Lecture – Race, Class, and Gender in Depression-Era Los Angeles

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I. LA's Border Patrol. On February 3, 1936, Los Angeles Police Chief James E. Davis dispatched 136 officers to California counties lying on the Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon borders. After local sheriffs deputized them, these officers proceeded to carry out their orders – to halt incoming trains and arrest persons "riding the rails" for railroad fare evasion, to arrest pedestrians "with no visible means of support" for vagrancy, and to "discourage" those in automobiles who appeared destitute from entering the state. Davis contended that most of these travelers would end up in Los Angeles where they would resort to begging, petty theft, and other criminal activities to support themselves. Shortly after this blockade began, Davis ordered a city sweep of "indigents" and tramps in order to thwart the "annual criminal migration" that he alleged engulfed the city in the winter months. The patrol remained in operation until April, seven weeks longer than originally intended.

   a. The extraordinary economic conditions of the Great Depression prompted wealthier Angelenos and Californians to implement policies they had previous reserved for nonwhites against members of their own racial group. In the process, poor white migrants were stigmatized by the same stereotypes that had been applied to African Americans, Mexican, and Asians before them and found themselves excluded from what scholars call the "imagined community" of Los Angeles.
   b. The push impetus for Chief Davis's blockade can be traced in large part to the development of Los Angeles and Southern California beginning in the late nineteenth century. By that time, as we've seen, boosters sparked the rapid development of Los Angeles by advertising it as a utopia for whites, especially from the Midwest. Boosters claimed, among other things, that Los Angeles lacked both the minority populations and class conflicts that plagued other American cities. While these advertisements did attract middle- and upper-class whites to the city, boosters discovered that their efforts also attracted increasing numbers of poorer whites who possessed little of the capital demanded by the real-estate-based booster economy. The depression of the 1930s increased these trends to crisis proportions for those dependent upon the booster economy – in short, the in-migration of wealthier migrants dwindled while destitute migrants entered the state by the thousands, increasing the tax burden on established city residents and, according to Los Angeles boosters, contaminating the social landscape of the city.
   c. White city residents who sought to exclude other whites from joining them faced a rhetorical dilemma, however. Non-whites could be excluded on the basis of the "alien" status, but long-standing American tradition invoked frontier migration as a defining American social process and fundamental right of all its citizens. To overcome this problem, border patrol advocates maintained that the newcomers' predicament derived not from economic conditions but from cultural deficiencies. Drawing on long-standing Protestant views of self-reliance and appropriating stereotypes previously attributed to non-whites, these advocates contended that

migrants lacked the work ethic and moral character to become part of the Los Angeles community.

Question: How much of this program, do you suppose, was a reaction to the Depression itself and how much of it can be traced to the history and structure of American Los Angeles – the city that grew rapidly from the 1880s onward?

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d. Advocates of exclusion were reacting to real challenges for the city, as the onset of the Depression posed a serious threat to its growth and economy. Like the rest of the country, Los Angeles suffered from a general economic downturn. While migration as a whole declined significantly from the massive influxes of the 1920s, the region saw large numbers of newcomers seeking manual employment, particularly from the Dust Bowl plains states. Like most other cities during the 1930s, Los Angeles provided few opportunities for unskilled laborers, and many migrants could not find work. The homeless proliferated downtown and Hoovervilles emerged along roads leading into the city.
e. While the development of federal New Deal relief programs signaled a widespread acknowledgement of the economic basis of Depression-era unemployment, the work ethic remained gospel for many, especially among socially conservative, Protestant-dominated populations like those in Los Angeles. Reports that over 37,000 poor migrants had entered the state in the last five months of 1935 convinced civic and business leaders to take drastic measures, resulting in the blockade.
f. As dependents and delinquents, patrol supporters concluded, the newcomers were the responsibility of the community in which they legally resided. Other blockade supporters argued that "box-car tourists" came to Southern California not for work but for the warm climate.
g. These blockade supporters sought to encourage the "right" kind of migrant while discouraging the "wrong" kind, so they developed a number of tests to distinguish between the two types of transients identified by the Chamber of Commerce: "those who are willing to work and those who would not work even if they had the opportunity." For instance, arrested migrants who consented to toil in government-run camps could remain in the state, while those who shirked such labor were by definition undesirable and subject to deportation. Shortly after instituting the patrol, Chief Davis established a rock quarry for vagrants and railroad fare evaders. Those arrested received the option of removal to the state line or a month's hard labor. The Los Angeles Times gleefully reported that convicts invariably chose deportation over work at the "rockpile," apparently proof enough of the policy's wisdom.
h. Casting poor newcomers as dangerous and predatory crooks raised a problem for blockade supporters, though – many of the migrants were women and children. Davis emphasized that the patrol would target single males and not the "honest unemployed bringing their families," and by and large patrol officers treated families leniently. A very few patrol supporters correctly identified families as a greater relief burden than single transients, but most others continued to point to the single unattached male transient as the proper target of the blockade.

