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# CALIFORNIAN

*California History Center  
& Foundation*

A Center at De Anza College  
for the Study and Preservation  
of State and Regional History

## **The Lost Mexicans of Bastanchury Ranch**





# A Pledge to Defend Civil Liberties

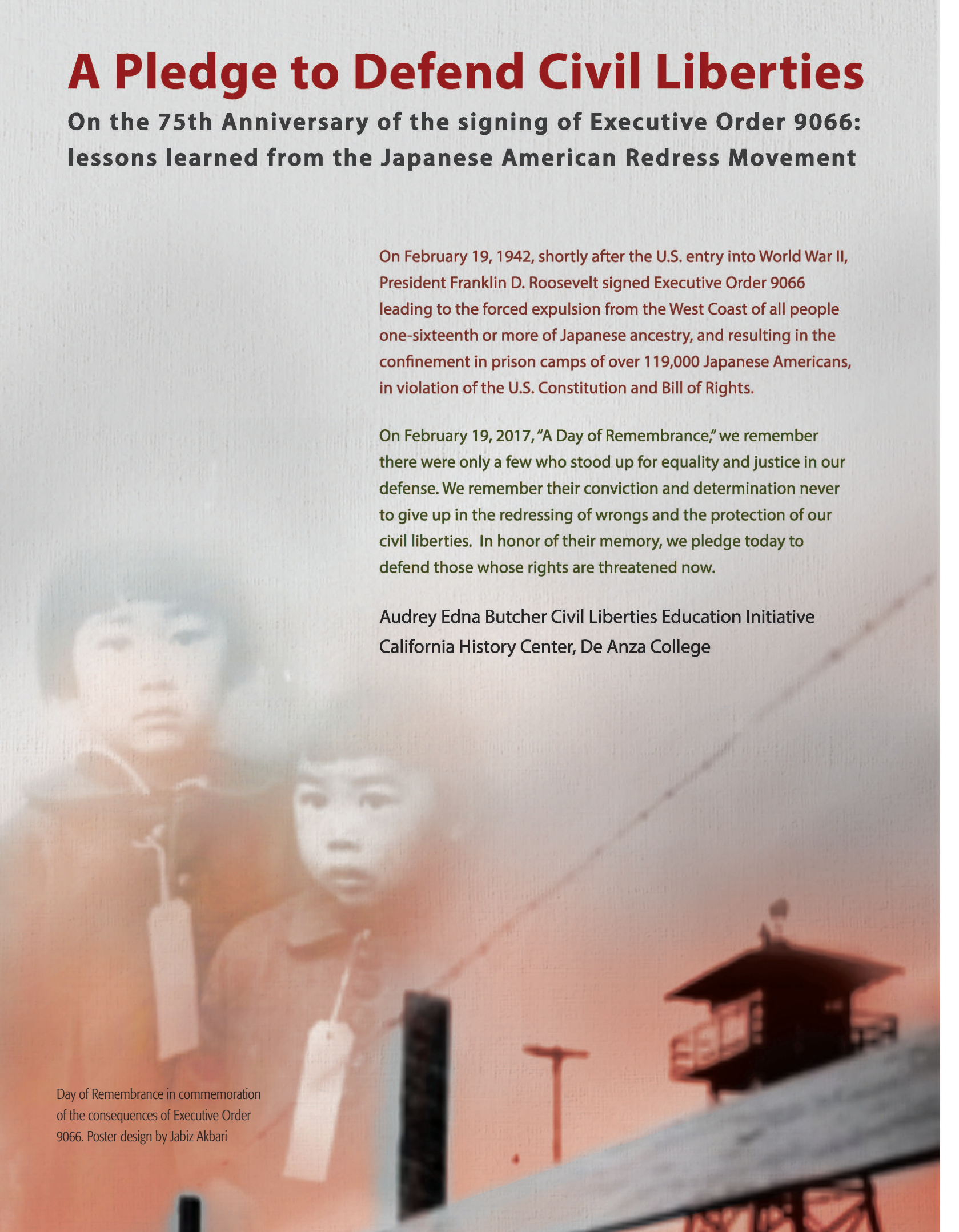
On the 75th Anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066:  
lessons learned from the Japanese American Redress Movement

On February 19, 1942, shortly after the U.S. entry into World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 leading to the forced expulsion from the West Coast of all people one-sixteenth or more of Japanese ancestry, and resulting in the confinement in prison camps of over 119,000 Japanese Americans, in violation of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.

On February 19, 2017, "A Day of Remembrance," we remember there were only a few who stood up for equality and justice in our defense. We remember their conviction and determination never to give up in the redressing of wrongs and the protection of our civil liberties. In honor of their memory, we pledge today to defend those whose rights are threatened now.

Audrey Edna Butcher Civil Liberties Education Initiative  
California History Center, De Anza College

Day of Remembrance in commemoration  
of the consequences of Executive Order  
9066. Poster design by Jabiz Akbari





# Winter Calendar

## JANUARY

- 9** First day of classes
- 16** Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday
- 30** Womens' International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) exhibit opening. Exhibit on display until March 24, 2017

## FEBRUARY

- 1** Billy Ralston, lecture, 6:30-10:20pm, CHC
- 4** Billy Ralston, field trip, 9am-5pm
- 8** Billy Ralston, lecture, 6:30-10:20pm, CHC
- 11** Billy Ralston, field trip, 9am-5pm
- 16** Fifteenth annual Day of Remembrance observed 1:30 – 2:45pm  
VPAC Theater – Room VPA 13  
Day of Remembrance – Japanese American Museum San José JAMsj, 7pm
- 17-20** Presidents' Day Weekend observed
- 28** San José's Japantown, lecture, 6:30-10:20pm, CHC

## MARCH

- 2** The Spider Web – 1920s War on Pacifists – with Dr. Jen Myhre, 3:30pm, CHC
- 4** San José's Japantown, field trip, 9am-5pm
- 7** San José's Japantown, lecture, 6:30-10:20pm, CHC
- 8** International Women's Day event – Raging Grannies (scheduled to appear), Conference Rooms A & B
- 9** Lawrence Coates, The Goodbye House, 4pm, CHC
- 10** Guerilla Cartography, 9 – 10am, Conference Rooms A & B
- 11** San José's Japantown, field trip, 9am-5pm
- 31** Last day of finals

### **Correction to October 2016 issue, caption of top image, page 19:**

The most important place in Heintzenville Chinatown was the Ng Shing Gung, Temple of Five Gods. CHCP built a replica of the Ng Shing Gung in 1991. The altar is the original and restored to its original splendor. Three of the gods are the original ones from the Heintzenville Chinatown temple. When the temple was demolished in 1949, the altar with five gods and temple fixtures were saved and stored by the City. Later it was discovered that Kwan Yin, Goddess of Mercy, (middle) and the Canton City God (far right) were missing. CHCP had these two figures replicated during the assembly of the altar in the new building in 1991. The Chinese American Historical Museum (CAHM) is in the Ng Shing Gung building. On October 2, 2016 CHCP celebrated 25 years of CAHM at History Park. Photo by John Yu.



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# Director's Report



Tom Izu

## The only thing certain is change

As we enter the New Year, we face much uncertainty and anxiety, and many people I know feel a sense of dread. I have felt it too and it wakes me up at night. But strangely, all of this makes me think about school history textbooks – and my relationship with them and how ending that relationship now brings some comfort.

I used to have some very heavy and thick history textbooks lying about that I managed somehow to keep from my earlier school days. Before I finally got rid of them, I would take a peek now and then and rage to myself about what was missing within them and whose stories had been left out and why. I would then worry that books such as these taught an entire generation the irrelevance of studying history because they were boring and left out so many of the controversies inherent in our country's past that make history so compelling.

