DREAMers Rising: Constituting the Undocumented Student Immigrant Movement

A Dissertation

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David Cunningham, Ph.D., Advisor

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by

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This dissertation explains how a group of individuals came to be recognized and named as a new group of collective political actors. In this way at least, the actor constitution process may be the opposite of this dissertation, which recognizes an individual for the efforts of many people. While one individual’s name is listed as the author of this work, there are many voices and contributors who played crucial roles in its construction, and deserve recognition and appreciation.

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A dream you dream alone is only a dream.
A dream you dream together becomes a reality.
– John Lennon

This dissertation is dedicated to Alexandra Piñeros Shields who makes my dreams a reality.
ABSTRACT

DREAMers Rising: Constituting the Undocumented Student Immigrant Movement

A dissertation presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Brandeis University
Waltham, Massachusetts

By Thomas Piñeros Shields

Between 2008 and 2012, undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as children acquired a new sense of collective self and status as they pushed for the passage of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. In so doing, they became a new political group known as “DREAMers.” To assess how and why undocumented immigrant students were constituted as political actors, I draw on in-depth ethnographic observations with one undocumented immigrant student social movement organization in Massachusetts, which went from a struggling group of young people to an established social movement organization in a period of two years. Defining actor constitution as a combination of collective identity and legitimacy, I argue that undocumented immigrant students became political actors as a result of: (1) biographical resources based in their life experiences of being partially incorporated and partially expelled from society; (2) the construction of public narratives from these life experiences; (3) the acquisition of material and cultural resources in organizations; (4) opportunities and threats within the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas, and (5) innovative strategies and tactics that deployed identity in these political arenas. As a result, this group constructed a collective identity centered on the name “DREAMers,” and gained standing in both state and national political arenas. By bringing theories from contentious politics to the study of undocumented immigrant students, this work advances
understanding of the dynamic processes that explain how this group established a collective identity and gained standing in policy-making arenas.
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Chapter 1. Introduction: “DREAMers in the Political Mainstream...A New Normal”

I. Introduction

At the Democratic National Convention on September 6, 2012, just a few hours before the official nomination of Barack Obama as the party’s candidate for a second term, Benita Veliz gave a short two-minute speech in which she introduced herself to the delegates and millions of television viewers, told how she was brought to the U.S. as a child, graduated valedictorian of her class at age 16 and earned a double major in college at age 20, all the while knowing that she could be deported because of the way she entered the United States. Then Veliz described President Obama’s decision to grant an estimated 2.1 million undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. as children a provisional and temporary legal status. Benita Veliz’s speech was short but significant because it was the first time that an openly undocumented immigrant had ever appeared at a national convention for a major political party. As the speech ended, Jose Antonio Vargas, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who, just over a year earlier, had revealed his own unauthorized immigration status in an op-ed to the New York Times, tweeted a comment that captured what I was feeling about Benita’s speech:
For Vargas and the vast audience, Benita’s speech reflected a ‘new normal,’ symbolically shifting the way undocumented immigrants might participate in the political arena of institutional party politics. Indeed, something had changed in the political legitimacy and acceptance of this group that referred to themselves as DREAMers, and that something had shifted the political calculus of existing leaders enough to allow Benita Veliz to appear on the same stage as the leader of the free world. In the not so recent past (and, in some settings, continuing today), undocumented immigrant students were labeled “illegal aliens” or even “criminals” and many (if not most) politicians sought to distance themselves from the stigma and stain of associating with this group (Chavez 2008). Even the name “DREAMers” was relatively new. When I began my research in 2008, undocumented immigrants did not regularly refer to themselves as “DREAMers,” a reference to the proposed Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act that would create a path to citizenship for some undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as children. When they did use the term, many would make a specific reference to the song Imagine by John Lennon by adding “but I’m not the only one,” or apply two fingers air quotations. By 2010, not only was the term commonplace among undocumented immigrant students, but media sources including television, newspapers, radio and online media outlets adopted the name “DREAMer.” In addition, political leaders had begun using the term regularly as they discussed immigration policies. In fact, the President himself used the term “DREAMers”
during a press statement in the White House Rose Garden where he announced the new policy, saying:

“This morning, Secretary Napolitano announced new actions my administration will take to mend our nation’s immigration policy, to make it more fair, more efficient and more just, specifically for certain young people sometimes called DREAMers.” – President Barack H. Obama, June 15, 2012

All of this provides further evidence in support of Vargas’ observation that a “new normal” had indeed occurred for undocumented immigrant students in the political arena.

From October 2008 until August 2011, I conducted in-depth ethnographic observations with one group of undocumented immigrant students who had formed a social movement organization, the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) in Massachusetts. Shortly after I began my research, SIM was struggling for resources after having lost its fiscal sponsorship as a program within another immigrant rights organization. Over a period of two years, SIM grew in prominence and size, attracting the attention of institutional leaders in government, foundations, the media and newly formed national social movement organizations to promote the rights of immigrants in general, and undocumented immigrant students in particular. SIM raised funding, hired staff and became recognized as an important member of policy discussions around immigration in Massachusetts and nationally. Furthermore, the original organizers played key roles in establishing two national organizations that represented groups like SIM across the country. Despite this, by the end of 2010, Massachusetts did not pass any legislation that would have expanded education opportunities to undocumented immigrant students and at the
national level, the DREAM Act failed to overcome a Republican filibuster in the U.S. Senate. In August 2011, I officially left the field, but continued to stay in touch with staff and leaders of SIM on at least a weekly basis, until Summer 2012.

In thinking about the evolution of this group and experiences of these young people, I wanted to understand the “new normal” for undocumented immigrant students. This project accordingly interrogates my central research question: *How and why were undocumented immigrant students constituted as political actors in Massachusetts between 2008 and 2012?*

One explanation for the presence of new political actors in the public from the field of contentious politics considers ‘actor constitution’ (McAdam et al., 2001; Krinsky and Mische 2013). I adopt a definition of political actors constitution as the combination of collective identity and public recognition (McAdam et al., 2001). First, the undocumented immigrant students renamed themselves “DREAMers,” thereby signaling that they understood themselves in new ways through the lens of a new collective identity. Second, this new sense of a collective self became a public identity, as DREAMers gained recognition from existing members of political arena, such as the Democratic National Convention, other political leaders, the media, and foundations that undocumented immigrant students had a role in ongoing discussions about policies that affected their lives. This dissertation reflects my interest in how and why these changes occurred. Section II of this introduction discusses how my emphasis on these components fits within conceptualizations of constituted actors in the literature.
In section III of this introduction, I turn to the central argument of this dissertation that explains how and why such changes occurred. In short, I suggest that DREAMers emerged as political actors as a result of: (1) biographical resources based in their life experiences of being partially incorporated and partially expelled from society; (2) the construction of public narratives from these life experiences; (3) the acquisition of material and cultural resources in organizations; (4) opportunities and threats within the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas, and (5) innovative strategies and tactics that deployed identity in these political arenas. As a result, DREAMers became established as new political actors with a collective identity that was recognized by existing members of the political establishment. My argument offers an alternative to the simple causal relationship between the grievances of DREAMers and their political emergence by elucidating the dynamic mechanisms associated with the constitution of political actors and the public recognition of such emergent categories. I explain DREAMer emergence by pointing to a combination of factors drawn from existing theories from contentious politics (McAdam et al., 2001). To become DREAMers, undocumented immigrant students acquired needed material, biographical and cultural resources to build organizations, develop public narratives and align the DREAM movement goals with past social movements. Furthermore, undocumented immigrant students engaged in strategic contentious performances that responded to perceived changes in the political environment, thereby leveraging public recognition from members of both state and national political arenas. I conclude this introduction in section IV with a
discussion of this approach’s implications for the scholarly literature and for public policy.

II. The Constitution of DREAMers as Political Actors

The presence of members and challengers in a political arena is a well-established premise of both public policy and social movement theories1 (Gamson 1975; McAdam 1998; Tilly 1978; Mazzoni 1991; Miskel and Song 2004). An arena refers to a set of institutional relationships, which “facilitate the development of protest movements in some instances and constrain them in others” (Jasper 2012). Arenas consist of members, who have routine access to resources and decisions that affect them, as well as challengers, who lack such routine access (McAdam et al., 2001:12)2. Both members and challengers are political actors within policy arenas (Mazzoni 1991; Miskel and Song 2004; McAdam et al., 2001). Political actors refer to “sets of persons and relations among persons whose internal organization and connections with other political actors maintain substantial continuity in time and space” (McAdam et al., 2001:12). Members are “those whose interest is vested – that is recognized as valid by other members” (McAdam 1998:38). Typically,

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1 A third type of actor in the political arena might be considered “defenders” or “counter-movements” that represent groups seeking to maintain and defend the status quo of members within the political arena.

2 This builds off of the work of Gamson (1975) who analyzed the polity and the role of challengers and members, in relationship to theories of pluralistic democracy. According to Gamson, pluralism requires addressing two threats, the tyranny of the minority and the open access of new challengers to address issues or grievances. For pluralist democracy to succeed, then, depends upon some level of openness for new actors into the decisions of the polity. The concept also builds upon the “iron triangle” between Congress, executive branch bureaucracies and interest groups. Policy analysts, however, have moved beyond this concept to consider policy networks (Miskel and Song 2004) or ‘arenas’ (Mazzoni 1991)
members include political actors within the state, including for example, in the U.S. groups or some individuals from the executive branch, agencies or legislative branches. Challengers, in contrast, are also constituted political actors who lack routine access to decisions that affect them, but still have some level of internal organization, a name and substantial continuity of relationships (Gamson 1975:140; McAdam et al., 2001:12). Challengers are usually, but not always, formal social movement organizations (Gamson 1975). Social movement organizations can also include “counter-movements” which consist of those groups that do not challenge the status quo, but rather defend it (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Historically, social movement challengers include a range of organizations who might all constitute a given policy arena such as the Sierra Club, Environmental Defense Fund, Greenpeace, and The Climate Project (founded by Al Gore), all of which might be part of a broad umbrella of the “environmental movement” but whose constituency, organizations, strategies, and target differ tremendously. Still, at some level, all of these groups might engage with the same *member* of the environmental policy arena, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a federal agency on particular issues.

Groups of individuals who are not part of the policy arena at all, fit the definition of *subjects*, who are “persons or groups not organized as constituted political actors” (McAdam et al., 2001:12). Actor constitution refers to the process by which sets of persons “acquire names" and political standing” within a political

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3 It is not clear to me whether McAdam et al.(2001) meant the acquisition of new 'names' literally, in their discussion of the actor constitution process, however, in this case, I have taken this definition literally in my discussion of the acquisition of the name “DREAMers” as a new collective identity for undocumented immigrant students.
arena, or more simply, how subjects become political actors (McAdam et al., 2001: 315).

The concept of actor constitution is intriguing both because of its centrality to the study of contentious politics, and for its puzzling quality as an illusory and challenging concept. As Krinsky and Mische note (2013), actor constitution represents a paradox of “contingent assemblages of social networks manage to create the illusion of determined, unified, self-motivated political actors, then to act publically as if they believed that illusion” (McAdam et al, 2001: 159). The illusion of the actor as a self-motivated unified group takes meaning both among the social movement actors themselves and in the eyes of other with whom, in this case, the DREAMers came in contact with. As such, I see questions about the constitution of political actors as central to sociological inquiry in general in two ways: (1) at the theoretical nexus of agency and the larger forces of culture and structure and (2) as a manifestation of the Thomas Theorem which state that if people “define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas and Thomas 1928). In this case, when undocumented immigrant students re-imagined themselves as “DREAMers” they became DREAMers, and were then granted legitimacy as a distinct group by others. For the purposes of this dissertation, I have adopted a definition of actor constitution that acknowledges its socially constructed nature among both agents and proximal others with whom they come into contact.

The constitution of new political actors includes the combination of self-definition (i.e.- I am a political actor because I say I am) and public recognition (i.e.- I
am a political actor because other people say I am) (McAdam et al, 2001: 316). I explain the self-definition of SIM members as political actors through the emergence of a collective identity (Polletta and Jasper 2001). Public recognition reflects the process of bestowing moral resources in the form of legitimacy, which I conceptualize as the certification of new actors by individuals or groups who are already accepted and recognized as established members and/or challengers within the political arena (McAdam et al., 2001). Each of these two aspects of the constitution of new political actors will be explored in greater depth in the next two sections.

**Collective Identity**

The constitution of political actors depends upon the establishment of a collective identity or a “sense of we” among participants. In this dissertation, I explain how the self-definition of undocumented immigrant students shifted between 2008 and 2010, as members of groups like SIM adopted a collective identity of “DREAMers.” As noted above, the emergence of DREAMers as a collective identity could be seen in the use of the name itself. In addition, DREAMers expressed a self-awareness of themselves as part of a larger movement. Further, the term DREAMer helped replace previous stigmatizing labels such as “illegal immigrant” or “alien,” with an aspirational and positive collective identity. In so

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4 The inherent duality in this definition of constituted actors reflects an attempt to provide theoretical leverage to reconcile “the paradox of the actor in contentious politics.” (Krinksy and Mische 2013) The crux of this paradox involves self-motivated actors who, by the nature of their very interactions, give meaning to one another.
doing, this new collective identity shift establishes a meaningful category of belonging for this previously group of undocumented immigrant student subjects to become political actors with a name and standing (McAdam et al, 2001).

In addition to the name “DREAMers,” a new organizational identity, cultivated when SIM joined other undocumented immigrant groups in establishing a national association United We DREAM (UWD) in 2009, provided another basis for self-conception. UWD represented a national presence for undocumented immigrant students. It also held regular meetings and even more frequent telephone or conference call conversations. As a result, members of SIM began to build relationships with other undocumented immigrant students through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other online media. Such media provided important tactical organizing systems for mobilizing undocumented immigrant students across the country. In addition, however, within these real and virtual spheres, a general sense of ‘we-ness’ began to take shape. Undocumented students who had previously felt alone and ashamed, began to establish a collective culture that manifest in new cultural artifacts with DREAMer images and slogans emblazoned on t-shirts, hats, posters, and stickers, as well as websites and Facebook pages. One group of DREAMers developed a series of YouTube videos that reflected challenges of being undocumented in a hip-hop style comedic scenarios called “Undocumented and Awkward.” Another established an online “hot DREAMer of the week” competition. Another created a tongue-in-cheek satirical online dating program called “Citizen4me” where “Undocu-love” DREAMers and citizens could
meet and get married (with the implication that DREAMers might obtain legal residency through such an arrangement).

The implications of these re-arranged cultural patterns that helped establish and solidify a DREAMer collective identity draws upon the foundations of sociological theory. Literature on collective identity is vast and increasingly prevalent in examinations of social movements, with a rich tradition that has been traced to Marx’s ideas of class-consciousness, Durkeim’s ideas of solidarity and collective effervescence, and Weber’s concepts of collective identification and norms among common roles (Hunt and Benford 2003). Collective identities are constructed from this sense of “we-ness,” which bounds “us” from “them”; and establish and maintain relations within and across this newly-constituted boundary (Tilly 2003:608). Thus, ‘collective identity’ may be defined as:

an individual’s cognitive, moral, and emotional connections with a broader community, category, practice, or institution. It is a perception of a shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may form part of a personal identity. A collective identity may have first been constructed by outsiders (for example, as in the case of “Hispanics” in this country), who may still enforce it, but it depends on some acceptance by those to whom it is applied. Collective identities are expressed in cultural materials – names, narratives, symbols, verbal styles, rituals, clothing and so on – but not all cultural materials express collective identities. Collective identity does not imply the rational calculus for evaluating choices that “interest” does. And unlike ideology, collective identity carries with it positive feelings for other members of the group. (Polletta and Jasper 2001:284; bold emphasis added).

The above definition is analytically helpful for several reasons. First, it establishes a distinction and relationship between ‘personal’ and ‘collective’ identity, conceiving a context within which such categories become interwoven. Second, this definition suggests that collective identities may represent social categories that were originally created by outsiders, but require the cooperation of those that it defines.
Such a definition implies that collective identities require work by those represented by an identity to construct and re-construct the meanings of belonging to that collective. Third, such conceptions imply that collective identity is not a fixed categorical distinction, but can shift in relationship to factors from both within and outside of a social movement. Collective identity, therefore, is in flux and evolving. Finally, the above definition recognizes that collective identities develop in relationship to a range of “broader communities, categories, practices or institutions.” One such arena for the construction of collective identity is the social movement (Polletta and Jasper 2001).

Collective identity plays a central role in social movement scholarship where it has been used as an explanation for the emergence of social movements, a motivator for taking action, a strategic tactic to build commitment, and an outcome of social movement participation (Polletta and Jasper 2001; Hunt and Benford 2004; Klandermans, van der Toorn et al. 2008). For the purposes of this dissertation, I am primarily interested in how collective identity of the DREAMer movement may be understood as a outcome of the mobilization of undocumented immigrant students, without denying the constitutive, motivational and strategic roles that collective identity played in the movement (Polletta and Jasper 2001). In one widely cited review article about collective identity, Polletta and Jasper (2001) note a gap in the literature:

We know little about the cultural building blocks that are used to construct collective identities...What are other tools and raw materials of identity work? (Polletta and Jasper 2001: 299)
One response to this gap has resulted in burgeoning attention to the study of narratives as identity work in social movements (Polletta 2006, 1998; Somers 1994; Loseke 2007; Ewick and Silbey 2003). It is recognized that stories both align life experiences with identities, but also may be “employed strategically to strengthen collective identity” (Polletta 2006:12). In this dissertation, I am primarily interested in the latter strategic role of narratives. I trace how undocumented immigrant students strategically adopted narrative strategies as a set of tools to cultivate the raw materials of their life experiences as mobilization strategies that resulted in the fortification of a collective identity of DREAMers. I suggest, however, that the outcome of these narrative strategies is broader than the development of collective identity, and includes the recognition and certification by existing members of the political establishment.

Certification by Existing Members of the Political Establishment

Beyond the internal development and adoption of this new collective category, DREAMers established themselves as political actors by being ‘certified’ as legitimate actors by already established members of the political establishment, such as elected leaders, the media and funders (McAdam et al., 2001: 316). One way that existing members of political institutions can grant legitimacy and certify a new group is through passing legislation that recognizes them. For example, research suggests that in California, the passage of in-state tuition legislation had constitutive effects on undocumented immigrant students (Abrego 2008). In Massachusetts, despite their failure to pass new legislation at either the state or
federal level\textsuperscript{5}, SIM was granted a level of legitimacy by political leaders and the media. This legitimacy depended upon being recognized by key actors in Massachusetts and nationally, in part, by engaging in innovative acts of contentious action such as ‘coming out’ in public story-telling or narrative, and by occupying public space with a 24-hour/day vigil for 19 consecutive days in response to the threat of anti-immigrant budget amendments\textsuperscript{6}. As a result of both of these events, political leaders, grant makers, the media, and existing immigrant rights organizations began to grant SIM a level of legitimacy.

In addition to and as a result of being adopted by members of the undocumented immigrant social movement organizations, the use of the term “DREAMers” gained public use and recognition as a descriptive category for undocumented immigrant students by the media. Table 1.1 presents the results of a quick Lexis/Nexus search for the term “DREAMER” and “immigration” in U.S. newspapers for the years 2008-2012. The table includes only those references to undocumented immigrant students as “DREAMers.” In 2008, this search resulted 66 mentions of “DREAMers” and “immigration” in the same stories, of which in zero used the term to refer to undocumented immigrant students. The first two stories that referenced DREAMers as undocumented immigrant students appeared in a St. Petersburg, FL newspaper in 2009 out of 71 “hits”. The number of times undocumented immigrant students were referenced as DREAMers increased to 39

\textsuperscript{5} As will be explained below, President Obama’s announcement of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was not passed as an act of Congress and therefore, is not considered “legislation” here.

