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This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Approved by the Dissertation Committee:

Karen A. Foss, Chairperson

UNDOCUMENTED, UNAPOLOGETIC, AND UNAFRAID: DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES OF THE IMMIGRANT YOUTH DREAM SOCIAL MOVEMENT

by

CLAUDIA A. ANGUIANO

B.A., Communication, California State University, 2004
M.A., Communication, California State University, 2004

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

June, 2011

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DEDICATION

Para mi familia

and

To all my DREAMers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project is the culminating effort of the many people who took of their time to provide support, encouragement, and resources to make the completion of this project a reality.

First and foremost, I am so grateful and continue to benefit from the advice of my advisor Dr. Karen Foss. I am indebted to her words of encouragement and guidance during the completion of this project. From the scholar's retreat, to the phone calls and emails, the feedback "*remember your granddaughter*" went beyond helping this dissertation, but holistically helped the development of my voice as a scholar. I am thankful for your exemplary mentorship, as you are an inspiration of the type of professor I hope to be.

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More than anyone, I want to recognize my amazing family who has been here for me every step of the way with ceaseless support. I thank you for you encouragement with all my heart. *En reconocimiento de mis padres que sacrificaron tanto para que yo pudiera tener una educación. A mi mama, Ana Luisa, y mi papa, Elias- son ustedes quién inqulcaron mi deseo de obtener una educacion y que llegara a ser alguien de provecho. No tengo palabras para agradecerles por su appoyo, amor, y paciencia durante este proceso. Los quiero y los admiro mucho.* Along with my parents, I would like to thank my siblings who share such an important part of my life. To my brother, Elias, who not only let me take over his office, but also brings me laugher, humility and sarcasm. Last but not least, to my wonderful sister. Annie, it is hard to properly thank you for all you did to make finishing a reality. Thank you for your selfless and generous spirit. You continue to pave the way through example and I am so lucky to call you my best friend.

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ABSTRACT

This project centers on the advocacy of undocumented immigrant youth to realize the passage of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, a narrowly tailored bipartisan legislation that would provide qualifying undocumented youth a pathway to citizenship. Using a Latino/a Critical Race framework to address socio-political discourses surrounding the immigration debate, my analysis presents the ways undocumented youth communicated about their identity and agency and the ways they constructed their demands publicly in seeking passage of the DREAM Act during the years 2001 to 2010.

This research purposefully departs from the traditional modality of research and conceptualizes political work as centered in the research process. To conduct this research, I spent eleven months of fieldwork participating with DREAM activist groups in California, New Mexico, and other states nationally. The data was drawn from an estimated 400 hours of fieldwork, 10 in-depth personal interviews of activists in leadership positions, and secondary accounts of the DREAM youth movement.

This study's findings point to three progressive phases of the DREAM social movement, with unique internal and external strategies used to advocate for social

change. The first phase covers 2001 through 2007, where self-identification strategies were used to create a collective group identity that countered the negative dehumanizing typecast of “illegal aliens” by identifying DREAMers as *exceptional students.* During the second phase, from 2007 to 2009, self-representation strategies worked to unite undocumented youth through the creation of national coalitional organizations and through self-identification as *undocumented and unafraid.* During the third phase, spanning the months from May to December 2010, participating activists utilized strategies of self-reliance and self-identified as *unapologetic DREAMers*. The strategies of intervention included the use of civil disobedience tactics to petition for the legislation. This study points to a progressive sense of vocality, agency, and empowerment for the DREAM-eligible youth involved in this social movement. Finally, this study offers a discussion about the current state of the DREAM Act and includes suggestions and implications for the future of the social movement.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"If you can't eliminate injustice, at least tell everyone about it" (Ebadi, 2011, p. 1).

Early one morning in April 2010, I set out with six other members from the immigrant-rights organization El Centro de Derechos y Igualdad on a road trip from Albuquerque to Las Vegas to take part in a two-day training session hosted by Reform Immigration for America. The purpose of the event, titled the Southwest Movement Building Direct Action Training, was for community organizers to collaborate and brainstorm new strategies for immigration reform and immigrant rights. As we made our way along the Interstate 40 highway, the sun slowly came up to reveal a perfect clear day with temperatures in the mid 80s.

After several hours, I took a turn at the wheel and continued to drive us toward our destination. From the center mirror of the van, I could see Dolores (pseudonym), one of the high school girls attending the training, becoming visibly agitated. After I asked if she was okay, she was silent for a moment but then shook her head and fervently asked why we had opted to take this route to the event. "I read the sign," she said. I was unsure to what she was referring until I saw the road sign:

Figure 1. W16-6 Watch for Ice on Bridge Sign (U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, 2009)

After reading the sign, I understood the source of Dolores' emotional state. The concern for her wellbeing had nothing to do with the weather conditions; rather her fear came from an instinctual interpretation and apprehension of the word ICE. Dolores' immigration status as an undocumented student required that she be on guard for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (otherwise known as ICE), knowing that the presence of border patrol agents could lead to her arrest and immanent deportation.

I share this story to index much of what guides this study. My interest in the issue of undocumented youth organizing did not emerge strictly from a theoretical curiosity but from a personal knowledge that came by virtue of having to bear the stigma of "alien," a label my family and I endured after emigrating from Mexico when I was six years old. Once in the United States, my father's labor certification was denied a decade after filing it, resulting in the reality and fears I experienced as an undocumented youth. Dolores is but one example of the many students affected by legalized restrictions stemming from an undocumented and unauthorized immigration status, making the issue both relevant and pressing nationwide.

In this dissertation, I examine the largely untold story of undocumented youth, like Dolores, who continue to mobilize for social change in the face of real threats, legal restrictions, and vitriolic anti-immigration discourse. The latter includes a cultural psyche, often reflecting right-wing, conservative rhetoric that frames illegal immigrants as a "'polluting' 'diseased' 'sinning' 'un-American' 'criminal' 'enemy' 'alien' 'breeding' 'beast' 'piece of shit' '(insert racial expletive)' who 'free-rides' off the system and is 'damaging the economy'" (Johnson, 2007, p. 218). In the face of these obstacles, a bold and growing community of immigrant youth continues to organize and speak out against the implications and effects of these beliefs on their lives.

The focus of this study is the seemingly loose national efforts of undocumented youth advocating for the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act). The proposed DREAM Act, first introduced in 2001, was designed to offer undocumented immigrant youth the possibility for U.S. citizenship if they could meet certain requirements. The latest version of the DREAM Act (H.R. 6497, 2010; S. 3992, 2010) stipulated that a would-be beneficiary must (1) complete two years of college or serve two years in the U.S. military; (2) have lived in the United States for at least five years; (3) be between the ages of 12 and 29 at the time of bill enactment; (4) possess no criminal record; and (5) demonstrate good moral character. Those who meet these stipulated conditions would then be eligible to apply for conditional legal residency after a 10-year waiting period.

There now exists a grassroots social movement dedicated to petitioning for the passage of the DREAM Act. Made up of a multitude of community organizations around the country, DREAM activists have used a full spectrum of agitation strategies for social

change, ranging from storytelling aimed at legislators to direct action civil disobedience. Because of the networking of local community activists both online through social media and other means of communication, this movement has created a space for self-directed organizing and has led to the empowerment of participating individuals. In the decade-long efforts to secure passage of the DREAM Act, clear patterns have emerged in terms of how undocumented youth address opposition against the act.

In this chapter, I provide a general overview and background of the research problem and the purpose of this study. I engage this task by first addressing the research questions that guided this study and by defining relevant terms. Second, I briefly present the theoretical and methodological framework that has informed my dissertation and demonstrate why this study is important. Third, I discuss the social and political context for DREAM Act organizing and provide an outline for the remaining chapters of the dissertation.

Focus and Rationale for the Study

In light of the persistent and escalating presence of undocumented youth in the public sphere in support of the DREAM Act, I seek to bring an understanding to the nature of their activism. Unlike the broader undocumented population that has been described as existing "in the shadows" (Chávez, 1997), undocumented youth have become increasingly vocal and public about their demands for social and legal inclusion. During this study, I asked the following questions in order to understand how communication functioned within the social movement for passage of the DREAM Act:

$RQ_{1:}$ How do undocumented youth communicate about their identity and personal agency given the legal restrictions they encounter and seek to change?

RQ_2: How do undocumented youth communicate their demands publicly in order to seek passage of the DREAM Act?

To answer these questions, I focused on those undocumented youth who would be the primary beneficiaries of the DREAM Act and the organizations established in part to support their efforts to get this legislation passed. These research questions call for a thorough exploration of activist practices with particular attention to how activism for the passage of the DREAM act has unfolded against opposition from anti-immigrant factions.

The opposition to the DREAM movement has been characterized by a nativist climate in which "many Americans believe that undocumented immigrants compete unfairly for jobs, depress wages, receive public benefits that they do not deserve, adversely affect the country's identity, and endanger national security" (Drachman, 2008, p. 99). The nation's political climate at the time of this study made the potential for immigration-reform legislation, such as the DREAM Act, a seemingly insurmountable task, yet these conditions did not impede the efforts of invested youth from mobilizing for social change. In the following section, I provide explanation for the key terms that are used throughout the rest of the chapters.

Terms and Definitions

While some of the terms may be self-explanatory, the definitions below are offered to provide a clear understanding of the origins, contexts, and meanings of the following terms central to my study. These terms include *undocumented immigrant youth*, *DREAM social movement*, and *DREAM eligible-activists*.

Undocumented Immigrant Youth

The terms *undocumented* and *unauthorized* have been used interchangeably to describe the noncitizen whose pathway to citizenship is often impeded through stern and outdated immigration laws. UCLA's Center for Labor Research and Education (2007) provided a useful definition of the term undocumented immigrant, referring to "foreign nationals who: (1) entered the United States without authorization, or (2) entered legally but remained in the United States without authorization" (p. 3). I employ the terms undocumented immigrant youth and DREAM-eligible youth to specifically refer to young participants who may benefit from DREAM Act and generally have the characteristics required and defined by the U.S. Congress.

These terms are connected to what Portes and Rumbaut (1996) called Generation 1.5, a generation stuck between parents born and raised outside the United States and their younger siblings who were born and raised inside the United States. This attribute is important to note because the undocumented immigrant youth who may benefit from the DREAM Act were not born in the United States but have been raised here, some since infancy, mostly speak English, and may have not lived in any other country, thus they may only be familiar with the way of life in the United States.

Many of the affected students were brought to the United States without legal documentation, or were brought with a visa that expired, and hence they may not even realize that they are in violation of U.S. immigration laws. I sometimes use the phrase *DREAM student* to refer to the undocumented youth that have graduated from U.S. high schools and are attending institutions of higher education, or who have graduated with postsecondary degrees. Most of these individuals have resided in the US nearly their

entire lives, but nevertheless face limited prospects for completing their education or working legally as they have limited access to federal and state student aid.

Passage of the DREAM Act would affect a growing population of individuals. In March 2005, the Current Population Survey reported approximately 37 million foreign-born immigrants live in the United States, 11.1 million of which were undocumented, with 56% of those undocumented individuals having arrived from Mexico (Passel, 2006). Additionally, based on these totals, children accounted for 1.8 million or 15% of the undocumented population. The 2007 U.S. Census suggested that of all U.S. high school graduates, fewer than 2% were unauthorized immigrants. Many of these children resided in the United States for the majority of their lives (Gonzales, 2008a, 2008b).

A 2006 analysis of potential DREAM Act beneficiaries conducted by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) suggested that slightly more than 2.1 million youth and young adults could be eligible to apply for legal status under the legislation (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). However, the analysis was based primarily on the bill's required criteria and historical trends, meaning roughly 38% or 825,000 potential beneficiaries would likely obtain permanent legal status through the DREAM Act's education and military routes (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). Building on the findings of this report, North American Integration and Development Center noted that MPI's failure to include the incentive effect of the DREAM Act eligible youth may account for its conservative estimate of total eligible immigrant youths that would achieve legalization (Hinojosa Ojeda et al., 2010).

While not all primary faces of the DREAM Act are Latin@,[1] a majority of the undocumented youth in this study have been racialized and categorized as illegal aliens.

Special emphasis was given to Latin@ students in this study because Latin@s have frequently been the target of exclusionary policies that affect their social arenas, access to higher education, and democratic participation (Chávez, 2008; De Genova, 2004). Also, a rising number of post-1960 immigrants have recently been reaching adulthood, and a majority of this emerging population is Latin@ (Portes, 2007). Moreover, Drachman (2008) claimed that out of the estimated 65,000 undocumented students graduating from the country's secondary schools each year, about 37,000 are Latin@. While there has been a long history of alarmist xenophobic sentiment toward a wide range of ethnically diverse immigrants in the United States (Luibhéid, 2002), Latin@ immigrants have historically been treated differently from other ethnic migratory groups in that they have been quintessentially marked with illegality.

I also focused on this population because DREAM eligible Latin@ undocumented youth in the United States have been systematically constructed as the representative face of unauthorized immigration. Gonzales (2009) suggested that stories of these cultural "Americans," who have built full lives in this country yet have not been able to become legal residents, are brought to light in order to demonstrate the immigration system's failings. In immigration debates, undocumented students who have been threatened with deportation because of their public protests have become the poster children for nationwide efforts in support of the DREAM Act.

DREAM Social Movement

While the DREAM Act is part of a larger body of immigration-reform efforts, I focused on the concentrated efforts to enact this particular bill in order to emphasize the social protest efforts of undocumented youth. Undocumented students and their allies

have been working and participating in advocacy for the DREAM Act for an extended period of time, but only recently has this movement received coverage from major media outlets, including the *New York Times, Washington Post, Univision, Miami Herald,* and the *Los Angeles Times.* The escalated activism that has brought the DREAM Act and efforts to secure its passage to the forefront of political discourse has made this study especially relevant. Since the DREAM act has recently achieved a certain level of visibility as a social movement, this study seeks to explain the origins, subsequent evolution, and present day status of social protest surrounding the act.

Almost a decade has passed since the DREAM Act was first introduced, and with the passing of each year the activist campaigns in support of the bill have grown significantly. The movement participants, hailing from different geographical locations, organizations, and backgrounds, have publicly communicated their demands using a wide-ranging set of strategies, while remaining mostly united in their efforts to see the DREAM Act become a reality. Parallels of the student-led activism have been made to that of the Civil Rights Movement. The similarities have included tactics such as hunger strikes, lobby visits and marches to Washington DC, mock graduations, national summits, rallies, and conferences, all of which have been incorporated into strategic planning for the movement (Buff, 2008). A wide spectrum of activities has occurred since student advocacy first coalesced around the Act. As a result, these students have now become both vocal and visible in problematizing their unlawful presence in the United States.

While focused on the national DREAM movement, my data brings concentrated attention to the continuing activist work of undocumented youth in California and New

Mexico, which have been two key sites of activism. Both locations feature large populations of DREAM Act eligible youth and a variety of multiethnic collaborative advocacy groups dedicated to advancing the human and civil rights of immigrants. I was also fortunate in that I have concentrated personal access, extended familiarity, and community connections in both locations.

More specifically, New Mexico and California both have an established history of advocacy efforts to extend postsecondary access to undocumented immigrants. Because of this advocacy, both states have successfully enacted in-state tuition bills granting undocumented youth the possibility to attend college. New Mexico's legislature enacted College Access Bill for Immigrant Students (New Mexico S. Bill 582, 2005) in 2005 to allow undocumented students access to higher education (Somos de un Pueblo Unido, 2009). California's Assembly Bill 540 (California A.B. 540, 2001) was signed into law in 2002, making undocumented students eligible to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities (Guarneros, Bendezu, Pérez Huber, Vélez, & Solórzano, 2009). In addition to the shared historical, political, social, and cultural milieus, these education-related bills made these two states rich sites to examine the work of advocates for the rights of undocumented students.

DREAM-Eligible Activists

This study focused primarily on undocumented youth in activist leadership positions, especially young adults engaged in political activism and specifically targeted participants who have shown consistent civic and political engagement for immigrant-rights reform. Many of these individuals were decision makers by virtue of the positions they held in organizations involved in DREAM activism. This also means that they had

consistent and extended amounts of involvement. By vigorously pushing for the DREAM Act, these individuals embodied the belief that it is possible to affect change through advocacy. By focusing on activist perspectives, I sought to ascertain the specific communicative strategies used to further their political agendas.

This study identifies the meaningful communication strategies that have been used to petition and advocate for legal rights, leading me to focus on strategies used in activism. In this vein, when referring to discursive strategies, I pay particular attention to the communication tactics, forms, and ways in which the students construct communication networks of ideas, opinions, and the more general linguistic maneuvers used strategically for purposes of affecting change. However, in focusing on strategies and tactics, I do not make de Certeau's (1984) distinction between strategies as possibilities of powerful elites and tactics as creative everyday practices of subversion. Instead, I take from Jasper's (2004) understanding of strategies as choices available to protestors and participants, that is to say choices that bring attention to agency and structural constraints.

Scholarly Justification for the Study

In this section I preview the framework and approach that I take in this dissertation. My study discusses the importance of research on this understudied population. I note the significance and applicability of Latino Critical Race Theory and the methodological considerations of this interpretive critical study.

My project focuses on a relatively understudied segment of the undocumented population, young people, which is a different lens through which to examine questions of immigrant reform and community organizing. The degree to which the DREAM Act

has galvanized immigrant students to organize under a common cause has generated both support and a recent growth of research interest among academics. This study contributes to this burgeoning scholarship in several ways. Academic interest in undocumented students generally has centered on the issue of higher education access and experiences (Frum, 2007; Oliverez, 2006a, 2006b; Yates, 2004) and on psychological and sociological impacts (Morales, Herrera, & Murry, 2009; Yoshikawa, Godfrey, & Rivera, 2008). The quantitatively driven research on the topic (Pérez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortes, 2009; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996) has provided statistical information about the undocumented youth experience. This quantitative research can be enriched with more descriptive picture of the lives it seeks to frame through charts and graphs. Only recently, information from the perspective of undocumented young people on the matter of their activism for social justice has been made available, including in the works of Abrego (2008), Gonzales (2008a, 2008b), Pérez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado, and Cortes (2010), Pérez Huber and Malagon (2007), Rincón (2008), Seif (2004), and Vélez, Pérez Huber, Benavides Lopez, de la Luz, and Solórzano, (2008). To date, however, no study has presented the DREAM youth social movement in a comprehensive approach that features the perspective and activism of DREAM organizing from its inception to its current state.

While the topic of immigration practices has gained the focus of scholars in an array of academic disciplines, communication scholars have brought little to no attention to this topic. Communication scholars that center their discussions on Latin@ immigration have discussed the following topics: adult immigrant identity (Amaya, 2007a), posthumous citizenship (Amaya, 2007b), medical discourse of border infection

(Ruiz, 2002), uses and functions of metaphors (Chávez, 2009a; Pineda, 2009), bordering practices (DeChaine, 2009; Demo, 2005), vernacular rhetoric of immigrants (Hasian & Delgado, 1998; Holling, 2006; Ono & Sloop, 2002), and mediated representation of immigrants (Flores, 2003; Santa Ana, 1999). Pineda and Sowards (2007) focused on immigrant activism, but with the exception of Anguiano and Chávez (2011), none have focused on undocumented youth activism.

This study has allowed me to further the research about youth-led activism in the field of communication studies, in which the student-driven public policy advocacy by undocumented communities has not been explored sufficiently. Studies that are specifically DREAM Act centered have focused more on legal policy implications (Drachman, 2008; Rodriguez & Cruz, 2009). Likewise, Pérez Huber and Malagon (2007) urged institutions, researchers, educators, and policymakers to acknowledge these unique experiences and work to better support undocumented student populations. This study seeks to achieve just that, but also brings to the forefront attention to the youth-led mobilizing efforts. Those who have documented student advocacy thus far have focused their attention on youth demonstrations against the federal bill H.R. 4437[2] (Gonzales, 2008a, 2008b; Pérez Huber and Malagon, 2007; Vélez et al., 2008) and for California's A.B. 540[3] (Abrego, 2008; Seif, 2004), but limited scholarship has covered student-led social movements for federal initiatives such as the DREAM Act (Negron-Gonzales, 2009). Despite the real threat of deportation, young undocumented youth are politically involved in the fight for citizenship, which makes this an important social movement phenomenon (Baker-Cristales, 2009; Buff, 2008; Laubenthal, 2007; Pallares & Flores-González, 2008). Hence my study will be a contribution to this scholarly literature.

I bring in the theoretical assumptions of Latin@ Critical Race theory (LatCrit) to aid in the understanding of the meaning making and activist practices of these students. LatCrit is a recent intellectual project that flows from Critical Race Theory (CRT), which situates race within legal scholarship by addressing enduring racism in the legal establishment (Crenshaw, Gotanda, & Peller, 1996). LatCrit theory not only focuses on the legal system; it acknowledges that people of color continue to face systemic discrimination based on the inequities perpetuated by the immigration legal system and the dominant discourses (Arriola, 1998; Garcia, 2003; Johnson, 2004; Pérez Huber Benavides Lopez, Malagon, Vélez, & Solórzano, 2008; Vélez et al., 2008). LatCrit is particularly accessible and useful for the study of socio-political movements because it has been extended beyond a focus on the legal system and on the politics of individuals seeking to affect racist legal establishments. A key feature of LatCrit scholarship is an attention to the community capital of undocumented youth, and the agency they possess that permits resistance to oppression. Furthermore, I seek to extend LatCrit scholarship by developing the ways that social movements made up of racialized communities can draw upon it to connect to and help mobilize support for activist groups.

To address the posed questions, I ground this study in a qualitative approach, driven by interpretive and critical paradigms (Mason, 2002). My critical fieldwork allows me to enact the role of scholar and activist, which is defined by an explicit commitment to this political cause as well as the requirements of the academic institution (Hale, 2008). The framework also features my personal investment to the cause as organizer of activist practices to further the DREAM Act movement cause. To conduct this research, I spent eleven months of fieldwork, from January to November 2010,

participating in the role of volunteer and engaged participant working with DREAM activist groups at state and national levels. In this role, I completed an estimated 400 hours of fieldwork, conducted 10 in-depth personal interviews, and gathered secondary accounts of the DREAM youth movement.

This focus on the DREAM social movement provides a unique methodological vantage point in this social protest analysis, meaning that I interweave the firsthand account of my experience as an undocumented student and my role as a participant in this movement. This distinctive activist-scholar perspective adds to social movement scholarship in that I have a wide array of data ranging from the personal to the social. There is a great deal that can be learned about the potential benefits of the DREAM Act by focusing on vernacular voices of undocumented students themselves, which allows for extended knowledge about communication practices of marginalized groups rather than the dominant community.

Lastly, given the current political climate, there are broader political implications to this study. At a time when immigration holds the position as one of the fiercest contemporary debates, this study presents an alternative perspective to the dominant national discourse. Looking at activism from the perspective of participants and protestors is timely and relevant societal topic that allows the public, policy makers, and educators to consider a multifaceted understanding on this topic. I seek to enhance the understanding of the experiences of undocumented youth activism and rhetorical social protest as a vehicle to resist and negotiate the faced barriers. Ultimately, this project is the first of its kind to focus solely on a movement made up of undocumented youth and

thus extends knowledge on rhetoric of social movements in the communication discipline and beyond.

Organization of the Study

In this dissertation, I am broadly concerned with advocacy work of undocumented students and the communicative aspects of their organizing. In Chapter 2, I provide a brief history of the immigration practices and policies that have come to affect undocumented youth in adverse ways. I also offer a synthesis and application of the literature related to undocumented immigrant students' activism and their access to higher education. In Chapter 3, I introduce my research venues and review the methodology utilized in this study, including details of the process by which I conducted my research and analysis framework.

As I examine the primary ways in which DREAM activists are attempting to address the immigration system, I am evaluating a social movement study in progress and will only be covering three stages, the first from 2001 to 2007, the second from November 2007 to March 2010, and the third from April 2010 to December 2010, that have characterized the movement thus far. To that end, I organize the analysis into three distinct chapters to correspond to each of the phases.

The first phase, the subject of Chapter 4, is characterized by *exemplar student identity*, which features the collective identity formation and early efforts at identifying with the opposition through appeals to the value of hard work. Chapter 5 covers the second phase, *undocumented and unafraid*, which traces the self-defining efforts and public disclosure featured in national visibility efforts. Chapter 6 presents the third phase, where I discuss the *unapologetic DREAMer identity*, to analyze the effrontery of

activists who escalated mobilization efforts by modeling civil disobedience tactic of previous civil rights movements. I conclude in Chapter 7 by summarizing the findings and presenting the theoretical and methodological implications of this study. I end by reflecting on and accounting for the delayed passage of the DREAM Act, discussing policy implications, and making recommendations to the DREAM movement.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Caminante, no hay puentes, se hace puentes al andar. [Voyager, there are no bridges, one builds them as one walks]" (Moraga and Anzaldúa, 1983, foreword).

This study draws upon various bodies of literature that inform my investigation of DREAM Act advocacy led by undocumented youth. In this chapter, I synthesize the literature in order to display the conversations already existing surrounding this topic. I begin with the macro context of legislative immigration policies that affect past and present conditions salient to the DREAM social movement. I then engage the communication literature of social movements, paying close attention to rhetoric of previous civil rights efforts and the Chicana/o movement. I go on to discuss youth-of-color activism, focusing in particular on studies that concentrate on undocumented youth themselves and constructions of cultural citizenship. Lastly, I pose the general tenets of my theoretical framework, situating my study in LatCrit theory to further examine immigration and agency concepts. These different bodies of literature offer explanations that assist in my theorizing about undocumented student activism.

Context of Study: Immigration Policy and Practice

To understand the context and the issues that DREAMers face and mobilize to change, it is important to first turn to history. Current events are rooted in the past, and the issue of immigration and citizenship in the United States is no exception. The complexities are especially stark in the West and Southwest where immigration inextricably is tied to the conquests that occurred throughout history in this area. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848 forced Mexico to secede almost half of its territory to the United States, thereby affecting the number of Mexicans who ended up in the US

in the annexing aftermath (Cervantes, 2003; Menchaca, 2007). Despite the fact that this imperialist move resulted in Mexican citizens being granted elements of legal whiteness,[4] it is now a truism that to be a Latin@ in the United States is to be non-white, and by extension barred structurally and symbolically from the privileges of whiteness (Candelario, 2007; Gomez, 2007). Contrary to European arrivals, who were eventually able to assimilate and become accepted as members of society, Latin@ immigrants face ineligibility and exclusion from citizenship that is largely based on an identifying marker of skin color (Gomez, 1998a). Non-voluntary colonization relegated Latin@ people to a racial hierarchy in which they are given second-class social status and deemed perpetual foreigners based on their brownness (Spickard, 2000).[5]

While national-origin quotas may have been removed as the "official" policy of the United States, racialized preferences still occur and devices continue to be put in place to permanently marginalize parts of the population (Bonilla-Silva, 2001). In his foundational book, *Strangers in the Land*, John Higham (1955) defined *nativism* as a form of nationalism in which there is "an intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., 'un-American') connections" resulting from a fear that they will destroy a "distinctively American way of life" (p. 4). While U.S. immigration policies have historically reflected a xenophobic hostility toward non-white people, studies continue to point to Latin@ immigrants emerging as racially marked and as continued targets of harsh immigration policies and racist nativism (Pérez Huber et al., 2008).[6] Ngai (2004) further provided an explanation of the successive ways in which the racialized Mexican identity became the iconic *illegal alien*, subsisting within a dysfunctional relationship that wanted immigrants to fill labor needs although still

unwelcomed by citizenry that branded those same immigrants as undesirable.[7] Markedly, the labeling process creates a climate of fear where the public at large believes that unauthorized immigration by Latin@s threatens the stability of citizens of the US.[8] This belief is a driving force in the continued interest in and passage of restrictionist immigration policies.[9]

U.S. immigration history shows a repetitive pattern of the immigration system operating to deter Latin@s from legal naturalization (Spickard, 2007; Zolberg, 2006). A complete accounting of all of these policies is impossible here; I will present instead a cursory exposition of the major policies that have especially restricted DREAMers' access to naturalization rights. An appropriate starting point is the repatriation of upwards of a million Mexican Americans in the 1930s.[10] In the 1950s, Operation Wetback and Hold the Line[11] served as examples of the policies implemented to confirm Latin@ immigrants as unwelcome (Astor, 2009; Ngai, 2004; Sánchez, 1993; Spickard, 2007; Zolberg, 2006).

Contemporary immigration legislations are eerily reminiscent of those policies of earlier decades as evidenced by enactment of numerous pieces of state and federal level anti-immigrant legislation. In a post-North American Fair Trade Agreement (NAFTA) era, Operation Gatekeeper was implemented to militarize the Mexico/US border in an effort to impede border crossings out of major cities (Astor, 2009; Nevins, 2002). This initiative showed the need to regulate symbolic boundaries between insiders and outsiders (De Genova, 2004) and reified the sentiment that Latin@s in particular should be expelled from national inclusion.

The framing of the presence of Latin@s as illegal and foreign in their former homeland plays a central role in the growing hostility toward people of color and immigrants. As Chávez (2008) argued, restrictionist immigration policy is tied to nativist concerns that the cultural identity of the United States is threatened by a Latin@ "invasion," fueling suspicion that Latin@s are intent upon re-annexing parts of the Southwestern United States to Mexico. In the face of this alleged invasion, individual states continue to take up the immigration issue on their own, enacting anti-immigrant legislation intended to deny undocumented individuals public benefits, driver's licenses, and in-state tuition (Reich & Barth, 2007, 2010; Yoshikawa, Godfrey, & Rivera, 2008) and ultimately demonstrating continuing hostile attitudes against immigrants.

Restrictionist practices, then, are not a trend of the past. Contemporary examples of anti-immigrant measures vigorously targeting Latin@s are evident in the passage of various pieces of legislation like Proposition 187 and S.B. 1070 (2010). In 1994, the Save Our State Initiative, Proposition 187 (1994), was designed to deny illegal immigrants social services, health care, and public education in California. Similar attempts fueled a 2010 Arizona bill, Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, best known as S.B. 1070; this bill was aimed at identifying, prosecuting, and deporting any unauthorized persons. Among other things, the most prominent aspect of this Arizona bill, touted as the "nation's toughest bill," is the implicit requirement for police to use racial profiling to require individuals suspected of being undocumented show documentation proving their legal status (Archibold, 2010). While each of these legislative and police efforts were couched in general language, the efforts of controlling unauthorized immigration have been directed at the policing of Latin@s in

particular (Chávez, 2008). The current nativist policies, jarringly similar to those of the past, signal continued hostility towards immigrants of color (Flores, 2003; Nevins, 2002). Past and current legal measures that criminalize Latin@ immigrant youth have long lasting consequences and function to reproduce/legitimate unequal social relations faced by Dream Activists.

While I have presented a historical context in admittedly broad strokes, this history speaks to background issues that have affected the lives of undocumented students in this study. The struggles of the undocumented youth activist in this study are part of a larger polarized discourse that speaks to the inequalities of an individual's right to access the privileges of citizenship (Chávez, 2008; Pérez Huber, 2009). I have explained the general discourse surrounding immigration policies in the US; these provide the context for the particulars of DREAM activism. In the following section, I speak to the effects that these immigration policies have on the undocumented students' access to higher education in particular.

Undocumented Students, Public Policy, and Higher Education Access

There are a number of laws that directly affect undocumented youth and largely have been responsible for initiating DREAM activism. I start with a positive ruling, *Plyler v. Doe,* the 1982 Supreme Court decision that determined that children of unauthorized immigrants were protected under the due-process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and entitled to a public education under the constitution (Yates, 2004). When Justice Brennan authored the *Plyler v. Doe* majority opinion of the Supreme Court, he rendered that illegal immigrant children are people "in any ordinary sense of the term" (*Plyler v. Doe*, 1982). Studies examining the undocumented youth experience have

affirmed the point that there is relatively little difference between undocumented youth and their "legal" peers (Abrego, 2006; Gonzales, 2008a, 2008b; Olivas, 1994; Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010). Because of this ruling, undocumented school-age children have access to K-12 education on the basis of undue discriminatory burden "of a legal characteristic over which children can have little control" (*Plyler v. Doe*, 1982). It is access to higher education, however, that still is denied to undocumented students in most states, and these are the policies that are the focus of DREAM activism.

Undocumented Students' Postsecondary Access

While *Plyler v. Doe* mandated that public schools must serve all students from K-12 regardless of their citizenship status, the decision in many ways exacerbated the contradictory nature of immigration policies. Even if the rationale is just as true for undocumented students seeking postsecondary education, that legal protection dries up precisely at high school graduation. *Plyler's* obvious shortcoming is that it fails to address what happens to students who graduate from high school and want to pursue college, but are denied access to in-state tuition or to financial aid funds (Rincón, 2008). The policies that resulted from immigration legislation have left undocumented students existing in limbo. These students exist *betwixt and between*[12] (Turner, 1974) in terms of status because many have lived in the United States most of their lives and have had unrestricted access to K-12 public education. Yet, their status as outsiders has been maintained and reinforced by the restricted access to some of the basic resources that their citizen counterparts enjoy.

There have been policies since *Plyler v. Doe* that have attempted to decisively address the question of postsecondary education access. Congress resolved to clarify the

state of undocumented immigrants in higher education in Section 505 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA, 1996). This law currently in place resulted in limiting lawful permanent resident status and access of undocumented youth to higher education benefits. This bill was intended to allow states to make their own determination about eligibility for in-state tuition for undocumented students (Russell, 2007). IIRIRA specifically declared that "an alien who is not lawfully present in the United States shall not be eligible on the basis of residence within a state . . . for any postsecondary education benefit unless a citizen or national of the United States is eligible for such a benefit . . . without regard to whether the citizen or national is such a resident" (as cited in Yates, 2004, p. 596). However, the ambiguous language allows differing interpretations of this stipulation, and consequently states have adopted a wide variety of policies on the eligibility of undocumented students for in-state tuition (Lopez, 2004).

The issue has been treated on local levels rather than a national one, and states have responded in varied ways. For instance, 11 states have interpreted the clause to allow undocumented youth to access the same rules as citizens in regard to higher education and implemented legislation to do so.[13] In June 2001, Texas became the first state to enact such legislation, allowing in-state tuition for undocumented students. Since then, eight other states, including California, Utah, New York, Illinois, Oklahoma, Washington, Kansas, New Mexico, and most recently Wisconsin, have passed similar legislation. Only three of these states offer state financial aid to undocumented students, including New Mexico (Drachman, 2008). These bills have resulted in extensive amount

of litigation and legal developments relating to issues concerning college residency and tuition.[14]

The states have become a site of research for those interested in the effects of in-state tuition, such as Reich and Barth (2010), who address the proliferating state policies with a comparative study on issue framing by state legislatures who craft these immigration policies. More relevant to my topic is Rincón's (2008) helpful treatment of the topic in her book *Undocumented Immigrants and Higher Education: Si Se Puede*![15] She focuses on in-state tuition policies and chronicles the efforts of individuals in the states that successfully lobbied to provide equal access to higher education. The research about the 10 states that have passed in-state tuition laws highlights the impediments and difficulty of enacting these kinds of changes state by state.

There is a history of strong advocacy in the two main states, New Mexico and California, where I centered my fieldwork. After a statewide effort, New Mexico passed one of the most progressive higher education laws for undocumented immigrant students in the country in 2005. New Mexico's College Access Bill for Immigrant Students (New Mexico S. Bill 582, 2005) allows students to access in-state tuition and state financial aid regardless of immigration status. In the first year of New Mexico's law, only 41 undocumented students enrolled with in-state tuition (Lewis, 2005), but beneficiaries of this law have increased each year. New Mexico also has put in place a "reciprocal agreement," which has functioned to allow eligible students in Colorado to take part in the in-state tuition benefits currently prohibited there for undocumented students. Out of all the states that provide relief to undocumented students, New Mexico is considered the most comprehensive in scope, a success attributed to the strong advocacy work of

communities, non-profit organizations, and teachers who have had consistent contact with undocumented students (Rincón, 2008).

In California, due to a statewide effort by activists seeking immigration reform, there is also a law that allows higher education access for undocumented immigrant students in the California. Every year, approximately 26,000 undocumented students graduate from California high schools, about one-half of who are expected to enroll in post-secondary institutions (Passel & Cohn, 2009). In 2001, Governor Davis signed Assembly Bill 540 exempting undocumented immigrant students from paying out-of-state tuition if they have attended California's high schools for three years and graduated from a California high school. An important aspect of these state-enacted bills is recognition that even if undocumented students do attend and complete college using state-resident tuition, states' laws do not attend to the fact that even upon graduation their unauthorized status prevents them from working legally in the United States (Olivas, 2004; 2008).

Olivas (2008) argued that states can and should be inclusive of undocumented students and that while the issue affects a relatively small amount of individuals, the issue continues to merit attention. The large amount of litigation also speaks to the advocacy efforts on both sides of the issue. A possible explanation for so many Latin@ youth being driven to activism for enactment of the DREAM Act may be that would-be beneficiaries are rendered ineligible for other forms of immigration relief or a pathway to documentation.[16] I now turn to a discussion on the DREAM Act legislation, as a bill that diverges from the steady procession of restrictionist anti-immigrant proposals.

Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act

The driving force of the proposed federal DREAM Act is to rescind the inconsistent laws, and it attempts to go beyond the issue of higher education and provide mechanisms for adjusting legal status. While there are other options for dealing with unauthorized student population[17] the DREAM Act legislation attempts to explicitly provide a path to legalization for undocumented students (Bruno, 2010). Amended versions have been put forth every subsequent year since its first introduction in 2001, but each version has fallen short of the necessary votes to become law, attributed largely to the polarizing atmosphere surrounding immigration reform (Rincón, 2010). Since I focus exclusively on DREAM Act activism, I now spend some time providing the background and the arguments that have characterized the debate on this legislation and larger immigration issue.

Since its introduction in 2001, the DREAM Act has been presented in different congressional sessions in various forms (National Immigration Law Center, 2010). All versions, however, have included a two-pronged approach[18] that enables some unauthorized students to eventually qualify for U.S. legal permanent residency (LPR status) (Bruno, 2010). The most recent DREAM Act bill was introduced in the 111th Congress in the House (H.R. 1751) and passed the House on December 8, 2010 by a vote of 216-198. It was introduced for a vote by Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) on November 30, 2010 in the Senate (S. 729, S. 3827) but on December 18, 2010 was five votes short of the necessary 60-vote threshold to advance to the Senate floor (National Immigration Law Center, 2010).[19]

The core effect of the DREAM Act is that it addresses the issue and fate of the unauthorized youth, who often have lived in the United States for years and may have little or no connection to their countries of birth yet are not legally allowed to work and are subject to being removed from the country (Bruno, 2010). The bill stipulates that to qualify under the DREAM Act, an undocumented student must meet certain requirements. The bill now places the burden of proof on a DREAM Act applicant to demonstrate eligibility for the DREAM Act by a preponderance of the evidence. The potential recipient must have graduated from high school, have entered the United States at age of 15 or younger, been physically present in the United States for a continuous period of no less than five years, shown evidence of and maintained good moral character, avoid violating travel restrictions, avoid committing certain crimes, and have paid taxes.[20] During the 10 years of conditional status, the eligible immigrant would be required to either (1) graduate from a two-year community college; (2) complete at least two years toward a four-year degree; or (3) serve two years in the U.S. military. After a total of ten years in conditional nonimmigrant status, youth could adjust to legal permanent resident status if all criteria are met (National Immigration Law Center, 2010).

The immediate consequence of this bill is that individuals who qualified would be conferred *conditional nonimmigrant status*. That change of status effectively makes qualifying applicants eligible to work and to obtain drivers' licenses, among other privileges from which they currently are barred. These individuals would be eligible for federal work study and student loans, and states would not be restricted from providing financial aid to these students (Olivas, 2010b). However, they would still not be able to have access to a broad range of public benefits. For instance, they would not be eligible

for Pell Grants or certain other federal financial aid grants (National Immigration Law Center, 2010).

Many of the studies about the DREAM Act have noted the longer-term effects of the legislation and the effects it would have on the 2.1 million individuals who potentially would qualify. A primary focus of discussions of the impact of the DREAM Act is the economic outcome of the bill. If enacted, the DREAM Act would confer economic benefits and an advance in socioeconomic status for DREAM eligible youth; the anticipated increase in average future earnings is attributed to the ability to be gainfully employed (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010; Frum, 2007; Pérez, 2009; Pérez, Cortés et al., 2010). The fiscal amount translates to future earning reported to be as high as $2.2 billion over ten years (National Immigration Law Center, 2010), which also increases the amount of tax revenue received by the United States (Gonzales, 2009; Jiménez, 2010). The DREAM Act would then not only have advantages for the individual youth affected by it, but it would positively affect the economy in the U.S. as well.

The DREAM Act bill has gained significant attention and attracted support from a variety of societal factions. For instance, it has collected bipartisan support (First Focus, 2010) and tremendous support from the pro-reform advocacy community (Olivas, 2010a, 2010b). As of 2011, it also garnered unprecedented support from 108 national organizations, 179 state and local organizations representing 40 states, all of which signed official support for the DREAM Act. The National Immigration Law Center (2010) reported that these supporting organizations make up a variety of labor unions, state and local elected officials, women's rights organizations, civil rights organizations, faith communities, child-advocacy groups and educators, and businesses. Despite this

across-the-board support, there are still points of contention around this legislation raised by pro-immigrant and anti-immigrant groups alike.

The general opposition against this bill points to the inherent misconduct of unauthorized individuals. Much of the opposition has focused on the wrongdoing of the individuals eligible for the bill for having migrated to the United States illegally. Disregarding the age of individuals at time of migration, the opposition raises concern that to enact the DREAM Act is akin to rewarding people for breaking the law. These opponents thus maintain that passage of the DREAM Act would encourage law-breaking and equate the bill with amnesty (Bruno, 2010; Kobach, 2007). Those opposing this bill have often argued that allowing undocumented youth equal rights “displaces” native-born students and adds a financial burden to the public postsecondary system (Bruno, 2010).

The DREAM Act is not without critique from pro-migrant communities as well, which have vocalized concern that the bill is too narrowly tailored and under encompassing (Maki, 2004). Such groups have expressed concerns that the DREAM Act is neither a very broad nor long-term solution, as it does not apply to undocumented children brought to the United States post-enactment (Frum, 2007). Critics also take issue with the component of the bill regarding military service, arguing that naturalization will coerce undocumented individuals into the military because they have no other options (Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna-Duarte, Meiners, & Valentin, 2009; Mariscal, 2007). This critique presents itself from academics and progressive liberals who have noted that the DREAM Act will negatively sway these undocumented students into the military instead of college. The Association of Raza Educators in Los Angeles elaborated:

> We hope that these "activist" and non-profit organizations [that support the legislation] look past their self interest and think carefully about the adverse effects the DREAM Act will have on the ENTIRE undocumented community and on poor people around the world. (Mariscal, 2007, p. 361)

A related critique is that DREAM legislation inaccurately frames the complex immigration system in a simplistic way. Jefferies (2008) noted that by presenting DREAM youth within a positive frame—with DREAMers as embodying the hard work ethic and virtues of the American dream—they are therefore aligning with the ideology of meritocracy. Jeffries critically assessed the flaws in presenting individual hard work as being sufficient to overcome institutional barriers.

