



<https://doloreshuerta.org/>

Celebrating Dolores Huerta Day!

Labor Organizing: Organizing and Social Class

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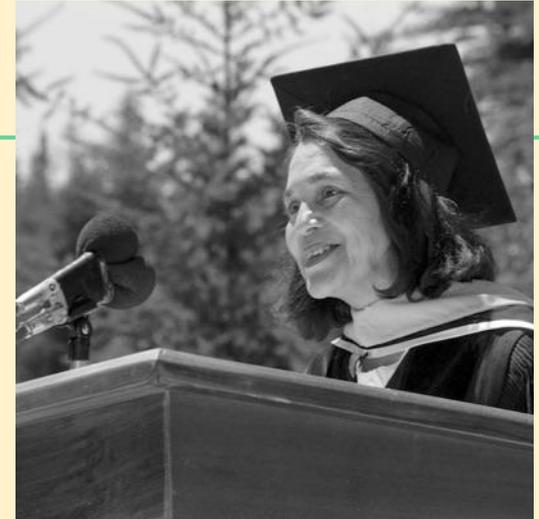


Photo courtesy Special Collections, University Library, University of California Santa Cruz.

Five-Day Unit Goals

- Students will be introduced to Dolores Huerta's activism and Dolores Huerta Day
- Students will understand policy context that led to labor organizing actions and the resulting laws
- Students will be introduced to the United Farm Workers and the Delano Grape Strike and Boycott
- Students will examine the power of labor organizing and consider current day examples
- Students will be introduced to concept of class struggle and connect this theory to current labor structures in the United States

Day 1

Introduction to Dolores Huerta

And Dolores Huerta Day
on April 10th

Are you familiar with Dolores
Huerta?

Write down anything and everything
that you know about Dolores Huerta

Who is Dolores Huerta?

Brief Background:

- Born in April 10, 1930 in Dawson, New Mexico
- Active in numerous school clubs
- Was a majorette
- Dedicated member of the Girl Scouts until the age of 18.
- Continued her education at the University of Pacific's Delta College in Stockton earning a provisional teaching credential.
- While teaching she could no longer bear to see her students come to school with empty stomachs and bare feet, and thus began her lifelong journey of working to correct economic injustice.
- Dolores left for delano from stockton in 1962
- Mother of 11



Photo credit: Kathy Murphy, used with permission.

Who is Dolores Huerta?

What She Saw

- Segregation
- Discrimination
- Poor Social conditions of Farmworkers
- Poor economic conditions of farm workers

What She Did

- Quit teaching to fight farmworker oppression
- 1955 stockton chapter of Community Service Organization (CSO) with Fred Ross
- 1960 Started Agricultural Workers of America (AWA)
- Voter registration Drives
- Lobbied politicians to allow non-US citizens to receive public assistance, pensions, and Spanish ballots, Spanish driving tests



Photo Credit: Dolores Huerta Foundation, photographer Angela Torres.



Who is Dolores Huerta?

Celebrating Dolores Huerta Day!

- April 10th (Dolores Huerta's birthday)
- Established in 2019 in California
- Recognition of lifelong pursuit of justice



About image: used by the State of California to recognize the day. Graphic designer unknown.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PROCLAMATION

A living legend, Dolores Clara Huerta was born on April 10, 1930, in Dawson, New Mexico. Taught by her family the importance of giving back to her community and giving a voice to the voiceless, Huerta has been a tireless advocate for working people of California.

Huerta's lifelong pursuit of justice was sparked in the Central Valley when, teaching the children of farmworkers, she often saw her students come to school with empty stomachs and bare feet. Finding her passion fighting for the rights of workers and their families, she has never stopped working towards equality. She began her advocacy work by serving as a leader of the Community Service Organization in Stockton and forming the Agricultural Workers Association, where she worked to increase voter registration in her community and advocated for neighborhood improvements.

Through this work, she joined forces with César Chávez to advocate for better conditions for farmworkers and their families. Together with Larry Iliong, Philip Vera Cruz, Pete Velasco and Andy Imutan, they formed the United Farm Workers and took on grape growers who were exploiting the people who toiled in their fields. Huerta was instrumental in the nationwide boycott of grapes that led to the first farmworker union contracts. Her fierce advocacy also helped secure the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975, a first-in-the-nation law that extended collective bargaining rights to farmworkers. She remained committed to nonviolent resistance, even after nearly losing her life when she was beaten at a protest in 1988.