\textsuperscript{6} Both of these innovative actions will be discussed in Chapter 6.
articles in 2010, and 41 in 2011. Then in 2012, with the election year coverage (including Benita’s speech) and President Obama’s announcement of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), the number of references increased by a factor of eight to 246 references. Overall, it is clear that media had increasingly adopted “DREAMer” as a new name for this group during these four years.

![Image of Table 1.1. Number of References to "DREAMer" in U.S. Newspapers 2008-2012]

Media coverage of the DREAMERs was extensive by 2012. On the cover of the June 15, 2012 edition of TIME magazine, under the heading “WE ARE AMERICANS, *Just not legally,” seven members of SIM appeared prominently with Jose Antonio Vargas. In addition, the article on the TIME Magazine website and inside the magazine, contained profiles of these SIM members⁷. On the same day as the official publication of this issue of TIME, President Obama announced Deferred Action for

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⁷ Note: This is an example of the process of resource aggregation, in which the public narratives are collected together and shared en masse (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). This process will be discussed further in Chapter 4.
Childhood Arrivals (DACA), an executive order to grant relief and temporary legal status to DREAMers. Although DACA is not ‘legislation,’ which would require the approval of Congress, this administrative action provides direct benefits to DREAMers by removing the threat of deportation and providing temporary work permits, but also the more symbolic or moral benefits in granting legitimacy to DREAMers. In fact, in his remarks, President Obama referred to undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. as children as “DREAMers,” thereby acknowledging the name of this newly constituted group.

The Democratic National Convention, TIME Magazine, President Obama and the political leaders in Massachusetts may be understood as elite actors who already possess public standing, who certified SIM and DREAMers by bestowing legitimacy to them by the end of Barack Obama’s first presidential term (McAdam et al., 2001; Edwards and McCarthy 2004). Legitimacy can be understood as a moral resource that was mobilized on behalf of the social movement (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). In this case, the bestowal of this legitimacy reflected the result of DREAMers taking public action that exposed their legal status, as members of SIM and other organizations “came out” as undocumented, applying a tactic of social movements that they adopted from the LGBT movement (Ramirez 7/24/2012; Bernstein 1997). So, along with the establishment of the DREAMer collective identity, this certification and legitimization by elites served to constitute undocumented immigrants as accepted challengers within established political arenas.

This role of elite actors in the granting of legitimacy to social movement actors has been a recognized part of social movement theories (McCarthy and Zald
While there is little disagreement that elite members of the polity possess concentrated resources, competing theorists within the social movements field have debated the willingness of elite actors’ to provide resources, including legitimacy, to new actors and challengers (McAdam 1999:36-40). Models of elite resource mobilization were criticized for tending to over-emphasize the powerlessness of disenfranchised groups, while under-emphasizing the role of indigenous groups in acquiring resources, especially among those groups excluded from the political arena (McAdam 1999:24). This dissertation adopts a position consistent with those who argue that the bestowal of resources by elite members is the result of power and conflict. As Frederick Douglass said, “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did. It never will.” (1857). Political leaders, such as President Obama, and other elite actors, did not “bestow” favors on undocumented students without recognizing the political power which came from groups acquiring and deploying “indigenous” resources to build organizations and engage in contentious and strategic political actions. The need to engage in contentious politics may have been especially true for undocumented immigrant subjects due to their unrecognized status. Unlike many other groups of social movement actors, undocumented immigrants did not have a place at the table from which to engage in political discourse directly or engage in institutionally approved

\[\text{1977; Jenkins 1983)}^{8}\text{. }\]

\[^{8}\text{Recently, Sirianni (2009) has recognized an innovation on the relationships between members and challengers by recognizing civic enablers, in which processes of inclusion in public and civic discussions may be facilitated by government and other elite members of a political arena. Such models of increased democracy and participation in political decisions is a rare approach. It was not a model that applied in the case of undocumented immigrant students at either the Massachusetts state level or the federal level.}\]
tactics such voting. Given their unrecognized status, the participation of undocumented immigrant students in the construction of policy has been that of challengers on the outside of the political arena. Since undocumented immigrants, were constituted as subjects living outside the political arenas, understanding their constitution as political actors (or members) reflects, in essence, their ‘re-constitution’ or, at least, ‘re-positioning’ as subjects.

Conceptualizing DREAMers as New Political Actors

I argue that the ‘new normal’ that Vargas tweeted about after the Democratic National Convention reflects the constitution of new political actors. This actor constitution was achieved through the creation of DREAMers as a collective identity by undocumented immigrant who engaged in collective action and a parallel certification of the category by existing and established members of the institutional political system (McAdam et al., 2001). As a concept, “actor constitution” draws from the contentious politics literature, and therefore this dissertation has implications for this field in particular. To more fully and clearly situate this conceptual emphasis, however, requires distinguishing between the constitution of new political actors and two related concepts in the global migration and immigration literature, respectively: citizenship and political incorporation.

There has been much debate about the meaning of citizenship as the relationship between undocumented immigrants and the state or polity (Bloemeraad et al., 2008; Sassen 2005). Citizenship generally refers to “membership in a political and geographic community,” incorporating legal status,
political, and other forms of participation in society as membership (Bloemeraad et al., 2008: 154). The debates and discussions about the nature of types of citizenship are also reflected in the various terms to describe undocumented immigrants (Gonzales and Chavez 2012; Abrego 2008; Lee 2008; Flores 2003): unauthorized subjects (Sassen 2005), irregular migrants (McNevin 2007), and subaltern immigrants (Odem 2008). While this literature informs this dissertation, it is important to distinguish between these concepts of citizenship discussed in the global migration and immigration literature, and the constitution of new political actors from the contentious politics field. While both concepts recognize the socially constructed nature of the subject of this dissertation, global migration theories generally explain the re-definition of undocumented immigrants in relationship to the shifting nature of the nation state, while actor constitution (and thus this dissertation) focus on the political work of social movement organization building and strategic actions. As such, this dissertation's conclusions have implications beyond the subject of undocumented immigrant students and may be extended to other collective actors whose might lack recognized political rights in a nation-state.

Research on the political incorporation of new immigrants into the United States (Lee et al, 2006; Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad, 2008) provides a second alternative to this emphasis on political contention. While there are several definitions of political incorporation (Lee et al, 2006), Bloemraad (2006) defines it as “the process of becoming part of mainstream political debates, practices, and decision-making” (2006: 6). This definition has much in common with the actor
constitution process and related emphases on how challengers become members of a political arena.

One point of departure, however, is that political incorporation has been developed specifically to explain immigration, while the actor constitution process helps explain a variety of groups who engage in contentious political action. This distinction has conceptual implications since political incorporation of immigrants has been criticized for suggesting a *linearity* towards becoming a member of the established polity, “echoing” assimilation theories that suggest immigration is an inevitable, desirable and simple process by which immigrants follow a path to become a part of the United States by adopting aspects of the dominant culture, thereby shedding their native cultures (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Lee et al., 2006). Such a 'linear pathway' metaphorically suggests a journey in which the “traveller” begins in a country of origin or birth (culturally or physically) and moves into the political life of the United States. This linear trajectory is less clear, or at least more complicated, in the case of undocumented immigrants who enter the United States as children (the 1.5 generation). Undocumented minors follow this trajectory of becoming a part of the United States at a young age, successfully achieving some level of cultural and social belonging at a point when their political incorporation is also blocked as a result of age limitations on political involvement of children (Gonzales and Chavez 2012). Then, as undocumented immigrant students reach adulthood, they are expelled from social institutions such as college, work and the military, and blocked from formal participation in electoral politics (i.e. - voting, running for office, etc.) (Gonzales and Chavez 2012). This experience of being
'expulsed' from society upon reaching adulthood after having been incorporated culturally and socially during childhood has been theorized by Gonzales and Chavez (2012) as the ‘abject,’ referring to that which is ‘cast out’ or literally ‘excrement.’ This experience of abjectivity requires having first been partially incorporated into U.S. society, thereby separating the trajectory of their incorporation into social/cultural and political forms, both of which are additionally dependent on a variety of idiosyncratic factors such as age of arrival, social class, language, culture, race, etc. (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Given their trajectories of partial incorporation followed by experiences of abjectivity, it is not clear that undocumented immigrant students would experience political incorporation in the same way as first generation immigrants might.

Second, political incorporation reflects transitions that are experienced individually, as well as in the aggregate, through practices such as voting (Ramirez and Wong 2006; Hajnel and Lee 2006; Junn 2006). Frequently, such processes are discussed in reified ways, with immigrants grouped into categories of race, ethnicity or nation of origin that have been constructed by researchers, rather than being self-defined (Wong 2006; Mollenkopf et al., 2006). Such approaches are notably distinct from members’ self-definition of categories, such as the establishment of DREAMer collective identities among members in SIM, and thus neglect the interactional dynamics of the constitution process.

The framework developed by Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad (2008: 15) provides a notable exception in the political incorporation literature. By distinguishing between the individual processes of assimilation and the collective
process of incorporation, they seek to rectify conventional individualist and aggregated approaches to understanding immigrant political incorporation. Still, the parallel nature of these pathways at once distinguishes political incorporation from assimilation, and aligns these two concepts as linear pathways based on acculturation. So, while political incorporation is important, and has contributed to my analysis in this dissertation, it differs from the concept of constituting political actors that depends upon dynamic interactions among undocumented immigrant students who self-define a collective identity and then are certified by elite members and existing challengers of a political arena.

III. Explaining Actor Constitution of DREAMers

Building on the distinction between these prevailing approaches and the constitution of political actors, this dissertation explains how and why the collective identity of undocumented immigrant students emerged, and how and why they were certified by elite members of the political establishment. The ascendance of undocumented immigrant students is embodied in part by the stories that DREAMers have told in public. Several years before her appearance at the Democratic National Convention, Benita Veliz delivered a speech at the DREAM Graduation, an event held in the shadow of the United States Capital with members of SIM and 300 mostly-undocumented immigrant students from across the country. While wearing a cowboy hat and a graduation robe in June 2009, Veliz shared a story:

One week after my 8th birthday, my family brought me to the United States from a small town in northern Mexico. Little did I know on that fateful night when we
crossed the stretch of bridge that connects Texas to Mexico and the United States that I live the next 16 years of my life as an undocumented student. Growing up I excelled at school, consistently making straight A’s and acing my state level exams. It was not until I entered high school that I began to realize the repercussions of my undocumented status. Faced with a choice of giving up on my dreams and giving up on a life where college and aspirations were non-existent – or fighting to keep my dream alive, despite my circumstances, I chose to fight. – Benita Veliz, June 23, 2009, Washington, DC.9

Veliz’s story graphically represented her life in a way that resonated with the undocumented immigrant students in attendance. The speech had been developed with editorial support from the Massachusetts lead organizer, Jorge Sandoval, who in turn had adapted its narrative template from Professor Marshall Ganz’s community organizing course at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. The narrative outline begins by describing a challenge that is unfair, making a choice about how to respond to this challenge, and the outcome of that choice. Social movement scholars have long referred to challenges or wrongs as ‘grievances.’ Further, social movement organizers seek to “frame” grievances that will resonate with a broader audience and align with core values in society (Snow and Bedford 1998; Snow and Byrd 2007). In this case, the grievance was being denied her ‘dreams’ of college despite hard work and excellent grades and the choice was “to fight.”

As inspiring as these public narratives can be, the “trouble with stories,” as Tilly (1999) put it, is that they can obscure or even completely exclude important complexities that explain how and why events occur as they do (see also Polletta

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9 Note: Except of speech taken from personal observation at this public event, and cross-referenced with YouTube video footage. See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-EXiA7WOU&feature=related
In this case, the story that a grievance led to activism because, ‘I chose to fight’ reflects an insufficient explanation for the political emergence of undocumented students. These narrative explanations for how and why undocumented immigrants participate in contentious action are reminiscent of the classic, and now largely discredited, theories of social movements that explained participation as a direct response to pent up grievances (McAdam 1999).

Additionally, these narratives encourage a valorized image of the speaker, by highlighting their agency or “choice” to fight. Consistent with storytelling, they highlight ‘independent and conscious actions” (Tilly 1999), and in so doing, stories obscure the structural and cultural forces that permitted or even shaped such choices.

Building on this critical conception of contentious storytelling, Polletta (2006) argues that stories are effective in mobilizing participants into social movements, precisely because of their ambiguity and openness to interpretation. I argue that these public narratives, though incomplete in an analytic sense, served many important ends, including building solidarity within the movement and motivating new participants to join. At the same time, I am interested in exploring the more complex relationship between the grievances of DREAMers and their political emergence.

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10 Tilly (1999) notes four serious limits of storytelling for the purposes of sociological inquiry including: (1) its limited number of interacting characters, (2) its constraints on analysis within a specific time and space, (3) its requirement of independent and conscious actions, and (4) its requirement that all actions, with the exception of externally generated accidents, result from previous actions by the characters.
To understand this more nuanced process through which undocumented immigrant students became political actors, this dissertation turns to the actor constitution process as a framework that structures my explanation of how new political actors entered the political arena, gained political standing, and constructed a collective identity\textsuperscript{11} (McAdam et al., 2001). I apply this framework to the case of DREAMers by arguing that this group became constituted as political actors by (1) developing claims from their life experiences of being partially incorporated and partially expelled from society; (2) consolidating narratives from these life experiences through the acquisition of material and cultural resources in organizations, and development of public narratives and leadership skills; and (3) deploying the resulting public narratives during contentious policy campaigns.

Through these processes, DREAMers developed a collective identity and leveraged support from elite members of political arena who provided resources to the group.

The next chapter (Chapter 2) explains the methodological approach of this study, and describes the opportunities and challenges that I encountered through my ethnographic experiences with the Student Immigrant Movement.

Chapters 3 and 4 then focus processes that lead to the establishment of a collective identity. Chapter 3 describes the “raw materials,” in the form of life

\textsuperscript{11} McAdam et al.,(2001) describe the actor constitution process as involving the following components: (1) \textit{subjects}, which refer to those actors excluded from the political arena who become members; (2) \textit{social appropriation}, which refers to how new actors use and/or borrow elements from existing social spaces to construct new social spaces; (3) \textit{innovative action}, which refers to tactics or ‘contentious performances’ that are drawn from an existing ‘stock’ or repertoire of a given social movement, and which evolve in relationship to shifting political opportunities and threats, and (4) \textit{identity shift} which refers to the transformation of a group and its members’ understanding of self into new forms.
experiences of undocumented immigrant students whose experiences serve as the
basis for their latter collective political claims-making. In particular, the
experiences are framed as either physical or social/cultural processes inclusion or
exclusion between undocumented immigrant student subjects and the institutions
of the United States.

Chapters 4 discusses how these life experiences are "processed" into public
narratives by examining the mobilization of resources to build the Student
Immigrant Movement organization, construct public narratives and to strategically
align these narratives with past social movements, especially the Civil Rights
Movement.

Chapters 5 and 6 then focus more explicitly on the certification of DREAMers
as new political actors. Chapter 5 reviews the arenas of immigration and
immigration policies in the United States, especially with regards to undocumented
immigrant youth today. I will then more narrowly present the state-level context,
and in so doing, I map the political arena within which this group of undocumented
immigrant students developed their social movement organization, the Student
Immigrant Movement. Chapter 6 then looks at the deployment of these public
narratives through innovative tactics in relationship to perceptions of an ever-
shifting context of opportunities and threats. In particular, this will look at two
campaigns that SIM engaged in during 2010. The first is the campaign for the
DREAM Act at the federal level, and second a state-level campaign against proposed
anti-immigrant amendments.

Finally, Chapter 7 will conclude by summarizing the results of the previous
chapters, including the consequences or outcomes of this new collective identity of DREAMers which shifted between 2008 and 2010. Furthermore, how this shift helped to foreshadow the events of 2011 and 2012, and in particular, the executive action taken by the Obama administration in June 2012 to provide Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) to the DREAMers. In so doing, this demonstrates the constitution of SIM as a constituted political actor with an established collective identity and the legitimacy acquired through processes of certification from existing elite members of the political arena. I will also discuss implications of these findings for the contentious politics literature, the broader sociological literature, policy and practice.

IV. Implications

This dissertation breaks new ground for the contentious politics literature by providing greater specificity in understanding what is meant by the constitution of new political actors and by reconciling theoretical ambiguities that govern the actor constitution process vis a vis conceptions of collective identity and resource mobilization.

Second, until recently, scholars of collective action did not consider the political actions of immigrants, much less undocumented immigrants (Klandermans, van der Torn, and Stekelenburg 2008). This dissertation explains the constitution of undocumented immigrant students, who have been marginalized and disenfranchised by the state through legal by institutional mechanisms, as well as by cultural and social mechanisms. As such, their political exclusion parallels other
groups with claims to be included into the political process, such as African Americans in the U.S. South who were denied voting rights. Unlike the civil rights movement, however, undocumented immigrant students have mobilized at a time that is different from the late 1950’s and early 1960’s.

Third, this dissertation brings the nature of how subjects are constructed more clearly into the conversation about social movements. Especially, this dissertation will explain how social movement organizations adopted narrative strategies, and the role that narratives played in constructing the identities and public understandings of undocumented immigrant students.

More broadly, by considering how a group of disenfranchised and stateless young people were able to leverage material and cultural resources and then engage in public actions, this dissertation raises issues of belonging and identity, topics of central concern to the field since its founding.

Finally, public policy scholars might take note at the implications of this dissertation for understanding how new actors are able to gain access to political arenas. Participation in such arenas serves important decision making functions around the manufacturing of public policies, but more so, their relative openness or closed-ness has implications for the functioning of pluralist democracy.
Chapter 2. Methods for Navigating Theory and Relationships in the Field

I arrived at my first Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) leadership meeting on October 11, 2008, for a scheduled Saturday morning recruitment meeting. The downtown building belonged to a national labor union that provided the space based on its affiliation with SIM’s parent organization, the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition. The room was clean, well-lit and spacious – about 25 yards in width and 50 yards in length - with two supporting columns along the left and three along the right, which divided the room into thirds. Chairs with clipboards were gathered in the far right-hand corner of the room.

I found Jorge placing a flip chart on an easel in front of rows of chairs. Jorge greeted me with a handshake and a warm ‘hello’, and then introduced me to the other leaders who were helping him set up. Over the next half-hour, more people arrived. One leader brought a box of donut holes and a large box of coffee, and a sandwich for Jorge. While eating, Jorge sat facing two the women with straight dark hair who I estimated were high school age, as they discussed something they saw on
a relatively new online website called “Facebook.”12 Jorge said to them, “You guys are in Facebook? Search for me. I’m all alone, I need friends.” Forty minutes after the scheduled start time, Ernesto asked everyone to sit closer together near the front of the room. Jorge then stepped up to the front of the room, turned to the group and said in a voice loud enough to project across the room, “Let’s get started.”

And so, I began my ethnography of the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM).