i. The city's border patrol policy was not without protesters. Opponents emphasized the rights of citizens to search for work, calling the migrants "modern 49ers" who were "penniless through no fault of their own." Many, in fact, evoked frontier imagery and the traditions of white westward migration. One opponent wrote to Davis, "My grandfather, Samuel Colby, had 48 cents when he crossed Rock River, WI, with his large family, on their way from Michigan to settle in Wisconsin….Will you let a good citizen with 48 cents only enter California? Many of your ancestors had not that much…How many of you got there on borrowed money? How many began work or started business with nothing? How about your ancestors – the early pioneers?" Others questioned whether Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, or the "intrepid California pioneers" would have been able to make it through the blockade.

j. Woody Guthrie, the "Okie" singer-songwriter who was by that time a popular fixture on Los Angeles radio, responded to an anti-migrant diatribe by *Los Angeles Times* reporter Kenneth Crist, who had labeled the migrants "loafers," "career-men in relief," and pinball-playing "relief chiselers." "No Kenneth," Guthrie retorted, "I'm gonna tell you what they're after-then you'll know just 4 times as mutch as you did when you come out of college. What these people want is a job-they want to pitch in an work an do there part to keep america the best nation on th globe…the rich crowd that you write for are concentratin their minds mostly on how to git through life without a worken."

k. Social workers took a different tack, protesting the blockade while simultaneously affirming the degraded status of the transient. Constant unemployment, migration, and rejection by communities, they argued, wreaked psychological and physical havoc on transients. Migrants might have begun their journeys for legitimate reasons, but continued wandering would undermine their morale and eventually render them "unemployable."

l. Neighboring states who feared a backwash of repelled travelers likewise opposed the blockade. California governor Frank Merriam, meanwhile, accused Arizona police of giving out free gasoline to ensure migrants made it through their state.

m. The diversity of blockade opponents prevented them from mustering a coherent strategy to eliminate the patrol. However, transients themselves found it fairly easy to evade. The city did not see the cost savings or crime reductions Davis had promised, and the chief ended the program with little fanfare after a few months.

n. Campaigns against unemployed transients continued, however. It was World War II that brought them to an end, at least for a time. On November 24, 1941, two weeks before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Edwards v. California* struck down state anti-migrant statutes as a violation of federal control over interstate commerce. Interstate migration, the justices agreed, was crucial to "the requirements of national defense," adding that anti-migrant legislation "withholds from large segments of our people mobility which is basic to any guarantee of freedom of opportunity." California's development during the war bore out this statement, as large numbers of Americans entered California for the very reasons – jobs and opportunity for a better life – that Davis denied motivated the "transient" migration five years earlier.

Question: Picking up from the last question, does the story of the border patrol shed any light on the subsequent history of Los Angeles during the war? Did the end of the Depression "fix" the economic and social system, or just paper over its flaws, or its dynamics?

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II. Colonization. The Great Depression was obviously a traumatic reversal of fortune for not just Los Angeles but for the whole country following the boom times of the 1920s. By the early 1930s unemployment rates skyrocketed to over 25%, and as you know from Sanchez, job pressures in Los Angeles led to widespread campaigns to repatriate and deport Mexican immigrants.

a. At the same time that city boosters and officials projected longstanding racialized stereotypes onto poor white migrants, federal and local officials, as well as leaders in California's agribusiness, also took a page from mythology in an effort to address the sudden surplus of Mexican workers. At least since Thomas Jefferson in the eighteenth century, Anglo-Americans had celebrated a rural ideal, one rarely realized but all the more potent for that reason. In this ideal vision, the independent yeoman farmer, untouched by the ravages of capitalism, became the foundation for a moral, democratic, and classless society. In California, this idea blended with the *Ramona* mythology that you've read about, which presented Spanish-Mexican California as a placid Latin colony with pastoral inclinations.