It is for these acts of bravery and determination that Huerta became the first Latina inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1993 and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States, in 2016.

Huerta continues to be a powerful force for social justice and empowerment for all. Through her leadership of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, she continues to build upon her legacy of civic engagement by training the next generation of community organizers and advocating for the working poor, women and children.

Today, Huerta's 89th birthday, we honor her lifelong commitment to justice for all and the many trails she paved for generations of activists. May her rallying cry of "¡sí se puede!" continue to call us to fight for the change our communities need to thrive.

NOW THEREFORE I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim April 10, 2019, as the first annual "Dolores Huerta Day."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 1st day of April 2019.



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

ALEX PADILLA
Secretary of State

United Farm Workers (UFW) 1962 - Present



March to Sacramento, Cesar Chavez to the right. Photo credit © George Ballis, courtesy of UC Merced Library Archives, used with permission.

Dolores Huerta and the UFW



Right: September 24, 1965, Dolores Huerta on the Grape Strike picket line in Delano, California. Photo by Harvey Richards (© Paul Richards, Estuary Press).



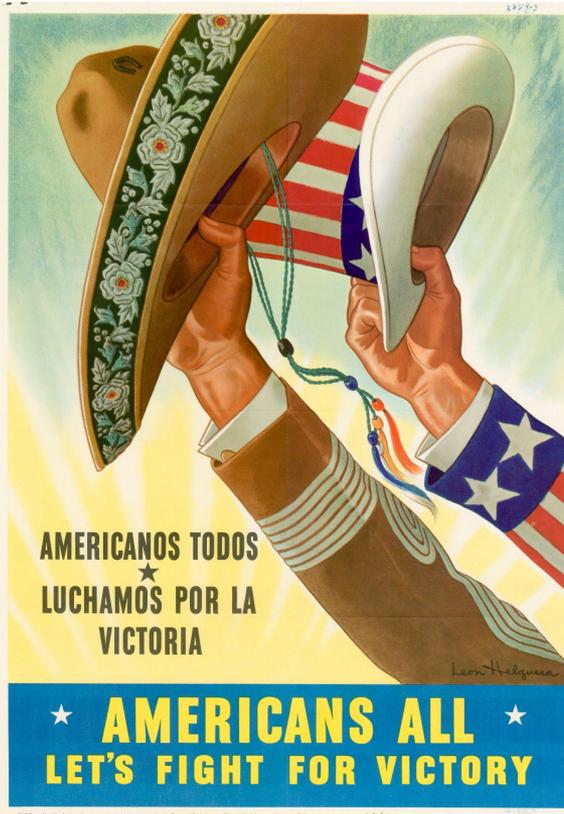
Photo Credit: Dolores Huerta Foundation, photographer Angela Torres.

¡Si se puede!

Rise of Labor Unions

- 1930s - Tremendous labor union gains due to pro-union stance of the Roosevelt administration and from legislation enacted by Congress during the early **New Deal**
- 1933 - **The National Industrial Recovery Act** provided for collective bargaining
- 1935 - **National Labor Relations Act** (aka **the Wagner Act**) required businesses to bargain in good faith with any union supported by the majority of their employees

American Farm Labor and the Bracero Program



Credit: Helguera, Leon. Americans all, let's fight for victory: Americanos todos, luchamos por la victoria., poster, 1943; Washington D.C. Public Domain.

- Labor shortage during World War II
- Bracero Program allowed Mexicans to work temporarily on U.S. Farms
- Program officially ended in 1964

Mexican Workers Wanted in October

Farmers and orchardists in Washington state have placed orders for approximately 6000 imported Mexican workers for the month of October, according to reports sent to

Figure 14. A description of the demand for Mexican laborers (Source: Northwest Farm News, September 9, 1943).



Right: The first Braceros arriving in Los Angeles, CA by train in 1942.