The extensive information about the legislation points to the complexity of the larger issue of immigration reform. The DREAM Act policy is a unique piece of legislation because it "is so fluid and so imbedded in a larger, systemic regime" (Olivas, 2010b, p. 2). Despite the problematic aspects of the bill and the contentious nature of enacting progressive immigration reform, the DREAM Act continues to be an option for many Latin@ youth and one that represents a first step towards change (Gonzales, 2009). Albeit a short-term solution for immigration reform, the DREAM Act would, when passed, allow many undocumented students in the United States to immediately benefit from its provisions. Since DREAM activism has grown into a full-fledged student movement, the next section offers a review of the relevant literature on social movements, paying close attention to the rhetoric of Chicana/o movements, youth-of-color activism, and undocumented student advocacy.

Social Movements

Extensive attention has been devoted to the study of social movements with varying perspectives on what constitutes a social movement and what factors merit emphasis (Della Porta & Diani, 2006). Despite the diverse approaches within this established literature, there is general agreement that social movements involve a "collective, organized, sustained and non-institutional challenge to authorities, power holders, or cultural beliefs and practices" (Goodwin & Jasper, 2009, p. 2). That broad definition accounts for the view that social movements signify a response to a particular exigency that then prompts action for change at a social level. There is a long history of both rhetorical and sociological approaches to the study of individuals seeking social change. Studying collective action aimed at social change is strengthened by a brief review of social movement theory in communication studies, since I am interested in communication factors that promote social change.

Communication scholars have contributed to the study of movements by introducing the rhetorical dimensions present in social movements. These authors situate social movements as a part of a communicative exchange. The conversation among key rhetorical theorist can be said to have begun in the 1950s when Griffin (1952) assigned rhetorical patterns as part of the movements themselves. The social and cultural changes of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s brought with it an interest in studying increasingly radical forms of protest and activism. The new forms of protest rhetoric included verbal and nonverbal communication such as marches, chants, and nonviolent disobedience, and they presented an opportunity to analyze the new forms of social movement actions (Jasper, 2007; Jensen, 2006). This new interest in "rhetoric of the

streets" (Haiman, 1967) subsequently led to questions and definitions relating to rhetoric of confrontation (Cathcart, 1978; Scott & Smith, 1969; Windt, 1972).

The dialogue among rhetorical social movement scholars continues. A number of scholars have focused exclusively on the rhetoric of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, looking at the speeches made by advocates and participants (Burgess, 1968; Cathcart, 1978; Houck & Dixon, 2006; Leff & Utley, 2004). Attention has also been paid to the rhetoric of the more "radical" activist figures, including John Lewis (Pauley, 1998), Malcolm X (Terrill, 2001), and Stokely Carmichael's rhetoric of black power (Stewart, 1997). Studies of previous movements allow me to take inventory of the strategies previously disenfranchised groups used to redress their inequalities, so examining these previous movement studies helps in my understanding of DREAM activism.

In light of my stated interest in how undocumented youth communicate their demands publicly in order to seek passage of the DREAM Act, I focus on strategies as instrumental acts performed in social movements. These important studies situate rhetorical social protest as a bottom-up action (Simons, 1970) by decision-making individuals seeking social change through use of rhetoric of agitation (Bowers & Ochs, 1971). Bowers and Ochs (1971) and their colleagues (Bowers, Ochs, Jensen, & Schulz, 2010) further extended that line of theorizing and provided additional case studies about social protest efforts. Noting that movements of agitation can be said to exist when "(a) people outside the normal decision-making establishment; (b) advocate significant social change; and (c) encounter a high degree of resistance within the establishment such that require more that the normal discursive means of persuasion" (Bowers et al., 2010, p. 4),

this definition helps frame my argument for the DREAM movement as comprised of agitators making choices among the available means of persuasion.

Given the structural limitation faced by undocumented youth who do not have access to legal rights, understanding the types of strategies used and the function of those selected modes of rhetorical protest is important. Bowers et al. (2010) described two major sets of rhetorical strategies. Members of the social movement who engage and address the establishment use strategies of agitation, whereas the establishment uses strategies of control to quell the agitation strategies of the protesters.

Bowers et al. (2010) outlined a successive list of 9 different types of agitation strategies on a continuum. Starting with the most discursive means of social protest, they theorize that if general persuasion does not convince the establishment, petitioning efforts lead to *promulgation* whereby agitators are more public in their attempts to convince others of the rightness of their cause. If activists are not successful using promulgation, then strategies of *solidification* and *polarizing* are used to create in-group unity by reinforcing their sense of identification or attempting to force choices between petitioners and the establishment. The more confrontational strategies of agitation include *non-violent resistance*, *escalation,* and/or *confrontation* based on the use of threats of disruption. *Gandhi* and *guerilla* tactics involve confronting the establishment with a large group of agitators and ends in *revolution*ary war (p. 22). These categories are useful but limiting as sole units of analysis; thus I bring to bear literature that accounts for more than strategic rhetorical practices.

Social movements have been theorized as enabling more than observable phenomena with concrete aspects. Since the 1970s, communication studies have

continued to present a wide range of approaches to understanding social movements (Cox, 1974; McGee, 1983; Simons, 1991). The varying rhetorical elements in social movements are partly to blame for the lack of consensus on how rhetoricians should study social movements (Hahn & Gonchar, 1971). In an attempt to redefine social movements in a nonlinear format, Lucas (1980) worked on the premise that a "social movement is not a material object that exist only in a given place and at a given time, but is a progression of human behavior which must be understood in temporal as well as in spatial terms" (p. 153). These studies reaffirm the difficulty in locating a singular point of analysis that all social movement studies should share.

The communicative dynamics of social movement protests continue to offer approaches relevant to my study of the undocumented immigrant youth movement. McGee (1980) further extended the reach of social movements by noting that social movement are more than a culmination of the actions taken by participants of the movement but, rather, are agitators using rhetoric to shift societal meanings. That concept is extended in the suggestion that social movements should be analyzed for their functions.

Stewart (1980) added an important perspective by assigning rhetoric the agency through which movements are created and enacted. According to Stewart, social movements follow a predictable scheme of functions their rhetoric fulfilled, but are distinguishable by the constraints placed upon the fulfillment of these conditions. Five functions that rhetorical strategies can fulfill are transforming perceptions of history, transforming perceptions of society, prescribing courses of action, mobilizing action, and sustaining the social movement (Stewart, Smith, & Denton, 2007). I draw on relevant

parts of both Bowers and Ochs (1971) and Stewart et al. (2007) as I present the distinctive appeals used during the phases of the undocumented immigrant youth movement.

Rhetorical social movement literature has heavily focused on the external strategies, but studies also have concentrated on the changes protest has on protestors themselves. An important work by Gregg (1971) presented an inward-directed study about ego-function of social movements. Drawing from sociological theory, this perspective attempted to explain how social movements make use of self-addressed rhetoric. Gregg's explanation added the important dimension that social movements protest constitutively contributes to identity formation. Despite critiques from scholars, such as Mitchell (2004) who noted that theory does not account for "more positive and constructive ways" of constituting identity (p. 212), Gregg's line of theorizing opened the avenue for a new approaches. This is notably the case in social movement studies that have focused on identity creation (Campbell, 1999; DeLuca, 1999; Stewart, 1999; Whalen & Hauser, 1995). Despite extensive literature on social movements, there is certainly need for contemporary social movement studies that bring negotiations between creating identity and the political goals of the movement. While I have presented the rhetorical social movement literature in broad strokes, I now turn the focus of my discussion on the pertinent literature divided into four categories. First, I narrow my focus to the rhetoric of Chicana/o social movements, and second, I present the literature that theorizes on youth of color activism, undocumented student advocacy, and cultural citizenship.

Chicano/a Social Movement Rhetoric

In communication studies, there is a small but valuable strand of rhetorical inquiry on the Chicana/o movement. The Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s has been seen as an event that forced an examination of American society from a Latin@ perspective (Stefancic, 1997). Such literature is valuable to my own analysis of Latin@ led organizing. In what follows, I demonstrate how DREAM social movement fits within this body of literature.

The Chicana/o civil rights movement saw widespread political activism for a broad cross section of issues and prompted communication scholars to take note of Chicano rhetoric (Powers, 1973). Richard Jensen and John Hammerback are important scholars who have contributed to the exploration of the influence of the rhetoric of several prominent leaders including César Chávez and Reies Tijerina (Hammerback & Jensen, 1980), José Angel Gutiérrez (Jensen & Hammerback, 1980), and Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales (Jensen & Hammerback, 1982). These works collectively and individually demonstrated the importance of rhetorical discourse, especially in terms of public address, that Chicano leaders used to fuel *el movimiento*. However, concerted emphasis on the identity of leaders in social movements can mean that questions of strategies go unnoticed. Rhetoric of social movement scholarship that centers analysis on prominent leaders presents a limiting approach not applicable to movements lacking a singular leader. Flores and Hasian (1997) contended that analyses of Chicano leaders' rhetoric need to be supplemented by the rhetorical activities of ordinary Chicanos/as, and this is the case with the DREAM movement.

There are additional explorations beyond those focusing on leadership that exist to provide a fuller understanding of Chicana/o movement rhetoric. Scholars have paid attention to rhetorical tropes used in the movement such as poetry (Sedaño, 1980), the functions of "plans" in driving the movement (Delgado, 1995; Hammerback & Jensen, 1994), and the rhetorical creation of martyrs to propel the cause (Jensen, Burkholder, & Hammerback, 2003). Given the pivotal participation of the still active Chicana/o student group Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), Brown Berets, and the Puerto Rican Young Lords political party (Bender & Aoki, 2002), a discussion of their involvement in the movement is justified.

Enck-Wanzer's (2006) work provided an important dimension that is more applicable to my own study of Latin@-centered movements because he investigated the rhetoric of the Young Lords Organization (YLO). The author helped to branch out into studying Latin@s and not just Chicanos by paying particular attention to this Puerto Rican activist group and their 1969 tactical "garbage offensive" protests, used to draw attention to the deteriorating sanitation services in El Barrio of New York. While this strategy was not shown to be successful in terms of members achieving their desired outcome, this demonstration enhances social movement knowledge of how marginalized groups work to craft power through rhetoric.

Rejecting the utility of focusing on any one single rhetorical form, Enck-Wanzer (2006) instead presented the approach of *intersectional rhetoric* as better suited to study social movements. He defined intersectional rhetoric as a "kind of rhetoric wherein one form of discourse is not privileged over another; rather, diverse forms intersect organically to create something challenging to rhetorical norms," bringing about a more

holistic understanding of use of rhetoric for social change (p. 191). These studies provide useful historical and cultural explanations of the various Chicana/o and Latin@ movements; however, in neglecting youth activism, they presented an incomplete explanation. The role of youth in the capacity of students and activists in Latin@ movements has not been fully addressed.

Holling (2008) provided an important contribution by further linking the Latin@ strand of communication scholarship with long-standing Chicana/o literature. She warned that mapping conclusions from "rhetorics produced during highly charged moments to contemporary rhetorical instances…may not provide an accurate portrayal of how Latin@ rhetoric advances itself" (p. 312). Nonetheless, I argue that similar political and social exigencies characterized in the literature of the Chicana/o movements *are* being manifested to some degree in the contemporary immigration-rights movement that I seek to study.

There are additional studies that do not explicitly discuss the Chicana/o movement that are nonetheless relevant to my study. To that end, I take note of studies of vernacular rhetoric as this body of Latin@ rhetorics highlights the communication practices self-produced by marginalized groups, increasing our understandings of social change, rhetorical invention, and strategies that counter dominant logics (Calafell & Delgado, 2004; Holling, 2006; Sowards, 2010; Ono & Sloop, 1995, 2002). Also related to my study are critical inquiries about the complexities of Latin@ immigration (Amaya, 2007a, 2007b; Chávez, 2009b; Demo, 2005, 2007; Flores, 2003; Pineda, 2009).

Even more pertinent are the few studies by communication scholars who have focused on immigration activism specifically (Flores & Hasian, 1997; Holling, 2006;

Ono & Sloop, 2002; Pineda & Sowards, 2007). These works advanced the theorizing on communities speaking out for political inclusion to the polity, but the small quantity demonstrates the need to expand on this area. Other than Anguiano and Chávez (2011), no works yet focus on youth in Latin@ movements, which is surprising considering the burgeoning young generations of Latin@ activism. Hence, I am compelled to turn to the interdisciplinary studies centered on the activism of youth of color.

Youth-of-Color Activism

Existing literature presents a historicized view of the role young people of color have had in the direct-action social change movements of the Civil Rights Movement era. Politically committed youth activists have been shown to be the base and leadership of antiracist movements of the 1960s and 1970s, encompassing a wide agenda that included anti-war, feminist, LGBT, improved education and free-speech efforts. Blumberg (1991) presented historical accounts that demonstrate how representative faces of Black Panthers, Young Lords, and the Brown Berets were the subjects of a mediated effort to present black and brown youth activists as menacing. Acknowledging the endurance of dominant discourses linking youth and race, Hosang (2006) provided evidence of the coordinated efforts of youth organizing as a site of possibility for refashioning hegemonic political discourse. Drawing upon case studies of contemporary youth-led activist groups in urban areas, he conceptualizes the *potential* of advocacy campaigns by youth of color for disrupting ideological terrain.

I draw on scholars invested in countering the negative portrayals of youth of color as “at risk” deviants[21] and instead present studies that spotlight the important work of youth organizing (Kwon, 2008; Valdivia, 2008). Accordingly, Ginwright, Noguera,

Cammarota and (2006) noted that "if U.S. society continues to treat youth—particularly, youth people of color—as potential criminals and undermine their contributions to social justice, then democracy, freedom, and fairness will become wishful ideals in times of increasing disparity and despair" (p. 25). By providing diverse examples of youth (students in particular) taking a leadership role in the fight for social justice work, this study extends work on how youth of color develop a collective capacity to petition for social justice and confront the oppression they face.

Youth activism gained attention in some of the literature that presented these young adults as immersed in civic participation and community involvement and its implication for understanding policy and the role of citizens (Quijada, 2008a). However, examination of different dimensions of activism by youth of color remains a largely underdeveloped area. I seek to show how DREAM Activism exists within a wider context where young people of color take ownership of issues salient to them through means of political action (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007). Specifically, I use the next section to present the studies that have documented the role of non-citizen youth as active social agents who are at the forefront of the fight for social change.

Undocumented Student-Led Organizing

There is a wider range of articles that have explored the varying forces and responses about undocumented immigrant youth. Many of these studies look at the broader issue of the laws that affect higher education access (Dougherty, Nienhusser, & Vega, 2010; Guarneros et al., 2009; Reich & Barth, 2010). Much of the attention regarding undocumented students and higher education has revolved around the financial barriers of going to college (Frum, 2007; Gonzales, 2007; Perry, 2006), potential for

success based on patterns of adaptation and assimilation (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Zhou, 1997), and educational attitude and drive (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

The literature has also discussed how undocumented youth endure challenges in terms of their mental, psychological, and emotional health because of lack of access combined with the added stress associated with the fear of deportation and separation from family members (Jauregui, Slate, & Brown, 2008; Lopez, 2004; Yoshikawa, Godfrey, & Rivera, 2008). While these studies are important, these limiting depictions often paint undocumented students as helpless victims or as unable to succeed without acculturating to mainstream culture. I do not mean to dismiss the tangible reality of added risks or material barriers these students face, but as proposed in this study, I also attend to important feature of strategic resistance to these obstacles and challenges.

Immigrant youth involvement in activism and community building has gained some attention in the last several years (Abrego, 2006, 2008; Gonzales, 2008a, 2008b; Quijada, 2008b; Seif, 2004; Vélez et al., 2008). While the concept of resiliency is presented in research of DREAM-eligible students, these studies focused on academic achievement (Morales et al., 2009; Olivas, 2004; Pérez et al., 2009). Bloemraad (2006) suggested that 1.5-generation immigrant children "are particularly apt to become leaders of community-based organizations because of the advocacy work they do for their families at a very young age" (pp. 192-193). This may explain why up to a million children and teenagers participated in the 2006 immigrant-rights marches (Bloemraad & Trost, 2008). This handful of studies deviates from the analysis of risks faced by immigrant youth and instead report how a contingency of Latin@ youth are making claims for citizenship through means of collective organizing and creating a broad

coalition of participation (Abrego, 2006; Gonzales, 2008a, 2008b; Gonzales, 2009; Quijada, 2008a, 2008b; Seif, 2004). That such large numbers of undocumented students are engaged in activism is unusual. Gonzales (2008a) stated, "community activity at such a high level by a group of young adults expected to be waiting in the shadows runs contrary to conventional wisdom and much of the scholarly literature regarding youth participation" attributed to the risks of political engagement (p. 235). While it may be contrary to "conventional wisdom," DREAMers are not obstructed by age or status from being in the front lines of efforts to demand immigration reform.

Fewer yet are the researchers who have explored the larger impact political and social constraints have had on undocumented students' college experiences (Pérez, 2009; Rincón, 2008). Pérez and Rincón serve as exceptions; they have each published books that provide in-depth explanations of the ways undocumented students face escalating attacks by vigilante forces and draconian governmental legislations, yet are acting with courage by continuing to say "*Sí se puede*." Rincón (2008) in particular painted a picture of historical events that have affected undocumented students and critiqued immigration debates revolving around the question of whether immigrants help or hurt the country economically. While, Rincón's contribution to this scholarship lies in her advancement of the view that student advocacy is best served when framed in the context of social justice and human dignity, she presented a limited picture of the extent of DREAM activism.

Also noteworthy is the study collectively written by undocumented students themselves, such as by the Students Informing Now (SIN Collective, 2007), a student organization created at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The article of how this

student-led campus group came to be shows how collective organizing efforts are vehicles that make it possible for undocumented students to become involved in the growing youth-led movement. An additional study about the Students Informing Now group at the University of California argued that undocumented students are not just constructing counternarratives in theory, but *living* counternarratives. Leaders of this organization formed SIN to work toward educational justice and immigrant rights, are exemplified as constructing organic counternarratives driven primarily by their grassroots actions and lived experiences (Dominguez et al., 2009). DREAM activists have shown themselves to be very involved in the discourse that is being produced about them. Their motto of "undocumented and unafraid" serves as a testament to their willingness to embrace being undocumented despite the hostile climate as tactic to further their advocacy endeavors. Resistance that emanates from a space of marginality makes the next section of cultural citizenship an important body of work to reference.

Cultural Citizenship

Another strand of relevant literature to which I seek to contribute pertains to the notion of cultural citizenship. Increasing protests about new immigration laws, beginning in 2006, have prompted scholars and the media to give more attention to Latin@ immigrants generally (Baker-Cristales, 2009; Bloemraad & Trost, 2008, Chávez, 2008). Flores and Benmayor (1997) proposed that cultural citizenship encompasses "a broad range of activities of everyday life through which Latin@s and other groups claim space in society and eventually claim rights" (p. 15). Collective and conscious participation in the public sphere is discussed as an articulation of cultural citizenship. Specifically, political protests are recognized as expressions of disobedience that give voice to

undocumented immigrant bodies that have been constructed as outside the purview of legal rights otherwise (Sandoval & Tomas, 2008).

The notions of *citizen* and *noncitizen* are important concepts to this study as the enacted policies construct and demarcate who can be included in and excluded from national membership. The notion of citizenship has become highly contested, and scholars have further problematized the "narrow notion of citizenship as a set of legal rights" (Bosniak, 2002, p. 2). This led several scholars to argue that the concept of citizenship, as it now exists, needs to be redefined and broadened to include the various forms of belonging that exist. Bosniak (2000) discussed citizenship as more than a legal status, including its possibility as a political activity, a distinct set of rights, or as a form of collective identity and sentiment.

The effort to highlight the commitment to civic equality and notions of citizenship has been extended by scholars who subscribe to the concept of cultural citizenship (Benmayor, 2002; Delgado Bernal, Aleman, & Carmona, 2008; Hurtado, 2003, Moreno, 2008; Seif, 2004). Rosaldo (1994) defined cultural citizenship as "the right to be different and to belong in a participatory democratic sense" (p. 402). Further, he argued that not having full-bodied citizenship does not take away from the cultural value of those who "perform" citizenship in every sense of the word.

At the crux of my study are the undocumented immigrant youth using rhetorical social protest to make claims of belonging *irrespective* of formal or official status but, rather, *for* formal, official status. The studies on cultural citizenship are important to the perspective that unauthorized immigrants partially offset imposed restrictions of status by civic engagement. Through an analysis of Latin@ undocumented immigrant vernacular

voices, I address how individuals, who are already enacting cultural citizenship, seek to extend their participation into legal citizenship as well.

With the exception of Anguiano and Chavez (2011), and Pineda and Sowards (2007), few communication scholars have seen activism as a relevant topic in approaching the concept of cultural citizenship. Despite the potential of cultural acts as means of reclaiming membership, Anguiano and Chávez (2011) evidence the failures of cultural citizenship in its applicability to the ultimate goals of DREAM Activists. Through an analysis of Latin@ undocumented immigrant vernacular voices, the authors highlight that despite DREAMers enacting cultural citizenship, this remains an inadequate means of countering the formal and institutional structures that deprive them of tangible rights.

Pineda and Sowards discuss the 2006 marches against the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, H.R 4437, a bill that would have made unauthorized immigration a federal offense. Pineda and Sowards showed how the protestors who took to the streets were trying at the same time to embrace their cultural heritage in using Mexican flags as well as asserting their place in American citizenship by waving the flag of the US. The visual image of the Mexican flag, which was viewed negatively by anti-immigrant groups, served to express unity in heritage and display pride. This study ultimately illustrates the limits of cultural citizenship as an agentic resource for those without legal citizenship. Moreover, cultural citizenship complicates the traditional conception of inclusion in the national body of the United States, where the political culture frames membership as a legal right, complicating the discussion of DREAM activists as *de facto citizens*.

Key to this section is the literature that has discussed the extent to which the Latin@ community (documented or not) is participating in the ongoing effort to expand the meaning and practice of citizenship through their activism (Oboler, 2006). While the literature has illuminated the political mobilization and active roles and organizing, legal status still presents a serious challenge to the political mobilization of non-citizens whether in the realm of labor issues or electoral politics (Varsanyi, 2006). Next, I discuss the Latin@ Critical Race theoretical frame and its applicability to my discussion of undocumented youth, including a discussion of students' agency against dominant oppressions.

Theoretical Framework

Centering DREAM Movement in Latino/a Critical Race Theory

I now turn to the ways in which LatCrit literature intersects and provides an ideal lens through which to focus on the sociopolitical and historical forces that undergird the mobilization of Latin@ youth organizing. LatCrit is a contemporary theoretical framework that serves as a conceptual tool when dealing with issues of race. Allied with Critical Race Theory, LatCrit theorists share in the perspective on the socially constructed nature of race and of racism as being a normalized everyday occurrence (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It extends that work by calling attention to the ways in which conventional and even critical approaches to race and civil rights ignore unique problems of the Latin@ community.[22]

I draw on LatCrit scholarship because it calls attention to the legal system for allowing harmful legal rules and doctrines that are pertinent to the general immigrant Latin@ community and undocumented students in particular. According to LatCrit

scholars Delgado Bernal (2002), Gomez (1998b), and Solórzano (1998), LatCrit is built on the premises outlined below:

1. To challenge laws and policies as internally inconsistent and fundamentally unjust while seeking to counter dominant ideologies.
2. To espouse a commitment to social justice and academic activism; acknowledging inequities in the law, educational and other social realms are but the first step in advocating for change to occur at the micro and macro aspects of society.
3. To emphasize the need for an augmented focus of intersectionality and Latin@ identity, by avoiding essentialism of this pan-ethnic collective.
4. To emphasize experiential knowledge that allows researchers to highlight the experiences of students of color as holders and creators of knowledge (Delgado Bernal, 2002, pp. 109-110).

These tenants are important because they point to the need for social movement scholars to address the racism faced by the Latin@ community. LatCrit's agenda extend to issues "ignored by critical race theorists such as language, immigration ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype and sexuality" (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001, p. 311). Focusing on how racism affects immigration is a productive addition to this study, as the DREAM movement consists of youth of color aiming to resist the sanctioned immigration laws in the US.

LatCrit theorizes the ways in which immigration status is manipulated in public discourse, such as pitting minorities against each other as competing for resources and pushing the idea of immigrants as the "enemy within" (Arriola, 1998; Garcia, 2003;

Johnson, 2002, 2004). An important contribution of LatCrit has been the explicit focus on intersections of oppression that comes from multiple parts of identity, including ethnicity, culture, nationality, and language issues experienced by the participants of this study. For example, in arguing that race is a central issue in the immigration history of the US, LatCrit scholars who analyze the social construction of immigration status have defined as *racist* any nativism specifically directed toward immigrants, whether actual or perceived (Pérez Huber et al., 2008). This discrimination that exists on the basis of status underscores the remarkable courage it takes for undocumented people to engage in public advocacy (Johnson, 1996; Rincón, 2005).

LatCrit theory highlights the marginalization and barriers that undocumented college students face but that does not render them defenseless. This framework acknowledges that while educational and legal institutions disadvantage undocumented Latin@ (Pérez Huber & Malagon, 2007), undocumented youth can and do resist and challenge these structural struggles. LatCrit studies have examined the possibilities of student resistance, and I seek to extend an understanding of how direct activism challenges the racist nativist framings experienced by undocumented youth of color. The central utility of these LatCrit studies that would not have been uncovered without use of this lens is the prevailing tensions that position undocumented youth as both constrained within nativist racism and able challenge the oppressive policies of that racism (Pérez Huber, 2009). This essential premise guides my understanding of how and why the participants in DREAM social movement express and deploy rhetorical strategies for social transformation.

I also utilize LatCrit concepts to discuss the notion of agency as it relates to my study. As Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) pointed out, “the story of today’s immigrant children is not complete without reference to their consciousness and agency” (pp. 117-118). This important vein of work focuses on the empowering potential and unique capital from community cultural wealth of students of color that typically goes unacknowledged (Yosso, 2005). Pérez Huber (2009) extended Yosso’s work by reflecting on and adding to an understanding of how undocumented youth utilize the rich forms of capital available to them to survive, resist, and navigate higher education while simultaneously challenging racist nativist discourses.

Although I focus primarily on active, explicit forms of activism, it is important to note there are also other types of youth-directed activism that are important and necessary. Delgado Bernal (1998) discussed the participation of women in the East LA Blowouts, giving a gendered analysis and introducing a new leadership paradigm. Her study served to expand the categories of community activism to be inclusive of Chicana participants. These studies offer the idea of transformational resistance that is an ultimate goal of most social movements. Furthermore, LatCrit argues that students of color use agency to rally against injustices by providing the notion of transformational resistance as a political, conscious, collective way in which students enact their internal and external resistance (Fernandez, 2002; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). They aided in the understanding of *internal* and *external* forms of resistance necessary for immigrant communities to engage in political action and address larger aims of liberation from dominant oppression. These studies are meaningful to this research about how youth of color became involved in political resistance, and they focus

on struggles of Latin@ youth for social justice issues in their schools and communities. Insufficient focus has been given to direct public acts of social protest, the focus of my particular study of the DREAM Act.

Lastly, it is relevant to address the concern raised about how LatCrit fits within the literature of social movements. LatCrit theory inherently discusses key areas salient to activists (Johnson & Martinez, 1998); however, there is little explicit focus on social movements (Aoki & Johnson, 2008) or direct attention to community-based movements or socio-political movements. Given that the focus of LatCrit is on social change (Valdes, 2009),[23] LatCrit works well to address significant aspects regarding my research questions. Since this body of scholarship finds its roots in a long tradition of Chicana/o activism and scholarship, it will be useful to show the ways in which undocumented youth confront and challenge these issues. By building on the work of LatCrit immigration theorists, my study extends this discussion by adding to the knowledge of undocumented youth grassroots activism.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of literature and a discussion of the theoretical framework that will be important to the analysis and discussion chapters to come. I have included a discussion of the broad context of immigration that incorporated the macro aspects of the phenomenon. I then engaged the literature as it pertains to the communication study of social movements paying particular attention to the rhetoric of Chicana/o movement, and youth activism, by citizens and non-citizens alike. Lastly, I posed the general tenets of my theoretical framework that allows me to examine activism. Taken together these diverging bodies of literature yield a significant contribution to how

scholars are negotiating the complex dynamics of immigration for the purpose of analysis. This review informs the methodological choices of this study, which are explained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

"Why am I compelled to write? Because the writing saves me from this complacency I fear. Because I have no choice. Because I must keep the spirit of my revolt and myself alive. Because the world I create in the writing compensates for what the real world does not give me. By writing I put order in the world, give it a handle so I can grasp it. I write because life does not appease my appetites and hunger. I write to record what others erase when I speak, to rewrite the stories others have miswritten about me, about you." (Anzaldúa, 1983, p.169)

The complete story of the undocumented immigrant youth movement is not an easy one to tell; it is not yet complete but in its prime. It is a complex social movement made up of differing pieces. There is the story as told by a rhetorical scholar, an account put together using historical events and secondary textual accounts to give a much-needed picture of the chronological progression of the movement and its communication strategies. Then there is the story told directly by the participants of the movement, individuals who own the rights to that story by virtue of their lived experiences, which brings a descriptive picture to the events that shaped the movement and adds important details that cannot be captured by secondary texts alone.

Yet, a third component comes from my interpretative lens as an academic scholar functioning *within* the movement. That personal reflection of my participation in the movement brings the added perspective of someone who has informally tracked and monitored the movement since its inception. My experiential knowledge as a Mexican-born immigrant has positioned me to be exposed to the issue of legal status that has been salient in my own home, my schools, and my community. My role as a former undocumented youth and invested activist in the movement brings a distinctive dimension to the study.

Each piece produces a unique (but partial) way of narrating and unraveling the decade-long struggle for legal citizenship. To fully appreciate the development of this organized campaign and the significance of the rhetorical strategies used for social change means capturing what it has been like to be there from the beginning. It also means encouraging readers to consider the lived reality of the actors in this social movement story.

Despite this resolve to offer as complete a picture as possible of DREAM activism, I found myself grappling with a nagging question once I sat down to write. *So which one is it today? Which story will I tell today?* The answer would differ as I struggled with the tensions of balancing my authorial voice. The sense of anxiety about authorial voice, after compiling nearly nine hundred pages of data, was not about scholarly rigor. I had resolved to bring all of those accounts into the analysis, fully aware that no matter my diligence and care, not everything could be captured into the pages. So that was not my concern. My main concerns were about my commitment to represent accurately this social movement. And so, that internal voice would also ask, *who are you writing for today?*

The writing process ironically proved to mirror the very themes my dissertation set out to address. In talking about issues of voice and identity in the movement, I was coming to terms with my own sense of identity and voice and how those affected the resulting analysis. I wondered why participating in the activist-centered fieldwork of DREAM activism came with so much more ease than writing about it. I had been keenly aware of the tensions of role switching during my fieldwork and had navigated my multiple layers of involvement fairly well. I *knew* the movement, so what was hindering

me from *presenting* what I *knew*? Writing is supposed be easier when you have something to say, and that was the thing I had in surplus. With all I had to say, writing should have come effortlessly, but it was almost as if I had *too* much to say, and saying it mattered so much to me that my heightened investment had the opposite effect when it came to putting it down on paper.

It is not easy to make these admissions, but these are the very tensions my methodological framework demands that I grapple with. I am meant to reveal and critically reflect on the parts of scholarly production that do not usually make it into the final manuscript. Should I not be equally as willing to share with my readers the personal information I had asked of my participants? I had to genuinely engage in the contradicting interests of portraying the movement, presenting my commitments to it, and considering how DREAMers would read my interpretations.

So, I sat at my computer hampered by these thoughts, frustrated by an aspiration to live up to the accountability of the people with whom I had worked, with whom I had built relationships. This was not about an elevated feeling of importance as a scholar, but about addressing the motives behind conducting the analysis. At the crux of my research was a stringent responsibility beyond the scholarly conventions of academia and to the people implicated in this study. *Does it resonate with them*? I had to be explicit about answering this question by choosing a research process committed to seeing the movement as made up of more than rhetorical artifacts. To account for these issues of personal involvement, commitment to those in the movement, and scholarly interests, my analysis incorporates a focus on the moments of tensions caused by playing researcher and activist simultaneously.

Finally, as I thought I was ready to begin writing, one last question emerged. *Will this change anything?* That demand was the most intimidating of all. This question carried a responsibility to go beyond documenting ten years of young people fighting for social justice. In a move beyond what is required of social movement studies, I wanted to help effect that social change with my work. I sought both a theoretical understanding of the movement and a desire for direct political engagement. I look to the piece of paper framed on my wall above my computer desk. It is a quote from Ann Lamott's (1995) book, *Bird by Bird*, written in black marker so I could easily turn to it when that familiar writing block freezes my fingers at the keyboard.

> Against all odds, you have put it down on paper, so that it won't be lost. And who knows? Maybe what you've written will help others, will be a small part of the solution. You don't even have to know how or in what way, but if you are writing the clearest, truest words you can find and doing the best you can to understand and communicate it, this will shine on paper like its own lighthouse. (p. 235)

Somehow, remembering that quotation expels the fear of putting this account down on paper and releases my anxiety. I hope the following sections ring true to my goal of bringing attention to the grassroots efforts of a community that has been systematically marginalized from the dominant discourse. Above all, what this study aims to offer is a modest contribution to helping counteract the silencing of undocumented youth.

With that in mind, I use this chapter to provide a detailed explanation of my research design. I start with a general explanation of my proposed activist methodology

and therein discuss the guiding assumptions behind, my role as researcher in, and the ethics relevant to my project. I go on to describe my research sites and to give an account of the data-collection methods. Lastly, I provide an explanation of how I analyzed my data.

Guiding Dimensions of Activist Methodology

The purpose of my dissertation research is to focus on the social protests of undocumented students on behalf of the DREAM Act. My interest in the DREAM Act legislation and organizing efforts clearly preceded this dissertation project. Because this project evolved from a vested interest in the social justice work involved in and a personal affiliation with the movement, I use analytical tools consistent with an activist methodology. In this section, I briefly describe the activist research approach and the applicability it has to my research.

Activist research purposefully departs from the traditional research framework and conceptualizes political work as centered in the research process (Hale, 2006). There are a number of interpretive strands of work that have already called for situated knowledge production bridged with action. These scholars encourage indigenous, standpoint, queer, feminist, borderland, postcolonial, critical race, and performance methodologies that include a critique of the notion of objectivity and encourage political subjectivity (e.g., Anzaldúa, 1987,[24] 1990; Collins, 2000; Denzin, Lincoln & Smith, 2008; Fine, 1994; Foley & Valenzuela, 2005; Madison, 2005; Sandoval, 2000; Speed, 2006; Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999). Similarly, activist methodology is an interpretive framework with distinguishing demarcations that come from a research process

characterized by loyalties to an organized group engaged in political struggle combined with rigorous academic analysis.

Scholarship with dual commitments may seem contradictory given that they are not really compatible with one another. Hale (2006) noted that the "successful" end results are judged in starkly different terms in the academy and in social organizing and activism. However, from its inception, these tensions are not framed as counter-productive, but on the contrary, are seen as constructive to the research process (Hale, 2008; Pulido, 2008). The case for this analytical frame is its potential to "create knowledge that is at once empirically grounded, theoretically valuable, and contributes to the ongoing struggle for greater social justice" as well as future activist research projects (Speed, 2006, p.75). An activist methodology, as I use it in this study, incorporates a particular sense of positionality, accountability, and commitment.

Positionality

The subscription to activist research framework represents an explicit affirmation of dual commitments to both the academic system and the participants situated in political struggles. Reflexivity as a practice is important when the research/study is concerned with issues of power (Madison, 2005). The activist framework makes it necessary to share information about myself and my own lived experiences and the reason for conducting the research in the first place. Thus, in this study I interweave my self-reflections and interrogations of the ways my personal experiences shaped my research efforts. Accordingly, this allows me to insert my personal voice and experience as an undocumented student. This also means revealing my driving orientation as

someone first immersed in the goals of the social movements, who then came to academia specifically to examine and improve such social change efforts.

Accountability

Another aspect of the project of activist scholarship is a rooted desire to advocate for institutional change. This desire makes it appropriate to incorporate a more collaborative approach between my participants and myself as part of the research design. I am accountable to movement participants as well as to my own positionality and to academic expectations and standards. I take this concept to mean that I am also responsible to issues of ethics, as the questions of accountability is about how my study benefit the participants as well as myself, and am I taking personal responsibility for the answers that emerge (Tuhiwai-Smith, 2005).

Accountability also means that I hold a particular view of the participants in my study. Rather than seeing the participants as "subjects," this methodology rejects the hermeneutical view of researcher as expert and instead validates and honors experience-based knowledge (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). Suitably, I came into the relationships with my participants with full knowledge they were fully capable of theorizing about the movement without the imposition of academic process. It was precisely with this humble perspective that I sought to examine and understand as well as make myself available to the movement.

The effort to include the feedback of movement participants was an ongoing part of the accountability that informed my methodological approach (Speed, 2008). I made efforts to privilege the preferences of participants with regard to names, for example. I made certain to inquire about how to feature their participation in the movement and to

record their preference of full name, first name, or pseudonym. I also collaborated with participants by creating a chronological outline of DREAM activism that characterized the activism efforts of a variety of groups and individuals. From this snapshot that reflected (more or less) a comprehensive timeline of events, I captured the detailed accounts of how organizing had progressively unfolded according to my data. I was driven by a sense of responsibility to the movement's leadership to include their perspective of what would be key to feature in the analysis. I sent them a draft and welcomed input so my account would be inclusive, and I did not inadvertently miss any specific details someone felt belonged in this analysis.

Commitment

A key part of what makes activist research work is a sustained commitment to the work being studied (Guajardo, Guajardo, & del Carmen Casaperalta, 2008). For social movement activist scholars, this means working to bridge the academia and the cause by presenting findings to the stakeholders of the movement. Research efforts, then, do not end with the completion of the research. Bevington and Dixon (2005) challenged scholars to remain in dialogue with the participants by noting, "If one's goal is to create movement-relevant scholarship, it is crucial to examine how one's work is received by activists" (p. 199). These priorities call for a focus on matters of relevance to the movements themselves—not to be conflated with uncritical adulation—by aiming for explanations of crucial strategic questions and broader movement concerns. Activist methodology by no means presents a perfect formula for balancing academic and political activities, but it does require the researcher to keep a foot in both worlds and to continually be attentive to the expectations of both sets of colleagues.

Description of Research Sites, Participants, and Methods

I came into this study with previous warning that studying movements currently underway would not be an easy feat, since social movements and protest events are comprised of multiple units of analysis (Jasper, 2007). To account for this complexity, I used qualitative fieldwork.[25] My data comes from several sources: from the resulting notes from my participation in the movement, personal interviews of DREAM activists, and relevant secondary activism accounts. I use this section to expand on the interplay between these three sources of data as effective means for answering my research questions. I also describe the organizations within which I collected my data.

Participant Observation

First, as a participant observer, I engaged in and initiated organizing events to further the aim and goals of the movement. In order to limit my observations to those most appropriate to my research objectives, I participated in a number of events to petition for the DREAM Act legislation. From January-November 2010, I logged a total of 400 hours of direct participation in DREAM-activist centered actions and activities.

The field notes gathered through participant observation generated my main source of data. I tracked what I was "observing, participating, interrogating, listening, and communicating" through my embodied participation (Madison, 2005, p. 87).[26] Due to my activist commitments, this method was an ideal way to directly and consistently engage in activist events and elicit and generate more detailed, contextualized findings than would be feasible by just conducting interviews alone.

I was a direct participant in a variety of DREAM Act activities, events, and protests including marches, rallies, press conferences, lobbying events, teach-ins,

demonstrations, civil disobedience direct actions, and mock graduations, to name a few. I also participated in organizing efforts that included, but were not limited to: conference calls, meetings, training workshops, fundraisers, vigils, film screenings, legislative trainings, and a number of informal social events around the DREAM social movement. Knowing that social movements consist of numerous groups, individuals, and organizations, my participant observation was not limited to one site or location.

Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Between January 2010 and May 2011, much of my participation and self-initiated protest activities were centered in the state of New Mexico. Participation in immigrant-rights activism was possible through my participation in El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos (El Centro) at the University of New Mexico, where I was a doctoral student. El Centro, founded in November 2005, is one of New Mexico's vital resources for immigrants at the University of New Mexico.[27] It is currently the only Latin@ immigrants-rights organization based in Albuquerque and serves as an independent, autonomous project of Enlace Comunitario, a pro-immigrant, service-based organization. As of July 2009, El Centro legally separated from Enlace Comunitario and incorporated as an independent non-profit agency in order to respond to the broader needs of and institutional changes identified by the Latin@ immigrant community (El Centro, n.d.).

Since its independent incorporation, the El Centro staff has worked tirelessly "to educate the Latin@ immigrant community about rights, to change and preserve pro-immigrant policies, and create a space in which the community can participate in social change" (El Centro, n.d.). Currently managed by Rachel Lazar, this non-profit shares office space and collaborates with Mujeres de Acción, an economic development

cooperative made up of Spanish-speaking immigrant women who gather funds to support domestic violence victims through revenues from selling tamales to local Albuquerque shops.

El Centro's programs focus on various issues salient to the immigrant community including: (a) the *Civil Rights Project,* designed to inform the community about their general rights; (b) A leadership initiative to invest in the development of current and future staff; (c) an immigrants rights hotline and information center to disseminate accurate information about a wide variety of topics relevant to immigrants; and (d) a youth organizing project. Personally, I gravitated to the organization more specifically because of the presence of the active Youth Organizing Project. My point of entry into this group was Adriana Ontiveros, who founded and has spearheaded the Albuquerque Dreamers in Action (ADA) since March 2009. ADA is comprised of about 12 active members who attend different Albuquerque high schools and meet bi-weekly to brainstorm and carry out events in support of the DREAM Act. Despite this group's recent inception, they already have been pivotal in lobbying New Mexico congressional leaders.

Much of my participation revolved around various local events with ADA, including meetings, lobbying events, mural painting, training events, vigils, council meetings, and other events generally hosted by El Centro. I also attended national events with El Centro including the March for America: Change Takes Courage gathering in Washington DC and lobbying event from March 21-24, 2010. I was also part of the delegation Southwest Movement Building Direct Action Training in Nevada, April 10 through 11, 2010.

