

WORKING ~ WORKSHEET 1: WEEK 2, PP. 7~14

ROBERTO ACUNA: FARM WORKER

You should also read the *Introduction* to Working by Studs Terkel, on pp.xi-xxiv

Background topic: Migrant workers (agricultural, industrial, service sector). Possible interview: a migrant worker in Japan.

Film: El Norte



1. Is Roberto Acuna making his living from farm work now – what is he doing?
(Take a look at <http://www.ufw.org/>) ~ read about Cesar Chavez
2. What does Roberto mean by the ‘California feudal system’? How can there be a feudal system in a nation as advanced as the USA?
3. What is Roberto’s personal and family history?
4. What does he think of the church?
5. Who are the ‘Anglo kids’?
6. Do you think Roberto has descriptive powers? When he’s speaking, can you imagine the people and situations he is talking about or are they hidden from you? He is not an educated man, but does he have the ability to move you, to make you think?
7. What hours did Roberto work as a child? What was the work like? Was it always difficult ~ didn’t he have any fun?
8. Growers are what? Why are they so powerful?

9. Why did he join the Marine Corps? What did it mean to be ‘accepted’? Accepted where? By whom? What for?

10. Page 12, Cesar Chavez. Who was Chavez (he died in 1993)? What effect does seeing Chavez speak have in Roberto?

11. What is the union attitude to machines? Do you think it makes sense?

12. Why do people leave their homes in Mexico and parts of South America to come to the US?

Write about Roberto’s personality, as you understand it from this short interview.

NEXT: Francis Swenson, hotel switchboard operator, pp.32~35