Credit: Dorothea Lange, working for the US Government., Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

United Farm Workers Union

- First genuine collective bargaining agreement between farm workers and growers in the history of the continental United States (1966 Schenley vineyards)
- The first union contracts requiring rest periods, toilets in the fields, clean drinking water, hand washing facilities, protective clothing against pesticide exposure, banning pesticide spraying while workers are in the fields, outlawing DDT and other dangerous pesticides, lengthening pesticide re-entry periods beyond state and federal standards, and requiring the testing of farm workers on a regular basis to monitor for pesticide exposure.

United Farm Workers Union

- The first union contracts regulating safety and sanitary conditions in farm labor camps, banning discrimination in employment and sexual harassment of women workers.
- The first union contracts providing for profit sharing and parental leave.
- Abolishing the infamous short-handled hoe that crippled generations of farm workers and extending to farm workers state coverage under unemployment, disability and workers' compensation, as well as amnesty rights for immigrants and public assistance for farm workers.
- The first union contracts eliminating farm labor contractors and guaranteeing farm workers seniority rights and job security.

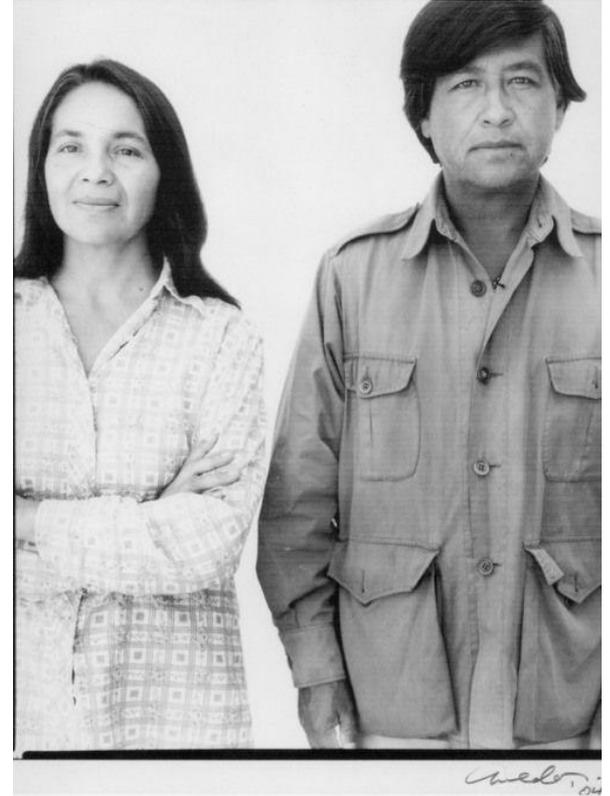


Photo credit: Richard Avedon; courtesy of Dolores Huerta Foundation, used with permission.

Farmworker supports provided by UFW

- Health Benefits (RFK Medical Plan)
- Pension Plans (Juan De La Cruz)
- Life insurance
- 1st credit union of farmworkers
- Cooperative stores
- Immigration Paperwork
- Income Taxes

IN DELANO—

Our Credit Union— Vigorous, Growing

The Farm Workers Credit Union, more than three years after its beginning in 1963, is a vigorous, well-staffed credit union run by the people themselves. Symbolic of the joining of the AWOC and the NFWA last year, the Mexicans and Filipinos together operate the credit union. Of the 15 elected officials, five are Filipinos and ten are Mexicans. The board is large so that no one man will have too much power.

Another function in the credit union is that of the supervisory committee which acts as a "watchdog" over the officers as they perform their duties. Another committee is the credit committee which passes on loans. It is their task to find out who are the "coyotes" who have no intention of paying back the money the credit union lends them.

The members of the credit committee have been burned a little by the "professional borrower" but it is now a much wiser committee that knows all the tricks of the cheaters. The committee does a very thorough job of finding out "who the person is" who seeks a loan. Careful investigations are made. The credit committee must find out how badly the money is needed, and how the people will be able to pay it back. The credit committee also makes emergency loans to the members of the credit union.

The people who work full-time, every day in the credit union are Helen Chavez, the assistant treasurer; Julio Hernandez, the president; and Roberto Barron, assistant to the president. Mrs. Chavez keeps the record of all money coming in as savings, and

money going out in loans. She helps the treasurer in preparing his reports to the Directors. Mr. Hernandez is the man that represents the credit union. He is the connecting line of communication between the people who run it and the people who use it: the shareholders. He makes sure the different committees work in harmony. Mr. Barron assists him in this work. The credit union works in many ways like a bank. The big difference is that it is operated by and for the people themselves. The money is used FOR THE PEOPLE; in a bank the money is often used AGAINST THE PEOPLE.