With assistance from El Centro in terms of both finances and personnel, I spearheaded some of the coordinated efforts to host the first annual Dream Conference at the University of New Mexico, held May 4 through 6, 2010. This event was cosponsored by various organizations aiming to educate the public about the DREAM Act and its implications, while at the same time, starting discussions about the issue on campus, in the community, and at the state level. As part of the core planning committee, my weekly participation included observations as an active member at weekly brainstorming/planning meetings, writing grants, helping with publicity, and participating in the logistics of a variety of other events. In addition to these face-to-face interactions, I also participated in e-mail/social networking site correspondence and conference-call conversations. In June 2010, I also worked with El Centro in planning to stage a demonstration at Senator Udall's office to push for his co-sponsorship of the DREAM Act, efforts that resulted in securing the support of both New Mexico senators.

Los Angeles, California.

DREAM Act organizing has a long-standing history in California, as the state boasts numerous DREAM focused organizations (UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education, 2008a, 2008b). There are two main organizations in California where I collected data: (1) California DREAM Network (CDNT) from Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA); and (2) DREAM Team Los Angeles (DTLA). In May 2010, I relocated to California, so a second phase of involvement with the movement occurred there.

CHIRLA is an immigrant-rights non-profit organization with a dedicated youth component called Wise-Up! Immigrant Youth Leadership Development. Staff member

Hector Arroyo has been with CHIRLA working since the 2001 inception of the group to provide training and mobilization of young Southern California activists. I joined CHIRLA on several events, including a lobbying event at Senator McCain's office and a march for the National Day of Action Against S.B. 1070 Action in Phoenix, AZ from May 28 through 29, 2010.

CHIRLA also has a subset youth competent called California Dream Network (CDNT). Led by youth organizer Maria Rodriguez, this statewide network was one of the first efforts to bring active youth together to advocate for immigration reform. Since 2007 this group has existed and emerged to bring college campus organizations together to address undocumented student issues and work to create broader social change around immigration reform and access to higher education (CDNT, n.d.).[28] I met Maria in April at an organizing event in Nevada and became acquainted with the longstanding efforts of the work of CA Dream Network which is carried out through a number of ways including: (a) college campus organizing; (b) youth empowerment trainings; (c) community outreach; (d) statewide conference calls; (e) regional Dream Network meetings; and (f) bi-annual statewide conferences (CDNT, n.d.).

Thirdly, I participated in California events hosted by the DREAM Team of Los Angeles (DTLA). This Los Angeles-based organization is a collaborative combination of various organizations and individuals committed to working on the passage of the DREAM Act. The group seeks "to create a space where undocumented immigrant youth become empowered through education and shared experiences, and develop as efficient advocates for their rights and those of the larger immigrant community" (DTLA, n.d.). This coalition of dozens of organizations in the greater Los Angeles area is composed of

both undocumented students and supporters working towards the enactment of the bill.[29] I attended several events hosted by the group, including the Sit in Civil Disobedience and Press Conference at Senator Feinstein's office in Santa Monica on May 24, 2010, DTLA Hunger Strike DREAM LA Hunger Strike Vigil on August 8, 2010, and DREAM Act Town Hall on August 19, 2010.

My collaboration in California was also possible through my position as media liaison with the second annual Tour de Dreams coalitional effort on August 9 through 21, 2010. My participation in this event allowed me to communicate with DREAM groups from across the entire California region. This event was made up of 34 students from various California colleges and universities who rode 540 miles from the University of California Berkeley to the University of California Los Angeles.[30]

Online and National Networks

The DREAM social movement has been propelled through the creation of self-directed organizations established and maintained for the purpose of advocating for the DREAM Act. Accordingly, I obtained my data from the following organizations (1) United We DREAM (UWD); (2) Dream Activist;[31] and (3) The DREAM is Coming Project. I spend a great deal of time in the chapters to come describing the development of these sites, but use this section to give a brief and broad overview of the goals and mission of each of these organizations.

The group UWD has loosely existed since 2006 as a collaborative endeavor to support immigrant-right equality. By 2009, the organization prominently featured the undocumented student experience by establishing a unified community of volunteer-run

undocumented immigrant-youth organizing nationwide. The members of UWD define themselves as follows:

> As a national immigrant youth-led organization, the mission of the UWD Network is to achieve equal access to higher education for all people, regardless of immigration status. We aim to address the inequities and obstacles faced by immigrant youth and to develop a sustainable, grassroots movement, led by immigrant youth, documented and undocumented, and children of immigrants. We use leadership development, organizing, policy advocacy, alliance building, training and capacity building to pursue our mission at the local, state and national levels. We believe that *all individuals and organizations that wish to be a part of our collective effort can contribute,* and can do so in their own way. By acting and leading collectively we can build a movement toward the mission we wish to accomplish. (UWD, 2010a)

The goals of UWD include: (a) building power through local, regional, national convenings and leadership development opportunities; (b) providing the tools and resources to immigrant youth leaders to organize and grow their movement at every level; (c) creating meaningful alliances with other national immigrant and education rights organizations and making sure there is a voice for immigrant youth at the national level; (d) strengthening the internal structure of UWD as an emerging institution; (e) strengthening anchor organizations of UWD; and (f) supporting emerging groups and providing capacity where organizing is needed but non-existent. UWD now boasts a National Coordinating Committee (NCC) that serves as the coordinating body for the 31 affiliates across the various regions of the country (UWD, 2010a). Some of the notable

organizing efforts of UWD are the National Coming Out Week from March 15 through 21, 2010, involving "out of the shadows" parties, rallies, and marches. I participated in DREAM events with this organization as a volunteer at the DREAM University Teach-In in Washington DC, July 19 through 21, 2010.

A second organization from which I obtained a considerable amount of data is the Dream Activist website. Functioning mostly online, the Dream Activist leadership has been directly responsible for featuring the wide spectrum of activities that have occurred since student advocacy coalesced around the Act. During the 2009-2010 campaign for the DREAM Act, dreamactivist.org served as the national website for the efforts. The network is defined as "a multicultural, migrant youth-led, social media hub for the movement to pass the DREAM Act and pursue the enactment of other forms of legislation that aim to mend the broken immigration system" (Dream Activist, n.d.).

The website serves as an important site for resources, information, and communication among undocumented students and allies across the United States; it is owned and operated by undocumented students only. Dream Activist is considered the national link to all DREAM organizations; the site offers aid to communities and individuals all over the country who use the site to come together and find new ways to achieve the passage of the DREAM Act and other pro-migrant reforms.

Dreamactivist.org describes its short- and long-term goals as follows: (a) get students out of the shadows and get them connected with immigration support groups in their local areas; (b) establish a strong and resilient DREAM bloggers network; (c) provide an online support and action group for undocumented students and allies across the United States; (d) act as a resource medium—the ultimate "DREAM" directory on the

web; (e) work with the broader immigrant-rights movement and the pro-migrant blogosphere in getting the DREAM Act passed; (f) establish a base for DREAM Act students and organizations to aid students after the DREAM Act is passed; and (g) work to get comprehensive immigration reforms and LGBT Immigration legislation (Dream Activist, n.d.). I corresponded extensively with members of this organization when planning DREAM Act-related demonstrations in New Mexico that were featured on the national website. I interacted with core board members of the site while at the Mass Mobilization March and Rally in Washington DC, July 20 through 21, 2010.

The third and newest organization that played a role in my dissertation data collection was the DREAM is Coming project. This alliance was officially launched on May 17, 2010, to create escalation actions to push the DREAM Act forward to a stand-alone vote. The DREAM is Coming was designed as a civil disobedience project comprised of founders and leaders from the following groups: Dream Team LA, ONE Michigan, Kansas Missouri Dream Alliance, and Immigrant Youth Justice League; it is coordinated by dreamactivist.org. The DREAM is Coming individuals define themselves as follows:

> We are compelled by our frustration and the fierce urgency of our dreams to act as agents of our destinies and be the catalysts for a future in which we are empowered, mobilized, and living with the dignity we deserve. We are a group of undocumented youth who have worked for years on a path to legalization. We are at a point in our movement where radical action has become necessary for ourselves and our communities. (Dream Activist, n.d.)

The DREAM is Coming serves to bring attention to the civil disobedience actions across the states by featuring nonviolent protest actions on the Dream Activist website.

Unlike organizational campaigns, social movements are made up of varying organizations as most do not "contain one supreme leader who controls the movement, appeal to single target audience, have a carefully defined and identifiable membership, or strive to attain a single goal through the employment of one persuasive strategy" (Stewart et al., 2007, p.7).[32] While the particular groups in which I participated have been key to the social movement for passage of the DREAM Act and more general pro-immigrant efforts, important to note is that these groups are but a few of the many that exist to advocate for DREAM-Act legislation.

Interviews

Interviews were another key part of the research method that allowed me to answer my research questions. In their most basic form, in-depth interviews are tools that allow the researcher to capture a life story through the use of closed and open questions. Whether interviews are formal or informal, they promote a level of self-disclosure that is valuable for the researcher seeking to better understand a particular phenomenon (Mason, 2002). Thus, qualitative interviews were clearly a useful approach to incorporate my participants' direct voices. I use this method as it works in tandem with the method of participant observation that I described above.

I conducted official interviews with student activists who had extensive organizing and leadership positions in organizations committed to the passage of the DREAM Act. I chose to interview prominent DREAM activist for two reasons. First, these individuals were fundamental in the creation and maintenance of groups advocating

for the DREAM Act. Furthermore, their extended participation in the movement gives them a unique vantage point and insight about the social protest efforts beginning with the inception of the DREAM Act bill.

With approval from University of New Mexico Main Campus Institutional Review Board, I conducted ten in-depth interviews, ranging from 30 minutes to four hours. All were audio recorded with permission of the interviewees. The interviewees included:

- Mohammad Abdollahi, co-founder of Dream Activist, and ONEMichigan, a youth led statewide immigrant-rights organization.
- Horacio Arroyo, community organizer of CHIRLA, and founding staff member of Wise-Up! Immigrant Youth Leadership Development.
- Lizbeth Mateo, founding member of Dreams to Be Heard at California State University Northridge; co-founder of DTLA; and co-founder of the Dream is Coming collaborative project.
- Matias Ramos, co-chair of Improving Dreams, Equality, Access, and Success (IDEAS) at the University of California Los Angeles and board member of United We DREAM.
- Maria Rodriguez, youth organizer of CHIRLA, founder of A.B. 540 Network, now CDNT, and a youth-led statewide immigrant-rights organization.
- Carlos Saavedra, National Coordinator of United We Dream.
- Becca (pseudonym), founding member of Texas DREAM Act Alliance (TDAA), youth-led statewide immigrant-rights organization.
- David (pseudonym), founding member of Arizona DREAM Act Coalition (ADAC), a youth-led statewide immigrant-rights organization.

- Karla (pseudonym), CDNT steering committee board member.
- Joel (pseudonym), founding member of East Los Angeles Community College (SAHEE) Student Empowerment Project.

As a participant in the movement, I had built rapport with those I interviewed, so these interviews were informal in nature. In accordance with *testimonios,*[33] I conducted interviews more as conversations between two equals than as distinctly hierarchical, question-and-answer exchanges (Rodriguez, 2010).[34] While I had formulated a series of questions pertaining to their knowledge of and experience with activism for immigration reform, the idea behind the interview was to understand more about their roles, participation, and opinions regarding the DREAM social movement. In the course of these interviews, participants shared their stories of DREAM activism by narrating (1) their affiliation and work with the DREAM social movement; (2) how and why they became involved with DREAM activism; and (3) general thoughts and insights about the progression, challenges, and benefits of organizing for the DREAM Act. During the interviews, I used the narrative space to dialogue about my own position as a scholar, activist, and undocumented student.

Textual Component

Lastly, I made use of a variety of textual information to provide a holistic and detailed account of other perspectives salient to the DREAM Act movement. This allowed me to bring in the materials I had gathered by monitoring various media sources for information about the campaign to pass the federal DREAM Act since its inception in 2001. I have kept accounts from newspaper and mainstream media sources from the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times, National Public Radio*, and other relevant news

articles and obtained hits by using the words *DREAM Act, undocumented+youth+student* in Google Alert. This meant that I was given a daily list of media reports based on hits on those words and was able to stay updated about events from organizations with which I was not directly involved. While I followed and incorporated media reports to have a larger context of what was happening in terms of the movement, these were not incorporated as data per se, but only served as necessary background and factual information.

Rather, for my textual analysis, I focused on the materials that were created explicitly by participating undocumented youth in their narrated efforts to further the DREAM movement. Thus, the secondary accounts were made up of data that came directly from first-person accounts by undocumented youth who were active in movement. For example I had access to and used documents from the following:

- Archival unpublished raw data from CHIRLA. These data consisted of approximately 2,500 documents, organized by year from 2003 to 2010. These documents included all the messaging and campaign events relating to DREAM years within that time frame as deployed by youth organizers of CDNT.
- The "DREAM Now" letter series produced by Kyle de Beausset at Citizen Orange Web Site, which featured ten published letters of DREAM-eligible youth written to the U.S. President (July-August 2010).
- Correspondence about and stories by undocumented students in blogs on listserves of which I was a member. Specifically, I relied on the news

archives of the dreamactivist.org website and on the individual website of Dream Activist co-founder Prerna Lal.

This gave me greater access to activist events from a larger vantage point. Additionally, I used:

- Transcripts of public hearings, websites descriptions of the history of events, leadership and organizing manuals, training guides, press releases, and pamphlets available in the Internet Web sites of the organizations in which I was participating and interacting.
- Materials distributed by the groups that are relevant to such events (i.e., media press kits, publicity/marketing handouts, flyers, brochures) to augment my field notes.
- Photos and audio recordings taken during public interactions to capture details that would have been difficult to cover otherwise. Obtaining permission beforehand, I recorded events taking place in the public sphere events (i.e. to media like television or radio press, or when giving public speeches). This allowed me to feature the voices of the DREAM movement participants that were not specifically interviewed for this study.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

I captured multiple perspectives as I collected interviews, organizational literature, and my own interpretations as an active participant in the DREAM movement. After the collection of field data was completed, I had 400 hours of direct observations. I typed up all my notes from each observation of event and the audio recordings of my reflections. I personally transcribed all of the audio from the events and each of the

interviews. To analyze the data, I first compiled all portions chronologically. This included typing up any of the handwritten notes that featured my thoughts on activist events in which I participated. I then personally transcribed each of my interviews and my personal reflections that I had audio recorded while participating in direct-activism events. By transcribing a little over 20 hours of audio, I was able to include the direct utterances of my participants in conjunction with textual data into one document. These were chronologically arranged to include all of portions of the data, and resulted in a little over 900 pages of data**.** I then compiled and included the secondary accounts that coincided with the events where I was a participant. Pamphlets and other training material not in electronic format were scanned and converted into electronic versions. All documents pertaining to my study were stored on my password-protected personal computer.

I followed the methodological process outlined by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) for compiling fieldwork data. Records of my observations were kept by way of detailed field notes prepared immediately following each participant-observation episode. I kept a successive record of the relevant activities in which I participated. I organized my note-taking temporally, starting at the beginning and ending at the end (Emerson et al., 1995). My field notes were typed in a Microsoft Word document where I noted the following items after each occurrence: (a) date and time of the event; (b) brief description of the event (meeting, rally, phone conversation for example) and the physical space, environmental context and so forth; (c) the participants, including who was there, their roles at the event, what they did, and so forth; (d) interactions and what was going on with regards to the activist related activities; (e) any direct dialogue pertinent to my

research questions; and finally (f) a personal/reflective diary that included both thoughts and reactions about my participation and about how my own life experiences influenced the way in which I processed what I observed (Wolfinger, 2002).

Once I had transcribed and organized my field data, I conducted two rounds of coding. First, I did an open line-by-line sequence that led to two broad themes, one relating to rhetorical strategies and another to rhetorical functions of those strategies. For close coding, the data was then input into NVivo Software to facilitate the coding process. NVivo analysis allowed me to sort and make sense of the text by noting recurring themes (Madison, 2002). After the process of uncovering recurring themes, I grouped them together and created a conceptual schema based on my research questions (Foss, 2009). The collapsed themes clearly showed strategy shifts over time, which then were analyzed in conjunction with the theoretical literature.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the methods I employed in this study. Seeking to highlight the voices of DREAM activists compelled me to use methods that best support that purpose. As Matsuda (1996) noted, “those who have experienced discrimination speak with a special voice to which we should listen” (p. 63). I thus provided a general explanation of my proposed activist methodology including the guiding assumptions, described my role as researcher and the ethical considerations it entailed. I introduced my proposed research sites and gave an account of the participant-observation and interviews by which I collected data. Lastly, I provided an explanation of the analysis procedures I utilized to code the material collected.

CHAPTER 4

PHASE ONE: MAKINGS OF A MOVEMENT

"The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in outer terrains. Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the 'real' world unless it first happens in the images in our heads." (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 109)

This dissertation project stems from a desire to understand the activism of undocumented youth in regard to the DREAM Act. The inherent hazards of activism, given the legal restrictions encountered by these youths, mark DREAM-Act organizing efforts as remarkable acts of resistance. That guiding interest is reflected in the research questions aimed at uncovering the strategies that characterize the DREAM social movement and the agency exhibited by the participants. These insights, gleaned from the rhetorical textual analysis, interview responses, and my personal experiences as activist-scholar and former undocumented student, add rich perspectives to the resulting answers.

The process of coming to self-identify as a DREAMer helps create, maintain, and drive the collective organizing for policy change. The dimension of identity creation is reflected in each of the three phases of the movement that I document in this study; for each, I describe the trajectory of the internally driven self-identification efforts as well as externally aimed strategies driven by instrumental political goals. Accordingly, I present three distinct progressive phases where the participants make shifts in strategies related to self-identity and shifts in strategies related to how they relate to their opposition of the social movement make shifts in identification strategies.

The first phase of the DREAM movement is characterized by *exemplar student identity*, which features collective identity formation among DREAMers and early efforts at identifying with the opposition through appeals to the value of hard work. The second

phase, *undocumented and unafraid*, traces the self-defining efforts and public disclosure efforts featured in efforts to get national visibility for the movement. The third phase, *unapologetic DREAMer,* features the effrontery of activists who escalate the mobilization efforts by modeling civil disobedience tactic of previous civil rights movements.

In this chapter, I discuss the first of the three phases; chapters 5 and 6 will present the other phases, respectively. Here, I present the origins of and key elements that result in the development of collective organizing by undocumented youth. These self-identifying strategies are evident in the creation of campus, statewide, and online support networks that together helped created a collective consciousness among undocumented youth. These early collective organizing elements are featured in the external rhetorical strategies that promote student identity through lobbying and narrative efforts. These identification efforts, aimed at educating the establishment about the existence and personal characteristics of the DREAM-eligible youth, function to create a positive self-identity that counters the negative views of unauthorized individuals. Lastly, I describe the remnants of efforts to maintain anonymity and reflect on my experiences as an undocumented student and early participant in this movement.

Background: DREAMing of a Movement

How did the undocumented immigrant youth mobilization, now known as the DREAM social movement, come into being? As with every social movement, the matter of how it all started is of paramount importance. Social movements do not just form out of nowhere, meaning that the genesis plays a significant role in understanding the larger account and how they ultimately unfold. Many might suppose that the undocumented immigrant youth movement began when the DREAM Act bill first was introduced, but

that is not the case. While it is difficult to point to an exact date or event that can be labeled the beginning of the movement, it had its origins long before the introduction of the DREAM Act. To give the full picture of how it all came about, I examine the progression of how DREAM activists protested, resisted, and attempted to transform the immigration system, of which the DREAM Act itself is only a small part.

Undocumented youth are ineligible for a multitude of rights by virtue of their immigration status. Without lawful permanent residency, unauthorized immigrants are barred from a range of political, occupational, social, and health related services and privileges. Undocumented youth particularly are affected by the policies that bar them from the educational sphere. Invariably, social protests by undocumented youth can be traced back to the legislation where the issue was first formally addressed in 1982 with *Plyler v. Doe;* a case that determined that undocumented children were entitled to a public K-12 education.

Postsecondary education has been another issue all together, and *Plyler's* reach was tested in the 1984 case when the University of California system reasoned that lacking legal status precluded undocumented students from meeting the criterion of residency (Olivas, 1994). By 1985, the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) stepped in on behalf of five undocumented students to contest the decision that denied them resident-tuition fees. The California Supreme Court ruled in favor of the undocumented students, whom MALDEF represented.

The *Leticia "A" v. Board of Regents of the University of California* case and subsequent ruling in favor of the undocumented students was not only a significant legal victory but also resulted in the creation of a network dedicated solely to immigration

issues affecting young adults (Rincón, 2008). What became the Leticia "A" Network group, named after the case, became the earliest known example of a formal support group singularly designed to advocate on behalf of undocumented students in institutions of higher education. For five years after the 1985 victory, the *Leticia "A"* ruling afforded undocumented students the same rights as U.S. citizens, including financial aid, but it was overturned by the ruling of the 1992 California Court of Appeals case, *Regents of the University of California v. Superior Court (Bradford)* (Guarneros et al., 2009). For the next decade and a half that followed this decision, undocumented students wanting to attend higher education were back in the position of having to pay three times the amount of fees as other in-state students.

Prior to the restrictive immigration policies that would follow the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Congress had proposed legislation to extend immigrant rights. The issue of citizenship for undocumented youth in the United States was given direct consideration by the 107th Congress, which introduced the Student Adjustment Act (H.R. 1918, 2001) and DREAM Act (S. 1291, 2001) for the first time in May 2001. Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), author of the legislation, described how a Chicago constituent requested help for her daughter, brought from Korea at two years old, who could not accept admission to the Julliard School of Music because of her undocumented status.

Durbin felt compelled to write the DREAM Act after discovering the "fundamental problem" of a young person being told they were unwanted by a country where they had lived for most of their lives (DREAM Act, S. 1545, 2003). During the time when this law first was introduced, there was little to no awareness about the undocumented youth who would be the beneficiaries of the law and little attention was

given to the higher education obstructions faced by undocumented immigrant youth. The legislation written by Durbin as a remedy to this problem would be the bill that would come to instigate the DREAMer social movement.

Shortly following the introduction of the federal DREAM Act in 2001, states also began to address residency and tuition restrictions. In June 2001, Texas became the first state to effectively provide higher education access to undocumented students by passing H.B. 1403, legislation that even included the benefit of access to financial aid (Rincón, 2008). California proposed a similar law, prompting immigrant-right groups like CHIRLA to dedicate funding and staff to develop a youth component. In July 2001, Wise-Up! Immigrant Youth Leadership Development was created, consisting of 10 high schools that worked together to lobby on behalf of Assembly Bill A.B. 540. Hector Arroyo was the staff member of CHIRLA who was responsible for this group, which worked to provide training for and to mobilize young Southern California activists, giving them their first participation in advocacy for state and local public policy initiatives (CHIRLA, 2010).

On October 2001, A.B. 540 was enacted successfully in California, providing applicants without legal status exemption from the non-resident tuition rate. This law came into effect during my own entrance into a Southern California undergraduate institution. In the midst of my transition into college, I could not have guessed that 5,000-8,000 other students in California were, just like me, seeking admission and resident tuition under A.B. 540 (Oliverez, Chavez, Soriano, & Tierney, 2006). That same study showed that the number should not have been surprising given that 40% of all

undocumented students live in California. With A.B. 540, college-bound individuals now had the option of enrolling in college having to pay only in-state tuition fees.

While the impact of this legislation was very important for undocumented students, there remained little awareness of the issue. My own high school counselor seemed so unaware of the issue that she could only advise that I abandon the idea of attending college all together. She seemed oblivious to the fact that, as a high-school senior, I had passed enough Advanced Placement classes to qualify as a college sophomore. Not attending college was not an option for me. Beyond making college financially manageable, since the fees were no longer three times the amount, this law really helped changed the misconception that undocumented students could not attend college.

In 2002 and 2003, a variety of additional states followed California by implementing their own versions of laws providing in-state residency to undocumented students. This geographically disparate group of states, including New York, Utah, Washington, Illinois, and Oklahoma, added to the places across the nation where undocumented students had access to in-state tuition. Later, in 2005, Kansas and New Mexico became additional states that created opportunities for undocumented youth to attend college (Rincón, 2008). In short, these laws meant that undocumented youth were now attending school and dealing with what it meant to be undocumented, often for the first time in their lives.

Strategies of Self-Identification

The grievances around legal status were the impetus for strategies of self-identification that were critical to the formation of the DREAMer social movement. The

issue of identity is paramount in this and every other phase of the undocumented youth fighting for higher education and legalization. The concept of identity has particular meaning for undocumented immigrant youth because identity is linked explicitly to immigrant status.

In this section, I concentrate on the strategies of self-identification. I note how these efforts featured the basic requirements of internal consciousness raising that is a building block for participating in social protest efforts. I describe the three following elements: (1) Identity formation on the basis of undocumented status; (2) collective identity formation as undocumented students came together; and (3) recognition of oppression. These self-identification strategies provided the foundation for the DREAMer movement; without the convergence of these strategies, undocumented youth would not have had the basis for a social movement.

Identity Formation: "So, You've Just Found Out that You're Undocumented"

In this first phase of the DREAMer movement, one of the most important features evident from my data is the essential self-revelation process about immigration status. Consciousness about the law and identity are very intertwined, mostly because *when-I-first-found-out-I-was-undocumented consciousness* is an experience very relevant to the *when-I-first-found-out-I-could (not)-go-to-college consciousness*. Applying to college is a time when many undocumented immigrant youth either formally realize they are undocumented or become aware of the implications of their undocumented status. Both revelations are tied to the identity-formation process of undocumented immigrant youth and make up big parts of the quintessential story that provided the foundation of the movement.

Many of the undocumented youth with whom I spoke would bring up the moment when this information came to a head for them. Awareness of identity as undocumented is about reaching an age where you now have a fuller understanding of "the gravity of it all" (David, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Carlos recounts his moment of recognition this way:

> My parents never told me I was undocumented. I'm sorry, they never told me what it really *meant* to be undocumented. We knew we didn't have some rights here and there, but it never really made sense until high school when I couldn't go to college. (Carlos, personal communication, May 28, 2010)

The frustrating discovery of the far-reaching effects of non-citizen status intersected for Becca with the event of applying to college and having to *literally* answer the question about citizenship:

> I started filling them out [college applications] and I got to the one question that all DREAMers love. I realized I was not a citizen. I don't know if it is this way for all other DREAMers, but citizenship does not really come up. I think more so if you are here from a really young age, like most of us were. I was six. (Becca, personal communication, July 20, 2010)

The same discovery is reiterated by many other undocumented youth, who attest to the invariable frustration of recognizing the range of limits that accompany college-application time:

> It was not until my freshman year of college when I found out about my immigration status. I asked my parents for my social security number when filling out my application for UCLA. There was a long pause. That day, I found out

> that, after eight years of going through the process, our family visa had expired because our sponsor had mismanaged our paperwork. (Cho, personal communication, August, 2010)

Mohammad provides a similar biographical sketch of his experience of becoming aware of the ways in which undocumented status can frustrate the college process:

> After high school I worked to save enough money to pay out-of-state tuition. When I had enough community college credits to transfer, I applied to Eastern Michigan University. I sat in the counselor's office, handed him my transcript, and he told me, "Mohammad, you are the kind of student we want at this university." He then handed me an acceptance letter. I was in. I looked at this letter and thought of my mother. With this piece of paper, I could go to my mother and tell her that she didn't have to stay up late crying anymore, that she didn't have to blame herself anymore, that she hadn't done her children wrong by bringing them to this country. I could tell her it was all worth it. Then, the counselor brought back his supervisor, who told me that they could not accept me because I "needed to be in a line to get in." The counselor then reached over his desk and took my acceptance letter from me. I left. My future was being held hostage. (The DREAM is Coming, n.d.)

The formative effect of discovering status cannot be overstated. These soon-to-be activists found out about their status and each other because this period and process of discovery is of vital importance.

I myself arrived in the United States at age six, speaking only Spanish. I was enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes until I attained my certificate of

English fluency in the fourth grade. From that point on, I was in the same classes as my citizen counterparts, which makes being an undocumented student all that more paradoxical. I wasn't treated differently from and did not see myself as different from the other students. The contradictory nature of undocumented youth as "special members of an underclass" is typified by a limbo-ridden existence**.** Ille has posted a blog about her own discovery of her undocumented status and vividly likened the experience to being whacked over the head with reality:

> Well, technically, you didn't "find" this information. Rather, after years of silently floating about in a hidden realm known as your parents' pre-consciousness, this information suddenly decided to make its existence known by jumping out of the bushes and beating you over the head with a "You're undocumented!" stick. And as with any beating, you come away from the attack a little winded, with utter blankness of the mind, and confusion and anger in your heart. It seems as if your life has come to a halt. (Ille, 2009a)

The comparison is comical and yet unnervingly accurate. The "being bonked over the head" experience is a shared experience that typically happens around the time and age when undocumented youth are denied important privileges. For example, one cannot get a driver's license, which does not just mean not being able to drive, it means having no form of official identification. *Whack:* going to 18+ events are out of the question. *Whack:* you can't travel by modes of transportation that require proof of identification. And then, of course, undocumented immigrant youth have to face this issue when, in the process of applying for college, they are required to check one of the residency categories: International Student, Permanent Resident, or U.S. citizen. *Whack*:

there is no box for those in legal status limbo. *Whack:* grants, loans, or work-study are not available funding options. *Whack:* if an undocumented immigrant manages to make it to college, she or he may encounter a library system that requires a social security number to check out a book. Becca summarized the experience of these undocumented students:

> The DREAMers experience that what we allude to more often is not just about lack of status. But that's the problem. Lack of status is what turns around and affects everything else in life, where your whole life is shaped. That is what I feel is what people don't understand. It's not just a law, especially when it's been something that's molded your life since you were young and that has to do with your relationship with people, your trust of people, your home, your finances. It literally affects your entire life, not just one part of your life. (Becca, personal communication, July 21, 2010)

As can be imagined, the large demographic of young people now forced to make sense of being undocumented would need support to overcome such a unique set of circumstances. One apt descriptor is Generation 1.5 (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996), a label designed to convey that undocumented youth are positioned in a complicated sandwich of sorts between adult parents born and raised outside the United States and their younger siblings who were born and raised inside the United States. Yet in this early period, undocumented youth were reluctant to share information about their immigration status. Those who had gained entry to college were for the most part "underground," since divulging information about status meant being one phone call away from possible deportation. Imagine if you will, both the schools and students working on their own

versions of a "don't ask-don't tell" policy. Ille posted that finding another undocumented student was a scavenger hunt of its very own:

> Oh, and did you know? No matter which school you attend, it's highly unlikely that you'll be the only undocumented student there. Undocumented youth are kind of like a Waldo you can never find: you know they're there, but you just don't know where. (Ille, 2009b)

This secrecy yielded a need for safe spaces where impacted youth could disclose status without fear of repercussions. The discovery of undocumented status became an important part of the development of the strategy of self-identification; until undocumented students were willing and able to come together to collectively support one other, there could not be a movement. The campus groups, online forum efforts, and community youth groups all aimed to address these very restrictions and met this important void.

Collective Identity Formation: "So You've Just Found Out There are Others"

Despite the general veil of silence that surrounds undocumented students, by October 2003 one of the first campus-based student organizations was established to offer support to these students. At the University of California, Los Angeles, a group by the name of Improving Dreams, Equality, Access and Success (IDEAS), made up of UCLA students, faculty, and administrators, was formed to provide support for A.B. 540. IDEAS "collectively formed a camaraderie of people connected by shared experiences, struggles, and successes" and proved to be a group from which members really benefited (IDEAS, 2010). The website made note of its evolution from a student-support network to a community-outreach project, one that now guides high school and community

college students in their transition to institutions of higher education. Matias Ramos, a founding member of this student-led organization, recounts the kind of relief provided by the group:

> IDEAS started recruiting undocumented students who had been accepted into UCLA and gave them help about how to navigate the UCLA system. I was part of one of those first recruits and came to be involved with them in the Fall of 2004. I would not have been able to go to UCLA had it not been for the older folks of IDEAS who taught me how to apply for scholarships and ask for help. (Matias, personal communication, July 20, 2010)

In 2004, a year when 17 California high school valedictorians were undocumented (Oliverez et al., 2006), immigrant youth continued to benefit from laws like A.B. 540. The need and desire to connect with other A.B. 540 college-goers continued to grow, and campus support groups emerged at more and more campuses. Many of the founders of these campus groups that I interviewed noted that the idea of a campus group came up after meeting other students who identified as undocumented.

Support groups and networks like these played an important role in laying the groundwork for the existence of an undocumented immigrant-youth movement. They served as the base since they basically facilitated a space and sense for collective identification. Important to note, however, is that the role of these early groups was primarily to help students navigate the challenges described earlier (i.e., school funding and resources about scholarships). Therefore, an important distinction in regard to these early groups is that their primary purpose was support, not advocacy, for the DREAM Act.

The rapidly increasing number of groups seeking to address undocumented student status was not limited to campus organizations. In July 2003, Congress had introduced the DREAM Act (S.1545, 2003) so that undocumented youth who had attended high school in the United States could have a pathway to residency. With 66 House sponsors and 48 Senate co-sponsors, established immigrant-rights organizations worked to increase the number of legislative supporters. Since the introduction of the DREAM Act into Congress, groups like the National Immigration Law Center (NILC) have played an instrumental part in educating policymakers by providing financial sponsorship for DREAM-advocacy campaigns and making information about the DREAM legislation available on their websites.

Other staffed organizations, such as CHIRLA, took part in the effort to raise awareness about the legislation. As early as January 2004, CHIRLA had put a DREAM Team together,[35] a coalition of well-known immigrant-rights groups such as Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), local organizations, and allies from Southern California to enact a DREAM Campaign. Another important distinction to make is that in this early coalition effort, while they welcomed youth at their meetings to show student representation, staffed advocates largely planned and implemented the activities. This protected the students themselves, who were in danger of deportation if they made their status known. Nevertheless, these advocacy efforts on behalf of undocumented students provided the foundational base of a movement that would become more youth-led over time.

Undocumented youth began the process of augmenting the existence of collective group networks beyond schools and into larger community spaces. By 2005, there were

statewide groups dedicated to issues affecting undocumented adolescents. But again, these consisted largely of youth groups within larger immigrant-rights organizations. The Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) that came out of the Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA), for example, worked as early as 2006 to train and mobilize student leaders across the state for higher education rights for immigrant students. Not for another few years would SIM members launch the "10 out of 10 Campaign," aimed at getting the entire Massachusetts congressional delegation to co-sponsor the DREAM Act. The burgeoning convening of undocumented immigrant youth was very much facilitated by the launch of online support network, and in the next section, I discuss the significance of a site strictly dedicated to and for undocumented youth.

Self-Identifying Online

With the topic of immigration at the forefront of national political discourse, undocumented immigrant youth continued to successfully carve out spaces of support at community and school levels. That system of connection with other immigrant youth would grow exponentially to become worldwide in March of 2006 with the creation and launch of Dream Act Portal (DAP). When the site launched, so did the dialogue among young people about their marginalizing experiences, since the website was designed to facilitate communication across the country among youth lacking legal status

I came to learn that DAP was not the first of such resources but that DAP was actually a replacement for CoSa (full name not available).[36] This site became the prominent Internet networking site for undocumented immigrant youth to communicate with each other because the DAP was the first hit to come up when an undocumented

student typed in something about their status or immigration law in Google. Imagine clicking that option, and, just like that, access to other undocumented peers went from maybe a handful to thousands.

The DAP site was very intentional about providing more than just information about the DREAM-Act legislation. While it did offer a series of forums concerning news, legislation, and policy, at its core, it was a social networking site. DAP allowed any visitor to become a new member, giving undocumented students an entire forum where they were invited to introduce themselves and tell their stories. Internet anonymity, then, allowed undocumented students to disclose their status and discuss relevant issues in a protected manner, which fueled the number of students who made use of the site.

Effectively, the DAP carved out a huge chunk of space where undocumented youth could connect with other students, find others near them, and find on-the-ground groups to join. One of the senior members explained the role of DAP as "a starting point for many. It's a social site . . . It's a support group more than an activist site; it seems that most people use it as survival tool" (Lu001, 2008). Many of the undocumented youth I spoke with praised this site for revolutionizing the undocumented immigrant youth movement in its own way. Mohammed, for instance, stated:

> That's how DAP was helpful, because I had never met another undocumented person. In my family, we never talked about it [immigration status]. No one talked about it. So finding the Internet and where there is a place to share your story and communicate was a stepping-stone to get more active and comfortable. At least for me. (Mohammad, personal communication, November 11, 2010)

The DREAM Act Portal quickly became the “go-to” place for many undocumented youth, as affirmed by this explanation:

> When I first found out [about my undocumented status], the really awesome thing was DAP. You realize when you are DREAMer, what you didn’t know before, is that there are other people with the almost same story as you. That’s super cool. (Becca, personal communication, July 20, 2010)

It is easy to see how this site created a large membership base that would be significant in the dawning of an undocumented immigrant-youth movement. The site served as source for undocumented immigrant youth to get comfortable with and subsequently identify more exclusively with their undocumented status.

Coming together on and offline in a new act of self-identification is a strategy typical in social movements (Bernstein, 2002; Holland, Fox, & Daro, 2008; Polletta & Jasper, 2001, Pulido, 2006). On the most basic level, undocumented youth shared and began to deploy a collective identity through the efforts of campus, statewide, and online groups I described above. Generating those spaces and places to gather are necessary precursors for potential mobilization by any social movement (Bernstein, 1997). Undocumented youth now had various systems in place that facilitated their ability to share experiences relating to status, thus creating an affective bond that motivates joint participation in social movement activism (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). These early features that brought undocumented students together in virtual and physical spaces were of utmost importance, and undocumented youth went from their own isolated experiences to a shared recognition of undocumented status and collective membership.

Recognizing Oppression

The coming together process that took place in this phase marked an emerging consciousness of the oppressive nature of undocumented legal status. There was now wary recognition that efforts at changing tuition laws to allow undocumented students equal access to higher education were only short-term solutions, a band-aid that ignored the wound. For the youth who started attending college under these laws, imminent graduations were not a celebratory occasion because the basic problem of immigration status had not been addressed. In fact, the issue was aggravated by the lack of employment opportunities post-graduation. Co-founder of the DTLA, Lizbeth Mateo describes her graduation as a bittersweet occasion:

> After four years of hard work, I became the first person in my family to graduate from high school, yet it was a bittersweet accomplishment. After high school graduation, I had to choose between pursuing college in Mexico and fighting for a future in the United States. I'm American. I stayed to fight. I paid my way through college without any financial aid, working at a sunglass store on the beach as my friends enjoyed their vacations. (The DREAM is Coming, n.d.)

Graduating actually set these individuals up for a completely new set of *whacks* of reality to the head. Undocumented immigrant youth finishing their degrees faced the painful recognition that a diploma is just an expensive wall decoration when you are barred from seeking employment. The shock of learning that the sole factor of status impacts the life of undocumented students in such colossal ways affected the corresponding rhetorical strategies. I myself did not realize the extent of my predicament until college-application season made my academic achievements crushingly irrelevant

and prospects for upward mobility dismal, if not for the inception of California's A.B. 540. This points to an existence as "denizens," with rights as inhabitants of a place, even though undocumented students lack formal access to the full rights of citizenship (Buff, 2008, p. 302). This paradoxical, liminal space has animated the chosen strategies and has become relevant to the rhetorical strategies used in the movement. Despite being "Americanized," unauthorized students were being positioned to face governmental policies that made their lives exceedingly difficult (Abrego, 2008; Gonzales, 2008a, 2008b).

There was an obvious focus on organizing that dealt not only with access to higher education but with the employment issue as well. This more direct sense of activism was evident in the organizing taking place in California. The Wise Up! alumni, those students who had originally banded together to lobby for A.B. 540 legislation, made efforts to extend their organizing efforts. These soon-to-be graduating college students shifted the conversation from simply focusing on how to navigate the challenges of undergraduate life and toward the need for more long-term immigrant-rights legislation. These early efforts at ongoing advocacy were an important foundation to the creation of an eventual movement, beginning the shift from *staffed youth-focused* group*s* into *youth-led* groups.

With 2006 coming to a close, CHIRLA did what no other groups had yet done. It created a permanent network of already mobile youth committed to activism. That step was taken on December 16 to 17, 2006, when a weekend retreat was offered by CHIRLA in an attempt to bring together undocumented immigrant youth. First called the A.B. 540 Network, the group convened student groups from across the entire state of California to

create a campaign plan for DREAM Act activism. This action was important because it was the start of a shift from groups that function as support networks to groups specifically designed for advocacy. Maria Rodriguez, a staff member of the newly formed A.B. 540 Network, envisioned the move from organized students *affected by* immigration status to a group that would *affect* the immigration system. The mission of the network would be to actively work "to ameliorate the plight of undocumented students" (CDNT, n.d.). The group was meant to function as an umbrella for the established California campus support groups, banding together to create broader social change around immigration reform and access to higher education.

The unification of these California groups under a single umbrella, all starting to turn their focus on activism, meant they were newly equipped to organize collective actions on a large scale. Shortly after establishing themselves as a statewide network on February 28, 2007, activists from campuses belonging to the CDNT launched the DREAM Act Campaign throughout the state of California. Over a dozen campuses organized events ranging from educational teach-in activities to rallies. The actions were coordinated in anticipation of the announcement by Congress of the 2007 re-introduction of the DREAM Act and were some of the first coordinated events that targeted colleges and universities. Undocumented students in Arizona followed California's lead but under very different conditions.

During that same time of December 2006, undocumented students in Arizona were prohibited from qualifying for in-state tuition rates and any type of state financial aid. This was the effect of the Arizona Public Program Eligibility Act, Proposition 300, part of a broader immigration package that emphasized immigrants as an "undue expense

to the state" (Arizona State University, 2010). Proposition 300 became law, and by 2007, 1,500 students from Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and nearly 1,800 community college students had been denied in-state tuition status (Russell, 2007, p. 4). Understandably frightened of organizing and concerned about getting arrested or caught, this law unintentionally put undocumented students in contact with each other. Despite the fear of getting noticed and possibly deported, the necessity to have a formal and strong support network of people to cope with the harsh anti-immigrant climate in Arizona prevailed.

The need to deal with the changes brought about by Proposition 300 led to the founding of the organization Students United for Fair Rights and Greater Equality (SUFFRAGE), which brought together undocumented students in a community that would engage in both social support and political activism. David, the founder of the group, shared with me the primary benefit of creating this campus organization:

> We had a lot of people who really loved it. Not because we were working to get the DREAM Act passed, because they had never felt like they had a "place." They never knew large amounts of undocumented youth, well, because you don't talk about that. You feel out of place and very alone. Then all of a sudden, they would come [to a group meeting], and there would be 50 other people who were in the same situation. That is what happened to me, because I had only met two other undocumented [youth], and all of a sudden, I was around 50 people who shared my story and were in the same predicament. It was a sense of community that none of us had ever had before. (David, personal communication, July 20, 2010)

The group had to take precautions when meeting in order to avoid notice and deportation. Despite these difficulties, undocumented students in Arizona came together to address these new challenges. The law that stripped them of their rights inadvertently prompted immigrant youth to come together to fight against it. Arizona students would go on to form their own statewide support group, Arizona DREAM Act Coalition (ADAC), which would eventually become solely focused on advocacy.

