

Transcript "A Strike and an Uprising (in Texas)"

- Amparo G.: I wonder what you see when you look at this photograph of Emma Tenayuca, strike leader of thousands of pecan shellers. The archives note reads, "Unknown date, place, Mexican." The original of this one of Arthur and Tommy Weaver has gone missing. Mr. Weaver said this was unofficially mailed to him from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1982. If frightful truths that go untold come back as ghosts, Texas has many – Sandra Bland and James Bird, children with bloody fingers from shelling pecans, Annie Mae Carpenter.
- Lower Third: Emily Jones labor union activist
- Emily Jones: It was racism and it was classism and it was you can't let these people get out of their assigned place, and we will do whatever we need to do to bash them back into that place. Fortunately, they didn't succeed in that particular instance. That was great.
- Title: A STRIKE AND AN UPRISING (IN TEXAS)
- Amparo G.: My words come in part from fragments of conversation among the workers on this film. There are no neutrals here. It was a very good year for pecans in Austin. Gatherers worked in abandoned yards and public spaces. Their posture caught her attention and the idea of natural abundance at the beginning of a film about worker rebellion seems satisfying.
- Felipe: Felipe
- Interviewer: Thank you
- Felipe: Okay.
- Amparo G.: She thought perhaps in some dystopian future we'll return to the social relations of primal society. Meanwhile, Beaman Metal Company bought pecans along with aluminum cans, truck wheels, and old car batteries.
- Beaman: 2,000 pounds a day.
- Craig Campbell: 2,000 pounds a day? No kidding.
- Beaman: Yeah, we got about 500 pounds in about 10 minutes from two different people. They brought in 300, 200 pounds.
- Craig Campbell: Wow.
- Beaman: Yeah, it's incredible.

Craig Campbell: Yeah, thank you. Four bucks, four bucks for eight pounds.

Lower Third: John Salazar, Jr. pecan gatherer

John Salazar: Aluminum cans, you got to go through the stink of beer... nauseating. They were hitting me even on the head, raining like hail.

Interviewer: Do they hurt?

John Salazar: Yeah, they hurt. I'm bald. If I had hair it would cushion a little but that's okay. I like it, okay. I like nature.

You go way up. I'm thinking about putting another one you see. You wiggle it. There it comes. There's more. And it doesn't harm the tree. You don't want to harm the tree.

I used to sleep under the bridge here. There were some people throwing sticks at it and hitting them and getting them green. They're not good yet.

I said, I thought it to myself, I know it's a little bit naive the way that I'm cynical with it and I said, "Look, them people, they look like elephants stripping down the tree because an elephant when it gets a limb that it wants to eat, it grabs the limb but it doesn't pull the twigs out. It doesn't know. It grabs the whole limb and tears it down and then it breaks.

Jalisco. Oh Carlos Santana from Jalisco.

Amparo G.: They went on to talk of seeds and sweat lodges, da Vinci and Nostradamus. She wondered if there was any economic lesson to be drawn from his grace and kindness, or they were simply his own way of being.

John Salazar: If you know, tell them. If you don't know, you ain't going to beat around the bush and lie. That way, I feel better not about the thing but about myself that it went in the correct and not in an awkward manner.

Lower Third: Figure 1. Cabeza de Vaca is instructed in pecan growing by his new found friend.

Interviewer: This picture is just amazing with this... a new found friend.

Lower Third: Craig Campbell cultural anthropologist

Craig Campbell: Yeah, it's again no justification for where that story comes from or what sort of friendship there was between Cabeza de Vaca, it was just an accepted mythology of Texas at that time, right?

Lower Third: Pecan Cracking Lamar Senior Center, Austin

Amparo G.: She thought about the connection between the shipwrecked Cabeza de Vaca and the Capoques, the Han, Iguaces, and Mariames. De Vaca said of his first encounter in Texas, "Our fear made them appear as giants." Two years later, in 1597, de Vaca committed the first written history of Texas to the Spanish Queen. His account holds a far different set of relationships and adventures than simple friendship. Marx wrote, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." Anne thought, "Why should Texas be any different?"

TITLE: 1938 San Antonio Pecan Shellers' Strike

LOWER THIRD: Emma Tenayuca interviewed by Luis R. Torres ca. 1987-88

Emma Tenayuca: It was very, very hard... very hard time. All of you here look very well fed.

Luis R. Torres: Perhaps too well fed. Why were you involved and what were you in general hoping to achieve? If you can keep your eyes riveted...

Emma Tenayuca: Are you a Christian Mr.-

Luis R. Torres: Torres.

Emma Tenayuca: ... Mr. Torres?

Luis R. Torres: It depends on how you define that.

Emma Tenayuca: Well, then we'll leave it there. Why in the mischief don't you take a pound of pecans from here and shell them yourself?