In Delano, the credit union is one of the strongest links in the chain which has made the huelga possible. It's 725 members are putting their money together, and together they are finding trust, unity and strength.

It is the same people who have joined together in the credit union, who have also joined together in the strike which broke the tyranny of millionaires Schenley, DiGiorgio and Goldberg, and brought a new era of dignity to farm work.

EL MALCRIADO page 13

NOT LONG AGO THE POWERFUL DELANO CREDIT UNION HAD LESS THAN FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS IN ITS TREASURY.

Below: Helen Chavez, Delano credit union employee, counts out money to Mrs. Margarita Osorno, one of the 725 shareholders.



IN BOTH NEW MEXICO AND DELANO, CALIFORNIA, PEOPLE WHO WORK TOGETHER ARE BUILDING STRENGTH FOR THE FUTURE.

If We Stick Together We Can Win

Credit: El Malcriado, © United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, used with permission.

Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to be an organizer? A labor organizer?
 - What are examples of labor organizing in our current time?
 - What kind of power does labor organizing have?
-

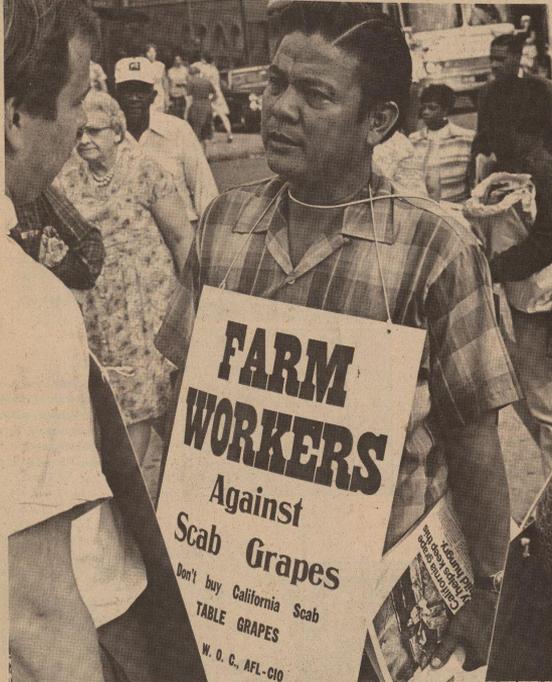
United Farm Workers



Photo credit: Victor Aleman, used with permission.

- 1962: Dolores Huerta founded NFWA with Cesar Chavez later to be renamed to UFW in 1965.
- 1963: First lobbying and negotiating victory by adding Farmworkers to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children ("AFDC") program, for the unemployed and underemployed, and disability insurance for farm workers in the State of California.

The Delano Grape Strike and Boycott



In September, 1965, over 4,000 grape pickers in the vineyards around Delano, California went on strike, when their employers refused to pay a living wage, sign a written contract, or recognize the workers' union. Since then, over 18000 workers have joined in that strike. For four long years, these farm workers, led by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, have struggled non-violently for social and economic justice. Here is our story:*

1965 grape boycott



Left: "The Delano Grape Strike and Boycott" 1970

This pamphlet published by the United Farm Workers (UFW) union publicized and sought support for a boycott of non-union table grapes. The pamphlet asks consumers to look for the iconic UFW union label before buying grapes.

Source: National Archives, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives

1965 grape boycott

- 5 year strike
 - Boycotts
 - Rallies
 - Marches
 - Non-violent resistance
 - Women and children more than ever on picket lines after seeing Dolores and Helen Chavez out there
 - 17 million people stopped eating grapes
 - Support from Europe and Canada

