



Chicano Legacy Mural
Mario Torero, San Diego, CA



Gintong Kasaysayan, Gintong Pamana
Eliseo Art Silva, Los Angeles, CA

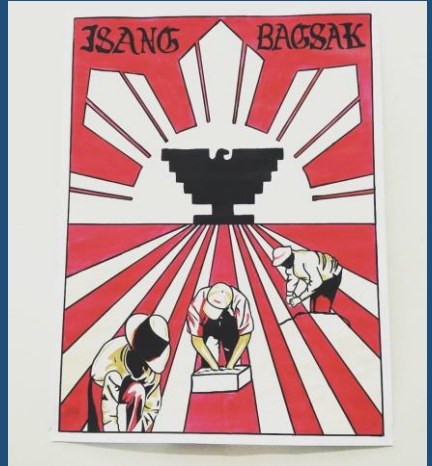
Nancy Magpusao Burke she|her/s

Lessons from César Chávez, Delano Manongs and Farmworkers Movement

Wed April 27, 2022
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. PDT

Overview

- Community guidelines
- Social climate of race relations
- Mexican and Filipino farmworkers/Manongs
- Coalition and conflict
- Key figures of United Farm Workers (UFW)
- Legacy and Lessons



Michelle Calimlim, KAMP Isang Bagsak

Community Guidelines

- Active listening
- Brave space
- Closed caption
- Comments in chat/questions
- Participation
- One Mic, One Star, mute

Reflection and Response

- What brought you to this workshop today?
- Do you know anyone who worked in the fields at the time of César Chávez, Dolores Huerta, Larry Itliong, Philip Vera Cruz, et al. - describe?



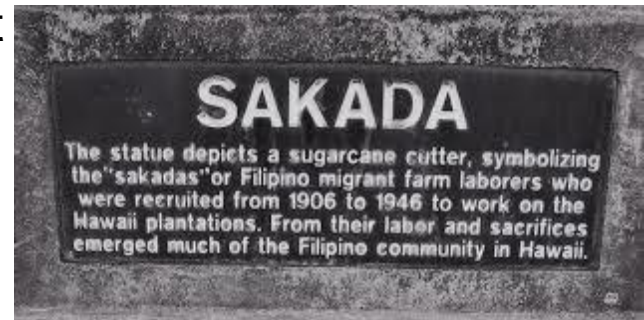
Origins of Filipino/x Farmworker History

Early Filipino-American Settlement

1898: the Philippines became a U.S. territory following Spanish American War

1899-1902*: Philippine American War, Philippines' fight for independence; US takeover

Around 1906: Many Filipinos came to U.S. as farmworkers in Hawai'i, California, Alaska



*U.S. declared end of Philippine American War in 1902, uprisings continued in sections of the Philippines




Mexican Farmworker History

Mexican Revolution 1910-1917: many fled to the U.S. where farm owners enticed them to work the fields

1920's Mexican refugees/asylum-seekers came to the U.S. in desperation for work, faced exploitation – living conditions

In the fields, Mexican workers faced discrimination and growers kept Mexican workers segregated from Filipino workers



Intersections of Racial Conflict:

Great Depression - Post World War II - Agricultural Fields



Positively No Filipinos Allowed

- 1920's history of turbulent Filipino strikes in Hawai'i's plantation fields against growers
- 1929: Great Depression - high rates of unemployment, job competition, scapegoating of immigrant workers
- 1930: Watsonville Riots – mobs of white men aimed violence at Filipinos over integrated dancehall

Intersections of Racial Conflict:

Great Depression - World War II - Agricultural Fields

- 1933: California prohibits marriage between Filipino and white residents
- 1934 Tydings-McDuffie Act - immigration quotas changing status of Filipinos from “nationals” to “aliens”; gradual independence
- 1943: Zoot suit riots in Los Angeles, June 3-8



The Bracero Program 1942-1964

- WWII labor shortage: U.S. and Mexico signed a trade agreement; conditions: adequate housing, food and sanitation – seldom enforced
- Mexican farmworkers, desperate for cash work, willing to take low-wage jobs



The Bracero Program 1942-1964

“Prospective Braceros often were asked to show their calloused hands to prove that they were experienced farm laborers. Workers were fingerprinted as part of the processing procedure, and were fumigated with DDT before being allowed to enter the United States.”

