

**THE LOCALIZED
HISTORY PROJECT**

@AAARI-GUNY

EDUCATOR GUIDE

***It's Not Yet Spring, Unless All
Flowers Blossom: the 1982
Chinatown Garment Workers' Strike***

A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH RESEARCHER: *WHY TEACH THIS HISTORY*

Hi, my name is Clarissa!

Completing this project was truly a labor of love. I first learned about the 1982 Chinatown Garment Workers' Strike two years ago, during the fall of my sophomore year of high school, in conversation with one of my educators, Dr. William Cheung. I remember feeling in awe of the fact that 20,000 immigrant women could organize a strike that large. Their triumph in winning their demands for increased unionization, all while challenging sexist stereotypes that deemed Asian women as submissive, is beyond moving.

My understanding of gendered and racialized labor has first and foremost always been informed by my own grandmother, who became a hairstylist shortly after moving to this country to support our family. I grew up going to the salon she worked in and being around other working-class immigrant women of color, many of whom are our own mothers, grandmothers, and aunts, and carry so much knowledge, power, and resilience that we must tap into and uplift. Garment women and organizers like Ms. May Ying Chen, through whom I've had the pleasure of learning about the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and Chinatown history generally, help sustain our collective memory. Moreover, as New Yorkers, we owe it to our neighbors to carry forth such histories. The Chinatown garment industry is a cornerstone of the Asian-American community in New York City, and one that deserves to be preserved despite its decline post-9/11 and the impact of globalization.

A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH RESEARCHER:

WHY TEACH THIS HISTORY

The immense success of the 1982 Chinatown Garment Workers' Strike is not attributed to the efforts of a singular charismatic leader, but the collective labor force of Chinese-American women who rose up like tigers to assert their rights. Yet, it is essential we do not view their work as a one-off event, but as a piece of larger labor narratives that center our most vulnerable women laborers as agents of change and possibility. I hope to deliver a meaningful glimpse of these sorts of lineages through this project. It is in unravelling and documenting labor-driven histories that we are better able to understand our own contexts, which empowers all of us, but especially youth, to continue struggles for equity and justice.

Thank you for engaging with my work!

Clarissa Kunizaki is a senior in high school and a founding member of the Localized History Project. As the Youth Co-Director of Community and Historical Research, she seeks to foster joy and exploration with peers to uncover radical histories. Clarissa is particularly interested in research areas that cover diaspora, solidarity, and gender. Her favorite historical year is 1968. Aside from her historical endeavors, she loves reading, going on food crawls, and singing karaoke.



PEDAGOGICAL REVOLUTIONS

HOW TO TEACH THIS HISTORY



Create Organizing and Strike-Related Ephemera to represent an ongoing issue important to you. In what ways are demonstrations important in giving voice to such concerns? What are some limitations and ways to meaningfully address them? Think about how to make your materials accessible to different audiences you'd target.



Sew, Embroider, or Craft Your Own Textile Creation to tell a narrative of your choice. As you create, think about what it means to figuratively and literally to bring together threads of courage and inspiration. What does creation mean to you after this process?



