

## **Mexican Contract Workers and the U.S. Capitalist Agricultural Labor Process: The Formative Era, 1942–1964\***

***Ronald L. Mize, Jr.***

*Department of Development Sociology  
Cornell University*

**ABSTRACT** Rural sociologists have seemingly moved away from an active interest in the plight of migrant farmworkers and the centrality of their labor in the development of U.S. agribusiness. Answering Pfeffer's (1983) call to analyze the different forms of agricultural production, I focus on the key formative period of what I refer to as the U.S. capitalist agricultural labor process. During the United States–Mexico Bracero Program, 1942–1964, U.S. agribusiness employed a coercive factory regime, introduced mechanization and increased work hazards, and employed a dual wage structure to keep Mexican contract workers at a serious disadvantage to advance their own collective well-being. This study relies upon archival and oral history research to challenge the existing theoretical approaches to the labor process in capitalist agriculture and provide a theoretical explanation that more closely relates to U.S. post-war agricultural production.

*Rural Sociology*, from its inception, has expressed the sociology of agriculture as a major research theme of interest. Probably one of the most important aspects of agriculture is the human labor utilized to bring crops through the production to consumption cycle, from seed to table so to speak. The work of Max Pfeffer (1980, 1983) has detailed the specific nature of U.S. agricultural production systems and the utilization of migrant labor in the corporate, industrial form of production. Yet, research that elaborates upon Pfeffer's three systems of agricultural production (family farm, sharecropper, and agribusiness) has not kept pace with other interests in the field of rural sociology and the subfield of the sociology of agriculture. Since 1989, only two *Rural Sociology* articles specifically address the role of Mexican migrant labor in fulfilling the needs of the U.S. capitalist agricultural labor process (Allensworth and Rochin 1998; Tootle and Green 1989). A few articles (Albrecht, Clark and Miller 1998; Brown 2002; Lobao and Saenz 2002) tangentially orient their interests to the migrant labor

\* My thanks to Jess Gilbert, Jane Collins, Paul Lichterman, Jack Kloppenburg, Donna Gabaccia, and Michael Apple for commenting on previous versions. This research was partially funded by the Social Science Research Council, Committee on International Migration and University of Wisconsin-Madison Travel Grant and Crowe Scholarship. Please direct all inquiries to Ronald L. Mize, Assistant Professor of Development Sociology and Latino Studies, 320 Warren Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853. E-mail: rlm65@cornell.edu.

situation. Rural sociologists have developed, for instance, intense critiques of the agro-food global complex, the scientization of agriculture, alternative/sustainable forms of agricultural production and markets, and agrarian transformations in the underdeveloped world. Yet, in the heart of the overdeveloped world (Mills 1959), we as rural sociologists are reproducing the problem of migrant labor invisibility as we move away from studying migrant farmworkers and onto bigger and better things such as wine producers, cooperatives, state agricultural policies, environmental hazards, and spatial inequalities as if they were disconnected from the organization of labor in contemporary U.S. capitalist society.

Agricultural labor is a topic that one would assume would hold a central place to those interested in rural society. Yet, discussions of migrant labor have been scant in the rural sociology literature (with important exceptions such as Barger and Reza 1994; Majka and Majka 1982; Majka and Mooney 1995; Thomas 1992; Wells 1996). I find this trend troubling and hope to partially rectify the situation by addressing one particular aspect of migrant agricultural labor in the United States—the capitalist agricultural labor process. This labor process specifically refers to large-scale agribusiness and the production of perishable fruits, nuts, and vegetables requiring significant, yet periodic, labor inputs. The previous research on the topic, particularly by Thomas (1992) and Wells (1996) rely upon Burawoy's (1979, 1985) analysis of the hegemonic regime of factory production. I problematize this approach by examining the formative era that established full-scale agribusiness in every region of the country. As large-scale growers became increasingly reliant upon a state-sanctioned temporary worker program that issued 4.5 million individual work contracts in its 22 year history, the Bracero Program was instrumental in the development and expansion of a fully capitalist labor process. The study relies upon archival research and direct testimonies to inform the theoretical discussion on the role of the labor process in managing immigrant labor.

### **Researching the U.S.–Mexico Bracero Program, 1942–1964**

From 1942 to 1964, the federal governments of the United States and Mexico arranged a set of accords that supplied U.S. agricultural growers, and for a brief time the railroad industry, with a steady stream of Mexican labor. Initially intended to serve as a war-time relief measure, the temporary-worker arrangements were allowed to continue until 1964. Approximately 4.5 million work contracts were signed and the vast majority of workers were sent to three states (California,

Arizona, and Texas) but a total of 30 states participated in the program.<sup>1</sup>

The Bracero Program began on August 4, 1942, in Stockton, California, as a result of the U.S. government responding to requests by Southwestern agricultural growers for the recruitment of foreign labor. The agreement, arranged between the federal governments of Mexico and the United States, stated the following four terms that served as the general guidelines for its 22-year existence:

1. Mexican contract workers would not engage in U.S. military service.
2. Mexicans entering the U.S. under provisions of the agreement would not be subjected to discriminatory acts.
3. Workers would be guaranteed transportation, living expenses, and repatriation along the lines established under Article 29 of Mexican labor laws.
4. Mexicans entering under the agreement would not be employed either to displace domestic workers or to reduce their wages. (Garcia 1980:24)

In regard to all four guidelines, the Bracero Program was lived out much differently by the workers than how the program was designed to work on paper. Unfortunately, the majority of the established literature on the Bracero Program assumes that the program operated according to the guidelines put forth by both governments. Rather than critically examining the experiences of workers, the majority of the published research slights the former Braceros as sources of information and takes for granted that the four general guidelines were enforced and actualized. The history of the Braceros documents how the safeguards “guaranteed” by the governments were rarely put into practice or poorly enforced. Workers were severely disempowered in their attempts to request those issues guaranteed to them in the standard labor contracts and the agreements made between both governments.

<sup>1</sup> From 1942–47, the following states contracted the following number of Mexican Braceros: Arizona: 5,975, California: 124,305, Colorado: 7,643, Idaho: 11,088, Illinois: 1,083, Indiana: 382, Iowa: 3,033, Kansas: 796, Michigan: 7,516, Minnesota: 5,288, Montana: 12,767, Nebraska: 4,039, Nevada: 2,577, New Mexico: 151, North Carolina: 410, North Dakota: 3,094, Oregon: 13,007, South Dakota: 1,577, Utah: 3,361, Washington: 15,029, Wisconsin: 4,817, Wyoming: 2,732 (Adapted from Rasmussen 1951:226). In addition, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, Ohio, Missouri, Tennessee, and Louisiana participated in the later years of the program (Lyon 1954:225). One respondent I interviewed stated that her father worked in the agricultural fields of New York, but I have found no official record of Braceros working in New York.