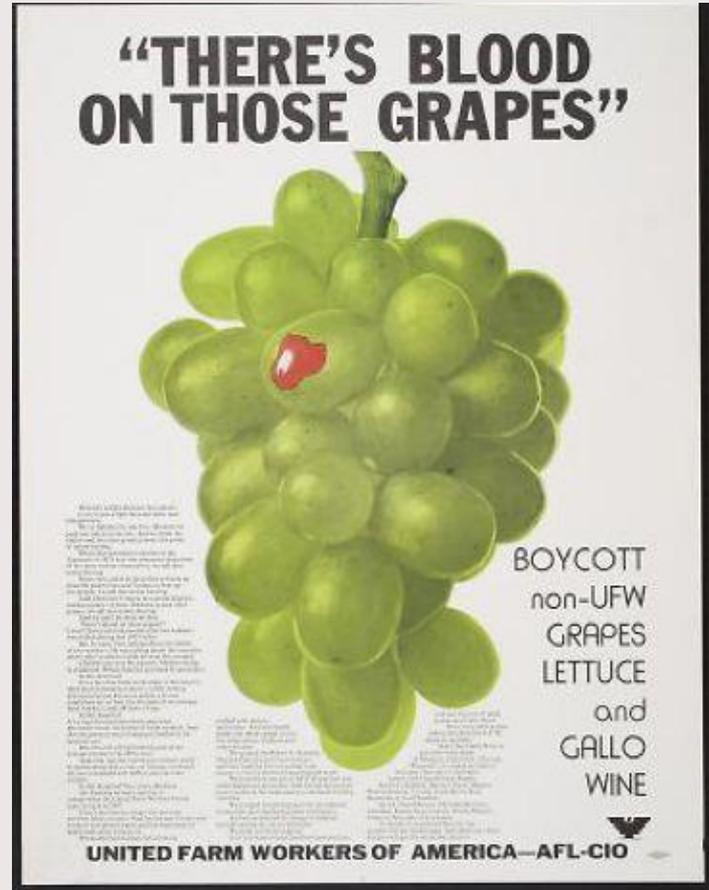


Image Credit: El Malcriado, © United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, used with permission.

*While this was
happening...*

March on Sacramento 1966

(still part of 1965 - 1970
grape boycott)

Source: Harvey Richards, [CC BY-SA 4.0](#),
via Wikimedia Commons



Witness:

Signed: William L. Kircher
William L. Kircher, Director

RECOGNITION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
SCHENLEY INDUSTRIES INCORPORATED
AND
NATIONAL FARM WORKERS ASSOCIATION

This agreement is entered into by and between the Schenley Industries Incorporated (hereinafter called Employer) and National Farm Workers Association (hereinafter called Union).

The Union has established to the satisfaction of Employer that it represents for purposes of collective bargaining a majority of the agricultural laborers employed by Employer in Kern and Tulare Counties, California.

The Employer and Union agree that negotiations of a written collective bargaining agreement setting forth the terms and conditions of employment for said agricultural laborers shall commence within thirty (30) days of the date of this recognition agreement, and both parties pledge to make every effort to conclude within sixty (60) days. Said negotiations shall be conducted at the offices of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.

It is agreed that if Union enters into any collective bargaining agreement containing conditions which Employer regards as more favorable than conditions contained in its collective bargaining agreement with Union, Employer may upon ten (10) days notice incorporate said conditions into its collective bargaining agreement.

It is agreed that pending the commencement of negotiations, Union will engage in no concerted economic activity against Employer. It is further agreed and understood that if the parties are unable to reach agreement upon the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, Union may take whatever economic action it desires.

It is further agreed that Union will make all reasonable efforts to organize other agricultural laborers engaged in grape growing, pruning and harvesting.

Executed this 6th
day of April, 1966

Signed: Sidney Korshak
Sidney Korshak, Attorney
For Schenley Industries Incorporated

Signed: Cesar Chavez
Cesar Chavez, Director
National Farm Workers Association

IMAGE TO THE LEFT
IS THE FIRST
CONTRACT SECURED
FOR FARMWORKERS
IN THE HISTORY OF
THE UNITED STATES,
NEGOTIATED BY
DOLORES HUERTA.