But I also began to wonder if it did something worse than that – what if it had taught many of us, including me, to become “irrelevant,” in a social sense, and to strive toward a sort of an anti-participatory “passivity” that makes civic life seem more like a sporting event than one of participatory action?

I remember learning from these books that the history of our nation was like a great pageant — awestruck we should sit at our desks (with hands folded respectfully in front of us) and quietly watch as the pageant goes by. This required no effort, just faith that things always worked out and that great challenges would always be met and surmounted by all-knowing leaders.

A subset theory within this, offered for the more critically-thinking among us, was that history would keep repeating itself, and so if we learned the formula, we would know exactly who to root for and what to watch for as a spectator – What, Me Worry? Progress was guaranteed, because our nation's story tells us so. Now and then those hapless and ignorant in our society would get in the way (occupying the wrong side of history so to speak) and temporarily stop the parade's prog-

ress but would soon be scooted to the side and out of the way by the appropriate authorities.

The spell of this indoctrination was lost in the haze of my student and community activist days and only remembered years later when I tossed the textbooks. I finally realized what I'd learned through experience: that history will not tell us what to do in the present, nor should it be looked to as a predictive force that can either overwhelm us with paralyzing despair or false optimism. Written history is often a Frankens-tory, designed for a specific, nonhistorical purpose and made up of fake or mismatched parts, more confusing or deceptive than enlightening, and absolutely useless as a moral guide.

If history can teach us anything, it is this: our values and principles, whatever their source, will continue to be tested, without end. I think this is the only thing about our society's history that is certain...that things will change and jump out at us, testing our resilience, our intelligence, our compassion, always. We will have to figure out what to do and do something, now, in the present.

The lessons embedded in the many stories history has saved for us can help us reflect on what we value and why, based on understanding who we have become up to this point in time. We don't need to watch passively, as the parade goes by, especially if we decide it is headed in the wrong direction. There is no “right side of history” marching us automatically towards progress. We can only learn about ourselves and others from our mutually-understood shared past and we can decide what to do together in the present. The rest is uncertain.

The saying made famous by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (attributed to abolitionist Unitarian minister Theodore Parker), “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice,” is used to inspire hope in a time when things seem uncertain and hopeless. But some have added a caveat to it (including, I believe, Dr. King himself) that the arc needs a lot of help with the bending part; It does not bend just because it is supposed to bend in a certain direction, but because we do something about making it go in that certain direction, one of our choosing. We pile on when we must, using our individual weight to create something much greater. And clearly our collective bodily weight (not just our weighty ideas) is needed now more than ever. Perhaps those heavy history books might have been of some use after all.

If history can teach us anything, it is this: our values and principles, whatever their source, will continue to be tested, without end. I think this is the only thing about our society's history that is certain...that things will change and jump out at us, testing our resilience, our intelligence, our compassion, always.



# Audrey Edna Butcher Civil Liberties Education Initiative

## Internment of Japanese Americans not a precedent

“Because equal rights, fair play, justice, are all like the air: we all have it, or none of us has it. That is the truth of it.”

—Maya Angelou

*The Audrey Edna Butcher Civil Liberties Education Initiative was established to help our community understand the need for safeguarding our civil liberties, taking inspiration from lessons learned from the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans. This unconstitutional violation of basic civil liberties and rights out of our country’s recent past repeatedly made the news during the contentious and polarizing 2016 presidential campaign. In a few cases it was claimed to be a “precedent” for making a “Muslim registry”, or similar acts of profiling and discrimination, a justifiable option. We reprint the following opinion piece originally published in The Inyo Register, November 22, 2016, to help shed light on this issue.*

### By The Manzanar Committee

The 2016 Presidential election has unleashed thoughts, feelings and acts that are antithetical to our democracy. Blatant racism and xenophobia are on the rise, including a dramatic increase in anti-Asian racism and hundreds of hateful incidents, along with unconstitutional calls to ban or deport immigrants and Muslims—all of this grips our country. At the same time, an emboldened alt-right, neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan, among many other hate-based organizations, threaten our society and our democratic traditions.

Today, calls to exclude people based on religion or to refuse refugees and immigrants entry from certain countries emanate from our elected officials, while racist vigilantes attack people of color and brazenly display despicable racist symbols such as the Confederate flag. There are also growing demands for government action against immigrant communities, the LGBTQ community, or religious institutions that test the limits of constitutionality. This is all too familiar to the Japanese American community.

It is important to remember Executive Order 9066 and the resulting unjust incarceration of the more than 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry in American concentration camps was accompanied by vicious anti-Japanese racism and violence. Perpetuated by business interests and many in our government, few spoke out against this vigilante violence. The violence and the forced removal were justified by religious persecution, xe-

nophobia and were fueled by political opportunism with no real opposition.

Historically, anti-Asian racism was codified in laws including alien land laws and exclusion acts. Again, too many in our country remained silent as these laws were passed.

In light of all this, the Japanese American community must speak out. Having had our constitutional rights revoked by our government not that long ago, we have a special duty to do so. The long history of anti-Asian racism in our country continues to this day and it challenges us to stand up and fight for our rights now more than ever. We must remind our nation of the fragility of our democracy and of our constitutional rights. The self-evident and universal democratic principle enshrined in our Constitution must be defended at all times, especially in times of crisis. The rights to worship freely, to habeas corpus and to freedom of speech assume greater importance in this current climate.

Indeed, the Japanese American community, who had virtually no one speak in our defense in 1942, has a moral responsibility to speak out now. In particular, we must stand with those civil rights and civil liberties groups speaking out

against Islamophobia and the persecution of the Muslim people, and that includes recent calls to create a “Muslim registry” in the name of national security because “we did it during World War II with Japanese...”

The spectre of such a registry reminds us that immediately following the bombing of Pearl

*continued on page 16*



Scene of barrack homes at Manzanar, July 3, 1942. Photo: Dorothea Lange.

Article originally appeared as “Japanese Internment Not a Precedent” in *The Inyo Register*, Tuesday November 22, 2016, page 4.

*The Inyo Register* [www.inyoregister.com](http://www.inyoregister.com) is a community newspaper for Inyo County, California published three times a week. It is based in Bishop.



# The Lost Mexicans of Bastanchury Ranch

by Gustavo Arellano

Credit: *Orange County Weekly*  
April 11, 2013 [www.ocweekly.com/news/the-lost-mexicans-of-the-bastanchury-ranch-6426207](http://www.ocweekly.com/news/the-lost-mexicans-of-the-bastanchury-ranch-6426207)





**D**ecades later, long after federal authorities deported the last of her students, Arletta Kelly still remembered the cactus.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Kelly had worked as an Americanization teacher in the citrus camps of Orange County, tasked with schooling Mexican immigrants in the art of good citizenship. During the day, she taught women how to sew and cook American meals like casseroles and pies; at night, the Michigan native recited basic English phrases before audiences of men so that they could use them at work. She bounced across the *colonias* (worker colonies) of North County, from La Habra to Placentia, Anaheim to Fullerton. But Kelly eventually spent most of her time with the Mexicans of the Bastanchury Ranch, 6,000 rolling acres of what now constitutes the exclusive neighborhoods of northwest Fullerton—Sunny Hills, Valencia Mesa and others—and parts of Brea and La Habra, an area that to this day, with its winding roads, visible horse stables, dramatic valleys and stretches of untouched California landscape, feels rustic, beautiful and forboding.