This study relies upon thirteen in-depth life stories of former Braceros collected in California and Colorado from 1997 to 1998; they worked in ten states between 1947 and 1964, mainly in agriculture (cotton, beans, fruits, etc.) or on the railroads. A separate group interview, conducted ad hoc in citizenship classes in Fresno, California with nine Mexican immigrants, introduced more general and collective Mexicano memories of the Bracero Program. I also selectively interviewed a small group ( $N = 10$ ) of non-Braceros who had specifically worked with or lived near Bracero labor camps in Colorado and California. Archival research was conducted with the collected papers of Ernesto Galarza in the Stanford University Libraries. It is ironic that the major scholarly accounts of the Bracero Program (Anderson 1963, 1976; Driscoll 1997; Galarza 1956, 1964; Gamboa 1990; Garcia 1980; Garcia y Griego 1983; Herrera-Sobek 1979; Kirstein 1977) corroborate the non-Braceros' collective memory more so than the memories of the former Braceros. By comparing aspects of the Bracero Program common to non-Braceros with the details elicited from the former Braceros, I am able to analyze what Braceros recalled and what they forgot (or chose not to recall). Together, their insights shed light into the organization of the capitalist agricultural labor process during the era of the Bracero Program, 1942–1964.

### **A Theoretical Delineation of the Labor Process Debate**

Harry Braverman's (1974) classic *Labor and Monopoly Capital* can be viewed as almost singly responsible for resuscitating a Marxist analysis of the capitalist labor process. As Braverman notes in his introduction, nobody since Marx had seriously studied the labor process. Those interested in Marxian political economy tended to foreground the general theoretical concepts to the neglect of the historical details in Marx's writing.<sup>2</sup> Braverman was interested in how the monopoly form of capitalism gave rise to the de-skilling of workers through the application of scientific management techniques that further alienated workers from the means of production (the Taylorization of the workplace). Alienation consisted of the separation of conception from execution, mental from material labor, and control over the finished product by the direct producers.

Michael Burawoy's (1979) *Manufacturing Consent* sought to extend the analysis resurrected by Braverman, but the central question for

<sup>2</sup> Antonio Gramsci's [1929–1935] (1971) discussion of Fordism is obviously a historical study of the capitalist labor process in the United States, but Gramsci did not figure in Braverman's theoretical repertoire. See Burawoy (1985) for an extensive treatment of the problems arising from this oversight.

Burawoy was why factory laborers worked so hard in the process of conceding to their own exploitation, i.e., how in fact is hegemony manufactured? The literature on the labor process has developed almost exclusively to account for workplace arrangements found in the *factory* sectors of the economy (Braverman 1974; Burawoy 1979, 1985; Fantasia 1988; Peña 1997), but two relatively recent attempts have been geared toward developing analyses of agricultural labor.<sup>3</sup> Robert Thomas' (1992) *Citizenship, Gender, and Work* and Miriam Wells' (1996) *Strawberry Fields: Politics, Class and Work in California Agriculture* both examine agricultural labor in California, but each limit their respective analyses to the lettuce/tomato and strawberry industries.<sup>4</sup>

In the literature on the capitalist labor process, the workplace is characterized as the arena where consent is engineered. Workers are, in a way, complicit in their own exploitation by willingly conceding to the expectations of capital and management. Burawoy (1979, 1985) characterizes the owners of capital as making certain concessions to ensure their positions of leadership in capital-labor relations. For Burawoy, the concessions consist of state-enforced rules and regulations that guarantee workers' wages, safety, and benefits. In addition, collective bargaining and other elements of union representation result in "the hegemonic organization of work [that] is based on consent predominating over coercion" (1979:194).

For Thomas (1992:223), concessions are comprised of collective efforts (by unions or workers coordinating in a less formal, state-sanctioned fashion) to "make claims for higher wages or to gain closure over entry into their occupation (in order to accomplish the same end)." But Thomas' main purpose is to show how undocumented workers and the gendered demarcation of certain job tasks (e.g., women doing the "wrapping" of lettuce heads) undercuts the aims of male, legal-status workers to create job security by restricting jobs and securing higher wages for themselves. In effect, Thomas' structural account of grower control over the labor process, through internal labor market differentiation, avoids the issue of whether consent or coercion is the key constitutive element of grower-worker relations.

<sup>3</sup> Burawoy (1976) wrote a seminal article on how the processes of reproduction are separated from processes of production in the utilization of immigrant labor. But his analysis of the contours of the labor process are less specified and, subsequently, scholars interested in the agricultural labor process have relied upon Burawoy's later work on the hegemonic factory regime.

<sup>4</sup> Devra Weber's (1994) *Dark Sweat, White Gold* specifically invokes Braverman in her analysis of cotton production and Mexican migrant laborers, but given her research and writing was conducted prior to Burawoy's writing, I will focus on the two latest conceived monographs by Thomas and Wells.

For Wells, grower concessions in the California strawberry industry consist of a loss of control over the production process by allowing sharecropping and worker-based decisions to be made over the labor process. "Instead of hiring crews of laborers who were paid a piece-rate wage, growers delegated planting, maintenance, and harvest to families who were paid a share of the market returns" (Wells 1996:3).

In applying theories of the labor process to the case of capitalist agriculture, both authors use Burawoy's (1979, 1985) view that posits that the labor process is marked by a high degree of consensus between capitalists and workers. In addition, the rules of production are agreed upon by both groups as a result of state- and union-enabled processes of collective bargaining, arbitration, and policies that set enforceable guidelines on health, safety, wage, deduction, and other general working conditions. Yet neither author acknowledges the problematic nature of applying the labor process literature that developed from the case of factory work to the specific characteristics of the capitalist agricultural labor process.

Wells' (1996) study of sharecropping in the California strawberry industry offers a fine-grained analysis of the relationship between politics and class in these localized production settings. Politics refers to both the impact of state policies and trade unionism in much the same way that Burawoy (1985) employs the term. The empirical case of strawberry sharecropping in Watsonville, California elides the description that the agricultural labor process is fully capitalist. Wells is correct in highlighting the specificities of workplace organization in agriculture, but her very specific case of sharecropping does not allow us to think about the capitalist labor process associated with what Pfeffer (1983:542) identifies as the "general system of industrial farming." It is this system that relies almost exclusively on migrant workers, associated with agribusiness in California, and was, in fact, the major recipient of Bracero workers.