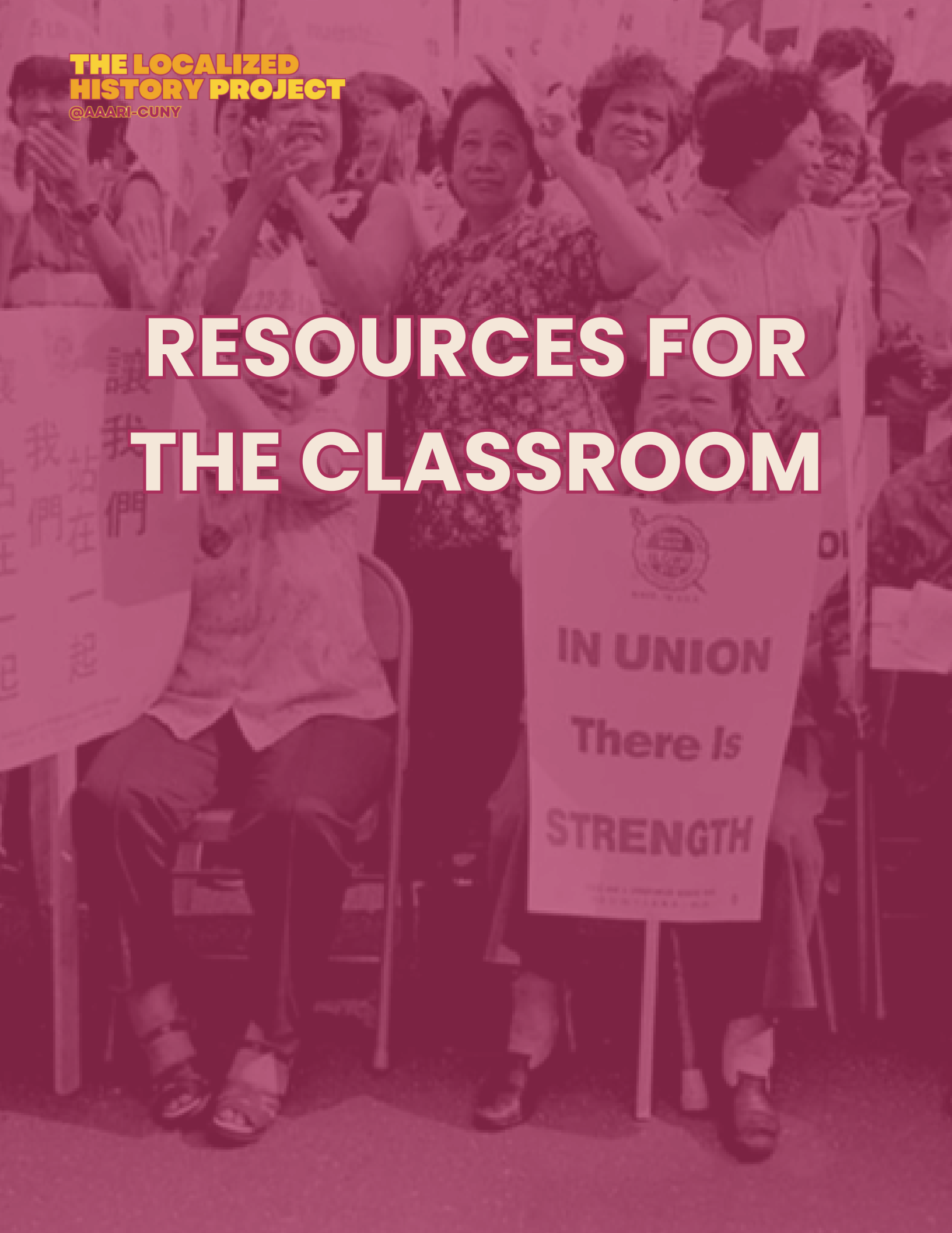
Conduct an Oral History with a friend, educator, family, community member, etc. Pick a topic you would like to learn more about from them and ask follow up questions.



Attend a Local Workers' Rights or Community Based Event with others or by yourself. Immerse yourself by speaking with and listening to others about the struggle. Reflect on what it means to be in solidarity through action.