LOWER THIRD: Russell Lee Mexican girl removing shells from pecan meats

LOWER THIRD: Treue der Union Monument (Loyalty to the Union)

Amparo G.: They went out of their way to visit the obelisk in Comfort. Utopian socialists, free thinkers, and abolitionists were fleeing towards Mexico when Duff's Confederate Rangers overtook them. Three years later, family members gathered their bones and brought them back for mass burial. This is the only civilian monument to the Union on formerly Confederate soil.

Oral historian Alessandro Portelli quotes Walter Benjamin, "An experienced event is finite, confined to one sphere. A remembered event is infinite because it's a key to everything that happened before and after it." Sandro goes on to say, "What people believe and what they forget is as significant as what people recall accurately."

TITLE: Oral history interviews with former pecan shellers

TITLE: Felicia Cedillo

Felicia Cedillo: They didn't pay me hardly anything. But anything everything that we made was something at that time to help out.

TITLE: Frank Carillo

Frank Carillo: Anything we'd get, give to my mother.

Felicia Cedillo: Mother would sometimes babysit. I used to laugh because she didn't speak very good English and she said, "Mija." She would tell me, "Mija tell your friends and everybody, tell them that I sit on babies." "Mom you're not going to get hired if you say that." And she said, "Why?" "Because you are saying I sit on babies. They don't want you to go and sit on the babies, you're supposed to say I babysit." And she said I was very good at shelling the pecans. She loved for me to go there because I used to ... I was fast with my hands. I could work really fast.

TITLE: Antonio Rivas

Antonio Rivas: Somebody said, "Hey Pearl Harbor has been bombed. Pearl Harbor has been bombed." "Where in the hell is Pearl Harbor?" I said. "You don't know it's over there in South America, you should know those things," And the other one, "It's not in South America, it's over there in Africa." Nuecerias, they called them nuecerias. I used to help my sister. She was about 15 years old but I used to help her. They call it pela nueces. They used to have about four or five nuecerias all around on the west side. I grew up on those things over there. It was very hard. If you make about \$15 a week you could get married.

There used to be a sheriff. He was mean. Everybody run. I did myself. I was just... listen I was only about 11 years old.

My mother used to make tortillas by hand and you could smell that beautiful smell inside because she was cooking everything. She was putting pecans, she was putting different kinds of things in there and you could smell it.

Nowadays you can't smell that stuff. I'm not very happy with what I eat nowadays, but I have to eat them. So I don't like it. But if you want to be living your life you have to eat what you get. But we were very happy I'd say. It's not like that today. We make about \$20 an hour or \$25 an hour we are not very happy. All goes into the lights, the water, the house payments, all that goes there and you get nothing out of it.

TITLE: Sophia Gonzales

Sophia Gonzales: In that time they were paying one pound of pieces, four cents a pound. It wasn't dimes or quarters or anything, it was just pennies. All this pieces, sometimes we

get into our fingers and it hurts a lot. They're very good to eat but they're very hard to peel. By the age of eight years I was already with my sack picking cotton. We were hungry we go to a restaurant my father said, "Let's go to the restaurant." "Close the door. No you're not coming in stay out, you stay out."

We didn't have any electricity, no radio, no telephone, just a lamp. A kerosene lamp.

Almost 17 I got married, I married a good man. My husband told me, "I'm not going to take my family to the fields." I hope my words be something to you, my story. Who tell us what was wrong with the wages? Nobody.

Male: Emma Tenayuca

Sophia Gonzales: Only Emma Tenayuca. They picked me for Treasurer of the Union.

Elvira Cisneros: They felt that all the Mexicans that came across the border had lice. My mother said, "Oh no you don't touch my daughter. You can shave the boys if you want to but not my daughter." My father was the only printer that did work in Spanish. So yes he helped Emma Tenayuca a lot. Yes we got to know her very well. She'd come and at that time we were a kids yet and we'd say, "Here comes Emma daddy, here comes Emma." She'd spend hours talking to daddy and momma about ... Well daddy about the revolution in Mexico.

TITLE: Berta Amador and Hope Sanchez

Note: Berta Amador and Hope Sanchez and this interviewer speak in Spanish subtitled in English

Berta Amador: Everything was cheap, but nobody had money. There was no work.

Hope Sanchez: Only potatoes. Oy potatoes! There were many people marching with banners and we found ourselves with Emma Tenayuca. I was only eight or nine years old but I understood many things.

Berta Amador: In 1938 I was married here (in this church)

Interviewer: Were you still working at nuecerias? Were you working in the pecan shelleries?

Berta Amador: Yes, always.

Interviewer: You knew about the strike?

Berta Amador: Yes of course. We knew how the strike was, how it was progressing, and what Tenayuca was proposing.

Hope Sanchez: Since nearly everyone lived in the hood. Word of mouth someone would say, "Let's go," And we'd go. Nearly all women.

Berta Amador: I was Secretary of Committee Number Three of the Strike. I didn't know how to do it or what to put down. But they elected me so I said, "Yes it's good." My father wouldn't let me go to meetings.

Hope Sanchez: So how did you take notes?

Berta Amador: I didn't write down anything.

Hope Sanchez: You didn't go to the meetings?

Berta Amador: No, I didn't go to the meetings. But I was secretary.