Although the youth may not have known it then, the internal actions of this phase were an important part of the social movement process. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* Paolo Freire (2006) asserted that political consciousness operates on the basis that the oppressed themselves first *recognize* structural oppressions for themselves. He asks "who are better prepared than the oppressed to understand the terrible significance of an oppressive society? Who can better understand the necessity of liberation?" (p. 45). This statement implies that a key feature of concrete activism is the "recognition of the necessity to fight for it" and awareness that liberation does not come "by chance but through the praxis of their quest for it" (Freire, 2006, p. 45). Hence, the realization by DREAMers was not only of their undocumented status but of the injustice of it all. Maria elaborated:

> Undocumented is a state a mind. Undocumented takes a lot of healing and it takes a lot of years to unravel that undocumented and realize that it is an imposed identity by a government that wants to exploit you. You know? A lot of us came into organizing or even the liberation of our own minds through the concept of DREAM. We know it is no longer just legislation. It is like an identity now. DREAM, DREAMers, you know? (Maria, personal communication, June 28,

2010).

Seeing themselves as able to do something against their grievances is a necessary stage in the self-identity process. Also necessary is a recognition of oppression and beginning to address those who have the capacity to affect those oppressive conditions (Stewart, 1980). Youth who were coming together based on the notion of this new collective identity were realizing that they could use their shared experiences as undocumented to assert their "own power to negotiate the meaning and implications of identity" (Alcoff, 2000, p. 341). This newfound sense of collective agency could be seen as the source of confidence in their own ability to act (Jasper, 2010a, 2010b).

This awareness of oppression and a desire to address it led undocumented youth to begin to focus more specifically on the DREAM Act bill. The burgeoning groups in different states were evidence of the importance of youth consciousness and the increased capacity to begin to resist the material challenges of undocumented status. While many issues could and were being addressed, ultimately, undocumented immigrant youth began to focus more exclusively on the only potential long-term solution available: the DREAM Act.

To summarize, in this section of internally focused strategies that emerged from this phase generated the base for the DREAM social movement, I presented the way in which undocumented came together under the efforts understand the dynamics of their immigration status. I described and suggested that these strategies of creating connections have the concrete benefits of undocumented youth forging a self-identifying community. Coming together and increasing their sense of agency was monumental and this feature was evident in the external efforts of this phase.

Strategies of Identification with the Opposition

Once there was a collective sense of self-identity and a confidence in their ability to address the oppression they faced, DREAMers began to generate strategies to publicly support the DREAM Act. Primary was the use of strategies of identification. These external strategies focused on presenting DREAM advocates as worthy individuals who share many similarities with those in the establishment. I use the phrase *exemplary indicators* to describe the focus of this stage of seeking to identify with the opposition. I highlight the tactical features that reinforced these strategic efforts of identifying with the opposition including (a) lobbying legislators; (b) local symbolic campaigns; and (c) storytelling efforts.

My data demonstrate that these strategies were built on and emerged from DREAMers' new sense of self-identification and collective identities as undocumented. While strategies of self-identification were crucial for the inception of the DREAMer movement, also important was the strategies they used to address those they hoped to reach about the DREAM Act. The first move they made was to shift the negative associations with the notion of *undocumented* to positive.

Embedded in the concept of illegality is the notion that it is both produced and experienced (Willen, 2007). Thus, the rhetorical strategies the DREAMers employed were grounded in and functioned to distance themselves from the negative connotations of illegality generally. This was the first move to frame the undocumented experience as within the context of something positive, and this was the focus of their lobbying, symbolic, and storytelling campaigns.

Lobbying

Lobbying was a logical first step for DREAMers to use to communicate with those with voting power. Given the relative obscurity of the issue at the time, DREAMers first had to let congressional representatives know about the issue, so concerted efforts were made to educate elected officials about *who* would benefit from the DREAM Act. Educating elected officials also was necessary because of the intense opposition toward immigrant-rights reform, resulting in misconceptions about the provisions of the DREAM Act; DREAMers wanted to make sure their representatives realized they were different from common stereotypes of illegality and, in fact, were not all that different from the legislators themselves.

To reinforce their commonalities with legislators, DREAM activists concentrated on educational references with which they knew legislators could identify. This bolstering strategy (Ware & Linkugel, 1973) helped dispel the negative connotations of undocumented students on grounds the legislators presumably could understand more easily. Students reinforced their efforts at distinguishing themselves from *illegals* generally by visiting the local and Washington DC offices of representatives to present themselves as exceptional students in person. Student delegations from California and Massachusetts, as well as the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) campaign, featured commonality with the legislators. The SIM campaign was a lobbying campaign, called "Why We Can't Wait," in which 400 students, parents, and supporters of immigrant communities gathered at the steps of grand staircase at the Massachusetts State house to petition directly for access to higher education for immigrant students (Student Immigrant Movement, n.d.). By directly communicating with legislators, DREAMers

and their supporters sought to provide a positive image of this group based on the shared value of education (Stewart et al., 2007).

These direct lobbying efforts were supplemented by phone calls, e-mails, and mailed petitions to the local and Washington DC offices of members of Congress. Petitions were lobbying vehicles that sent messages that DREAM Act "relief would make it possible for these students to continue their education and fully contribute to this country" (Arroyo, 2007a). The signatures were designed to show that constituents who supported the bill and the large amount of support for it, suggesting that "without the opportunity to regularize their immigration status, the results are tragic for both the children and for the rest of the nation who will be deprived of these future leaders" (Arroyo, 2007a). All of these lobbying efforts, whether in person or through mediated means, were designed to target the lawmakers with voting power to enact the bill. Such an approach assumed the vital importance of directing the appeals for political support to the federal legislative body.

Symbolism

In addition to lobbying, undocumented students also sought identification with legislators through various symbolic campaigns designed to persuade legislators of the worth of the students' cause (Morris & Browne, 2006). In particular, symbolic campaigns that affirmed DREAM-eligible youth as aspiring students and contributing members of society were a primary tactic used to secure support for the DREAM Act. The strategic practice was not simply to promote a "we" of collective undocumented students, but to also include legislators within that shared "we." An important point of distinction is the fact that rhetorical strategies relied on identification *with and not*

against their opposition. This early DREAM Act effort allowed petitioners to reflect "the audience's values, beliefs, and attitudes by identifying with the moral symbols and revered documents rather than attacking or disparaging them" in order to gain approval from the audience they seek to influence (Stewart et al., 2007, p. 162).

Carlos shared how he oriented his legislative visits so that he presented an aligned identification with the individual senators he sought co-sponsorship from:

> I remember that after meeting every Senator they would ask the same two questions. One, "what do you want to study" and two "where do you want to go to school?" So I did my research and learned of all of their schools and careers. So every time one of them would ask, "What do you want to do?" I'd say, "I want to be a lawyer" and they would respond, "Oh, I'm a lawyer." And if they asked me where I wanted to go school, I'd say "Oh such and such" and they'd say "Oh I'm class of '79" [and] all that jazz. So it's the little things and the little tactics. (Carlos, personal communication, May 26, 2010)

During their advocacy efforts, then, undocumented youth presented an almost total identification with the senators, focusing on their similarities above all else. This act of adapting their tactics to the individual senators shows a concerted effort to encourage an exceptional sense of similarity. In researching the details of senators' lives he was petitioning, Carlos was not simply an emphasizing a general sense of shared educational values. More than that, this example invites us to see the how personal identification efforts were specific and directly aimed at the relevant audience.

In addition to identifying with the occupations and alma maters of their congressional representatives, DREAMers identified nonverbally with the educational

values of their representatives as well. Graduation garb was an artifact widely used as a technique to bolster student identification with legislators and other members of the public who valued education. DREAMers and their supporters continuously were encouraged to wear caps and gowns, to visually include them in pictures, and to incorporate cut-outs of them in any relevant material in order to highlight students' achievements, aspirations, and potential to contribute to the larger society after graduation.

Displaying these student symbols of graduation became expressions of identity and assertion of an affiliation with the corresponding values of the dominant culture (Whalen & Hauser, 1995). The DREAM Act advocates used caps, gowns, and invitations to graduations to demonstrate to legislators that undocumented students were indeed deserving of legal citizenship. They used something already viewed favorably by the legislators—education—as their identifying link, and the slogan of this phase became "education NOT deportation." Figure 2 illustrates the use of this symbolism.

Figure 2. Graduation Silhouette (CHIRLA, 2010)

An example of the use of this strategy of identification is evident in late February 2004, when CHIRLA members organized an educational campaign on various southern California campuses, where they placed cardboard cutouts of graduating students around the campus to highlight the urgency of the DREAM Act. Students at Glendale Community College demonstrated on campus with shirts that read “education for a better nation,” and “justice & equality for all.” In symbols, slogans, and tactics, the approach was to refer to education as a way of attracting attention to the bill and reassuring the public about the population the bill would address (Arroyo, 2007a). Tactics like “diploma testimonies” used college diplomas as the template to visually represent what would not be achieved without passage of the DREAM Act and stylistically brought focus to the link with higher education.

These representative symbols played an important role in fashioning identification between the DREAMers and congressional representatives and other members of the public (Bowers et al., 2010) by visually linking DREAMers with the goal of attaining a degree. These tactics were aimed strictly at Republican legislators who supported restrictionist immigration policies. In late April 2004, President Bush became the target of a petition drive to deliver 65,000-signed petitions, one signature for each immigrant student not able to go on to college every year. CHIRLA also held a campaign to deliver “College Acceptance Letters” to President Bush as way to highlight that immigrant students were experiencing barriers to education (Arroyo, 2005). This push served as a way for anti-immigrant politicians to see undocumented immigrant youth as potential college graduates.

Another use of educational symbolism to create identification with legislators was the Mock Graduation Campaign. The Center for Community Change (CCC), a non-profit organization based in Washington DC, used the 2004 graduation season as a time to bring attention to the DREAM-Act legislation. By then, UWD had loosely formed as a campaign comprised of national, state, and local immigrant-rights organizations; student and education groups; and faith-based organizations advocating for the passage of the DREAM Act. The CCC, along with CHIRLA, hosted a mock graduation to follow up the Bush petition drive. On April 20, 2004 a Commencement Day event was held in Washington DC in front of the Department of Education, where Secretary Rod Paige was invited to come out and accept the collected petitions. On June 2, 2004, the UCLA group IDEAS followed suit, and working with the Immigrant Rights Coalition (IRC), staged a mock graduation ceremony. This event included a mock graduation valedictorian—a high school immigrant from a local Southern California school. The wearing of academic regalia and the mock graduation ceremonies were designed to show that DREAMers across the country valued education and wanted equal access to higher education and its benefits and that they shared this value with their legislators.

Simply stated, the strategy of identification worked to reduce the sense of "otherness" between DREAMers and legislators that likely existed on the basis of notions of illegality. By focusing on the shared value of educational attainment, DREAMers showed their acceptance of the values of and system of the establishment (Bowers et al., 2010). With this rhetorical approach, then, DREAMers did not villanize the opposition; dispute the norms, values, or exclusionary nature of citizenship; or talk about their status as oppressive or use any other similar language that might give legislators an excuse to

continue to hold unfavorable images of immigrants in the country illegally. In fact, DREAMers did just the opposite: they accepted the burden of proof to demonstrate their own worth to their legislative audiences and maintain the status-quo attitude that citizenship is an earned privilege. This effort at identification appealed to an American mythos and the Republican political party ideal of meritocracy by emphasizing how "these talented youth have lived here most of their lives and consider themselves American. It is to our benefit to recognize their full potential" (Arroyo, 2007c). In seeking identification with their audiences, DREAMers showed that they shared the values of lawmakers and as a result had *earned* their opportunity to become citizens.

This approach of insisting on *sameness* with the opposition also reaffirms *difference* (Reger, Einwohner, & Myers, 2008). In seeking a connection with the "establishment," DREAMers inadvertently created separation from the larger undocumented immigrant community. Undocumented students essentially differentiated themselves from the stereotypical view of *illegal* immigrants as a "low-achieving," "criminal," and "freeloading" threat to society (Flores, 2003; Santa Ana; 1999; Takacs, 1999) in an effort to have their particular interests met. While undocumented students systematically were categorized as "other" (Chávez, 2007; Johnson, 2004), DREAMers "othered" other undocumented people with their differentiation from those others. Divisions, then, accompany identification as a strategy, and this certainly was the case with DREAM activism.

Stories

While lobbying efforts and identification based on values of education required students to focus on their collective identities as DREAMers and their similarities with

their legislators, undocumented youth also needed to show they were individuals, and this effort at personalizing took the form of storytelling efforts. Storytelling became, then, another way to differentiate DREAMers from the collective stereotype of the *illegal alien*.[37] Narratives can be important rhetorical tools in movements in which members are seeking to assert and represent themselves—precisely the DREAMers' goals (Pezzullo, 2001).

Telling their stories was particularly instrumental to DREAMers because the stories embodied self-assertion and self-representation at the same time that they countered the perception of the "faceless illegal alien" common in dominant society (Johnson, 2004, p. 6). Students continually sought to offer a different perspective from the limited, racist narratives offered about immigrants in the dominant culture (Gonzales, 2009; Muñoz & Maldonado, 2011; Negron-Gonzales, 2009). Matias spoke to the use of the narrative model as an important part of DREAM Act petitioning because of its ability to counter negative perceptions: "We've aimed to create a completely separate narrative from what we have as a predominant narrative that is dominated by anti-immigrant movement (Matias, personal communication, July 20, 2010).

One of the first uses of storytelling by DREAMers was seen in the "DREAMs are Real" campaign, in which DREAMers mailed their congressional representatives personal examples and testimonies, all of which touted the value of education and suggested how valuable the youth were to the country. An example of such a testimony is one about Angela: "Angela, student in FL, got in-state tuition and is in first semester at Honors College; got all As and one B" (Arroyo, 2003). The unique achievements of the undocumented students act functioned as rational arguments for the necessity of the

DREAM Act; the stories made a claim for the need to support the exemplary efforts of undocumented youth.

The effort to personalize undocumented youth by inviting Senators to learn about their experiences, goals, and dreams was furthered by the use of postcards telling individuals' stories. The postcard campaign was an online effort that called on undocumented immigrant youth to mail postcards telling their stories to their senators by inviting them to their would-be graduation parties. Written and delivered specifically to the individuals with legislative voting power, the invitations to senators highlighted how legal status effectively interfered with their ability to contribute to greater society. Below is an example of the template for the postcards from A Dream Deferred ("Ongoing Actions," n.d.), with each participating youth asked to individualize his or her own academic talents and accomplishments:

> "You're Cordially Invited To My D.R.E.A.M.:
>
> Senator, on Sunday, May 17th I will be graduating near the top of my class with a degree in Bioengineering. I hope to use my education to conduct research in the field of cancer medicine. I would love to one day pursue a medical PhD and work for the National Institute of Health. None of this can happen without your much needed support. Please help me make D.R.E.A.M. a reality.
>
> Sincerely, <Signed First Name>"

This campaign yielded the delivery of about 600 postcards to senatorial "targets" who held legislative power to enact the DREAM Act ("Home," n.d.).

The stories of undocumented students also were used in the "Dream Yearbook" campaign that provided "student profiles" alongside pictures of undocumented youth as

infants, as so not be identifiable (Arroyo, 2007c). Each profile was a story of a DREAM-eligible youth that included statistics such as when they arrived in the US, from where, the extracurricular activities in which they participated, and their goals for the future. Compiled together, the yearbook chronicled a larger tale of the numerous "talented, straight A students" who were being barred from accessing colleges because they could not afford the out-of-state tuition without financial aid. These efforts aimed to show Senators that to "oppose the DREAM Act is to say that no one including overachieving students has the right to become legalized" (Arroyo, 2007b).

Storytelling is a strategic and emotive identification tool that allowed DREAMers to provide information about the injustice of their experiences (Benmayor, 2002; Fernandez, 2002; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Though not all of the DREAMers have been youth of color, this use of storytelling is particularly extolled by critical race theorists. Storytelling has a rich history as a theoretical and methodological tool used to dispel misconceptions held by dominant society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Given the existing (il)legal categories that both create and ignore identities, cultures, and languages (Garcia, 2003), stories used by students of color challenge oppression without deliberately opposing the dominant culture.

In sum, I have presented the internally based self-identification strategies that featured youth coming together. In associating themselves with education and countering negative perceptions of immigrants, DREAMers brought together their sense of self-identity with strategies designed to positively affect the establishment. Both sets of strategies were important early attempts that functioned to interweave the personal and political for the undocumented youth.

Possibilities and Limitations of Phase One

The internal and external strategies I presented as representative of this phase contain both positive and negative consequences for DREAM activism. First, on the positive side, the use of strategies directed internally as well as externally provided the movement with a strong foundation. Building on DREAMers' newly found collective identity, DREAM activism could count on solidarity from undocumented students. While most actions still were done anonymously during this phase, that students were willing to come together and physically communicate their large numbers was a valuable rhetorical move in and of itself when revealing status always had the potential for disastrous consequences. Pulido (2006) noted the importance of confronting the fear that accompanied undocumented status:

> Fear is one of the most powerful forces that prevent people from acting. Depending upon how repressive the situation is, people may fear, with good cause, retribution in the form of unemployment, the denial of basic services and needs, the destruction of their property, and, in some instances, violence and death. (p. 3)

Undocumented immigrants experience tremendous pressure to remain invisible, so coming out in any manner, even anonymously, is a risky rhetorical tactic (Takacs, 1999, p. 608). David noted that one of the first challenges in undocumented youth organizers face is the inherent risk of exposing their status.

> Traditionally undocumented youth do not go out and organize. For us it is safer to stay at home. [It is a challenge] to organize undocumented youth and undocumented immigrants. They are notoriously hard to organize for obvious

> reasons. It's hard to get a really strong movement going when people are scared to give you their phone number. (David, personal communication, July 21, 2010)

The process of moving from a *private individual* to *public actor* in the face of tangible consequences was thus the necessary first step to DREAM organizing.

Given the risks faced by undocumented youth, even the most moderate attempts at speaking out and publicly addressing the DREAM Act have resulted in social movement agitation. In other words, that these students were speaking out constituted "more than normal discursive means of persuasion to call attention to their grievances and to achieve their goals" (Bowers et al., 2010, p. 5). That these students approached congressional representatives about the DREAM Act and about themselves as DREAMers was to violate the norm that they should remain hidden (Voss & Rowland, 2000) and thus "resists an oppressive identity and attempts to replace it with one that commands respect" (Lindemann-Nelson, 2001, p. 6).

The choice to focus on identification with legislators is not surprising; given the need to confront fears about and issues of status at the same time they began publicly addressing legislative audiences. Undocumented students chose to present themselves as similar to the legislators as a way of arguing that they were worthwhile individuals, not simply undocumented immigrants. Legislators could begin to see the students not as illegal others, but as individuals not that different from themselves. DREAMers invited politicians and society to perceive them differently from common stereotypes, namely as high achieving students with unique talents.

The concept of *repertoire* is especially salient to social movement participants as it refers to the range of choices available to actors engaging in collective actions, or a

repertoire that varies chronologically (Tilly, 1978). Strategies of identification, then, constitute one set of choices available (Hall, 2000), but it is not without its limitations. Primary among these is the differentiation of undocumented students from other immigrants. Students privileged their own interests in and desire for educational access over other immigrant concerns.

This is not surprising given that youth advocacy was constrained by a ferociously stigmatized context. The undocumented community generally has been seen in the most negative terms:

> At best, they are tolerated; at worst, they are hunted down and forcibly deported. In everyday terms, most such migrants are consigned, either temporarily or permanently, to spaces that are structurally as well as geographically, socially, and politically peripheral. Within these marginal, abject zones, their everyday lives are framed by the experiential consequences of their peripheral status, variously epitomized as “illegality,” “irregularity,” “invisibility,” and “non-existence. (Willen, 2007, p. 2)

This experience of stigma is at the core of the immigration issue and means that DREAMers had fewer socially available ways to differentiate themselves from the default perception of “illegal aliens.” Furthermore, fear about their status becoming known added to the dilemma of immigration. Undocumented students not only *felt* the impact of discriminatory legislative policies but were *literally* “unable to express their discontent through regular and legitimate channels” (Boulding, 1969, p. vi).

The de facto criminalization of undocumented status meant that as rhetors, DREAMers had fewer strategic options available to them. That they began by

differentiating themselves within the larger immigrant community made sense, given the extent and negativity of stereotypes about immigrants. Ultimately, these strategic efforts countered the dehumanizing experience of being undocumented by shifting the focus from deficiency or deviant characteristics to the merits of youth working to attain postsecondary education despite insurmountable odds. Thus, the response to the highly charged argument against illegal immigrants uses positive characteristics to disavow the criminality central to charges against immigrants (Cacho, 2008).

In general, then, it is surprising that DREAMers were able to act at all, given the issues around undocumented status and the stigmatized context of immigration in which their early activism occurred. This study, however, shows just the opposite. Despite huge improbabilities, undocumented youth made demands for change from the governmental establishment (Laubenthal, 2007) in actions that must be called revolutionary, given the risks faced by the students. Both sets of strategies I presented--those that fostered a sense of identity consciousness around being undocumented and those that sought to appeal to legislators--are representative of the inception phase of the movement.[38] The emergence of a sense of personal agency (García Bedolla, 2005) combined with strong identification laid the groundwork for the future phases of the movement.

Testimonies and Transitions: Undocumented Youth Enter the Public Sphere

The first phase of the DREAMer movement might be said to have ended on May 18, 2007, which marked the transition to strategies that operated more officially in the public sphere. On this date, three brave undocumented students spoke about their experiences in person during the Congressional Hearing before the House Judiciary

(Comprehensive Immigration Reform, 2007b). The testimonials by Martine Kalaw, Marie Nazareth Gonzalez, and Tam Tran were orally presented and their transcripts made available online. Not only were undocumented students sharing their status with one another but they were also making that status public in the form of testimony.

The fact that students began to speak in public, using their names, signaled a distinct shift in movement tactics. These events mark the first signs of disclosing private information that would characterize the entire second phase of the movement. The unofficial policy of anonymity was officially broken when student narratives were shared personally and directly, rather than anonymously, to the very establishment that had power over the bill.

My own career as a student paralleled the undocumented youth movement. I had just graduated from a California State University during the very month my alma mater would establish the very first undocumented student support group on campus. In May 2006, CSULA students founded Students United to Reach Goals in Education (SURGE); before that, there had been no formal undocumented student organizing on campus. Instead, I had found solace in the confines of academic scholarship. Scholars and cultural activists like Gloria Anzaldúa were speaking my language, both literally and figuratively, and inspiring me to explore my personal experiences by demonstrating that my community was worthy of gracing the pages of the assigned books.

Anzaldúa (1987) reaffirmed my concerns by noting that she was on a similar quest to “seek new images of identity, new beliefs about ourselves, our humanity and worth no longer in question” (p. 109). Rhetorical scholars like Lisa Flores underscored this feeling by writing scholarly articles on the immigration issue that are now available

on academic databases. In my own desire to liberate my story, I found myself making the most radical move during my final semester of my MA program. I mustered the strength to write about my undocumented identity for a final research paper. With all the trepidation of the world, I managed to share with several professors my personal interest in this topic, and they encouraged me to pursue doctoral education in order to have a platform to theorize about these very issues. In hindsight, that event was when my personal and scholarly personas finally intersected.

Several months after the three undocumented students testified before Congress, I found myself in the University of New Mexico doctoral program. I cannot remember how I stumbled across them, but I distinctly remember being taken aback that these students would disclose their status in such a risky way. The transcripts would be the data for my first major paper as a doctoral student. I knew little then about the extent of such risk, but three years later, as I continued my research, I learned that Tam's act of breaking anonymity came with huge consequences.

Shortly after Tam's political testimony, she had agreed to be featured in a story for *USA Today*, and, on October 8, 2007, was quoted by first and last name as she spoke out about her immigration plight. Three days later, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials appeared at the then-24-year-old UCLA graduate's door and took her, her brother, and her parents into custody. While a representative for ICE said the Tran family's arrest by the agents "absolutely, unequivocally had nothing to do" with her advocacy (Kiely, 2007), this outcome nevertheless shook many of the undocumented students who learned about it. Her prophetic words take on a different meaning with knowledge of the events that shortly followed her account:

> The privilege of being able to speak today truly exemplifies the liminal state I always feel like I'm in. I am lucky because I do have a government ID that allowed me to board the plane here to share my story and give voice to thousands of other undocumented students who cannot. But I know that when I return home tonight, I'll become marginalized once again.(Comprehensive Immigration Reform, 2007b)

I reflect on this example to illustrate the discrepancy in my understanding of the movement then and now. Despite all my scholarly efforts to write an accurate thematic analysis of those testimonies, I was so far from knowing the extent and magnitude of the participation of these young adults. I had no sense of the context and multiple layers behind those personal accounts. More recently, after meeting Tam's brother and members of the UCLA group of which she was a part, I became particularly aware of how the act of providing testimony carried with it a ripple effect on the rhetorical actions that would follow. Matias Ramos, also from Tam's group, described the chilling effect it had on the active undocumented students to learn that Senator Tom Tancredo (R-CO) had immediately called for her to be deported. In a true "sign of the times" (Matias, personal communication, July 21, 2010), undocumented youth felt an added need to keep a low profile.

During this phase the DREAM Act legislation had not yet come up for a vote. In late 2007, that all changed when the non-threatening protest tactics of identification that characterized this era would be put to the test. When the DREAM Act finally was brought to a vote on October 24, 2007 for the first time since July 31, 2003, the vote was

52 to 44, short of the 60-vote margin needed to prevent a filibuster and begin debate on Capitol Hill.

Despite political analysis that this was the best timing for enactment of the bill, several factors resulted in the Senate voting down the DREAM Act. The redacted support of two Republican Senators, absenteeism of two Democratic supporters, and White House's efforts to dissuade passage all worked against the efforts and killed the possibility of enactment (Olivas, 2010b). The bill was disputed from both sides, "caught in the ironic pincers" of being too expansive "for conservative legislators who feared being tarred as supporting 'amnesty'" and too narrow by liberal legislators who feared "enacting it would torpedo the larger strategy of reforming overall immigration problems" (Olivas, 2010b, p. 64).

Tania Unzueta, co-Founder of Immigrant Youth Justice League, put it like this: "I pinned a lot of hopes for my future on the 2003 DREAM Act. It failed. I hoped again in 2007—to the same result" (kyledeb, 2010b). This failure came at the time when some high profile deportations of undocumented students were bringing more groups together. Moreover, this vote result basically catapulted the conversation by undocumented immigrant youth about the dire need to do something. Following the 2007 vote, undocumented immigrant youth made the resolve to speak out strongly about the act. The impact of that defeat was the creation of a full-fledged undocumented youth movement with a whole new set of used tactics.

Conclusion

In this section I mapped out the events from 2001 to 2007 that comprise a period of collective identity formation for the undocumented youth movement. The early phase

of the DREAMer movement was characterized by recognition of undocumented status and collective identity formation through online and campus groups. The rhetorical strategies that accompanied this phase of organizing focused on presenting a student identity and narrative petitions. The strategies of this phase aimed at creating awareness of DREAM-eligible students were through invitational efforts to affirm DREAM-eligible youth and alter perceptions of illegality. The self-identification and identification strategies with others presented here were important forms of invitational *and* agitative rhetoric that allowed for the inception of the DREAMer self-directed movement take shape.

In the next chapter, I presents the movement's second phase, characterized by a significant shift to national rhetorical activity combined with efforts at self-labeling. Undocumented students abandoned the focus on an exemplar student identity to instead focus on an identity as *undocumented and unafraid.*

CHAPTER 5

PHASE TWO: FROM ACRONYM TO IDENTITY

"My silence has not protected me. Your silence will not protect you." (Lorde, 1984, p. 20)

In the previous Chapter, I described how the DREAM social protest efforts took place within a relatively contained forum. I noted how the agitation efforts, based on the notion of the exemplar student, were mainly orchestrated by larger advocacy groups and addressed directly at official political figures. These appeals were unsuccessful as out-of-status college students did not muster the votes needed to enact the DREAM Act. This second phase describes the departure from such petitions and the move toward escalated efforts both within and outside of the social movement.

This chapter begins by analyzing the events immediately following the defeat of the DREAM Act vote in 2007 and continues through the Coming Out campaign in March 2010. I follow the developing self-representation strategies by DREAM-eligible youth who collectively forged and claimed an empowered DREAMer label. These self-representation efforts were evident in the creation of national organizations and in the public disclosure of undocumented status. The featured undocumented and unafraid identity was deployed in the external mobilization efforts where national visibility and coming out stories were used to legitimize the movement and diminish the stigma of immigration status. I end by previewing events that ended this phase and reflect on my increasing participation in this movement.

Backdrop: Vote Outcome

Despite the efforts of the prior phase and numerous pro-immigrant organizations in place as of late 2007, issues with nativism and general fear still permeated the disclosing of undocumented status. Youth who made their status publicly known still could anticipate a variety of negative consequences. Such was the case for Jesús Apodaca, who shared his need for funding for college with the media; as a result, Representative Tom Tancredo (R-CO) immediately requested that the Immigration and Naturalization Services (now Department of Homeland Security) find him and his undocumented family members and deport them immediately (Galindo, Medina, & Chávez, 2005). This second phase in the DREAM social movement started in a time period when undocumented youth were rightfully guarded about sharing that private information. Personally, as a PhD student, I remained unwilling to share information about my status freely because there was so much at stake.

Erick Huerta, a journalism student at East Los Angeles College, echoed the fear of divulging his status as doing so could result in deportation. He reminisced about the perils of status in an essay, "The Double Life of an Undocumented Student," in which he describes the difficulty of those early years, when he "was horribly depressed because all I had to look forward to in life was selling hot dogs, fruit, and shaved ice in a cart my dad owned. Not to mention that a decade of internalized oppression and instilled fear of *la migra* traumatized me" (Huerta, 2010).

Huerta (2010) shared how undocumented youth were compelled to take measures on par with Superman to conceal their identity status. He joked that Superman was arguably the most accomplished and literal manifestation of an "illegal alien" since he

immigrated to the US from another planet as an infant. Erick continued the comic-book metaphor when describing his own feelings:

> Sometimes I feel like a stressed-out comic book super hero, juggling multiple identities. Public opinion vilifies my kind, because people imagine that my kind spits venom or have two heads. The "so-called public" fears what it can't comprehend. It's as if people, collectively, have their fingers in their ears while yelling "lalalalala, I-can't-hear-you," but once you connect with them individually, one by one, they become open-minded, curious, smart…empathetic.

Without missing a beat, he pondered where ICE would deport Superman if the e-verify system catches up with him.

The allegory is humorous, but he was serious when he referred to the valor it took for students such as Tam Tram, one of first undocumented students to go public by testifying before Congress, to speak out. The first acts of vocality instilled "courage to stop feeling bad for myself, to make the best of the situation and carry on," (Huerta, 2010). This was true not only for Huerta but for numerous other undocumented youth.

At the same time that DREAMers continued to struggle with the disclosure of status and the failure of the DREAM Act vote, their efforts were beginning to be noticed by journalists, scholars, professional associations, and policy analysts alike (Olivas, 2010b). The considerable media, research, and policy debates about the issue, despite the small size of undocumented college student population in comparison to the larger scheme of things, was attributed in part to the efforts to bring attention to the bill (Olivas, 2010b, p. 52).

The failure of the DREAM Act vote in October 24, 2007 gave DREAMers reason to begin to question their tactics. After a highly charged debate in the U.S. Senate in May and June, Senator Durbin pleaded with his fellow legislators to "give these kids a chance. Don't take your anger out on illegal immigration on children who have nothing to say about this" (Comprehensive Immigration Reform, 2007a). While the vote was meant to represent a "less controversial issue that speaks to basic issues of fairness and justice" (Redden, 2007), opposing lawmakers argued that showing sympathy for DREAM-eligible youth would reward illegal entry into the United States. Senator Steve King (R-IA) took aim at the use of the testimonies of DREAM-eligible youth, noting they would not "legislate by anecdotes," and while his "heart goes out to all those who aren't in control of their destiny, the United States needs to be in control of its own destiny" (Comprehensive Immigration Reform, 2007a). The failed vote was a crushing disappointment to the undocumented youth who had put their hopes in its enactment.

However, rather than hopelessness, the vote was met with a new resolve and created an incentive for undocumented youth to question their fear of vocality. The following post demonstrates both an acknowledgment of the frustration around the failed vote and the need to respond in a productive way:

> To DREAMers across America—I know this wait is the hardest time. I know life in limbo is harsh like life in a prison, only you have committed no crime. But remember, we have the power to make this wait productive, to take this time as a test—a character-building exercise—and, to end this wait. Take each defeat as a learning lesson, as a challenge to do better and get better [un]till you beat every test. (Lal, 2008)

Those invested in the DREAM Act and already well-connected through the flourishing Dream Act Portal (DAP, n.d.) were introspective about what else could have been done to prompt a different outcome. Attuned to the legalized obstacles that would be removed with the enactment of the DREAM Act bill, the conversation shifted to ways in which they could affect the legislative vote in their favor in the future. Immigrant youth out of necessity, rather than choice, felt a need to build the capacity of the collective movement by taking their agitation efforts to a national level. This took on the shape in the use of self-representation strategies to offset the dehumanizing aspects of being categorized as illegal aliens as well as strategies designed to more forcefully address the opposition of legislators and the general public. I begin by tracing the trajectory of internal and external youth mobilization efforts to bring about the enactment of the bill characterized in the time frame.

Strategies of Self-Representation

Strategies of identification continued to critically drive the social movement as undocumented immigrant youth heightened their resolve to pass the DREAM Act. Much of 2009 was characterized by strategies that elevated the unified identity of undocumented youth as *DREAMers*. By early 2010, they were using an undocumented and unafraid persona in the public sphere. Whereas the identification strategies of the previous phase concentrated on educating through similarity with the opposition, the strategies of this phase were characterized by identification with their status as "undocumented" in a visible public way. I describe the self-representation strategies that emerged as: (1) self-directed organizing; (2) self-labeling as DREAMers; and (3) displayed politicized consciousness.

Self-Directed Organizing

A prominent part of this phase was the efforts by undocumented immigrant youth to build new networks and groups that facilitated organizing efforts. This response to the vote defeat resulted in the creation of organizations that would establish a national sense of self-representation. I describe in this section how two national organizations, Dream Activist and UWD, were created and how coalitions allowed youth to engage in advocacy based on a self-reliant sense of agency around the *DREAMer label.*

The move toward national organizing began after a handful of active members of DREAM Act Portal (DAP) took the failed DREAM-Act vote to mean there had been insufficient advocacy efforts on the part of DREAM-eligible youth. This general sentiment, coupled with a desire to self-direct the movement, rather than relying on staff members and others who were not personally affected by undocumented status, resulted in efforts to organize so that more highly organized and national collective action was possible.

At this time, DAP was the only forum available that connected undocumented immigrant youth. And while that purpose was well met, there was concern about the lack of attention to advocacy per se. One of the members expressed concerns that the site had a discrepancy between "what some of us think DAP is and what the creators/moderators think it is" (Lu001, 2009). Despite consensus that DAP was indeed providing a safe space for DREAMers and fostering community connections, the biggest critique was that DAP *could* but was not meeting its potential to coordinate direct action activities and should be optimized to meet that goal. Becca, one of these active DAP members noted

that the vote aftermath had them question if the networking efforts of Dream Act Portal were adequate for the ultimate goal of getting the DREAM bill passed:

> I remember everyone was so bummed after everything that happened, and a few of us were talking online by then. I remember we kept ranting about DAP right after the vote happened; people seemed to think that if you called enough, the DREAM Act would pass. That prevailing thought was "you have to call senators." That's all we did. That's what organizing was. There was no organizing. All you did was call your senator and it was frustrating because you would try to get people to do something, and I would start these threads about how we need to organize and have a solid foundation and two people would respond "Yeah, that's nice…we should call our senators." It was so frustrating. After the vote, those of us who were talking outside of DAP, felt like it was missing that element. (Becca, personal communication, July 20, 2010)

The desire for more than an information-based social networking site did not lead to efforts to revamp the DAP site, but rather resulted in the creation of an alternative networking site altogether.

Envisioning a site that would have the capacity to mobilize undocumented immigrant youth beyond just calling the senators, members of the DAP decided to start an activism-based website:

> We got closer to the vote, and I was frustrated because no one would do advocacy. Then the DREAM [Act] came up for vote and failed. A month later was when we started talking about the Dream Activist site. The site was based on the notion that a lot of information was all great, but we needed to have an

> advocacy spin to it and give people something to actually do it and have action. That's how we started it, and it's funny because I looked at the initial minutes and the proposal of what we wanted to do, and we've pretty much stuck to it, which is pretty cool. (Mohammad, personal interview, November 11, 2010)

That idea led to what became dreamactivist.org (Dream Activist, n.d.), a site primarily dedicated to the passage of the federal DREAM Act. The goal was to build a site that could facilitate the coalition of advocacy efforts and serve as the national link to help organizations, communities and individuals come together to find new ways to achieve meaningful pro-migrant reform. Dreamactivist.org branded itself as such: "We are undocumented students that are working 24-7 for other undocumented students, families and allies, and we approach this with the understanding that *this is not just a cause; it is our lives"* (Dream Activist, n.d.).

While building Dream Activist behind the scenes, co-founder Prerna Lal blogged at Dream Deferred, a site that pitched itself "as a place for these students to tell their story anonymously and an opportunity for you to *do something*" (A Dream Deferred, "Home," n.d.). By then, several folks from Dream Act Portal joined in the efforts to work on the Dream Activist website. However, the lack of funding gave way to a focus on petitioning efforts through DreamAct2009.com. That was the site used to successfully gather over 8,000 signatures, managing to "grow the largest of any online pro-migrant actions that demanded a pledge from the Presidential candidates to sign the DREAM Act into law within the first 100 days in office" (Dream Activist, 2008).

Social networking sites were the main action-driving forces during the year following the failed vote. New social media and communication technologies were clear

tools that helped facilitate the potential of DREAM activism (Garrett, 2006). These concurrent social-networking efforts dedicated to bringing attention to the DREAM Act made the Internet the home to a growing and vibrant online community of DREAMers.

By October 24, 2008, the date marking the anniversary of the DREAM Act dreams-deferred vote, the online contingent of undocumented youth made a unified effort to publicize a *Day-of-Action.* This day was meant to remind members of Congress of the need for immigration reform that would remind them of existence of youth without legal status in the United States. These online efforts confirmed that the vote had been seen by undocumented youth as a sign of deferment rather than finality.

The scope and reach of the DREAM movement was greatly expanded by internal organizing efforts. On September 2008, three key undocumented figures, Prerna, Matias and Mohammed, became friends through the publishing of *Underground Undergrads: UCLA Undocumented Immigrant Students Speak Out,* written by the students themselves (UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education, 2008a). The book featured stories of undocumented immigrant students from University of California Los Angeles and their issues of access to higher education and brought further attention to the fact that exceptional students were going through college despite being undocumented.

The book brought together students who would take a leadership role in creating an *uninstitutionalized collectivity* (Stewart et al., 2007). Using the Internet to search for other undocumented youth, Mohammad, Prerna, and Matias worked to create an identifiable youth membership by contacting undocumented students to bring them on board with the plans to formally organize. Undocumented students thus were more likely to be informed about the DREAM Act and to have the option of how to get involved in

local DREAM Act groups movement. Pulido's (2006) statement reminds us that these are vital aspects in social movement activism:

> While politically conscious individuals are essential to social movements and political struggle, they are not enough. Without the presence of political organizations, counterhegemonic activity would be limited to rebellion and random acts of protest. Organizations and groups are the essential building blocks of movements, as they provide the space where like-minded individuals coalesce and can accomplish a great deal more collectively than alone. (p. 89)

The critical shift in the formation of an independent social movement occurred when undocumented youth broke from organizing under the banner of established immigrant organizations and began to organize for themselves.

As is the case with all grassroots movements, the bottom-up efforts to start official DREAM organizations were important feature of this phase. By the end of 2008, two organizations, UWD and Dream Activist joined forces, providing a solid foundation for DREAM Act advocacy on its own terms. Pro-migrant organizations had been directing the fight for the DREAM Act, and while those persuasive efforts were a functional first step, a major shift occurred when undocumented youth broke away from parent organizations to create structures of their own. Instead of continuing to organize and exist solely as products of top-down organizations, DREAM youth who came of age since the introduction of the DREAM Act favored more direct action toward achieving their objectives. The growing number of invested youth recognized a lack of "national infrastructure to sustain the energy and growing political astuteness of undocumented youth and immigrant youth organizers" (UWD, n.d.). To address this shortcoming,

UWD established a board whose members were undocumented immigrant youth who would direct the movement agenda. At the same time, Dream Activist took over the web site responsibilities.

A particularly important event was the first national Strategy Field Meeting in December 2008. This was the first convening of young people from across the country with the concentrated goal of becoming the national link to aid organizations, communities, and individuals in coming together to find new ways to achieve the passage of the DREAM Act. The national meeting created the space and opportunity for undocumented students to reflect and plan for further DREAM Act activism on their own terms. UWD was credited for having a uniting effect as they "had a lot to do with bringing people together that otherwise would not be together" (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 19, 2010). The UWD web site elaborates:

> From the meeting, it was clear that an informal coalition structure could no longer suffice to sustain the much broader long-term vision of building an immigrant youth movement well beyond advocating for a change in immigration laws. Furthermore, there was a shared vision by key youth leadership that a national structure should be created that was led by young people whose lives are directly impacted by unjust immigration laws. (UWD, n.d.)

The December 2008 meeting proved to be an important event for several reasons. First, it facilitated the collaboration between the key figures of UWD and the co-founders of Dream Activist. In part, this meeting "burst the bubble" of isolation. Until this time, people had been working on individualized state efforts without necessarily connecting their on-the-ground efforts collectively. The agreement to have the Dream Activist

domain serve as the national website was one of the important outcomes of that field meeting. Prerna and Mohammad, co-administrators and co-founders who had been working on building the Dream Activist site thus far, were invited to participate:

> I was there with Prerna, and they told us that in the past they had tried to get a website . . . So we talked about that and decided to make dreamactivist.org the official website for the campaign for the session. That is where the confusion about who UWD versus who Dream Activist is comes from. We are just the website representing the voice of all of these groups and exist for messaging purposing, not organizing capacity. (Mohammad, personal communication, November 11, 2010)

Since UWD did not have a self-sustained website, the members of UWD agreed to use dreamactivist.org as a way to disseminate information about the advocacy efforts that would now be led by the undocumented youth themselves. Prerna described how the website was meant to be the “Watchtower of United We Dream,” with efforts made to “make sure the right hand knows what the left hand is doing, disseminate information, our students and allies are ‘in the loop’ through various channels, while we work to change the discourse of the immigration debate” (Branson, 2009).