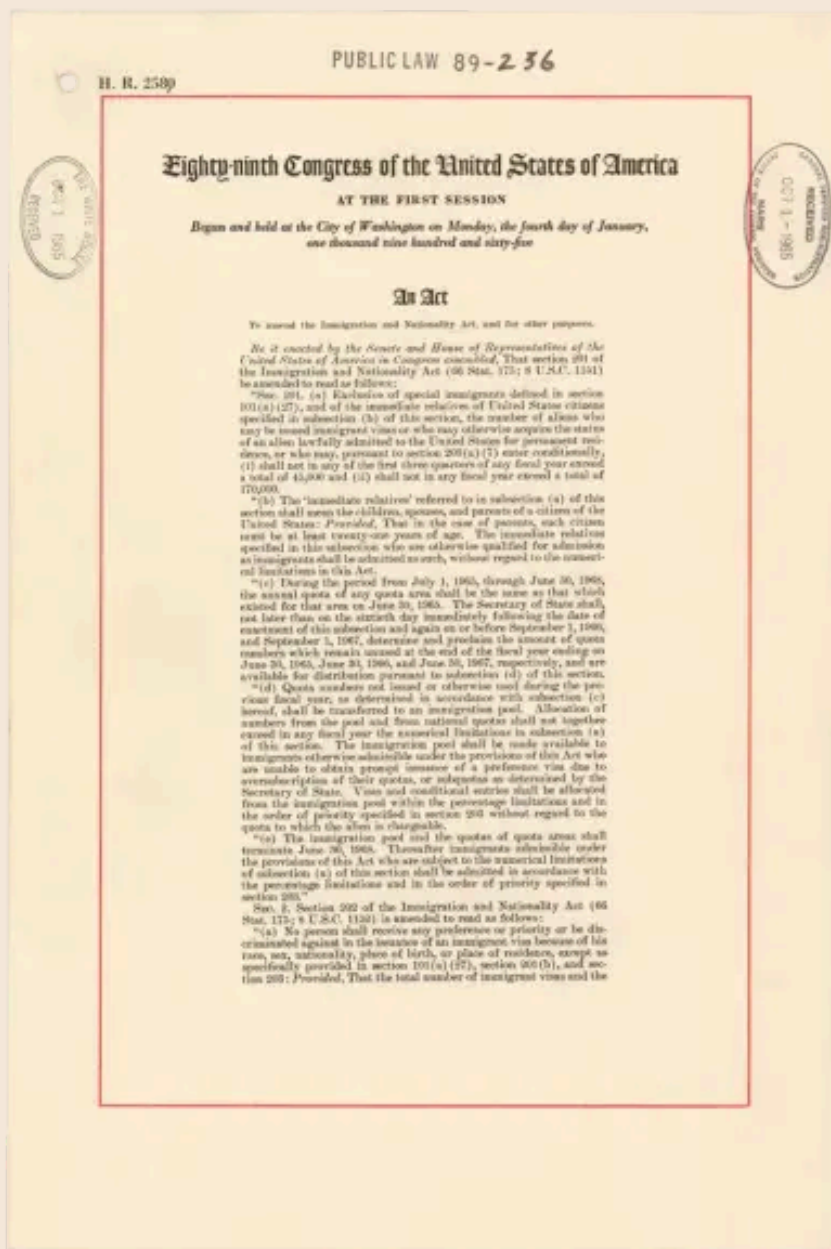
**THE LOCALIZED
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RESOURCES FOR THE CLASSROOM



IN UNION
There Is
STRENGTH

primary sources:



The text of Public Law 89-236: An Act to Amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for Other Purposes, also known as the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.

Created by the United States Congress on October 3, 1965. Included in Record Group 11: General Records of the United States Government at the National Archives in the public domain.



An International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) sign held on the picket line, featuring the ILGWU logo painted onto a wooden backing, c. 1960s-1990s.

Featured in "Ladies' Garments, Women's Work, Women's Activism" exhibit at New-York Historical Society (2019). Exact rights status unknown, but likely available under the terms of fair use.



ILGWU members at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, August 28, 1963.

Photographer unknown. Included in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Photographs (1885-1985) - 5780/102 P, box 1, folder 17, at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives. Available under the terms of fair use.