TITLE: Isabel and Enrique Sanchez

Isabel Sanchez: He gave him the job of breaking the pecans, and my brother would, at the beginning, put his fingers in there and so when he got home his fingers were all full of blood and swollen and all that until he learned how to do it better, but that's one thing that I always remember, his hands.

Graciela Sanchez: Community security, yeah, that's what the dogs are. Try to go door-to-door knocking, voter registration, whatever, you get to deal with the dogs.

Enrique Sanchez: Somebody had a birthday party and that party went all night and nobody complained, nobody called the cops. It was a village. it was a place where the women ruled.

Isabel Sanchez: In the summer, everybody went out with their children, their children were running all around and at a certain time and it still happens around 10:00, you feel a breeze. At that time somebody would say thank God, and then after a while they said, buenas noches, you know, good night. Oh, hush.

Interviewer: Seligman, what was he? What was that?

Emily Jones: Pig. In the pecan shelling industry, mechanization had already started and Seligman backed that up, turned it around because he was able to hire these thousands of workers for almost no money. But Seligman cut the wages from six and seven cents a pound to five and six cents a pound. While it's a penny, it's huge, percentage wise you're getting like a 20%, close to 20% cut in wages, which were already really below starvation wages. And people couldn't bear it, they just couldn't, and so there was this massive walkout.

Amparo G.: Anne tried to create a chronology of the strike but it felt contrived. She thought, the past is more like a photo album of moments people can't or don't want to forget. This was more than a demand for higher wages and more than a demand for the right to a union. It was a mass uprising of a people. Close to 10,000, they elected Emma Tenayuca, communist and fiery representative of community and class as strike leader. Even though she had never shelled the pecans herself.

TITLE: Emilio Zamora historian

Emilio Zamora: People loved her. They called her la passionara. It's hard to translate that but it basically means I think a soul-driven person. In other words, a person that speaks from the heart. The passion that she had, she got it from somewhere inside, the spirit. Somebody who felt very deeply about the seriousness of the problems that the workers faced.

TITLE: George Cisneros cultural organizer

George Cisneros: Where was it that she changed from the Beatitudes to driving the Pharisees out of the temple. That's not a question of faith, it's a question of alignment. When you're dealing with a diaspora situation, it's not monolithic. My grandfather was always involved with labor organizing. He was a member of the Communist Party in Mexico. In '38, he was involved with Emma's placards.

Amparo G.: Not allowed to carry Rómulo Munguía's signs in the streets, the strikers put them on porches and painted signs on cars.

TITLE: Bernard Rapoport philanthropist

Bernard R.: Americans weren't very nice to radicals like my father, and so he lived with Mexican families and he sold blankets from door to door. We had an old soap box and he'd make the speeches in Spanish. He would say, "Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains." I mean they would roar, you know what I mean?

Interviewer: Well, tell me about Emma Tenayuca.

Bernard R.: She is like Joan of Arc to me. And that union. You know the old UAW song, the Union Will Make Us Strong? Those poor people will never be able to emerge from where they are without a union where for once they feel they have some strength.

TITLE: Alberta Zepeda Snid

Alberta Zepeda Snid: Maybe it was anger. It seems like I can't remember sleeping. I think that the more the police harassed the people, the more they came out. Like when you run into an ant pile and you scatter them like that, and they start coming out, you make them angry. They're going to sting the heck out of you if you don't get away. I feel that's the way we were. The more they harassed the people, the worst, people just kept on coming from nowhere, from everywhere. That's the way I see it now, the way I remember it.

Amparo G.: This is Chief of Police Kilday, who swore under oath, "I did not interfere with the strike, I interfered with a revolution." He wasn't the only one who tried to interfere. The Catholic Church, with the exception of Father Tranchese, LULAC

and the Mexican Chamber of Commerce joined Mayor Quinn, the police and the city government with their bullwhips, vilification, fines and clubs. Victim of a police teargas attack, five months old Ramon Ramirez cries in pain as his mother frantically telephones for a doctor from Guadalupe Street house. Even the most brutal of photographs from the San Antonio Light show an equal measure of defiance.

TITLE: John Stanford Communist Party of Texas

John Stanford: Legend is that Emma Tenayuca got up on a table to talk to the pecan workers, and said that actually it was Manuela Sager that got up on a table to talk to the pecan workers. Well I think they both got up on the table. If you've ever seen pictures of places where pecans were shelled, that's the only way you could speak to the workers. Get up on a table to talk to them.

Amparo G.: Here's Manuela many years later still marching, still organizing, still an active member of the Communist Party. When the jails could not fit a single person more, they drove men 20 miles into the countryside and left them to walk back.

TITLE: Latane Lambert

Latane Lambert: George Lambert was a socialist organizer and there was this uprising of the pecan shellers and that was when we became interested in other than the cause.

Interviewer: How old were you?

Latane Lambert: Twenty-two.

Interviewer: What did he tell you about Texas?