Simply, ethnography is a form of research conducted in the context of “natural social settings” of people’s daily lives (Emerson 2001). Between October 2008 and August 2011, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork within the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM), a social movement organization dedicated to promoting the educational rights of undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as children. During this time, I sought to understand the details of the activities of undocumented immigrant students who were involved in political actions designed to change public policies about immigrants and immigration. I attended meetings among members, leaders and allies/coalitions and public performances such as protests, vigils, press conferences, legislative hearings, and lobby visits. In addition, I travelled with movement leaders to Washington, DC (three times) for national events and to Little Rock, AR, to meet civil rights leaders.

Throughout the process, over meals or during breaks in these meetings, I engaged in informal conversations with SIM members and I developed relationships with the members and leaders of this organization. In addition to my direct field

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12 Facebook actually began in 2004 as a college and high-school network, and was opened to anyone in 2006. In October 2008 it had just over 100 million users, but it was new to me.
observations, I had access to raw film footage and transcripts of events that were captured by a documentary film-maker who had been filming much of the work of SIM over this time. I remained actively involved in the operations of SIM and conducted interviews with all staff and most of the core leaders of SIM through August 2011. During the 2011-2012 academic year, I continued to visit the SIM staff about weekly, and attend major events.

This chapter provides an overview of my methods and is organized around four “tasks” that have generally been a concern of ethnographers. First, I will discuss how I obtained access and entered the field with the Student Immigrant Movement in Section I: Entering the Field. Second, I will review my process for obtaining and analyzing data in Section II: Data Collection and Analysis Methods. My third methodological task involved connecting my observations to larger theory, which, as part of my grounded theory approach, included the development of a research question. I will explain my approach to this task in Section III: From Empirical Data to Theory. Finally, my fourth task involved navigating relationships with subjects in the field, which I will discuss in Section IV: Key Relational Tasks and Dilemmas in the Field. Finally, after reviewing my approach to these four tasks, I will summarize the methodological lessons from this project, and consider their implications for this work and future scholarship in Section V: Lessons and Implications.

I. Obtaining Access and Entering the Field
In Summer 2004, I attended a presentation by a group of high school age students from a neighborhood in Boston. The group was called GOALS and it was the predecessor to SIM. The students were mostly rising seniors or recently graduated who had all immigrated to the United States from Latin America as children. Most were undocumented. They had formed a group outside of school to push for the passage of legislation that would allow them to (if accepted for admission) pay in-state tuition to public colleges or universities. GOALS had succeeded in helping to spur passage of the legislation in the Massachusetts Senate and House, only to have the bill vetoed by then-Governor Mitt Romney. Undeterred, these students planned to travel across the state in a van to rally support to override the veto. One student described the statehouse as his/her “second home.” I was impressed with the civic and political commitment of these students and increasingly focused my attention on the issue.

In Spring 2008, a friend employed as a community organizer in several low-income communities of Massachusetts suggested that I meet Jorge Sandoval, the youth organizer at the MIRA Coalition. Jorge agreed to meet me at the MIRA office, where I learned he had arrived in the United States at age 12 and had experienced unauthorized immigration status.

Our first meeting also began a series of mostly theoretical conversations we shared about youth organizing and immigration. We continued to meet over the course of Spring 2008 at restaurants or at his parents’ home and held long conversations that oriented me to the undocumented immigrant student movement. Jorge described the local organizing that he had done and how he and others had
founded SIM. He described past campaigns for in-state tuition and the DREAM Act, as well as campaigns for individuals who faced deportation. We discussed my dissertation project and the idea of writing about SIM’s youth organizing work.

Over that time, Jorge never invited me to meet the leaders that he described, which made me suspect that Jorge was ‘testing’ me before introducing me to the larger group of SIM members. As a graduate student in sociology, I could not help but be conscious of the social distance between Jorge and myself; I am a 40-year old prematurely grey haired, white male doctoral student who is married with three children. Given our differences, I could understand why he, as a leader, would want to be sure about my intentions and commitment before introducing me to the membership of an organization that works primarily with undocumented immigrants. We continued to meet every other week into the spring. And then, our contact ended over the summer, as Jorge travelled to Peru to visit family. During this time, I began to consider a new dissertation topic.

In September 2008, I received an unexpected call from Jorge asking me to meet. We met at the MIRA office for what I expected would be the last time. I anticipated that Jorge would tell me that he enjoyed meeting me, but that the prospects for this research project would just not work out. Instead, Jorge invited me to “tell the story of SIM” (field notes, 9/2008). He said, “I need someone who is going to ‘get under my skin’ to really understand what we do, what SIM is. And then to write this into a book about immigrant youth organizing.” I accepted. We shook hands, and I attended my first recruitment meeting/training for new SIM members the following month.
My introduction to this first meeting is described in the opening of this chapter. After Jorge announced, “Let’s get started” he reviewed the agenda and established ground rules. He then shared a personal story of his experiences with his father. Early in the meeting, he asked me to stand up and introduce myself, reminding me sternly to be succinct. I explained my research in general terms, explaining that I hoped to learn about how undocumented immigrant students organize into a youth-led organization. I also reminded them of the confidential and voluntary nature of this study, and clarified that, if they did not want me to participate, they could un-invite me. Jorge jumped in as I finished my introduction to remind the group of what a ‘great opportunity’ it was to have someone with an academic background write a book about them. It seemed to me at the time that he was ‘selling’ the group on the idea of allowing me to continue. Members of the group seemed to accept his word and let me join the meeting.

Three weeks after attending my first SIM meeting, Jorge informed me that he and the other organizer for SIM had been laid off from their position at MIRA. They now had no organizational base. They had no funding. Faced with the option of ending SIM, Jorge and a team of core leaders began to meet at his parent’s kitchen table. I met many of the core leaders as they learned about SIM’s predicament. I was invited to late-night strategic planning sessions with allies and leaders of SIM. I found myself a part of conversations as a trusted insider among an inner-circle of allies that had worked together for over a decade on these issues. These conversations occurred over dinners at somebody’s home and lasted late into the night.
My position as a professional program evaluator at a university research center provided little in the way of resources that could help support this organization. Furthermore, a doctoral student in the early stages of my research, I was partially aware of some of the debates about the balance between participation and data collection (Coffey 2002; Kleinman 2002; Irwin 2006; Lofland and Lofland 1995). So, most of the time, I listened and actively took notes, trying to better understand the relationships of the different people in the room who had been activists at existing non-profit organizations in the region. Several were or had been staff or members of the board from MIRA, and most of the discussions at these meetings involved strategies for managing the separation from MIRA while leveraging resources to support the ongoing work of SIM. While not stated, it seemed that another purpose of these meetings was to provide emotional and social support to Jorge and Ernesto as they left their paid positions.

In addition to Jorge’s introduction, several other factors helped me earn trust (and access) with others in the SIM leadership and movement. First, I am married to a Latina immigrant with a Ph.D., who has many years of experience at various Boston-based organizations in the immigrant rights community, or “La Lucha” (the struggle). I was aware how as I entered the field, my wife’s social and symbolic capital became a part of my public identity that granted me access to the group. SIM leaders would introduce me to allies or other members in the group as a researcher from Brandeis, but then add “he’s Alexandra’s husband.”

Over time, my attendance at meetings seemed to become accepted and taken for granted, though on occasion, during a break, members would ask about my
strange habit of sitting in a corner without saying much while constantly writing.
During my first year at SIM, I generally did not participate in meetings beyond large group reflections in which not participating would have been more disruptive than participating. For those large group reflections, members tended to gather in large circles to share feelings and reflections with other members. I also limited my role to instrumental tasks to be helpful, such as, such as setting up chairs for a meetings or setting up food for lunch. Mostly, however, I sat with my laptop open, taking notes and not volunteering to answer questions or join discussions.

II. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

My second methodological task was the systematic collection and analysis of data. As noted above, this ethnography consisted of three types of data collection activities: (1) interviews, (2) field observations and (3) review of existing artifacts and archival documentation. My approach to each of these will be considered below.

Data Collection and Analysis Methods 1: Interviews

As part of this ethnography, I conducted twenty-four formal interviews with undocumented immigrant students (n=15) and other leaders (n=3), staff (n=2) and allies of SIM (n=4). Interview participants in this study were recruited from within the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM), and selected intentionally to represent a diverse range of roles within SIM (members, leaders, staff and allies), over different periods of time (2008-2010), and students from a range of countries of origin born in Brazil (4), Dominican Republic (3), Guatemala (2), Colombia (1), Chile (1), El
Salvador (1), Honduras (1), Mexico (1), and Peru (1). Nine of these SIM interviewees self-identified as gender female and the remaining six interviewees gender identified as male. Among the non-undocumented immigrant interviewees, one had also immigrated to the United States in his early 20’s and three others were second generation (children of immigrants) whose parents came from China (2) or Colombia (1). All lived in Massachusetts for five or more years, and all were above the age of 18 at the time of our interview\textsuperscript{13}. Eight interviews were conducted in 2009 (early in the study period of the movement), and the remaining in late 2010 or 2011. Seven respondents participated in repeat or continued interviews that took place over two or more recorded sessions. Most interviews were approximately an hour in length, though several were longer. A summary of the undocumented immigrant interviewees is attached in Appendix A.

The purposes of my interviews were twofold: (a) to better understand the lived experiences of the undocumented immigrant students and (b) to better understand the organizational and strategic processes that shaped the evolution of SIM and its members and allies (Charmaz, 2006; Weiss, 1994, DeVault and McCoy, 2002). Towards these ends, I conducted two types of interviews: (1) 15 in-depth biographical interviews with undocumented student leaders/members to better understand their sense of identity and how it changed over time and (2) nine interviews with allies and leaders of SIM who were not undocumented immigrant students (DeVault and McCoy, 2002). My interview protocol focused on the life

\textsuperscript{13} Note: This last point was a concession to IRB review of human subjects, since interviewees under age 18 would have required parental permission, thereby revealing the names and contact information of undocumented immigrant parents.
narratives of undocumented immigrant students, and specifically engaged with
three dimensions of their lived experiences: (1) experiences with immigration or
immigrating; (2) experiences in school and (3) experiences with political activism
within SIM. In addition, I conducted interviews with key allies and paid
staff/leaders of SIM to supplement and triangulate the data collected during the
interviews with the students themselves. My interview protocols are attached in
Appendix B. These nine interviews focused on the activities and impact of SIM vis a
vis its campaigns and goals.

I transcribed the fifteen interviews with undocumented immigrant students
myself and imported these transcriptions into a qualitative analysis software
(Atlas.ti). While transcribing I made mental notes of potential codes that seemed
relevant to my analysis. I then re-read all interview transcripts for themes and
developed an initial written set of codes through an iterative coding process that
required multiple ‘passes’ through my interview data, during which time I created
either “free codes.” My interview codebook is presented in Appendix C. During
this process, I applied these codes to label discrete units of meaning in the text of
interviews, generally comprised of multiple sentences or even paragraphs to
complete a particular story. In a few cases, such as an analysis of the word
“DREAMer” or “student” I coded my data based on a global search for use of those
specific words.

Using an inductive approach of grounded theory, I grouped these codes and
their corresponding texts into the data families (Corbin and Strauss 2008; Charmaz
2000). As I examined these families, I began to see that they reflected interviewee
experiences of either social/cultural or physical inclusion or exclusion into U.S. society. These four families of experiences will be described in length as part of Chapter Three: Subjects. This chapter provides background information about the life experiences of undocumented immigrant students that provide insight into their reasons for political engagement and the raw materials for constructing their public narratives.

_Data Collection and Analysis Methods 2: Field Observations_

As noted above, my fieldwork included attending meetings and events, as well as long road trips with members of SIAM. The road trips were particularly rich opportunities for extended conversations, while driving, during meal breaks, and before or after meetings. During some events, such as the 19 day and night vigil, there was an abundance of ‘down time’ to talk with members. Throughout my participant observation time in the field described above, every effort was taken to record my observations and experiences thoroughly and accurately through a combination of written and electronically recorded notes. The particular means I used to collect notes often depended upon the nature of the field setting. Whenever possible, I attempted to type my field observations directly onto my laptop computer. Frequently, the setting did not allow this, so I turned to my ballpoint pen and notebook to take notes by hand. In many instances, I used ‘jottings’ and then returned within the same day to more fully write out detailed notes (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995). In a few cases, in public spaces or press conferences, I turned on a
tape recorder to record public speech. In these cases, I was able to return to the
recordings and transcribe relevant parts of the speeches or discussions.

In preparation for analysis, I transcribed notes from meetings and public
events. In the case of many of the public events, I incorporated the documentary
film transcripts for analysis, which I used to supplement my own notes, by double-
checking the presence of attendees, specific quotes, and details that I might have
missed in my note taking.

During the process of transcribing, I ‘cleaned’ my notes by changing names to
pseudonyms and correcting typographical or spelling errors. I organized my field
notes chronologically, and initially coded them based on the following types of field
settings (1) interviews; (2) meeting notes; (3) observations at public events; and (4)
press or discussions of events external to SIM (i.e.- immigration policy in other
states; national events; etc.).

During the review of my field notes, I observed groups of codes that began to
thematically cluster around four ‘families’ that I labeled as (a) organization; (b)
practices; (c) contexts and (d) identity.\textsuperscript{14} I remained committed creating analytic
space to analyze each of these four themes, based on my sense that the
interconnected dynamics of these four elements explained the overall
transformations that I saw in SIM and its members. These data families provide the
spine for this dissertation, and especially Chapters 4 through 7, by allowing me to
interrogate my data to better understand how undocumented immigrant students

\textsuperscript{14} I owe a debt of gratitude to my classmate Ken Sun, who upon hearing me describe my research
helped me identify these analytic labels.
were constituted as political actors. As previously described, I later re-analyzed my field notes through the lens of the actor constitution process, organizing my notes around the set of sub-processes. I then entered into a process of letting my data and the actor constitution theory interrogate one another. By ‘interrogate,’ I refer to an iterative process of considering and re-considering the relationship of data and theory, which I will discuss at length in the next section. This mutual and reciprocal interrogation became the substance of this ethnography and occurred by writing and re-writing chapters of this ethnography.

*Data Collection and Analysis Methods 3: Written and Visual Archival Documentation*

During my fieldwork, I frequently received newspaper announcements or press releases relevant to the events and activities of the Student Immigrant Movement. I collected these and organized them by month in physical files. In preparation for my analysis, I conducted a more thorough Lexis/Nexis search of U.S. News services that referred to ‘undocumented or illegal immigrants/immigration’\(^\text{15}\) and (DREAM Act or In-State Tuition or Student Immigrant Movement) between 2008 and 2011.

In addition, I watched and took notes on the testimony about the DREAM Act by members of the U.S. House of Representatives in December 2010 and the Senate in September and December 2010. Afterwards, I obtained copies of the testimony

\(^{15}\) Note: I used the term “immig+” to capture any iteration of ‘immigrant or immigration’ that began with the “immig” prefix.
of these members of Congress from the Congressional Record\textsuperscript{16}. Also I obtained copies of written public transcripts of discussions about in-state tuition (during hearings of the Joint Higher Education Committee) and discussions of anti-immigrant amendments included in the budget process from the Massachusetts legislature.\textsuperscript{17} My analysis of these documents was supplemental to the analysis of field notes and interviews. Primarily these second source documents helped to demonstrate opportunities and threats discussed in chapters six, as well as the certification of new movement actors in chapters seven and eight.

III. From Empirical Data to Theory

I began my ethnographic fieldwork by using a grounded theory method to collect, code and analyze my data (Charmaz 2000). Unlike deductive approaches to research that develop empirically from existing theories by collecting data to refute hypotheses, grounded theorists develop theories from empirical observations through a process of induction (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Timmerans and Tavyor (2012: 169) contrast the approach with prevailing “logico-deductive” theories as follows:

In the 1960s, Glaser and Strauss perceived a growing division of labor between theoreticians and empirical researchers: Theorists such as Parsons and Blau created broad “logico-deductive” theories that would then orient the work of empirical researchers in a feedback cycle of refutation. Surveying the theoretical landscape, Glaser and Strauss argued that this approach generated theories with little connection to substantive social life because researchers would force data into the straightjacket of preexisting concepts. Instead, they favored generating theories based on the

\textsuperscript{16} The record for all congressional legislation and testimony is located in the Library of Congress and available online at Thomas.loc.gov.

\textsuperscript{17} Note: All proposed pieces of legislation, as well as the journal of activity by both the Senate and House and testimony and actions in committee hearings are available at https://malegislature.gov/.
“emergence” of theoretical categories through a process of constant comparisons between groups sampled on theoretical grounds. (Timmerans and Tavory 2012:169)

Grounded theory involves iterative processes of empirical observation, coding, and memo writing that moves inductively from empirical observations to greater levels of theoretical abstraction and generalization (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Charmaz 2000). A tenet of the approach is that practitioners generally enter the field without pre-conceived theories to draw insights from the empirical evidence with a goal of developing new theories (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Charmaz 2000). The underlying value of this approach is to help prevent researchers from being locked into the orthodoxy of seeking only evidence to support existing frameworks.

The principles of grounded theory, especially those dictating that practitioners enter the field without any pre-conceived theories and that inductive processes will directly generate new theories, have always been controversial, and even its proponents have critically interrogated these foundations in recent years (Timmerans and Tavory 2012; Charmaz 2009). Rather than suggesting that grounded theorists develop completely new theories, Charmaz (2000; 2009) has called for a ‘constructivist’ grounded theory that emphasizes an iterative relationship between data and the field of existing theories (Charmaz 2000). Most recently, Timmerans and Tavory (2012) propose reconsidering the privileged
position of induction among grounded theorists, and instead, elevate the process of “abduction”\(^\text{18}\) which they describe as:

> the form of reasoning through which we perceive the phenomenon as related to other observations either in the sense that there is a case and effect hidden from view, in the sense that the phenomenon is seen as similar to other phenomena already experienced and explained in other situations, or in the sense of creating new general descriptions (2012:171).

They go on to say that abduction seeks a “situational fit between observed facts and rule.” Similarly, while writing this dissertation, I moved from empirical observations to find a situational fit with theories from the contentious politics literature.

My analysis began with a traditional grounded theory research approach, when I began collective observations of the field, identifying themes or recording early hunches from my data (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Charmaz 2000; 2009). In the context of a research methods course\(^\text{19}\), I began using a grounded theory approach by carefully detailing various aspects of the physical and social environment that I had entered, describing details of clothing, room layouts, and public behaviors of the SIM members.

Consistent with the tenets of grounded theory, I did not have an established research question or theoretical framework to guide my early observations in the field, but rather tentative interests in the political participation of undocumented immigrant students generally and in particular this group that was engaged in lobbying efforts to change state and national policies. I began to try on answers to

\(^{18}\) As the authors describe, the concept of ‘abduction’ was originally developed by Charles Peirce, and has been recognized as an important element of grounded theory.