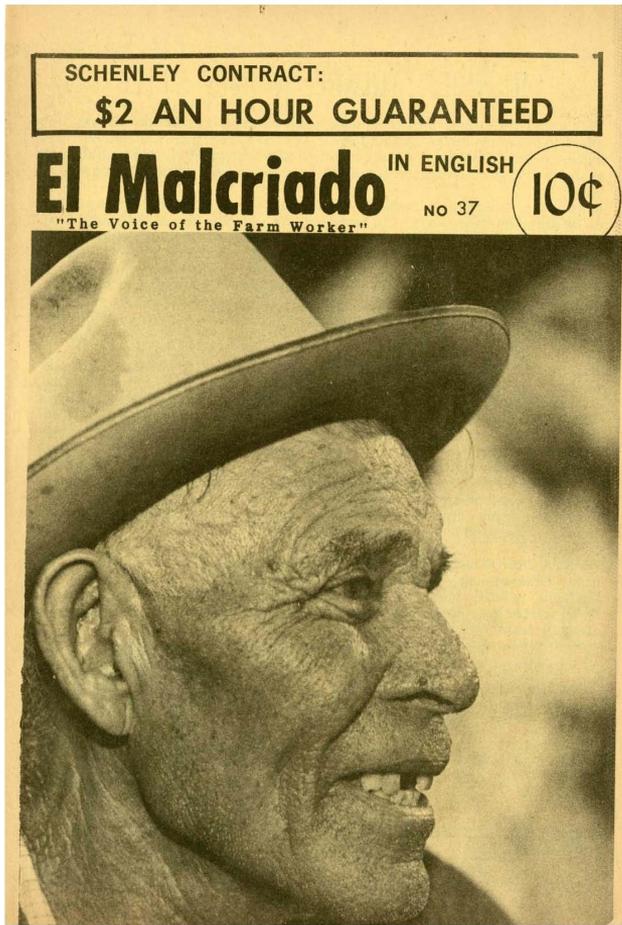


Image Credit: El Malcriado, © United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, used with permission.

At a time when minimum wage was \$1.25 an hour nationally, the contract guaranteed:

- ❖ Between \$2.00 - \$3.50 depending on position
- ❖ Workers voted and decided on \$8-\$12 per ton of wine grapes depending on the field
- ❖ That Schenley would fire all contractors who cheat workers
- ❖ 6 paid holidays
 - Time and half if did work on holiday
 - 50% more working 48 hours in a week
- ❖ 3 days for funerals and sick days
- ❖ Schenley would pay for tools, equipment and clothing for sprayers
- ❖ A health and Welfare plan



THE SCHENLEY CONTRACT!

The first week in June, 1966, is an historic week for farm workers. For the first time in history, a major grower signs a contract with the National Farm Workers Association. For the first time in history, farm workers are protected by a written contract guaranteeing a wage of not less than \$2 an hour. For the first time in history, the farm workers are protected by a union. Here is what that protection means:

The F. W. A. demands that Schenley industries pay all farm workers at least \$2 an hour, guaranteed throughout the year. Irrigators will get \$2.25 an hour. Tractor drivers will get \$2.50 an hour. Sprayers, truck drivers, and pipe men will get \$2.75 an hour. Mechanics will get \$3 an hour. Swampers, who load boxes on the trucks, will get 9¢ a box for a crew of four. The crew leaders will get 25¢ above what the crew is receiving on an hourly basis.

In the pruning season, pruning by hand will pay \$2.50 per hour plus a bonus of \$1.50 per row in cane and \$1 per row in spur pruning. (A row is 80 vines.) Pruning by machine will pay \$3.50 per hour plus a bonus of \$1 per row.

The Schenley workers were not sure how they wanted to be paid for the wine grapes (for gondolas). At first they wanted \$4 an hour guaranteed, plus \$1 per ton for the grapes picked. But then the workers voted to ask for a straight piece rate of \$8, \$10, or \$12 per ton picked, depending on the field and picking. **BUT IT WAS THE WORKERS THEMSELVES WHO DECIDED WHAT THE WAGES WOULD BE!**

Wages are only a part of the story. Schenley will fire all its contractors (including Frank Herrera) and promise not to use any more contractors who cheat the workers. Instead, the union will set up a hiring hall. Schenley will call up the union and say, "We need 3 crews, 60 workers this week" and the union will send over the workers needed. Everyone who works at Schenley's will be protected by the union.

The workers will get six paid vacations. They get the day off but they still get paid the same wage as if they had worked. The vacations are Mexican Independence Day (Sept. 16), Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year, and Fourth of July. If they do work on these days, they get their wage plus a 50% bonus. They also get 50% extra wages for all the time they work over 48 hours per week.

