

IMAGES OF WOMEN IN THE UFW  
COPH OHP\_298



Center for Oral and Public History  
California State University, Fullerton

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## Descriptive Summary

**Title**

Images of Women in the UFW [OHP 298]

**Date(s)**

2015

**Creator**

Natalie Navar

**Extent**

Six (6) oral histories. Six (6) narrators.

**Collateral:**

Natalie Navar's MA paper, *Through the Lens: Oral Histories Capturing the Images of Women in the United Farm Workers Union* (2015)

[Located in project file]

**Repository**

Center for Oral and Public History  
California State University, Fullerton

**Project Abstract**

This project is a compilation of oral histories from two female photographers, two female organizers, and two men organizers. The interviews talk about the use of photographs in UFW, the role the images took, and how the photographers worked in the union. The interviews analyze the aspects of race, class, and gender of the UFW through photography.

**Narrators:**

Ilka Hartmann

Eloy Martinez

Cathy Murphy

Clara Solis

Anita Torres

Henry Torres

## Images of Women in the UFW Oral History Project

**OH #5536**

**Narrator:** CLARA SOLIS (b.1960)  
**Interviewer:** Natalie Navar  
**Date:** March 15, 2015  
**Location:** East Los Angeles, California  
**Language:** English  
**Project:** Images of Women in the UFW

**Audio Format(s):** Born-digital  
**Length:** 01:42:59  
**Transcript:** Verbatim, 41 pp.  
**Ephemera:** None

### **Abstract:**

An oral history with Clara Solis, a longtime resident of East Los Angeles, California. This interview was conducted for the Images of Women in the UFW Oral History Project for the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding her time spent in the United Farm Workers (UFW) and her knowledge of UFW photography. Specifically, this interview details Solis' childhood spent in East Los Angeles, California, her siblings, and her parent's background; talks about the start of her work with the UFW, how volunteered, and how she found out about the UFW while she was attending Cal State L.A. in 1976; describes the community of East Los Angeles, the neighborhood she lived in, the freeway system, and the effects that the creation of freeways made; recollects the discrimination she faced while working for the UFW; talks about the influence the UFW has had on her life, how she became a staff member, and her first assignment in Salinas, California; remembers her time spent at the UFW's headquarters in La Paz, her job in the printing office, the friends she made, the hours she worked, and the training she enduring during the late 1970s; comments on the mild sexism she saw and how she dealt with it; recalls her organizing efforts in the Coachella valley in California, the vegetable strike in 1979 and the strong women she worked with, Jessica Govea being one; her memories of the murder of martyr, farm worker, Rufino Contreras, and the aftermath of his death, including the march they had for him; details her time spent with Jessica Govea and Marshall Ganz; remembers the photographs and flyers that the UFW utilized, how she felt about the pictures, and how she thinks Cesar Chavez wanted to use the images; describes the impact the UFW had on California and child labor laws; explains the UFW's overall objectives during the late 1970s, the biggest obstacle she faced, the skills she learned, and her biggest accomplishment to date.

**OH #5537**

**Narrator:** CATHY MURPHY (b.1943)  
**Interviewer:** Natalie Navar  
**Date:** March 27, 2015  
**Location:** Bisbee, Arizona  
**Language:** English  
**Project:** Images of Women in the UFW

**Audio Format(s):** Born-digital  
**Length:** 01:46:59  
**Transcript:** Verbatim, 57 pp.  
**Ephemera:** None

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Cathy Murphy, former staff photographer for the United Farm Workers (UFW). This interview was conducted for the Images of Women in the UFW Oral History Project for the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding her time spent in the UFW and her knowledge of photography. Specifically, this interview details her childhood spent in Bay City, Michigan, her father's job at Dow Chemical, and her family's move to California when she was fourteen; she talks about her reactions to moving to Antioch, California, her role models, and how she wanted to be a nun when she grew up; she describes how she became a photography enthusiast, and the courses she took at different colleges to learn more about the craft; she recalls her time spent living in Yugoslavia for a year with her husband, how she worked at the University of Zagreb, and how she was treated while teaching there; she recollects of her time attending UC Berkeley, the Free Speech movement, and how she was involved with the protests and walk-outs; she details how she was accepted into the Brooks Institute of Photography in 1974, the equipment she used, and the skills she learned from the school; she explains how she met Cesar Chavez at the Thousand Mile March in the summer of 1977, how Chavez hired her as a staff photographer, how much she was paid, and the hours that she worked; she details her experiences while working with Chavez and the farm workers, how she lived in La Paz, California, and the fields that she was sent to; she talks about her duties while working for the union, how she documented child labor in the fields, her reactions to the children, and how she went about taking their images; she describes how her photos were used, how they are still used, and how she and the union have dual copyright for her images; she recollects her time working on the Rumford Fair Housing Act in Berkeley in 1964, how she helped, and her feelings about it; she details her photography of the Tarahumara Indians in Copper Canyon, Mexico, how she did it from 1995 to 2004, and the aftermath of her work there; she describes the exhibits she worked on, and her travels due to them; she talks about her accomplishments, how Getty Images has picked up her photos, and how her life has changed because of it.