b. After about the 1880s, of course, California's agrarian life was far from harmonious: the industrialized, exploitative nature of agribusiness and its racialized division of labor – built upon the backs of an army of migrant seasonal workers – made the Jeffersonian ideal of the independent yeoman farmer rarely attainable. And yet the pastoral imagination did not cease to work upon the minds of the region's growers, business and employer interests, and state and federal officials throughout the troubled decade of the 1930s. In short, in a bid to subdue Mexican worker radicalism and reshape class, ethnic, and community consciousness, officials and agricultural interests reworked various rural myths and paternalist policies to the needs of the local economy. The 1930s witnessed various proposals to resettle Mexican-American families in self-sustaining villages in agricultural districts. These proposals highlighted the extent to which urban-rural migration underpinned the region's economy and sought to alleviate some of the unintended consequences of this migration.

c. But first I want to describe the myth in a little more detail. Idealized visions of rural life came to Los Angeles with Northeastern and Midwestern migrants beginning in the 1880s, and they were evident even in the building of the metropolis. It can be seen in the drive build a decentralized "garden city." In the words of the Head of the city's Housing Commission, the Reverend Dana Bartlett, the idea was to "ruralize the city."

d. And the ideal carried over into agriculture. As we've seen in previous presentations, despite the absence of agrarianism in practice, Californians became wedded to an agrarian myth that was used to mask racial and socio-economic realities by depicting workers as docile, innocent, and child-like laborers under

benevolent tutelage. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, those laborers came Indians, and Filipinos.

e. By the 1920s employers established a preference for Mexican labor (Asian exclusion laws combined with political and economic unrest in Mexico). Employers rationalized their preference for Mexican labor through a series of economic and racial arguments: Mexicans, they said, were "Indian peons," "docile," "tractable," and "perfectly suited" to stoop labor. Unlike the Anglo-American laborer, the Mexican was thought to be satisfied with very little – as one observer put it, "So long as he earns enough one day to enable him to be idle the next, he is content." In essence, California growers harnessed the whiteness at the core of Jefferson's agrarian philosophy to elevate the European American as racially and biologically destined to be an independent settler, farmer, or entrepreneur, and docile, unambitious nonwhite laborers would enable that destiny to unfold.
Question: Can you connect the agrarian, or pastoral, myth and its uses to the previous story of the border patrol? Taken together, what can they tell us about the ideas many Angelenos had about themselves and their region?

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f. Mexican laborers engaged in a variety of seasonal occupations in the beet, lettuce, walnut, asparagus, citrus, vineyard, and cattle-ranching industries. Mexican women were typically hired to work in packinghouses. As one grower claimed, "Most of them have always wandered from place to place working in the dry yards and canneries." Mexican children – nicknamed *ratas*, or rats – often worked in the citrus belt retrieving fallen fruit.

g. The variety of fruit crops and nearly continual harvest cycles made annual employment possible as long as Mexicans migrated the length of the state in search of work. Moving northward from the Imperial Valley in May for the fruit crop, Mexican families moved to the San Joaquin Valley, Bakersfield, Santa Clara Valley, Sacramento, and Fresno for the picking season, and then shifted back to Los Angeles and Southern California at the end of August for urban employment, the citrus and walnut harvests, or alternatively, the lettuce and cotton crops of the Imperial Valley. During the agricultural seasons, they typically lived on large farms in shack or barrack-style dwellings.

h. But migrant workers and their families thus often moved into the cities, especially Los Angeles, during off-seasons and also during economic downturns, where they sought employment, better housing, and educational opportunities for their children.

i. After World War I, employers collaborated with reformers to alleviate the unintended consequences of seasonal labor, which included rural slums and unregulated, makeshift communities. Rather than decreasing profits by improving wages and diversifying agriculture to provide year-round employment, however, growers across Los Angeles County sponsored housing reform and health and educational programs, constructing so-called "worker colonies." But not all growers embraced reform and by the mid-1920s it became patently clear, according to one researcher, that employers had funneled "migrants through the

landscape in ways that allowed mainstream citizens not to recognize them as parts of their community."