That vision was to create a “space for the undocumented youth to share, grow, and lead within the immigrant-rights movement” (UWD, n.d.). The vision for a sustainable, grassroots movement led by immigrant youth was one that would work towards the mission of equal access to higher education regardless of immigration status. A structure was then in place to organize efforts into teams, including a steering committee, communication plans, and a policy team. The union of Dream Activist and

UWD meant broader strategies could be enacted, and event planning and alliance building could be more streamlined.

Student groups began to launch and amplify the membership of active undocumented youth across the country. A number of youth-led state-wide immigrant-rights organizations were created in states with large concentration of undocumented immigrant and undocumented youth, including Illinois, New York, Florida, and Michigan. Undocumented youth in these states saw the online work as impractical without simultaneous efforts to have on the ground activities. By 2008, New York Student Youth Leadership Council (NYSYLC), Students Working For Equal Rights (SWER), Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL), Kansas Missouri Dream Alliance (KM/DA), and ONE Michigan were all actively engaging students, educators, and parents locally, regionally, and nationally on behalf of equal access to higher education for immigrant students. The websites for these groups have similar goals: to collectively work "towards full recognition of the rights and contributions of all immigrants through education, leadership development, policy advocacy, resource gathering, and mobilization" (IYJL, 2011).

The IYJL in particular began when Rigoberto Padilla, a junior at the University of Illinois in Chicago, was placed in deportation proceedings due to a misdemeanor-driving violation. Its website described how, after coming together to fight that deportation, they realized "the power that comes when we are able to speak for ourselves, and have a community of allies around us to support us" (IYJL, 2011). They were successful in getting the deportation halted, which was a turning point for the undocumented youth of Chicago.

Padilla’s situation was not the only deportation case that gained national prominence; there were a number of other high-profile deportation cases of honor students that were put in proceedings. During this phase of the movement, there were various coordinated efforts between the “blogosphere” and local organizations that resulted in many successful fights against the deportation of students, including Padilla. This allowed undocumented youth to put a system in place so they could assist immigrant youth facing imminent threats of removal from the country.

These self-organizing efforts that were visible in the creation of state and national organizations yielded increased membership, more undocumented youth in leadership positions, and a more sophisticated capacity for communication by/about undocumented youth (Stewart et al., 2007). By the time Dream Activist and UWD formed a limited liability company called Active DREAMS LLC in July, 2009, the DREAM movement featured a strong online and mobile network whereby interested youth could sign up to receive critical action alerts. By then, they had increased the size and capacity of the movement membership base to a mailing list of about 60,000 people.

I spent this section describing the collaborative efforts that functioned to organize nationally and to mobilize undocumented youth at a collective national level. The increased capacity meant that youth would have the ability to enact “new strategies, avenues and building new coalitions . . . only on a different scale” (Dream Activist, 2009a). The combined organization then could make claims about the existence of a unified and powerful interest group (Armstrong, 2002), which allowed for more participants to have a voice in the efforts to enact policy change. In the next section, I discuss the significance of a self-naming efforts demonstrated by undocumented youth.

Self-Naming

It was during this climate of optimism and national movement-building efforts that another key element of the social movement was evident, that of self-naming. Jasper (1997) notes that naming is an important component in the construction of political realities of social movement protestors as "naming of one's own group or movement is an important part of creating an identity in whose name the movement justifies its own action" (p. 103). This was an important part of the self-representation efforts of this phase.

The first main example of self-naming was visible with youth taking the acronym from DREAM-Act legislation and assigning it a deeper meaning. The DREAM acronym comes directly from the legislation that the activists were working to enact: Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act. The use of DREAM, on the most basic of levels, stems from the need for a shorter and easier way to reference the bill. However, my analysis indicates that this label was representative of a much more complex and significant naming process.

Adopting the DREAMer label was the first tactic that undocumented youth used to increase their agency and empower themselves to speak out. A key dimension in campaign messaging is the recurring reference to the word *dream* to demarcate the purposeful efforts to enact the DREAM Act.[39] A practical function of the DREAM label is to use it to reference DREAM Act-eligible individuals in a way other than illegal aliens. This is not unique to social movement efforts that use labeling to create a specific "symbolic reality" built on positive rather than negative associations (Stewart et al., 2007, p. 170). David noted the importance of calling "ourselves a better name, and DREAMers

is a very positive name and lets us start off the debate on a positive tone, just like the anti-immigrant discourse starts the debate a very negative tone with the term *illegal alien*" (David, personal communication, July 20, 2010).

The participants in the movement used self-labeling as a way to counter the negative epithet of illegal alien. The terminology of illegal alien has garnered significant attention by law and humanities scholars alike, who have noted the prominence of this legal description that emphasizes foreignness (Ngai, 2004). The category has been shown to be a powerful rationalization tool to justify harsh treatment and restrictive immigration policy (Flores, 2003; Johnson, 2004; Nevins, 2002). Ono and Sloop (2002) showed how shifting a rhetorical label can shift "borders, changing what they mean publicly, influencing public policy, altering the ways borders affect people, and political responses" (p.5). However, the strategy of adopting the DREAMer label was not just as a replacement term for illegal alien.

My analysis shows that the label of *DREAMers* was a shared way to describe themselves to reflect a unique identity. The self-identification efforts to name themselves came from the "fact that so many of us have used that to create our identity. It's sort of both" (Matias, personal communication, July 21, 2010). The explanation of this process is shown to be much more complex than as solely functioning to be an alternative descriptor. Rather, I show the clear efforts from the movement's participants to make it an alternative *identity,* in addition to using self-labeling as a way to affect the social category under which they made their claims. Becca noted the significance of this shared identity in the way it confronts the marginalizing immigrant youth experience:

> So to me it's an identity of its own. I know for some people it's the only identity that they had because they haven't had the opportunity to develop any other identity or share it with being undocumented and queer or undocumented and whatever. I think there are multiple layers to that identity component. (Becca, personal communication, July 21, 2010)

During the UWD second annual Field Strategy Meeting, held in February 2010, 46 DREAM-eligible student leaders from 15 states gathered in Minnesota to deal with the need to self-define who they were as a movement. They had come together to envision, reflect, and plan for future DREAM Act activism and found themselves having to directly address how identity was a necessary part of that equation. They realized that in addition to coming up with future externally driven national strategies, the internal aspect of self-identification was also a large part of the agenda for those in attendance. Becca described this to be part of forging a collective movement:

> We met together as a network to figure out how we were going to move forward, what we were going to do, what goals and tactics we wanted to use. It was interesting because when we started having all these conversations, is when the whole DREAMer identity and how it can be different for different people came up. (Becca, personal communication, July 21, 2010)

Noting that those in attendance were a different "generation of DREAMers," this field meeting explicitly addressed the self-labeling issue by actively deferring to what undocumented youth wanted, since they were the ones impacted by the decisions of the group.

The problematizing of the identity of undocumented students and the creation of a DREAMer identity as an alternative to labels dominant in society was central to this phase of the movement. Becca's comment above illustrates how supporters of the DREAM Act were forced to address the issue of complexity of identity in the effort to come together as a collective movement. The issue of identity became the core theme for activists working toward passage of the bill, showing the importance behind the identity label. The naming effort is an example of the larger self-representation efforts, since this move allowed participants to address the deeper issues involved with the assumed label and created the space to self-describe and thus re-conceptualize what it meant to be undocumented.

There was a second way in which self-naming process took place during this phase. DREAMer label was used to create a distinctive and shared identity that could serve as the foundation for social protest efforts, but there was also an equal effort to make claim of their undocumented status. To further develop this self-identity, the next move was for the youth to take the identity public. The process of going public featured the notion of being undocumented and unafraid. This strategy was evident in the coming-out campaign effort to demystify the parlaying power of deportation. DREAMers chose to explicitly frame identity as a way to regain control of their self-representation:

> Undocumented youth all over this country finally come out of the shadows and lay claim to their own futures. No longer will we let ourselves be intimidated, scared and ashamed. We have worked long and hard, we have risen to meet every challenge and we have made this country a better place for all. And yet, we are

> relegated to live in fear. So let us come out and end this fear. (Dream Activist, NYSYLC, & UWD, 2010)

To this end, a national Coming Out Day and Coming Out Week was scheduled for March 15 through 21, 2010.

Consequently, I argue the attention to the DREAMer label was a strategic effort to construct a sense of self *qua undocumented* and thus to demand value based on lacking status (Kruks, 2001). To challenge the conception of illegality, there was a communal idea to "make being undocumented cool" (Mohammad, personal communication, November 11, 2010). This demonstrates that the youth were no longer conforming to the characteristic of the opposition but engaged with political discourse in a much different way. Sonia Kruks (2001) noted that social movements of marginalized groups in the past have used this strategy in similar ways:

> What makes identity politics a significant departure from earlier, pre-identarian forms of the politics of recognition is its demand for recognition on the basis of the very grounds on which recognition has previously been denied: it is *qua* women, *qua* blacks, *qua* lesbians that groups demand recognition. The demand is not for inclusion within the fold of 'universal humankind' on the basis of shared human attributes; nor is it for respect 'in spite of' one's differences. Rather, what is demanded, is respect for oneself *as* different. (p. 85)

Dream Activist, New York State Youth Leadership Council (NYSYLC), and UWD Network all collaborated to put together and post the guidebook for undocumented immigrant youth to use at the coming-out event[40]. *Coming Out: A How To Guide* (Dream Activist et al., 2010) was made available for use by undocumented youth who had

decided to publicly share their undocumented status with others.[41] The guide was meant to help DREAMers work through the fears by creating an individualized coming-out plan "right for them," depending on their level of comfort. The strategy was attributed to the gay and lesbian social movement whose signature contribution was gay liberation through the strategy of coming out (Armstrong, 2002).

The *Coming Out* guide opened with clear explanation for the use of this tact:

> Congratulations! You have decided to come out of the shadows about your undocumented status. Perhaps you have finally decided to tell your friends why you haven't signed up for your drivers' ed. class or why you still don't drive to school. Maybe, you will come out to your guidance counselor, who has asked you repeatedly to turn in your college application, but you were too afraid to tell him/her that you don't have a social security number and that you still don't know how you will pay for college without financial aid. (Dream Activist et al., 2010)

Given the risks of disclosure, the guide also spoke to managing the anxiety and demonstrated this was not an impetuous move. One of the organizers of the event in Chicago noted that it was not as though undocumented students had hastily woken up and said "this is a good day to get arrested" (Jones, 2010), but a calculated move to take control of and assume agency in the identity-creation process. In sharing the experiences of being undocumented instead of intently keeping it a secret, I next outline how it worked directly to augment DREAMers' consciousness and agency.

Politicized Consciousness

In the previous phase, I argued that the awareness of status and connections with others had raised the consciousness of undocumented youth and equipped them with the

framework necessary to advocate for political rights. This phase showed a striking difference in the self-identification process, as youth now featured *oppositional consciousness* evident "when a group develops an account that challenges dominant understanding" (Taylor & Whittier, 1999, p. 179). The heightened level of consciousness demonstrated by undocumented youth is a key feature of this phase.

This distinguishing feature of the undocumented youth movement demonstrates an awareness of the multiple factors that informed the undocumented identity re-creation process. My findings suggest that the self-identification efforts were multidimensional and aimed at confronting intersecting oppressions (Dream Activist et al., 2010), a concept heavily featured in the theorizing of Black and Chicana feminist scholars (Anzaldúa, 1987; Collins, 2000; hooks, 1994; Lorde, 1982; Sandoval, 2000).

By emphasizing coming out, the movement not only solidified a sense of voice but allowed students to voice their concerns on their own terms. Even though using the DREAMers terminology allowed for a positive label and sense of identity, this set of strategies took on the task of confronting identity in a more substantial way. The strength to defy fear vis-à-vis the social protest efforts reduced fear, changing the idea of label:

> I want to talk about what this movement has given for me. To be able to come up here and say that I am undocumented and unafraid and the consciousness that these people have given me for the last two years fighting side by side has been amazing. (Daniel, Personal communication, August 23, 2010)

Daniel's comment helps crystallize the resulting effects of his activism by showing how adopting the label led to a much stronger sense of agency. A Texas-based DREAMer,

articulated the self-defining process as also having increased their capacity to affect more change:

> I think it's people realizing they are not alone, and feeling like they can come out because it's empowering because they can claim it. They have support and because they are not afraid anymore, and are more educated about the issue, the stronger we are as a movement, more change we can affect. (David, personal communication, July 20, 2010)

A second consequence of this campaign was that DREAMers were refusing the negative scripts of inferiority offered by the dominant culture. By disclosing the private information of their undocumented status, DREAMers showed an empowered agentic orientation (Foss, Waters, & Armada, 2007). Additional examples of the politicized sense of agency were most evident in the introduction of the *Coming Out* guide:

> Please remember you are not alone. You are part of a large community of courageous undocumented youth who have decided to come out of the shadows about our immigration status. We live every day in fear and we are tired of it. We want to be able to talk about our lives and our stories without fearing persecution or deportation. We are not free to travel, go to school, work, live, **but we refuse to be helpless**. In the same way the LGBTQ community has historically come out, undocumented youth, some of whom are also part of the LGBTQ community, have decided to speak openly about their status.
>
> Your courage will open the way to having even more conversations about your immigration status. Sharing your stories will allow us, as a movement of undocumented youth, to grow, as we continue to learn to accept ourselves. By

being more open we will begin replacing fear with courage and, ultimately, be united in our demands for change. You will be surprised how little other people know about the realities of being undocumented. People who know someone who is gay or lesbian are more likely to support equal rights for all gay and lesbian people, the same follows for people who know someone who is undocumented. Also note, if you must also confront intersecting oppressions (i.e. Gender, Race, Class, Sexual orientation), coming out about your status is one of the many hurdles for liberation. (Dream Activist et al., 2010)

The *Coming Out* guide also provided a pyramid illustration of the various other activists that could counter any notion of inferiority, as captured in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Coming Out Pyramid (Dream Activist et al., 2010)

The rhetoric of undocumented youth during this phase of the movement emulated the themes from the Black and Chicana/o movements and can be seen as a logical extension of those efforts. The DREAM movement's construction of a positive identity explicitly borrowed from the Chicano Movement (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Flores & Hasian, 1997; Hammerback & Jensen, 1994; Jensen et al., 2003; Sedaño, 1980). Cordova (1999) described themes of the Chicana feminist social movement, including

resisting passivity, stereotypes, legal struggles, and the fact that experiences can only be understood as multiple layers of oppression by those who experience them. These themes are similar to those confronted by DREAMers. Lizbeth summarized the ways the DREAM movement was similar to *el movimiento* in Chicana/o organizing, where focus was placed on self-description as an alternative to negative labels (Murrilo, 2004):

> It took a lot of work… just like the same way of calling yourself undocumented, which is, whoa! You don't do that. It was the same thing with the Chicano movement, and how young people started using that term to empower themselves. They said, "wait, you're going to call me that anyways, so I'll take that term and I'll turn it into something positive and give it a new definition. When you call me that you're not going to be putting me down anymore, but empowering me, and calling me something I accept, because I've redefined it." It's the same thing with [DREAM] movement. It has taken time to say: "I am undocumented." But I think young people in every movement have made that turning point happen. (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 19, 2010)

The *Coming Out* guide (Dream Activist et al., 2010) was another instance of linking to previous social justice movements.[42] This was resonant of the ego-function in social protest rhetoric as first presented by Gregg in 1971 (see also DeLuca, 1999; Stewart, 1999). Not unlike efforts by Black Power activists (Stewart, 1999), the Young Lords Organization (Enck-Wanzer, 2006), and the Chicano movement (Delgado, 1995), DREAMers efforts to show similarities with previous social justice movements also "helped constitute, maintain, and defend advantageous conceptions of the self" (Morris & Brown, 2006, p. 3).

Similarly, DREAMers aimed to overcome the silence by describing their own conditions and experiences. These efforts showed that DREAMers would "no longer allow others to speak our stories and define our identities for us. To make the fight our own, we must own the fight, starting with coming to terms with and recognizing the undocumented portion of our identity" (Becca, personal communication, July 21, 2010). The self-identification phase of the movement points to a very conscious effort to regain voice and agency.

This interpretation suggests earlier social movements played a role in the self-representation strategies used by DREAMers. However one point of difference to bring to light is that while Chicano/a activists subverted the *Chicano* label, DREAMer efforts did not feature efforts to dismantle the pejorative views around the word *illega*l, but to find a alternative term. The efforts showed that activists rejected the word illegal and renamed and self-labeled under *undocumented and unafraid,* and more specifically, *DREAMer*. Nonetheless, similar sentiment behind the change was for students to make use of labels in order to "occupy a discursive space designed not to alienate or subjugate [. . .] but to transform them and generate new possibilities" (Delgado, 1995, p. 453).

In this section, I have described the consequences of DREAMers' internal self-representation strategy. Speaking for themselves and taking ownership of the movement is a functional outcome from tactics aimed at moving the participants from victims to agents with voice. This identity functioned to mobilize the youth, who began presenting a symbolic and unified group identity as undocumented and unafraid. While I have shown how this enhanced their feelings of empowerment and self-worth, there was another important effort beyond these internal efforts. I next focus on the attempts to

extend their visibility and vocality into the public sphere as part of the political strategy for passing the DREAM Act.

Strategies of Public Visibility

The efforts of this phase included external efforts aimed at the concrete goal of passing the DREAM Act. In this phase, then, DREAMers worked toward a political operation that was sophisticated enough to exist on a sustained national level, and in the process, the appeals took a much different tone. For this section, I highlight the coordinated features that reinforced the strategic efforts of visibility through the following: (1) national campaigns for legislators and the general public; and (2) public stories.

These efforts took place during the start of a sympathetic administration. As a candidate, Barack Obama had promised immediately "to pass the DREAM Act . . . That's going to be a top priority" (On the Issues, 2008). This fueled DREAM optimism, and with Obama's entry into the executive office came high hopes that were only furthered when Congress reintroduced the DREAM Act (S. 729, 2009) and American DREAM Act (H.R. 1751, 2009) on March 27, 2009. DREAM activism was now literally on the map,[43] and the youth involved wanted to be part of the momentum, which further increased grassroots efforts.

While youth organizing and volunteering during the presidential election and subsequent victory for Barack Obama (Dahl, 2008) led to certain expectations for Obama's presidency in terms of the DREAM Act, the Bill took a backseat as Obama's presidency was forced to focus on the housing-market crash and severe economic downturn. This left young people "feeling as if they're sitting on a bus that's out of

service" (Ramos, 2010) and that the Obama administration was no longer listening to their needs and concerns. President Obama essentially declared the issue was no longer top of the president's priority list during 2010, turning his focus instead to gridlock in Congress over health-care reform and midterm elections (Youngman, 2010).

National Campaigns

When the DREAM Act was given a back seat in the Obama administration, DREAMers developed strategies designed to both pressure federal legislators to vote for the DREAM Act and to gain public support through acts of greater visibility. The driving approach behind this goal of national visibility was the aim of demonstrating the existence of a national movement so that recognition would be forthcoming from both legislators and community. Blogger Kyle de Beausset joked in a post about the emerging movement and its effort at increased visibility that "if you're on the Internet and you haven't heard of the DREAM Act, you're not doing it right. Seriously, just throw your computer out the window right now. Keeping your computer is not worth your money or your time" (Kyledeb, 2009).

The national mobilizing campaign aimed to showcase members from different states and signal an increased collective group power through symbolic public acts at a national level. By using "visibility politics," DREAMers essentially marked "their bodies to publicly announce their refusal to be invisible" (Olson, Finnegan, & Hope, 2008). The movement achieved this rhetorical goal by staging public and nationally geared events to bring attention to the now-established movement. One such event was the National DREAM Graduation and Solidarity Actions campaign. While there was a similar event held in 2004, which I discussed in the previous chapter, this event was

different for a number of reasons. The 2004 graduation went virtually unnoticed by the media, and because of this lack of publicity, the 2009 Graduation was considered the first of its type.

The National DREAM Graduation and Solidarity Actions of June 23, 2009 were touted as strictly youth initiated. The national graduation ceremony was held in Washington DC, which allowed youth to descend on the Capitol wearing caps and gowns, thus bringing public attention to the growing membership base of the DREAM movement. DREAM-eligible youth from all over the country (along with education, faith, business, immigrant, and civil rights leaders) participated in the ceremony to celebrate the achievements of their collective self-organizing and exercise their growing sense of political agency. The event was a strategy of visibility to demonstrate that immigration status would not be a roadblock for undocumented youth seeking to move forward.[44]

This DREAM graduation deviated from the type of legislative efforts that had come to characterize the strategies of the previous phase. The event included the founding members of Dream Activist and UWD, who played a leadership role in the event; members of these organizations served as Master of Ceremony and speakers during the graduation. During the ceremony, one of the founding members of Dream Activist encouraged the undocumented youth in attendance to continue to organize collectively and choose to stay on the path of resistance. One founding member spoke to the crowd of students with the following statement:

> The situation we find ourselves in makes it so much harder to get up and face the world every day, but the more struggles we face, the more worth fighting for it

> must be. We can lead protective lives, hiding away from reality and immigration authorities. Or, we can take on the things that scare us the most. I ask you today to make the choice to fight. (Dream Activist, 2009b)

Another point of difference is that unlike the Ceremony of 2004, in this event, the undocumented youth who gave the keynote addresses used their full names; signaling a stride towards vocality. The choice of speakers at the graduation not only was designed to bring attention to the larger DREAM cause but to put a face to the individual DREAMers who were in the middle of high-profile deportation proceedings. One such speaker was Benita Veliz, from San Antonio, a DREAMer who was pulled over by police for a routine traffic violation and subsequently detained for not having a driver's license. A valedictorian at Jefferson High School, who graduated at age 16 and attended St. Mary's University in San Antonio on a full scholarship, she had decided to go public about her deportation case (Downes, 2009).

Veliz's story received national coverage from mainstream outlets ranging from *The New York Times*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *San Antonio Express-News* and Spanish television media stations. There was a whole campaign dedicated to her cause on a Facebook group called "Don't Deport Benita Veliz," designed not only to bring attention to Veliz's case but to have her serve as a representative of "kids all across the nation in this situation who are not free to speak out" (Ludwig, 2009). Another graduation speaker was Walter Lara from Florida, an honor student who lived in the US since age three, but was being deported after ICE detained him while he was boarding a ferry (Thomas, 2009). Both speakers were going through similar deportation proceedings, so the

selection of these speakers was a strategic choice to bring visibility to the fact that this issue affected individuals from all parts of the country.

The tactic to feature those in deportation proceedings was a significant external strategy to bring attention to the growing membership and to the need for legislators to take action. The "Education Not Deportation" (END) campaign was an overarching effort to educate policymakers, promote legal advocacy, and target the media to promote long-term solutions to current immigration laws (UWD, n.d.). The campaign was used to highlight the existence of the deportations of young people who could not continue pursuing higher education and live in the United States because of unjust immigration laws. In this way, the END campaign built on the momentum created by earlier local campaigns. By calling for an end to the deportations of all immigrant youth, and using real names in the process, DREAMers signaled that they were advocating at a different level from before.

Dream Activist also had reached out to existing campus organizations and arranged for solidarity events to be hosted by undocumented immigrant youth all across the country. Most of these solidarity actions consisted of similar graduation ceremonies replicated on a smaller scale across 16 states coast to coast (Dream Activist, 2009b). These actions, done in concert with the national effort, were listed on the website along with contact information so that undocumented youth in participating states interested in participating in these efforts could easily attend.

While most of the action programs duplicated the symbolic graduation ceremony locally, some chose to engage in different and creative actions of visibility. Florida activists took the approach of setting up a full classroom at an outside courtyard of Miami

Dade College with "DO NOT ENTER" tape surrounding it. Meanwhile, members of Students Working for Equal Rights (SWER), DREAMers, and student-government presidents from various Florida campuses spoke to the press about the obstacles DREAMers face in achieving higher education degrees. This move to bring the issue to the campus allowed participants to expose the problem faced by DREAM-eligible youth to the school community.

The success of the summer graduation resulted in continued efforts to push for national visibility. After mobilizing at the Capitol, the movement aimed to bring that visibility of the movement to school campuses across the country with the September 23, 2009, National Back to School DREAM Act Day of Action. Participating members were asked to host events at their respective schools to bring attention to the cause, and the result was 125 actions throughout 26 states. Most of the events were "small but self-initiated" by both established and newly formed groups. The University of New Mexico, through the Raza Graduate Student Association, was one of these participating members; UNM put together a call drive to encourage people to call New Mexico senators.

The existence of a DREAM movement became visible to legislators as well as to the public. The tactic also focused on campus and community awareness in order to garner more support for the DREAM Act. Tabling at campus locations where students would walk by became a standard tactic on campuses. Here, DREAMers collected signatures, recruited volunteers, and publicized campaigns to increase awareness about the DREAM Act. These activities also made evident that DREAMers existed on campus focused on creating a presence in the public sphere through national events designed to show a unified DREAMer identity.

Public Stories

Another example of public visibility strategies is the use of broadcast stories. The narrative efforts of this phase were directed at the general public with notably less content about educational accomplishments. Rather, DREAMers focused on their worth as students, examples that featured narratives focusing on the experience of being undocumented youth. The following quotation provides the flavor of the storytelling efforts and focuses on how stories of youth are ones of power and voice:

> We're telling a new story of the Dream generation. We're writing our own histories. This is the beginning of a healing of our nation, a healing of our generations, because our collective tomorrows hinge on the power of the youth today. (Dream Activist, 2009a)

An important feature of the stories is that they were being told in the public sphere and coincided with the other efforts to maintain visibility (Stewart et al., 2007). Undocumented students were encouraged to document their struggles on blogs, and over 20 undocumented students had started their own blogs to disclose their experiences. During this time, the undocumented experience also made its way into a variety of online networks, including websites, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter. The rhetorical form of storytelling as political resource was demonstrated in the efforts to share the experiences of DREAMers in a variety of mediums, like the newspaper, film, Internet, and in person. The stories were uploaded on various online sites like YouTube, featured on Dream Activist, and circulated to the media for attention.

DREAM activists hosted rallies and demonstrations that further enabled youth to make their undocumented-and-unafraid messages and identities prominent. March 10,

2010, the National Day of Coming Out, was a turning point in the national movement as undocumented immigrant youth took “the fight from the so-called shadows and into the streets” (Bello, 2010) and began to publicly defy fear and criminalization by declaring their new identity as undocumented and unafraid. Chicago was ground zero for the first day of actions, and there was increased activity during the National Coming Out of the Shadows Week from March 15-21. Coming Out rallies took place in venues in New York, Chicago, Seattle, and various cities in California, with students wearing “I am undocumented” T-shirts and publicly sharing their stories.

The choice to use coming-out stories is an important feature of the DREAM social movement. It showed the progression from a focus on accomplishments to a focus on a refusal to accept the oppressive undocumented existence that accompanied undocumented status. De Genova clarified that “deportability, and not deportation per se” (2004, p. 93) put these non-citizens at imminent risk of deportation at any time and marked them as disposable. By choosing to make their identities known, students reclaimed agency and power by taking the situation into their own hands. DREAMers transformed their undocumented status with stories of visibility, accompanied by more active and defiant calls for action. These acts broke the anonymity that protected them from possible deportation.

The defiance evident in the undocumented-and-unafraid slogan and stance was much more aggressive and deliberate, defying the law in ways the rhetoric of the first phase did not (Bowers et al., 2010). Carlos Saavedra, working as national field coordinator for the UWD Network, publicized the coming-out event by noting the risky

nature of this approach; however, he suggested that not calling attention to the identity of undocumented students was just as dangerous because it denied them agency and control.

The deployed undocumented-and-unafraid identity presented the DREAMers as in a position of power. In showing that they were willing to openly resist an unjust law, and in the process shed their anonymity, the message was one of power. This action suggested that hiding undocumented status was destructive to the human dignity of the youth, and until they went public with their names and goals, they would continue to accept others' definitions of themselves. DREAMers came to understand "the power of their personal story . . . and it was more than just about finding political allies but more about coming out instead, of not continuing to let others speak for 'us' and tell 'our' stories" (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 19, 2010).

Perhaps Senator Durbin said it best when he described how students would come up to him and "would say in a whispered voice I'm one of those undocumented students. I'm undocumented. As you can see today, DREAM Act students are no longer whispering" (Durbin, 2010). The vocality in these rhetorical strategies demonstrated a drastic departure from the previous phase. These vocal efforts also functioned to legitimize the movement.

> I think that it comes back to youth people letting others speak for them, for us. It was a case of working under a nonprofit or as part of larger group and being a youth component, which was okay because we needed to grow . . . I think that part of this is using that terminology of *we are a movement.* In the last couple years that became a turning point that we can make things happen, now even more and more people are stepping up to the plate and saying "look, I speak for

> myself. I don't let other people do it for me." (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 19, 2010)

The examples in this phase were effective in gaining visibility for the movement. The national campaign efforts and story together poignantly pointed to a level of self-exposure not seen before. I note both the outcomes and drawbacks of this phase in the next section.

Possibilities and Limitations of Phase Two

The strategies I presented as quintessential to this time period were demonstrative of a new era of mobilizing. The efforts were an effective way of rallying for social change. The degree of risk also came with consequences, and the established social movement was also thwarted by the critiques that came with the new vocality. In other words, the strategies that I presented had significant tradeoffs.

This phase effectively functioned to bring the issues the DREAM Act was designed to address out into the public, compared to the sense of secrecy that was part of years prior. By enacting these self-representational strategies that defied fear, DREAM youth affirmed their sense of confidence and willingness to increase the degree of risk in order to achieve their goals. This not only affirmed to the legislators that they would continue to lobby for the bill, but that they were willing to bring the issue into a much larger arena.

No doubt this era showed that the movement had external impact on the level of awareness of the movement. The public stories were picked up by the media and continued to encourage undocumented students to come out. The nationwide approach signaled that protesters were DREAMers who not only could be found in states with large

immigrant populations but in all parts of the country. For example, the student body president at Fresno State University was publicly “outed” as undocumented by the campus newspaper. Miami Dade College student body president Jose Salcedo declared his undocumented status shortly after that. Dream Activist editor, Flavia de La Fuente, discussed the paradoxical impact of this increased visibility: “The more out people are the easier it is for us to protect them. If you are out and we know about you and you get involved, somebody is going to miss you” (Hoffman, 2010). By these accounts, it seems DREAMers were now able to respond to case-by-case deportation effectively in large part because of increased visibility overall.

Another positive result of the increased visibility surrounding the advocacy in this phase is that it gave credibility to the movement that had been lacking prior to the collective national efforts. Lizbeth recalled that before the movement’s national efforts, they were not taken seriously as a movement, and the perception of DREAMers themselves was that “they are just a little website,” or “they are just a little network and that’s it” (Becca, personal communication, July 20, 2010). The strategy of public visibility solidified the efforts of the participating undocumented youth as a full-fledged social movement.

However, the realization that the DREAMers were, in fact, a self-directed social movement resulted in negative outcomes as well. Opponents used the visibility of DREAMers as proof of an influx of unauthorized criminals. Nativists disparaged the now openly vocal DREAMers like Benita Veliz, making her an example of the indicated “invasion” of illegals. Scholars pointed to recurring practices like those aimed at DREAMers to be a part of the larger discourse that demonized undocumented immigrants

(Chávez, 2001; Chávez, 2008; Chávez, 2009a; DeChaine, 2009; Demo, 2005). Another consequence was that the media also covered the movement with greater frequency, often framing DREAMers' activism as acts of deviancy (Velez et al., 2008). Marches and mobilization efforts were seen as augmenting rather than dispelling negative perceptions in the civic imaginary (Cohen-Marks, Nuno, & Sanchez, 2009).

The organizational structure of the larger immigrant-rights organizations became a point of contention as well, and the efforts of DREAMers were seen as going against immigration-reform efforts generally. Becca discussed how the increased exposure came with friction: "the more organized stuff we did is when tensions first started between [DREAMers] and big bureaucracy organizations" (Becca, personal communication, July 19, 2010). One of those bureaucratic organizations was the Reform Immigration for America (RI4A), a coalition campaign that had been launched in 2009 to push and coordinate a national effort for comprehensive immigration reform. RI4A was meant to "bring together individuals and grassroots organizations with the mission to build support for workable comprehensive immigration reform" through use of their extensive funding. The RI4A was a top-down organization (Stewart et al., 2007) while DREAM activism was a bottom-up grassroots organization. DREAMers accused R14A of making decisions and speaking for undocumented students. In a sense, the emerging tension between Dream Activist and RI4A pointed to another consequence of the agency of the DREAMer identity: DREAMers now exhibited a confidence in their organizing competency.

Lizbeth elaborated on the tensions between DREAMers and larger immigrant-reform organizations by suggesting they came in part because of age differences.

DREAMers in their mid-twenties felt competent in their ability to take direct ownership of their actions, voices, and stories. They had been active in the movement for a long time, and they felt comfortable expressing their own needs by that time:

> We have gone from being kids who used to let other people speak for us and be in the background. Three years ago we were in the background and having EDs [executive directors] organize and speak on our behalf and say "Hey, we need to do this for the kids." We've gone from that to being adults that are so fed up and say "wait a minute, so much of my life and identity is at stake here." (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010)

As the DREAMer's public visibility grew, another consequence was that their actions received even additional critique. For example, while their identifications with values of education differentiated them from the rest of the immigrant movement in the first phase, very few were aware of the consequences of this strategy. When DREAMers successfully stopped Walter Lara's deportation, they were criticized rather than applauded for this victory. Hing, in an article in *Colorlines*, a progressive daily news site, attacked DREAMers for doing a disservice to the larger immigration-reform campaign by "reducing the immigrant community to the Walter Lara's of the world" (Hing, 2009). According to Hing, this was a "pyrrhic victory," implying that the success came at a devastating cost to the larger immigrant community. Hing claimed that "DREAMers are in the business of selling an image as a class of exceptional, pristine high achievers (Hing, 2009). DREAMers' greater visibility, then, left them open to critique about their activities and strategies. This clash between DREAMers and other immigrant-reform groups was the beginning of much larger tensions that would come to

affect the social movement trajectory in the years to come.

New Transitions: Heightened Participation

The vocal appeals of undocumented students were virtually unheard of in the years prior to the failure of the DREAM-Act vote. I noted earlier how I was complicit in this silencing, rarely disclosing a personal stake in the very research topic on which I had concentrated during most of my graduate school career. I had not stepped out of my comfort zone to become more personally and publicly involved beyond my academic conversations. As the movement developed, however, so did my involvement in efforts at documenting and participating in the movement. The University of New Mexico was a supportive environment, and as a member and eventual co-chair of Raza Graduate Student Association, I participated in the National Day of Action by putting a table in the courtyard and passing out informational flyers.

In an effort to bridge my connection between the academy and my personal standpoint as an undocumented student, I took part in the First Immigration Symposium, where I was invited to speak about the current political climate; I chose to focus my presentation on contemporary immigration rhetoric. I also spoke more specifically about the DREAM Act at Graduates of Color Research Colloquia, but despite my active participation in the Peer Mentoring for Graduates of Color and El Centro de la Raza, I had not brought the issue to campus in a more formal way. I did extend my participation past the campus doors in January 2010, when I became involved with several immigrant-rights organizations that had youth components.

One of my biggest campus organizing efforts involved a three-day event we labeled the “DREAM Conference,” which was the first event about undocumented

students hosted by the University of New Mexico. Sponsored by El Centro de la Raza, League of United Latin American Citizens, Mexican Student Association, Project for New Mexico Graduates of Color, Lambda Theta Phi, Latino Fraternity Inc., Raza Graduate Student Association, College Democrats, and Somos Un Pueblo Unido, we put on workshops; a Cinco de Mayo celebration at lunch; a forum with state senators, UNM faculty, and community leaders; and a screening of the documentary *Papers* (2009). I personally worked to help organize a mock graduation ceremony on the second day of the conference. What started as a silent rally became an impromptu march around the University of New Mexico campus, leading to the President's office to demand that he publicly support the legislation. The conference was a great success that showed the collaboration possibilities and campus wide discussion of an issue that affected undocumented students. This conference signaled my direct involvement with the DREAM movement, and when I agreed to be the media representative, it confirmed my boldness in being able to talking about this personal yet political issue in a public forum.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have mapped out the events from 2007 to 2010 that comprised a period of collective self-representation by participants in the undocumented youth movement. The national unity made the movement much more visible as a member from the DTLA noted,

> Growing up, I always thought I was the only undocumented kid in the world. It never occurred to me that there were others. Now, it's hard for me to fathom that we have a national movement and network. I certainly ain't [*sic*] the only one now. (Erik, personal communication, October 2010)

To no longer be ashamed and instead claim undocumented-and-unafraid status transformed the social conception of that very identity in the movement and in dominant society. These strategies incorporated the otherwise silenced undocumented immigrant youth into dominant society under new terms of identification.

Five months into my fieldwork, a radical change in the movement would turn my attention to the national actions of the movement. The next phase is markedly different in the internal and external efforts of the movement. Compelled by "our frustration and the fierce urgency of our dreams to act as agents of our destinies and be the catalysts for a future in which we are empowered, mobilized, and living with the dignity we deserve" (The DREAM is Coming, n.d.), DREAMers began to envision radical tactics that would announce the urgency of the cause. This change of vocality was an important steppingstone to achieve the actions of the next phase. These efforts would allow DREAMers to next speak out for fundamental rights and focused on an empowered identity.

The third and last phase, which I have labeled as an *unapologetic DREAMer identity*, features the effrontery of activists who escalated the mobilization efforts by modeling civil disobedience tactics of previous civil rights movements. I discuss the May 2010 to December 2010 period in which the movement specifically diverged from the larger immigrant-rights organizations by concentrating exclusively on the passage of a stand-alone DREAM Act, and in the process, created a politicized identity for DREAMers themselves.

CHAPTER 6

PHASE THREE: FROM SHADOWS TO SPOTLIGHT

"Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot un-educate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore." (César Chávez)

I resume the story of the DREAM movement at the time following the "coming out" of undocumented youth. As the previous undocumented and unafraid phase of the movement showed, undocumented activists were empowered by disclosing status to friends, strangers, legislators, and taking their voice into the public sphere. With direct ownership of the strategies, actions, and stories, the undocumented immigrant youth, who were now speaking for themselves, began to escalate their agitation efforts.

This chapter features Phase Three of the DREAMER movement, made up of the activity from March to December 2010. I begin this third phase by detailing the strategies of the *unapologetic DREAMer* identity, characterized by the effrontery of activists who mobilized by modeling nonviolent disobedience tactics from previous civil rights movements. I describe the key elements of the self-sufficient identity and I trace interventional direct actions used confront the establishment.

Backdrop: Disaffected DREAMers

At the recommendation of social movement scholars who note that "to understand any politicized identity community, it is necessary to analyze the social and political struggles that created the identity" (Taylor & Whittier, 1995, p. 174), I start this chapter by first presenting the political backdrop of 2010. The entire year of 2010 was marked by a flurry of immigration-related activity on multiple domains. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) reported that by the first half of 2010, 44 state

legislatures had enacted a record number of 314 immigration laws and resolutions (NCSL, 2010). Behind the upswing of legislative efforts to restrict immigrant rights was an array of activism on the part of anti-immigration and political groups like the Tea Party. The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) reported a trend in 2010 of expanded “nativist extremist” groups, characterized by such for their hard line anti-immigrant efforts (Beirich, 2010).

It has never been my goal to quantify these advocacy efforts, but I note that the DREAM movement matched the burst of activist energy. I use several markers to attest to the heightened activity that came from the movement. By 2010, I was fully immersed in activist fieldwork and took part in many of the activities I describe in this chapter. My field notes speak to the unparalleled rise of social protest to the point that the eight months of this phase show equal activity to those from the first seven years of the movement. The busy activity of the DREAM youth movement can be said to be the result of three events: (1) the failed comprehensive immigration reform national-level engagement with this issue, which was anticipated when Obama came into office; (2) the passage of S.B. 1070 in Arizona (2010); and (3) the deaths of several DREAM-eligible youth. These three events contributed to the shift and escalation of social protest rhetoric.

The advocacy for the DREAM Act thus far had hinged on the goal of incorporating the bill under the overarching efforts of a comprehensive immigration-reform bill. By early 2010, Obama’s presidential promise for federal reform was stalled in the struggle over economic and health-care issues that largely overshadowed other platform issues (Kane, 2010). Moreover, the Obama administration showed counterintuitive action on the issue of immigration, given the rise in deportations under

his presidency (Slevin, 2010). The only progress on the immigration front came with the Schumer/Graham framework (Schumer & Graham, 2010), which was eschewed by DREAMers as a watered-down immigration-reform bill that focused mostly on enforcement and criminalization.[45] The divisive bipartisanship did not bode well for the potential reform efforts, leaving DREAM-eligible youth, who were being asked to wait for comprehensive immigration reform, to feel this was a disingenuous request.

The disillusionment increased even further with news of the Arizona legislature's passage of S.B. 1070. In April 2010, Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act (S.B. 1070, 2010) was proposed and passed by Governor Jan Brewer. The legislation was seen as another regressive step in the direction of immigration reform as the bill expanded police powers to stop, question, and detain individuals for not having proper identification and legalized the racial profiling of Arizona immigrant families (Acuña, 2010). Groups like DTLA and CDNT sent messages of solidarity to Arizona DREAMers, noting that they stood with "our fellow brothers and sisters in Arizona" and worked to assist in the efforts "to demand that Governor Brewer veto this bill" (Lizbeth, personal communication, May 13, 2010). The bill prompted increased mobilization among DREAMers and was seen as a turning point for immigrant communities tired of inhumane immigration enforcements: "it is so sad that it took the passage of the bill to get people to really act but, I think it was a wake-up call" (Karla, personal communication, May 28, 2010).

Lastly, the tragic death of several DREAM-eligible youth greatly shook movement participants. Two of these were Dream Activists: Tam Tran and Cynthia Felix were killed in a car crash in May 2010. Tran had testified before Congress in 2007;

she was studying at Brown for a doctorate in American Studies. Felix was the first undocumented student admitted to Columbia University's School of Public Health. Their untimely deaths were seen as another wake-up call to pull together and continue their efforts:

> In honor of Tam Tran and Cynthia Felix, two inspirational role models that gave much to the students across the country and who will be with us in spirit. I am doing this so that students will no longer be terrorized by legislation like S.B.1070 in Arizona, and not have to go to school in fear that their families are deported back home. (The DREAM is Coming, n.d.)