Whereas Wells uses the labor process literature to specify the relationship between politics and class in capitalist agriculture, Thomas uses that literature to dismiss the notion of agrarian exceptionalism and thus views social relations in agriculture as fully capitalist.<sup>5</sup> Challenging the characterization of agriculture as unique and distinct from industrial

<sup>5</sup> Thomas, in Thomas (1992) and Friedland, Barton and Thomas (1983), has spent a great deal of his scholarly studies on the lettuce industry in California, which is much closer to Pfeffer's industrial farming model. The industry is highly mechanized, and the division of labor is highly specialized. Lettuce cutters work with a special knife/sickle that requires a great deal of time and practice to master. Conveyer belts are mechanized and placed on wheels so they can be driven through the fields with wrappers and packers working on board. This strange-looking contraption leads cutters through the fields and sets the pace of work.

production, Thomas (1992:13) cites several sources, noting that “a number of agricultural enterprises and commodity groups have been shown to be characterized by organizational structures and labor processes that very closely approximate relations of production and employment found in industrial settings.”

For Thomas (1992:11), his analysis hinges on trying to answer two questions: is agriculture an exceptional system of production, and why are Mexican citizens consistently found doing this type of agricultural work? Thomas dismisses arguments for agrarian exceptionalism for two reasons: the similarities he sees between industrial and agricultural production and the fact that growers use the exceptionalism claim to seek exemptions from labor regulations. As he fully notes:

The second explanation, based on considerations about agriculture as an exceptional system of production, argues that characteristics of agricultural production distinguish it so greatly from other economic sectors and production processes that efforts to analyze it using industrial categories prove fruitless. Factors such as the perishability of the product, the time gap between the principal production activities (e.g., planting, cultivating, and harvesting), the relative immobility of agricultural firms, and the greater uncertainties brought on by plant biology and weather have historically been used by agricultural interests as an argument against their inclusion under generic policies, such as coverage under the stipulations of the National Labor Relations Act. (Pp. 12–13)

However, by acknowledging agriculture’s uniqueness as a form of production, one does not, contrary to Thomas’ claim, necessarily further growers’ interests. I contend that the exceptionalism of post-war U.S. agrarian production is, in the end, what makes it so much like other particular forms of capitalist industrial production in different times and industries. Thomas looks for similarity between contemporary agricultural and industrial sectors in the U.S. economy. Yet this comparison is incongruous due to the unique place of agriculture in the history of U.S. labor laws and the unique characteristics of agricultural production. The similarities of the post-war U.S. agricultural labor process are more in line with Marx’s “despotic regime” of the country and time frame that gave birth to the capitalist industrial process (nineteenth-century Britain) than the late capitalist production processes of the contemporary U.S. economy. An elucidation of the labor process in Marx’s *Capital, Volume I* is most applicable to the U.S. capitalist agricultural labor process. Certain workplace arrangements begin to look similar across industries, times, and places, as there is still an increasing drive toward specialization and repetition in particular

sectors that have not seen the need for flexible, post-Fordist modes of production.

The capitalist agricultural labor process is marked by a high degree of consent, to be sure, but it is not secured by hegemonic class relations and grower concessions. Rather, consent is secured through coercion, not willing consent. The depiction of the labor process that Marx chronicled in “The Working Day” chapter of *Capital, Volume I* is better suited to explain U.S. grower-Mexican laborer relations. In Burawoy’s terminology, the “factory regime” of the capitalist agricultural labor process is more akin to Marx’s market despotism than the hegemonic factory regime of late capitalist industrial production.<sup>6</sup> Concessions secured by the working class in the U.S. industrial sector did not extend to agricultural workers. For example, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) was a victory for factory workers, but not all workers. Agriculture was specifically exempted from the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). Agricultural employers were also exempt from minimum wage laws with which other U.S. employers were legally bound to comply.

From the initial insights of Marx and Braverman on the significance of the labor process, two main lessons can be drawn. First, to “know” the labor process in capitalist society, it must be thoroughly examined in every branch of industry. For instance, the specific aspects of agricultural production in the post-war U.S. context enable one to study the labor process comparatively by examining various branches of industry during the same time frame, the same branch over time, or various branches in various time frames. Specifically, Marx’s delineation of the working day most closely approximates the U.S. contemporary agricultural labor process, which I define as crucially constructed during the Bracero Program. It is from Marx’s study of his time and industry that I draw comparative materials. Though the labor process consisted of ten components in Marx’s historical analysis,<sup>7</sup> I draw upon factory regimes,

<sup>6</sup> As Marx described the despotic factory regime of production during his time:

The driving motive and determining purpose of capitalist production is the self-valorization of capital to the greatest possible extent, i.e. the greatest possible production of surplus-value, hence the greatest possible exploitation of labor-power by the capitalist. . . . If capitalist direction is thus twofold in content, owing to the twofold nature of the process of production which has to be directed—on the one hand a social labour process for the creation of a product, and on the other hand capital’s process of valorization—in form it is purely despotic. (Marx [1867] 1976:450)

<sup>7</sup> Marx defined the working day of his time/place in terms of despotic regimes, migration, proletarianization, management and hierarchy, scale, coerced job tasks of the working day, machinery, work hazards, wages, and deductions. Though I have identified each of the ten themes’ applicability elsewhere (see Mize 2000), I limit my present analysis to the most pertinent aspects.



the working day, work hazards, and wages in order to distinguish the U.S. capitalist agricultural labor process from U.S. post-war industrial factory regimes that have provided the basis for previous theoretical applications.

It is in the interests of capital to exact as much work as possible in the shortest period of time when wages are paid according to time. The differences between time-wages and piece-wages (hourly and piece rates) are linked to the lengthening of the working day.

Given the system of piece-wages, it is naturally in the personal interest of the worker that he should strain his labour-power as intensely as possible; this in turn enables the capitalist to raise the normal degree of intensity of labour more easily. Moreover, the lengthening of the working day is now in the personal interest of the worker, since with it his daily or weekly wages rise. (Marx [1867] 1976:695–96)

The piece wage enables the capitalist to exploit the worker to the fullest of the worker's ability. "The quality of labour is here [in the piece-wage system] controlled by the work itself, which must be of good average quality if the piece-price is to be paid in full. Piece-wages become, from this point of view, the most fruitful source of reductions in wages, and of frauds committed by the capitalists" (Marx [1867] 1976:694).