In 1968, Betty Schmidt with the Center for Oral and Public History (COPH) at Cal State Fullerton interviewed Kelly about her days at the Ranch—and that’s when Kelly brought up the cactus. By then 70 years old, the *maestra* fondly recalled the Bastanchury Mexicans, who had created a society of their own far removed from the rest of Orange County. They were so grateful for Kelly’s tutorship that women frequently invited her to their ramshackle homes for dinner and a bit of south-of-the-border hospitality. Kelly singled out the cooking of one woman because, as she told her interviewer, “One of the things that she served so frequently that I was fond of was what she called ‘nopalitos,’ which are the little tiny shoots of the cactus.”

Schmidt asked from where did the unnamed Mexican woman buy the nopalitos. “There were big cactus” all around the Bastanchury territory, Kelly said. “And then when the spring came they would come up; why, when the shoots would come up, [the Mexican woman] would cut them off and peel them and slice them down and cut them up in little bits.”

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**Gustavo Arellano** is the editor of *OC Weekly*, an alternative newspaper in Orange County, California, author of *Orange County: A Personal History* and *Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America*, and lecturer with the Chicana and Chicano Studies department at California State University, Fullerton. Arellano, a lifelong resident of Orange County, writes an award-winning nationally syndicated column called “iAsk a Mexican!”

The rest of Kelly’s interview, transcribed and available for reading at the COPH archives, is filled with similarly pastoral anecdotes, stories about riding a bicycle, about another Mexican woman who pronounced “cheese” as “Jesus,” and about her role in helping orchard growers fight strikers during the 1936 Citrus War. But when Schmidt asked about the fate of her students at the Ranch, Kelly’s sharp memory quickly became spotty.

“Well, I think many of them went back to Mexico because work was scarcer and some of them had accumulated a little bit of money and so I knew of quite a few families that packed up and they drove back—in old jalopies—back to Mexico—the ones I happen to know of,” Kelly said. “Now, others may have gone by some other method, I don’t know.”

In fact, the Mexicans who lived on the Bastanchury Ranch in the early 1930s were subject to one of the largest mass deportations in Orange County history, with hundreds of them in late March of 1933—single men and families, Mexican nationals and American citizens—thrown onto trains bound for Mexico, carrying with them only the clothes on their backs and whatever belongings they could lug along. Almost overnight, a vibrant community vanished, the homes of former residents demolished, its memory bulldozed into wealthy neighborhoods, the few surviving scraps locked in university archives or in the recollections of those few families that escaped exile.

Eighty years ago this spring, officials deported hundreds of legal residents whose only crime was being Mexican during the Great Depression—and Orange County has tried to forget ever since.

The Bastanchury family is familiar to generations of Southern California residents and scholars alike, and not just because of their namesake road, which unspools through the hills of Fullerton, Brea, Placentia and Yorba Linda. The Basque clan were one of Orange County’s first national celebrities, a dynasty whose patriarch, Domingo, arrived at what’s now Fullerton in the 1860s and eventually acquired about 10,000 acres of desolate terrain: for decades, his house was just one of two between Anaheim and Los Angeles. Originally using his holdings as grazing lands for sheep, Domingo’s four sons eventually turned the Ranch into an agriculture and livestock powerhouse: 1,500 acres devoted to black-eyed peas, 500 acres for lima beans; hundreds of acres of walnut orchards and fields that, by 1928, sold more than 50 percent of California’s tomatoes; 10 acres of Berkshire hog pens; and canneries and two packing houses that boxed the Ranch’s

Eighty years ago this spring, officials deported hundreds of legal residents whose only crime was being Mexican during the Great Depression—and Orange County has tried to forget ever since.



riches for sale to the rest of America. Oil money came in the form of a legal settlement, and some of the water drawn from artesian wells for irrigation was sold publicly as Bastanchury Water, a brand that existed for decades. The estate was so sprawling that the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroads built spurs near the packing houses, the easier to pick up the bounty, while the Pacific Electric Railway kept two stations within Ranch limits. Managers had to cut up the Ranch into sections with their own supervisors, just to handle everything properly.

But the crown jewel of the Bastanchurys was their 3,000-acre citrus grove, rows of Valencia orange and lemon trees that went up and down the Ranch, held in place by terrace farming. On the family's stationery and on the labels for their orange crates, marketed under the Model, Basque, Daily, Popular and Golden Ram brands, read the slogan "The World's Largest Orange and Lemon Orchard," a claim no one bothered to dispute.

Domingo's sons were fiercely proud of their accomplishments and never shied away from boasting about what they had willed up from what many considered remote badlands. "Some of my ideas were discountenanced by scientific men, by farm bureau men," Gaston Bastanchury told the *California Citrograph*, the bible of the Golden State's citrus industry, in 1923. He was the public face of the family, a man who

frequently made the society pages for his many trips abroad, a tycoon so rich that he once offered heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey an \$800,000 purse if the Manassa Mauler would fight on the Ranch, in a custom-built arena Gaston promised would seat 135,000 people. "I felt that I knew what we could do and kept on. But the fact remains that these old brown hills—and you can still see hundreds of acres in that same state around us—have produced trees and those trees are beginning to return something on the investment of labor and money which have been put into them."

Life was fabulous on the Ranch—it became the center of Basque life in Southern California, featuring weekend-long parties filled with traditional lunches and dinners. There was even a handball court so that nostalgic men could play the jai alai of their youth. But to create their dreamland, the Bastanchurys needed cheap labor—first, Native Americans, then fellow Basques and a smattering of Japanese. By the 1920s, though, cheap labor in Southern California agriculture meant Mexican workers, and the Bastanchurys began recruiting across the Southwest and abroad, uniting with fellow Orange County orchard owners to lobby Congress for relaxed immigration laws, arguing only Mexicans could properly work with oranges.

"Our experience shows us that the white man does not like the tedious routine work of picking and will promptly leave

"Portion of world's largest orange orchard, Fullerton, Calif." Orange County Archives.





this for any other job available, even at smaller wages,” wrote J.A. Prizer, manager of the Placentia Orange Growers Association, in a prepared statement given to Congress in 1928. At that same hearing, Prizer revealed that county growers used the Bastanchurys’ worker rolls to determine how many Mexicans they needed to run a successful operation. “The Mexican, by nature, seems to be peculiarly adapted to this class of work. He is patient, and apparently enjoys the work itself.”