\(^{19}\) SOC 293B: Field Methods, Prof. Sarah Shostak. Spring 2009.
the question of “what is this a case of?” (Timmerans and Tavory 2012; Tavory and Timmerans 2009; Abbott 2004; Becker 1998). As insights emerged, I wrote memos and identified ‘codes’ to track themes from the data, employing the analytic method of ‘alternative casing’ to my data (Timmerans and Tavory 2012:177-179). In this early stage of research, my observations overwhelmingly emphasized the structural organization of SIM, the policies that defined their position in society and the state and national dimensions of policy making by undocumented non-citizen residents. I considered casing that involved the political incorporation of new immigrants, emphasizing the personal biographical/demographic of the SIM members. I also looked at these through a lens of youth organizing and the incorporation of young people into civic and organizational spaces. I rejected most of these as my primary frames, largely because they did not seem to capture one or more aspects of the data that seemed important, not only to me, but to the organizers and members of SIM. The two main areas that seemed to be missing involved the recognition that these young people were engaged in a collective struggle and that this struggle was in conflict with existing established institutions with power, especially the state and federal governments, mainstream media, opposing groups, potential employers, as well as colleges and universities. Over time my gaze shifted and deepened to more substantially focus on the changes in the nature of undocumented immigrant students as collective actors, including how these students saw themselves, and how others saw them.
As I entered the stage of writing my chapters, I made a conceptual and procedural shift from induction to abduction\textsuperscript{20} (Timmerans and Tavory 2012; Charmaz 2009) when I began engaging with the contentious politics literature. I began focusing on the evolution of SIM and their changing tactics as a case of evolving repertoires of contention (McAdam et al 2001)\textsuperscript{21}. While re-reading the book *Dynamics of Contention*, I came upon the “actor constitution process” which seeks to explain how new actors enter the political process and gain standing or power (McAdam et al 2001; Johnston 2006; McAdam and Fligstein 2012). In a moment of insight, I recognized the “situational fit” between the four families of data that I had identified among undocumented immigrant students and the basic elements of the actor constitution process.

**TABLE 2.1** **Empirical Data Families, the Actor Constitution Process and Dissertation Chapters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Families</th>
<th>Actor Constitution Process</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Organizational Appropriation</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contexts</td>
<td>Political Opportunities and Threats</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices</td>
<td>Innovative Actions</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in the above table, my data “families” provided conceptual leverage for examining four sub-processes of the actor constitution process. Armed with this recognition, I returned to my data and began to re-examine my field notes through the lens of the deconstructed actor constitution process, and adopted the formal research question of “how and why were undocumented immigrants in SIM...”

\textsuperscript{20} At the time, I knew that I needed and wanted to engage the literature, but I did not have the language of “abduction” to define this process of reasoning.

\textsuperscript{21} This was of my research question as proposed in February 2011, though it required revisions.
constituted as political actors?” By ‘unpacking’ the elements of the actor constitution process, and defining ‘political actors’ I re-conceptualized the two types of changes that I saw among SIM members and between SIM and outside groups by deconstructing a ‘constituted actor’ into its components of collective identity and certification by existing actors. This dissertation is structured around the elements of this process.

In many ways, the writing process became a means of analysis, raising themes and bringing new insights together from the tensions between data and theory. As such each chapter engages theoretical questions that relate to the sub-processes of the actor constitution process (McAdam et al. 2001). In this way, I accomplished this first methodological task of holding an iterative conversation between empirical observations and theory. This conversation, however, followed a more mundane and pre-established methodological task of systematically collecting data.

IV. Key Relational Tasks and Dilemmas in the Field

Perhaps the most significant issue that preoccupied me during the early days of my fieldwork involved what Emerson and Pollner (2001: 240-1) have called ‘doing distance’:

Ethnographers have typically addressed these issues with the framework of participant/observation, using the term to identify a tension inherent in their efforts to comprehend and study social life: how to strike a balance between closeness and distance, between involvement and detachment.

Though at the outset of my research, I worried about how I would overcome my social distance from undocumented students, I soon found myself drawn into the
work of SIM as a resource, member and person (Emerson and Pollner 2001:244-248). In long memos to myself, I reflected on and at times obsessed about my acceptance into the group and how my age, race, gender and status as an academic researcher would influence the actions of the 20-something mostly Brazilian or Latino/a members of this group who tolerated my presence as a quiet note-taker in their meetings.

One of the events that illustrate this dilemma occurred in June 2009, when I agreed to serve as one of four licensed drivers for a team of 12 SIM leaders to a national conference in Washington, DC. After the election of President Barack Obama, many national immigrant rights groups were hopeful that Congress would be introducing legislation to address the problems with current laws that led to the presence of 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. They had organized a three-day national conference with lobbying events in Washington, DC to launch the Campaign to Reform Immigration For America (RIFA). In order to attend, the organizers of SIM needed to reserve a van. As someone with a valid driver’s license who was over 25 years old, I agreed to rent the van on my credit card (and be reimbursed) and help drive the group of 12 members to DC. We left downtown Boston at 10:00pm and arrived at the campaign kick-off at 8:30am. The intimacy of a long van ride through the middle of the night, and the long meetings and shared meals over this three day trip were a ‘bonding’ experience among the attendees and for me.

During that trip, I became a primary driver, shuttling participants to and from the hotel to the conference event, and found myself sleeping on a pull out sofa at the
home of a former colleague of a SIM staff member. These physical constraints made it difficult for me to take notes of my observations, so during dinner on the last night at the trip, I excused myself to ‘go for a walk.’ During this time, I sat on a bench and wrote down ‘jottings’ of observations that I would want to be sure to develop in my field notes when I arrived home. When I returned to the table, I was welcomed with a small dessert as each member went around the table sharing their appreciation for me and for my contribution to the trip. I later learned that they had observed my disappearance, assuming that I was either upset or homesick, wanted to be sure that I felt appreciated and ‘part of the SIM family.’ I was very touched and more than a little embarrassed. At the same time, in reflection, this type of attempt at ‘doing distance’ was met by the paradoxical response of an ‘inclusive overture’ by the group (Emerson and Pollner, 2001: 248).

Throughout my fieldwork, I reflected upon and wrote memos about managing inclusive overtures and balancing my role as an outside researcher with being a participant and supporter. Over time, I found that my involvement would comprise patterns of intense time in the field, followed by time away where I would write, reflect and read relevant research literature in social movements, youth organizing and immigration. In this way, my pattern became less about moving away from the field than a process of navigating between two conceptual spaces in the field of activism and in the scholarly research literature – a process that was at times intensive and (sometimes) emotionally draining. These tensions can be seen in a review of three key issues that emerged during my participant observation.
fieldwork: obtaining access, entering the field and maintaining rapport (Emerson 2001:15; Whyte 1943).

It was shortly after the June 2009 trip that I learned of my embarrassing nickname, “Papa SIM” among some of the SIM leaders. As nicknames go, this one seemed relatively benign to me, even meant as a term of endearment or affection. At the same time, it emphasized the difference in my age or even generational status from the members of SIM. The name did not ‘stick’ with me for too long afterwards, nor, I think, expand too far beyond the dozen attendees from that trip. The role of “Papa SIM” was a good fit with me. I had spent several years of my career working at a university in student affairs, where I had experience as an advisor and mentor to college students. As such, it was an easy transition for me to play that role within SIM, and to recognize the necessary ‘balancing act’ of being supportive and encouraging, without being directive. SIM staff and leaders did not want someone to tell them what to do. They made it clear, on multiple occasions that this was their organization. This was especially true for Jorge.

**Jorge**

My relationship with Jorge was different from others within SIM. I had been meeting with Jorge for several months in one-on-one settings before I began to conduct my participant observations with the larger group. In many ways, Jorge adopted a stance as a teacher, and I, his student. Throughout this time, Jorge and I would meet regularly, often immediately following meetings to review what had happened, or sometimes at his home in the morning. He would ask me for my
observations and answer my questions, providing more details or explaining events as they occurred. I shared them, in general terms, trying to shift my observations into questions to glean an understanding of Jorge’s interpretations of events and decisions. On several occasions, such de-briefings took place while we were en route from a meeting – either together in a car, at a restaurant or café, or on the phone. I scratched notes from these conversations into a notebook, and frequently recorded our conversations. These conversations became a critical part of my education into community organizing as a craft.

During this time, Jorge remained my primary contact, reminiscent of other ethnographer partnerships with community members, including Sudhir Venkatesh’s relationship with Black Kings gang leader J. T. (Venkatesh 2008), Mitchell Duneier’s relationship with Hakim Hasan in Sidewalk (Duneier 2001); and William F. Whyte’s “doorway” of Doc (Whyte 1943).22 Beginning in spring 2009 I began conducting one-on-one interviews with other SIM participants and allies who Jorge had identified and introduced. Jorge also invited me to smaller leadership meetings of core leaders and chapter meetings. I attended the meetings that Jorge invited me to and interviewed his suggested contacts until October 2009, when Jorge left SIM to take a position as the organizer for United We Dream, the national network of the undocumented student social movement.

22 Note: I am aware, even now, of the gendered tradition that this list of ethnographer and community partners suggest, drawing upon a cultural trope that parallels the ‘buddy film’ genre in motion pictures. Such parallels provoke me to wonder and tentatively acknowledge that I may be developing a ‘fable of rapport’ in my description of this process (Clifford 1983).
During that year, I attended monthly meetings of a coalition of staff from allied organizations that had come together to promote the passage of legislation that would expand educational opportunities for undocumented immigrant students. I also attended membership meetings and trainings, which were attended by primarily immigrant students in high school or recent high school graduates, all of whom had been recruited by Jorge or Ernesto.

In some ways, Jorge felt invested in my writing, often asking about when the book would be finished and wanting details about the direction I was taking. Throughout this time, Jorge also challenged me to share my writing and to finish soon. I felt shocked, when, in December 2009, just two months after I entered the field, he said to me, “When is your book going to be done?” This was a question that I heard from him and others in SIM repeatedly for the next few years. He also resisted my need to use pseudonyms. I explained to him that my research required the approval of a committee for the protection of human subjects, and shared historical examples of ignoble research such as the Tuskegee Syphilis study. For Jorge, however, I sensed that this was beside the point. He and SIM were seeking exposure. It was, for him, a matter of dignity and a strategic tactic to publically announce his undocumented status. He began discussing the need for public revelations of undocumented status with me months before launching strategies in SIM and nationally to encourage undocumented immigrant students to do so. At one point, he explained, “we need to get to the point when we own our stories as a source of pride. Crossing the border is dangerous, and we should talk about it like, look, I did this.” Given this strategy of revelation, I wondered if my “book” had
become one of these strategies for him to acquire legitimacy for the Student Immigrant Movement.

Despite these frustrations with the slow progress of my writing and the human subjects restrictions, I had the impression that his questions were what he called “agitating.” As he described it, “agitating” refers to an aspect of community organizing whereby the organizer attempts to make the potential new member a little uncomfortable, because that feeling of discomfort will be a motivator to act. So, I interpreted Jorge’s questions of me as his attempt to agitate or organize me.

I shared some early written pages as the project progressed and themes emerged. Jorge replied that he wanted me to write something that he could distribute throughout the movement. We decided to just focus on the successful lobbying efforts in the Summer of 2009 in which all ten Massachusetts Representatives in the 111th Congress agreed to be co-sponsors of the DREAM Act, which activists referred to as the 10 for 10 Campaign. He shared that case with members of the newly formed national coalition to be named United We DREAM.

Then in early September 2009, Jorge called me to tell me that he was leaving SIM to assume a national role as an organizer with a newly formed group that represents undocumented immigrant students. He had just hired Mariana to join Ernesto, and the two co-organizers would continue to lead SIM.

Advisory Board

As Jorge planned his departure from the organization, the remaining staff members, Mariana and Ernesto, invited me to join a newly formed advisory board.
Altogether, the advisory board held a total of four meetings with the SIM staff from November through March 2010. By late spring the group found it increasingly difficult to schedule a meeting time. By summer two advisors (including myself) continued to be seen as ‘active’ by the staff and leaders. I suggested disbanding the advisory board in July 2010 when one of the members resigned.

It is important to note that my role on the advisory board gave me no real decision-making authority in the organization. At that point the staff members and most of the core leaders were undocumented immigrant youth. They planned campaigns, managed finances for the organization, wrote grants and raised funds, led meetings of members, recruited new members, and planned trainings. In addition, by January 2010 the staff began making hiring (and firing) decisions. Minutes before the offer was extended, I learned that the two current staff (Ernesto and Mariana) had decided to hire a third staff member, Roberto, as a new organizer. Ernesto told me, “we need you to be present to give the blessing of the advisory board.”

A few weeks later, Ernesto announced his own resignation, leaving Mariana and Roberto as the core staff for a few months in Spring 2010. They soon decided that they needed more staff. My lack of decision-making power within the organization was again illustrated by an occasion when my co-advisor and I recommended against hiring two additional staff later that spring, suggesting that a thorough review of the budget and finances would be wise, but the staff hired Eliza and Neil anyway. It turned out to be a prescient decision, as 2010 brought many challenges and opportunities that required additional staff.
While advisors lacked formal power, it would be disingenuous to suggest that we had no effect on the organization. In many day-to-day ways, my fellow advisor and I helped to manage the organization’s staff and played central roles in their operations. We worked with staff on writing and managing grants. We helped negotiate disagreements. We provided a space for members to think through plans and ideas. And we helped create structures for staff roles. As the staff and leadership composition of SIM completely changed from January until late summer 2010 we also played a role as the ‘memory’ of the organization, which became important to its continuity.

Later, in September 2010, Roberto announced his departure from SIM to more directly pursue his education. He remained in his position through that fall, but his announced departure left a leadership vacuum in the organization. In addition, it was a time that included a Senate vote on the DREAM Act as part of a military reauthorization proposal in September 2010, a mid-term election that brought the House of Representatives under Republican control in November, and final House and Senate Lame Duck votes on the DREAM Act in December.

This was an emotional time for the members of SIM and especially the undocumented students. The DREAM Act had been defeated in the U.S. Senate by four votes in December. Around this time, a sub-group of members of United We DREAM split to form their own organization called the National Immigrant Youth Alliance (NIYA). Ernesto had joined NIYA, and proceeded to sign a public letter to all United We DREAM (UWD) affiliated organizations that criticized Jorge personally and SIM specifically.
Meanwhile, personal conflicts between members of the staff and members of
the leadership developed into a conflict within SIM. In January 2011, a group of
three staff and four leaders, as well as my fellow advisor and I, participated in a
formal mediation conducted by a volunteer outside mediator. The mediation
resulted in a ‘structure committee’ that met through spring and summer 2011 to
develop a ‘constitution’ for SIM.

The structure committee met weekly through April, when we met in Salem,
MA, near my home, over a long weekend. I co-facilitated these discussions that led
to the drafting of a new constitution and proposed structure for SIM. In this role, I
helped draft the new constitution for SIM, and helped to shepherd it through a
process of review and edits with a broader group of SIM leaders and members
between April and July.

During these months, the structure committee also served as the governing
body of SIM. Among the tasks of this governing body was to hire a new staff
member of SIM to replace Roberto. I served on the committee to select the new staff
person, and helped broker a re-distribution of staff roles that would allow Eliza to
be the lead organizer of SIM and the new staff person to become an administrative
coordinator for SIM.23 The committee chose Leah Julia, an ally of SIM who had
previously worked in Washington, DC to advance RIFA.

In August 2011, SIM held a Congress to approve the new constitution and
elect a board of directors to replace the structure committee. I facilitated the

23 The term ‘coordinator’ was used instead of ‘executive director’ to connote a flattened hierarchy
within the organization.
election of a new board of directors for the SIM organization, a body that I opted to not serve on myself. Several members, leaders and staff seemed surprised by my decision to not serve on the board. I explained that I needed to concentrate on my role as a researcher, and to finish my dissertation. After the elections, the leaders invited me to the front of the room to thank me for my contribution. “Tom,” they told me, “there is a position for you on the board for life.”

V. Lessons and Implications

The above review of my evolving role in SIM is a reminder of Reinharz’s (1997:3) recognition that we create ‘new selves’ in the field.

I propose we both bring the self to the field and create the self in the field. The self we create in the field is a product of the norms of the social setting and the ways in which the “research subjects” interact with the selves the researcher brings to the field. In sum, “being a researcher” is only one aspect of the researcher’s self in the field. Although the researcher may consider “being a researcher” one’s most salient self, community members may not agree.

Navigating multiple roles through intimate relationships in the field has been the subject of much debate and discussion among ethnographic researchers, and especially, those influenced by participatory, feminist, post-modern and existential qualitative researchers (Lofland and Lofland 1995; Coffey 2002; Kleinman 2002). Others, however, have noted the problematic complexities that can arise from such intimacy (Irwin 2006).

A challenge associated with my fieldwork involved legal and/or ethical dilemmas relevant to participatory research with the undocumented immigrants. Students who came out within SIM meetings also “came out” to me as a person attending these group meetings. This meant that I had entered into an ethical bond
to protect their identity and trust. For instance, when I overhead or learned about possible criminal activities that some students may have engaged in (for example, the use of false identifications to obtain employment or driving without a license), I engaged in ‘data denial,’ and chose to not record these discussions except in general ways or with all identifying information removed. Instead, I focused on these issues only so far as they represent the general climate and context of the lived experiences for young people who are undocumented.

While I had developed principles and practices for respecting confidentiality and voluntary participation in this research, my ethical obligations extended much further than protecting their identity. During my first trip to Washington, DC with the group, Jorge announced that “if the police stop us, let Tom or me do the talking.” I reflected on how I might be called upon to not disclose the purpose of our travel to law enforcement officials. Even though I consulted legal authorities and knew that I had not violated any laws by travelling with SIM students, I feared the prospect that driving undocumented students across state borders might be a cause for members of law enforcement with a predisposition against undocumented immigrants to make my life uncomfortable. During one of these trips, I realized that my destiny had become intertwined with that of these students when state police in Mississippi stopped us while I was driving. The routine traffic stop ended without incident, but my heart raced as I continued to drive through Mississippi, wondering what would have happened if the police decided to inquire about the identification of my passengers. Of course, any such discomfort pales in comparison to the risks faced by the young people in this study.
A third challenge involved my own reluctance to adopt commonly used conceptual models that marginalize immigrants or young people. For instance, I was aware of critiques of the developmental perspective that construct youth as ‘not fully formed’ or ‘incomplete’ adults (Raby 2007; Flacks 2007; Lesko 2001). Likewise, immigration scholars have been critical of dominant approaches to understanding subjects through a lens of assimilation (Portes and Rumbault 2001; Lee et al., 2006). In this sense, my desire to orient this study theoretically, while not subjugating undocumented students to these common but disempowering research frames, was challenging. My decision to seek to understand the lives of undocumented students within collective processes of the actor constitution process (McAdam et al, 2001) provided a way to reconcile these tensions.

A fourth related issue involved maintaining relationships with and analytically engaging the changing population of participants involved in SIM. This first became an acute issue when Jorge, my primary contact in SIM, left the area and accepted a position at the national United We Dream (UWD) coalition. Afterwards, several established leaders and staff left the organization, while others entered. The process is not inconsistent with a challenge among youth-led organizations, which often need to deal with frequent changes in the mix of participants, but it posed dilemmas for my fieldwork. First, Jorge’s new position raised the question of where to direct my analytic focus. I decided that I would ‘follow’ the organizational entity known as “SIM” as my unit of observation, watching various actors enter and leave, and in turn, make claims for the organizational mechanisms and leadership (Marcus 1998). Second, the changing population required me to pay attention to
continually renewing and establishing new relationships with new leaders who joined the group. At times, I became a part of the organizational memory for newer members, and under the auspices of my role as an ‘advisor’ participated in discussions about establishing the organizational structure of SIM.