The despotic factory regime, which characterized nineteenth century capitalism in England, is not simply a "pre-modern" relic of interest to Marxist historians. Rather, the parallels between bourgeois-proletarian relations of the Lancashire wool mills and grower-migrant laborer relations in post-war U.S. agriculture make Marx's original analysis particularly pertinent today. Work is accomplished by coercion and force. Relations are in the form of domination, not the engineering of consent with workers. Capitalist production is organized with two purposes in mind: 1) the creation of a commodity to be exchanged on the market, and 2) the exploitation of labor, to the maximum extent, in order to maximize profits and minimize labor costs. The drive for maximizing profits impacts workers since they are solely responsible for making products. In the despotic regime, capitalists push workers to the margins of existence by simultaneously increasing the duration and intensity of work while decreasing wages to the lowest feasible rate. It is a labor process ruled by force and intimidation with work coordinated all in the name of maximizing profits.

In the case of U.S. capitalist agriculture, many scholars familiar with Anglo-Mexican class relations note the despotic nature of the labor process. For example, Montejano (1987:197) refers to the "labor controls and discipline imposed by Anglo farmers on Mexican farm workers" as a set of coercive labor relations best described as a logic of

labor repression. "Labor repression refers basically to the use of compulsion for organizing the recruitment, work activity, and compensation of wage labor." Everyday lives of Braceros were so dominated that there was almost no ability to actively resist and still expect to remain employed. But this is not to say that resistance did not happen when some workers felt that they were being overworked, underpaid, malnourished, or treated poorly in general. As Gamboa (1990:75) notes of his study of Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, "This prevailing stereotype of Braceros as docile, undemanding and incapable of organizing themselves to press for better working conditions does not hold true in the Northwest, where Braceros were constantly on strikes and this made the region unique from other parts of the country." Of the life stories I collected, none of the interviewees stated that they had worked in the states that Gamboa studied. But the respondents collectively did work in every other major region of the country (Southwest, South, East Coast, and Midwest) that employed Bracero labor.

Ernesto Galarza noted in 1944 that workers in Illinois, Colorado, New Mexico, Michigan and California would rarely speak critically in the presence of camp managers or labor officials. Galarza conducted studies in each of these states and stated that basically if workers wanted to voice complaints, they were told to "shut up or go back." Ten years later in the Salinas area of California, Galarza found that the situation had not changed. Of the 181 Braceros he interviewed, none of them reported "instances of intimidation, any form" (Galarza Papers 19:2). Regardless of conditions—where 26 of the workers earned as little as \$20 or less in some weeks, 37 workers described the quality of food as "fair or poor," 50 workers lived in housing they deemed "fair or poor," and 105 of the 181 respondents were charged three to seven dollars for the "complimentary" blankets they slept under—there were no reported threats or intimidation. The despotic regime of agricultural production is most fully evidenced in terms of how the working day was organized, the hazards associated with farm work, and the heavy use of coercion to bring workers in line.

### **The Working Day of the "Factory in the Field" Regime**

In capitalist agriculture, the cycle of crop production is truly unique as compared to other industries. The ripening of fruits, vegetables, and other commodities takes place over a maximum of one to three months and can be limited to as little as one week. The natural elements also wreak havoc on the growing cycle as excessive rain causes crops to mold, insects and weeds can affect crop yields or even kill entire crops, and strong winds or a lack of proper amounts of sunlight can have similar

**Table 1. Partial List of Job Tasks as Detailed in Contracts**

Bailing	Digging	Knocking	Pruning	Spraying	Training
Boxing	Dusting	Lidding	Pulling	Stacking	Transplanting
Bucking	Emasculating	Loading	Rolling	Stemming	Trimming
Bunching	Feeding	Packing	Sacking	Stringing	Turning
Capping	Filling	Picking	Seeding	Stripping	Vining
Carrying	Girdling	Picking Up	Shaking	Swamping	Weeding
Casing	Grading	Pitching	Shoveling	Thinning	Wiring
Cleaning	Hoeing	Planting	Sorting	Tying	Wrapping
Cultivating	Hulling	Propping	Spawning	Topping	Windrowing
Cutting	Irrigating				

Source: (Galarza 1964:88).

effects. Additionally, there are a whole host of man-made catastrophes such as overproduction that leads to soil erosion and burn-out, water table depletion, and dependency on pesticides. As much as growers and scientists attempt to master nature, one can never completely control for the complexities of agricultural production and its potential natural and humanly-produced disasters.

All of these factors enable capitalist growers to call for a large, highly-mobile workforce to be employed for short periods of time but at an extremely fast pace basically from sunrise to sunset. Agricultural technology, not to be outdone by nature, enabled several types of lighting systems to work during the night. California cotton growers were notorious for employing local youth to shine flashlights and car headlights on laborers to enable Braceros to work through the night (the practice known as “swamping”). If pickers worked a “light day” of 6–8 hours, they often sought night work in the canneries. Since steady work is available only sporadically for a maximum of nine months during any given year (if a migrant is willing to move at the very least three to four times throughout the year), workers try to earn as much money as possible and work as many hours as possible when the work is available.

In a normal crop cycle the major tasks include planting, irrigating, thinning, weeding, and harvesting. Per the Bracero work contract, growers found a myriad of ways to describe these five major job tasks (see Table 1). If these descriptions did not suffice, “general orchard work” and “miscellaneous crop activities” covered other job duties to be performed (Galarza 1964:92). From 1942–1949, no mechanical operations were to be performed by Braceros and, in many contracts, the practice of using Braceros to operate farm machinery and drive tractors was expressly prohibited. If Braceros were used in this manner, they were to be compensated at a higher pay rate.

Of the Braceros I interviewed, most harvested crops (the most labor intensive component of the growing cycle), but they also planted,

irrigated, thinned, topped sugar beets, and performed job tasks expressly forbidden by the terms of the contract—driving tractors and the construction task of laying irrigation pipe. One of the standard lines in the contract Don Jorge had, along with all of the other Braceros under contract, was that the Braceros were expressively forbidden from operating machinery.

The picking was over, then the boss told me ‘Do you know how to drive?’ Well drive, yes. Then he asked me if I knew how to drive a tractor. Well yes, but I never worked with them. But if you show me how, yes. ‘Good’, he told me, ‘I’m going to put you on a tractor.’ Then he placed some wood blocks on the tractor so that I could reach the brakes. It went well. The first time I drove the tractor there was a wire, for a fence, it was the first time and I took off with the fence. ‘No Shorty, no, you’ll wreck,’ they yelled at me. The second time he got on with me and taught me how to use the brakes. (Interview with Jorge Colima 1997)

This fairly detailed recollection of the work done as a tractor driver was extremely relevant to the interviewee because he was doing a high-status job task that most Braceros did not have the opportunity to perform. The jobs of operating farm machinery were the best paying in the fields and were to be reserved for domestic workers (per the contract agreed upon by both federal governments), but Don Jorge was asked to operate tractors in both California and Texas. Conversely, his recollections about thinning and blocking sugar beets in Michigan and harvesting a cucumber crop in Ohio were much more limited.