Additionally, a young student had committed suicide leaving only a note to detail how he had been “driven to suicide by Congressional inaction” (Crocetti, 2010), sending ripples of concern that the mental health issues of undocumented students were not being adequately addressed. The overwhelming response was of grief and anger with comments on the Dream Activist website like, “Gustavo didn't deserve this” and asking about how many more would be lost to further Congressional inaction and failed comprehensive strategies.

These events immediately brought an increased sense of urgency and resolve to fight back with a radical new set of rhetorical strategies. As tends to be the case in social movements when conventional forms of rhetoric fail to generate a response, DREAM activists turned to other methods of protest. I turn now to the new identity and external methods DREAMers used to make their confrontational demands during this phase of the movement.

Strategies of Self-Reliance

The importance of identity as a mobilizing factor was no less evident in this phase of the movement. Building on the vocality and agency attained in the previous years, my analysis shows DREAM activists demonstrated a different relational dynamic with their allies, opponents, media, and the general public in this phase. The internally based strategies showed a stronger sense of shared DREAMer identity and a growing membership of participants willing to escalate their efforts to affect social change. The DREAM activists affirmed the view that they *could* and *should* directly challenge power structures.

In this phase, I provide examples of efforts to reinforce a politicized identity and establish status. I describe the boldness and self-reliance efforts that characterize the activism of this timeframe. The theme of identity revolves around an *unapologetic* effrontery—boldness in internal and external activism not seen in previous phases. In this section, I describe the key substantive changes in the claims of identity as featured in the following elements: (1) differentiation within the immigrant-rights social movement; (2) use of polarizing dialogue; and (3) expressions of radicalized consciousness. I then turn to how the political and personal sense of agency affected the external strategies of this phase.

Differentiation with the Social Movement

This section reflects the ways in which some DREAMers began to differentiate themselves from the mainstream immigrant-rights protest efforts. Immediately following the National Coming Out events, DREAMers showed signs of separation from those in

the mainstream immigrant-rights organizations working towards Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR).

An example of this differentiation was evident during the March 21, 2010 Reform Immigration for America (RI4A) mass mobilization in Washington DC called March For America: Change Takes Courage. The gathering was a collective effort of RI4A with logistical support from its national, state, and local organizational partners (America's Voice, n.d.). The intent of this massive mobilization was to gather supporters from across the country and assemble in the nation's capital to call on Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform by 2010. The march at the National Mall was an organizing success for RI4A, with the participation of over 200,000 people from the pro-immigrant community including allies, young people, unions, politicians, and civil rights advocates who turned out to support immigration reform (Preston, 2010, March 21). A contingent of activists from the Dream Activist group exercised a unified voice, presenting themselves as a strong contingent at this immigrant-rights gathering.[46] Flavia noted "it's time for the DREAM Generation to show its unity, power, and above all—loudness—during the March For America" (Dream Activist, 2010c).

The number of "undocumented and unafraid" shirts worn by participants in combination with young people wearing caps and gowns illustrated the existence of self-identified DREAMers from across the nation. I randomly spoke to several participants from different locations that attributed the increased advocacy efforts to the coming-out campaign. There were exclusive DREAM Act youth events that Dream Activist put together for formal and informal gatherings of undocumented youth. The Dream Activist website gave details and directions so that DREAMers could meet at designated locations

for pre- and post-marching events. About 200 or so DREAMers marched together, all while using "signature" DREAM chants like, "Everywhere we go people want to know who we are. So we tell them we are the DREAMers, mighty mighty DREAMers. Fighting for justice and the DREAM Act," "Yo, Obama, don't deport my Momma," and "Can't stop, won't stop." They also brought attention to themselves by carrying a huge "PASS THE DREAM ACT NOW" American flag that worked to *literally* unify the undocumented immigrant youth, distinguishing them from the larger crowd of attendees. The march also showed the importance of the DREAM youth when Carlos Saavedra, UWD National Coordinator, spoke at the main rally. His participation was seen as sign of greater immigrant youth representation in the immigration-rights movement as a whole and supported the fact that DREAMers were becoming "national leaders and not just testimonials" (Ramos, 2010).

There were also efforts of self-differentiation at the May 29, 2010, National Day of Action Against S.B. 1070 mega-march held in Phoenix, Arizona, hosted by Puente Arizona and National Day Laborer Organizing Network. Starting at Indian Steele Park and ending at the State Capitol, 50,000 participants attended the six-mile march, having traveled to Arizona to participate in protesting the law (Alto Arizona, n.d.). DREAM activists at the march held posters that focused on the DREAM Act to differentiate them from other immigrant-rights groups.

In these gatherings, DREAM youth had their own agenda and decided on how they would participate, asserting their leadership of their own movement. Additional examples of leadership efforts indicated an unwillingness to concede a secondary role in the larger immigration-reform efforts. DREAMers used the slogan, "fighting for our

lives not self-interest" (Dream Activist, 2010b) to highlight their special circumstances and to set themselves apart from other immigrant concerns. This differentiation was accompanied by an even greater emphasis on being a *true grassroots* movement—a movement composed of those with undocumented status, with leaders emerging from the movement rather than being composed of paid organizational staff. The notion of grassroots authenticity in this phase of the movement was articulated by Lizbeth:

> The movement is a real grassroots movement. Not to put anyone down but the larger immigrant-rights movement is led by mostly these organizations that have funding and have staff and have access to all these people. They have money for, like lobbying, and so much money and resources are invested that it loses the grassroots feelings because it is so top-down. The people doing work on the ground are doing amazing work but there is a disconnect. I think that foundations are now realizing that it's awesome that the [DREAM] movement is funded by youth themselves and thinking about investing and helping now that they've seen that how they've used the money has not been working. I think that's the beauty of youth making things happen with very little support. (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010)

Noting that DREAM-eligible youth had limited resources prompted them to be creative in terms of mobilizing and strategic actions. This, then, became another point of differentiation between DREAMers and the rest of the immigration-rights movement. DREAMers frequently recounted how they trained themselves to lobby legislators and as a result had acquired a more sophisticated understanding of how to navigate the lobbying system. Lizbeth specified how their self-directed DREAM organizing had equipped her

with the knowledge and skills that came with self-taught experiential knowledge, and not with a formal position in a social movement organization. When talking about the process of learning to lobby, DREAMers clearly were proud of what they learned, how they negotiated meeting senators and their legislative staffs, and how the interactions were taken seriously by both sides. Lizbeth said that congressional representatives had been "open and direct with us, so it has been working" adding that "we have done it with really no funding" (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010).

The focus on the self-funded, bottom-up approach of DREAMers indicated that the invested youth were able to accomplish more because they had more incentive to be resourceful and creative in a struggle that was of such personal relevance to them. The new-found confidence that came from experiential knowledge of this type not only was another outcome of DREAM activism but an additional source of differentiation as well. DREAMers knew what they were capable of, trusted their new-found confidence, and believed they could transform the system, and they were not afraid to put themselves in the forefront of protest to make their claims. Mo mentioned how with little to no funding and with a completely volunteer-run network, they had actually accumulated quantifiable successes. Examples included: "A bill; 39 co-sponsors in the Senate and 120 in the house; dozens of deferred action for individual dream act students; and an online presence which trumps that of any pro- or anti-immigrant group; 60,000 people on Facebook and 40,000 on our general list" (Dream Activist, 2010d). DREAMers continually emphasized what they had accomplished because of the necessity of using different tactics, all of which reinforced their differences from other groups.

Acquisition of agency seemed to be another direct result of the ability to determine

the direction and actions of the social movement for themselves. This is important to note because it suggest that the very act of engaging is social protest extended the capital available to undocumented youth. As Pérez Huber's (2009) research showed, undocumented youth used their cultural capital to navigate the challenges that emerged from lacking legal status. However, I show that undocumented youth extended their resistive capacity by engaging in activism, since it equipped them with the ability to confront the political system. This can be added to the forms of capital that have existed and continue to exist within communities of color, as this capacity of DREAM youth to be resourceful was another important element of resistant capital key to thriving social movements.

When viewed as a strategy, the claim of resourcefulness presented itself as way for DREAMers to affirm what they established and accomplished through their social movement on their own. For example, I note the explicit effort by participants to be positioned as self-sufficient in multiple tasks. A member posted on her Facebook status, "We were once asked, 'Who does your policy work? Political strategy development? Where do you get your funding?'" To which she responded, "We are talented and extremely resourceful undocumented student organizers who stand up for our DREAMERS and communities that are under attack" (Ana, pseudonym). This third phase, then, featured a motivation to organize as stakeholders in the movement, to display their creative strength, and to enlist use of self-created resources. In the process, they deliberately distinguished themselves from other immigration reform groups because of their age, lack of funding, creativity, and self-created resources. Undocumented youth felt equipped to take a leadership role in the larger efforts for immigration reform. The

shift to an *unapologetic* self-identity was in essence a claim to their self-reliance.

Polarizing Dialogue

This second strategy I uncovered as a form of self-reliant rhetoric in the third phase was the use of polarizing tactics. Differentiation is at the heart of polarizing strategies (Stewart et al., 2007), and this section focuses on the tensions fostered by certain DREAM movement leaders to further their social movement efforts. The use of polarization was essentially a "with us or against us" kind of confrontation (Bowers et al., 2010). The examples I provide in this section demonstrate the confrontational features between DREAMers and the larger immigrant-rights movement.

An example of polarizing dialogue was evident in the public critiques DREAMers directed at the actions of the leadership in the larger movement. DREAMers seemed to feel that they were the targets of both liberal and conservative critics alike. They saw conservative discourse as "racist, sexist, homophobic attacks from the right wing," but they were equally attacked by "peace activists and immigration-rights advocates who disapprove of the DREAM Act because of its so-called military option" (Perez, Guitierrez, Meza, & Dominguez Zamorano, 2010).[47] Perhaps the public polarizing rhetoric can best be understood in the context of a dispute that took place between DREAMers and the immigrant-rights organization Reform Immigration for America (RI4A). From June 1 through June 10, 2010, 10 members of the NYSYLC held a hunger strike outside of Senator Schumer's office. During this time, Senator Schumer did not meet with the DREAMers who were protesting outside of his office, but instead met with the leaders of the RI4A, which frustrated the NYSYLC DREAMers. Shortly after this took place, members posted an open letter taking issue with RI4As actions:

> We were told, point blank, that if we advocated for the DREAM Act we would be killing a larger reform package. That by merely sharing our stories, we would be activating the anti-immigrant sentiment in the country and doing harm to everyone, including our parents. We were shamed, called selfish, and ridiculed at every turn. But through it all we managed to pull through with an amazing movement to boot. Where we were denied a seat at a table, we created our own table and, as youth, we reclaimed our own movement. We are no longer dependent on privileged, usually white, out-of-touch organizers to do our bidding or for that matter even speak for us. What does it tell you about your movement when the speakers don't even represent the issue at hand?! We can speak for ourselves. (NYSYLC, 2010)

This particular incident positioned DREAMers at the front lines (i.e., fasting to put pressure on a senator) and the hierarchical RI4A as an established out-of-touch organization obstructing the DREAM efforts. By beginning to criticize the actions of those who were working toward same end goals, the DREAMers made rhetorical moves to create a distance from themselves and the mainstream immigrant-rights movement.

Various other public posts also took aim at the lack of ineffectiveness of larger organizations and the need to respect the DREAM-led self-advocating efforts. The emphasis of DREAMer uniqueness was favored over the image of a unified and collective immigrant-rights coalition. The editor of Dream Activist underscored this attitude by calling out the executive director of RI4A: "Pop quiz: How do Ali Noorani and RI4A feel about passing the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill? Hint: It's one word; it starts with a 'u' and ends with 'unacceptable'" (Flavia, 2010). The post goes on to

highlight how leadership of RI4A opposition to the DREAM movement is no different than the opposition that civil rights movement leaders faced from white moderates in the 1960s. This exchange on the Dream Activist site shows how DREAM youth defined themselves as separate from other immigrant-rights organizations by declaring the tactics of those other groups as unacceptable, inappropriate, and too slow.[48]

Another way DREAMers' polarizing tactics emerged was in efforts to advocate for a standalone DREAM Act rather than a bill that was part of a larger immigration-reform package. Using polarizing rhetoric, DREAMers asked participants to make a choice about where to place their primary identification. The sentiment was best explained in the following Dream Activist post:

> There's no bill. There's nothing. I'm not planning on spending my time fighting for a non-existent bill. Tick tock . . . Over the last month we have had a number of escalating actions. These have taken place in the offices of *non-supporting senators* [emphasis added] (Senator McCain -R AZ*), supporting senators* [emphasis added] (Senator Feinstein -D CA) and *our so-called allies* [emphasis added] (Luis Gutierrez -D IL). Soon we'll add a few DC based *"advocacy" organizations* [emphasis added] to the list. If the message is not clear yet, let's try and clear it up. We, as youth, are not afraid of a challenge. Everyone should be on notice: if you are not making the DREAM Act happen as a stand-alone bill, then you are a roadblock to DREAM, and we are going to call you out in a very public way. If you won't willingly take a stand to fight for our lives, then we'll bring the moral crisis to your doorstep. Our parents have waited too long and we have waited too long. The time for the DREAM Act is now. We are

> willing. We are ready. We won't wait. You haven't heard our thunder yet! (Dream Activist, 2010d)

These examples of polarizing rhetoric do not mean DREAM youth did not attempt to open spaces for dialogue. There were noticeable endeavors by DREAMers to address and reflect on the concerns expressed about the divisiveness and direction of the DREAM the movement. On August 13, 2010, DTLA and Orange County DREAM Team, in collaboration with the DREAM Is Coming national campaign, hosted the first DREAM Act Town Hall, organized and led by undocumented students. The event was held with the intention of "addressing major questions and concerns about the legislation as well as to discuss the strategy and tactics that undocumented youth have embraced" (Neidi, personal communication, August 13, 2010). The main goal was to create a safe space for undocumented youth and allies to talk about the shift in the DREAM Movement. Hosted at Echo Park United Methodist Church in Echo Park, California, I attended the event alongside 250 other people. Neidi Dominguez and Erick Huerta facilitated the event as joint Masters of Ceremony. They spoke of the event as a way to create "new safe spaces" and address the shift and strategy and much needed dialogue about efforts for social change. [49]

However, at the town hall, the youth also were presented with a variety of antagonizing questions about the rationale to advocate for such a flawed bill. Shortly following the town hall meeting, several immigrant youth heavily involved in the movement posted an Op-Ed in the independent news site *Truthout,* in which they defensively reasserted their unapologetic identity. The piece addressed accusations that youth were sabotaging the immigrant-rights agenda:

> We are undocumented youth activists and we refuse to be silent any longer. The DREAM Act movement has inspired and re-energized undocumented and immigrant youth around the country. In a time when the entire immigrant community is under attack, and increasingly demoralized, stripped of our rights, the DREAM movement has injected life, resistance and creativity into the broader immigrant-rights struggle. Until we organized this movement, we had been caught in a paralyzing stranglehold of inactivity across the country.
>
> We were told that the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act, or CIRA, was still possible. Yet we continued to endure ICE raids and we witnessed the toxic Arizona S.B.1070. Meanwhile, [Comprehensive Immigration Reform] CIR had lost bipartisan support and there was no longer meaningful Congressional or executive support for real reform. Our so-called allies need to realize that they are not undocumented and, as such, do not have the right to say what undocumented youth need or want. Our progressive allies insist in imposing their paternalistic stand to oppose the DREAM Act and tell us that this is not the "right" choice for us to acquire "legal" status in this country. We wonder: Who are they to decide for us? And by what criteria do they deem the DREAM Act not to be the "right" legislation for undocumented youth to become "legal" in this country? (Perez et al., September 21, 2010)

Despite efforts to dialogue with other immigrant groups and the public about issues of immigration reform, the key DREAMer identity during this third phase relied on polarization and differentiation rather than on identification and efforts at unity.

These internally aimed efforts resulted in a fragmentation of DREAMers with the larger immigration-rights movement, a result not unique to social movements. Rhetorical social movement scholars have noted that splintering and fragmentation, more often than not, is normal operating procedure (Griffin, 1952; Jasinski, 2001). The long-term effects of these confrontational acts are not yet known, yet it bears noting that the Black power movement used divisive tactics that are now credited for achieving positive impacts on the larger civil rights movement (Stewart, 1997).

Expressions of Radicalized Consciousness

Another important phenomenon of this phase was the escalation of strategies. DREAMers seemed interested in experimenting with strategies that had not been used before, and especially strategies that were radical in nature. DREAMers degraded the "generic" organizing tactics that had been tried and tested, and stressed that the movement called for outside-the-box thinking. The DREAMers spoke of organizing as an ongoing process that required them to adapt and apply creativity to the strategies deployed against the opposition. Matias noted that the failure of traditional tactics, combined with emotional responses to DREAMer deaths, drove the movement into a radically new direction in terms of strategies:

> I think the rise of escalation [strategies] is because of the desperate need for the movement. There is desperate need for a new narrative on immigration, and an understanding that we need to get creative too. Because we've been trying the "regular" methods of getting attention. You know, we've done the lobbying, we've done the press releases, we've done the press conferences and the rallies and the marches. That is why there is the DREAM University, sit-in at McCain's

> and Trail of DREAM. They are very creative and out of the norm actions that I think they show more savvy political minds being created. That's what I feel. (Matias, personal communication, July 21, 2010)

Maria, a youth organizer for CHIRLA, noted how emotions affect organizing, and the fact that "we haven't had a win so we are feeling frustrated and desperate and that feeling of desperation shapes decisions and strategies" (Maria, personal communication, July 3, 2010) also gave rise to more radical tactics. In addition to heightened emotions, there was a growing sense that variation was productive to the momentum of the movement. Karla noted that participants "have to change our tactics all the time. That's what organizing is. Minute by minute we never really know. We need new creative actions, ideas, and dialogue" (Karla, personal communication, May 24, 2010).

In particular, there was critique of the movement's previous reliance on the legislative approach: "Go talk to your legislature, go talk to your legislature again." This approach seemed too reminiscent of the 2007 efforts (Mo, personal communication, November 11, 2010). The declaration that youth "cannot afford to wait and put our lives on hold until we have the 'right' political climate to pass something pro-immigrant in Congress" (Erik, personal communication, August 24, 2010) pointed to a resolve that undocumented youth needed to move to tactics that would achieve movement goals.

The new tactics of this phase were captured in Lizbeth's description: "we are not going to play nice anymore" (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010). She noted the "approach of the past years when they told us to be patient did not work" (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010). She voiced that as a movement, "we've done the telling your story, and we've done rallies," but these did not yield the

desired results. Mo noted, he "could see the writing on the wall . . . so instead of proceeding down the same path to nowhere, now we are beginning to see bold action by immigrant youth" (Dream Activist, 2010c). Accused of being "radical," Mo took this as a compliment; he believed that "escalations have changed the way people think" about DREAMers willing to show put themselves on the frontline (Mo, personal communication, November 11, 2010). DREAMers were no longer "just being followers and being aware what is really happening and able to make independent decisions" (Mo, personal communication, November 11, 2010). This post indicates that DREAMers were ready to use more confrontational strategies than they had before.

The third phase of the movement, then, saw a new generation of DREAM activists take the stage, willing to engage in increasing acts of civil disobedience. DREAMers considered this move a "sign of the times." Lizbeth's discussion was typical:

> When I first started working [on DREAM Act] in 2003 and had been approached, asked if I wanted to do civil disobedience, I would have said, "Are you crazy? No!" That's because it was so very new there was still hope that if we keep doing "the right thing," like sharing stories and giving our testimony here and there, and doing an interview where we changed your name, or if you do a video with your story but cover your face, that by doing that people would understand and people would sympathize. We have sympathy and support we just don't have the chances, and our movement has changed so much. I did this not because I was not afraid or crazy but because I think I knew there was support and the movement was ready for this and I have a friend who wrote a column that said

> "kids no more" and it's true we are not kids and won't have people speak on our behalf. (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010)

The sheer fact that DREAMers were engaging in civil disobedience became the gauge by which to judge the effectiveness of the movement and its mobilizing efforts.[50]

I raise this notion because there is a marked relationship between the unapologetic identity and external strategies that were used on the opposition. The year 2010 also marked nine years from the time the DREAM Act initially was introduced into Congress, a length of time that I suspect played a substantial role in this phase. The more radical identity and the strategies that accompanied it were presented as the logical effect of "waiting for this bill for ten years and finally saying *enough is enough"* (Perez et al., September 21, 2010). Waiting nine years for the DREAM Act was described as "a lifetime in a young person's life" (Dream Activist, 2010d).

In sum, in this section I discussed the differentiating, polarizing, and increasingly radical strategies DREAM youth used to assert a more aggressive, unapologetic politicized identity. I noted how these acts functioned to further empower undocumented immigrant youth in participating in the movement. While the boundaries between internal and external strategies were more blurred, in the next section, I show how the movement also engaged with the opposition with equal tenacity to which is described here. I give examples of the nonviolent escalation strategy for social change and the ways in which these new strategies of modeling moral authority, civil disobedience, and performative protest were all rhetorics of dissent that signaled another important change for the DREAMer identity.

Strategies of Intervention

The third phase of the movement was accompanied by an equally strong escalation of externally directed strategies. I show that the core of this approach was the use of strategic intervention. With the term *intervention,* I refer to an act used to promote change that requires the receivers to respond (Brown, 1978). The DREAM movement focused on the use of direct psychological and physical and exposure of their protest to their opposition (Sharp, 1973), and they used social protest to demand social change in a more forceful manner.

My analysis indicates various forms of rhetorical tactics and maneuvers aimed at promoting direct engagement with a variety of audiences including legislators and the general public. The interventional attempts of this phase included numerous tactics, which I demonstrate by focusing on the three main themes: (1) modeling moral authority; (2) civil disobedience direct action; and (3) performative protest campaigns.

Modeling Moral Authority

My analysis points to the use of modeling to frame the DREAM social movement in a paralleled manner to the efforts of the civil rights movement. These examples of framing DREAM youth as similar to previous civil rights social movements functioned to bring moral legitimacy to the social movement. Rhetorical parallels with other historic civil rights figures from the past were artfully constructed discursively and through use of nonviolent civil disobedience. There were several instances where DREAM youth skillfully made comparisons to iconic activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. Take for instance the following post:

We have our own version of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

> Ever heard of the DREAM walkers? They braved everything from bad weather to the Ku Klux Klan to walk 1500 miles to DC from Florida for the DREAM Act, evoking memories of Mahatma Gandhi's salt march. Next, they went to Arizona and hugged it out with America's most anti-immigrant Sheriff—Joe Arpaio, spreading the message of peace, love and non-violent resistance. They also don't like the word "undocumented." No, we are all human beings." (Lal, 2010a)

There are other instances where civil rights comparisons were made to support DREAMer arguments for the movement. David, a self-described DREAMer participating in a DREAM conference, asked the audience to share some of the opposing arguments for the bill. The audience listed some of the point of views against the DREAM Act, which included the conservative view that the DREAM Act would incentivize and reward more illegality. This argument essentially stated that DREAMers should not be "rewarded for breaking the law" and questioned, "what part of illegal don't you understand?" David responded by saying:

> The best counter is to point out that in the US, it was legal to administer poll taxes or literary tests to prevent African Americans from voting. It was legal to intern Japanese Americans. These were *legal* but they were not *right.* Our morality should dictate our laws and not the other way around. (David, personal communication, May 5, 2010)

David was debunking the "legitimacy" of the opposing argument by applying the rhetorical strategy used by Dr. Martin Luther King (1961) in his speech entitled *Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience,* where he stated, "We must never forget that everything that Hitler did in Germany was 'legal.' It was illegal to aid and comfort a Jew in the days of

Hitler's Germany" (v. 18). These efforts of DREAMers aligning with activist leaders like Martin Luther King were ways of presenting the view that youth experienced similar oppression as the marginalized groups of the past.

This rhetorical framing is a strategic tool that allowed DREAMers to promote their cause in a way that appealed to a broad audience. This strategy functioned as a grievance *extension* (Jasper, 1997). By this, I mean that DREAMers, like previous citizenship movements of the past, were non-citizens and could not exercise voting rights. Undocumented individuals do not have legal safeguards but are subject to deportation at any time (Johnson, 2004, p. 13).[51] What was particularly challenging for DREAM youth was that by virtue of being institutionally barred from legal rights, they needed to strive to persuade others to feel affected by their grievances—even if they were not affected by the same conditions. To do so, youth framed the DREAM social movement to correlate with the struggles faced by Black activists of 1960s and appealed to a sense of morality in the petitions for social change.

For example Mo noted the importance of compelling the general public to align with the "right" side of history. He explained the similarity of the DREAM youth movement and civil rights by noting that individuals answered to social pressure to support social justice:

> Even if people don't support what happened back then [1960 civil rights], they don't publicly say that. Because it's the wrong thing to do and the better thing to say is "I was always on that [civil rights] side." So what if we can create the same thing? It's popular to hate Mexicans [undocumented immigrants] right now, so we have to change the framework of how people think about it. It should be seen

> in terms of "it's fucked up to say that" instead of what it is now. Because right now it's okay. (Mo, personal communication, November 11, 2010)

In this comparison, Mo demonstrated that acceptable nativism toward immigration status is no different than racial segregation. Johnson (2004) substantiated the historical view that "manipulation of citizenship status based on race has a lengthy, if not illustrious, history in U.S. law" (p. 155).[52] By linking the historical denial of citizenship of blacks to unauthorized immigrants, Mo was in effect paralleling the injustice of the past as equal to the present day.

The modeling strategy was evident in training materials as well, in which a very similar appeal was offered. Dream Activist (2010a) put together an Undocumented People's Guide to Civil Disobedience, a training manual disseminated exclusively to the organizations and individuals committed to civil disobedience.[53] The parallels were made explicitly to previous contexts when nonviolent strategies were justified as necessary for individuals who could no longer wait for the status quo to change:

> We stage civil disobedience in an effort to *unveil the moral crisis of the unjust system that is causing real suffering in immigrant communities.* Action will compel the American people, public officials and Congress to respond and act towards a humane solution. We unveil this moral crisis through dramatic, truthful actions that confront those in power, engage them in direct relationship, and resist until they meet our demands for the passage of the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill. (Dream Activist, 2010a)

Karla offered another example of the use of historical figures as models for DREAMers. She mentioned that since the DREAM movement was made up of youth,

they knew about figures from the past because of their education. She noted that DREAMers "are very lucky as college students to be aware of the past movement like the Civil Rights and Chicano [movement]" (Karla, personal communication, May 24, 2010). She went on to confirm that a lot of the tactics (like the sit-ins and civil disobedience actions) were modeled from the examples of what had already been done in the past. A key component of this direct action, Stewart et al. (2007) asserted, is that "coactive rhetoric obviously serves more than the 'managerial' and 'reinforcement' functions ascribed to it, but it demonstrates that social movements deserve legitimacy by *worth and right*" (p. 66). The participants used modeling as an externally aimed strategy to evoke broader support through the use of moral authority. As DREAM youth sought to model themselves on the leaders of the civil rights movement, they aimed to create similar "dialectical enjoinment in the moral arena" (Cathcart, 1978, p. 233). DREAM protestors extended this strategy by making use of nonverbal direct action efforts that were most prominent during the civil rights movement.

The civil rights movement served as the inspiration for DREAM activism as evident in the examples I presented of DREAM youth modeling that era. I show how DREAMers offered parallels to previous civil rights movement so they can make claims for moral authority (Burgess, 1978).

Civil Disobedience

This third phase of the movement also included the use of nonviolent civil disobedience. In the enactment, DREAMers were concentrating exclusively on the passage of a standalone DREAM Act rather than within the context of comprehensive immigration reform. While the moral appeals were important, Reed (2005) noted that the

rhetorical stances for moral legitimacy were more effective when "backed by such nonviolent direct actions as sit-ins, boycotts, mass marches, and strikes" (p. 5). The comments of DREAMers during this phase made explicit use of sit-ins in order to use the strategy of rhetorical intervention aimed at U.S. senators.

The DREAMers implemented new tactics to accomplish the intention "of putting the Dream Act at the forefront of the immigration debate." The DREAM is Coming project is one example; it was intended "to be a national project with targets in mind and specific outcome in mind. We cover the legislative part and the online organizing" (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010). The coalition followed this vision and mission statement:

> We are compelled by our frustration and the fierce urgency of our dreams to act as agents of our destinies and be the catalysts for a future in which we are empowered, mobilized, and living with the dignity we deserve. We are a group of undocumented youth who have worked for years on a path to legalization. We are at a point in our movement where radical action has become necessary for our communities and ourselves. Through civil disobedience, we are demanding that Congress and President Obama pass the DREAM Act immediately. This action is a catalyst for the escalation of the immigrant's rights movement. (The DREAM is Coming, n.d.)

At the core of the civil disobedience efforts was a focus on showing DREAMers' commitment to the movement. In other words, as Ganz (2009) suggested, DREAMers were showing "the courage to venture into the unknown, risk failure, say no to current

demands, and commit to a course of action that we can only hypothesize will yield the desired outcome" (p.8).

There are numerous examples of the distinctive effort to escalate nonverbal social protest tactics as a way to be proactive in the appeal for immigration rights. Mohammed talked about what led to the civil disobedience:

> Everyone needed to step up. It was about getting past fear. No longer feeling like no one had agency, and that we had to keep pushing for CIR. We had to force it. Say [to legislators] that we are tired of waiting and we need you to do something because something is going to happen that is going to cause us to possibly be put in deportation proceeding. (Mo, personal communication, November 11, 2010)

The DREAM is Coming website featured a ticker on the Web site with a countdown that ended deliberately on May 17, 2010. On this day, five undocumented leaders of the immigrant student movement—Raul Alcaraz from Arizona, Lizbeth Mateo from California, Tania Unzueta of Chicago, Mohammad Abdollahi of Michigan, and Yahaira Carrillo of Missouri--staged a sit-in at the office of Senator McCain. The Arizona law-enforcement officials arrested four of the five, and they were detained in Tucson, Arizona.

The Arizona civil disobedience was linked to the anniversary of the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education.* The date was a purposeful way to link to previous civil rights movements and to show there was still no "equal protection of the laws" when it came to legal status. By challenging the local and federal law, the youth aimed to highlight the urgency for legislative action in Congress and in the process, catalyze a mass grassroots mobilization calling for the DREAM Act.

The Arizona McCain demonstration by DREAMers sparked similar civil disobedience actions across the country. The intention was to push legislators to help enact the DREAM Act, leading to intentional nonviolent resistance at the offices of senators who played key roles in the Senate. By the end of May, a three-city sit-in effort coordinated by Kansas/Missouri DREAM Alliance (KSMODA) in St. Louis, Kansas City and Washington DC urged the respective senators to co-sponsor the DREAM Act.

California was another key state where a number of protestors were involved in nonviolent resistance. Though Senator Feinstein (D-CA) was a confirmed supporter, she was, nevertheless, made a "target" because of her membership on the Senate Judiciary Committee and role in the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and Border Security. By May 20th, a total of 12 students were arrested in Feinstein's California offices, calling on her to "champion" the DREAM Act bill. For California DREAM advocates, this meant that she take a more vocal and concerted effort to make the legislation move forward. Nine of those–mostly UCLA students–-took part in a civil disobedience action that resulted in blocking a large street intersection in West Los Angeles, dubbed the "Wilshire" Action, after the name of the street that they blocked, Wilshire Boulevard.

I experienced the impact of defying the laws on a visceral level. While attending the sit-in at Senator Feinstein's office, I joined along in the chants "Hey Feinstein what do you say? Make some DREAMS come true today" and "Fighting for jobs and education. Not for racist deportations." We sang along to the John Lennon song "Imagine" by putting the iPod up to the bullhorn, shouting especially louder when it came to the "you may say that I'm a DREAMER but I'm not the only one" lyrics. Senator Feinstein was not present in the building at the time of the demonstration, and her

representative offered to give the youth a meeting with her in the future. This concession was deemed insufficient by protestors who continued to occupy the building space until they were arrested.

The event left an impression on me, as it had been one thing to read about the Arizona 5 students and another to be in the presence of the young women holding their ground at the Federal building and being surrounded by no less than a dozen police officers. Holding a signs saying “DREAM as Stand Alone bill,” the small group of about 30 students chanted “undocumented and unafraid” for the several hours it took until the protesting youth were arrested and detained. I was initially puzzled as to the reason for targeting those who were already supporters. Feinstein’s office spokesperson, Gil Duran from his Washington DC office, expressed similar bewilderment and reminded protestors that Feinstein herself introduced the DREAM Act in 2003. He noted “it doesn't make a lot of sense to protest against someone who has been there, working on this issue since the beginning” (Behrens, 2010).

The protestors in attendance noted that they would no longer accept mild support and instead required accountability from those not intently working to enact the bill. Tarrow (2011) noted, “contentious collective actions serve as a basis of social movements, not because movements are always violent and extreme, but because it is the main and often the only recourse ordinary people posses against better-equipped opponents or powerful states” (p. 8). The approach to enact civil disobedience action towards even DREAM supporters was represented by an attitude of “get fully behind it or get out of the way.” This meant that senators were asked to explicitly show public support for DREAM bill over the comprehensive immigration reform.

Civil disobedience is designed to incite thinking. It is a form of non-violence that "occurs when an agitator deliberately breaks a law considered unjust and destructive" (Bowers et al., 2010, p.45). While sit-ins are "a common instrumental, confrontational strategy of protestors of all kinds" (Lake, 1983, p. 275), the DREAM movement used this popular strategy as agitators bringing attention to their exclusion from citizenship rights.[54] As Del Gandio (2008) pointed out, direct action is powerful and strategic symbolism because the disruptions do more than create physical interference of traffic; they also show force and challenge power and motivate others to similar actions. Jasper (2010b) reminded us that while these interventional approaches can be seen in a negative light, they are representative of the choices protesters can exercise when selecting agitation strategies.

Ultimately, the confrontational approach aimed to increase the commitment from supporters. Tania suggested that participating protestors were putting themselves at risk to "face the ultimate fear of deportation to show their commitment to passing DREAM, our community and leaders must ask themselves what they are willing to do" (Jones, 2010). So, although there was a host of natural allies, like Senator Feinstein and Representative Gutierrez who were undoubtedly not the enemy, civil disobedience was rationalized as a way to compel a stronger initiative for action for the DREAM community (Lal, 2010b). These escalation tactics were meant to draw attention to what the activists called the *deferred dreams* of all the DREAM-eligible youth in America.

More DREAM-eligible youth continued to participate in acts of civil disobedience as evident in the *DC 21* action. On July 19th through the 21st 2010, I joined the call of action and participated with DREAMers from across the country in the Mass DREAM

Mobilization held in Washington DC. I worked with several DREAMers from adjacent states to organize a caravan that started in Arizona, came through to pick people up in New Mexico, and picked up Texas participants before arriving in DC in time for the events. No other New Mexico youth joined that chartered bus caravan, so I attended the event as the sole representative from the state of New Mexico. I was thrilled to be part of the mobilization as it would be my first time participating in a National DREAM - exclusive gathering.

This event included training sessions, a symbolic DREAM graduation, and lobbying events in Capitol Hill. DREAM Act advocates planned the events to be similar to the organizing of the National Graduation Ceremony of the year before, but the gathering was meant to be much more action oriented. Following the graduation, during which the Master of Ceremony announced the graduating class of 2010, we flung our caps into the air, grabbed our signs, and proceeded to march outside the Senate offices.

We rallied outside the Hart Senate Office Building chanting "One two three four, I don't want to mop the floor. Five six seven eight, I just want to graduate." While we made our way around the Senate building, the Dream Activist media liaison blared on the megaphone a startling announcement. We were told that at that very moment, 21 undocumented immigrant youth were being arrested inside the building for conducting a peaceful protest sit-in at the congressional offices of Senator Menendez, Senate majority leader Reid, Senator Feinstein, Senator McCain, and Senator Schumer.[55] In sum, these numerous examples of civil disobedience were an interventional strategy that showed youth making a move towards escalation, and they worked to force more attention on the issue.

Performed Protest

In this third section, I describe performative tactical campaigns that were used during this phase. Dramatic public displays were staples in DREAM organizing during the summer of 2010. Undocumented youth made use of an assortment of other campaigns aimed at agitating and disrupting the status quo. These tactics consisted of DREAMers making use of what Kells called "symbolic performances, rhetorically constituted and socially performed" (2006, p. 215). These staged acts of advocacy were attempts to affect the public policy through use of theatrical displays of dissent. I restrict my focus to several examples of embodied forms of protest performance, including extended journeys, teach-ins, die-ins, and hunger strikes.

There were several extended journeys I categorize as performed protest. The first of these was a five-month walk taken by four immigrant students from Florida's Students Working for Equal Rights (SWER). They started their 1,500-mile walk from Miami in January 2010 and finally arrived in Washington DC in May to urge Obama stop to the separation of families and the deportation of DREAM Act-eligible youth. Similar but shorter walks were emulated by youth in Michigan, New York, and California in 2010. Though notably a less confrontational tactic, the extended walks were a visual and public way to draw attention to the issue of the DREAM Act clearly in line with the more radical acts representative of this phase. Along with the other nonviolent protests, these performed protests are more examples of how DREAM youth communicated their resistance and critique against the oppressive immigration system.

A similar extended journey through California was made up of students from various California colleges and universities. I was given the responsibly of serving as

media liaison for the 2nd Annual California Tour de Dreams bike ride, in which 34 students rode 540 miles from the University of California Berkeley to the University of California Los Angeles. The purpose of the event was to call on legislators to push for the passage of the DREAM bill and to call on the community to help create college scholarships for underrepresented and historically marginalized students by sponsoring the bike rides. Tour de Dreams held a press conference at nine locations along the route. I wrote the press releases for the event and met up with riders for the last leg of the event from the city of Ventura down to UCLA. Across the coastal landscape, the DREAM riders enacted the importance of the cause through 540 miles and physically brought attention to the cause.

In July, UWD used a campaign called DREAM University. This tactical campaign was a teach-in that was a historical type of interventional nonviolent protest. The mission behind the Dream University campaign was to show the hurdles with which young American immigrants are presented when they graduate from high school:

> Unaware of the hurdles ahead of them, as they walked across graduation stages only to find that the door to higher education and opportunity was shut, and all that was left for them was to go underground, to continue to live in the shadows. This performance event was meant to be symbolic of the 70,000 Dream-eligible students who are unable to adjust their status. (Dream University, n.d.)

Wanting to publicly draw attention to lack of legal status, UWD used a location that would sharply underscore the double standards of the United States democratic system. Dream University maintained a continuous presence in the Washington DC's Lafayette Park located directly across from the White House.

I arrived in DC to take part in Dream University after it had already been in session for five consecutive days. On Day 6, I was honored to be invited to give a guest lecture. The day of my class was concurrent with the Mass Mobilization taking place, so I prepared a lecture about persuasive communication, hoping my topic of choice would allow protesters to put their knowledge to immediate use during the legislative visits that were scheduled for two days after. Flattened cardboard boxes were used for seats and volunteers held up "class in session signs" as I made my way to the cardboard podium.

The aim of DREAM University was for students from around the country to use the space as a concrete metaphor by creating open doors to higher education. After my lesson was over, the students took a break for lunch before classes resumed. Following my class, a different instructor taught the use of Street Theater so students could use their bodies to enact resistance. Students created body sculptures for words like *illegal* and *ICE* that were meant to reflect students' impression of a situation or oppression. After that activity, we moved to "forum theatre" in which students rehearsed an improvisation to create a scene, and students focused on the specific oppression of being undocumented.[56] The skits narrated the experiences of participating DREAMers with themes about how it felt to be denied full legal opportunities. The performances, aimed at audiences passing by, used a variety of effective attention getting features like dancing and music.

Student response was enthusiastic. At the debriefing at the end of the day, students noted how they loved being able to dance in front of the White House "without having papers," while others commented on how unified they felt to be able to be with DREAMers from such varied locations. Throughout July, the efforts saw over 2,000

students attend classes (DREAM University, 2010). The ongoing teach-in not only informed spectators about the movement's cause but also focused on conducting classes in order to teach the students about the cause.[57] The participating DREAMers protesting in front of the iconic White House was an important visual juxtaposition that augmented the critique of the governing establishment and represented values of equality. This particular demonstration also enabled audiences to see the resilience of youth who responded to the lack of access by putting themselves at risk of deportation.

DREAM movement participants used die-ins as yet another type of performance protest to petition for the bill. In these examples, students theatrically showed the importance of the DREAM Act through a plea that politicians stop "killing" the dreams of immigrant students. On April 30, 2010, Trail of Dreams New York and members of the NYSYLC conducted simultaneous die-ins in the DC and NY offices of Senator Schumer. Simulating being dead was another tactic that offered a visual reminder of DREAMers' message about suffering from the lack of citizenship. The following NYSYLC statement presented the tactic of staging death against the other symbolic acts in which DREAMers engaged:

> Wearing **caps and gowns**, that represented our desire to get access to college, walking barefoot, that represented the **blisters and tiredness of our feet** after walking 250+ miles from NYC to DC, and white paint and blood stains on our faces, that represents the **death of our dreams**, we stormed into Senator Schumer's office to demand answers and action. (NYSYLC, 2010)

Movement actors demonstrated a way of calling attention to injustice of legal status in dramatic ways. I categorize these acts as strategies of intervention because they are an

extreme use of performance to shock people and meant to accompany feelings of guilt. The death of dreams was further emphasized by a funeral procession in Nashville, Tennessee, July 25, 2010, to dramatize what often happens to the dreams of undocumented students who have grown up in the United States. The DREAMer organizers of the procession ended their march at the office of Senator Robert Coker (R-TN), whom they called on to support the DREAM Act (Hara, 2010).

The last example of performative events was use of extended and visible hunger strikes. Under the slogan "Because we are willing to starve for our Dreams," participants also set off a series of long-term hunger strikes in different states. This tactic modeled the 1968 César Chávez spiritual fasts to support migrant grape workers demanding better labor wages (Shaw, 2008). From April through December 2010, DREAMers fasted in similar ways in a variety of states across the nation including New York, North Carolina, Minnesota, Kentucky, Indiana, Kansas City, and St. Louis. These hunger strikes called on their respective legislators to support the bill. All of these continued efforts and displays were "performances" about enacting their belief and commitment to the cause. The strategic choices of this period made use of dramatic enactments in order to demonstrate to the audience the urgency of the request. The performative protests were arguments in their own right "not a content, but a performance, a happening born, existing, and transformed" through movement discourses (DeLuca, 1999, p. 134). Consequently, I argue the tactics used in this phase were visually communicating their resistance. Pineda and Sowards (2007) insisted visual argument "represented a strategic, argumentative choice to advocate cultural pride, unity, and civic virtue" (p.168) when

used by an undocumented activist. I suggest that these events were not only about advocating desire for belonging, but also as form of critique.

