

F25.18: The UFWOC Salinas Lettuce Strike and Boycott: The Farmworker Organizational Movement and Struggle in Northern California, 1970-1975

Overview

Over 50 years ago, The UFWOC Salinas Lettuce Strike and Boycott struggle emerged in Northern California, within the aftermath of the successful Delano, California grape workers strike and international boycott movement of the mid and late 1960s. According to Chicana Historian Lori Flores, "The Salinas Valley had to be the UFWOC'S next big target not only because so many growers had evaded the union by signing Teamsters contracts, but because penetrating one of the nation's richest agricultural regions would be a game changer," (Flores, 2016 p 186). How did this occur? How did it begin? In summer of 1970, the UFWOC, various farmworkers, and local grassroots organizations and supports formulated a labor strike process, which was many years in the making, due to harsh labor conditions and the lack of decent living wages by growers. However, farmworkers organizing and coalition building were occurring in the Salinas Valley prior to the construction of this labor struggle and attempted boycott. This book chapter will provide a historical contextualization of the The UFWOC Salinas Lettuce Strike and Boycott struggle, and the farmworker movement in Northern California, during the early decade of the 1970s. It argues that the success of Delano grape workers strikes and international boycott movement, overshadowed The UFWOC Salinas Lettuce Strike and Boycott struggle, due the UFW organizational effort on focusing five years on the grape industry and growers, and had international media and mainstream consumer attention. It will adopt archival materials, newspapers, and organizational publications to provide a documentation of this important farmworker struggle, within the historical presence of the UFWOC in Northern California during the decade early decade of the 1970s. This book chapter will investigate the origins of labor activism and mass political action by focusing on this historical struggle within the UFWOC leadership process and organizational efforts. Also, it will examine how the Teamsters Union and the Growers between 1970 to 1975 were successful against the The UFWOC Salinas Lettuce Strike and Boycott struggle. Finally, it will interpret how the practical outcome of this farmworker labor struggle changed the political direction, ideology, and organizational framework on the The UFWOC leadership during the late 1970s.

What the student will DO and LEARN

Each student will learn importance of research design, creating ideological frameworks, a literature review, and applied research methods.

Additional benefits

Each student will learn importance of research design, creating ideological frameworks, a literature review, and applied research methods.

Additional qualifications

FWS-eligible student preferred

Time commitment

5 hrs/week for 30 weeks