**OH #5538**

**Narrator:** HENRY TORRES (b.1956)  
**Interviewer:** Natalie Navar  
**Date:** March 28, 2015  
**Location:** Albuquerque, New Mexico  
**Language:** English  
**Project:** Images of Women in the UFW

**Audio Format(s):** Born-digital  
**Length:** 00:50:34  
**Transcript:** Verbatim, 16 pp.  
**Ephemera:** None

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Henry Torres, a resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico. This interview was conducted for the Images of Women in the UFW Oral History Project for the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding his time spent in the UFW and his knowledge of photography. Specifically, this interview features his childhood in Portland, Oregon; he talks about his small family growing up, the challenges of that; he describes his educational background, going to school in Los Angeles, California, the cultural shock he faced when he attended University of Pennsylvania, and the aftermath of going to school there; he recollects on what inspired him to join the union, how he started, and his duties while he was a volunteer; he recalls his time spent in La Paz, California, the UFW headquarters, the area, and how he became a negotiator; he explains the difficulties of being a negotiator, how he worked in the Coachella Valley, and how contracts were won; he talks about the photography, how he felt about the images, and the marches; and he talks about the women in the union, and how their leadership and work greatly helped the UFW.

**OH #5539**

**Narrator:** ANITA TORRES (b.1959)  
**Interviewer:** Natalie Navar  
**Date:** March 28, 2015  
**Location:** Albuquerque, New Mexico  
**Language:** English  
**Project:** Images of Women in the UFW

**Audio Format(s):** Born-digital  
**Length:** 01:07:27  
**Transcript:** Verbatim, 31 pp.  
**Ephemera:** None

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Anita Torres, a resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico. This interview was conducted for the Images of Women in the UFW Oral History Project for the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding her time spent in the UFW and her knowledge of photography. Specifically, this interview details her childhood living in a small village called Truchas in New Mexico, the farm she lived on, her duties growing up, and her parent's lives and jobs; her recollections of her brothers growing up, her caretaking responsibilities for her grandmother, and the challenges of her father being away from her due to his migrant worker duties; she talks about how exposure to the UFW while she was attending Menaul high school, and how she was inspired by the UFW; she talks about arriving in La Paz, California in 1977, how Cesar Chavez himself interviewed via phone call; she describes her position in the print shop at the headquarters, what her duties were, the hours she worked, and the voter registrations she helped out with; she explains how the headquarters looked, and the Fred Ross School; she recalls the photographs that she saw while in the union, how they were used, and how she felt about them; she talks about the marches she was part of, the funeral march for UFW martyr Rufino Contreras, and the difficulties of being in the movement; she recollects the skills she learned from the union, how she left in 1980, and how she felt about leaving; she describes her motivations, challenges, and her accomplishments of her activism.

**OH #5540**

**Narrator:** ELOY MARTINEZ (b.1940)  
**Interviewer:** Natalie Navar  
**Date:** April 30, 2015  
**Location:** Bolinas, California  
**Language:** English  
**Project:** Images of Women in the UFW

**Audio Format(s):** Born-digital  
**Length:** 02:08:12  
**Transcript:** Verbatim, 68 pp.  
**Ephemera:** None

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Eloy Martinez, a resident of Oakland, California. This interview was conducted for the Images of Women in the UFW Oral History Project for the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding his time spent in the UFW and his knowledge of photography. Specifically, this interview features his childhood and meeting his wife; description of working with Native Americans on Alcatraz Island; he talks about his experience in central California protesting farm working conditions including standard breaks, fair wages, and health and safety issues; he discusses farm worker support from the Catholic Church and establishment of the United Farm Workers with co-founders Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta; his view that the United Farm Workers provides a sense of community; he describes the benefits provided by the United Farm Workers to its members; examples highlighting the 1966 California protest march from Delano to Sacramento and the 1960s Gallo Farms protest; his recollections of photographer, George Ballas and his images explaining the effects of DDT pesticides, and how it affected the farm workers and their children; speaks on how the images capture less women than men; his insights of how law enforcement was the biggest obstacle for the United Farm Workers; and talks about what motivated him and his activism.

**OH #5541**

**Narrator:** ILKA HARTMANN (b.1942)  
**Interviewer:** Natalie Navar  
**Date:** April 30, 2015  
**Location:** Bolinas, California  
**Language:** English  
**Project:** Images of Women in the UFW

**Audio Format(s):** Born-digital  
**Length:** 01:47:43  
**Transcript:** Verbatim, 55 pp.  
**Ephemera:** 1 photograph

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Ilka Hartman, activist and photographer. This interview was conducted for the Images of Women in the UFW Oral History Project for the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding her time spent in the UFW and her knowledge of photography. Specifically, this interview details the beginning of Hartman's life in Germany in 1942 during World War II; quickly progresses through her childhood to the point of immigration to the United States; goes into Hartman's discovery of photography and activism in Stockton, California; her participation is noted to begin at UC Berkeley with photographing demonstrations held by the Black Panthers in the mid-1960s; which contain unique moments in her life, specifically in relation to being arrested after taking a photograph; discusses her move out of San Francisco in 1969 as the city had become occupied by the National Guard; brief recognition of the Indian occupy of Alcatraz and her involvement through photography; clarifies how she came across the UFW and the background story of her images of the women marching to Salinas; focuses on what drew her to the UFW and the importance of its significance; contains concise recognition of Hartman's experiences with the Berlin Wall and local government changes in Bolinas, California in 1972; her motivation to be involved in these major movements and advice to young people wishing to enter the path towards activism.