Latane Lambert: Just that it was a fierce awful place. During that strike I think he was arrested twenty-seven times. He was charged with arson because they built fire on the sidewalk one cool morning. We were married in the Union Hall. Oh, the marriage was quite an event. I think we had about three thousand people. It was scary to think that you were associated with something as inspired as this was. Because the people really felt they were fighting the battle of all workers.

Amparo G.: There's a piece of footage in the archives at Wayne State. It begins with the Alamo, the cathedral and two men in bowlers. And then a horse drawn cart rides through, and we're in the organizing campaign. Images at the end offer the contrast of a mansion and pecan sheller's house, but no images of Emma.

Emilio Zamora: Right before the producers agreed to bargain with the Union, they announced that they would do it only if Emma was removed from the strike committee. And what was really interesting is that the Union then met, they held a vote,

and the workers said no. The workers said, "No. Emma Tenayuca remains on the committee, and she remains as the head of the committee.

Maria Flores: They bring in the professional union organizers and Emma is sidelined on it. So in some ways, she hardly has to make a choice herself. She's gone and ultimately then she leaves town and she's gone for many years.

TITLE: Sister Maria Eva Flores plays tape she recorded of Emma Tenayuca

Emma T. (archive) (singing)

Maria Flores (archive) That was a song of the Wobblies?

Emma T. (archive) It's the Marseillaise. (singing)

Maria Flores The music helps her do to push there, yeah, that's great.

Amparo G.: In the moment of victory, a Mexican orchestra played. When CIO organizer, J. Austin Beasley asked how many had gone to jail, a thousand hands went up. Isabel said at this tardeada, "We used to shell pecans and now we dance."

John Stanford: To join together and to win a victory over the most powerful people in town. To have the union recognized. To shut down this industry. They are bound to have felt their power. The important things that they had done. In spite of the fact that they mechanized the industry afterwards, these workers lost their jobs. But that's the way capitalism works. We constantly need to fight for each new victory. It's a never-ending struggle but we will win and someday we'll have a working class in power, political power, and someday we'll have socialism.

Amparo G.: In June 1938, the first minimum wage came in and Seligman mechanized. Relief lines formed outside of what had been nuecerias. When the 2nd World War began, Tejanos helped developed the economy that would fight the fascists, and some became warriors in defense of a nation that should have been their own.

Interviewer: What the hell is that? Is that what they are talking about or they are jets?

Male: No, there's a flyover of jets.

Amparo G.: The military dominated San Antonio's economy and in 2006, the MLK March Committee thought it would be fine if T1 Jet Hawks from Randolph Air Force Base flew over the crowd in what is perhaps the nation's largest Dr. King Day march.

March chanting; One, two, three and four, Dr. King was not for war. What do we want, peace. When do we want it, now. Freedom, freedom, freedom coming and it won't be long.

TITLE: The Jobs with Justice March on Nacogdoches 1987

Anne: I never used to see those things.

Lee: Telling you man, it's Reagan.

Amparo G.: Lee said the American flag is everywhere, never used to see so many. He thinks it began with Reagan. Jacob said, "In case you forgot which country you're in." Louie Gohmert, East Texas Congressman, offers flags for sale depending on their prior use, but he offers no interviews. Perhaps it's because Stephen Colbert called him the stupidest US Congressman. Nacogdoches is behind what many call the pine curtain separating East Texas from the rest of the state. Anne thought more disparaging than ecological, as though there might be a Klan meeting just beyond the edge of the road.

TITLE: Stephen Delear historian

Stephen Delear: This is a picture from 1964, just after Halloween in the Daily Sentinel. The paper is saying, ""Oh, look how cute they are," and one of the girls is wearing a hood. One of the most shocking things about white supremacy is that these people believe this system is right and good and proper. There isn't an introspection here. So there was nothing odd at all about dressing your daughter up as a Klansman and sending her out to trick or treat.

Amparo G.: These are images from a found film labeled Nacogdoches 1938. Stephen Delear talked about removal of African-Americans and their businesses from Main Street. The long reign of police chief, M.C. Roebuck known as far as Houston for his brutality, and the University seemingly more concerned about local white reaction than the rights of African-Americans. Anne looked at these images and saw a rigid self-conscious hierarchy. Division of labor at its most proscribed by race, class and gender. Each in his place made obvious by clothing, gaze, and gesture.

Emily Jones: There is a thing among lawyers where you say you know the facts are never as you first hear them. It doesn't mean it's not a good case, just means people's inclination is not to tell you the parts that make their case more difficult. But I'll tell you, with civil rights cases in East Texas, it was an exception to that rule. People would come in and tell you stories and you just go, "Oh my God," and then you would find out that that actually was the story.

Amparo G.: Arthur Weaver was the lead plaintiff in a 1974 suit that resulted in the first black county official elected in Texas in the 20th century.

Male: You might want to take this. This is my best award I got. A black woman working in the home for the white man, all the black folks were making is two dollars a week, sometimes had to yield to hold her job. We got tired taking care of the white man's babies. You know how that was? There were so many white babies

born in the black community, and we blacks knew all of them... We knew these white men by name, who was sexing with our grandmothers and our mothers, aunts, cousins.