j. Advocates of immigration restriction in the 1920s seized on the threat posed by these workers, arguing that they were rapidly going into the big cities where their lack of ambition to own land or acquire wealth depressed wages. The philanthropist, restrictionist, and eugenicist John Randolph Haynes charged that the unregulated entry of the Mexican "peon laborer" was directly responsible for "a condition of peasantry in the western part of rural America" that threatened "a new racial problem" akin to the slavery system of the Old South. Growers defended their labor practices, and advocated for free immigration from Mexico, by giving their workers an alternative pastoral image and denied that they moved into cities when out of work. George P. Clements, the head of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce's Agricultural Committee and treasurer for Los Angeles County's Associated Farmers clarified the difference between the "indigenous" Mexicans growers hired and the "mixed-race" Mexicans who resided in American cities: "There are two classes of Mexican immigrants – the peon and the cholo. The peon does not hang around a city when out of employment, but immediately goes out to the open. The cholo is a chronic beggar and never seeks employment if he can impose upon charity and welfare organizations. The cholo should not be permitted to enter our country." The peon, by contrast, exhibited "compassion, graciousness, kindness and courtesy" and was "clean, moral, artistic, and diligent." Both sides in the debate, in other words, contributed heavily to the racialized myth of the Mexican laborer.

k. As you know from reading Sanchez, the pastoral image built on the racialization and/or the invisibility of Mexican workers, could not withstand the pressures of the Great Depression and the calls to repatriate Mexicans. Between 1931 and 1934 around 35,000 – around 1/3 of LA's total Mexican population – were repatriated to Mexico.

l. Repatriation left behind a more uniform community of blue-collar workers, families, and long-term residents, many of whom had lived in Los Angeles for ten years or more and/or owned property. Los Angeles also attracted Mexicans from across the Southwest who moved to the city for its more generous social services, federal assistance, and for the greater job opportunities opened up by the automobile, tire, meatpacking, waste, and steel industries, as well as agriculture. But the federal New Deal programs continued the segregation and exploitation of Mexican labor. Major pieces of legislation with protections and aid for workers, including the National Industrial Recovery Act and the National Labor Relations Act, sidelined them. Migrant laborers were considered "relief recipients" rather than unemployed workers and thus received fewer benefits. Local officials in control of federal relief dollars often took Mexican workers off of relief rolls entirely after growers complained that the programs restricted their labor supply.

m. Increasingly, Los Angeles's Mexican community, which suffered unemployment at higher rates than whites, became exposed to political organizers and union leaders who had established ties with the Mexican community over the previous twenty or more years. Particularly influential were radical organizations with roots in Mexican traditions of anarchism and socialism, such as the Partido

Liberal Mexicano (PLM), which had established its headquarters in Los Angeles in 1904. These developments resulted in a strike wave that swept Southern California. In 1928 workers in the Imperial Valley's cantaloupe industry went on strike. Mexican and Filipino fruit and vegetable pickers engaged in further strike activity in the Imperial Valley during 1930, while Santa Clara Valley and San Mateo Valley witnessed fierce labor disputes between 1931 and 1932. The following year (1933), the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU) was established, the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union went on strike in Los Angeles, and a berry strike began in El Monte, so twenty miles east of central LA. The berry strike, which challenged prevailing wages, began in Hicks Camp, a community on the edge of El Monte that housed approximately 1,000 Mexican residents. It spread to Santa Monica's celery industry and Orange County's citrus industry by 1936. The El Monte dispute was followed almost immediately by the San Joaquin Valley cotton strike of September 1933. Lasing 27 days and described by many as a "social earthquake," the cotton strike involved shootings, violence, and vigilantism. This strike demonstrated the powerful presence of Mexican agricultural workers – estimates suggest that between 75 and 95 percent of those involved were Mexican – and the interrelated nature of Mexican strike activity. The San Joaquin Valley was connected to a wider regional migration circuit: Much of the Mexican labor arriving in the Valley for the harvest season was channeled through Los Angeles, which functioned as a clearing house for Mexican labor within Southern California. In all, a wave of 37 separate strikes in these years disrupted the production of 65 percent of California's crops.

n. In response to the violence and vigilantism of the of the San Joaquin Valley cotton strike in particular, government officials at federal and state levels began drawing up plans to prevent future unrest.
o. The plan, in short, was "resettlement," which promised to solve the social tensions and conflict emanating from the pattern of rural-urban migration at the heart of the agricultural economy. A proposal made at a White House conference in 1933 urged that the "state take leadership in breaking up the large colonies of agricultural workers who dwell in the cities and migrate to the farming districts for the harvest, by fostering large colonies of Mexican settlement in the agricultural section."
p. In 1935 these plans began to come to into focus, as the WPA established the *American Born Mexican Survey*, a project to interview and analyze data on the social and occupational "characters and abilities" of Mexicans on relief in order to identify families eligible to be relocated to rural colonies. Funding was to be provided to relocate 1,000 families in a sister project called the "Mexican Village." According to the project's director, Dr. V.M. Egas, who had previously designed state-run rehabilitation schemes in Italy to combat strikes among farm laborers, the plan was underpinned by a "humanitarian doctrine." It sought to reduce relief costs for the federal government, combat "the very real problem of juvenile and adult delinquency," and "Americanize" Mexican families through home rating manuals and parenting codes.