-Smithsonian Photo Collection



*DDT Dichloro-Diphenyl-Trichloroethane

César Chávez



y no quieren a los campesinos y piensan
que la unión son un montón de bandidos.

The Bracero Program 1942-1964

- Post World War II – started as a program to provide Mexican agricultural workers to growers it continued after the war
- Public Law 78 stated that no bracero-a temporary worker imported from Mexico-could replace a domestic worker; enforcement questionable
- Growers used racialized distinctions to pit workers against workers by ethnicity:

“You can always break a strike. If the Mexicans are striking, you call in the Filipinos and pay them a nickel more. When the Filipinos go on strike, the Mexicans are going to cross over and scab and they get to make the money. So no one ever really wins.”

-Alex Fabros Jr., Asian American Studies Professor
San Francisco State,
Delano Manongs: Forgotten Heroes of the United Farm Workers



Organizing Leaders, a partial list

- Andy Imutan, VP of UFW
- César Chávez, president of UFW
- Dolores Huerta, AWOC – NFWA
- Esther Uranday, organizer
- Helen Chávez, union operations





Organizing Leaders, a partial list

- Jessica Govea, union operations
- Linda and Carlos LeGerrette, union operations, confidantes
- Larry Itliong, co-founder AWOC
- Philip Vera Cruz, co-founder AWOC, 2nd VP of UFW
- Pete Velasco, VP of UFW

Delano Manongs, Marissa Aroy



The Delano Manongs and Dolores Huerta



Harsh Labor Conditions

- Grape pickers' wage in 1965: average of \$.90/hour plus ten cents per "lug" (basket) picked
- Growers ignored state laws regarding working standards
 - One farm: boss made workers all drink from same cup
 - Another Ranch: workers forced to pay a quarter per water cup
 - No ranches had portable field toilets
 - Workers' temporary housing: race-segregated, paid two dollars+ per day for unheated metal shack no indoor plumbing nor cooking facilities



"Typical Farmworker housing in CA"
Source: United Farm Workers

UFW Coalition-Building: Labor Unions

The UFW was a product of cross-racial coalition building. The two main labor unions involved were:

American Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC)

- Founded in 1959
- Led by Dolores Huerta, Larry Itliong and Philip Veracruz
- Mostly Filipino, Chicana/o, black, and white agricultural workers



National Farm Workers Association (NFWA)

- Founded in 1962, Huerta leaves AWOC to join NFWA
- Led by César Chávez
- Mostly Mexican agricultural workers
- Merges with AWOC to further organize boycott/strikes in northern and central CA



The Delano Grape Strikes 1965-1970

- September 8, 1965: Filipino American farmworkers and members of AWOC went on strike against Delano grape growers protesting years of poor pay and conditions
- September 16, 1965: One week after Filipinos initiated strike, Larry Itliong (AWOC) persuaded César Chávez (NFWA) to join AWOC
- Grape boycott educated consumers about the suffering of field laborers - millions stopped eating grapes.





Legacies and Lessons 1970

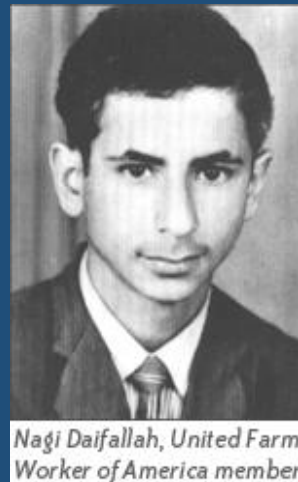


- Growers sign first union contracts
- Access to toilets
- Cold drinking water in the fields
- Rest periods
- Grievance procedures
- Pesticide controls
- A hiring hall
- Wage increase
- Right to be represented by a union
- Better pay, benefits, protection
- 40 Acres, Agbayani Village

Legacy and Lessons:

Hidden Stories, Coalition, Differential Inclusion

- Cross-coalition organizing
 - Filipino American laborers organized early strikes in Delano
 - Multiethnic organizing
 - Women organizers were at front lines of strike
- Organizers lost their lives on picket line
 - Nagi Daifallah: worked with laborers, UFW died Aug 15, 1973 from Kern County deputy's inflictions
 - Nagi revered for leadership in the Arab worker community, activism in union issues and translation skills among UFW



Unity Clap



Thank You!