The strikes were varied in level and number of participants. In New Hampshire, two students planned a 36-hour hunger strike to raise awareness and elicit a more vocal response from the Dartmouth College administration. Texas DREAMers had a 43-day hunger strike to persuade Senator Hutchison to champion the Act during the lame-duck session of Congress (Biggers, 2010). I did not fast myself, but I took part in the DTLA and Orange County DREAM event by visiting the collaborative 15-day hunger strike and encampment for the Dream Act in front of Senator Dianne Feinstein's Westwood office. Hunger strikes have utility to appeal to power and emotion. These are all symbolic acts that “exemplify willingness, potential martyrdom, and self sacrifice” in DREAMers (Scanlan, Stoll, & Lumm, 2008, p. 277).

In sum, all of these the presented examples collectively worked to present a much more escalated and interventional form of social protest. These examples all created a heightened visual protest effort that for obvious reasons was difficult to sustain for extended periods of time. DREAMers use of these tactics was especially significant because they extended the intervention efforts that youth were willing to use. These examples show that youth were willing to extend their protest past acceptable forms of political participation and into the terrain of the riskier social protest acts.

Possibilities and Limitations of Phase Three

The strategies in this phase in some ways show the cumulative effect of the decade-long efforts to pass the DREAM Act. The movement participants were deploying tactics that differed substantially from those seen in the previous years. This phase

illustrated an escalated social movement where DREAM protestors appealed to many different audiences.

It is important to highlight that at this point in the social movement, DREAM youth continued to face opposition. For instance, in early November 2010 I embarked on a road trip from New Mexico to California with Mo from Dream Activist. Earlier that day, Mo had sent a mass e-mail through the Dream Activist listserve about the deportation of a San Francisco DREAMer the group was working to deter. He wondered if it was fair to scare people into action by making the subject line of the e-mail read "you are getting deported." He turned to me after checking his smart phone, and with a look of amusement asked if I remembered the e-mail he sent earlier. I did. He read aloud, "Good. Send these fucking cockroaches home. No amnesty. No DREAM Act. Do not reward these criminal kids. Fuck you" (Mo, personal communication, November 11, 2010). He laughed as I took a moment to process why someone would subscribe to a DREAMers listserve under the aegis of such vitriolic intentions.

I offer this exchange for a reason. While I have focused on the resistive elements of the DREAM protest movement and expanded sense of agency, this focus does not negate the opposition that was present. Youth continued to be responded to negatively. Mo told me that he always responded tongue-in-cheek by reassuring opponents that "I will be delivering a DREAM petition on your behalf, and it is because of *your* contribution this law will happen" (Mo, personal communication, November 11, 2010). Few would disagree that nativist rhetorics have continued to permeate the debate on immigration. Despite the backlash, what I point to in this discussion is evidence of a reified sense of agency in the face of anti-immigrant opposition. The politicized identity

can be summed up in the post in Dream Activist site that responded to anti-immigrants efforts to intimidate immigrant youth from coming out as undocumented. There was the threat that they would "call ICE on the illegal' to which Flavia responded:

> How about this: If they come, we'll be ready, with peacekeepers and civil rights attorneys on hand. Immigrant youth will stand up and tell their stories, and they'll give speeches, and we'll cheer for them, and they'll be a little nervous but they'll be happy they did it. Maybe there will be some anti-immigrants nearby, awkwardly holding signs that say "Illegal is illegal" and waving American flags and telling people like [names of undocumented youth] that they're second class, criminals, and cockroaches. And then we'll ask passersby, "Whose side are you on?" (Flavia, 2011)

What this quote and strategy show is that there was still a continued strong opposition against the DREAMers. However, what was unique about this phase was that the responses to scare tactics from the opposition actually showed a much more aggressive tone and response than before.

Ultimately, these strategies show a much more prominent sense of empowerment. As evident in the internal and external strategies, this escalated approach of social protest demonstrated an increased commitment and engagement to the cause. Lizbeth shared the sense of legitimacy that was gained by this phase of the movement, noting that the established immigrant right organizations seemed to project concern that "these kids don't know what they are doing" (Lizbeth, personal communication, August 13, 2010) and that they had proved this by using escalated strategies.

The escalation phase also gave participants a concrete sense of confrontational power. Neidi noted after returning from the DC Mass Mobilization that it was a scary feeling to have resisted and gained power, "It shook us because we didn't know what it like [to have it]. We are used to being powerless and being told what to do. And it is scary to think that we have power, but we do, and we need to know where to put it" (Neidi, personal communication, August 2011). Neidi went on to share at the DREAM Team LA hunger strike vigil that the undocumented students who staged a sit-in in Washington DC were degraded during the arrest. The arresting police officers had asked them immediately if they were US citizens. She said:

> So bravely, and with so much dignity, they said to them, "we are undocumented." And the police said, "Oh, you're illegal. You are a criminal." And they said, "No, we are undocumented." They got up with such strength for this movement and said, "I am not illegal. And I'm not a criminal. I am fighting for my life, and I will not stop, and that is why I am here." (Neidi, personal communication, August 2011)

This identity shift is one that goes beyond self-affirmation, showing an empowered sense of self that is confrontational and resistant to dominant immigrant oppression. This claim for respect and dignity by talking back to the police officer is a powerful testament to the enhanced personal agency of the participants.

Participants who enacted resistance and made demands showed notable differences in this era. The focus was no longer on the stories of discrimination, stories of education being denied, or invisibility. Instead, this phase indicated themes of courage, stories of empowerment, and examples of youth standing their ground on moral

authority to speak up for themselves. The external strategies used during this tenth year of social protest, follow the trajectory towards confrontation continuum set in the theory of the rhetoric of agitation (Bowers et al., 2010). This leads me to question: would the DREAM Act have passed if they had been less confrontational? Would it have passed if they had been more confrontational? As with every phase before this, there were tradeoffs that came with the nonviolent protest and persuasion approach. Jasper (2010a) reminded us that creative strategies come with risks for the protestors. The dilemma of whether there were more costs than benefits to these strategies does not come with clear answers.

Tears and Transitions: Dream 2010 Vote

Five months into my fieldwork in New Mexico, I could not have predicted that the movement would take this escalated turn, and so I found myself in the middle of these historic actions. The rhetorical acts that I described in the preceding sections were especially meaningful to me because I had the opportunity of participating directly in many of events I described. Between May and August, I attended national events and did what I could to support the movement efforts. Being in the middle of this new role as a direct participant was both an exciting and challenging undertaking that forced me to grapple with the complex dynamics of activist scholarship.

There were days of 12 straight hours of participation in organizing events when I resented having to come home and document my experience. I struggled with the requirement to paint an accurate picture of the moving sights of undocumented youth defying oppression, and many examples are not included in this account. I frequently felt my descriptions came short of capturing the complexity of the events. However, there

were also many days when I felt so fortunate to have the luxury of coming back to write and cathartically process events through writing about it in my field-notes journal.

While I cannot say that I always balanced the efforts seamlessly, I truly wrestled with these tensions during the course of this study. In reconciling the dual roles of activist scholars, I came to the realization that if I could have spent 400 hours in direct participation, I would also have to devote a significant amount of time to enacting the part of scholar by concentrating on writing up my findings. Admittedly, through the final months of writing this dissertation, I was much more the "scholar" than the "activist." During this period of time when I mostly sat indoors with my laptop, declining the opportunity to attend organizing events, part of me grew restless because I was back to only indirectly monitoring the movement. It was then that I reminded myself that this final write up is my own act of resistance, a small offering to contribute to the story of the undocumented movement.

The movement continued to organize and use direct action. The final months of 2010 showed furious activity with news that the DREAM Act would finally be put for a vote. DREAMers had succeeded in getting Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, who had just won a tight midterm election race, to put the DREAM Act as a standalone vote during the lame-duck session.[58] The bill was attached to the National Defense Authorization Act for the fiscal year 2011 along with the repeal of law barring openly gay, lesbian, or bisexual from military service in "Don't Ask Don't Tell" (Barrett & Bash, 2010). The tensions and friction between DREAM activist and the mainstream immigrant-rights organization subsided, and by September the organizations were in collaborative support for the bill. As I neared the end of my dissertation writing, I had a

vision of concluding the chapters with a celebratory note of DREAM movement victory, but events would not play out in that way.

Emotions ran high, social networking sites were all abuzz with updates and efforts to ensure the needed votes. The Facebook Group DREAM Act 2010 encapsulated the efforts of the last ten years a couple days before the vote:

> Meetings. Rallies. Letter writing campaigns. Press Conferences. Documentaries. Awareness summits. Voter registration drives. Blogs. Congressional Visits. Marches. Sit-Ins. Hunger strikes. SWEAT. TEARS. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOUR DREAMS! You have given this your all! You have shed the fear and stepped forward when no one else would. Now the DREAM Act needs you more than ever! Can't stop. Won't stop.

The DREAM Act passed the first hurdle by prevailing in the lower chamber. Viewing parties were put together so that DREAMers could watch the Senate vote being aired on CSPAN. On December 18, 2010 at 7:30 a.m., it felt like DREAMers across the nation were collectively holding their breath. But there was no sigh of relief; there would be no celebratory conclusion. While DREAM advocates managed to get certain key Senators like Richard Lugar (R-IN), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Bob Bennett (R-UT), and Claire McCaskill (D-MO) to vote to end the Senate debate and force a final vote, six Democrats joined 39 Republicans in either voting against DREAM or abstaining. The legislative defeat in the face of these increased efforts left me stunned.

DREAMers were collectively disappointed, but as with every other defeat experienced within the ten-year span, the youth responded with a mentality that the DREAM lives. Despite disappointment, the defeat was met with an even stronger resolve

to keep fighting. The DREAM movement can be said to be the strongest to date. David noted that the youth have been resilient for an entire decade and the movement "is not going anywhere. [Failure] may demoralize us but it does not stop us from gaining ground" (personal communication, July 21, 2010). Looking back at the existence of the movement thus far and seeing that every time the bill does not pass, the movement invariably grows, because more youth become dedicated and committed to participation. While I cannot say with certainty what exactly will happen to this movement, these comments indicate an affirmed commitment to keep fighting.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the movement to date. This third phase, from April-December 2010, focused on the escalation period where DREAM activists made use of civil disobedience tactics and in turn demonstrated themselves to be empowered agents of change. I noted that the functional result was an affirmed identity as unapologetic DREAMers.

Describing the progressive nature of the DREAM youth movement has allowed me to show the rhetorical strategies used by the social movement. My discussion has also notably shown the progressive sense of empowerment shown by participating DREAMer youth. I conclude in the next chapter by offering a discussion about the current state of the DREAM movement, suggestions and implications based on this analysis of the movement.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

"Though we tremble before uncertain futures may we meet illness, death and adversity with strength may we dance in the face of our fears." (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 575)

In the wake of the 2010 defeat of the DREAM Act, a video surfaced that depicted the sentiments felt by some of the movement's participants:

> *Dear Senators,*
>
> *Your lack of compassion is appalling. Something which is only surpassed by your political pigheadedness. The fact that you've branded DREAMers as public-service parasites to this country points to your lack of awareness and empathy. After all, these are children that you've condemned: DREAMers are the most self-reliant and goal driven individuals. Daughters. Sons. Brothers. Sisters. Partners. Co-workers. Colleagues. These young people have difficult lives and have overcome countless obstacles to get further than anyone would have expected. We say lack of compassion because we are still denied a chance to live freely and realize the American Dream. We want this country to be a place where dreams come true. A place where undocumented children, who had once been condemned to an eternity in limbo, are given a second opportunity to dream. During our 10-year struggle, DREAMers have won over the majority of the American public. We've had the support of president Obama and the support of over half of your fellow Senators. In the past this is all that we would've needed to pass a bill that would bring a positive social and political change. But a small handful of you did not think it was enough. Although the defeat of the DREAM Act in 2010 was a hard pill to swallow, it united us politically, emotionally and*

spiritually. For 2011 we demand that our aspirations and movement do not become casualties in your political tug of war.

In solidarity,

Dreamers Adrift (Dreamers Adrift, n.d.).

This letter, featured by the DREAMers Adrift collective, captured the tone and content at the core of this dissertation—mapping the DREAM Act and the progression of its strategies. To conclude this examination of the DREAM Act, I will begin by summarizing the chapters and findings from my analysis of the decade-long DREAM struggle for the passage of the DREAM Act. Second, I discuss the current state of the DREAMer social movement and its future. Third, I assess the challenges faced by DREAM Act participants as a way of contextualizing the defeated bill. Fourth and finally, I point to the methodological contributions of this study by presenting the intentions, benefits, and limitations of activist research.

Summary and Findings

In this dissertation project, I aimed to present rhetorical social protest in a holistic, rather than isolated picture, by evaluating the movement to pass the DREAM Act from its inception to its current status. Two research questions guided my study: $RQ_{1:}$ How do undocumented youth communicate about their identity and personal agency given the legal restrictions they encounter and seek to change? RQ_2: How do undocumented youth communicate their demands publicly in order to seek passage of the DREAM Act?

To answer these questions, I drew from 400 hours of participant-observation fieldwork, mainly localized in California and New Mexico, and 10 in-depth interviews of DREAM activists in leadership positions. These interviews were supplemented with

secondary accounts of DREAM activism available in materials from the movement and media accounts. I have presented three distinct progressive phases where the participants of the social movement made shifts in identification and in the external strategies used to address outside publics.

The first phase covered from 2001 to 2007 and revealed strategies aimed at educating legislators about the existence of exceptional DREAM-eligible students. This featured the *exemplar student* strategy of identification based on a collective identity formation process. Invitational means of persuasion were used to petition legislative representatives through appeals to the value of hard work and education. The strategies were important self-affirmation moves that increased the self-concept of undocumented students. These efforts also functioned to humanize DREAMers by positioning DREAM-eligible youth as exceptional in order to counter the negative typecast of illegal aliens. This phase ended with the 2007 defeat of the DREAM Act; the failed vote resulted in new agitation techniques during the movement's second phase.

The second phase concentrated on the 2007 through 2009 time frame, during which the movement concentrated its efforts on winning wider visibility and social support for the movement. The internal efforts to unite undocumented youth included the creation of national coalitional organizations and self-definitional efforts that were captured in the slogan, *undocumented and unafraid.* The external strategies of this stage were made up of efforts at public disclosure and national visibility. The self-directed activism by DREAM-eligible youth in this phase yielded self-empowerment as an affective consequence and a sense of voice and agency not evident earlier. The agitation efforts also legitimized the movement and emboldened the youth to take ownership by

defying the stigma of immigration status. By the end of this phase, DREAMer efforts were met with resistance, and the disaffected youth resolved to escalate the agitation efforts even further.

The third phase traced the protest spanning the months of May to December 2010. The participating activists utilized notably riskier strategies in an attempt to affect social change. This *unapologetic DREAMer* era featured the effrontery of activists who escalated mobilization efforts by modeling civil disobedience tactics of previous civil rights movements. This fundamental transformation of agentic orientation showed youth comfortable in challenging the power system and making bolder claims for social equality. The direct action efforts pressured senators and resulted in the DREAM Act being put to a vote as a stand-alone bill. The 2010 DREAM vote also failed to pass, leaving open for speculation what the next phase of the movement will look like.

State of the DREAM Movement

The story of the DREAM Act social movement does not end where I conclude my research; it continues on, vigorously. Perhaps not surprisingly, the battle for higher education and legal status continues the familiar vacillating cycle. While Maryland has recently become the 11th state to allow in-state tuition for undocumented youth, the legislation reportedly "awakened a sleeping giant in this state," with citizens rallying against its enactment (Hill, 2011). The NCSL reported that so far in the 2011 legislative session, eight states (Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia) have considered 15 bills that would ban undocumented students from eligibility to in-state tuition rates or from enrolling in public colleges and universities (NCSL, 2011). In October 2010, Georgia's State Board of Regents enacted

new regulation regarding the admission of undocumented students, noting that the 35 institutions in the university system must require "lawful presence" as prerequisite for enrollment (University System of Georgia, 2010). The gains for undocumented students were balanced, and then, by equally ambitious attempts to undo such legislation.

In a continuation of the trend from previous years, these restrictions continue to spur undocumented youth into action. By early 2011, a new group called the National Immigrant Youth Alliance (NIYA) was launched, adding to the growing number of organizing efforts. This undocumented youth-led network made up of grassroots organizations, campus-based student groups, and individuals signals continued efforts of DREAM-eligible youth who are "committed to achieving equality for all immigrant youth, regardless of their legal status" (NIYA, n.d.).

At the end of March 2011, another ticker appeared on the DREAM is Coming web site, a clear signal of civil disobedience action in the works. NIYA had held its first convening in Georgia with undocumented youth and allies from all over the country on April 2 through April 4, 2011, and this proved to be the site from which the next act of disobedience was hatched. On April 5, 2011, the *Georgia 7 Action* was launched. This campaign effort, billed as designed to "draw a line in the sand," was a collective effort of youth requesting the administration of Georgia State University to refuse the imposed ban on undocumented youth (Domenic, 2011). The youth framed the issue around injustices stemming from segregation. Pointing to Georgia's segregationist practice, which Dream Activist reminds us consisted of 27 Jim Crow laws during the civil rights era, seven DREAMers sat down on the street and refused to leave. Additional participants chanting "up up with education, down down with deportation," dropped banners over the Georgia

State University library. Upon arrest, the youth openly declared themselves as "undocumented and unafraid" as they blocked a street intersection (McCann, 2011).

The *Los Angeles Times* ran a story about the Georgia 7, noting that the agitators had been cited with misdemeanors, provoking the author to ask, "So what, one might ask, does it take for an illegal immigrant to get deported in the United States in 2011?" (Fausset, 2011). Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano answered that question:

> I am not going to stand here and say that there are whole categories that we will, by executive fiat, exempt from the current immigration system, as sympathetic as we feel towards them, but I will say that [DREAM-eligible youth] group . . . are not the priority. (DHS, 2011)

President Obama affirmed on the Spanish media network Univision that his administration was not targeting DREAM Act-eligible students for deportation. That very day, the Department of Homeland Security sent Prerna Lal, George Washington University law school student and co-founder of Dream Activist, a Notice to Appear for removal proceedings (Dream Activist, 2011). The wry irony was not lost on the 22 senators who wrote a letter addressed to President Barack Obama, asking him to use his executive authority to prevent deportation of young people who would benefit from the DREAM Act (National Immigration Forum, 2011).[59]

The "not targeted" but "not safe" policy is just one more example of the undocumented youth in the perpetual state of limbo that is the undocumented youth experience (Rojas, 2011). The nationwide strategy to win rights for immigrant youth remains geared toward escalated tactics classified as "mindful and intentional strategic

acts of civil disobedience" (NIYA, n.d.). The efforts of DREAMers focus largely on direct collective actions led by those most affected—the students themselves—and supported by committed, conscientious allies (NIYA, n.d.).

Given the decade-long picture of the contentious back-and-forth wrangling concerning immigration law, what projections can be made on the DREAM Act and immigration reform? I contribute to that discussion by identifying my impressions on the outcomes, challenges, and suggestions by/for this movement.

Accounting for Defeat: Assessment and Suggestions

The driving force behind this research project was to provide an analysis of the social protest rhetoric of DREAM activism in order to offer a more complete and multifaceted depiction of this movement. As a researcher keenly aware of the political and legal stakes, I was also motivated to understand the continued defeat of the DREAM Act. Scholarship committed to theoretically rigorous critique and principled pragmatics is not easy. The importance and difficulty of that dual emphasis prompts me to follow the call for scholars to "go beyond simply criticizing liberation movements in order to see what can be done to improve and strengthen them" (Alcoff & Mohanty, 2006, p. 17). My commitment to contribute to academic scholarship and to the movement itself compels me to address how, in the wake of all these activist efforts, we can make sense of the continued failure of the legislation.

Social movements are long and hard efforts. I went from understanding that on a cognitive level to a more emotional one, especially when advocating for rights that seem common sense to me. My study showed the expansive litany of strategies constructed by undocumented youth as intentional and carefully deployed. To date, however, these

deployments have not achieved passage of the DREAM Act. That particular complexity of the issue is exactly why it is so difficult to offer a guaranteed set of strategies designed to result in passage of this legislation. Nonetheless, I am prompted in this section to include potentially useful information salient to DREAM activists. I first focus my discussion on the features relevant to rhetorical social movement scholarship.

One of the finding of this study was the way in which the DREAM social movement changed over time. In many ways the phases followed the radicalization evolution presented by the theory on the rhetoric of agitation (Bowers et al., 2010). However, despite their presented tool for generalizing outcomes, this study points to the fundamental question of whether any social movement theories can effectively predict outcomes. Despite the range of tactics that were used by protestors, these efforts were met with failure.

As communication studies have long showed, the rhetor or protestor can never really know how an audience will react to the communicative exchanges. Take for example, the outcome of the same civil disobedience strategy—sitting in—enacted at the office of two senators. The tactic led Senator Scott Brown to say he would not support the DREAM Act *because* DREAMers rallied at his office (Somos Republicans, April 17, 2011), while that same tactic resulted in Senator Reid exclaiming that he would not have put the DREAM Act for a vote in 2010 legislative calendar *if not for* the youth sit-in at his office (kyledeb, 2010). This example does not lessen the importance of careful analysis or rhetorically sophisticated strategies; rather it shows we cannot ever fully know how a tactic will be received.

While theoretical knowledge of social movements is important, the fact remains

that "no social movement knows when or if it will achieve its ends, and some have been with us in various forms for more than a century" (Stewart et al., 2007, p. 6). In this study, I presented the use of unique strategic choices in each phase that resulted in different set of consequences. Jasper (2004) reminded us that organizers and participants face, either explicitly as choices or implicitly by external factors, the strategic dilemma known as *tradeoffs* (p.6). In the progression of the movement, the defeats fueled the DREAMers' drive to use creative strategies, which carry both costs and benefits. The strategic dilemmas activists face also exist in the stigmatized identities around which a movement is organized (Bernstein, 2005b; Jasper, 2010a). These tradeoffs are important to point out given that the identity and political strategies were imposed in part from the opposition, so they represent the tension of agency in contrast to structural barriers.

The matter of tradeoffs also points to the question of evaluation of social movements. Given the tradeoffs involved, how should we evaluate a movement? Is achieving the desired outcome, in this case passage of the DREAM act, the only thing that matters? Or is a social movement about more than a means to an end (Jasinski, 2001)? As a participant in the DREAM movement, I simultaneously know the importance of the attainment of the goal and the limitations of judging DREAMer success solely on the outcome.

Success can take on many forms that are completely unrelated to effectively meeting stated goals, and social movement scholars have suggested various criteria. A better alternative, according to Bernstein (2005a), is to consider "mobilization and cultural effects, including the creation of alternative discourse, community building, and empowerment as well" (p. 5). Moreover, she cautions against using legal or political

change as the end-all and primary marker of collective action. She attests to this by noting that lesbian and gay activism from 1940 to 2000 endured years of legal failures. The subsequent claims for equality, rights, and justice, she argues, were necessary to counter the stigmatized social effects, so the result was both legal change as well as cultural change.

Cultural change generally, then, can be another indicator of social movement success, even if a particular goal is not yet realized. However, cultural change is an abstract concept that makes it difficult to measure (Speed, 2008). Whole social movements may have the potential to transform public opinion, which in turn can encourage policy change but "such effects are tenuous and largely undemonstrated" (Jasper, 1997, p. 295). In the case of the DREAMer movement, cultural change remains in flux, with support for the legislation increasing at the same time that opposition to it increases. It may be that cultural change will need to swing substantially in favor of progressive immigration reform (certainly not the current climate) before the DREAM Act will pass. Even if the actual demand is not met, what DREAM activists are doing may be affecting the general cultural context. Bernstein (2005a) noted that a similar trajectory occurred with civil rights movement, women's, and LGBT movements.

The decade-long organizing efforts by undocumented youth were not only about demanding legal inclusion through the DREAM Act itself but also about a demand for social recognition. Thus, while the stated political goal was not met, the positive outcomes of the DREAMer movement can still be charted as it pertains to the creation of identity formed deliberately on undocumented status. The DREAMers that were the focus of this study showed an increased sense of agency that was reflected in every phase

of the movement. For instance, “coming out of the shadows” revealed a sense of self-empowerment not evident before they employed visibility tactics. Understanding their oppression was key to my participants’ finding their sense of voice. Social protest was the vehicle that showed that DREAM youth could and would finally speak out against stigma and fear. Youth organizing around the DREAM Act has provided a stepping stone for immigrant youth to become politically active, to gain exposure to different streams of social justice work, and to share responsibility for building a movement based on principles of social inclusion and justice. Together, these actions were important challenges to the dominant immigration discourse and point to a committed base and continued efforts to grow a sustainable social movement directed by affected youth. That undocumented youth gained consciousness, voice, and public visibility as a result of DREAM activism cannot help but ultimately transform the culture in ways we probably cannot yet imagine.

From both personal and academic vantage points, I understood the transformative nature of social movement. My authorial voice was enhanced because I had been inside the protest lines and understood the discursive strategies beyond simple unit analysis. My participation is reason for disclosing my personal experiences, and that is certainly a dramatic change from what I ever thought I would willingly include in this dissertation. I grew and learned from discussions around dinners, sign making, and car rides. Taking part in rhetorical protest was personally enriching as it allowed my academic knowledge to forcefully collide with the rhythms and sensibilities of activism. The tearful disappointments, outrage, and fun I experienced during my fieldwork were productive emotions that worked to augment this intellectual inquiry.

These positive outcomes gained in the process of working towards a political end goal are not exhaustive. So, it would seem relatively straightforward if I were to extol the benefits of those attributes as I end this dissertation and call it a day. However, while the benefits certainly are important, when all is said and done, undocumented immigrant youth need the DREAM Act to pass; there is no level of theoretical pontification that gets me around that point. Despite the important constitutive effects on a person's sense of self, I note that that critically engaged activist research must also be attuned to the political objectives of the participants (Speed, 2008). Given that reality, I now turn to an assessment of the macro and micro challenges DREAM Act participants face.

Accounting for Race

Despite hopeful rumblings that Senator Durbin might "revive" the bill by bringing it for a vote (Hing, 2011), as of April 2011, DREAM-eligible youth still do not have many, if any, options for adjusting their status. This social movement is not a simple case of figuring out how best to present their arguments in favor of the legislation and then doing so. And while it has not been a focus of this dissertation, the role of racial identity as it affects organizing efforts cannot be ignored. It is important to note that much of the social movement efforts were a response to stigmatization, and social movement analysis must recognize those racialized layers.

A story from my field notes is informative in this regard. In early June 2010, I arranged to have a meeting over dinner with a community organizer helping me with logistics for a demonstration being planned in Albuquerque. I was frazzled about the pending details and frantically trying to cross each item left on the "to do" list. It may have been that he was trying to be reassuring, but in the most matter-of-fact tone, Max

(pseudonym) told me to relax--that it did not matter if I devoted all my time, efforts, and resources to the DREAM Act because it was not going to pass. His candid statement, amid my furious preparations for a major organizing event, led me to retort, “Well then, what is the point of all of this? By *this,* I was mostly inquiring about the point of the planning meeting. However, his answer provided a higher-level interpretation of *this.* He noted that the establishment does not want “brown, complex thinking, organized, assimilated, English-speaking individuals with the power to vote,” meaning there is no incentive to ever enact the law. Oooff. The blunt comment lingered in the air before I could respond.

Clearly, I do not include this exchange to imply there is no hope for the bill and especially not to discredit the efforts of DREAM activism. I would not in good conscience advocate for the bill or write this dissertation if I did not think it was possible to fight the forces of nativism. However, his comment is something I have contemplated long after that day.

There are plenty of examples of plays on words, by those who oppose the DREAM Act, that reinforce the racist sentiments Max identified that evening. The bill has been referred to as the *Dream On Act* and *Nightmare* (Hannity, 2011; Media Matters for America, 2010) because it would give rights to Latin@ immigrants. Yet another example of these attempts to reframe and demonize identity on the basis of race comes from Mike Cutler, a retired Immigration and Naturalization Service special agent, who called it the *terrorist assistance and facilitation act* at a recent DREAM Act Senate hearing (Garron-Caine, April 18, 2011). And Maandrews followed suit, referring to DREAM Act beneficiaries as the “Raza Crowd of Invaders”:

> The "dream act" poster children represent less than 1/20th of 1% of the Illegal Aliens who have been gaming and abusing the Laws and benefits if [*sic*] the USA! The Open Borders/La Raza Crowd of Invaders and "Useful Fool" Progressives are aiding and abetting the 20+ million illegals from south of the border (20% of the population of Mexico) and doing everything they can to bring in more! They see the Nightmare Dream Act as backdoor Amnesty and [*sic*] Just a Start in [*sic*] "Reconquista." (Maandrews, 2011)

Policy makers who voted against the bill offered yet another set of arguments relevant to race. They argued that DREAM legislation created a disadvantage to non-immigrant students. Taking the debate comments from the most recent vote, the dispute is evidently affected by fact that a large majority of youth who stand to benefit from the bill are students of color. Dana Rohrabacher's (R-CA) remark is typical: He called the DREAM Act "affirmative action amnesty" because it would allow immigrant youth privileges that "non-minority citizens" would not be allowed to access (Hing, 2010).

An inescapable part of the equation is that no matter the level of sophistication of social movement strategies, structural and institutionalized forces are present in the equation. I do not say that to devalue the importance of the efforts or the empowered identity that results from social protest but to contextualize the nature of and strength of the opposing forces. This activism is not just for the narrowly tailored bill that would regularize DREAMer's legal status; they are also for countering the forces that claim that youth have no right to be here in the first place (Buff, 2008). The activism has and continues to be part of a system of oppression that is unabashedly racist. Despite the progressive confidence of the DREAM youth, the identity deployment, and the

arguments for inclusion, previous examples show a continued pattern of hostile rejection of racialized immigrants. This is acknowledged by some social movement participants who noted "Fellow DREAMers, our fight for the DREAM Act symbolized what we are still battling— prejudice and racism" (Patricio, 2011). Continued legislative efforts take direct aim at immigrant minors that affect the mobilizing efforts of the DREAM Act activism.[60]

In light of the role race plays in the debate, Latino Critical Race Theory is even more essential to this study and to other social movement studies that face racism at the core of their mobilizing efforts. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun wrote, "in order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way" (*Regents of the University of California v. Allen Bakke*, 1978). There is no other way to address the DREAM Act and its continued defeat without taking into account the role of race, racial identity, and racism.

Also important to note is that the DREAM movement does not enact social protest efforts in isolation, and there is always the potential for backlash using the very tools DREAM activists used to make their claims for rights. For example, a recent study of the 2006 Mega March suggested not only that demonstrators had failed to win the hearts and minds of American voters but their actions actually increased negative perceptions of Mexican immigrants (Cohen-Marks et al., 2009). Hence, the strategies activists use to work toward visibility can turn out to be the mediated spectacles that turn people away.

Foss and Foss (2009) directed our attention to the notion that resistance to something typically bolsters efforts by opposition in response. Feminist activist Sonia

Johnson argued, “when we identify ourselves in opposition to something we become its unwitting accomplices . . . the very difficult truth is that what we resist persists” (as cited in Foss & Foss, 2009, p. 50). By focusing on claims for citizenship, then, DREAM activists unwittingly may be inviting attention to and thus a backlash that works against intended purposes.[61]

It is also important to acknowledge that if the DREAM Act had passed and undocumented youth were granted the rights of conditional adjustment of status, the negative representations from anti-immigrant groups would not necessarily cease. For those reasons, I argue that LatCrit framework allows us to contextualize the systemic dynamics that exist in the efforts for social justice change. The proposed LatCrit racist nativism framework is a conceptual tool meant to help “researchers understand how the historical racialization of Immigrants of Color shapes the contemporary experiences of Latina/o undocumented immigrants (Pérez Huber, 2009, p. 708). The long history of oppression that undocumented communities have faced is a reminder that as long as the dominant discourse continues to frame undocumented youth in a racialized way, any theorizing must take into account issues of race and racism.

Burnout and Burned Bridges

Another level of challenges the DREAM movement faces is the internal dynamics of the relatively small amount of dedicated DREAM activists who have become representative of the national movement. That burden of emotional labor is ripe with potential for burn out by those in the movement. Some of the most active members of the movement commented on the strain of fighting for a decade and witnessing the rising and falling participation of other members.

For instance, Becca noted “there are people who think you can only do this for so long, and they are getting into their 30s and have to start to figure out their life with or without the DREAM Act” (personal communication, July 20, 2010). One particular DREAMer who participated in the two-week Freedom ride from California to Washington DC had just enough time to go home for one day before embarking on the responsibility of route planning for the nine-day Tour de Dreams event. She never complained, but showed signs of sheer exhaustion. To define activism as “actions” (i.e., organizing, showing up, strategizing, etc.) is to miss a key component to social movements not often addressed in social movement literature. There is tenacity that comes with passion. The commitment and heart of the activists in the heat of the struggle is crucial, but this degree of passion cannot be maintained forever.

There is also the added stress imposed by the tensions that exist within the broad umbrella of immigrant-rights efforts. One DREAMer noted, “This is the 10th year I do this. And it's long and draining and to be here in this moment where there is so much division which makes everything heavier” (Maria, personal communication, June 28, 2010). That heaviness from the polarizing tensions has real consequences to the mobilizing power of the youth, adding additional burdens to the tasks and organizing they feel compelled to do.

The demands created by polarizations raise yet another issue for the movement: the continued division within immigrant-rights reform generated in large part by the tactics of DREAM activists. Divisive tactics, no matter how effectively they function to create identification with the opposition, are destructive to the future cooperation of advocates supporting the DREAMers. The exclusionary sense of the DREAM label as

applicable to a certain special segment of society unwittingly denies those who may share the core values of the cause from participating (Bernstein, 2005a). All parties committed to immigration reform can benefit from coming to a place of solidarity. [62]

Furthermore, the high level of activity and organizing takes on additional stress when some DREAMers are told: "with the energy, power, determination and leadership that the DREAM activist youth are showing, you can do better than the DREAM Act" (Jane, 2010). The burden falls on committed DREAM activists to live up to these expectations of others. All of these demands on those in the movement show the difficulties that lie ahead for DREAM legislation and the DREAM social movement.

Scholarly Applications

In this section, I suggest some of the implications of engaged research and draw on my experience to discuss some of the issues of this endeavor, including lessons and limitations that can be drawn from the study. The unique challenges that resulted from this endeavor have been just as much a part of the contributions of the study as my findings about the movement itself. I reflect on some of the challenges with hopes that my experience will help pose future questions, for which I have no definitive answers, but that are, nonetheless, important to consider. Previously documented collaborations of activists and academics in the environmental movement (Cable, Mix, & Hastings, 2005) made similar claims about the challenges and potential for collaboration of scholars in social movements (Bender & Aoki, 2002; Croteau, Hoynes, & Ryan, 2005).

There are already concrete examples of a vibrant community of scholars who have put their knowledge about the topics they study into practical application. One such case is found in the leading immigration scholars from more than fifty leading

universities who urged Congress to pass the DREAM Act and spoke out on behalf of the undocumented students (Gonzales, 2010). Scholars like Roberto Gonzales model the process of engaged academic theorizing, tangibly working for enactment of the DREAM Act by publishing his scholarship in a wide variety of academic and community outlets.[63] Others have similarly connected their knowledge to a variety of outlets outside academia (Guarneros et al., May 2009; Olivas, 2008; Pérez, 2009). These are exemplary efforts at bridging the academy and practice to produce useful theoretical tools (Hasbrook, 2011). Taking a cue from Bevington and Dixon (2005), it is my long-term goal to contribute to the production of knowledge that could be of use to those in movement itself.

Make no mistake, the commitment to extend research work beyond the academy comes with ramifications (Kehn, 2011). Scholars who have stepped out in support of the DREAM Act or similarly charged issues have become open targets of attack. This was the case for professor Kent Wong, who has a long history of working to enact the DREAM Act (UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education, 2008a, 2008b). In a recently oral statement of support for the DREAM Act Wong said:

> When that day happens, the young people of the DREAM Act movement will go on to accomplish and do great things with your lives. You will go on to become lawyers, teachers, doctors and members of the U.S. Congress to replace those old white men. You are the hope and future of this country. You represent the hope and future of your generation. (Corsi, 2010)

His statement, however, was distorted when picked up by a litany of anti-immigrant blogs that denounced him for racism against white Americans. I came across websites

that included his contact information, with readers encouraged to call to express disapproval and even to threaten death (Carter, 2010).

These realities make the inclusion of my own story genuinely scary for so many reasons and speak to the power of extreme conservative discourses. My fear is placated when I channel the bravery of the undocumented youth with whom I spent so much time. To present the reality behind this struggle means to evoke the personal and not to recoil or retreat in the face of oppression and opposition simply because it is easier (Anzaldúa, 1983). This is at the core of this movement as a *movement of the flesh*, because social protests are driven by *physical realities* of protesters' lives. The heart of this movement is a "politic born out of necessity" (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983, p.23), out of the limitations of unauthorized status.

While the DREAM act is not the one and only answer to this issue, undocumented immigrant youth would benefit immensely from being granted equal legal rights. Park's (2005) insightful analysis on the paradox of the US commitment to liberal democracy and exclusionary practices showed that while "immigration status may be a morally arbitrary characteristic . . . it is not a legally insignificant one" (p.7). The tangible need for permanent residence is an undeniable part of the DREAM Act conversation.

I approach that responsibility by fervently emphasizing the urgency and reasons behind my support for the bill. As social movement scholarship shows, DREAMers are not unique for being denied civil rights. And while I am not arguing that undocumented youth are more deserving, it is important to remember that some DREAMers youth have spent as much as half of their lives fighting for this bill. Professor Olivas (2011) reminded us in an op-ed piece in the *Houston Chronicle* that there are very real

consequences in Congress's failure to pass the DREAM Act. With this in mind he urged DREAM students to stop making their undocumented presence known, essentially a reversion to the earliest stage of the movement:

> Throughout our history, we have been unafraid to take stands on principle — especially when human rights and civil rights are involved. From Thoreau's protesting war to César Chávez fasting for farm workers to Martin Luther King Jr. being arrested in a non-violent protest in Birmingham, we have a proud tradition of calling attention to injustices. But here's a distinction: None of these people of yesteryear risked being deported or repatriated upon release from prison. Today, when DREAM students such as Mario Perez are removed to a country they have never known, we reduce their powerful "letters from a Birmingham jail" to insignificant tweets from Mexico City or Lagos or Wuhan. In the face of grave threats to themselves, their families and their support systems, DREAMers who remain have little choice but to slink back into the shadows, reluctant to voice their anguish about a wrongful public policy. (Olivas, 2011, para. 13)

The state of limbo is overwhelming especially for those who have attained a degree and are hoping to use it. They are stuck in limbo because their future is placed on hold, awaiting a passage of immigration reform that may never ever come.

I agree that educators play an important role in this issue and can serve in the capacity as advocates and allies (Morales et al., 2009), not to speak for, but alongside undocumented youth. As I have demonstrated in this social movement study, the activists have shown themselves to be empowered individuals, capable, vocal and

sustaining in their efforts. As educators we are also called to listen and learn from those who have most at stake.

This study makes a persuasive case for the capacities and challenges faced by those engaged in the DREAM social movement. I still remain as hopeful as the DREAMers whose confident assertions point to the belief that it is not a matter of if but a matter of when (IYJL, n.d.). This ongoing movement shows signs that the fight for civil rights is long from over, making further exploration of this topic warranted and vital. Much like my reason for enrolling in the doctoral program, this dissertation is guided by Gloria Anzaldúa's words to do work *que valga la pena*. This struggle continues to be a matter of importance for me and will be the site for my future analysis long after this dissertation is bound and dusty. No matter the outcome of the federal legislation, if we believe Anzaldúa's affirmation that "the possibilities are numerous once we decide to act and not react," (1987, p. 378) then undocumented immigrant youth and their indomitable spirit have the promise of extensive possibilities ahead of them.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: DREAM Act Social Movement Timeline

1982

Plyler v. Doe Supreme Court case holds that the children of unauthorized immigrants are protected under the due-process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and entitled to a public education.

1985

Plyer decision tested in the case *Leticia "A" v. Board of Regents of the University of California*, where five undocumented students rejected by University of California from resident tuition fee, dispute issue of legal status as precluding criteria for residency. Students are afforded same rights as citizen students and are even are eligible for state financial aid program.

1990

Leticia A. decision was overturned by the California Court of Appeal in *Regents of the University of California v. Superior Court (Bradford)* leaving undocumented students in California required to pay out-of-state tuition, which was approximately three times the amount of in-state fees.

1994

California passes Proposition 187, a referendum aiming among other thing, to bar undocumented youth from social services but later found unconstitutional by federal court.

1996

Immigration Reform Amendment and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 adopts ambiguous language in Section 504, regarding policies on the eligibility of undocumented students for in-state tuition.

2001

May 21: Student Adjustment Act (H.R. 1918) and Dream Act (S. 1291) first introduced by 107th Congress.

April 15: Wise-Up! Immigrant Youth Leadership Development created by CHIRLA comprised of 10 high schools network aiming to advocate for proposed A.B. 540 legislation.

June 16: Texas legislature passes HB 1403 bill to allow Texas students access into higher education institutions.

October 12: California enacts A.B.540 and makes an exemption for non-resident tuition eligibility for undocumented students.

2002

March 6: Utah passes HB 144 creating exemption status from non-resident tuition fees for undocumented students.

April 9: Student Adjustment Act (H.R. 1918) passes with 62 congressional sponsors, and the Dream Act (S. 1291), with 18 co-sponsors in the Senate, is introduced by 107th Congress.

June 25: New York's S.B. 7784 is signed into law by legislators, permitting payment of tuition and fees charged to non-resident students of higher education in the New York school system.

2003

May 7: Washington State enacts HB 1079, permitting undocumented students to pay resident tuition at Washington's higher education institutions.

May 12: Oklahoma HB 1559 bill provides in-state tuition and/or state financial aid to qualified immigrant from Oklahoma high schools after at least two years of attendance.

May 18: Illinois HB 60 bill enacted to require an individual who is not a citizen or permanent resident of the state be classified as resident after graduating from an Illinois high school.

July 31: Preserving Educational Opportunities for Immigrant Children Act (H.R. 84) tallies 66 sponsors, and the Dream Act (S.1545), with 48 co-sponsors, is introduced into the 108h Congress.

October: Campus group *IDEAS (*Improving Dreams, Equality, Access and Success) is officially established at the University of California, Los Angeles.

2004

National Immigration Law Center is instrumental in educating policymakers and providing financial sponsorship regarding DREAM advocacy campaign.

February 25: The first meeting of DREAM Team was held; this was a California staffed organization coalition made up of CHIRLA Wise Up!, Korean Resource Center, MALDEF, ACLU-SC, and the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS).

April 20- Center for Community Change, UWD and CHIRLA host Commencement Day at Washington DC.