And we said if we had our way, what we would do to them. A lot of times black boys would be walking down the street and see a white girl and know that's his half sister, but he couldn't even smile at his half sister. You know why? His daddy would kill him. Cut.

You all would never understand that and never know it. I don't think about these things every day, but they run across my mind. This kind of stuff about the problems of the past, I don't have to go to speaking meeting. Or read a book, like you'll have to do. Or get it from somebody else. I was there, turning around in it, looking, listening, asking God to let me live long enough that I can talk about it, do something about it. Everybody lived on that same thing, the teachers and preachers, most people had act like Uncle Toms, had to not participate in things, stay home, go to home, go to church. Go home, go to church. Keeping us on our knees praying, being good while they're doing their things against us. I couldn't see it that way.

Amparo G.: Annie Mae Carpenter had worked for Stephen F. Austin State University for many years. She cleaned the house of the President and then she cleaned three other buildings.

Arthur W.: I think, I don't know if that's the one I filed, or Larry Daves had it. See that's Annie Mae Carpenter right there.

Amparo G.: One day she was told to clean the bathrooms in the male student dormitories. When she refused she was fired. Annie Mae Carpenter became lead plaintiff in a gender and racial discrimination suit against the university.

TITLE: Shirley Stegall former cafeteria worker

Shirley S.: I can understand Miss Annie Mae. She was a very proud lady. She cared about the way she looked. She didn't go to work looking any kind of way. Matter-of-fact, sometimes when she went to work you thought she was going to church to me. You know how you have some women that get their hair fixed sometimes? Annie Mae was on it all the time. She looked good all the time.

TITLE: Vernet Stein former cook

Vernet Stein: The Annie Mae Carpenter lawsuit... We all was part of it. You either farmed or you worked for the white lady.

Interviewer: How much were you drawing a hour?

Vernett Stein: It wasn't by the hour, we weren't working, (paid by the hour). Just like I said, every two weeks, I drew \$98. They made me mad, I said, "You know I had peas and cornbread when I come here, I still got that."

TITLE: Betty Jean Lathon former cook

Betty Jean: Miss Annie Mae was right to me. Them boys and stuff down there naked and all that, she got to be around all that. I wouldn't have wanted that for my own mama. My mama got to clean it up? No, no, no, I wouldn't want my mama to do that either. They were mean.

Amparo G.: Anne was overwhelmed by snapshots.

Betty Jean: That's me with my mouth wide open and my cap.

Amparo G.: She thought this might be Annie Mae Carpenter but the snapshot wasn't labeled, and she couldn't find anything of her in the digitized archives at Stephen F. Austin State University. The local newspaper covered so little about civil rights that you could believe that the movement skipped over Nacogdoches. But there were a few photos of a demonstration at a segregated laundromat that Stephen Delear described.

Stephen Delear: One of the marchers during the protest washes their white clothes on the white side and their colored clothes on the colored side, and pretty soon thereafter the laundromat, desegregates.

Vernett Stein: If you didn't like picking cotton, which I picked many a pound and pulled my babies on my sack. Now if you didn't like doing that, you were in bad shape.

Emily Jones: Larry needed a legal secretary but of course he couldn't afford to hire somebody who was good, so he hired me. The top of a job application at the time said, "Stephen F. Austin State University, an equal opportunity employer." And we noticed going through literally thousands of these things, that on a lot of the applications, the "n" in "Opportunity" was circled. We found shockingly that all the people who had an "n" circled were black. The Head of Human Resources at SFA at the time

Anne: David Frye?

Emily Jones: David Frye, what a jerk. In his deposition he said that he didn't know, he had no idea why there would be an "n" circled. Okay, just doodling I'm sure. On the black applicants, we decided to doodle. But when David Frye testified that they circled "n" on these applications to indicate that the person was black, the judge said, Well, Mr. Frye, if you were going to indicate that they were black, wouldn't you have circled a "b?"

TITLE: Larry Daves civil rights and labor lawyer

Larry Daves: They were making sure that nobody accidentally offered a job to an African-American. They were assigned to jobs specifically and solely based upon both a combination of gender and race. One of the problems of growing up in this country is there's a whole history that working class kids never know about. Their own unions, they don't know about their own parents, they don't know about their grandparents, they don't know about the struggles that working people have been involved in this country. They don't know about the victories, they don't know where a lot of this legislation came from.

Danny Fetonte had moved to town and he was one of the new progressive leadership that was developing in the AFL-CIO. Danny and I started talking about all these issues and we decided sort of a crazy idea that maybe there was something that the union movement and this effort to try to achieve people's civil rights, and get genuine equality had in common. I'd sent out a letter to all the class members and invited them to come to the foundation offices. God Almighty, so damn many people were wanting to sign up for the union right then that we couldn't deal with it.

Male: It was hundreds of them out. Wouldn't hold them, couldn't no building hold them. Bigger than this church house here. That fear left when they put them to some work.