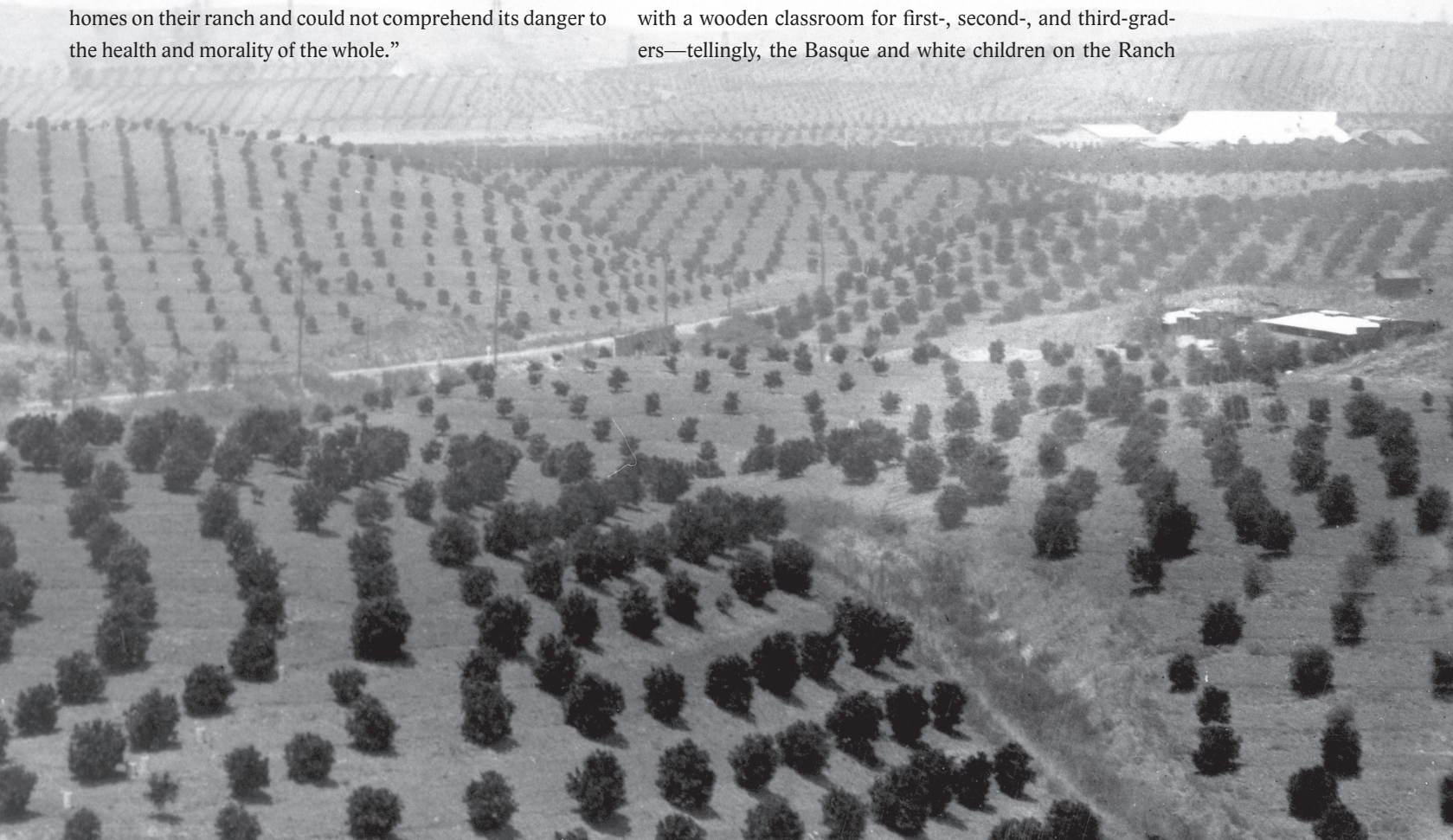
And so the Bastanchurys brought in hundreds of Mexicans. A contemporary of the dynasty derided the Ranch as “their own private kingdom in the Fullerton hills,” isolated from the rest of civilization, and it wasn’t far from the truth: while grower-sponsored worker camps sprang up across Orange County’s citrus belt, the Bastanchurys’ orange pickers lived like serfs.

“[The Bastanchurys] had the Old World feudalistic attitude toward their farm hand,” wrote Druzilla Mackey, an Americanization teacher in Orange County alongside Arleta Kelly, in a 1949 history of education in Fullerton. She had no problem with the workers, describing them as “always the poorest of our Mexicans, the most friendly and also the most idealistic.” But she openly despised the Bastanchurys, writing “they felt generous in allowing these squatters to establish homes on their ranch and could not comprehend its danger to the health and morality of the whole.”

Mackey described abodes constructed from sheet iron, discarded fence posts, sign boards, even rusted bed springs—whatever detritus Mexicans could find in the Ranch’s trash dump: Kelly remembered one built of “cartons and wood and pieces of tin.” Some houses were half-wood, half-canvas. Few had running water; nearly all had outside, shared toilets. Rains turned everything into a swamp; despite the abundance of artesian water, families had to draw their own from irrigation ditches and carry it via buckets to their homes. Once a week, a grocery wagon arrived with fresh produce and meat—a necessity, since almost no one had refrigeration because there was little electricity. Some homes had dirt floors, some were just tents. Elsie Carlson, who taught the Ranch’s Mexican children, put it thusly: “I felt like a missionary.”

The conditions endured by the Bastanchury Mexicans became something of a county scandal: a newspaper exposé, lost to history but cited by Kelly in her CPH oral history, mentioned the “exceedingly primitive and poverty stricken” condition of the camp, which upset the Bastanchurys and their management. But after organizing by the Americanization teachers and the Rev. Graham C. Hunter of the First Presbyterian Church of Fullerton, the Ranch finally relented and built homes for workers with potable water in 1927, along with a wooden classroom for first-, second-, and third-graders—tellingly, the Basque and white children on the Ranch

The conditions endured by the Bastanchury Mexicans became something of a county scandal...







Coyote Hills, Fullerton, was once part of the large Bastanchury Ranch. Travisk via Wiki, 12/27/2008.

In just three years, Orange County politicians had gone from begging Congress for more Mexican labor to demanding that those workers give up their jobs, homes and lives to whites and return to Mexico.

were bussed to the “white” schools in the Fullerton flatlands, while the Mexican children on the Ranch had to trudge at least a half mile to school on dirt roads through orchards.

A community grew. The 1920 census showed only a few Mexicans living on the Ranch: by the 1930 census, the official count was 411. It had grown so much that the U.S. Census Bureau gave the Bastanchurys their own designated tract, split in six *colonias*: Tia Juana, Mexicali, Escondido, Coyote, Santa Fe and San Quintín, which some ominously called El Hoyo—The Hole. Tia Juana was the largest, then Mexicali, and they were around what’s now Laguna Lake Park in Fullerton; the rest gravitated near what’s now St. Jude Hospital. Stand-alone shacks remained dotted throughout the Ranch.

“I think they were very happy people, really, they lived a very simple life, but it was probably somewhat better than the life they lived in Mexico,” Kelly said, and the Mexicans made do with what they had. Though the houses were downtrodden, they were well kept, with gardens of flowers and vegetables prettying the environment. Mother sent their children off to school scrubbed clean and dressed in their Sunday best. During the major Mexican holidays—Mexican Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo and Dia de los Muertos—the *colonias* held their own private celebrations or traveled together to Placentia and Los Angeles to partake in bigger ones. A monthly dance was held at the schoolhouse, and the Americanization teachers frequently presented their Mexican pupils to the Fullerton population at large as proof of their good work, affairs that earned approving write-ups in the *Fullerton News Tribune* and the *Santa Ana Register*. No one was an illegal immigrant;

all the Bastanchury Mexicans were either American citizens or sponsored by their hosts, with most originating from Tepic, Jalisco.

This bucolic life couldn’t last. In October 1931, at the height of the Great Depression, the Bastanchurys shocked Orange County by announcing they had debts of \$2 million and were placing their beloved Ranch into a receivership. The celebrated citrus grove wasn’t producing; it turned out that the soil on the Ranch wasn’t conducive to large-scale, long-term growing, just as the old-timers had tried to tell the Bastanchurys.

But something more nefarious had infested the Ranch as well. In just three years, Orange County politicians had gone from begging Congress for more Mexican labor to demanding that those workers give up their jobs, homes and lives to whites and return to Mexico. By 1931, federal agents were raiding barrios and *colonias* across Southern California, rounding up legal residents and American citizens of Mexican descent alike, and deporting them to Mexico; upon arriving the Mexicans were forced to give up their legal papers allowing entry back into the States. Taking a kinder approach, church, civic and business groups asked Mexicans to leave, vowing to pay their train fare. Even the Mexican Consulate, not wishing to anger their America neighbors, organized return trips back, with promises of jobs that somehow never materialized.