May 20: Kansas (HB 2145) allows undocumented individuals who are accepted into postsecondary institution to be considered residents of the state for the purpose of tuition and fees.

2005

April: New Mexico passes S.B. 582, the *Immigration Education Act* (addressing the) *Denial of College Benefits to Immigrants* and allows undocumented students to pay in-state tuition.

May: Students organize the Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) and help found the independent Student Immigrant Movement (SIM).

December: Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (H.R. 4437, 2005) was introduced. It proposed that on the federal level, undocumented persons residing in the US be charged with a felony for their presence in the country and be barred from ever gaining legal status in the US.

2006

January: SIN Verguenza (SIN) is formed for and by undocumented students at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

March 26: DREAM Act Portal (http://dreamact.info) is launched and becomes the prominent online network for undocumented immigrant youth.

May 1: Mega Marches take place across the US with participation by hundreds of thousands of immigrants, becoming the largest nationwide protests in US history.

May 6: California State University, Los Angeles students establish Students United to Reach Goals in Education (SURGE), a support group for undocumented students attending that university.

December 7: Proposition 300 prohibits undocumented students in Arizona from qualifying for in-state tuition rates and any type of state financial aid.

December 14-15: Maria Rodriguez, youth organizer of CHIRLA, hosts the first-ever convening retreat of California's statewide network through A.B. 540 Network from the base of the Wise Up! Program.

2007

May 18: The Hearing on Comprehensive Immigration Reform: the Future of Undocumented Immigrant Students was directed to the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law, including the testimonials of Marie Nazareth Gonzalez, Martine Kalaw, and Tram Tran.

May 21: Minnesota's HF 1063 bill allows individuals who are accepted into postsecondary institution to be residents of the state for the purpose of tuition and fees.

August 24: Newly formed DREAM-related blog *Citizen Orange* posts first article.

October 8: Tam Tram speaks to *USA Today,* and her family is put in deportation proceedings three days following the media coverage.

October 22-24: Education Not Deportation campaign is launched at various colleges

across the country with a number of participating schools organizing phone calls on campus to Congress.

October 24: Dream Act fails to pass Congress with a vote of 52 to 44, short of the 60-vote margin needed to prevent a filibuster and begin debate on Capitol Hill.

December: DREAM Act postcards campaign launched through Dream Deferred blog. New York Student Youth Leadership Council (NYSYLC) and Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL) officially come into effect. California DREAM Network kicks off the campaign to focus on DREAM efforts.

2008

January: SIM launches and succeeds in the "10 out of 10 Campaign" aimed at getting the entire Massachusetts congressional delegation to co-sponsor the DREAM Act. Kyle from the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) partners with Dream Act Portal to blog at A Dream Deferred. United We DREAM hosts the first field meeting where students from over 15 states create a national strategy to pass the Dream Act and mobilize immigrant youth movement.

February 21: At a Democratic primary debate at the University of Texas in Austin, candidate Barack Obama notes, "Something that we can do immediately that is very important is to pass the Dream Act…That's going to be a top priority."

September: Launch of *Underground Undergrads* book by UCLA Labor Center.

October: "Pass the DREAM Act" as an #immigration idea is submitted to Change.org. Idea secures over 12,000 votes, and over 100 endorsements, becoming well known in the pro-migrant blogosphere.

December: Successful online campaign for DREAM Act leads UWD to invite Dream Activist and Citizen Orange to the table to talk about campaign escalation and tactics. At the meeting, UWD promises to contribute towards a petition site to gather signatures. Prerna Lai creates @DreamAct Twitter, Causes on Facebook, and social networking sites become main action-driving forces.

2009

January 7: UWD (UWD) Facebook Cause is launched.

January 20: Barack Obama is inaugurated as 44th United States president.

March 6: DREAM Act petition launched through DreamAct2009.com website and gathers more than 10,000 signatures in the first two months. Some members of Dream Activist meet for the first time in DC for the introduction of the DREAM Act of 2009. Premier of *Papers the Movie: Stories of Undocumented Youth,* a film about undocumented youth and the challenges they face when they turn 18 without legal status.

March 20-24: The United States Students Association, the country's oldest and largest student-led organization, makes the DREAM campaign part of its advocacy agenda.

March 27: Congress introduces The DREAM Act (S. 729) and the American Dream Act (H.R. 1751).

April 10: New Mexico's El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos youth organizer Adriana Ontiveros heads up the youth-led Albuquerque DREAMers in Action group.

April 20: Map of immigrant youth activism in the United States for the Dream Act is made available through dreamactivist.org. Created by Marisol Ramos, the map pinpoints online-based organizations, state-based Immigrant Rights organizations, policy organizations, and student organizations nationwide.

April 21: *College Board* issues report about and endorses the DREAM Act.

April 22: As part of the final article in the Immigration series, the *New York Times* covers immigrant youth and DREAM Act.

May 1: May Day 2009 turns out thousands of pro-migrant advocates in rallying for immigration reform.

June 3: Members of Dream Activist attend Reform Immigration FOR America campaign, a new coalition launched to push for comprehensive immigration reform legislation. Mohammed presents at civil liberties conference about the growth of DREAM Act online activism.

June 23: First National Graduation Event is held in Washington DC. Dream Activist founding members meet for the first time. UWD coalition members host graduation ceremonies in actions of solidarity across 16 states coast-to-coast.

June 29: Wisconsin approves an in-state tuition bill, effectively making it the 11th state to offer in-state tuition to undocumented immigrants.

July 13: Dream Activist forms LLC called Active DREAMS LLC. UWD Network officially forms.

August 6: Campus Progress non-profit organization incorporates coverage about DREAM Act.

August 10: The Texas DREAM Act Alliance forms as an umbrella organization consisting of active DREAM Act advocacy groups in the state of Texas.

August 15: Tour de DREAMs, comprised of California Dreamers, bike 511 miles from Berkeley to Los Angeles, CA, stopping at cities throughout state to raise awareness and build support for the DREAM Act.

September 19: Dream Activist members Mohammed and Juan attend Reform Immigration for America (RI4A) and FIRM campaign trainings aimed to increase awareness and raise support for comprehensive immigration reform.

September 23: National Back to School DREAM Act Day of Action shows a growing movement as 125 actions occur throughout 26 states. Most of these actions are small and self-initiated and include participation by the University of New Mexico.

October 12: Carlos Saavedra, appointed National Coordinator of United We DREAM, joins the team of two DREAM fellows in Washington DC designated to represent the movement on Capitol Hill.

October 22-23: With the legislative tally at 100 co-sponsors in the House and 28 in the Senate, there is a push for passage at the two-year anniversary since the last introduction of the bill. DREAM students provide testimony for Congressional briefings on the DREAM Act.

December 13: Dream Activist holds first-ever retreat in San Francisco, two years after website formation; the retreat is attended by a majority of the Dream Activist core group.

December 21: *USA Today,* referencing Rigo Padilla's deportation, uses the term *illegal* as a descriptor, evoking hundreds of phone calls and faxes to which the publication agrees to drops the terminology.

2010

January 1: *Trail of DREAMS,* comprised of students Carlos Roa, Felipe Matos, Gaby Pacheco, and Juan Rodriguez embark on a 2,000-mile journey from Miami and across the southeast, all the way to nation's Capitol, aimed to conclude on May 1st.

February 6: UWD Field Strategy meeting held in Minnesota where 46 DREAM Act student leaders from 15 states and Washington, DC aim to reflect and plan for further DREAM Act activism.

Feb 22-27: United We Dream Network National Week of Action aims at promoting awareness; it results in 50 actions of solidarity in 16 states.

March 10: National Day of Coming Out prompts a push for students to disclose their immigration status.

March 15-21: National Coming out of the Shadows Week launches in an effort to empower youth across the country by calling for public declaration of undocumented status. Coming Out Rallies take place in New York, Washington, California, and in Chicago, students wear "I am undocumented" shirts and publicly tell their stories.

March 21: March FOR America: Change Takes Courage, a mobilization in Washington DC, yields over 200,000 people marching and rallying at the National Mall to ask for comprehensive immigration reform.

March 22: Press Conference held at the AFL-CIO headquarters, just a few blocks from the White House, where DREAMers, Fabiola from California and Dream Activist Mohammad Abdollahi speak on behalf of the bill.

April 10: Fours Dreamers from NYSYLC set out for the 220 mile NY Trail of DREAMs as a walk of solidarity and aim to meet the Miami walkers in Washington DC.

April 10-11: RIFA hosts Southwest Movement Building Direct Action Training in Nevada.

April 23: Arizona's Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, S.B. 1070), is enacted. This bill aims to identify, prosecute, and deport any unauthorized persons. Bills similar to S.B. 1070 are introduced in Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Michigan, Minnesota, and South Carolina shortly after.

May 1: Representative Gutierrez and several immigrant rights leaders arrested in a symbolic gesture to push for comprehensive immigrant rights.

May 5-6: University of New Mexico hosts the first ever DREAM Conference on campus through a collaborative effort of various campus and community groups.

May 15: Tam Ngoc Tran of Orange County and Cynthia Felix of East Los Angeles are killed in a car accident.

May 11: Dream Team Los Angeles (DTLA) and the California DREAM Network (CDNET) host an undocumented student caucus.

May 17: Launch of Dreamiscoming.com, a civil disobedience project comprised of membership from Dream Team LA, ONE Michigan, Kansas Missouri Dream Alliance, and IYJL, and coordinated by DREAMActivist.org. Raul Alcaraz of Arizona, Lizbeth Mateo of California; Tania Unzueta of Illinois; Mohammad Abdollahi of Michigan; and Yahaira Carrillo of Missouri are detained in Tucson, after staging the first sit-in at Senator McCain's (AZ) office. They submit themselves to the possibility of arrest and deportation on the anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* to highlight continued inequality in the educational system of the U.S.

May 20: Nine students take part in a civil disobedience action that results in blocking the intersection of Wilshire in order to bring attention to the DREAM Act stand-alone bill.

May 27: In Los Angeles, St. Louis, and Washington D, youth and community members are arrested for participating in sit-ins at the Senate offices of Senator Dianne Feinstein of California and Senator Claire McCaskill of Missouri.

May 29: National Day of Action Against S.B. 1070 includes march of over 50,000 participants held in Arizona, where Arizona DREAM Act Coalition (ADAC) contributes to large DREAMer contingency of participants.

June 1-10: Ten members of the NYSYLC hold a hunger strike outside of Senator Schumer's office. Three are arrested as the hunger strike ends with a sit-in at Schumer's DC and Long-island offices and a "die in" in front of his NY city office.

June 15: New Mexico Coalition, comprised of members of University of New Mexico campus groups, stage a demonstration outside Senator Udall's Albuquerque office to call for his vote for DREAM legislation.

June 21: Three members of the North Carolina DREAM Team (NCDT), Loida, Rosario, and Viridianaon, begin a hunger strike to urge support from Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC).

July 3: 1.8 Million DREAMS, a collaborative project that serves as a creative multi-media outlet for undocumented students to share their stories, is launched at a fundraising event in Los Angeles, CA.

June 17: Dream University, a project of United We DREAM, opens to become a tactic for gaining media attention for the DREAM Act while also building up to the national DREAM mass mobilization.

July 19: First day of DREAM Mass Mobilization in Washington DC.

July 20- 21: Second annual National Mock Graduation is hosted in Washington DC, followed by a march outside Senate offices. 21 undocumented immigrant youth are arrested while conducting non-violent sit-ins at congressional offices on Capitol Hill of the following elected officials: Senator Menendez, Senate majority leader Reid, Senator Feinstein, Senator McCain, and Senator Schumer.

July 21: California DREAMers launch hunger strike targeting Senator Feinstein of California outside her Westwood office.

August 8: Members of DREAM Freedom Ride returns from DC mobilization. DREAM TEAM LA Hunger Strike ends with vigil outside Senator's Feinstein's office.

August 13-August 21: Tour de Dreams II results in a 540-mile bike ride that began at UC Berkeley and arrive at UCLA with participating students from various California colleges and universities.

August 19: DREAM Act Town Hall meeting held at Echo Park United Methodist Church in Los Angeles California to create dialogue among community members.

September 22: Senate takes up discussion on the Department of Defense's budget and the Defense Authorization Bill. Senator Reid (D-NV) attempts to attach amendments to that bill, including the DREAM Act, but fails.

October 7: Statement of unity drafted between LGBT and Immigrant Americans GetEQUAL, UWD, Presente.org, and Immigration Equality Action Fund about coalitional efforts for the passage of DREAM.

October 22: UWD's 3rd annual field meeting is held in Kentucky with over 146 youth in attendance.

October: The state of Georgia enacts new regulations regarding admission of undocumented students, noting that the 25 institutions in the university system must require "lawful presence" as prerequisite for enrollment.

Dec 18: In a 5-41 vote, the DREAM Act passes the House of Representatives but does not advance to the US Senate.

APPENDIX B: Photographs

Albuquerque DREAMers in Action campaigns (Photo by author)

March FOR America: Change Takes Courage, a mobilization in Washington DC, yielded over 200,000 people marching, rallying at National Mall in ask for comprehensive immigration reform. (Photos by author, March 21, 2010)

University of New Mexico hosts the first ever DREAM Conference on campus through collaborative effort of various campus and community groups. (Photos by author, May 6, 2010)

Los Angeles IDEAS members are arrested for participating in sit-ins at the Senate offices of Senator Dianne Feinstein of California.
(Photo by author, May 27, 2010)

National Day of Action Against S.B. 1070 included a march of over 50,000 participants held in Arizona, where Arizona DREAM Act Coalition (ADAC) contributed to a large DREAMer contingency of participants. (Photos by author, May 29, 2010)

Demonstration at Senator Udall's office and campus tabling to support DREAM Act by University of New Mexico students. (Photos by author, June 15, 2010)

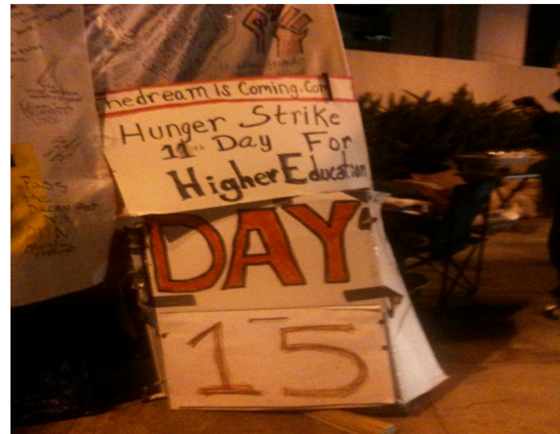
Poster for DREAM Mass Mobilization in Washington DC.

Dream University, a project of United We DREAM, opened and used teach-in as tactic for gaining media attention for the DREAM Act while also building up to the national DREAM mass mobilization. (Photos by author, July 19, 2010)

Dream University participants use dance and skits to narrate the DREAMer experience. (Photos by author, July 19, 2010)

Washington DC march outside Senate offices. 21 undocumented immigrant youth were arrested while conducting non-violent sit-ins at congressional offices on Capitol Hill.
(Photos by author, July 20, 2010)

DREAM Act Town Hall meeting held at Echo Park United Methodist Church to create dialogue among community members. (Photo by author, August 19, 2010)



California DREAMers launched a Hunger Strike targeting Feinstein outside her Westwood office. (Photos by author, July 2010)

Tour de Dreams II resulted in a 540 mile bike ride that began at UC Berkeley and ended at UCLA with participating students from various California colleges and universities. (Photos by author, August 21, 2011)

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AUTHOR NOTES

[1] There are various principle signifiers that exist in the United States, including but not limited to: Mexican/Mexicana/o*,* Mexican American, Spanish-American, Chicano/a, Hispanic and Latino/a. I am mindful of the differences in the variety of ethnic self-identifying labels and that the very words to describe my participants can carry numerous meanings and ideological implications. I use Latin@ to refer to the participants with inclusion of the "at sign" because such a symbol allows me to be consciously inclusive and not privilege one gender orientation over the other. As other critics and writers have done before me, I adopt the "@" sign to indicate both the "a" and the "o" combined to acknowledge both female and male simultaneously, which is not possible when using Latino/a or Latina/o. This preferred pan-ethnic signifier primarily refers to persons or communities of Mexican and Latin American origin and is considered a more politically conscious choice (Oboler, 1995; Rinderle, 2005). I note that there is "hidden diversity of undocumented students" (Gonzales, 2009) as Asian American and Pacific Islander community represents a rising number of the DREAM-eligible youth.

[2] Republican House Judiciary Committee Chairman Sensenbrenner's HR 4437, The *Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005,* never became law due to the massive mobilization against the drastic possible changes and criminal convictions that would result if HR 4437 were passed. One of its many stipulations included changing "unlawful presence" from a civil misdemeanor to that of a federal crime (Immigrant Legal Resource Center, n.d.).

[3] In 2001, Governor Gray Davis signed into law Assembly Bill 540 (California A.B. 540, 2001) adding a new section, 68130.5, to the California Education Code. Section 68130.5 created a new exemption from the payment of non-resident tuition for certain non-resident students who have attended high school in California and received a high school diploma or its equivalent.

[4] See Gomez (2007) for an extended discussion of how Mexicans were given the legal definition of white, and the role of legal distinction in the social construction of race and racial ideology.

[5] This comes from the basic tenets of CRT where the idea of white privilege, whiteness, and racism are predictable, structural, institutional, mainstream, and pervasive. Whiteness works through hegemonic systems and occurs at material, ideological, local, and global levels (Allen, 2004).

[6] Pérez Huber et al. (2008) defined racist nativism as "the assigning of values to real or imagined differences, in order to justify the superiority of the native, who is to be perceived white, over that of the non-native, who is perceived to be People and Immigrants of Color, and thereby defend the right of whites, or the natives, to dominance" (p. 43).

[7] Enacting legislation at the convenience of the United States due to instances such as shortage of labor have come at the benefit of the country, as discussed by Sánchez (1993) who noted the U.S. government's response has frequently been to implement back-door solutions that expand guest-worker programs when convenient, but ban such guests from the ability to become permanent residents.

[8] Samuel Huntington's (2004) book, *Who Are We*, extends the anti-immigrant argument, suggesting "in this new era, the single most immediate and most serious challenge to America's traditional identity comes from the immense and continuing immigration from Latin America, especially Mexico" (p. 42). Huntington makes the case that unlike other immigrants, Mexicans are not interested in assimilating because they are comfortable with their own culture, which makes them a cultural cancer.

[9] Extensive literature intricately details the notion of illegality as socially constructed and the cultural and political ramifications of this construction. For an in-depth discussion on the creation of "illegal" immigrant identifier and the effects of this linguistic tool, see Chávez (2008), De Genova (2004), Nevins (2002), Ngai (2004), Ono and Sloop (2002), and Torres, Miron and Inda (1993).

[10] In the 1930s, the federal government forced as many as one million Mexican Americans to leave the United States and denied them re-entry despite the fact that some were U.S. citizens.

[11] El Paso sector "Operation Hold the Line" had Border Patrol agents forgoing the detention of unauthorized migrants in urban locations and detecting any attempted entries or deterring crossing at more remote locations. The U.S. government, in 1954, launched Operation Wetback, a repatriation project of the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service to remove illegal immigrants ("wetbacks") from the Southwest. The object of this intense border enforcement was "illegal aliens" in general, but common practice of Operation Wetback focused on Mexicans specifically. This project led to the deportation, repatriation, or ''voluntary'' departure of hundreds of thousands of Mexican immigrants (Astor, 2009).

[12] Turner's (1974) concept of liminal space refers to the transitional state between two phases. I argue that undocumented students exist in this "betwixt and between" space since they do not belong to the society of which they previously were a part (county of birth) and they are not yet reincorporated into this society (United States). Liminality is an ambiguous period characterized by a sense of uncertainty and by living in two worlds and belonging in neither one. Liminality is the space where one is "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremony" (Turner, 1974, p. 95).

[13] Many state-level immigration measures have been proposed or passed that also explicitly prohibit undocumented youth from access to higher education, including Arizona, Colorado, and Georgia (NCSL, 2010).

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[14] See work by foremost scholar Michael Olivas (1994; 2004; 2008; 2010a; 2010b) who has dedicated his legal study to this narrow issue.

[15] *Si se puede,* literally translates into "Yes we can," a phrase widely adopted since coined in 1972 by the United Farm Workers movement founders César Chávez and Dolores Huerta. The coined slogan has since been used in the Obama presidential campaign and has drawn widespread use in the rallying of many pro-immigration protestors.

[16] Being on overstayed visas and/or having parents who lack legal documentation renders them ineligible for family sponsorship, vastly limiting their qualification for permanent residency (UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education, 2008b). Under the current law, these young people generally derive their immigration status solely from their parents, and if their parents are undocumented or in immigration limbo, most have no mechanism to obtain legal residency, even if they have lived most of their lives in the US. The DREAM Act would provide such a mechanism for those who are able to meet certain conditions. It is important to elaborate that in some ways the DREAM Act is a "bill within a bill," described as such because it has often been proposed within larger comprehensive immigration reform efforts that seek to address larger portions of unauthorized population in the US.

[17] The most common way that undocumented immigrants attain legal status is through family immigration. Among other things, family immigration requires an immigrant to have a "qualifying relative" who is a U.S. citizen, or have a permanent legal resident who is willing to petition for her/him. A "qualifying relative" is defined as a mother, father, sibling, or adult son or daughter. Without a qualifying relative, an undocumented immigrant is ineligible for family immigration and is likely ineligible for any other forms of immigration relief. Hence, because the parents of these students are prone to be undocumented, in the slight chance an undocumented immigrant is eligible to immigrate through a qualifying relative, it could be twelve years or more until the government adjudicates their family visa petition.

[18] One part would be to amend the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to permit states to determine state residency for higher education purposes. The second part would authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain alien students who are long-term United States residents and who entered the United States as children, and for other purposes (Olivas, 2010b).

[19] National Immigration Lawyers Center summarized the changes to highlight the most significant features of the changes. Most notable is that is does not repeal the ban on in-state tuition for illegal immigrants. It lowers the age cap for eligibility for the DREAM Act to 29 on the date of enactment. Additionally, to be eligible, individuals still must have come to the US as a child (15 or under), graduated from a U.S. high school (or received a GED from a U.S. institution), and be a long-term resident (at least 5 years). It

makes attempts to limit "chain migration." DREAM Act individuals would have very limited ability to sponsor family members for U.S. citizenship. They could never sponsor extended family members and they could not begin sponsoring parents or siblings for at least 12 years. Parents and siblings who entered the US illegally would have to leave the country for ten years before they could gain legal status, and the visa backlog for siblings is decades long. It specifically excludes non-immigrants from the health insurance exchanges created by the Affordable Care Act. Conditional non-immigrants also would be ineligible for Medicaid, Food Stamps, and other entitlement programs. Also, it requires the Department of Homeland Security to provide information from an individual's DREAM Act application to any federal, state, tribal, or local law enforcement agency, or intelligence or national security agency in any criminal investigation or prosecution or for homeland security or national security purposes (National Immigration Law Center, n.d.).

[20] The criteria of "good moral character," as determined by the Department of Homeland Security, from the date the individual initially entered the US (previous versions of the DREAM Act only required an individual to be a person of good moral character from the date of the bill's enactment): submits biometric information; undergoes security and law-enforcement background checks; undergoes a medical examination; and registers for the Selective Service. The criteria further limits eligibility for conditional nonimmigrant status by specifically excluding anyone who has committed one felony or three misdemeanors; is likely to become a public charge; has engaged in voter fraud or unlawful voting; has committed marriage fraud; has abused a student visa; has engaged in persecution; or poses a public health risk.

[21] As with other Race theorist, I use *youth of color, people of color,* and *students of color* to speak to the racialized identities and experiences that differ from the white, European-based majority in the US (Yosso, 2005).

[22] Though LatCrit had its genesis in the legal field, it is increasingly adopted by a number of other scholars who acknowledge the need to apply race-oriented epistemologies for their research in different disciplines including education, history, ethnic studies, sociology and American studies, including Delgado & Stefancic (1998), Ladson-Billings (1999), Parker, Deyhle, and Villenas (1999), and Romero (2008). Regardless of discipline, the aim of LatCrit is to advance productions of knowledge, social transformations, and anti-subordination struggles, both within and beyond the confines of academia (Hernandez-Truyol, Harris, & Valdes, 2006).

[23] Nearing almost fifteen years since its inception, LatCrit is currently in a self-reflexive period, facing internal reevaluations and criticism (Aoki & Johnson, 2008; Hernandez-Truyol, Harris & Valdes, 2006; Montoya & Valdes, 2008).

[24] I was compelled especially by the pioneering theorizing of Anzaldúa (1990) who noted that "Theory, then, is a set of knowledges. Some of these knowledges have been kept from us—entry into some professions and academia denied us. Because we are not

allowed to enter discourse, because we are often disqualified and excluded from it, because what passes for theory these days is forbidden territory for us, it is vital that we occupy theorizing space, that we not allow white men and women solely to occupy it. By bringing in our own approaches and methodologies, we transform that theorizing space" (Anzaldúa, 1990, p. xxv)

[25] Qualitative research consists of using multiple techniques that attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Within this broad continuum of qualitative research methods there are possible varying levels of de/attachment from the topic being analyzed. Involvement can vary from that of a distanced researcher as "ventriloquist" who transmits information with attempted neutrality to the opposing stance of researcher as advocate intent on exposing the material effects of hegemony and seeking to offer alternatives (Fine, 1994, p. 17).

[26] There are different levels of participation in this method, starting with the least involved level of strict *observation*, which omits intentions as researcher, through the most involved role of *observer as participant*, where a researcher has tasks in the research site and is immersed and open in their investigative purpose (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002). I took the approach of observer as participant since it allowed me the possibility of having direct encounters with the students and used my role as a participant to solidify my relationships.

[27] *Somos un Pueblo Unido* is another active, well-established and strongly regarded organization that makes up one of the only two immigration-only focused groups in all of New Mexico. Based out of Santa Fe, *Somos* promotes itself as the "only community-based and immigrant-led organization actively committed to preparing immigrant leaders to create institutional change." *Somos* supports student activists' efforts to engage in support for DREAM Act and has assisted in various campaigns of direct action organizing. This has included organizing trainings, a postcards campaign urging New Mexico's Senators to support the legislation, assisting in the logistics for students to meet with policy makers and Congressional office representatives, and holding rallies and marches in support of their cause. I only maintained contact with this organization though attendance and participation of the co-sponsored events in New Mexico where they actively maintained collaboration. I was formally and informally involved, both because of geographical distance and their focus on the Comprehensive Immigration Reform strategy that led to limited participation in "DREAM Act exclusive" events. The collaborative relationship among the various New Mexico organizations does not align with my research questions, and hence I do not intend to focus on the differing strategic approaches among the New Mexico organizations that are involved in this study.

[28] The statewide network changed the name to California DREAM Network in 2009 and by December 2011, California DREAM network had a membership of over 32 campuses across the country, including colleges from across the entire state. They also included members from dedicated student-organized campus groups including: East Los Angeles College (SER), Evergreen College (Cochitlehault-li), Glendale Community College

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(VOICES), Los Angeles Community College (AHEAD), Los Angeles Trade Tech (RISE), Pasadena Community College (SEE), Mt. San Antonio CC (IDEAS), Rio Hondo Community College (SWB), Riverside CC (SAFE), and Santa Monica College (IDEAS & ALAS). California State University campuses represented were: Cal Poly Pomona (SDEE), CSU Fullerton (ASEE), CSU Fresno (DIAS), CSULA (SURGE), San Jose State (SAHE), CSU Dominguez Hills (Espiritu de nuestro futuro), CSU Northridge (DREAM TO BE HEARD), and San Francisco State (IDEAS). The University of California system also had membership with UC-Berkley (RISE), UC Davis (SPEAK), UC Los Angeles (IDEAS), UC Riverside (PODER), UC Santa Barbara (IDEAS), UC Santa Cruz (SIN), and UC San Diego (MIRA). This included community colleges with no stand-alone campus groups like Bakersfield College, Cerritos College, El Camino College, and Santa Barbara College.

[29] They include: Alliance of DREAMs at UCLA, NAKASEC, Improving Dreams, Equality Access and Success (IDEAS), the Underground Undergrads Project, SURGE at Cal State, Los Angeles, CHIRLA, and more (Underground Undergrads, n.d.).

[30] UC Berkeley (REACH); UC Santa Cruz (SIN); San Francisco State University (IDEAS); Mount San Antonio College; UC Davis (SPEAK), De Anza College, UC Los Angeles (IDEAS); Riverside Community College (SAFE); Santa Ana College; University of New Mexico; and regions such as Pomona; La Puente; Salinas; Los Angeles and Riverside.

[31] United We DREAM and Dream Activist created a coalitional partnership and were listed as existing within a joint website endeavor. Since that is no longer the case, I treat the organizations as separate entities.

[32] Despite my focus on these particular youth-led organizations, it is important that I note that these strategies and directed campaign efforts herein were directed by established immigrant-rights organizations and deserve recognition. The forged connections to established organizations, such as the National Immigration Law Council (NILC) as fiscal sponsors, Mexican American Legal Fund (MALDEF) Center for Community Change (CCC), SEUI, National Council for La Raza (NCLR), and United States Student Association (USSA), to name a few, provided partnerships that facilitated the petitioning efforts I discuss in the analysis. These coalition efforts were instrumental in fulfilling a precondition of undocumented mobilization efforts to come, as the efforts of these supporters were an important criterion for the youth-led mobilizing efforts of the future (Laubenthal, 2007).

[33] LatCrit and testimonios are especially useful to researchers guided by racial and social justice concerns of students of color. This stems from the view that interview practices can be motivated by a social and/or political urgency to voice injustice and raise awareness of oppression (Pérez Huber, 2009).

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[34] This is a complementary tool of my research activism, since the interviews were conceived as a tool that allowed participants to bear witness to the social injustices, presumed that the subaltern could speak, and validated experiential knowledge (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

[35] After seeing the need for stronger collaboration among different groups already doing work around the campaign, CHIRLA Wise Up! started meeting with the Korean Resource Center (KRC) to discuss the campaign and the possibility of creating a coalition to unify the groups. On February 25th, the first meeting was held; present were members of CHIRLA Wise Up!, the Korean Resource Center, MALDEF, ACLU-SC, and the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS). The goals as a coalition were (1) to represent a unified student-based effort in Southern California to pass the DREAM Campaign; (2) to empower and involve students in the issue around student legalization; and (3) to expand the unified work around the campaign to new areas and constituencies in California by outreaching to new groups and organizations doing immigrant youth rights work.

[36] There is little information about that original CoSa site for undocumented youth because it was collapsed into DAP shortly after its dissolution, leaving a minimal paper trail. Information about the role and function of CoSa is evident in archives of the Dream Act Portal; new DAP members would mention it in noting their discontent with and uselessness of the CoSa site.

[37] This was all happening at a time when Congress proposed one of the most anti-immigrant policies the United States has ever seen. The Federal Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (H.R. 4437), if enacted, would render undocumented persons residing in the US be charged with a felony for their presence in the country and barred from ever gaining legal status in the US.

[38] Given the fact that those students were just then identifying with status, there was a concentrated effort on keeping students safe. The strategies used by students themselves were mostly anonymous and minimized the level of risk by making sure that the participants could not be traced. That staff advocates and allies of the larger immigrant-rights organizations—not students themselves—were responsible for much of the advocacy efforts during this time that also protected the youth. For advocates who were not affected by legal status, safe activism for undocumented youth was a priority, so it makes sense that acts of resistance were done with the low-risk strategy of bringing attention and support to the legislation.

[39] Though I make the authorial decision to capitalize DREAM, the word is inconsistently used in lower and upper case in social movement literature.

[40] *Coming Out: A How to Guide* opens with quotes by Harvey Milk from a speech used to encourage the gay and lesbian community to openly disclose their sexual orientation: "Brothers and Sisters, you must come out! Come out to your parents, come out to your

friends, if indeed they are your friends, come out to your neighbors, come out to your fellow workers. Once and for all, let's break down the myth and destroy the lies and distortions. For your sake, for their sake. For the sake of all the youngsters who've been scared by the votes from Dade to Eugene. On the Statue of Liberty it says 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free.' In the Declaration of Independence it is written, 'All men are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights.' For Mr. Briggs and Mrs. Bryant and all the bigots out there, no matter how hard you try, you can never erase those words from the Declaration of Independence! No matter how hard you try you can never chip those words from the base of the Statue of Liberty! That is where America is!"

[41] Resources like *Coming Out: A How To Guide* were not the only training tools available by this phase of the movement. There were multiple other organizing, leadership training, and activism training manuals that make up the tool kits of this phase. United States Student Association, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, and UWD put forth comprehensive "advocacy tool kits" with information for successfully advocating for the legislation that were made available on the Dream Activist website. However, I focus on the on this guide since materials explicitly talk about the facilitated process of representation.

[42] *Coming Out: A How To Guide* was structured in levels so that participants could pledge to meet one of the incremental levels based of difficulty. There were people you would emulate by "coming out" based on each stage. The list had required steps that would allow completion of each level, in addition to detailed instructions about how to accomplish each specific task. Each level pointed to an increased level of consciousness. This started with Level 1, *The DREAMer: Shout it Out,* where students were encouraged to *"*share your story with anyone (friends, family that do not know, a teacher, etc.) and get at least 10 petition signatures"; Level 2, *César Chávez and the UFW*; Level 3, *Audre Lorde: Shout it out*; Level 4, *Rosa Parks: We are here get used to it*; and Level 5, *Harvey Milk: Out of the closet and into the streets*, which required three steps: (1) obtaining 100 petition signatures (or texts); (2) getting 5 people to share their story with Dream Activist; and (3) holding a coming out event with press coverage (Dream Activist, March 5, 2010).

[43] By "literally on the map," I mean there was an actual map of the US with immigrant youth activism for the Dream Act made available through dreamactivist.org. Created by Marisol Ramos, the map pinpointed a nationwide representation of online-based organizations, state-based Immigrant-rights organizations, policy organizations, and student organizations, which have grown to represent most states.

[44] Josh Bernstein, the new Director of Immigration for Service Employees International Union (SEIU), worked closely with youth to financially assist the efforts of youth host the graduation ceremony outside of the U.S. Capitol (SEIU, n.d.).

[45] Details of the outline for comprehensive immigration reform were released to the public on March 17, 2010 via an op-ed piece published in the *Washington Post* (O'Brien, March 11, 2010). Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) frameworked elements based on "four pillars," including: (1) biometric SSN cards to ensure that illegal immigrants can't get work; (2) strengthening border security and domestic enforcement; (3) creating a process for admitting temporary workers; and (4)"tough but fair" path to legalization for immigrants already in to go "back of the line" to wait for a chance to earn permanent residence (Schumer & Graham, March 19, 2010).

[46] The gathering was a collective effort of RI4A with logistical support from its national, state, and local organizational partners (America's Voice, 2010, March 22). The intent of this massive mobilization was to gather supporters from across the country and assemble in the nation's capital to call on Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform by 2010. At the time of the march, I was already actively participating with the youth-led Albuquerque DREAMers in Action group that was part of El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos, and they generously invited me to join them as part of the Albuquerque delegation. As my first time in Washington DC, first time participating in a "Mega March," and first time I'd be meeting with emerging DREAM leadership in person, the event was quite memorable for me. Aside from the rally and march, our delegation spent a day at the United States Congressional and Senate offices, meeting with the staff of New Mexico legislators Tom Udall and Jeff Bingaman to lobby for comprehensive immigration reform.

[47] Alacoff and Mohanty suggested that with identity politics there is likelihood that critiques will come from both sides of the aisle. They noted that conservative opposition feel that "these movements appear to be threatening individual freedom," while movements who align around an oppressive identity are critiqued from the left for "threatening the progressive coalition and wallowing in victimization" (2006, p. 17).

[48] In presenting the incident in broad strokes, I do not aim to portray that DREAMers were in consensus of these views nor that it was "the" voice of the DREAM movement perspective. In presenting these public disputes, I hope it does make the point that the DREAM movement had multiple fragmented and dissenting voices that all co-created and were involved in the larger conversation.

[49] The panelists included two of the arrestees in Senator John McCain's office in Arizona on May 17, 2010, Yahira Carrillo and Lizbeth Mateo, along with Carlos Amador and Jorge Gutierrez, two participants in the 15-day hunger strike in California that started July 19, 2010. The panel discussion and following question-and-answer segment was meant to elicit a meaningful conversation as well as "air out" the public tension that had arisen. A long line of people waited to ask questions; most questions were concerned with the military component of the DREAM Act legislation, which was a big point of contention for liberal supporters who rejected terms of the bill as a military incentive.

[50] "I think it [Arizona 5 Action] was effective and after the action, in the next month or two, it showed. The way I measure where "we are" is with the question I ask people:

"Are you willing to be arrested?" And 90% started saying yes. Erica was one of them, and when we were recruiting people, Erica said she had never thought about it, and in a day had decided to do it. And 30 other people said they were willing to be arrested" (Mo, personal communication, November 9, 2010).

[51] According to Center for Constitutional Rights, the so called Securities Communities program, launched in March 2008, further involves state and local entities in the enforcement of federal immigration law. Secure Communities institutes a mechanism to run fingerprints through various databases when individuals are arrested – even for minor charges or if charges are dismissed. They note that Securities Communities has been implemented in at least 574 jurisdictions and 30 states as of August 31, 2010 and since its inception has dramatically increased the amount of detained immigrants funneled through the removal system.

[52] He evokes the example of the Supreme Court case of Dred Scott to make point that freed blacks, like slaves, were not full members of the national community and a "black man suing for his freedom, was not a 'citizen'" and therefore could not invoke the "diversity of citizenship jurisdiction of the federal courts" (Johnson, 2004, p. 155).

[53] I was given access to this manual because I led my own civil disobedience training at the University of New Mexico. Those of us who had worked on the DREAM conference took the call that was issued by Dream Activist to escalate the organizing efforts. I took the lead to bring together the participants of that endeavor and we gathered to brainstorm as a group how we could assist in this next pivotal movement to push for the DREAM Act. We decided it would be best to organize our continued efforts for the DREAM Act under a new coalitional name to represent the different organizations that were already in existence. Making the group general enough to "shift gears" once the DREAM Act passed, under the banner of *NM Coalition*, we were comprised of various members from different New Mexico organizations who aimed to support and stand in solidarity with DREAMers from across the nation that were urgently calling for the DREAM Act. In an attempt to participate in the solidarity efforts for direct Action before the June 15th date to be introduced as a Stand Alone Bill to enter the legislative session, we took incremental steps in our requests to Senator Udall to co-sponsor the stand-alone efforts. We first meet with the Senator's staff member, Josh. Our next step was mobilizing direct action in New Mexico by gathering in front of Senator Udall's office, where he had a demonstration of protestors outside his Albuquerque office to urge him to push the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill immediately and make the point that NM DREAMers stood in solidarity with undocumented youth across the country. We continued the push to demonstrate a necessitated urgency for legislative action in the Senate by hosting a calling party and setting up a legislative DC visit with the Senator himself. Our efforts were successful, evidence by his "yea" vote for the bill.

[54] This is not to imply that the larger immigrant-rights movement did not make sure of these tactics. The move to escalate the approach was a joint one, evidenced in the Fair Immigration Reform Movement, Center for Community Change, Campaign for

Community Change, Reform Immigration FOR America, New Organizing Institute, and UWD, joint collaborating of the Southwest Movement Building Direct Action Training in Las Vegas Nevada on April 10-11. Under the sentiment that the immigration rights movement had “proven it can march, turn out the vote and lobby,” the focus of this event was based on learning from previous non-violent movements and practicing non-violent resistance. The organizers from each of these groups facilitated different workshops and showed the implementation of the very strategy that I show the DREAM movements utilized. Per my research question, I only bring examples of the discursive strategies used by DREAM movement, thereby consciously excluding a discussion of those used by other groups.

[55] Reyna Wences from Illinois, Dulce Matuz from Arizona, Myrna Orozco from Missouri, Tania Unzueta from Illinois, Erika Andiola from Arizona, Nicolas Gonzales from Illinois, Laura Lopez from California, and Isabel Castillo from Virginia were charged with unlawful entry based on a mass sit-in on Capitol Hill on July 20th. These eight DREAM-eligible youth sat in the offices of Senator John McCain and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, asking them to champion the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill. (Escalante, 2010)

[56] Aligning with Boal’s (1979) concept in the *Theatre of the Oppressed*, these performances were meant to reveal oppressions and allow the spectators to bear witness to the injustices. This calls for the use of the human body as a tool of representing feelings, ideas, and relationships. Through sculpting others or using our own body to demonstrate a body position, participants create anything from one-person to large-group image sculptures that reflect the sculptor's impression of a situation or oppression.

[57] UWD also made the effort to equip undocumented youth to take the idea of Dream University campaign and apply similar efforts to individual states by opening “satellite campuses.” Senate recess meant that the legislators would be going back to their respective states; having seen the efforts of Dream University DC, they would be able to “bear witness to the Dream University of their state, their own constituents” (UWD, 2010b). The Dream University Toolkit was made available so that other activists could establish a Dream University Satellite Campus. With the instructions came the justification that senators must see DREAMers at all times and in all places: “there cannot be a single moment in which a Senator thinks this is not a widespread issue, and for that we need your commitment” (UWD, 2010b), Dream University satellite campuses were suggested to be outdoors to be very visible to media and by-standers, emphasizing once again the palpable need for visibility.

[58] This was done at the resulting concession to amend the bill modifications that reduced the age limit (from 34 to 29), lengthened the time period for citizenship (to a 10-year wait eligibility to apply for citizenship), eliminated DREAMers’ eligibility for certain government benefits during the 10-year waiting period, and increased the fees beneficiaries would have to pay (Altschuler, 2011).

[59] For a copy of the letter to the President, please visit: http://scr.bi/DAction

[60] These efforts to eliminate "birthright citizenship" had taken center focus in the legislatures aiming to repeal the 14th Amendment that gives citizenship to anyone born in the United States. The introduced legislation to end automatic American citizenship is purported by Republican lawmakers to incentivize "anchor babies" (Fox News, 2011).

[61] The outing of the undocumented student who encountered a simple traffic stop in Georgia was said to be the blowback that led to stricter admissions practices at the state's colleges (Olivas, 2011). I am not implying that the social protest actions are to be blamed for the defeat as much as I am arguing that additional theatrical factors must be considered as playing into the dynamic.

[62] The idea that coalitional building elicited allies for the cause based on shared understandings of oppression is outside the scope of my project. Therefore, I leave it to scholars devoting their attention those possibilities (Chávez, 2008; Pastor & Marcelli, 2003). However, I do note that DREAM advocacy would be well served to feature rhetoric from a place of support and not just scrutiny on both sides of the aisle.

[63] One example of such specific contribution is the exemplary College Board executive summary report—a brief yet informative account—whose usefulness is evidenced in the variety of organizations that make use of the information in their support for the DREAM Act (Gonzales, 2009).