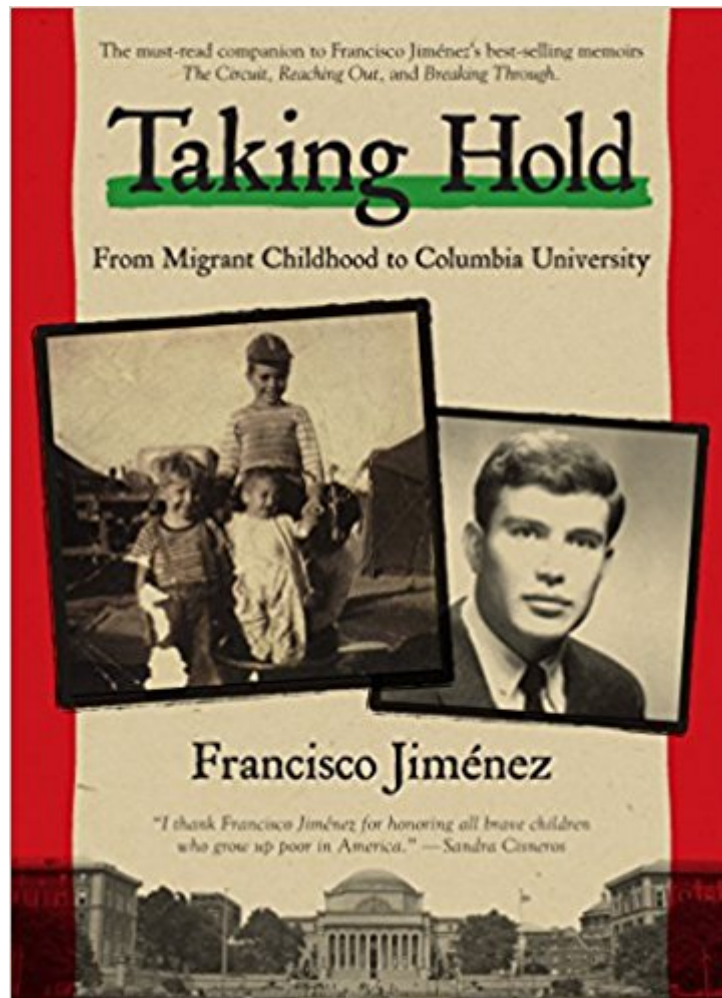




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Taking Hold: From Migrant Childhood To Columbia University



Synopsis

In this fourth book in his award-winning memoir series, Francisco Jimenez leaves everything behind in California—•a loving family, a devoted girlfriend, and the culture that shaped him—to attend Columbia University in New York City. With few true accounts of the Latino experience in America, Francisco Jimenez's work comes alive with telling details about the warmth and resiliency of family and the quest for identity against seemingly impossible odds. "Many [students] have commented that your books give them hope and courage and, thanks to you, many are seriously thinking about college for the first time in their lives" --John Padula, teacher, Boston Public Schools

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up •In this fourth of Jimenez's autobiographies, the author recounts his life from when he started his graduate work at Columbia University in the late 1960s to when he began his professorship at Santa Clara University in 1973. Jimenez refers frequently to the poverty he and his migrant family experienced when he was a child. The anxiety wrought by his family's dearth of resources instilled in him an ongoing fear that he was inadequate to meet the financial and academic challenges before him. Jimenez demonstrates that by dint of intelligence, tenacity, and help from friends and professors, he was able to obtain the education he desired so fervently. Jimenez's memory is capacious. He remembers the color of the suit he wore on his first day at Columbia (light green) and the cost of rent for the first two apartments where he and his wife lived

(\$150 and \$175). These details are interesting but without modern context will not mean much to most readers. Jim Jimenez re-creates some scenes with resonant clarity, emphasizing the necessity of pinching pennies and the joy of finding out his wife was pregnant. Other elements are not as strong. Lengthy descriptions of his academic pursuits go beyond the intended readership's interests and educational experience. Overall, this is an eloquent work about overcoming poverty to receive an advanced education. VERDICT Consider purchasing this for biography collections in need of modern-day inspirational figures. — Jennifer Prince, Buncombe County Public Libraries, NC

"Simply written but full of beautiful details, this book should inspire every citizen of our diverse and changing world." --VOYA "Taking Hold" is an engaging, inspiring account of a migrant worker turned Ivy League graduate." --New York Daily News "There is a humble sincerity and earnest plain-spokenness to Jim Jimenez's prose. His ingratiating storytelling--who else could make these years of adulthood such a compelling read for teens?--make us root for him to succeed." --Horn Book Magazine "With characteristic grace and insight, [Jimenez] describes his new life in the grit and crush of Manhattan, the initial alienation of being a misfit among peers...and the strain of missing his family and girlfriend in California." --Booklist "With the themes of courage, patience, determination, family, and love, this compelling memoir gives hope and inspiration to all readers, encouraging them to pursue their dreams." (DD) --Language Arts Journal (May 2016) Awards and recognitions: 2016 John Steinbeck Award 2016 UCSB's Luis Leal Award for Chicano/Latino Distinction in Literature Best New Teen Books for 2015 - Nebraska Library Commission Best Social Studies Books for 2015 --International Literacy Association CCBC Best-of-the-Year Choices for 2016

I have now read ALL of Francisco's books and have loved everyone of them. His writing style reminds me of John Steinbeck because of the easy flow of his words. I especially like the way he relates to his life when he was younger and how it relates to his life in each of the books he has currently written. The pictures he has included in the last 3 books let the reader see who he is talking about. I found this very helpful when I was teaching his books. My students then could see who they were reading about. I am now waiting for the audio book to come out so I can add it to my collection. Prof. Jimenez is a very quiet unassuming person who carries a big stick in the literary world as far as I am concerned and one I am proud to know. My hats off to you for showing young poor people they can do it also if they put their minds to it.

I started reading this series because my son was reading it in school and I wanted to be able to discuss it with him. I quickly got hooked and had to read all the books. It is a great story and a timeless story. Immigrants before and since the time of the authors family have been faced with the same struggles and discriminations. This book reveals those difficulties in a straightforward non sensationalized way that allows the reader to enter his world and see the good and the bad. It has been a wonderful book to read and discuss with both of my sons. The difficulties faced by the author and his family spark conversation about social justice, and his hard work and accomplishments inspire and motivate us all to do more. I highly recommend this whole series of books.

Not sure anything could measure up to the first book, which I have read aloud to classes of children, and read with my upper level adult ESL students. Jimenez' simple writing style doesn't quite support the adult story well; I'm not sure who the target audience is. The observations don't go quite deep enough for an adult reader, but I am not convinced this would hold the interest of child or middle school readers. I do love his earlier books, however, and they've been inspirational for many young and older students I've known.

I bought this for one of my bilingual students after she asked for a year to read the next book in this set. She is still reading, but loves it so far!

I couldn't put this book down and was sorry when I finished it. I wanted to read more about the author's path.

A great example of perseverance. Every one of Francisco's books are humbling because even though financial hardships were a reoccurring obstacle, he still managed to stay focus in reaching his goal.

His books are so inspirational!

Another great book by Francisco Jimenez!

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