Workers will be allowed 3 days off (with pay) for funerals of members of their families, and days off (with pay) when they are sick.

Schenley will pay for all tools and equipment used by the workers, and will also pay for special clothing for sprayers.

Still to be worked out is the special "Health and Welfare Plan" to provide medical insurance and pensions for the workers.

But wages, vacations, and pensions are still only part of the story. For at last the worker, protected by the union, can work with dignity and pride. No boss, contractor, or crew leader can treat these workers like animals, insult them or look down on them. The boss can't fire the worker just because the boss doesn't like him. And the bosses know that if they are unfair to any worker, or try to shove anybody around, they will have the whole union to deal with.



HOW TO END A STRIKE Schenley officials sat down at this table with leaders of the Farm Workers Association and workers from Schenley's Ranch to work out a contract. Left to right are: Gil Padilla, Dolores Huerta, Alex Hoffmann (lawyer) and Cesar Chavez, leaders of the FWA; Bill Basset and Bill Kircher of the AFL-CIO; Sidney Korshack, high official of Schenley Industries; and five members of the Farm Workers Association who are now workers at Schenley Ranch near Delano, Srs. Alviso, Ariola, Garza, Sanchez, and Jordan.

EL MALCRIADO SAYS: VIVA SCHENLEY INDUSTRIES, which have the good sense to recognize the Farm Workers Association and sign a fair contract. And **VIVA CESAR CHAVEZ,** and the **ASSOCIATION,** and the **STRIKERS,** who

won this great victory. The 250 years of feudal agriculture and grower tyranny in California are ending, and the campesino is winning his long struggle for justice.

Schenley Industries, Inc.

Oppression and Resistance

DEFINE OPPRESSION:

*THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY OR POWER
IN A CRUEL OR UNJUST MANNER*

WHAT DOES
OPPRESSION LOOK
LIKE?



DYNAMICS OF OPPRESSION

the exercise of authority or power in a cruel or unjust manner

	INSTITUTIONAL (Systemic – Society)	INTERPERSONAL (Group)	INTRAPERSONAL (Individual)
Thoughts	Institutionalized stereotype <i>(acknowledges stereotype exists* even through denial)</i>	Group stereotype <i>(thought of stereotype is commonly understood)</i>	STEREOTYPE <i>(Spanish or Southern accent is bad)</i>
Feelings / Beliefs	Institutionalized prejudice <i>(institution accepts stereotype as factual)</i>	Group prejudice <i>(stereotype is believed to be true)</i>	PREJUDICE <i>(Spanish or Southern accent is bad)</i>
Behaviors / Actions	Institutionalized discrimination <i>(institution justifies discrimination)</i>	Discrimination <i>(Spanish or Southern accent are made fun of)</i>	Self-inflicted discrimination <i>Is internalized (I change my accent to avoid discrimination)</i>
Policies, Practices, Structures, Laws, Culture, Norms	OPPRESSION / ISM <i>(Structural Inequality of hiring practice based on accent)</i>		

DYNAMICS OF OPPRESSION IN AMERICAN FARM LABOR

INSTITUTIONAL (SYSTEMIC – SOCIETY)	INTERPERSONAL (GROUP)	INTRAPERSONAL (INDIVIDUAL)



“ We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. ”

**Martin Luther
King, Jr.**

(Letter from a Birmingham Jail)

Oppression and Resistance



Photo by [Jon Tyson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

DEFINE RESISTANCE:

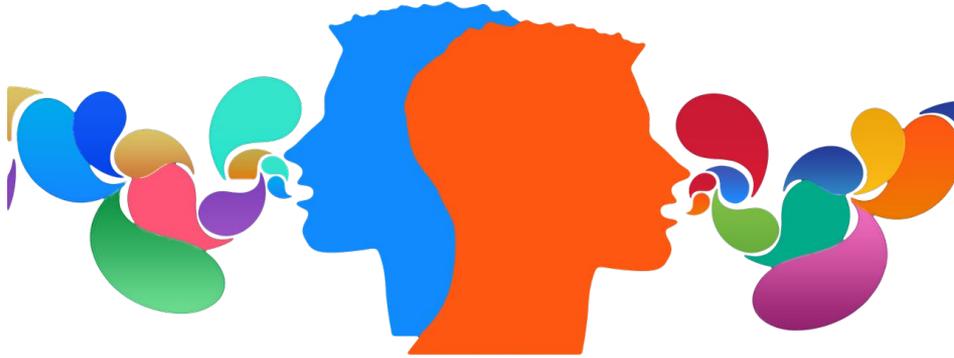
*THE REFUSAL TO ACCEPT OR COMPLY
WITH SOMETHING; THE ATTEMPT TO
PREVENT SOMETHING BY ACTION OR
ARGUMENT.*