A fifth challenge that I faced in this ethnography was how to narrow and bound my topic (George and Bennett 2005; Yin 1994). I first bound my case study of SIM temporally. I focused on the period of time that begins and ends with the legislative cycle of the 111th U.S. Congress (January 2009-January 2011), which overlaps with the Massachusetts’ state legislative period as well. In so doing, I recognized and highlighted structures within legislative cycles of the U.S. policy-making process, whereby elections are held every two years and the shape and make-up of Congress changes with each election. Given the policy goals of SIM to advocate for the DREAM Act of 2009 (nationally) and the Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (in Massachusetts), campaigns for both state and national legislation began and ended with each new Congressional session. This analysis of contentious repertoires within the legislative cycle situates this study at the intersection of social movements and policy studies (Amenda, Caren et al. 2010). At the same time, however, it became clear that the constitution of these new political actors continued beyond the legislative cycles. Therefore, I continued my research observations as I maintained contact with SIM staff and leaders during 2011 and 2012. As I extended my time period, I became firmer in my conclusions as new evidence accumulated. By 2011, it had become clear to me and to members of SIM that their collective identity had shifted to fully become “DREAMers”, the
certification of this group by elite members of the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas was less clear. While it is true that some members of the media, some funders in Massachusetts, some immigrant rights groups and some political leaders had begun to recognize undocumented immigrant students as a political force, in 2012 the group gained an unprecedented form of legitimacy when President Obama announced DACA. Essentially, this policy singled out DREAMers among all groups of undocumented immigrants for special treatment and recognition.

Implications
The remainder of this dissertation explores the way undocumented immigrant students engaged in collective contentious action and constituted themselves as political actors. The political engagement of undocumented immigrant students has become a growing area or scholarly interest (Nicholls 2013; Morrissey 2013; Gonzales 2009a; 2013). This dissertation contributes to this growing body of research in several ways. First, this dissertation provides a theoretical contribution to this conversation. As has been noted, unlike most scholarship about this population, my analysis builds upon the contentious politics literature to explain the political rise of this group. As such, it considers undocumented immigrant students as they developed into collective and contentious political actors.

Second, my choice of cases advances the discussion of undocumented immigrant students. Since much of the work about the political mobilization of undocumented immigrant students builds upon examples from earlier pioneering
efforts in California (See Gonzales 2009; Nicholls 2013), this dissertation brings a new and important set of actors into the discussion. Third, I began my research began before the flurry of national attention around the DREAM Act, and therefore, am able to explain how and why this ascendance occurred.

Finally, I conducted an in-depth study in which I obtained a tremendous amount of access to undocumented immigrant political leaders in Massachusetts and nationally. I was fortunate to attend and connect personally to events that other scholars have analyzed based on second-hand media accounts of events or retrospective interviews. Further, I have been privileged to participate in several hundred hours of individual and group conversations with national and state undocumented immigrant student leaders as they reflected, planned, strategized, analyzed events, and, of course, dreamed.
Chapter 3: Subjects: Understanding the Experiences of Undocumented Immigrant Students as Biographical Resources for Mobilization

During our interview in the summer of 2010, Neil described how he grew up as a ‘normal American boy,’ before becoming undocumented as a senior in high school when his father’s application to renew his visa was denied.

I remember that day...I came home at like 5 pm after (track) practice. And I see my mom in the kitchen, she is trying to cook, but she keeps slowing down, and she’s crying, and I am going half way up the stairs and I ask her, ‘what’s wrong?’ And she is like, “Dad got a call. We got denied.” And I was half way up the stairs and I just freeze there and I’m like (sigh). And then, I just walked up to my room. I put my bag down... my desk was facing the wall, and I just sat at my desk, nothing on the table, and I just stared at the wall. I just wanted to break everything. And then, 20 minutes of this, I called my friend. My best friend [name withheld], and I just basically told him what happened. I was in tears. And I was like, I don’t know what to do man! I was like, now, I want to go here, and I want to go there, and I want to get a job and I want to do this and that and I want to, y’know, there are a lot of things I want to do, but everything is closed on me. And I don’t care about this homework right now, because what does it matter?

For Neil, the juxtaposition of his life as a “normal American boy” and his loss of legal status was shocking. Prior to that day, he was an excellent student who was active in school clubs and sports. As a high school senior, he had applied to a list of highly competitive colleges. He had friends. He did homework. Then suddenly, he was cast out of that life and faced the prospect of returning to a country that was unfamiliar to him, with no option of applying to stay.
The experiences of undocumented immigrant youth like Neil being cast out of society as they approach adulthood has been theorized as “abjectivity” (Gonzales and Chavez, 2012; Willen 2007). To understand this experience of expulsion, Gonzalez and Chavez (2012) adopt Butler’s (1999) definition of “abjectivity,” to explain how the 1.5 generation, establish their ‘political, civic and public selves’:

“The “abject” designates that which has been expelled from the body, discharged as excrement, literally rendered “Other.” This appears as an expulsion of alien elements, but the alien is effectively established through this expulsion.” (Judith Butler 1999:5, as cited by Gonzales and Chavez, 2012:255).

The application of the concept of “abjectivity” to the subjective understandings of lived experiences of undocumented immigrant students contributes important phenomenological understandings about how undocumented immigrant students experience legal status and socio-cultural exclusion.24 At the same time, the theoretical frame is problematic in two ways. First, abjectivity obscures important experiences of undocumented immigrant students in the United States, by under-emphasizing how experiences of being ‘cast out’ co-occur and intersect with experiences of inclusion in the lives of undocumented immigrant students. The concept of abjectivity, at best, only partially explains the lived experiences of undocumented immigrant students. In fact, as Gonzales and Chavez (2012) themselves recognize, experiences of undocumented immigrant include “being allowed to participate in some aspects of society (e.g., schooling) but not others (e.g., work)” (258).

In this way, undocumented young people are partially cast out, neither

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24 In particular, Gonzalez and Chavez (2012) apply the concept of the life course and its intersection with governmentality into the discussion of undocumented immigrant students.
completely excluded from society nor completely included, but in between the ‘legal’ and ‘illegal.’ This ‘in-between’ state has been referred to as “liminal legality” (Menjivar 2006; Nakano Glenn 2011). The concept of liminal legality “questions black-and-white conceptualizations of documented and undocumented immigration by exposing the gray areas” (Menjivar 2006: 999). One interviewee that I spoke with, Orfelia, expressed this feeling in the Spanish phrase “Ni de aqui, ni de alla” (Neither from here, nor from there). For her and other 1.5 generation immigrant students like her, there was no point in time when she is not partially ‘expulsed’ from social belonging in the United States. This sense of partial inclusion and partial exclusion provides insight into how and why these undocumented immigrant youth became politically engaged. The political activism of undocumented immigrants leverages the tension between narratives of inclusion and exclusion to reconfigure themselves as subjects trying to navigate a system that does not recognize them as legal political residents (Bloemraad 2010; Bloemraad, Voss and Lee 2011; Menjivar 2006). Such tensions create dissonance between societal expectations of merit and the realities of being undocumented.

A second shortcoming of the exclusive focus on abjectivity is that it fails to

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25 Other parallel concepts to ‘abjectivity’ that do recognize this “betweenness,” or the experience of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion, may be found in sociological theory, including perhaps most famously, Durkheim’s conception of anomie.

26 In the 2010 ASA Presidential Address, Evelyn Nakano Glenn extended Menjivar’s (2006) concept of “liminal legality” from Salvadoran immigrants to undocumented students.

27 This phrase is relatively common among Latinos/as. Other scholars have also noted the ‘in-between status’ of children of immigrants in the 1.5 and second generation. In fact, in separate articles Gonzales (2008) and Castro-Salazar and Bagley (2010) both quote immigrant youth who apply the same phrase to their identity between two cultures. In the article by Castro-Salazar and Bagley (2010), the student re-appropriates the phrase by saying, “Ni de aqui, ni de there” combining the Spanish and English languages to highlight the bi-cultural irony of her situation.
explain the shifting emergence of undocumented immigrant students and the changing constitution of this group, who have been able to gain legitimacy in the eyes of media, political leaders and other elite members of the polity. In fact, the concept of *abjectivity* represents a process that is the polar opposite of the actor constitution process, defined as “how a segment of a population acquires names and political standing” (McAdam, et al., 2001:315). While abjectivity represents a process of political exclusion and ‘casting out’ of a group of subjects from the political sphere, actor constitution represents a process of political emergence, of entering the political spaces and becoming recognized as political actors in cultural, social, and political ways (See Figure 3.1). I argue that these processes are ‘complementary,’ in that they work in opposite directions, and at the same time, co-occur within the same person or group, thereby partially incorporating and partially expulsing actors into a political space.

**Figure 3.1. Actor Constitution and Abjectivity as Complementary Processes**

The purpose of this chapter is to present a framework for understanding the life experiences of undocumented immigrant students that explains both inclusion and
exclusion from society. Furthermore, this framework will provide a starting point for understanding how and why undocumented immigrant students constructed a collective identity and a legitimate public presence to become constituted political actors. One way that they did this was to use the narratives of their life experiences as ‘raw materials’ to be later processed and deployed as part of contentious campaigns for new policies in the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. I propose that these experiences can be understood as biographical resources, which I define as the life experiences of undocumented immigrant students that can be processed and deployed through narrative in contentious political action. For the undocumented immigrant students in SIM, their experiences provided the structural situations that led to their involvement in SIM, which they were able to craft into compelling and powerful narratives to later be deployed as part of public political campaigns.

My analysis of the narratives of these subjects revealed four main descriptive themes: (a) experiences with migration at a young age; (b) acculturation in the United States; (c) challenges or frustrations with school and/or peers; and (d) encounters with immigration enforcement. The first two of these themes (migration and acculturation) essentially relate to processes of integration into U.S. society and culture, and thus relate to processes of inclusion. The second two themes involve rejection from or even expulsion from the United States, and link to processes of exclusion. The four themes also point to a dimension of physical inclusion/exclusion or social and cultural inclusion/exclusion of immigrants, which represent two of the dimensions of citizenship and belonging that scholars have
observed (Lee 2008; Sassen 2005; Odem 2008; McNevin 2007; Lowe 1999; Flores and Benmayor 1997). Table 3.2 summarizes these processes based on either physical inclusion/exclusion of persons or social/cultural inclusion/exclusion.

Table 3.2. Framework for Understanding Undocumented Immigrant Experiences As Processes of Inclusion/Exclusion across Physical and Social/Cultural Domains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processes of Inclusion:</th>
<th>Physical Modes</th>
<th>Social and Cultural Modes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migration at an early age</td>
<td>Acculturation and Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention and Deportation</td>
<td>Denied Rites of Passage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All four of the above processes have relevance to the later political action of undocumented immigrant students, and the juxtaposition of these processes (physical/social or inclusions/exclusion) help to form the basis of their collective claims.

The next section establishes a context for the experiences of undocumented immigrant students. Then I engage the framework directly by considering in turn the narration of these four processes of physical and social/cultural inclusion and exclusion.

I. Contexts of Inclusion and Exclusion of Undocumented Immigrant Students

Of the 11.8 million undocumented immigrants in the United States, there are an estimated 2.1 million who entered as children (Batalova and McHugh 2010). There are an estimated 726,000 undocumented high school graduates who might
have qualified for the 2009 version of the DREAM Act, another 934,000 children in high school and 489,000 people aged 18-34 who never graduated from high school but would have been eligible if they completed a GED (Batalova and McHugh 2010).

This cohort of young people born in the late 1980’s or early 1990’s started to come of age in a globally interconnected world and context of twenty years of increasingly strict immigration enforcement policies. The patterns of family and children migrating to the United States grew substantially in the 1990’s, so that now large numbers of undocumented immigrant children (the 1.5 generation) and children of undocumented immigrants (second generation) came of age in the United States during a period of increasing hostility and exclusive state actions including workplace raids, deportations and restrictions on the rights of immigrants in general, and the undocumented specifically (Rumbaut 2004, 2008a, 2008b; Rumbaut and Komaie 2010).

Undocumented immigrants who entered as children have the right to elementary and secondary education (K-12) under the 1982 Plyler vs. Doe Supreme Court decision. Unlike their parents or other undocumented adults, these students held standing as members of society, but this standing is contingent upon their position in the life course (Gonzales and Chavez 2012). As a result, the acculturation and socialization of the 1.5 generation in the U.S. society provides leverage against the hostile policies of exclusion. For undocumented immigrant

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28 In September 2010, a revised version of the DREAM Act was proposed as part of the Defense Reauthorization Act, but failed a procedural vote in the Senate. In a December 2010 lame duck session of Congress, yet another scaled down version of the bill was passed in the U.S. House of Representatives, but also failed to obtain the required 60 votes to bring the bill for a vote beyond in the Senate (52 to 44) vote, with four Senators not voting. Both versions of the bill reduced the number of beneficiaries by decreasing the maximum age of eligibility from 35 to 30.
students who engaged in social movement organizations like SIM, these tensions provided a means for political claims making. For undocumented children, the transition from adolescence to adulthood poses specific challenges through policies that define undocumented immigrants as ineligible for many rights and privileges of belonging (Bloemraad et al. 2011; Gonzales and Chavez 2012; Klandermans et. al. 2008). In her 2010 Presidential Address to the American Sociological Association, Evelyn Nakano Glenn described the central concern to be “whether immigrants are entitled to full civil, political, and social rights, and whether all children – including racial minority and low-income children- are equally entitled to high quality education” (Nakano Glenn 2011:9).

The political struggle of undocumented immigrant students has mostly centered on education rights to attend state colleges or universities just as U.S. residents do, pay in-state tuition just as residents in their high schools do, and receive financial aid (Nakano Glenn 2011; Gonzales 2009). Such policies were passed in 10 states (as of 2010), and allow undocumented immigrant students to pay in-state tuition rates to the public colleges and universities if they graduate from a high school in that state. Massachusetts is not one of the states that has passed in-state tuition legislation for undocumented immigrant students.

In addition to these state policies, a central goal of this movement has been passage of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act or “The DREAM Act” at the federal level. The DREAM Act provides a means for undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as children to obtain legal status - temporary at first and then a permanent legal status commonly known as a
“Green Card” provided they meet provisions of: (1) having entered the United States before age 16, (2) having been continuously present in the United States for at least five years prior to the legislation’s enactment; (3) Having obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent and (4) having been under age 30 or 35, depending on the version of the bill being considered. In addition, beneficiaries of the DREAM Act would need to complete two-years of college or military service within six years, and have maintained good moral character (DREAM Act 2010). In 2007, and again in 2009-2010, the DREAM Act was incorporated into a broader set of policies for “comprehensive immigration reform” that would overhaul the U.S. immigration system and (in most formulations) provide a “path to citizenship” for all 11 million undocumented immigrants currently residing in the United States.

In addition to education rights, undocumented immigrant students have also launched campaigns that would protect individuals or groups from detention and deportations. One such campaign, “We are Mario” was held by SIM in Massachusetts in 2007 for a young man from Chelsea, MA. Other campaigns have sought to prevent deportations of undocumented immigrant students with no criminal history, under the banner “Education, Not Deportation (END)” campaigns. Such campaigns typically centered on the personal biographies of one or two SIM members or other undocumented immigrant students who had been detained and

29 According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security, “A permanent resident is someone who has been granted authorization to live and work in the United States on a permanent basis. As proof of that status, a person is granted a permanent resident card, commonly called a “green card” (though it is no longer green). You can become a permanent resident several different ways. Most individuals are sponsored by a family member or employer in the United States. Other individuals may become permanent residents through refugee or asylum status or other humanitarian programs. In some cases, you may be eligible to file for yourself.” Source: www.uscis.gov. Last updated: 09/01/2009. Accessed 12/20/2010
faced deportation. By creating public sympathy through media-based strategies, these END campaigns sought to pressure federal agencies to waive their enforcement actions in these cases.

Finally, undocumented immigrant student campaigns have responded to states that have proposed anti-immigrant legislation. In 2010, anti-immigrant policies in states like Arizona, and attempts to create similar policies in other states such as Massachusetts, were met with protest by undocumented immigrant students. In Massachusetts, the campaign was called *MassHope 2010*. This situation follows the models of threat-based movement mobilization that scholars have discussed in relationship to patterning of groups such as patriot and militia groups (VanDyke and Soule 2002), the Ku Klux Klan (Cunningham 2013), Not-In-My-Back Yard (NIMBY) responses to siting homeless shelters (Snow et al., 1998), welfare privatization (Reese, et al., 2005) and protests in El Salvadorian (Almeida 2003).

This overview of policies and political campaigns by undocumented immigrant students provides a sense of the political context of undocumented immigrant students, to help clarify the contexts in which experiences of inclusion and exclusion related to the constitution of new political actors. The remainder of this chapter digs deeper into understanding those experiences, and seeks to advance the discussions of undocumented immigrant youth by proposing a framework that considers the dual processes of inclusion and exclusion in their physical and social/cultural modes (McAdam et al., 2001).
II. A Framework for Understanding Four Experiences of Physical and Cultural/Social Inclusion and Exclusion of Undocumented Immigrant Subjects

These salient biographical experiences of these students became the basic narrative building blocks for a political strategy that centered on the deployment of public narratives. The bulk of this chapter explores these raw experiences in depth, and considers their implications for the constitution of undocumented immigrant students as political actors.

A. Experiences of Physical Inclusion: Family Migration at an Early Age

The very physical presence of people in the United States whose legal status is unrecognized by that state is a social fact that Ngai (2004) has labeled as “impossible subjects” (Ngai 2004). The process by which the physical bodies of these children came to be included within the territorial space of the United States is commonly understood as ‘immigration.’ Definitions of “immigration,” however, conjure notions of agency and choice for those people migrating. There is a directionality, permanence and intentionality to common understandings of “immigration” as an act of willful agency. Given this, the physical traversing of

30 U.S. policies distinguish between ‘immigrant’ and ‘non-immigrant’ visas. Non-immigrant visas include student visas, religious visas, guest visas, and some work visas, are considered temporary and do not provide a process for applying for permanent legal status (a ‘green card’) nor citizenship. A second distinction may be seen between ‘immigrant’ and ‘refugee’ visas. Refugees may be granted permanent asylum and can apply for citizenship, but are presumed to have travelled without willful agency due to a ‘well-founded fear of persecution.” Some groups, including the Child Welfare League of America, the National Association of Social Workers and others have been raising questions about whether unaccompanied minors should be seen as ‘refugees’ who are fleeing economic neglect and hunger, rather than migrants who choose to seek a better life.
space for those undocumented immigrants who entered as children poses a
problem. Within the narratives of undocumented immigrant students, the
processes of physical inclusion were justified based on two themes: (a) the lack of
choice/agency of children who entered the United States; and (b) the desire to be
reunified with family members.

Given the age of migration for undocumented immigrant students, a common
trope used in many of the public statements by and about undocumented students is
that the decision to come to the United States rested with their parents. This lack of
choice/agency in migration decisions develops from the fact that these students
arrived in the United States as children, and are therefore seen as innocent of any
violation of U.S. immigration policy. For instance, as noted in the introduction to
this chapter, Neil described wanting to “see Mickey Mouse, like everybody says.”
Such promises of seeing Disney characters were commonplace among my
interviewees and other undocumented immigrant students who participated in SIM
over the years. Mariana, for instance, half-jokingly described “being tricked” with
promises of going to “see where Mickey Mouse lives.” On another day, Alejandra
told me “somebody ought to get that mouse.” In these discussions I interpreted the
idea that Mickey Mouse had become a proxy for the manipulative effects of U.S.
culture on the willingness of young children to migrate.

Others shared stories of being ‘forced’ to come to the United States.