The nature of the job tasks varied according to the types of crops. The most difficult tasks, in most of the respondents’ evaluations, were the harvesting of cotton and sugar beets. Tomato production was also discussed due to its large proportion of employment of Braceros in California. As a grower from Arkansas stated to the President’s Commission, “cotton is a slave crop, nobody is going to pick it that doesn’t have to . . . and the [Mexican] national is about the only reservoir of labor that we know of that really wants to pick cotton, because he gets more money than he ever saw in his life before, or ever expected to see, and people that can get anything else to do, don’t want to pick cotton” (U.S. President’s Commission on Migratory Labor 1951:20). Don Antonio picked cotton in 1958, and his testimony on the cotton working day illustrates the point.

Well, we would arrive and we would work all day and they would pay us about three dollars. It was by contract for how much work we did. I don’t remember what it was per pound, [again],

We would get our lunch half way through the day, we wouldn't take too much time because we were doing contract work. Sometimes they put us into some pretty bad places. Like cotton for example. Places where the cotton was very small [arm gesture to knee] and those that were from here, they would put them in the better places. So there were still locals working here and they got the better jobs. We don't know how much they paid them. They had restrooms. Water wasn't very good it was kinda salty. They didn't have fresh water but where could we get better water from. We would take soda but we would bring our own. (Interview with Antonio Guanajuato 1997)

The idea of the Braceros as privileged workers in terms of how they were treated as compared to domestics was often countered by Braceros' testimony as to how they were treated in the fields and the camps. The quality of water, lack of facilities, and work in low-yield crops all combined to secure Braceros squarely at the bottom of the labor process in terms of receiving the lowest pay under the harshest of conditions.

Similar to the cotton working day, the thinning and harvesting of sugar beets was also a labor-intensive activity. Mechanization was introduced in stages during the program but full-scale mechanization did not occur until after its completion (Grove 1996).

After the sugar beet ground was ploughed and seeded, the plants sprouted thickly, each ordinary seed sending up four or more shoots. The worker had to go along the rows and *block* out the plants into clusters several inches apart. Also, each cluster was *thinned* so that only the strongest plant remained. This activity was performed with a short-handled hoe, generally eighteen inches long. The worker, therefore, had to work in a "bent over" or squatting position. The work was usually done under pressure, since the plants had to be thinned quickly before they became too large and crowded. The worker often worked from twelve to fifteen hours a day. (Crisler 1968:80)

The aim of blocking and thinning is uniformity of spacing between seedlings and control over the number of developing seedlings in each row. After this process, which continues until the crops have fully matured, the harvest begins. Harvesting was done either via mechanical aids or the sugarbeets were topped by hand.

In Utah, we were thinning the rows with *cortitos* [short-handled hoes that required one to stoop over]. During those times, they did not have the big ones for us. We would also top the beets. With a knife we would take the top off. . . . The way we did the sugar beets was a machine would pull up the plants from the

**Table 2. Peak Employment of Braceros In California by Crop, 1956**

Asparagus	6,037
Almonds	1,749
Brussel Sprouts	1,225
Carrots	1,714
Celery	2,245
Cherries	1,068
Cotton	9,000
Grapes	6,270
Lemons	6,050
Lettuce	5,975
Melons	2,255
Olives	1,771
Oranges	5,299
Peaches	4,957
Pears	3,848
Prunes	2,548
Strawberries	4,098
Snap Beans	2,351
Sugar Beets	4,209
Tomatoes	44,837

Source: (Galarza 1964:89).

ground and way up to here [signals up to his chest] and we were topping the beets and throwing them in a ditch where another machine picked them up and put them in a truck. (Interview with Liberio Michoacan 1997)

Don Liberio (employed in Utah, North Carolina, Michigan, and California from 1947 to 1949, 1952, and 1964) was fortunate in that certain aspects of his difficult work were mechanized. The topping of sugar beets, without the type of machinery described, would be done by the worker needing to stoop over. The beets would be pulled from the ground, their tops would be cut off, and then the beets would be stored in a sack. This sack was carried on his shoulder until filled to capacity (about 40 to 50 pounds). Then, the worker would carry the sack to the end of the row and dump the beets in a box that would eventually be transported to the processing plant. At that time, hoeing was most often done with *cortitos* so workers would not damage seedlings. It was assumed that workers could more easily view their work if they were forced to bend over and reach almost to the ground to clear away weeds and other debris (e.g., rocks, clay, and litter).

As is evident in Table 2, the employment of Braceros in the harvesting of California tomatoes far surpassed the peak employment of Braceros working in every other area. One particular tomato operation in California used this system as detailed by Galarza (Collected Papers Box 3: Folder 1): "All [of the] boxes [were] punched for on [a] card held by worker and checked by him on the spot. Box

piles [were piled] six high. Boxes [were] dumped on the field when considered below grade and charged to worker. Re-sorting of rejects made at workers expense.” The two Braceros I interviewed, who picked tomatoes, had little in common since one was paid an hourly rate and the other was paid per box or on a piece rate.

### Work Hazards

The character of work for the Mexican Braceros is probably unimaginable for those who have never worked in the fields. When I interviewed those affiliated with the program, they all stated that their work was “hard,” not something most people would want to do. And quite simply, stoop labor is not the type of work people do because they want to, they do it because they think they do not have any better employment options. Francisco Zacatecas was employed during the last four years of the Bracero Program in California. He worked every aspect of production in asparagus, chilis, fruit trees, tomatoes, strawberries, grapefruit, and grapes and described his work in the following fashion:

**Don Francisco:** The work is hard. You get all sweaty and dirty and wet.

**RM:** What does it do to your body?

**Don Francisco:** The cuts on your hand from the knives. You have to be careful or you’ll cut your fingers off. You get tired. It hurts your lower back, your shoulders from the weight. You are never going to come up. You are always bent over.

From additional interviews in the San Luis Valley of Colorado, one respondent who at the time of the interview worked for a migrant services agency detailed the effects of agricultural work on one’s body. The respondent worked in the valley’s potato harvest as an adolescent.

You get a terrible sunburn on your neck and back if your shirt exposes skin. You couldn’t wear the gloves to pull the potatoes since you were sweating too much. . . . You had to carry the bags of potatoes to the end of the row when you filled them up and I would get blisters on my leg where the bag rubbed up against me. (Interview with Señora Isabel 1997)

Respondents noted that they too were required to use a short-handled hoe when thinning and harvesting asparagus, strawberries, sugar beets, and other vegetables. As stated earlier, this farm implement requires one to bend over and stoop down for the vast majority of the work day. Respondents complained that they felt like they would never be able to stand up straight after a day with *el cortito*. As Murray (1982) notes, the tool was eventually banned from agricultural work due to its

negative effects on workers' backs, shoulders, and arms. At the time of the program, agriculture was one of the most dangerous occupations. Anderson (1961) notes that in California, only mining and construction jobs were more dangerous than agricultural employment. In California (one of the few states to collect data at that time), disabling injuries occurred at a rate of almost 50 per 1,000 workers from 1953 to 1957 and though all other industries saw a steady decline in rates, agricultural rates remained stable. The dangers associated with agricultural work were coupled with coercive labor management practices.