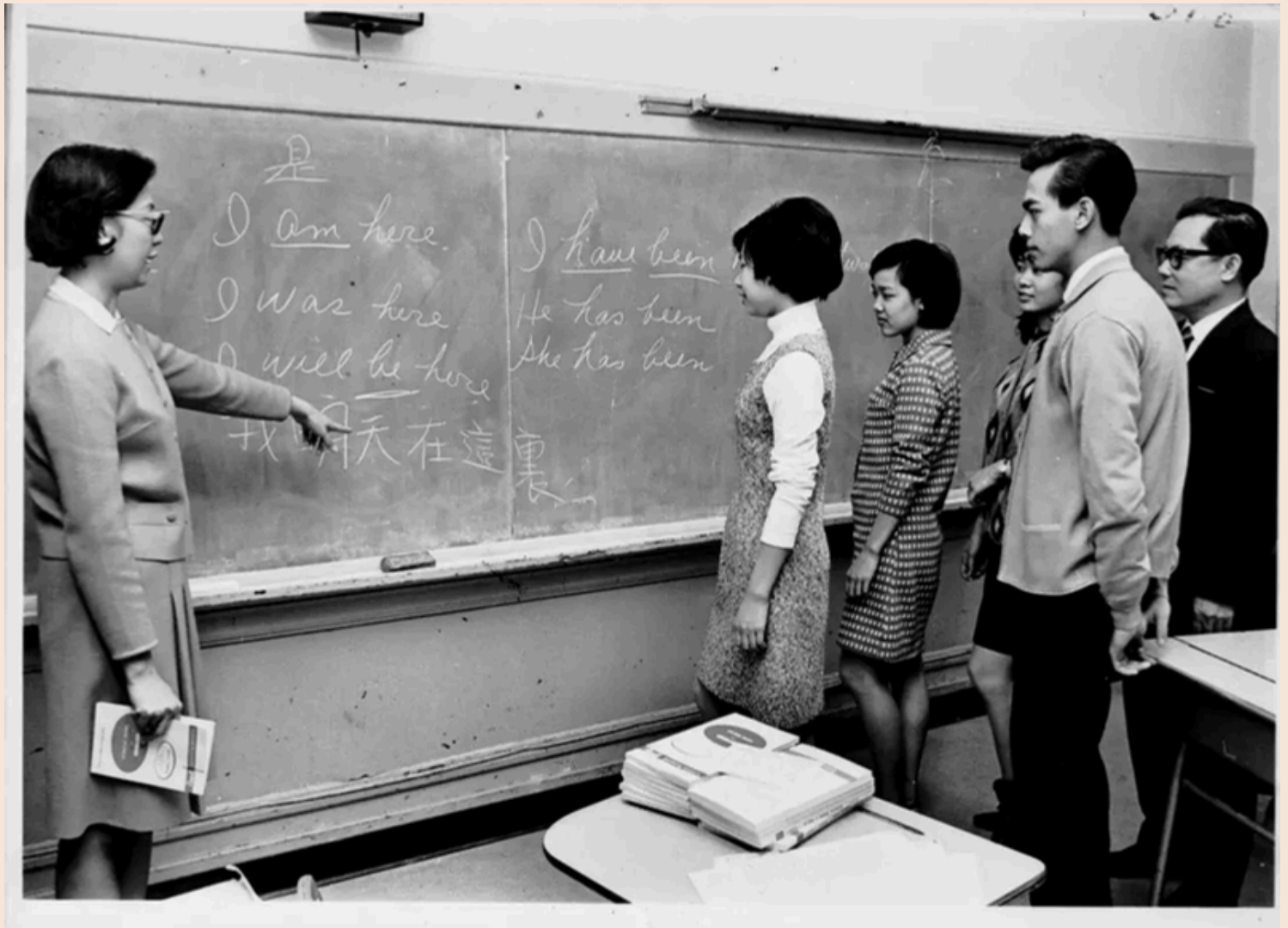
A women's basketball game hosted by ILGWU Local 22 against ILGWU Local 91 at Stuyvesant High School, November 6, 1937.

Photographer unknown. Included in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Photographs (1885-1985) collection at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives. Available under the terms of fair use.



Chinese American Voters League of ILGWU Local 23-25. Kathy Andrade, Salvadoran-American union activist, is pictured at far left, c. 1970s.

Photograph by Emile Bocian. Accessed via "We Are One: Honoring Immigrant Garment Workers" (LaborArts). Image held at the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) Permissions for fair use granted by MOCA.