Larry Daves: Every single place from the janitorial staff to the groundskeepers to the cafeteria workers, putting together little charts of everybody who worked there, and are they a member of the union yet? It was not long before, essentially, all the employees that were in that hourly workforce were signed up members of the Union.

Vernett Stein: You work what they say work, or you do what they say do, or you are going to go out the door or at least you thought you was. Yeah, I joined the union, I didn't have nothing to lose. I called myself helping the next fellow that come along behind me and I sure I hope I did. I do, I sure hope I did.

Shirley S.: I had done the dressings, and the Italian spilled. My boss man, he said, "Did you mop that?" I told him, I said, "Yes, I did. I mopped it three times," and he sent me home. So the Union come to me and said you go back, go back your regular time. And it was a guideline to go by, you just can't do any kind of way.

TITLE: Danny Fetonte union organizer

Danny Fetonte: People were not getting healthcare, and we couldn't understand because they were university employees and university employees had healthcare. We had thirty-two women who were all African American and we went over to the administration building. There was an unwritten rule that African Americans did not go in the administration building during the day. We lined up outside and one person went in and asked if they could get a healthcare plan, they were told no.

The next person went in. They finally came running down the stairs from the president's office and said if you go back, there'll be healthcare plans distributed by all of your managers tomorrow to everybody. Vice President, Edmund Pattillo, had called over the food service managers and chewed them out that his employees were in the administration building. The reason why we knew, they didn't realize but the secretary in the food service department who was white was also a member of ours. But they assumed she wasn't because she was white.

- Amparo G.: In 1985, the university contracted out 156 cafeteria jobs. Having lost a ten year legal battle against justice for African American and women workers, it did the ultimate, disowned them.
- Vernett Stein: When they first contracted out to ARA, now we had hell. They were bent double to get rid of us, but we were bent to stay there and we did. And see that's when we started to fighting for minimum wages, because see we had never gotten minimum wages.
- Anne: I don't see how they could do that, I mean this is a state university.
- Larry Daves: Those were really sort of the darkest, gloomiest days, and so instead of trying to organize the public sector, we switched over to the private sector.
- Danny Fetonte: July 15th, "Vote No Union."
- Anne: Did you ever see so many exclamation points?
- Danny Fetonte: No. It's a sign that they're not sure what they're doing. The election. 57 yes, 28 no, on September 2nd, 1987.
- Amparo G.: ARA stalled in negotiating a contract at the same time the university stalled on back pay for workers who had won the Annie Mae Carpenter lawsuit. So Danny contacted a new national group, Jobs With Justice, that had a model of social justice organizing similar to the pecan shellers.
- Danny Fetonte: It wasn't like they walked out their door and it was an easy thing for the people drove hours and hours to get an opportunity to march with fellow workers and other groups to say we don't want discrimination here anymore. It was a lot of people reaching out to each other.
- Shirley S.: My mother even marched, I just thought about that. Because I came home one day from work and I said... we called her sister girl. I said, "Sister girl, what you've been doing?" She said, "We've been drilling." I said, "Well what did you all say?" She said, "ARA, go away."
- Larry Daves: You know I'd sort of, maybe felt too much faith in what you can do through the judicial system. Because it's really not enough to shut down the old order. You

have to also create the structures through which people can build their own new world. You can't create a new world for people. People have to be engaged in the process of building the world that they can then deal with and that they can be then affect in a positive way.

I think the combination of a civil rights campaign and a militant union campaign was extremely successful.

The march started on a hill and then proceeded toward the university. By that time, Nacogdoches County had already been radically transformed. You had a profoundly different world than what Emily and I faced in 1972. Courts had forced them to finally move into the new age. But they did not have to accept unions. Unions were almost the epitome of evil as far as they were concerned.

I don't know where that comes from other than just the reality of class conflict in this country, and the influence that capital and large institutions continue to hold over us. Faced with an organized labor that was determined that there was going to be a just end to this struggle, they finally decided let's get this behind us.

TITLE: "We Stand Together" CWA 50th Anniversary Video 8/24/88

Shirley S.: I'm glad that those of that believed in the Lord, we came and we stuck together and even through all the hard trials and tribulation, I always had this passage of scripture that stayed with me. "All things work together for the good for them that love the Lord," and we love the Lord because if we hadn't loved the Lord, we would have did like everybody else, tucked our tails and went home.

Female: There's power in numbers. When you've got a lot of people working for one thing, then you can finally can pretty well get what you want.

Shirley S.: I feel like I have accomplished something for just more than myself, for humanity as a whole.

Anne: Do you all feel like you're part of this college?

Shirley: Aramark.

Other worker: Aramark.

Shirley: Yeah, not the college. I feel like I just work for Aramark.

Female: That's the way I feel too.

Evelyn It's on SFA campus.

Other worker: It's like we don't mean anything to them, we're just here to feed their students.

Anne: What are you making Evelyn?

Evelyn: \$11.46.

Anne: How long have you been here?

Evelyn: About 40 years, 39 to 40 years.