Without the family’s patronage, the Bastanchury Mexicans were threatened. In the fall of 1932, the Mexican Consulate helped to organize a meeting in Fullerton to figure out how immigrants could stave off repatriation. The government’s deportation campaigns had begun in Orange County, organized by the local Department of Welfare. The consulate’s Orange County representative, Santa Ana resident Lucas Lucio, accompanied deported Mexicans from the Santa Ana train station to Union Station in Los Angeles, where he would then join them on a Southern Pacific train to El Paso to ensure they weren’t further abused. Even 45 years later, in an interview with a professor, the experience made Lucio shudder.

“At the station in Santa Ana, hundreds of Mexicans came and there was quite a lot of crying,” he said. “The men were pensive and the majority of the children and mothers were crying.” Lucio told the story of how on one trip, when the train didn’t stop in El Paso but rather proceeded into Juarez, there was “a terrible cry...many did not want to cross the border...a disaster, because the majority of the families were separated. There was no way for anyone to try to leave the train or run or complete their desire to return to the United States.”



In February of 1933, the Bastanchurys' empire was auctioned from the steps of the Orange County Courthouse and put under new management; within five days, a hundred unemployed white men swarmed the Ranch, confident white ownership would give them a job. The era of the Bastanchury Mexicans was about to end.

Sometime that spring, new management and a consortium of white business, political and civic leaders went to the Ranch's schoolhouse and told the Mexicans they had to leave. "The Americanization centers in which these people had been taught how to buy homes and make themselves a part of the American community," Mackey wrote 18 years later, "were now used for calling together assemblages in which county welfare workers explained to bewildered audiences that their small jobs would now be taken over by the white men, that they were no longer needed nor wanted in these United States." As a last-ditch effort, she paraded her Americanization students in front of a men's civic group as she always had, desperately trying to show that the Bastanchury Mexicans were worthy of staying. But it didn't work.

"And so," she concluded, "one morning we saw nine train-loads of our dear friends roll away back to the windowless, dirt-floored homes we had taught them to despise."

On Friday, March 31, a week after Mackey's efforts, 437 Mexicans—"mostly children," according to the *News Tribune*, and almost all from the Ranch—were herded onto nine passenger trains, one bound for Nogales, another to Juarez. The local media tried to paint the Mexicans as welfare cases—"Repatriation of Mexicans Eases Burden," read a headline in the *Santa Ana Register* and pointed out that the Mexican government promised jobs to their repatriated countrymen upon their return. In reality, the Mexicans were left penniless in a country that parents hadn't visited in years and their American-born children simply didn't know. Few, if any, ever returned to Orange County.

It was the largest mass deportation in county history, and stung those few people who witnessed the episode for the rest of their lives. Lucio recalled they "were very poor...went on the half fare of the Southern Pacific." Juanita Ferraris, granddaughter of Doming Bastanchury, told the *New Tribune* in 1955 that it was "one of the saddest sights I've ever seen."

And they departed with work available on the Ranch: in April, the new owners announced in the *News Tribune* that they were looking for "local men" to hire; in May, they revealed they already shipped 55,000 boxes of lemons in just two months—since the Mexican left.

The Ranch's six *colonias* were eradicated; by June of that year, the schoolhouse was moved to another school and turned in a soup kitchen. Houses were either sold off to other citrus camps or simply demolished and tossed back into the scrap heap from where they came. Years later, a Fullerton council member told the COHP that the 1930 census showed that the city had 10,882 residents; in 1940, that figure shrank to 10,300. Bewildered, he admitted, "We finally found out that the reason for the population loss was because we lost the workers up" at the Ranch. Figures from the 1940 census reviewed by the *Weekly* showed that not a single Mexican listed as living on the Bastanchury's estate in 1930 remained.

Some of the Bastanchury Mexicans, however, did evade the deportation train. One of those was the family of Fullerton resident Cuca Morales. Born in 1927, her birth certificate lists her place of birth as the "Tia Juanita Camp: at the Ranch. Her memories are clouded not by age—her mind is as sharp as someone half her age—but rather by the fact that she was only five when her parents were forced to move away.

At her home, in a housing tract set aside for veterans when she and her husband bought it in the 1950s, Morales keeps many photos from those days. One shows her as a baby,



Women from Druzilla Mackey's Americanization class. Cuca Morales is the charming toddler on the left. Photo courtesy Orange County Archives.



Articles from the *San Bernardino Sun*, 1932. California Digital Newspaper Collection.

The nopal is the ultimate metaphor for Mexicans, displayed on the Mexican flag as a reminder of who they are.

held by her mother, as Cuca's father, who worked as a lemon picker, plays the violin and an unnamed man accompanies him on guitar. In another, she's a toddler standing by her mother's side in a group shot of women who took Mackey's Americanization classes. Behind them, rows of citrus groves stretch over the horizon.

"My grandpa used to be the man who would hold the dances" at the schoolhouse, she says. "I'd stand by him while my mom accepted the money." And she also remembered Maria Bastanchury, the dowager of the Ranch. "She was a stingy lady," the octogenarian says with a laugh. "After workers harvested the walnuts every season, she'd be raking through the leaves, looking for more."

Morales says she only knew of one family repatriated to Mexico, that of her brother's godparents—"and he cried for months after they left," she remembered. Everyone else she knew moved on to other *colonias*, or the barrios of Santa Ana, La Habra and Anaheim. "My dad wanted to go back to Mexico, but Mom [who was born in Arizona to Mexican immigrants] said, 'No, we're going to stay here—if you want to go, you can.'"

To remain, Morales' parents went to Gaston Bastanchury, who fixed her father's papers—but they still had to leave the Ranch. The family sold their house for a Buick, and they ended up living in La Habra's Alta Vista camp, where Morales grew up before moving to Fullerton, where she raised a family and has lived ever since.

Her parents "never talked about" the disappearance of the Bastanchury Mexican *colonias*. "I remember one time my mom said that they were poorer on the Ranch. And when I bought my house in Fullerton, she said, 'I don't like Fullerton,' but never said why." Morales kept in contact with former residents of Tia Juana but has never dwelled on its importance. But her daughter Clara—a retired employee of the United Auto Workers—does. "You still have families who came from the Bastanchury Ranch around town," she says. "One time, I was at the bank, and somehow, someone asked [one of the customers] where was she born. 'The Bastanchury Ranch,' she said. It sounded like she was proud that she was from there."

"Most of the people who were born there are dead," Cuca suddenly said.

"But it's part of history," Clara shoots back. "And it should be noted. Instead, people want to forget us."

To remember, Clara drives her mother through the streets of what was the Bastanchury Ranch—"what's now a bunch of rich people's homes," she cracks. "Mom always ap-

preciated going down Gilbert [Street] and Euclid [Avenue]. To see the cactus."

It's spring again, and the hills of Fullerton are blooming. Native shrubs like coyote brush, Southern willow scrub and California sagebrush feature new branches; flowering plants like yellow sun cups, purple phacelia and orange monkeyflowers bloom. Hikers and bikers zip along trails and streets, most ending up at Laguna Lake Park off Euclid.

Across the street is the Robert E. Ward Nature Preserve, a fenced-off section of the West Coyote Hills that developers have long eyed to turn into more ranch-style homes. This is the heart of what was the Bastanchury Ranch—and from the parking lot of Sunny Hills Church of Christ you can see the earth alive with the new shoots of prickly pear cactus.