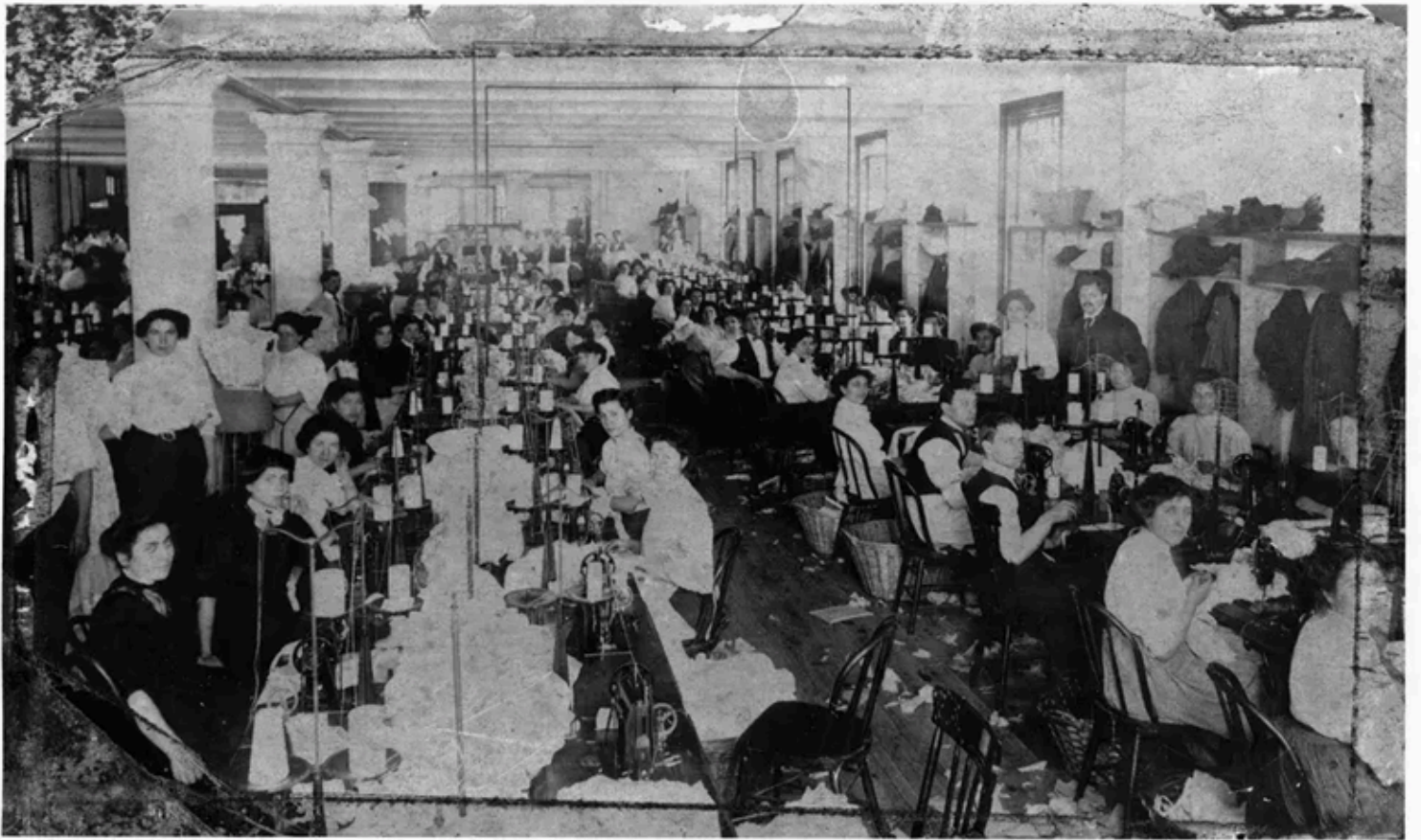
An English class for Asian American ILGWU members of Local 23-25, c. December 15, 1968.

Photographer unknown. Included in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Photographs (1885-1985) collection at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives. Available under the terms of fair use.



The interior of a Chinatown garment factory, c. 1979–1984.

Photograph by Bud Glick. Featured in "A Makeover for Chinatown's Garment Industry" (2014). Photo courtesy of Bud Glick Photography; exact rights status unknown, but likely available under the terms of fair use.



Sewing machine operators, mostly women, work at long, paired tables overseen by managers, c. 1900.

Photographer unknown. Included in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Photographs (1885-1985) collection at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives. Available under the terms of fair use.



Young women operating sewing machines take a break to pose for a group photograph, c. 1910.

Photographer unknown. Included in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Photographs (1885-1985) collection at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives. Available under the terms of fair use.



The front page of *The New York World* on March 26, 1911, showing firefighters' attempts to slow the blaze at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory.

Photographer unknown. Image originally published in *The New York World*. Made available in the public domain via Wikimedia Commons.



A woman working at a sewing machine in a garment factory on Canal Street with her child playing behind her, c. late 1970s-1980s.