31 Note: In order to be eligible for most versions of the DREAM Act, an undocumented immigrant is
required to have entered the United States before the age of 15. Also of note is that the suggestion
that it was the parent’s choice is related to, but not the same as suggesting that parents were to
‘blame’ for or responsible for the undocumented status of the students, as has been discussed in
various public discourses about the DREAM Act by both opponents and proponents.
Alejandra described her sadness at saying good-bye to her friends in Colombia when she was 12 years old:

> When I left, everyone cried. I will never forget that day - everyone cried in the classroom. And I left, ... But, I don't know, so I came here, I didn't like it. I wanted to go back.

In the above, Alejandra reflected upon her migration as something that she never desired or chose. For a 12 year old such as Alejandra, it is easy to see how she might have resisted the decision to come to the United States, but also how little she could do about it. For younger children who came to the U.S., choices were even more limited. Among the 15 interviewees, Orfelia arrived at the youngest age of eight months, and (of course) did not remember anything about her birth country or her arrival in the United States. In this way, she and the other students lacked some element of the capacity to ‘choose’ to come to the United States. The extent to which undocumented students understood themselves as non-agent subjects in their migration to the United States provided an important starting place to explain their physical presence as young adults in the United States. This sense of innocence underlies an inherent logic that rests upon the assumptions that children not be ‘punished for the crimes of their parents.’

While children had little say in their migration, the suggestion that their parents ‘chose’ to migrate to the U.S. risks neglecting the economic, political and cultural structures that drove their families to migrate to the United States. From the points of view of the undocumented student interviewees, their parents migrated to the United States and brought them for a variety of reasons. A common

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32 See for instance, Massey et al., 2003.
reason that immigrants say they migrate is for “a better life.” But, what a “better life” means and the particular texture of individual lives varies according to individual cases.

Patterns of migration and exodus also grew out of forces larger than a given family decision to travel. In some cases, the pattern of migration by large proportions of people in a given community have made exodus a way of life for many people. Consider Andrea, a quiet young woman, who was the youngest child in a close-knit family in a rural part of Mexico. She described the way migration was understood by many people in the community of her birth:

In Mexico, that’s something very common; especially in my town. There are many people who are just like, its easier for them to come that way instead of like actually applying for some type of permission to come to the United States, ... I don’t know if it’s because we are really far from like the capitol, because that’s the only ... American consulate that they have in Mexico. There’s also, spending money to apply for any visa or any permission is like, you don’t know if you are going to be able to get it. So you are not sure that you will be able to get it, so for them, it’s better to spend the money to pay the people to help us cross the border.”

Andrea describes a logic that it was less expensive and more certain option to “pay people to help us cross the border.” The logical rationality of these forced choices and their commonality in her town suggest that structural conditions influence, contribute to and shape the ‘choice’ of migration in ways that are complex.\textsuperscript{33} For the purposes of undocumented students, the notion that adults had a “choice” unlike undocumented students became a source of contention within the undocumented student movement. As advocates of the DREAM Act referred to their

\textsuperscript{33} Such questions about these structural influences on migration are part of a very large literature that extends beyond the scope of this dissertation. See for example, Massey, et al 2003; Sassen 1999; 2005; 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; 2001.
entry to the country illegally ‘through no fault of their own’ or ‘children are not responsible for the decisions or crimes of their parents,’ advocates for undocumented immigrant adults bristled at such comparisons that implicitly castigate and condemn undocumented adults.

A second part of the explanation for why the undocumented immigrant student interviewees moved to the United States involved the reunification with family members who had already migrated. Consider Andrea’s description of why her family brought her from Mexico:

> My mom had to come a year before I did. I don’t remember very well, but my Mom, always had kind of financial problems. I didn’t really understand like what were their problems, but I just knew that they were very serious. That’s why my parents had to come, to just make a little bit of money and to go back... so my Mom instead, decided that they were going to bring my sister and me because we were the only ones left in Mexico. All of my sisters, my other sisters and my brother were already here. My parents were already here. My sister and I were in Mexico, and they, my sister was at that time I think she was 21. And I was 11. So, she, they just brought us to the United States.

Andrea described coming to the United States as a result of “very serious” financial problems, but not really understanding what those financial problems were. Her expectation was that her parents intended to make a bit of money and go back. Also, as the narrative shows, her family did not migrate all at once or all together. Her parents came first, and she joined them later with her sister. For Andrea, and many undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as children, their stories of migration reveal an experience early in life of separation from at least one parent for at least a short period of time.

In some cases, however, such a separation could be long and dramatic. Consider the experience of Azul who immigrated to the United States from El
Salvador at about the age of 10. Azul’s mother left her in El Salvador with her grandparents at such a young age that she did not remember her mother.

My mother was living here for a quite a while now so it was time. As I grew up there, I never thought about it that I had another mother, because my grandmother and grandfather were my dad and my mom, so I used to call them mom and dad. But then, the whole economic situation was harder so we decided to come to the US. So my brother and I came to the U.S. to be reunited with our family here….I was nine or ten….I really didn’t have a relationship with my mother. I used to talk to her on the phone, I guess and I used to send her letters with my handwriting, telling, oh, look I can write now, writing my name and my signature on it. But, I really didn’t know her that well. So it was still a surprise because my grandmother used to say, “No, you have a mother, and your mother is in the United States,” but I was like, ‘You’re my mother.’ So it used to be conflicting views as to who was my mother. …It was strange. From Los Angeles to Boston, we actually took an airplane. And the first time I saw her she said, “I’m your mother” and then she gave me a hug. But it was just like, “You are my mother?” But it was kind of weird. For the first year or two here, it was a little harder because I had to live with my mom instead of my Grandmother and I was so used to living with my grandmother, because my grandmother lived with an aunt in a separate apartment. So it was more anxiety then anything, because, this is who I grew up with and then I had to live somewhere else now.

As Azul recounts, not really knowing her mother for the first ten years of her life and viewing her grandparents as her mother and father made for a difficult transition to the United States. Such extended and transnational early family experiences were not uncommon among the undocumented students that I spoke with.34

The experiences of physical migration into the United States reflect important elements of life narratives that contribute to the reservoir of biographical resources marshaled by undocumented immigrant students, and explain away some of the problematic questions that surround the physical presence of these “impossible subjects” in the United States. However, unlike the notion that undocumented immigrants arrived through independent rational choices of individual actors, these narratives are deeply embedded in larger social and

34 There is existing literature about the effect of such separations on transnational family structures that may lead to other types of stress and strain on families and children.
institutional structures. In most cases, these migration narratives are familial, an issue that has implications for developing a collective identity and their constitution as political actors. For one thing, it is notable that I never heard a single undocumented immigrant student blame or criticize their parents’ decision to come to the United States. Most were grateful to their parents, even if they themselves (like Alejandra) were ambivalent about the decision to migrate. These undocumented immigrant students understood their family members as also deserving and worthy of legal status, and so they took up the campaign for comprehensive immigration reform, or even the DREAM Act. So, as undocumented immigrant students like Orfelia, Mariana, Andrea, Neil, Azul and others considered their life experiences as resources for public story-telling, they would do so with the idea of fighting for, not against, their families.

B. Experiences of Social/Cultural Inclusion: Adaptation and Achievement in School

A second type of inclusion experienced by undocumented immigrant students involved their adaptation and achievement in the United States, and especially in schools. This type of inclusion parallels concepts of cultural citizenship by emphasizing the acquisition of new social and cultural skills that reflect patterns of inclusion into U.S. society (Flores 2003; Flores and Benmayor 1997). This pattern of inclusion for undocumented immigrants who entered as children, the 1.5 generation, are more similar to second generation immigrants than first generation immigrants (Gonzales 2013).
Upon entering the United States, undocumented immigrant children and their families found ways to adapt to its culture and institutions, beginning with devising strategies to learn English and do well in school. For example, Eliza who arrived in the United States at age 8 from the Dominican Republic, remembers one of her early memories as “my parents were always telling me how important education was and how hard they worked to just even bring like a bowl of rice into the table.” Later, her father helped her learn English:

And when I came here my dad gave me like crayons and a notebook and he gave me a dictionary and he told me that he wanted me to learn five words every day. … Five words. And I would have to tell them and repeated them and have a conversation by. And so that is how I learned English.

In the above example, Eliza’s remembers a ‘five word a day’ strategy that her father developed to support her English language learning. Like Eliza’s parents, Paula’s mother also used strategies to train her to study at an early age.

It has always been very important… Grades have always been very important. My mom, I remember when, I was making the transition from bilingual classes to English classes, we had to learn like certain spelling words or whatever, and my mom would make sure that I would rehearse them all the time. So she would put those, like the list, right in front of my bed, so every day, I would have to see everything …I was like in third grade. Also my multiplication tables. (Laugh) …every day if I would stop by, if she was there, she would be like, “You have to go through them.” I would say it was very important.

Such home grown strategies for learning English or doing well in school not only helped the children learn language or math skills. They sent a message that school and education are important. Alejandra described how her parents created incentives for reading.

My parents also pushed me to do well. My parents went to college. They are school graduates, they know. So, …I always had, since I was little, my parents read to me. …So, before I turned 18, my dad was like, “if you want to go out you have to read a book. Like you cannot go out if you do not tell me what you read in a book.”
For Alejandra, Eliza and Paula, as well as most of the young people who later
came SIM leaders, parents played strong facilitative roles in their language
acquisition and school performance. These supports, combined with the values that
they gained at home around educational performance, helped lead these young
people to strong academic performance, or at the very least, a sense of worthiness
for continued education that has come to be identified with undocumented
immigrant students (Nakano-Glenn 2010; Gonzalez 2009). Indeed, many SIM
activists had succeeded in school academically. Many listed colleges that they had
applied and been accepted to. Joanna, for instance, describes being simultaneously
accepted and rejected to several colleges at the same time. Her experience was that
colleges did not know what to make of her status. She would receive letters that
invited her to the school, but suggested that she could not attend without a social
security number. “It was really funny,” she said of the experience years later. Still
she said, “I was accepted into pretty much every college I applied to.”

Unlike most of the students in SIM, one future leader did not do particularly well
academically for most of his school career, but still makes the case for his academic
worthiness. Tiago, who moved to the United States from Brazil when he was 13
years old, described his disengagement in school up until his senior year. He
explained that his bad grades were not a result of any intellectual deficit, but instead,
were due to his motivation, and his relationships with teachers. Tiago’s explanation
for his poor performance, if anything, showed a sense that he was too well prepared
for the work that schools were offering.

I went to private school in Brazil and the education was much further ahead. Like in Math
class, I loved my math teacher... But in eighth grade, most of my peers were learning pre-
algebra and some of them were learning Algebra 1, but in Brazil in 7th grade, I was already doing Algebra 2. So in, when I got to school here, they didn’t have a book that could teach me something I couldn’t do…. So like that whole year, the teacher would have, like I don’t have any work for you. He would give us these like little standardized tests that he had, and we would take them, but that was like just busy work… and I did well in his class but it would set me up for failure in math in the future, because I just totally disconnected from the material so when I got to high school… I have like no class work ethic.”

In the above narrative, Tiago describes his education in Brazil at a private school and how better prepared he was in Algebra than his U.S. peers in 7th grade. Looking back, however, Tiago explains that the easy time that he had in 7th grade led him to not develop the work ethic that he needed to do well in high school. In fact, Tiago failed his 11th grade English class because he stopped attending class because he said the teacher was “sexist”. Then, he shared a story about how he put his latent academic abilities into practice during 12th grade:

When I came to senior year, I was like, maybe I need to salvage things here. So I argued and I managed to get into English honors. Which was a blessing for me because I had a teacher there, who …. indirectly she put me in college… the thing is that even in her class I was disengaged, but she, instead of blaming me or punishing me for being disengaged, she would always tell me, ”I understand why you feel you are wasting your time here, because you are ready to go do college work, like I totally get it.” And that was like, well maybe I am… that’s why I don’t do well in school, and don’t succeed, because I know that I am a smart kid and like could do stuff, but I didn’t and I couldn’t pinpoint why. … She was like you should take the SATs, because I took the PSATs and I did like really well. So she was like, you should take the SATs. And I was like ‘ok.’ And I got a waiver so I didn’t’ have to pay for it and I took the SATs and I did wonderful on the SATs. I did very well. A 1980 out of like 2400, I was like the third or fourth in my school. And this was like, having failed… junior English, and moving into this class.

Tiago told the above story to reveal his transformation into a hard working student under the support of one teacher who didn’t ‘blame him’ for being disengaged, but helped to provide him with an explanation for his disengagement that turned it into an asset, that is, he is disengaged because he is ready for college. His story is remarkable for the way that Tiago came to understand himself as academically worthy of college.
Tiago then reported his next accomplishment during his senior year of getting into an Advanced Placement (AP) Psychology class.

And I got into psychology honors because I thought it would be interesting. And I got into psychology honors, like a month late. And I wanted to go into AP, but they were like, no you can’t go into AP, you have to go into honors, because you already going a month late and you are way behind in the material. And I was like, I want to go into AP. And they were like, well you can’t. blah blah blah. And you have to catch up on this work. It was like a requisite, that they would let me in to, but you have to catch up on a month’s work. And so I came in, and then that week, I, like by myself, I read all ...the work up until that point and I said, ok, I’m going to take every test you can give me, like over the next few days. And I took every test and I got 100 on every test and I was like, I want to go into AP. And they were like, ok. So they let me, they finally let me go into AP. And I also did wonderful in AP psych, because I think, it was like, it was somewhat college level, y’know I mean, they say the AP is college level...it was a different kind of engaging work, because it was on you, y’know what I mean, to do this stuff, because if you fail, you are just not going to learn it. It wasn’t like, and at that point, I wasn’t exactly worried about what my grade was for college, because college was like, at that point I started becoming interested in the idea of going to college but it wasn’t like, it was very far and I didn’t even think about the logistics of trying to go to college, but I was like oh, this is cool, if I, if I do it, I will learn it, and that’s was interesting, and that’s it. I had a great time.

The above narrative can be understood as a story of redemption for Tiago. In the above, he wants to enter an AP Psychology class in his senior year of high school, but the semester has already begun and his teachers tell him it is too late. Despite this, he makes the case for entering the AP Psychology course by taking a test. The story he tells, echoes a narrative structure of the hero accomplishing a task to prove he (or she) is worthy of the prize they receive. In this story, Tiago’s task is to catch up on a month’s worth of AP Psychology work in one week independently. Then he takes every test in AP Psychology and getting a perfect grade of 100 on each one. In the face of this accomplishment, his adversaries, the faceless “they” that represented the school authority system of teachers and administrators “finally” let him take “AP” psychology. He does “wonderfully” again.
This hero’s journey that underlies Tiago description of his experiences provides the spine of a narrative that I heard in many different ways among the undocumented students that I spoke with. In this case, Tiago’s story focuses on his school success, and thereby remains apolitical, but it is nonetheless a story of overcoming obstacles and challenging systems of power to succeed in school. Tiago’s story is instructive in that it reveals his ability to succeed in his high school system and his ability to negotiate with high school teachers, both of which help demonstrate his understanding of the culture of U.S. schools. The two processes of social/cultural inclusion discussed in this section - family strategies of adapting to the United States and accomplishing academic success to demonstrate worthiness – provide important leverage for situating narratives of undocumented immigrant students in the context of contentious politics. “Worthiness” represents a sense of belonging and deservedness, foreshadowing the recognition of themselves as legitimate actors in society, and well before the broader society and political institutional members necessarily recognized this group as legitimate.

Still, it should be noted that although themes related to school and education were the most prominent, they were not the only ways that undocumented immigrant student activists experienced inclusion in the United States. Other themes of social/cultural inclusion included experiences of socialization through work, in ESOL programs with other foreign-born students, and in neighborhood organizations. These experiences were rare, but present among the interviews with these 15 interviewees. Given SIM’s focus on educational reform, it is, perhaps understandable that these young activists would emphasize school experiences, and
that I, as the interviewer, emphasized these experiences more readily. So, it is probable that other institutions, such as religious organizations, may have played a role in their lives (despite not being mentioned by any of the interviewees) or that different institutions might have played a greater role in the socialization of other immigrant children, whether documented or not.\(^{35}\)

Having looked at the processes of physical and social/cultural integration of undocumented 1.5 generation immigrants into the United States, the next section shifts gears to consider questions of the social/cultural and physical expulsion of this group.

\section*{C. Experiences of Social/Cultural Expulsion: Blocked Rites of Passages and Peer Relationships}

The previous section described ways that students in SIM understood their worthiness for a college education based on different criteria such as grades or successfully navigating the outcomes-based educational system of standards and tests in the United States public schools today. In part, this reflected an internalization of the tacit agreement underlying much of the rationale behind education in the U.S. – that if you work hard and pass your tests, then you will be ‘rewarded’ with the ‘prize’ of higher education. In our interview, Alejandra best expressed how her success in school represented a sense of belonging and inclusion in the United States. As she described in our interview:

\footnote{For a more about the range of community institutions that affect the lives of immigrants, see, for example Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad (2008).}
In ninth grade, they were like, ‘Oh if you pass the MCAS, you are going to get a scholarship. You’re going to get tuition reduced or something like that if you get advanced on the MCAS.’ ...I thought that maybe maybe if I do good, I could get it. But then, I guess as the time went by, I realized, no.

In the above quotation, Alejandra describes their tacit agreement in schools that invokes elements of the Protestant Ethic and commonplace understandings of the American Dream, that “maybe if I do good, I could get it.” As with many of the SIM leaders that I spoke with, Alejandra’s sense of success in school is intertwined with a sense of disappointment at not being able to enjoy the rewards that she earned:

My parents never said anything to me, they were like ‘just study Alejandra. Don’t worry about it. We are here for you. Study.’ Ok. So that was 9th grade, so I prepared for the MCAS. I wanted to take honors classes... By 10th grade I was taking honors. I took AP. I took the MCAS. I got advanced on the MCAS. And, y’know, I got the answer. ‘Oh yeah, you got the scholarship, but I was like ‘oh thank you. I’m not going to use it.

Alejandra’s experiences demonstrate the juxtaposition of the experiences of inclusion and success with experiences of abjectivity through rejection and expulsion. Alejandra and three other interviewees (Mariana, Victor, and Joanna) had earned the John and Abigail Adams scholarship for high performance on the MCAS standardized test, which would have paid her full-tuition for four years at a public university. She learned that she could not use the scholarship because it asked for a social security number- something that has become a cultural symbol of ‘belonging’ for many of the undocumented students that I spoke with. “Just nine digits” Alejandra complained to me over lunch one day. “That’s all I need, just nine little numbers.”
Alongside the frustration associated with her inability to use any of the scholarships that she had qualified for, Alejandra recognized that she faced a condition that was shared by others in her school:

He (Miguel) told everyone that ... he was going to have one year of rest, just not to tell people that he could not go to college. And I thought about it, because that’s what Juana said too. Juana graduated in ’04 and she said to her friends the same thing too. She said, “Oh, I’m going to take a break.” I mean, it’s believable, but, at the same time, all of us were in the honor society and all from AP classes, I mean, like, what kind of student like is ‘going to take a break.” Like, I don't hear of students like that saying, “I’m going to take a break.” Like in my mind, I say, “No one is going to believe me that I am going to take a break.”

Alejandra’s use of irony here highlights the disjuncture between her story and the canonical narrative repeated to students in schools across the United States – that if you study hard and succeed, you will go to a great college. Like several of her friends and classmates who had been accepted to very good colleges or universities, she was also ineligible for any financial aid from the government. So, she joined her fellow undocumented friends in a performance that she did not believe would be convincing when it came to explaining why they were not going to an elite college or university.