q. A pastoral ethos underpinned the Mexican village program. This ethos viewed country living and "pleasant rural occupations" as solutions to the ills emanating from "civilization" and urban life. The program promoted ideals of self-help, community, and "family spirit" and it proposed to combat the instabilities and unintended consequences of urban-rural migration by creating "permanent attachments" to the land. Prospective Mexican Village residents were asked about their knowledge of gardening, livestock raising, farming, and their experience of marketing vegetables and poultry. They were also "selected for their abilities as artisans, particularly in the making of Mexican handcraft products." Thus, the village would be based upon local production and a handcraft economy, completing the pastoral vision.
r. In 1936 the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce considered a similar scheme to "rehabilitate certain classes of unemployed in indigent circumstances," which was also aimed specifically at Mexicans. Its biggest proponent, Arthur G. Arnoll, suggested the business interest in the plan as a means to control labor: "I would think as a result of the strike in Los Angeles County of the Mexican laborers, there would be a permanent board of strategy set up to develop Mexican villages out in the agricultural districts where the mean labor supply can be housed and taken care of." Critical of what he saw as overly generous federal relief programs as well as of the attractions of urban life, Arnoll continued: "By the time the New Deal and the more abundant life get through with these Mexicans agriculture is not going to get any satisfactory labor supplies from the big cities, and the sooner they realize this, the sooner they will get command of their own situation."
s. Arnoll proposed that these Mexican villages could be linked to the mission churches at San Fernando, San Gabriel, San Capistrano and others. Supervised by the Catholic Church and/or federal officials, the residents "could do a certain amount of handicraft work" and become self-sustaining. "These villages," he continued, "would lend immeasurably to the attractiveness of the Mexican people in Southern California and I believe would prove a gold mine so far as the Mexicans were concerned." By giving the worker colony a pastoral image and establishing the village upon the production and sale of handicrafts, the plan would restore an agrarian ideal and mask the realities of Californian agribusiness. It was thus a culmination of growers' repeated attempts to actively create and rework a pastoral, yet ultimately racialized, image of the Mexican – as a peon tied to a rural, folk background and as a worker destined for agricultural labor.
t. Neither the WPA nor the LACC projects to construct Mexican villages ever materialized. Federal funds went instead toward construction and maintenance of camps for migratory workers. The majority of the residents of those camps were white farmworkers from the southern plains – "Okies" – rather than Mexicans. State efforts foundered on opposition from many growers. Although worker colonies met growers' needs in many respects – they gave employers a resident workforce and subsidized employers by diminishing their responsibilities for worker health and housing – growers remained skeptical of the long-term benefits. Profitability and concerns that large-scale worker colonies endangered extensive land holdings became entwined with fears about labor discipline. Any plan that involved workers settled on state lands seriously diminished the

employer's "right" to raid, arrest, and evict tenants in the event of strike action. Ultimately, the Mexican rehabilitation plans collapsed beneath the weight of long-held fears about profit and worker radicalism, and beneath a tacit acknowledgement that California's agriculture was not, never was, and never could be "pastoral" in nature.

u. California's pastoral myth and the role of Mexican "peon" labor in it, remained a myth. But it had real effects for Mexican laborers, who never received a federal relief program aimed at their needs, as many other sectors of labor and agriculture did. The federal New Deal administration refused to confront the realities of seasonal labor, preferring instead to identify migrant workers as *fallen* farmers or agricultural laborers but rarely as *real* workers eligible for social benefits under the National Industrial Recovery Act. The growers who controlled state government programs, meanwhile, employed the pastoral myth when it aided in their desire for access to an abundant and cheap labor source, but abandoned it when it appeared it could grant rights to laborers.
Question: How would you describe the relationship between Southern California agriculture and the city of Los Angeles? How did they influence or shape one another?