### **Coercion and Consent in the Capitalist Agricultural Labor Process**

During the Bracero Program, the threat of returning a contractee to Mexico, if he did not meet the demands of the job without complaint, was usually enough for workers to conform to grower expectations. If a worker did not comply, caused a ruckus, or started making demands for better working conditions, he would face deportation. Living with the fear of total control, violence did not have to be inflicted by the grower because workers were made well aware of the history of state agents (local law enforcement) who were recruited to do the dirty work of punishment. Collective action was not an option afforded to the Mexican worker pushed to the margins of existence. The power imbalance was often too great to begin seriously talking about leverage for the worker in negotiations. Asked about working conditions, another bracero said:

Three days ago our crew stopped work right in the field. There were fifty men in the group. It was explained by one of the men who could express himself that it was not our desire to make a strike but we wanted to have eight hours work or to have our board without charge if we worked only one or two hours. The foreman said that assuredly there would be plenty of work and we went back to cutting. The next day the bracero who had spoken for us was not in the camp. The foremen said he had been taken to the Association but he did not know the motive. In the field, the boss said there are plenty more where we came from if we were disgusted. I have read my contract, but it is not worth the pain to insist on the clauses. Here, the contract has no value. (Galarza 1956:18)

For the entirety of the program's existence, if Braceros wanted to continue working, they had to accept a pay schedule that changed from day to day. They had to cope with rancid food that was deducted from wages and the illegal deductions for blankets and work supplies. They also were required to live in grower-supplied housing, even if it meant



living in a tent or a “converted” barn or chicken coop.<sup>8</sup> They risked personal safety riding in overcrowded flat-bed flat-bed trucks. They endured the extreme loneliness of living in a country whose language they did not speak. They also endured isolation in a labor camp where surveillance was the order of the day and outside contact was infrequent or completely nonexistent. The central means for ensuring that the Braceros would suffer through these deplorable conditions was the threat, implied or actual, that malcontents would be replaced if they publicly voiced their grievances.

One of the key agents of social control was given significantly more power during the Bracero Program. As many growers formed agencies to pool labor resources, they relied upon third party contractors to manage the labor force. It was the recruitment of men to work in U.S. agriculture by farm labor contractors (FLCs) that was codified and legitimated by the state-sanctioned Bracero Program. Recruitment was strictly male-based and was clearly a grower/FLC-initiated practice since growers believed that productivity would be maximized with an able-bodied, young, male workforce. The capitalist agricultural labor process during the Bracero Program was characterized by a physical separation of men from their families. In previous work, I have analyzed the Bracero Program as a total institution (Mize 2004) in part due to Goffman’s views on the incompatibility of the family with the total institution framework. “Total institutions are also incompatible with another crucial element of our society, the family. Family life is sometimes contrasted with solitary living, but in fact the more pertinent contrast is with batch living, for those who eat and sleep at work, with a group of fellow workers, can hardly sustain a meaningful domestic existence” (Goffman 1961:11). The immense physical distance of Mexican nationals from their homes only amplifies the problem. So, the question may remain in some minds: if they endured hardships, mistreatment in their “host” country, and threatened family stability; why did men *van al Norte*? Quite simply, many felt that they had no other choice, given their economic chances in Mexico. A food vendor that provided corn tortillas to Braceros in Colorado analyzed the motivations for migration in this way.

Why are those guys willing to leave their families, their culture, their language, everything that they’ve ever known? I can’t imagine some guy waking up in the morning and saying, ‘I’m

<sup>8</sup> Students in a U.S. citizenship course all described these living conditions as those experienced by Braceros they knew or knew of. Many of the most deplorable aspects of the Bracero Program (minimal wages, unfair deductions, dangerous transportation, dilapidated housing, rancid or strange foods, and racist treatment by U.S. citizens) occupied the vast majority of the conversation yet were the topics that most Braceros I interviewed refused to talk about in any depth.

tired of my culture, I'm tired of my family, I'm going to the United States.' I don't believe that that's the way it happens. O.K.? So what happens is that his level of existence, the economic level, is somewhere in the neighborhood of just flat-ass desperation. O.K., follow me? For him to make this move. Is this not so, O.K.? Now who is responsible for that level of existence? (Interview with Señor Palmas 1997)

Given the choice, many Mexican male workers stated that they would prefer to be with their families and a few even stated that they prefer to work with wives and children to maximize their earning ability. The Bracero Program attempted to establish the exact opposite of the Braceros' intentions by keeping women and children in Mexico while fully exploiting Mexican detached, unencumbered men in U.S. fields. It was a combination of direct surveillance by FLCs and crew bosses, social isolation, and low wages that placed Braceros in the vulnerable positions they found themselves in.

### **Remuneration and Wage Rates**

The wage labor system is an integral, if not *the* defining, component of capitalism. Those who purchase the labor power of others and own the means of production may ultimately decide the type of wage scale that is used, how much workers are paid, and what will be deducted from paychecks. The means of remuneration in capitalist agriculture comes closer to Marx's description of the English factory system than the contemporary U.S. factory regime. The use of piece rates have been virtually banned from factory production, but it is still the primary means for agricultural labor. The two means of remuneration at the disposal of both U.S. growers and nineteenth-century factory owners were the piece and time schedule. Piece rates are based on how much a worker produces and he is usually paid a flat fee per item produced. Time schedules, or hourly rates, are based on the amount of time spent working, so a worker earns a fixed amount per hour of work. I discuss how these two wage schedules were specified in the individual work contract of Braceros. In addition, I utilize both the life stories and other sources on wage data to show how much workers were actually paid despite the contract specifications. The amount and type of deductions becomes central for calculating the actual wages earned by Braceros. As for the money that was earned, I also discuss the remittances that were sent back to Mexico, and how the Braceros used their earnings to support their families. Finally, I discuss different survival strategies in forming a family wage of subsistence, and how the Bracero Program subverted the family as wage-earners in favor of employing solely men.