Anne: Do you know the school signal?

Evelyn: Lumberjacks? The ax. Yeah.

Other worker: Ax. Jacks.

SFA Promo Film: Well, you just have to experience it.

Tour guide: You have your panhandle here where your thumb is, kind of, and your pinkie would point towards Nacogdoches kind of.

Amparo G.: The president of the university declined an interview, so the crew joined a tour for three high school seniors.

Tour guide: L and a J for Lumberjacks.

Anne: Who was Stephen F. Austin?

Tour guide: He's the founder of Texas. Yes, ma'am, that's him.

Interviewer: Anything else about him?

Female: That's my big, my biggest selling point, that's pretty much the most exciting thing that I have.

Anne: Okay.

Amparo G.: This cold morning they couldn't find workers. They saw no groundskeepers, technicians, carpenters, housekeepers, file clerks or plumbers.

Lee: There are so many things you have to change going indoors, exposure....

Amparo G.: Only this one woman cleaning a dorm restroom. It was as if the college ran by itself during the day.

Lee: Boy, here we go again. Oh my God, I think that I'm just going to turn it off.

Amparo G.: Finally, in the cafeteria they've found workers partially hidden behind plexiglass.

Female: Every job I get, I try to get in a union. Well, thank you.

Title: food service workers fill out union cards

Anne: People really fought on this campus for a union. It's really an interesting story and it was women like you, I mean they were young at the time. It was really great.

Female: Are you'll doing a commercial?

Anne: No, we're just thinking about the people on the other side of this thing.

Female: Okay.

Amparo G.: Gramsci wrote from prison, "When the old is dying and the new cannot be born, when normal systems of government seem to be suspended, a great variety of morbid symptoms appear." Loosely translated, "Now is the time of monsters."

Title: Texas Tea Party Tax Day Statewide Rally

Amparo G.: In 2009, CNBC Rick Santelli raged in opposition to Obama's mortgage relief for poor families, and suggested a capitalist dumping of derivatives into Lake Michigan. Texas politicians and small businessmen formed the Texas Tea Party and pushed the state backwards with Neo-Confederate, nativist, and paramilitary support.

Male: I'm totally against any labor unions organization in the government, teachers. We've become slaves to the labor unions.

Male: You're either a Texan or an American and that's it.

Male: We attended Bundy Ranch in Nevada and helped out for a little over three and a half weeks as well as last summer at the border, Texas/Mexico border, we helped detain illegals there and turn them over to border patrol.

Dan Patrick: We are the leaders, we're the 12th largest economy in the world, we're the most conservative government in the history of the world, and I can tell you as an Lieutenant Governor, if we don't do it in Texas, there's not another Texas to move to.

Female: That's right.

Pastor: See the Lord your God has placed the land before you, go up, take possession, the Lord is with you.

Amparo G.: On a quieter day, Anne took Thelma the dog to the capital. They passed the Confederate monument. On to the Texas Rangers. Not the ones who drove

Mexicans off their land, but earlier terrorists akin to those who massacred the Germans buried in Comfort. On to cannons facing towards petitioners and granite from Convict Hill. Inside where Thelma couldn't go, Texas children are instructed in Confederate values.

World systems analyst, Immanuel Wallerstein, wrote that pastness persuades us to act in ways we might not otherwise act. Pastness is a tool we use against each other. Pastness is central in the socialization of individuals and the maintenance of group solidarity. Moral, political and contemporary, the past is written in soft clay as well as stone.

They returned to Nacogdoches for Juneteenth, less than a week after the killings at the Emanuel Church in Charleston.

Two and a half years after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, Union General Granger informed the slaves and masters of Texas that their relationship had changed. He told the former slaves to remain in place and work for wages. Their presence at military bases would not be tolerated.

Male: In fact, it was 150 years this year that we found out in Galveston that the slaves were free. It could've been deliberate, it could've been because of communication gaps. You try to protect slavery as long as you can. As we celebrate there is sadness.

Male: That kind of fits right up there with the bombing of the church.

Anne: In Birmingham?

Male: In Birmingham, yeah, that's right there with that.

Male: That old police with the name of M.C. Roebuck, one of the rottenest things you've ever seen. That was a no good man, don't let nobody tell you no different.

Male: That's the reason why we are marching to say that there's still some radicalism we need to use to get the certain type of justice we want. So we believe in the Constitution, we just want the Constitution to apply to us fairly and justly.

Amparo G.: The prisoners in the emancipation parade reappeared at the City Park to clear away dirty dishes and pick up trash. Anne thought, some would see this as a donation from the sheriff towards community service and the absence of black inmates in the work crew as a moment of sensitivity. At current rates, one in three black men in Texas will be incarcerated at some point during their lifetime. They drove the route of the 1987 March but all that stuck out was the length of the walk in poverty along the way. Houses built on stacked rocks, faded paint.

TITLE: Delton Stegall former custodial worker

Delton Stegall: There ain't none of them that marched with me I don't think... I don't think they're even still living. I think a lot of them folks are dead and gone. It just look like all at once, somebody just opened the gates and said, "All right, it's time to go home."