Photograph by Paul Calhoun. Included in Eveline Chao's "A Makeover for Chinatown's Garment Industry" (2014). Image held at the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA); permissions for use granted via MOCA.



May Chen distributing union literature about upcoming activities and union benefits to fellow garment workers, c. 1980s.

Photographer unknown. Included in River Dandelion's "How Chinese American Women Changed U.S. Labor History" (2019). Permissions for use granted via May Chen.

車衣工友

第二次示威大集會

維護我們的工會合約
衣廠不能再關門 立刻簽訂工會合約！

日期：七月十五日 星期四

時間：早上八時四十五分

地點：華埠哥倫布公園
(和富街夾茂比利街)

工友們來參加示威大會，我們的團結就是最大的力量，維護工會合約，
要求所有的僱主立刻簽約！每間工廠的每一位工友返工之前一定要去公園。

讓我們站在一起！

國際女服車衣公會 23 25 分會



GARMENT WORKERS RALLY I I TO DEFEND OUR CONTRACT

No More Lock-out!—Sign the Contract

PLACE: COLUMBUS PARK (WORTH & MULBERRY STS.)

Date: Thursday, July 15, 1982

TIME: 8:45 A.M.

- Attend the Rally to defend our New Contract and show our Unity.
- Demand EVERY EMPLOYER sign.
- Protect our Rights and our Benefits.

Our Unity is our Strength.

Don't go to Work - Go directly to the Rally.

**ALL Workers from EVERY Shop
MUST Attend This Rally.**

LOCAL
23-25

WE ARE ONE

WE ARE ONE



Garment workers strike poster calling ILGWU members and supporters to rally at Columbus Park on Thursday, July 15, 1982 to defend their union contracts.

Poster created by ILGWU Local 23-25. Included in the Chinese Sportswear Workers Social Association Collection at the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA). Permissions for use granted via MOCA.



Striking members of ILGWU Local 23-25, wearing union hats, gather in Columbus Park on June 24, 1982 to demand a new contract.

Photographer unknown. Originally accessed via LaborArts' "We Are One: Honoring Immigrant Garment Workers" digital exhibit. Included in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Photographs (1885-1985) collection at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives. Available under the terms of fair use.



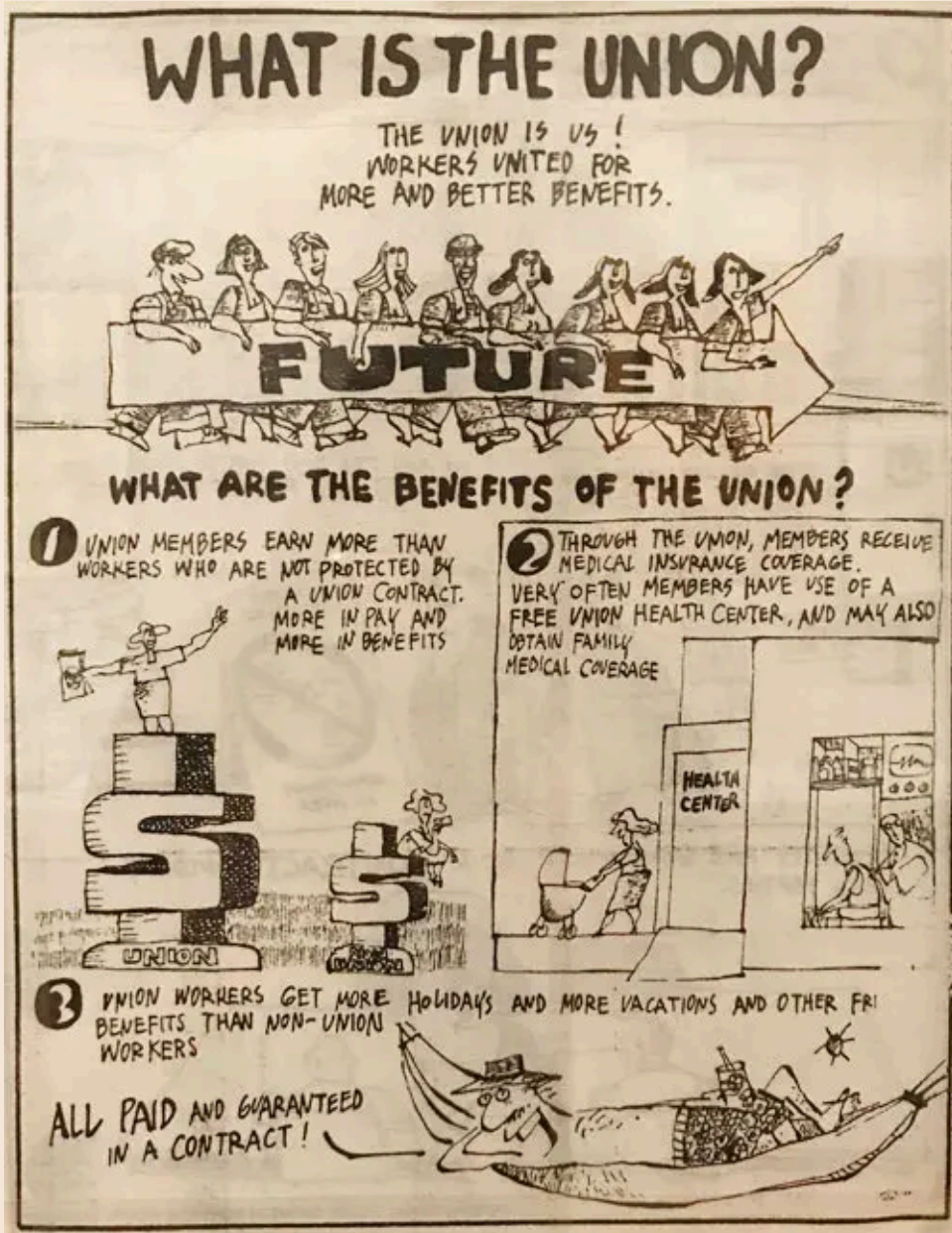
Members of ILGWU Local 23-25 share disposable union hats on the day of the 20,000 person rally in Columbus Park, June 24, 1982.