During the Bracero Program, the use of piece rates was officially sanctioned in the individual work contract, which would specify whether pay would be based on a piece or hourly rate. The Bracero arrangements guaranteed that the wages paid would be equal to those paid to American workers for similar jobs in the respective regions of the U.S. (*Secretaria del Trabajo y Prevision Social* 1946:85). Some of the recent research on the program (see Grove 1996; Calavita 1991) assumes that the wage guarantees were in fact a lived reality for Braceros, since growers complained about this stipulation, and the U.S. government agreed to the guarantees in writing. The standard work contract did state how much the worker would be earning in each crop he was contracted to harvest. But the direct testimony by Braceros attests to the cunning of authority in its remunerative practices. Certain factors varied to ensure workers that they would never really know how much they were making from week-to-week. The availability of work, the number of hours worked per day, the shifting wage schedule (piece or hourly), the amount of deductions, and the changing pay rate all served as means at the growers' disposal to pay whatever wage they deemed appropriate.

The wages that Braceros received varied a great deal, but a consistent pattern did occur. The few workers who could earn what was guaranteed to them only did so by working extremely long hours. In 1946, Washington pea farmers boasted that their workers averaged ninety dollars per week, but to do so, Braceros had to work fifteen hour days, seven days a week at 85 cents per hour (Gamboa 1990:80). Since the minimum wage for nonagricultural jobs in the United States was 75 cents per hour, and agricultural work was exempt from minimum wage laws, the 85 cent hourly wage was rarely paid to Braceros. After deductions for non-occupational medical insurance, board, and transportation, the wages were rarely enough to live on in either the United States or Mexico. Considering that most Braceros were sending upwards of 80–90 percent of their paychecks back to Mexico, their living was meager indeed.

To explain why Braceros were willing to work in such harsh conditions for poor pay, one needs only to consider their earning options in Mexico. As one respondent stated:

One worked in the fields over there in Guanajuato, you earned three pesos all day from six in the morning to five or six in the afternoon. Three pesos [ponders while he repeats the amount the second time]. Well of course everything was a little cheaper but no no no. It was very little. (Interview with Don Antonio, 1997)

The wages earned by Braceros I interviewed varied a great deal from crop to crop and region to region, but both hourly and piece rates were

utilized by growers. In terms of an hourly rate, the respondents reported a range of 50 cents per hour to 90 cents per hour. Piece rates were specific to the crop but a sample of the different rates were 40 cents per bushel for picking green beans, 13 cents per box in tomatoes, 5 dollars a bin for grapefruits (the respondent averaged two bins per day), and \$1.50 per 100 pounds for picking cucumbers.

One of the more interesting aspects of the self-reports on wages was that there were a number of silences, the “*no recuerdo*” (“I don’t remember”) type of response. One explanation for the lack of recollections is that wages probably serve as a source of embarrassment. The Braceros tend to take pride in their work, and they may conclude that their worth is measured in wages. The contract specified the wage and piece rates, but after speaking with Braceros and personally working in the fields, I found that the wage schedule changed on a daily basis. On the most labor-intensive days, when the crops were not producing or needed cleaning to remove mold or insects, the pay was worst and on a piece rate. However, when pickings were good, and the work was comparatively easy, the pay on an hourly rate, so the amount paid did not depend on how much one picked.

Another source on wages, other than self-reports and contract stipulations, is the pay stubs Braceros received with their pay checks. Ernesto Galarza collected hundreds of pay stubs from Braceros, and they document a consistent pattern. After deductions and off-time due to inclement weather, Braceros were consistently making just enough for themselves and their families in Mexico to subsist. Of the 181 workers that Galarza interviewed in the Salinas area, 160 reported earning less than 40 dollars (net) in a one week period. The highest weekly net earnings never exceeded 75 dollars for 171 of the 181 interviewed (Galarza Papers Box 18: Folder 6). The factor that tended to account for the differences in earnings, whether the pay was based on a piece or hourly rate, was the amount of hours worked. The more hours in a week that the Bracero worked and the less money he spent in the United States, the more he could send back to Mexico.

But certain aspects of the wage structure were simply out of his control. The amount deducted from paychecks also varied in the reports by Braceros, but most often the question posed about deductions was met with a “*no recuerdo*” response. The standard work contract stated the amount that would be deducted for food. As Galarza (Papers 3:1) notes, the \$1.75 per week maximum deduction for food, that was set by the government, translated into the minimum amount deducted by growers. This amount was intended to guarantee that Braceros would be charged at cost for the food prepared. Another deduction that was officially sanctioned by the binational agreement was a mandatory

nonoccupational health insurance policy that cost Braceros \$3 per month (\$3.50 at one camp that Galarza surveyed). “In conforming with the established international rules and contracts, of the amount paid to the Mexican braceros of their salary ten percent was deposited into a savings fund [in Mexican National Banks] for each worker” (*Secretaria* 1946:88). The mandatory savings account deductions would not be returned to the Bracero until he fulfilled the conditions of his contract and had returned to Mexico.<sup>9</sup> Galarza (18:6) also exposed the illegal deductions made by growers in the Salinas, California area. Braceros were charged for blankets, and a smaller number were charged for the twist ties used in banding carrots together.

For most Braceros, remittances were the main reason for migrating in the first place. “The majority of the braceros sent money to their family in Mexico. . . . [Almost 97 percent] of those sent money and only 3 . . . percent did not send any” (*Secretaria* 1946:91). Interviews with the former postal employee Señor Freemont and former bus driver/crew boss Señor Paulo document the prevalent practice of sending money back home via money orders or purchasing food, clothing, or used appliances to transport back to Mexico. The reliance on remittances for subsistence is a unique characteristic, to the extent that it occurred, of the Bracero Program. Primarily, the labor demands of growers for young, unattached males substantially limited the options for families in Mexico. For years prior and subsequent to the program, Mexican agricultural laborers have been comprised of families that work as a team for subsistence wages.

### Conclusion

The paucity of a rural sociological focus on agricultural labor may be quickly rectified by an elaboration on the themes and analytical approaches suggested by Burawoy (1976), Pfeffer (1983), Thomas (1992), and Wells (1996). Carefully selected case studies may further elaborate the capitalist agricultural labor process during important times and locations in the overall formation and increasing dominance of large-scale agribusiness. Key historical moments in the development of large-scale agricultural labor can certainly shed light on how to explain the current situation where Mexican immigrant laborers can be found picking apples in New York, slaughtering beef in Nebraska, picking tobacco in North Carolina, and milking cows in Wisconsin. The

<sup>9</sup> The mandatory savings program has received substantial attention in both the United States and Mexico due to concerted efforts on both sides of the border to hold the proper agencies accountable for funds that were never returned to Braceros and are still not accounted for to this day. For more details, see Mize (2005).

overall finding of this article is the key components of the capitalist labor process, as detailed by Karl Marx in "The Working Day," apply much more completely to the case of the post-war U.S. capitalist agricultural labor process than the explanatory framework of Burawoy's hegemonic regimes. By focusing on four of the ten major components comprising the working day, I demonstrated how analogous the nineteenth century labor process of the English factory regime is to the post-war U.S. capitalist agricultural labor process.