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III. Labor. California's agriculture in the early twentieth century was not pastoral, of course, it was industrial. And rather than engaging in handcrafts, many laborers engaged in union organizing.

a. On August 31, 1939, during a record-breaking heat wave, nearly all of the 430 workers at the California Sanitary Canning Company (popularly known as CalSan), one of the largest food processing plants in Los Angeles, staged a massive walk-out and established a twenty-four-hour picket line in front of the plant. The primary goals of these employees, mostly Mexican women, concerned not only higher wages and better working conditions, but also recognition of their union – the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA), Local 75 – and a closed shop.

b. During the 1930s, the canning labor force included young daughters, newly married women, middle-aged wives, and widows. Many of these Mexican women entered the job market as part of a family wage economy, and they pooled their resources. As one former CalSan employee recalled, "My father was a busboy and to keep the family going…in order to bring in a little more money…my mother, my grandmother, my mother's brother, my sister, and I all worked together at CalSan." Others worked in the canner to be able to buy consumer goods like radios, phonographs, records, and nice clothes; and still others sought material advancement into the middle class.

c. Women made up 75 percent of cannery workers, and they were clustered into specific departments – washing, grading, cutting, canning, and packing – that paid piecework rates. In other words, they were paid based on what they produced. Male workers, by contrast, generally earned hourly wages as warehousemen and cooks.

d. Standing in the same spots week after week, month after month, women workers often developed friendships crossing family and ethnic lines. The majority of cannery workers were Mexican but many Russian Jewish women also found work in the plants. Their day-to-day problems, including slippery floors, inflammation from constantly handling peach fuzz, production speed-ups, arbitrary supervisors, and even sexual harassment, cemented feelings of solidary that would aid in unionization efforts.
e. In California, UCAPAWA initially concentrated on organizing agricultural workers, but with limited success. After 1939 union policy shifted to emphasize the establishment of strong, solvent cannery and packing house locals, hoping to use them as bases of operations for future farm labor campaigns. One of the first plants to experience this new wave of activity was CalSan.
f. In July 1939, a twenty-four-year-old national vice-president of UCAPAWA named Dorothy Ray Healey began to distribute union leaflets and membership cards outside the cannery gates. She talked with workers before and after work, and visited their homes. She found a receptive audience. As former worker Julia Luna Mount recalled, "Enthusiastic people like myself would take the literature and bring it into the plant. We would hand it to everybody, explain it, and encourage everybody to pay attention." Within three weeks, 400 out of 430 employees had joined UCAPAWA, a testament to the close networks among workers that had developed in the plant.
g. The plant's owners, brothers George and Joseph Shapiro, refused to recognize the union or negotiate with its representatives, so on August 31, 1939, at the height of the peach season, 400 workers left their stations and staged a dramatic walk-out. Their demands included union recognition, a closed shop, elimination of the piece-rate system, minimal wage increases, and the dismissal of nearly every supervisor.
h. East Los Angeles grocers supported the strikers by donating staples like flour, sugar, and baby food to the strikers. Encouraged by these donations, teams of strikers approached stores throughout Los Angeles and encouraged them to refuse CalSan products. Those who declined the boycott often found picketers in front of their store. Ultimately, forty retail and wholesale grocers signed on to the boycott. Additionally, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), a federal agency created in the 1930s, formally reprimanded the Shapiros for their refusal to negotiate with the union.
i. None of this pressure brought the Shapiros to the table, however, so after two and a half months the striking workers came up with a new tactic. The Shapiros woke up one morning to find small groups of children conducting orderly picket lines on their front lines, carrying signs reading "Shapiro is starving my Mama" and "I'm underfed because my Mama is underpaid." This generated so much community pressure, including from within the brothers' synagogue, that after several days they finally agree to negotiate.
j. Workers failed to eliminate the piece rate system, but they won a 5 cent pay raise, the dismissal of several supervisors, and the first closed shop for UCAPAWA on the west coast.

k. By 1941, the union was organizing workers at other canneries in Los Angeles as well, and Los Angeles' local became the second largest UCAPAWA union in the country. Mexican women filled 8 of 15 elected positions in the union, serving as major officers and executive board members.
l. The momentum lasted until 1950. After World War II, red-baiting, the disintegration of the national union, and an indifferent NLRB spelled the end of democratic trade unionism among Mexican food processing workers. Teamster's unions secured sweetheart deals with plant owners that required the food processors to join their union. Those who refused to abandon their own union and join the Teamsters were fired and blacklisted. Meanwhile, the Immigration and Naturalization Service deported several UCAPAWA activists. In the face of these multiple pressures, the Los Angeles local folded.
Question: Can you connect the demise of this union with the demise of the border patrol? Taken together, how did these shape or reflect conditions for the working class in Los Angeles going forward?