WHAT DOES
RESISTANCE LOOK
LIKE?

DYNAMICS OF RESISTANCE BY UFW AND FARMWORKERS

INSTITUTIONAL (SYSTEMIC – SOCIETY)	INTERPERSONAL (GROUP)	INTRAPERSONAL (INDIVIDUAL)

*In dyads, discuss the following:
Share a personal or historical example of
oppression and resistance.*



Source: Pixabay free image

Discussion Questions

- What are other examples of labor organizing in our current time?
 - What are the results of these organizing efforts?
-

Day 2

What is the
relationship between
labor organizing and
social class?



Karl Marx: Class Struggle



Proletariat and Bourgeoisie

Society is divided into two classes: the proletariat (working) class and the bourgeoisie (ruling class).



Exploitation of Labor

Capitalists exploit workers by extracting surplus value from their labor.



Class Conflict

The inherent tensions between classes lead to social conflict.



Revolution and Change

The struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie will lead to revolutionary change.

Class Struggle Explained

What do you labor unions have to do with this?

Power of the people

- When working class people join together to make demands, they increase their power against the bosses

Strike and boycotts as powerful tools

- Refusing to produce profit for the bosses (by withholding labor or striking) is key to wielding this power by stopping production
- Boycotts withhold profits of a product (after it has already been produced) and allow for participation outside the union

Connect Class Struggle to Labor Actions

- In groups, choose an organizing action from history (can choose examples from Day 1)
- Label which aspects represent oppression and resistance and outline how it is an example of working class power against bosses
- Create a presentation to demonstrate their understanding of this connection

Day 3

Present Class Struggle Labor Actions

- Present class struggle/labor actions presentations to the class
 - Discuss effective methods of labor actions with the class based on these presentation
-

Day 4

What is Civic Engagement?



Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our **communities** and developing the combination of **knowledge, skills, values** and **motivations** to make that difference. It means promoting the **quality of life** in a community, through both **political** and **non-political processes** (Civic Responsibility in Higher Education, Ehrlich, 2000, p.vi).

Operating with unwavering **hope**, we believe in achieving the seemingly unattainable. “**Si se puede**” embodies a **collective awakening to individual and communal power**. Our civic engagement department is dedicated to equipping **grassroots leaders** with the **tools** and **knowledge** essential for guiding their **communities** toward enduring **transformative solutions**. We aim to create a Central Valley of **informed** and **engaged citizens** and **voters** ready to **advocate, educate, vote**, and use our political system to create a more **just** and **equitable** Central Valley (Dolores Huerta Foundation website).

Civic engagement and support

In the same groups as Day 3, brainstorm within groups on an action that each group can take that aligns with the values identified in their presentations from Day 3. These actions can correspond to the community organizations that they researched prior, but they don't have to. Some examples can include:

- Writing letters to/calling local legislators, encouraging them to support the proposed values/actions
- Creating a campaign within the school (working with student government etc.)
- Signing up to volunteer time at local organization
- Or something else!

Day 5



“¡Sí Se Puede!”: Dolores Huerta’s 50 Years of Activism

Civic engagement and support

In the same groups as Day 3, brainstorm within groups on an action that each group can take that aligns with the values identified in their presentations from Day 3. These actions can correspond to the community organizations that they researched prior, but they don't have to. Some examples can include:

- Writing letters to/calling local legislators, encouraging them to support the proposed values/actions
- Creating a campaign within the school (working with student government etc.)
- Signing up to volunteer time at local organization
- Or something else!

Present the action to the class and discuss goals and future steps



Photo Credit: Victor Aleman, used with permission.