In addition, without directly interviewing the laborers who perform agricultural labor, it would be easy to assume that the program worked the way it was designed on paper. These themes of the working day, work hazards, coercion, and wages were considered in light of the life stories of former Braceros and other accounts of the United States-Mexico joint governmental program that was so crucial in developing the industrial system of agriculture in every region of the United States. Rather than documenting how the guarantees were met in terms of quality of housing, wage rates, job tasks performed, and other terms of the contract; the life stories and primary research by Galarza are a testament to how the terms of the contract were consistently violated. Direct testimony by former Braceros challenges the conventional academic views as to how the despotic regimes, coerced job tasks of the working day, work hazards, and means of remuneration (in terms of wages, deductions, and remittances) actually played out for those involved.

### References

- Albrecht, S., L. Clarke, and M. Miller. 1998. "Community, Family, and Race/Ethnic Differences in Health Status in Rural Areas." *Rural Sociology* 63:235-52.
- Allensworth, E. and R. Rochin. 1998. "Ethnic Transformation in Rural California: Looking Beyond the Immigrant Farmworker." *Rural Sociology* 63:26-50.
- Anderson, H.P. 1963. *Fields of Bondage*. Berkeley, CA: Mimeographed.
- . 1961. *The Bracero Program in California*. Berkeley, CA: Mimeographed.
- Barger, W.K. and E. Reza. 1994. *The Farm Labor Movement in the Midwest*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Braverman, H. 1974. *Labor and Monopoly Capital*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Brown, D.L. 2002. "Migration and Community: Social Networks in a Multilevel World." *Rural Sociology* 67:1-23.
- Burawoy, M. 1985. *The Politics of Production*. New York: Verso Books.
- . 1979. *Manufacturing Consent*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1976. "The Functions and Reproduction of Migrant Labor: Comparative Material from Southern Africa and the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, 81:1050-87.
- Calavita, K. 1992. *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration and the I.N.S.* New York: Routledge.
- Crisler, C.C. 1968. "The Mexican Bracero Program with Special Reference to Colorado." M.A. Thesis: University of Denver, Denver, CO.
- Secretaria del Trabajo y Prevision Social. 1946. *Los Braceros*. Ciudad Mexico: Direccion de Prevision Social.
- Driscoll, B.A. 1997. *The Tracks North*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Fantasia, R. 1988. *Cultures of Solidarity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- Friedland, R., A. Barton, and R.J. Thomas. 1983. *Manufacturing Green Gold*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Galarza, E. 1956. *Strangers in Our Fields: Based on a Report Regarding Compliance with the Contractual, Legal, and Civil Rights of Mexican Agricultural Contract Labor in the United States* 2 ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Section, Joint United States-Mexico Trade Union Committee.
- . 1964. *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero History*. Santa Barbara, CA: McNally and Loftin.
- Galarza Papers. Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California.
- Gamboa, E. 1990. *Mexican Labor and World War II : Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, 1942–1947*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- García, J.R. 1980. *Operation Wetback : The Mass Deportation of Mexican Undocumented Workers in 1954*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- García y Griego, M. 1983. “The Importation of Mexican Contract Laborers to the United States, 1942–1964.” Pp.49–98 in *The Border That Joins*, edited by P. Brown and H. Shue. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Goffman, E. 1961. *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Gramsci, A. [1929–1935] 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.
- Grove, W.A. 1996. “The Mexican Farm Labor Program, 1942–1964: Government-Administered Labor Market Insurance.” *Agricultural History* 70:302–20.
- Herrera-Sobek, M. 1979. *The Bracero Experience: Elite/lore versus Folklore*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Latin American Center Publications.
- Kirstein, P.N. 1977. *Anglo Over Bracero: A History of the Mexican Worker in the United States from Roosevelt to Nixon*. San Francisco, CA: R and E Research Associates.
- Lobao, L. and R. Saenz. 2002. “Spatial Inequality and Diversity as an Emerging Research Area.” *Rural Sociology* 67:497–522.
- Lyon, R.M. 1954. “The Legal Status of American and Mexican Migratory Farm Labor.” Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University: Ithaca, NY.
- Majka, T.J. and L. Majka. 1982. *Farmworkers, Agribusiness, and the State*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Majka, T.J. and P.H. Mooney. 1995. *Farmers and Farmworkers Movements: Social Protest in American Agriculture*. New York: Twayne Publishers.
- Marx, K. [1867] 1976. *Capital, Volume I*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Mills, C.W. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mize, R.L. 2000. “The Invisible Workers: Articulations of Race and Class in the Life Histories of Braceros.” Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology and Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin: Madison, WI.
- . 2004. “The Persistence of Workplace Identities: Living the Effects of the Bracero Total Institution.” Pp. 155–75 in *Immigrant Life in the US: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by D. R. Gabaccia and C. W. Leach. New York: Routledge Press.
- . 2005. “Reparations for Mexican Braceros? Lessons Learned from Japanese and African American Attempts at Redress.” *Cleveland State Law Review*, LatCrit VIII Symposium Issue, 52:273–95.
- Montejano, D. 1987. *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Murray, D. 1982. “The Abolition of El Cortito, The Short-Handled Hoe: A Case Study in Social Conflict and State Policy in California Agriculture.” *Social Problems*. 30: 26–39.
- Peña, D.G. 1997. *The Terror of the Machine: Technology, Work, Gender, and Ecology on the U.S.–Mexico Border*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Pfeffer, M.J. 1980. “The Labor Process and Corporate Agriculture: Mexican Workers in California.” *The Insurgent Sociologist* 10: 25–44.
- . 1983. “Social Origins of Three Systems of Farm Production in the United States.” *Rural Sociology* 48:540–62.

- Rasmussen, W. 1951. *A History of the Emergency Farm Labor Supply Program*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.
- Thomas, R.J. 1992. *Citizenship, Gender, and Work: Social Organization of Industrial Agriculture*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Tootle, D. and S. Green. 1989. "The Effect of Ethnic Identity on Support for Farm Worker Unions." *Rural Sociology* 54:83.
- U.S. President's Commission on Migratory Labor. 1951. *Migratory Labor in American Agriculture*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Weber, D. 1994. *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Wells, M.J. 1996. *Strawberry Fields: Politics, Class, and Work in California Agriculture*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.



Copyright of Rural Sociology is the property of Rural Sociological Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.