Amparo G.: Someone said that it's easier to imagine the end of all life on Earth than the end of capitalism, but then the ever optimistic Marx reminds us, "Without the great alternative phases of dullness, prosperity, overexcitement, crisis and distress, the working classes would be a heart broken, a weak minded, a worn out unresisting mass whose self-emancipation would prove impossible. Lee complained about modern day dashboards and obtrusive rear view mirrors, and then a long drive west into the sun.

Title: an inconsistent conclusion

The Hispanic Elvis rides in front of the birth of the race. Laura said it was an iconic image of San Antonio like Emma. Jacob called it wonderfully contradictory. A Chicano impersonating a white man, a white man who appropriated black culture, in front of the image of indigenismo and conquest.

Less than a year after the strike, Emma's life was threatened by a mob at the San Antonio Municipal Auditorium. Wanting to join the war effort, she wrote to J. Edgar Hoover for permission to join the Women's Army Corps and of course she was denied. She exiled herself as a schoolteacher in California and then came back San Antonio.

TITLE: Graciela Sanchez human rights organizer

Graciela S: The first International Women's Day march that we had in San Antonio, we were able to get Emma Tenayuca to speak. Nobody really hears about her in San Antonio in the public eye I guess since the '30s, and then here she's coming back to life 50 years later.

Emma Tenayuca: You will remember the cowboy pictures that you and I saw as children, where there is one man who comes to town. He's all-powerful. He has a gun on his left side, another one on his right side.

Graciela S: Ronald Reagan.

Emma Tenayuca: Ladies and gentlemen, for over 400 years, the countries of Europe have dominated and exploited the countries of South America. The present struggles are not struggles for communism. The present struggles are struggles for liberation.

Male: Right on.

Graciela S: She showed up, gave her talk, and then she leaves and then I actually don't see her again until her funeral and that's 1999.

George Cisneros: Emma comes back in our life totally unexpected when my younger brother, Tim, goes ...he's at Little Flower School and he shows up for the first day of class, I believe it's his fifth grade and Emma is his teacher. She had just come back from California, it's a first time she'd been in San Antonio, she had left there in what 40 something, and she was working at a Catholic school. I think she was about justice and injustice ... Injustice. Whether that be a class issue, or a racial issue, or a cultural issue, it was the justice factor that seemed to ...

That's almost religious, the right hand and the left hand of the Lord. It's frightening when you think of it in those terms. Anyway, I wish we had had her for another 10 years because I would have known which questions and how to ask her questions.

Anne: I have a silly question, but I don't know if you can see it from your window, but it feels like you're walking right up to the Statue of Jefferson Davis. Do you ever think about that on your way, or do you try to ignore them? How do you-

Emilio Zamora: I don't even pay attention to them. Let me see that. It's kind of related.

Lee: Alan Pogue

Emilio Zamora This is a 1974 demonstration. Chicano students had taken over the President's office demanding all kinds of things. The speakers are here, Allan is taking a photograph from here, and immediately this drew my attention. That's me, I don't even notice these characters. There's other things, there is so much here that is so important.

TITLE: students force removal of Jefferson Davis statue University of Texas at Austin, August 30, 2015

Amparo G.: This film is dedicated to Emily Jones and Ruthe Winegarten. To all those who spoke with parts seem and most put aside in editing. To Arthur Weaver, John Stanford, Latane Lambert and others alive when we started, and to all those who rose up in protest when most of us didn't, couldn't, weren't born. Sacco said long ago, "They live not in America but under America." Good riddance to Jefferson Davis, she thought, contempt pushes us towards redemption.

Male: All right, all right, all right.

Kirk Lyons: ...cultural atrocity, this is a work of art. Would you go and gouge the eyes out of the Mona Lisa? Would you cut the nose?

Female: I don't think Mona Lisa represented like slavery and the Confederacy

Kirk L.: This doesn't represent slavery. If you took all of the white supremacy off this campus you'd be here on a bare field. Your culture is next, your culture is next. Why is a so-called white supremacist have to school you people on basic civics, and decency and what art desecration is?

Xavier Rotnofsky: I don't think that's a good thing that you just said.

Kirk L.: You just gouged the eyes out of the Mona Lisa.

Xavier R.: The head is totally in place.

Jacob: It's really ugly artwork though, I mean being honest comparing it to a da Vinci is kind of ridiculous. I mean it's not like a da Vinci, it's nothing like the Mona Lisa.

Kirk L.: Well it's the best we can do in Texas, thank you very much.

Jacob: No, there's better in Texas, definitely. There's plenty of good art in Texas and that's just not it.

Kirk L.: Pull the statues out of the State Cemetery. Enjoy your hatenanny while you can and then we'll be back when we put Jeff Davis and Woodrow Wilson back.

Jacob: We'll throw some black lives matter on there.

Kirk L.: Well, remember gray lives matter too.

Male: He said, "Grey Lives Matter" – the Confederates.

Lee: You got my wireless mic on man.