Consequently, for Alejandra and for others in SIM, the promises inherent in education had been broken. She responded with despair, at least at first:

I was going through a phase, a phase where I was like, even if I have my papers, why am I studying? What am I doing? I’m just going to go and have fun and wait until I get deported. Y’know nothing was going on in the state house. Nothing was going on law wise. It was like. Nothing. And, but I guess, old habits die hard, so I kept studying. I feel weird if I don’t study. I feel weird if I don’t take a class. I was like, it’s so weird to not do well in school.

In the above quote, Alejandra connects her academic success back to her identity. In fact, she earned good grades at community college, but felt over-qualified, as the following quote suggests:
Although I said I could have put more effort, it's like, school comes very easily to me, especially I feel [community college] comes easily, and they make it so everyone can be at the same level, y'know, so I was like, its good, but, I still felt like, it felt weird to me, because I knew I wasn’t doing my best. Like I could do this, oh, ok. I do anything in class and I get an A.

Alejandra’s experiences are similar to the vast majority of the SIM students that I met. They see themselves as smart and capable students in academic settings who have, for the most part, succeeded in their U.S. secondary school classes. The dissonance between having earned educational rewards and scholarships, but being unable to use them fueled grievances and helped to serve as the basis for later social movement claims.

In addition to social and cultural exclusion in schools and educational settings, some members of SIM described experiences with cultural or racial barriers. While many of the undocumented immigrant students that I met described having established very close relationships with other immigrant students in school (as noted earlier), some faced challenges navigating relationships with their native-born peers. For instance, at the time of our interview in early 2011, Eliza was a 19-year old energetic and talkative young woman with many friends in SIM. She was born in the Dominican Republic, but came to the United States to be reunited with her family when she was eight years old. Eliza described experiences in school as ‘really hard’ due to the language barriers she faced and her sense that other children were teasing her, which continued through high school:

I was really shy growing up. And then I went to a private high school and that was really really hard too because I think that was the first time that I experienced racism in my life and I didn't even know what it was. And people would make fun of me because I had an accent and I was really ashamed....It was one time, that a teacher gave ... an assignment and I was the only one that wrote it down. And the next morning people were ... asking each other and I stepped in and I said, this is the homework, I wrote it down. The girl told me, 'well, how would you know? You don't even know English?' Right? And ... I was already in the country for like six years. And I was like, I thought I knew English. Y'know, I was really really
confused. So after that day I never really spoke to anyone. I would only speak to people that were from the country that I was from, or I wouldn’t want to talk to my professors, my teachers. It was just a really hard time for me, high school. And then on top of that it was like, 'you're undocumented.'

Eliza identifies the above incident in school as the precipitating event that led her to stop talking to others except those from her country of origin. In this narrative, she attempts to be helpful, and by her account, is the only student who had written down the assignment. Despite this, she experiences racism and rejection by her peers, so she chooses to not speak to others who were not also from the Dominican Republic. She concludes her story by adding, "and then on top of that it was like, you're undocumented." So, while previous challenges of racial prejudice and language barriers might well be shared by other immigrant children in schools, "being undocumented" represents yet another level of marginalization within an already marginalized social position.

In part this marginalized position developed from the secrecy around being undocumented. Parents, teachers, lawyers and immigration advocates advised undocumented immigrant students to never reveal their immigration status to anyone, not even close friends. Many undocumented students experienced a sense of isolation and shame that comes from carrying this secret. For example, Paula described feeling isolated and alone:

It was really hard, like, I kind of felt isolated, because I was in this situation, and I thought I was by myself, alone in this situation. And, so I was like, I couldn’t tell anyone, well, I felt like I couldn’t tell any of my friends..... I don’t know, it was really bad because, it was like you have to like make up things in order, well I felt like I had to make up things in order to... justify why I am not getting my permit, or why I am not working. Or why, I mean until this day, ...just a handful of people that know ... that I am undocumented but not everyone.
Paula’s experience with being undocumented parallels that of other undocumented immigrant students that I spoke with, as she “had to make things up” to justify why she was not following the path of assuming adult responsibilities in the same way her peers were. Paula experienced this secrecy tied to her undocumented status as isolating. Such isolation can sometimes lead to feelings of shame:

For a while, it was like, being undocumented, like, I don’t know it was like shameful to me, in some ways. Like, its not something that I want to be like, I don’t want people to feel awkward around me, or to think like, so today, for instance, for some friends I don’t want them to think, like, oh, we can’t go here with you, because if we get stopped by cops or something. I don’t want them to feel uncomfortable, so, I guess that is why I haven’t said, what I have, that I am undocumented to some certain people.

Such feelings of shame serve as a powerful emotion signifying a sense of inadequacy in comparison to peers. She referred to not wanting to tell others, out of sensitivity to how they would feel. Not wanting friends to feel ‘awkward’ kept her from revealing her undocumented status to others.

As with Paula and most of the students that I met in SIM, Andrea was told to never talk with anyone about her immigration status.

When I was in school, no, I never actually say anything to any of my friends, because my mom, well basically my parents they told me don’t talk about anything about that has to do with immigration. There is like nobody should know it. It is only in the family. And so I was like always very afraid, and I never actually said anything to any of them, to any of my friends. ... It was like, it affected me, I think a lot because when I was in school, sometimes, my friends would question me, oh, when are you going back to Mexico? I’m going to the Dominican Republic this year like during vacation, I’m going to be there for two weeks. And I was always making up excuses, Trying to tell them, no, I can’t go this year because I have something to do in the summer, and things like that, but I always felt that, I always had to make up excuses, and like, I am very, I really don’t like to do that. So it was kind of, I felt I was lying to them, and at the same time I was lying to myself as well....Making up those excuses, I was just lying to myself because I lied to them that I actually had my papers, but I didn’t go because I had to do something that summer and things like that and that wasn’t true. So, I felt that, that made me feel really bad, every time I had to do that. ... Well basically, my family told me don’t talk to anyone. This is only in the family. So I felt that I couldn’t trust anybody, not even my friends. So something that I wanted to express, but at the same time, I couldn’t.
As Andrea described her experiences of making up excuses as lying to her friends and to herself, she became very emotional. She began speaking more slowly, and her eyes welled up with tears. We took a break while she composed herself, and she went on to describe how SIM, though part of this secretive world, also provided a means to gain confidence and be more open about her status. In fact, as a result of joining SIM, Andrea came out to her best friend, Nancy:

I have become more open with my friends as well. Like, one girl from high school, my best friend N, she didn't know my situation, but after I joined SIM I told her. I actually, had, actually I didn't need to tell her. I just invited her to come to a meeting. And it turned out that I just, and she said, why are you doing this? And I said because I'm undocumented. And I think she was shocked. And she said why you never told me? And I was just like, because it's just not something you, that it was easy for me to say. And, and then and now she's like involved now.... I met her in my, actually my sophomore year of high school. And we graduated from high school. We took basically all of our classes together. I never ever told her anything.... we were best friends. We are best friends since sophomore year of high school. She never found out that I was undocumented until I actually decided to tell her, but that's because of SIM, like SIM gave me the courage.

As Andrea's narrative demonstrates, navigating peer relationships for undocumented students is sometimes complicated, leading to shame and isolation for many undocumented students. The social pressure to not share their status provides further insight into the abjectivity of undocumented students, and demonstrates a form of social and cultural expulsion and exclusion.

Another way that undocumented immigrant students experience social and cultural expulsion is through denied rights of passage. As young people become adults, they experience a series of ‘rites of passage’ that signify and celebrate a transition. Among these, is the acquisition of a driving license. In all but three
states\textsuperscript{36}, undocumented immigrant residents cannot obtain driver’s licenses. Tiago described coming to terms with his peers obtaining driver’s licenses:

> I think it was just a matter of the things, the driver’s license, like my buddy got his driver’s license and his dad helped him get a car. The car was cool and I was like “hmm, I can’t really do that.” No, I knew, it was always like an understanding that we had, we didn’t like actively talk about it all the time, but we knew, “oh, we didn’t have papers, and that’s how it was.” ...I worked, I knew that I worked with my ITIN number and I knew that people got paid under the table. Like I knew that there was a system in place for people to be able to work and also because there were those jobs where we couldn’t work at all, but I had to. So that was like, like more things started coming together as they developed and I think junior year was like a big jump for me in maturity. It was also like, I started engaging more with the American kids, so it was a big shifting time in my life. And I think that helped me think about my situation more clearly, so I was like ok, this is how this is.

As noted above, grievances surrounding rites of passage such as driving and access to work shaped Tiago’s sense of maturity. Other undocumented students shared a similar experience of coming to terms with their status only as their peers obtained access to the ‘adult’ privileges (and responsibilities) of driving, working, voting and college.\textsuperscript{37}

Paula also described coming to terms with being undocumented when she could not engage in the same rites of passage as her peers.

> I knew that there was something, like I didn’t have documents, but it didn’t hit me yet until I got to high school, and, my friends were taking their driver’s license tests, their permits and all that, and, getting jobs and I, I mean, the job part was like oh, uh, “my mom is like, you can focus on school, I don’t want you to start working and getting used to working and forgetting about school”, so it really didn’t hit me that I couldn’t work because of that... but then, like, I couldn’t get my permit or anything, and it was like oh, crap, (laugh), y’know like, its, I’m undocumented. But I never told anyone.

The above quote illustrates several aspects of social and cultural exclusion. First, although she knew that she did not have legal papers as a child, Paula came to

\textsuperscript{36} Only Washington, New Mexico and Utah allowed undocumented immigrants to obtain driver’s licenses in 2010, though all were considering changing these policies.

\textsuperscript{37} For more on the “rites of passage” in general, see Kett (1977); Also regarding obtaining a driver’s license as a rite of passage, see Fast Cars, Cool Rides by Amy Best.
understand what this meant only as she entered high school and began to think about transitioning to adulthood when she was denied access to the rites of passage (i.e.- work, driving and college applications) that many of her friends engaged in.

Second, Paula’s parent (her mom) helped her partially navigate the process by providing her with narratives that could excuse her lack of participation in these activities, such as “I don’t want you to start working and getting used to working and forgetting about school.” Such protections, however, became difficult to maintain around issues like drivers’ licenses and college. The experiences of graduating from high school, obtaining a driver’s license and moving into career, military or college represent ‘rites of passage’ for most young people in the United States today. Still, Paula’s sense of social and cultural exclusion from others prevented her from telling anyone about her immigration status.

These three types of social and cultural exclusion help illustrate the texture of abject status for undocumented immigrant students. These encounters with school, peers and denied rites of passage were experienced as a nullification of the experiences of social and cultural inclusion that undocumented immigrant students acquired by learning new languages, earning good grades in school, and gaining a sense of worthiness as they came of age in the United States. As I have argued, it is the dissonance between this abject exclusion and experiences of inclusion and belonging that form the basis for these experiences as biographical resources for later use in the arenas of political action.

D. Experiences of Physical Expulsion: Detention and Deportation
The arrest, detention and deportation of family members – especially a parent – was an omnipresent fear among the undocumented students that I met in SIM. In a handful of cases, that fear had become a reality. For two of the undocumented immigrant students that I interviewed, the arrest and deportation of a family member presented a dramatic and life changing challenge. Each of these cases will be described in some detail to provide a rich sense of the challenges faced by undocumented immigrant young people who have had one or more family members detained and/or deported.

Victor, a Guatemalan-born twenty-year old who crossed the Mexican border into the United States with older relatives and a “coyote” at age 8, described multiple ordeals related to his parents’ encounters with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). In his sophomore year in high school, Victor’s mother was arrested in the raids on the Michael Bianco Factory in New Bedford on March 6, 2007, thereby raising the threat that she would be deported. The following extended narrative is Victor’s description of coming home from school to discover his mother had been arrested in an immigration raid.

After sophomore year, that’s when it hit me about my status because around 2007 that’s when the Michael Bianco raid happened…. I was just coming from high school, just a regular day, asking “where’s my mom?”, and then she wasn’t there.... usually ... she gets home at 3:15...and I get home at 3:30. ...So I’m just waiting there, and then I get a phone call from my aunt saying, “did you hear what happened?” And I said “No. What happened?” And then she said there was a raid at this company, and that my mom was there. It was a big shock to me. I didn’t want to believe it.

Victor describes his initial shock of coming home to find his mother had been taken into custody by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers during a
raid that received national attention.\textsuperscript{38} The Bianco garment factory was responsible for assembling and sewing backpacks, including contracts with the U.S. military. According to news reports on 361 workers, mostly women of Central American descent (like Victor’s mother), were arrested at work in a surprise raid. Over 500 armed ICE agents surrounded the building to prevent workers from leaving. Women (and a few men) were sorted, handcuffed, and put into vans to be taken to detention facilities over the course of several hours. In some cases, detainees were flown to Texas, far from their families or support systems to have their cases processed. Victor explained how his family responded to a whirlwind of news after the raid, and how his mother’s case progressed as he spent the week at his aunt’s house with his cousins and siblings:

People were actually being deported. They wanted to send everybody they caught to Texas. Y’know, every family would talk to each other... I would hear from my aunts or my cousins, “Oh, this is what they are doing? They are sending people here and making them sign this paper.” You hear from everybody what’s going on, and then everything is happening too quickly. So, it was very very tough. And then as time continued, I remember my mom just being... in jail. And we couldn’t actually visit her, like I couldn’t. Like my father couldn’t visit her. Like nobody could visit her, like only my little brothers or my aunt. So, it was a really tough situation, we could only talk on the phone, and just hearing the sadness, its just helpless. And it was very, it was very tough for me because I didn’t know what to do, I didn’t know how to help her, or what to do. So the only thing I could do was take care of my brothers. And then from there, that whole week we spent at my aunt’s house. And as time progressed, ... I wanted to know what was going on. They were talking I guess, there was this situation where my mom was about to be sent to Texas. So when you hear, like all the people saying that the people who are sent to Texas, that like once they are there, then their case is lost and they are going to be deported. So my mother was going to be sent there and then I was like “oh I’m going to lose my mother.” So, my father acted quick in getting a lawyer. This lawyer fought for her, and then, he got her out and then she won her case. And now she has her work permit, so, I guess in the end it was a good thing with a really positive turn out.

\textsuperscript{38} The Urban Institute conducted a study on the effects of the New Bedford raid on children who were separated from their parents, which documented the effect on children in terms of missed school and stress, as well as the community response to protect children’s well-being in the event of large scale immigration raids. They found that older children were more likely to have been left unsupervised (Capps et al., 2007).
Despite his description of his mother winning her claim for asylum and receiving a work permit as a result of her lawyer’s efforts ‘fighting for her’ due to his father’s ‘acting quickly,’ Victor’s experience with immigration enforcement was not finished. A year later, ICE officers arrived at his home looking for his father, waking Victor up from bed. Although his father was not home, and he did not get arrested that day, the experience left the family shaken, and Victor’s father decided to turn himself in.

So, by then, he couldn’t work there any more. So y’know he was like this is a really bad situation, because its like being hunted down. So he decided to turn himself in. So it like was around 2008.

After this incident, Victor’s father began a series of court appearances to consider his case. Each time, for a little over a year, his father’s case was postponed for three months more. As he describes, his father’s case was being considered in Spring 2009 two weeks before Victor’s high school graduation.

He was about to get deported and in 2009 when I was graduating, they do it in May, I forget the month, but ...his court date was a week before my graduation. So each court date that he went to was like either stay or he would go. Yeah, every year they would kick it for three more months. It got to the point where it was my graduation day and then a week before my graduation day, was his court date. And I was very nervous, because throughout that whole time I didn’t know if he was going to stay or not. I really wanted him to see my graduation. I was really happy when he got two more months. But then I was nervous that he had two more months and they usually give him three. But y’know I didn’t put much into it. He saw my graduation, and I graduated, and I walked. Y’know I stayed home and tried to do what I could and then the two months came up and it was his court date, and then I hear like a phone call saying that he was detained and that he can’t leave, and, it was like a really tough situation because I guess the hardest part was the accepting part, rather than the whole process I thought that it wasn’t real. I was like oh he is going to come back, he is just working and then at midnight I am going to hear the door. I didn’t want to believe it. And then as time passed, and then on August 15th, or something, he got deported. So at the end of 2009, it was all of this bad situation and I didn’t know what to do anymore because I had just graduated high school.
The above narrative reveals the precarious nature of cases in the immigration system, as the proceedings take months or even years for them with little warning as to whether or when a parent will be deported. In this case, Victor’s father had the chance to see him graduate, and then within two months, he was gone. His father’s deportation coincided with a shift in Victor’s life from high school to post-high school. Although Victor had good grades and had won the John and Abigail Adams scholarship (which he could not use), Victor went to work to support his mother and younger siblings in the absence of his father.

Mariana also experienced the process of physical expulsion from the United States. Shortly after she began college, Mariana’s brother was detained by ICE for a non-criminal immigration violation. ICE officers told her younger sister and mother, “we will be back.” In fear, Mariana’s sister left the country, and her mother soon followed. At age 19, under the persistent threat that federal authorities might attempt to physically detain and deport her, Mariana remained in the U.S. and paid her own bills, cared for the family home, worked, and attended college part-time, while navigating already challenging terrain that undocumented immigrants face in the United States today.

Upon her mother’s departure, Mariana faced the prospect of living on her own. She was left with additional responsibilities including paying the mortgage on her family home by working and renting rooms. Mariana and her brother eventually had to sell their house and move:

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39 Note: Mariana had worked for several years at a Dunkin Donuts to save money to pay the out-of-state rates for her public university. Due to her immigration status, she had turned down the Abigail Adams scholarship which she earned for her high standardized test scores.
I was going through a lot of transitions at that time. Then the house was getting too hard to maintain because it was too expensive. The mortgage and the bills. And my brother had a condo, so he couldn’t like, help out like... So ... we sold the house. And I moved into an apartment with some family friends, like renting an apartment with them.

For Mariana, family separation and the challenges of living alone were difficult. She describes her response to this separation from her family as a motivation to become more politically active. Mariana found SIM on Facebook:

It was the week before my mom left to go back to Brazil, so I had friend requested a student, [name], in Florida and saw in his status update that he had joined the Student Immigrant Movement in Massachusetts. As soon as I saw that, I had to click on it. And it said they were working with undocumented students on the DREAM Act. I always thought that the DREAM Act was a bill that other people were working on. Y’know white professionals were working on it. I didn’t know undocumented students were working on it, and so I was immediately hooked. I called them until they would have a one on one with me...They got back to me a month later. I didn’t think they were ever going to get back to me....He wasn’t on the list, but then I read it and I talked to him on the phone a little bit. And then I came all the way to the Boston office to meet him. It was like a 1-hour trip. I took the bus to the commuter rail. And I brought my friends along with me. Not that I was suspicious, but I wanted my friends there to be with me in case this was a set up.....It could be a trap to get undocumented students to show up. I don’t know. So I brought my friends with me.

As Mariana noted, her mother was leaving the United States to return to Brazil, and Mariana was searching for peers in the same situation that she was in. This was in spring 2008, but she found SIM and called immediately. Mariana noted both her own perceptions that “white professionals were working on it” as a barrier to getting involved previously. Upon connecting to SIM, she says “I decided I was going to stay and I was going to keep fighting.”