It was near here where the Ranch schoolhouse existed, here where its workers came to trim the *nopalitos* that grew anew every spring, where a community lived and loved and learned. And it's these cacti that nearly everyone interviewed about the Ranch—from Arletta Kelly to Druzilla Mackey, Elsie Carlson to Cuca Morales, and so many more—brought up as the sole surviving remnant of the Bastanchury Mexicans, the sight always prompting them to recall the forgotten past.

Those memories never made any Orange County narratives. Although mentions of the Ranch *colonias* dot the COHP archives, only a few people ever access them. Those who lived through its demise mostly kept their memories to themselves, saving photos in albums not available to the public. No full examination of the Bastanchury Mexicans exists: the only two academic texts to even mention them are Gilbert G. González's seminal 1994 study of Orange County's Mexican orange pickers, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*. And Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez's *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s*—and the former only devotes a few paragraphs, while the latter has but a sentence.

But if the Ward Nature Preserve's colonies of cacti are the last-standing legacy of the lost Mexicans of the Bastanchury Ranch, then it's an almost cosmic landmark. The nopal is the ultimate metaphor for Mexicans, displayed on the Mexican flag as a reminder of who they are. It's a plant that grows best in inhospitable conditions where little else can exist, one you can hack at but will still give, still thrive. And there, on the Fullerton hills, long after the decline of the Ranch and the scattering of the Bastanchury Mexicans, the cactus plants stand sentry 80 years later, the most beautiful, nourishing memorial imaginable.



# The Emergence of Unconstitutional Deportation and Repatriation of Mexicans and Mexican Americans as a Public Issue

Francisco E. Balderrama

At the California State Senate Hearings on Unconstitutional Deportation and Coerced Immigration on July 15, 2003, Emilia Castañeda painfully remembered arriving, as a young girl during the Great Depression, at the train station in Los Angeles with her father and brother. Los Angeles County had ordered her father to appear for expulsion to Mexico. While the family prepared to board, Los Angeles County officials advised Emilia and her brother that they could stay in Los Angeles if they declared themselves orphans and became wards of the state. Yet Emilia insisted that she was “no orphan,” stating, “I have my father.”

The officials dismissed her pleas for her family to stay, placing Emilia and her brother—who were both American citizens—with their father on the train to Mexico. They were expelled with few resources. “I think all we had was the trunk with maybe a few dishes, our blankets, and a few of our clothes.” The family’s arrival in and adaptation to Mexico involved severe hardship and suffering. “I wasn’t used to that kind of life,” Emilia remembered. “And I was probably unhappy and depressed.” In recalling those days of despair, Emilia wondered why she and her family “had been sent out from our country to a strange country where we didn’t belong.”<sup>1</sup>

This tragic episode was not an isolated case. More than one million legal U.S. residents and American citizens of Mexican descent suffered the same terrible fate of unconstitutional deportation and coerced immigration. Contemporary scholars and activists should be familiar with this dark chapter of American and Mexican history as they grapple with the complex challenge of homeland security and the accompanying resurgence of nativism. This history provides an opportunity to understand the role of the Other, especially in regard to citizenship and transnational migration.

Unconstitutional deportation and coerced immigration of the Mexican population was commonly known as “repatriation” during the Great Depression. Repatriation implied that individuals were voluntarily returning to Mexico, leaving



Mexican migrants on the road with tire trouble, California, 1936.

Photo: Dorothea Lange. Library of Congress.

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Mexican and Mexican-American families wait to board Mexico-bound trains in Los Angeles on March 8, 1932. County officials arranged these mass departures as part of “repatriation campaigns,” fueled by fears that Mexicans and Mexican-Americans were taking scarce jobs and government assistance during the Great Depression. Los Angeles Public Library/Herald Examiner Collection

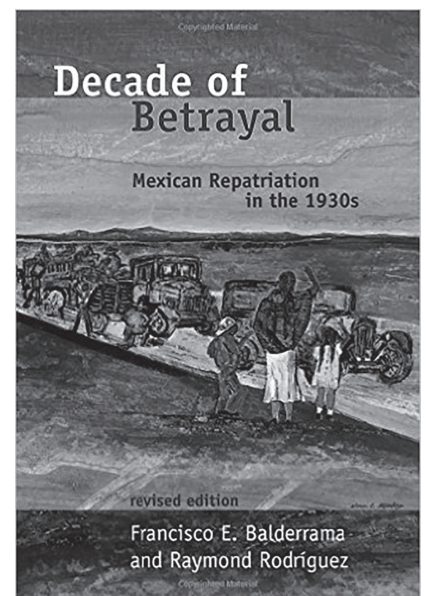
the United States of their own free will. Los Angeles County, however, initially employed the word *deportation* to describe its campaign of rounding up Mexicans and Mexican Americans for shipment to the border. But legal counsel advised the county that the right to deport was a function reserved for the federal government. So Los Angeles County, home to the largest concentration of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the United States, invoked the term *repatriation* when rounding up the Mexican population. Chicago, Detroit, Denver, and other American cities joined Los Angeles in naming their campaigns with a euphemism. The procedure was also praised as a way to ensure that jobs would become available for “real” Americans and as a way to cut welfare costs during this period of massive unemployment. However, it turned out to be a foolish policy; Mexicans across the country never comprised more than 10 percent of those on welfare.

Economist Paul Taylor, anthropologist Manuel Gamio, and sociologist Emory Bogardus first reported the repatriation phenomenon as it occurred during the Depression years.

Not until the 1970s, however, with the emergence of the study of Chicano history, did other scholars investigate repatriation. Abraham Hoffman’s *Unwanted Mexicans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929-1939* uncovered repatriation policy in Los Angeles, while Mercedes Carreras de Velasco’s *Los Mexicanos que devolvió la crisis, 1929-1932 (The Returned Mexicans from the Crisis of 1929-1939)* sketched the Mexican government’s reaction.<sup>2</sup> Additional studies of the Depression called attention to repatriation. George Sánchez’s *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* has interpreted repatriation as an influence on cultural and ethnic identity; Camille Guérin-Gonzales’s *Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Labor, 1900-1939* looks at how the American dream became a justification for exploitation and ousting of Mexicans.<sup>3</sup> More recently, Fernando Saúl Alanís Enciso has defined the formulation of Mexican policy for repatriation.<sup>4</sup>

These studies acknowledge the importance of repatriation even though the topic remains a relatively unknown story. *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* by Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez “provided the first comprehensive treatment chronicling the treatment of the Mexican community by American and Mexican authorities during the Great Depression.”<sup>5</sup> The study combines extensive archival and oral history sources to describe and analyze the impact of

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the repatriation phenomenon on Mexican and Mexican American men, women, and children on both sides of the border.

California State Senator Joseph Dunn was “both shocked and intrigued” after reading *Decade of Betrayal* and decided to convene the Select Committee for Civic Participation in July of 2003.<sup>6</sup> The hearings led to bills for extending the statute of limitations to permit claims by repatriates and for establishing a state commission to investigate the repatriation. Congresswoman Hilda Solis also declared her intention to sponsor hearings in the U.S. Congress. The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) joined the movement seeking justice for survivors by filing a lawsuit—*Emilia Castañeda vs. the State of California, Los Angeles County, and the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce* (2003).