Photographer unknown. Included in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union Photographs (1885-1985) collection at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives. Available under the terms of fair use.



Members of ILGWU Local 23-25 on strike in New York City's Chinatown, c. 1982.

Photograph by Robert Gumpert. Included in Katie Quan's "Memories of the 1982 ILGWU Strike in New York Chinatown" (2009). Exact rights status unknown, but likely available under the terms of fair use.



An informational poster created by ILGWU Local 23-25 to inform potential members, largely Chinese immigrants, about the benefits of union membership, c. 1990.

Created by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Included in "City of Workers, City of Struggle Lesson: "We Are One" New York Women's Activism in the Garment Industry, 1909-1990" (Museum of the City of New York). Held at The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives and available under the terms of educational fair use.



As part of the 1992 Campaign for Economic Justice, ILGWU Local 23-25 members protest at Foley Square on June 21, 1992.

Photographer unknown. Included in LaborArts' "We Are One: Honoring Immigrant Garment Workers." Photograph held at the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA); permissions for use granted via MOCA.



The interior of a clothing store in Chinatown covered in dust and debris from the collapsing towers post-9/11, c. July 2002.

Photograph by Xiao Min Yu. Included in the Recovering Chinatown: 9/11 Collection at the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA). Permissions for use granted via MOCA.



A teach-in at NYU in the weeks following 9/11 in response to the violent Islamophobia unleashed against many in the city, September 22, 2001.

Photograph by Corky Lee. Donated by Frank Mok & Corky Lee to the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) as part of "Chinatown POV: Reflections on September 11th." Permissions for use granted via MOCA.



Retired Local 23-25 ILGWU members at the 40-year commemoration for the 1982 Chinatown strike, July 6, 2022.

Photograph by Tequila Minsky. Included in *amNY*'s Included in "We Are One: Commemorating the 40th anniversary of the 1982 Garment Workers Chinatown Rally." Exact rights status unknown.



Dance performers with red flags at the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the 1982 Garment Workers Chinatown Rally, July 6, 2022.

Photograph by Tequila Minsky. Included in amNY's Included in "We Are One: Commemorating the 40th anniversary of the 1982 Garment Workers Chinatown Rally." Exact rights status unknown.

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READING!**

讓
我
們



IN UNION
There is
STRENGTH

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION BOARD OF SINGAPORE