries, and they continue to exert a powerful influence on how men understand themselves and their place in the world.



## Keeping Autonomous Driving Alive: An Ethnography of Visions, Masculinity and Fragility by Leslie T. Chang

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Print length : 148 pages



This ethnographic study explores the experiences of men in the American South who have been affected by violence, poverty, and racism. The study draws on interviews with men from a variety of backgrounds, including white men, black men, and Latino men. The men in the study share their stories of how these forces have impacted their lives, and they offer their insights into the challenges and opportunities that men face in the South today.

## Violence

Violence is a pervasive force in the lives of men in the American South. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the South

has the highest rate of homicide in the United States. Men are disproportionately likely to be both victims and perpetrators of violence.

The men in this study spoke about the many ways that violence has affected their lives. They talked about growing up in neighborhoods where shootings were common, and about losing friends and family members to violence. They talked about the fear and anger that they felt as a result of their experiences with violence, and about the ways that violence had shaped their sense of themselves.

One of the men in the study, a white man named John, grew up in a small town in Mississippi. He told me about how he was constantly bullied by other boys in his school. He said that he was often beaten up, and that he was even threatened with death on several occasions.

"I remember one time I was walking home from school, and this group of boys started chasing me," John said. "They were throwing rocks at me, and they were telling me that they were going to kill me. I was so scared that I ran all the way home, and I didn't stop running until I got to my front door."

John's story is not unique. Many of the men in this study had similar experiences with violence. They talked about being beaten up, stabbed, and shot. They talked about seeing their friends and family members killed. And they talked about the lasting impact that violence has had on their lives.

## **Poverty**

Poverty is another major force that shapes the lives of men in the American South. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the South has the highest

poverty rate in the United States. Men are disproportionately likely to live in poverty, and they are more likely to experience the negative consequences of poverty, such as unemployment, homelessness, and hunger.

The men in this study spoke about the many ways that poverty has affected their lives. They talked about growing up in poor families, and about struggling to make ends meet. They talked about the shame and stigma that they felt as a result of their poverty, and about the ways that poverty had limited their opportunities.

One of the men in the study, a black man named James, grew up in a poor neighborhood in Atlanta. He told me about how he and his family struggled to make ends meet. He said that his parents worked long hours, but they still couldn't afford to put food on the table every night.

"We were always hungry," James said. "I remember one time my mom had to sell our furniture just so we could buy groceries. It was really embarrassing, and I hated that we were so poor."

James's story is not unique. Many of the men in this study had similar experiences with poverty. They talked about growing up in families that struggled to make ends meet. They talked about going hungry, and about living in rundown houses. And they talked about the ways that poverty had limited their opportunities.

## **Racism**

Racism is a third force that shapes the lives of men in the American South. The South has a long history of racism, and it continues to be a major problem in the region today. Men of color are disproportionately likely to

experience racism, and they are more likely to be victims of police brutality, mass incarceration, and hate crimes.

The men in this study spoke about the many ways that racism has affected their lives. They talked about being discriminated against in school, at work, and in the criminal justice system. They talked about being called names, being harassed, and being threatened with violence. And they talked about the ways that racism had made them feel less than human.

One of the men in the study, a Latino man named Jose, grew up in a small town in Texas. He told me about how he was often discriminated against because he was Latino. He said that he was called names, and that he was even beaten up on several occasions.

"I remember one time I was walking home from school, and this group of white boys started chasing me," Jose said. "They were calling me names, and they were throwing rocks at me. I was so scared that I ran all the way home, and I didn't stop running until I got to my front door."

Jose's story is not unique. Many of the men in this study had similar experiences with racism. They talked about being discriminated against, harassed, and threatened with violence. And they talked about the ways that racism had made them feel less than human.

The men in this study have experienced violence, poverty, and racism firsthand. These forces have shaped their lives in profound ways, and they have had a lasting impact on their sense of themselves and their place in the world.

The stories of these men are a reminder of the challenges that men face in the American South. They are also a reminder of the resilience and strength of these men. Despite the challenges they have faced, they have persevered and they continue to make a positive contribution to their communities.

The men in this study offer a valuable perspective on the challenges and opportunities that men face in the American South. Their stories can help us to understand the complex dynamics of masculinity in the region, and they can help us to develop more effective strategies for addressing the challenges that men face.



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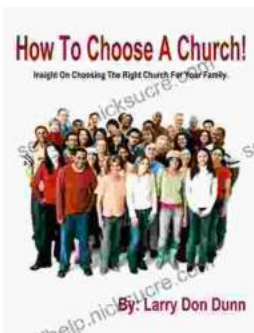
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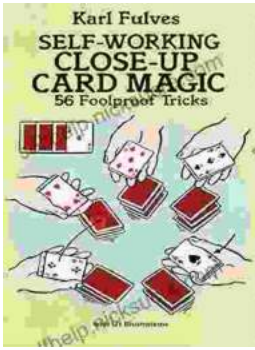
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