The hearings, filing of the suit, town hall meetings, and press conferences have created extensive media attention. Newspaper coverage has included the *Los Angeles Times*, July 15 and July 16, 2003; the *Sacramento Bee*, July 16, 2003; the *San Jose Mercury*, July 17, 2003; London’s *Guardian*, July 17, 2003; and the *Orange County Register*, July 19, 2003. The Spanish-language *La Opinión* gave the most exclusive attention to deportation-repatriation of the 1930s with a four-page treatment on July 13 and follow-up articles on July 14 and July 15. Furthermore, National Public Radio stations in Santa Monica, Pasadena, and Santa Barbara have produced a number of programs. Stories on repatriation also aired on [Los Angeles] Spanish-language television channels 34 and 52 and the English-language station 7.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 2003, the *Public Broadcasting News Hour with Jim Lehrer* was the first national television news program to present the dark chapter of Mexican unconstitutional deportation and repatriation to the American public. Repatriation survivor María Ofelia Acosta testified how her parents—legal residents of the United States—and their American-born children were rounded up for shipment to Mexico. “I could have gone to school...my sisters and brothers. I could have had a better life,” she lamented. Acosta is convinced that recent legal action on behalf of the survivors for reparations will never remedy the injustice: “No money can pay for that.”

Acosta joins other survivors such as Emilia Castañeda, Ignacio Piña, Rubén Jimenez and José López in wanting the American public to know about this injustice. These women and men are organizing support for the legal suit and new legislation by speaking at community forums, professional conferences, and union groups, as well as on television and ra-

dio programs. At these public events the survivors frequently state that they hope knowledge about this great injustice will prevent other ethnic or racial groups from suffering the same kind of mistreatment, especially during difficult times of social unrest and economic crisis. Detroit repatriation survivors and their families have delivered this same message in their documentary *Los Repatriados: Exiles from the Promised Land*, which focuses on repatriates from the Midwest.<sup>7</sup> These testimonies provide new evidence and insight into the repatriation experience, especially regarding adjustment to life in Mexico and, for many, their experiences on returning to the United States. These new testimonies provide important evidence that merits serious examination and careful analysis.

By seeking justice in the public arena, the survivors of repatriation have contributed to the empowerment of themselves, their families, and their communities. Many family members are relieved that at long last the injustice suffered by a parent or grandparent is now being addressed. For some it has been the lifting of a burden and an opportunity to begin the healing process for the survivors and their loved ones. Survivors and their families have also become students of Mexican repatriation history. They have read the limited secondary literature and have searched for primary documents. Moreover, they are encouraging historians to continue their work because they value the scholarship on unconstitutional deportation and coerced immigration. More important, they have used this knowledge to construct a context for understanding their individual family experience. The survivors and their families therefore have transformed their private experience of repatriation injustice to the public issue of unconstitutional deportation.

Whatever the outcome of the lawsuit, pending legislation, or future governmental inquiries, it is unquestionable that the survivors of repatriation and their families have emerged to claim their rightful place in American and Mexican history.

1 California Senate Select Committee on Citizen Participation Hearing, “Examination of Unconstitutional Deportation and Coerced Emigration of Legal Residents and U.S. Citizens of Mexican Descent,” July 15, 2003.

2 Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929-1939* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974); Mercedes Carreras de Velasco, *Los Mexicanos qu devolvió la crisis, 1929-1932* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1974).

3 George Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Camille Guérin-Gonzales, *Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Labor, 1900-1939* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994).

4 Fernando Saúl Alanís Enciso, “El gobierno de México y la repatriación de mexicanos de Estados Unidos, 1934-1940” (PhD diss., El Colegio de México, 2000); and more recently, *El Valle del Rio Bravo, Tamaulipas, en la Decada de 1930* (Ciudad Victoria: El Colegio de Tamaulipas-El Colegio de San Luis, 2004).

5 Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 4.

6 “Examination of Unconstitutional Deportation and Coerced Emigration...,” July 15, 2003.

7 Information about the film is available from Fronteras Norteñas, PO Box 44859, Detroit, MI 48246.

By seeking justice in the public arena, the survivors of repatriation have contributed to the empowerment of themselves, their families, and their communities.

# At the Center

## Japanese Americans *continued from page 5*

Harbor, many leaders of our community were arrested and detained in Department of Justice Internment Camps, well before their families were incarcerated in American concentration camps. The United States Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation compiled lists, or a registry, of religious leaders, priests, teachers, community and business leaders. Held without charges, denied habeas corpus and other basic constitutional rights, our government's only "justification" for their actions was that they immigrated from another land.

Nearly 75 years later, the persecution of the Muslim community and of immigrant communities is unmistakably similar to what our families endured during World War II and its aftermath. Seemingly unaware that our country redressed the unjust incarceration of our families and community through the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, some candidates, elected officials and others have claimed that this unconstitutional treatment of our community is a precedent for denying Muslim refugees entry and for persecuting Muslim Americans.

To be sure, Japanese Americans and their immigrant parents were labeled "non-aliens" and were forcibly incarcerated simply for looking like the enemy and were denied their basic constitutional rights – freedom of religion, assembly, speech, protection against unreasonable search and seizure – they lost their freedom. Our community, American and foreign-born, lost years of their livelihoods, stolen by their own government because of racism, economic greed and political opportunism.

We cannot and will not allow this to happen to anyone else ever again.

As Sue Kunitomi Embrey, co-founder of the Manzanar Committee, once wrote, "Democracy is only as good as those who practice it. It is the practice that is important."

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*The Manzanar Committee is dedicated to educating and raising public awareness about the incarceration and violation of civil rights of persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II and to the continuing struggle of all peoples when constitutional rights are in danger. A non-profit organization that has sponsored the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage since 1969, along with other education programs, the Manzanar Committee also has played a key role in the establishment and continued development of the Manzanar National Historic Site in Inyo County. For more information, send email to [info@manzanarcommittee.org](mailto:info@manzanarcommittee.org), call (323) 662-5102, check its blog at <http://blog.manzanarcommittee.org>.*



**October was a busy month** at the center. The Silicon Valley Archives Crawl – first annual – took place Saturday, October 22, 2016. We welcomed dozens of folks, some for the first time, others who are long-time friends of the CHC, to our collection during the very special Valley-wide archives open house.

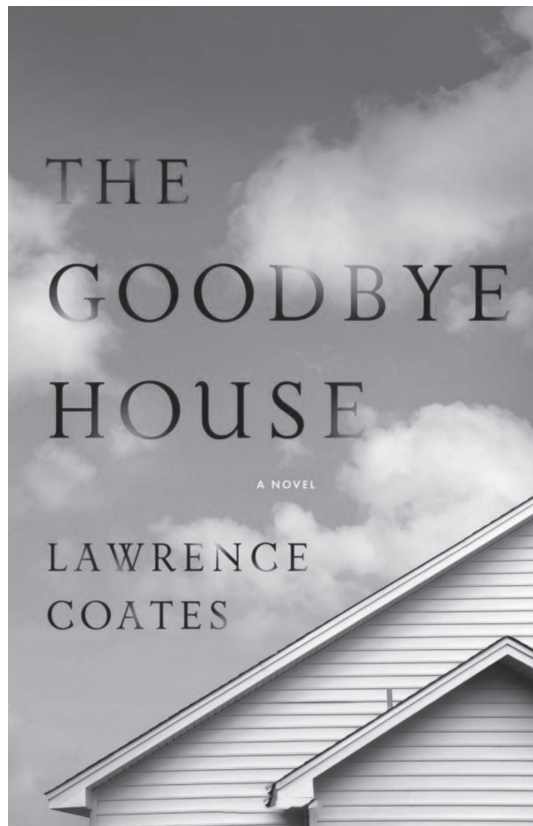
## *A Taste of History*



Apple representative Michael Foulkes and Cupertino Mayor Savita Vaidhyanathan enjoy a "Taste of History."

**Our annual fundraiser, "Taste of History"** featuring Frances Dinkelspiel, author of *Tangled Vines*, was an educational and palate-pleasing afternoon at the Visual and Performing Arts Center (VPAC) on campus, Saturday, October 29. Thanks to all who attended and all who made the event possible.





**Coming March 9, 2017**, the return of a favorite author and teacher, Lawrence Coates, professor at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, to present his latest work of fiction, *The Goodbye House*. Silicon Valley denizens will recognize both the suburban setting and the wrenching emotional landscape of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century hereabouts.



VPAC theater hosts a crowd of onlookers as Frances Dinkelspiel displays images from the scene of the notorious “wine crime” from her book “Tangled Vines.”



# At the Center



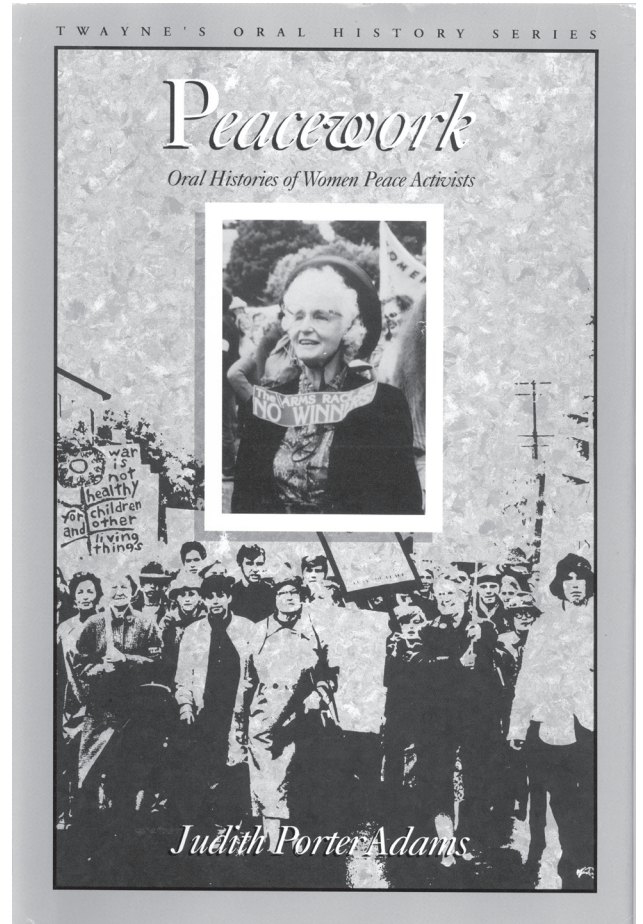
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR  
**PEACE & FREEDOM**

**CHC's winter quarter exhibit** — *A Woman's Fight: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom* — is on display until March 24, 2017. The exhibit was created by the Peninsula/Palo Alto Chapter of WILPF in celebration of 100 years of history of the peace and social justice activist group, 1915-2015. Political memorabilia, detailed history, and a timeline are featured, with a special presentation of “Raging Grannies” festive paraphernalia.

In conjunction with our current exhibit, we will welcome De Anza's Dr. Jen Myhre on Thursday, March 2 to the CHC. Dr. Myhre will shine light on “The Spider Web.”

*The Spider Web: How the U.S. War Department Destroyed the Women's Movement in the 1920s*

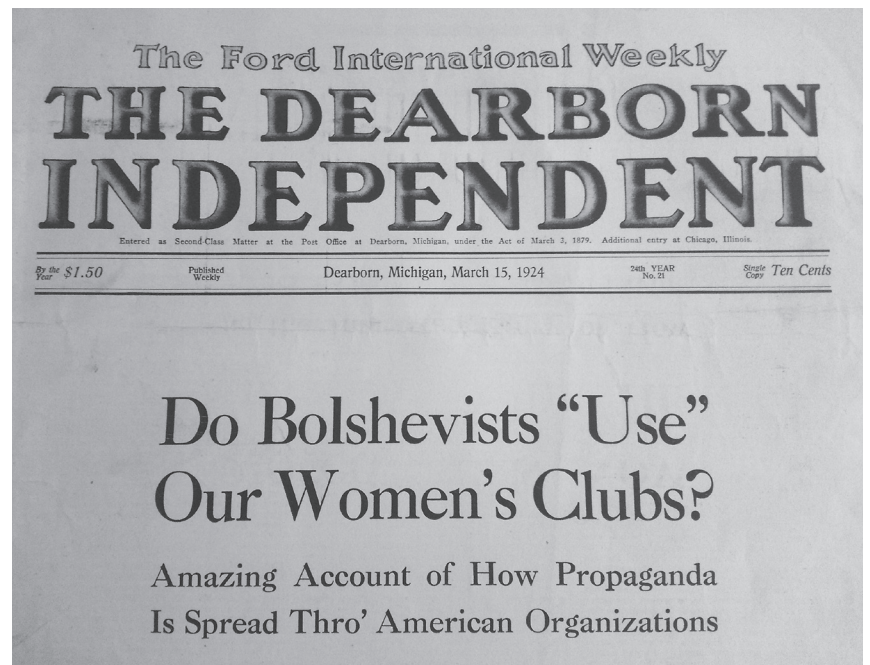
Though most of us were taught that the women's movement died out after the winning of the vote and did not revive until the 1960s, in fact the splintering of the feminist women in the 1920s was a result of a deliberate surveillance and propaganda campaign by our federal government. This short talk by Dr. Jennifer R. Myhre will use archival materials from the time to bring to light an astonishing tale of the violation of civil liberties and the suppression of democracy which has modern resonance for us today.



Oral historian and author Judith Porter Adams is a co-curator of the WILPF exhibit.



Dr. Jen Myhre. Photo: Johanna Foster, 2014





# A Woman's Fight

The Women's International League  
for Peace and Freedom



**California History Center Exhibit  
January 30 – March 24, 2017**

"Raging Grannies" in full voice.

This original exhibit, curated by the Peninsula/Palo Alto Chapter of WILPF, explores the 100+-year history of the League as it promotes social transformation by non-violent means to attain "social and political equality and economic justice...to ensure real and lasting peace and true freedom."

The development and work of WILPF, described at the international, national and local levels, is told through historic photographs, memorabilia, and a timeline. Highlighted are the experiences of League members of Japanese ancestry who were incarcerated in internment camps during World War II.

Showcased, also, are WILPF's "Raging Grannies" whose demonstrations dedicated to peace and social justice, engage the audience with peace songs, costumes, and performance activism.





## WINTER CLASS

### California History Center State and Regional History Academic Program

*The following course will be offered Winter quarter 2017 through the California History Center. Please see the History class listing section of the Schedule of Classes for additional information [www.deanza.fhda.edu/schedule](http://www.deanza.fhda.edu/schedule) or call the center at (408) 864-8986.*

*Some classes may have started by the time you receive this issue. We apologize for the magazine's delay.*

#### San José's Japantown

**Course:** HIST-053X-9

**Units:** 2

**Instructor:** Crystal Hupp

**[huppcrystal@fhda.edu](mailto:huppcrystal@fhda.edu)**

San José's Japantown is now 126 years old and one of only three remaining authentic historic Japantowns in the United States. This course will examine the history of San José's Japantown with a particular focus on its residents, business developments, the arts, and entertainment options. Students will explore this historic and vibrant community through two lectures and two hands-on field studies events that will take place in Japantown in San José.

**LECTURES:** Tuesdays, 2/28 and 3/7, 6:30-10:20pm

**FIELD STUDIES:** Saturdays, 3/4 and 3/11, 9am-5pm



JAMsj Japanese American Museum of San José