It should be noted that although these narratives of family detention and deportation were not universal to all undocumented immigrant students, the feelings of fear that the threat of detention and deportation were felt by all undocumented immigrant students that I spoke with at one point or another. Furthermore, the experiences of both Mariana and Victor coincide with policy shifts
that have seen substantial increases in the numbers of arrests and deportations in recent years (ICE Annual Report, 2011; Hagan, Rodriguez and Castro 2011). Both Mariana and Victor responded these acute and painful threats in a way that is counter to the findings of some scholarship that immigrants will respond to the fear of such threats by withdrawing from the community (Hagan, Rodriguez and Castro 2011). Instead, both followed a path of more political engagement, in a dynamic similar to accounts of threat-based mobilization, including pro-life activists (Luker 1984), those organized against siting homeless shelters in neighborhoods (Snow et al., 1998), and (ironically) patriot-based anti-immigrant organizations (Bandhauer 2006). Snow et al., (1998) theorize that such threats are most likely to lead people to engage in political action when they disrupt the ‘quotidian,’ defined as the routines of everyday life. In both Mariana and Victor’s cases, the experiences of family members’ detention provided a set of motivating factors for their involvement in SIM, as well as a compelling and powerful narrative that could later be deployed for social change.

Victor describes how these experiences of physical expulsion led him to think about his undocumented status and to becoming involved in the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM):

Because in 2009, as that was ending ...I felt like it was me against the world in a sense, because I didn’t know who to go to. I didn’t know anybody like that, who I could talk to at all, because the friends that I had in high school were not really helpful... And in SIM I found all of these great people now that actually, not only are they friends inside the organization, but outside.

In the above, describes feeling “like it was me against the world” after his father’s deportation. He described feeling alone and misunderstood by friends.
For Victor, SIM provided a space to be understood after to the traumatic experiences of the physical expulsion of his father, but also, a place to learn to tell his story. He explained this experience of transforming his personal story into political strategy:

It was like really a changing experience because you get filled with this motivation and I didn't know that my story could be turned into such a way that you get other people involved, to motivate others. So I thought of it as a strategy. Y'know, this is my self story."

In SIM, Victor was able to transform his sense of injury by a system that physical took his parents away from him into a strategy. In the above, he acknowledged the central point of this chapter, that the experiences of undocumented immigrant students form the building blocks for strategic public action in SIM.

As Victor's story suggests, motivation was not enough; as will be explored in greater depth in the next chapter, participation also requires the presence of an organizational vehicle. In Mariana's case, I asked her, if there was no SIM, how would your life be different? She replied:

That's a hard one because at that point, I might have ended up going to Brazil. But I am stubborn. I hate people telling me I can't be here. The reason I didn't leave with her is I was trying to find something. It would be painful thinking I am the only one.

The cases of Victor and Mariana are instructive about the way U.S. immigration enforcement policies shape the life trajectories of some undocumented students and how they establish the basis for claims as activists. It is unclear whether Mariana or Victor would have become active leaders in the fight for the DREAM Act and reform of other immigration laws had it not been for the traumatic way that immigration enforcement physically removed their family members from the United States. While a more detailed analysis of the issues related to
enforcement and family separation are beyond the scope of this dissertation, in these cases, the experiences eventually led them to ‘come out’ publicly as undocumented students.

In June 2012, both Victor and Mariana were featured prominently with over twenty other undocumented immigrant students on the cover of TIME Magazine, released on the day that President Obama announced relief from the threat that she and others in her situation would be deported. Also, unlike this dissertation, both “Mariana” and “Victor” used their real names in that cover article.

III. Moving from Personal Experiences to Collective Claims

This chapter presented a framework of four types based on the physical and/or cultural/social experiences of inclusion or exclusion of undocumented immigrant students. These experiences fueled the participation of undocumented immigrant students in SIM. The expectations that developed out of the sense of worthiness and belonging during experiences of inclusion helped set the stage for their grievances related to processes of social/cultural and physical exclusion. SIM became a space for sharing and legitimizing their experiences as wrongs that were the grounds for their later public protest. In addition to the motivational aspects of these experiences, components of these experiences became the biographical resources that, over time, were cultivated into ‘narratives’ or ‘stories’ among undocumented immigrant students who became involved with SIM. The life experiences of undocumented immigrant students who had become actively involved as leaders and organizers of the Student Immigrant Movement are not
meant to be representative of all undocumented immigrant students, but the
discussions of their processes of physical and social/cultural inclusion and exclusion
provide insight into the nuanced and sometimes hidden themes of these lives that
social movement actors drew upon. Three of themes seem particularly salient to
this discussion of actor constitution.

First, the experiences of *inclusion* at both the physical and social/cultural
levels have a familial component. As noted above, undocumented immigrant
students migrated as part of large-scale social forces and patterns that swept up
parents and children. In addition, the reasons for migration were driven by a desire
to be reunited with family. Likewise, family members, and especially parents,
played key roles in developing strategies to support the socialization and learning of
undocumented immigrant students. Such familial experiences become important
when considering the constitution of new political actors, who remain connected to
parents and other relatives who do not represent the ‘DREAMer.’

Second, the undocumented immigrant students who became politically active
were often, but not always, academically successful. Like Tiago’s description of his
senior year, other interviewees were able present themselves as ‘worthy’ of college
by the standards that they understood in high school such as class rank, test scores
of other academic accomplishments. This worthiness helped to leverage later
political claims when they described the challenges and barriers of paying higher
tuition or not being able to attend college. These grievances represent claims of
belonging and inclusion, which were brought into sharp relief against processes of
*abjectivity.*
Third, undocumented immigrant student experiences of expulsion, whether racism among peers at the social/cultural level or parents being deported at the physical level, illustrate the nature of these real and perceived threats to established routines of everyday life (Snow et al., 1998). Recalling how the denial of his father’s visa literally disrupted Neil’s daily routine of coming home from school after track practice, doing home work, and planning his college. Or, perhaps the more subtle application of threat to Alejandra who experienced a social disruption when from friends would ask about her plans for college. Perhaps most visceral might be Victor’s story of being woken up by ICE agents searching for his father. These stories provide reminders of the sudden and capricious penetration of immigration enforcement into every aspect of undocumented student lives. In light of these disruptions, undocumented immigrant students attributed their motivations to participate in SIM, in part, to these experiences. Attention to the role that perceived threats plays in social movement mobilization has often focused on issues of ethnic competition on the mobilization of right wing groups such as the KKK or militias (Cunningham 2013; Cunningham and Phillips 2007; McVeigh and Cunningham 2012, Van Dyke and Soule 2002). In this case, the experiences of undocumented immigrant students with abjectivity represent a perceived and acute threat to the routines and expectations that they established by growing up in the United States. In this way, the perceptions of threat have much in common with the concept of ‘quotidian’ disruption proposed by Snow et. al. (1998). These dramatic interruptions in the established plans for college and adulthood for undocumented immigrant students such as Neil, Paula, Victor, Mariana, and Andrea partially
explain their political engagement and subsequent action within SIM. Their response to perceived threat provides insight into this dissertation’s core question of actor constitution. In the face of abjectivity, undocumented immigrant students in SIM sought alternative channels to re-constitute themselves as contentious political actors.

Consideration of these themes has several implications for existing scholarship. First, this proposed framework seeks to expand upon the theories of the abject as a way of understanding the life experiences of undocumented immigrant students. The undocumented immigrant students in SIM were partially, but not completely, cast out of society. These experiences of expulsion, while powerful, co-occur with the experiences of inclusion that undocumented immigrant students experienced in the United States.

Second, processes of inclusion provide important points of leverage for creating sympathetic and strategically effective public narratives that help to construct these actors. This leads to a discussion of the role of perceived acute threats in the mobilization of undocumented immigrant students. It is well established that the underlying presence of grievances, when combined with political opportunities and mobilizing structures (such as organizations or networks) can lead to the emergence of social movements (McAdam 1999; Snow et. al. 1998).

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40 The literature suggests that additional structural reasons, such as the presence of mobilizing structures such as SIM, being invited into the organization and the lack of barriers to participation might further explain their participation (McAdam and Paulson 1993). Additional analysis might reveal pathways to participation for undocumented immigrant students.
Finally, the four processes of physical or social/cultural inclusion or exclusion provide insights into the nature of the policies that SIM sought to address between 2008 and 2012. Each of these four types of experiences of physical or cultural experiences of inclusion or exclusion corresponds to a different type of campaign (Tilly 2008). The neat alignment of the four types of experiences from Figure 3.2 with the four types of campaigns can be seen in Figure 3.3. This alignment represents something more than coincidence, since collective responses to the dilemmas encountered in the physical or social/cultural experiences of inclusion or exclusion for undocumented immigrant students shed light on the federal or state nature of public policies that can affect their political lives.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Federal Level</th>
<th>State Level</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proactive Claims</strong></td>
<td>(Leveraging Narratives of Inclusion)</td>
<td>(Policy purview of socialization and education policies)</td>
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<td>The DREAM Act Campaign</td>
<td>In-State Tuition or the Educational Opportunity Act Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reactive Claims</strong></td>
<td>(Leveraging Narratives of Exclusion/Threat)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Education Not Deportation (END) Campaigns to prevent deportations</td>
<td>MassHope2010 Campaign in response to state budget amendments.</td>
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As the above table indicates, two of these campaigns are ‘proactive’ or opportunistic, meaning that ‘success’ stems from advancing the cause to create, and ultimately pass, new legislation\(^41\). In contrast, two of the campaigns are “reactive,” meaning they are trying to prevent the passage of legislation or executive action and thus tied to threats facing undocumented constituencies. In general terms, the

\(^{41}\) Note that as used here, I recognize that “success” can be an illusory and hard to define concept, and that success is often a matter of perception among political actors. I also recognize that ‘success’ may be either complete or partial (e.g. passage in the House of Representatives but not the Senate).
proactive or reactive nature of these campaigns points to the opportunity or threats posed by policies to regulate the experiences of undocumented immigrant students.

The other dimension of this policy framework invokes issues of either federal or state sovereignty, specifically regarding the relative responsibilities of federal and state government regarding the incorporation or regulation of immigrants in the United States. In general terms, policies that define the physical inclusion or exclusion of immigrants remain a responsibility at the federal level. The aggregation of narratives of physical processes of inclusion/exclusion thereby lends itself to campaigns at the federal level. Within the United States, although there have been attempts by several states to enforce immigration policies (such as Arizona and Massachusetts), the onus of responsibility for policies about migration into and out of the United States are at the federal level. As such, any policy that grants ‘a path to citizenship’ such as the DREAM Act depends upon federal action. So too, the actions of federal officers, specifically those of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), are responsible for the detention and deportation of immigrants with status violations.

In contrast, to how physical inclusion/exclusion policies are within the federal domain, policy decisions about social/cultural inclusion/exclusion occur at local and state levels. In the case of undocumented students, these especially include education policies, including policies about the access to and granting of lower ‘in-state’ tuition rates at state colleges and universities and laws that help establish social/cultural participation in society.
Taken together, the life experiences of physical (federal) and social/cultural (state) inclusion and exclusion provides a starting point for understanding how and why undocumented immigrant students constructed a collective identity and a legitimate public presence to become constituted political actors. These life experiences may be seen as ‘raw materials,’ which may be understood as biographical resources to be later processed into public narratives and deployed as part of contentious campaigns for new policies in the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. The next chapter explores how, through their involvement in SIM, undocumented immigrant students were able to craft compelling and powerful narratives to later be deployed as part of public political campaigns.
Chapter 4. “This is Our Organization” Mobilizing Resources to Build a Social Movement Organization

A few weeks after I began my fieldwork in October 2008, I received a phone call from Jorge, telling me that he and Ernesto, as well as two other staff, had been laid off from the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition. “We are having an emergency meeting at my house tomorrow morning. Tom, I want you to be there when I tell the leaders.” As I hung up the phone, I wondered if and how the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) would survive without its parent organization to provide salaries, an office, travel and materials, not to mention the organizational support and relationships that they needed. According to Jorge and Ernesto, they might no longer receive the $73,000 in pending grants to support the work of SIM from three foundations, since those contracts were with MIRA. Furthermore, Jorge explained the legislative challenge that they faced: a time sensitive deadline of January 15, 2009 to file the Equal Opportunity Act (EOA), a bill that would allow undocumented immigrants attending state colleges and universities to pay in-state tuition. With their lay-off, SIM was transformed from a program within the largest coalition of immigrant organizations in the state to a group of young people who had to meet around the organizer's kitchen table. Perhaps most importantly, the split from MIRA threatened the legitimacy that the
parent group imparted, and thus SIM’s very continuation as a political actor. In short, suddenly and unexpectedly SIM faced a lack of resources to engage in the political work it had planned.

The transition from its parent organization highlights the role that resources, and their acquisition, control and mobilization, can play in a social movement organization such as SIM. The term ‘resources’ implies material assets, but also other less tangible types of ‘inputs’ that make social movement mobilization possible. Social movement scholars have long recognized that different types of resources (i.e. – material, cultural, human, socio-organizational, and moral) contribute to the emergence of social movements (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Zald and McCarthy 1987). Analyzing how such resources and their related organizational capacities relate to the emergence and sustenance of political contention has defined the resource mobilization approach to social movements (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). Political challengers’ ability to procure needed resources is especially crucial given the unequal distribution of resources in society and the corresponding reality that those organizations that challenge the state frequently enter the political arena possessing relatively few such assets (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). The unequal distribution of societal resources seemed especially relevant to undocumented immigrant students, a group barred from full legal participation in major parts of the U.S. economy. As such, SIM poses an especially interesting case to understand how undocumented immigrant subjects who have been cast out of the organizational spaces to promote themselves, and who have been legally cast out of society acquire the assets necessary to build the
organizational infrastructure and constitute themselves as political actors with a name and legitimate public standing.

This chapter addresses how SIM acquired and controlled different types of resources. By applying concepts from the resource mobilization literature, I explain how these disenfranchised individuals built an organization and acquired the resources that they needed to engage in collective political social movement actions beginning in 2008 with their separation from their fiscal agent and parent organization. In particular, I identify four mechanisms – aggregation, self-production, appropriation/co-optation and patronage -- that explain how SIM acquired the resources it needed to re-build its organization, develop a collective identity and leverage legitimacy (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; McAdam et al., 2001). After defining my terms in the next section, I will trace how these four mechanisms operated as SIM re-established itself as an organization after its separation from MIRA. The second case traces how a particular tactic developed by SIM – the deployment of public narratives from the life experiences of undocumented immigrant students – drew upon these mechanisms to both further participants’ sense of collective identity and aid the group’s efforts to be certified in the institutional political arena.

I. Types and Mechanisms for Resource Mobilization in the Literature

One way that social movement theorists have explained growth, participation and engagement in social movements has been through the mobilization of resources (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Jenkins 1983; Edwards and
McAdams 2004). Scholars noted that resources play an intermediary role between grievances in the form of structural strains or threats and political mobilization in response to such grievances, by facilitating the ability of social movement organizations to respond to potential opportunities (McAdam 1999). In particular, these theories emphasized the role that organizations and other ‘mobilizing structures’ play in putting resources to work for social movement organizations (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Jenkins 1983; McAdam 1999). For the purposes of this chapter, the mobilizing structures of interest primarily refer to organizations, which appropriate and deploy different types of resources to a social movement’s end.

For the analysis that follows, I adopt the five-part typology of resource types proposed by Edwards and McCarthy (2004): material, cultural, socio-organizational, human, and moral resources (2004:125). Material resources are most closely associated with what economists might call financial and physical capital, including money (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:128). Cultural resources refer to widely available, non-proprietary cultural products and practices, including certain repertoires of contention that suggest aligns a social movement within a system that gives meaning to their work (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:126; McAdam et al., 2001; Tilly 2006, 2008). Socio-organizational resources include intentional social organizations or infrastructures (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:127). Human

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42 “Mobilizing structures” refers to “those collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action. The focus on meso-level groups, organizations and informal networks that comprise the collective building blocks of social movements constitutes the second conceptual element in the synthesis of the current consensus that appears to exist among those who have studied the question of movement emergence.” (McAdam 1999:ix). In addition to the three types of mobilizing structures mentioned here (meso-level groups, organizations and informal social networks), Zhao (1998) has identified geographic spatial features that shape the acquisition and dispersal of resources and participation.
resources include labor, experience, skills and expertise (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:127). Moral resources involve the granting of legitimacy to social movement actors primarily by external groups, thereby reflecting a key concern of this dissertation (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:125). To this list, I would add “biographical resources” by which I refer to personal biographical experiences that may be aggregated, self-produced and deployed strategically through various means, including public narratives.43 This typology provides a useful language for discussing the types of resources that SIM acquired and applied towards its political goals.

Answering the question of how social movement organizers and leaders acquired different types of resources suggests a need to explain the mechanisms through which these actors develop and secure resources (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; McAdam et al, 2001). This is consistent with the approach recommended by McAdam et al. (2001: 47), who included a call to put mobilizing structures “into motion.” The authors proposed that instead of focusing on static mobilizing structures, research should instead examine the process of organizational appropriation, which refers to how movement leaders are able to “command the resources need to mobilize and sustain action” (McAdam et al. 2001: 47-58; Fligstein and McAdam 2011). Edwards and McCarthy (2004) identify four mechanisms that provide access for social movement organizations to use resources. These are (1) aggregation, in which dispersed individuals pool private resources to

43 A search of SocIndex has not revealed any prior use of this term to conceptualize the social movement actors acquisition of personal experiences as resources in, although several scholars discuss similar processes. See in particular, Polletta (2006) Viterna (2006 ) and Taylor et al. (2009).
pursue collective goals; (2) *self-production*, in which social movement actors create or add value to resources; (3) *appropriation/co-optation*[^44], in which social movements exploit relationships with existing social organizations that were not originally formed for the purposes of the movement; and (4) *patronage*, which refers to “the bestowal of outside resources on a social movement organization by an individual or organization” (Edwards and McCarthy, 2004: 135).

Attention to these mechanisms also addresses a debate within the resource mobilization literature about whether resources are primarily acquired from sources that are internal to or external to the movement (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; McAdam 1999; Jenkins 1983; McCarthy and Zald, 1973; Morris 1981). In recognition of the unequal distribution of societal resources, early resource mobilization scholars (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Oberschall 1973) emphasized the need for disenfranchised groups to gain support from elite groups external to the movement (McAdam 1999). McAdam (1999) criticized these resource mobilization models for overemphasizing the importance of elite involvement and under-emphasizing the importance of the mass base in mobilization. The political process model of social movements attempted to overcome these shortcomings by highlighting the role of “indigenous organizational strength” to create mobilizing structures (McAdam 1999; Mc Adam et al. 2001; Morris 1981).

[^44]: As used by Edwards and McCarthy (2004), *co-optation* refers to the “transparent, permitted borrowing of resources that have already been aggregated by such groups” while *appropriation* refers to surreptitious exploitation of the previously aggregated resources of other groups (pg. 134). Furthermore, this definition of co-optation differs from the definition by Gamson (1975) who defined co-optation as a process whereby challenger groups gained acceptance by elite members of a political arena, but no new advantages for their constituency (pg. 29).
Engaging this debate between external and internal suppliers of resources, Edwards and McCarthy (2004) assert social movements rely on both external and internal resources. This chapter provides evidence to support this assertion, by tracing the mechanisms through the resource acquisition by SIM. Each of these cases demonstrates how SIM acquired, to differing degrees, resources from a combination of external and internal sources. Furthermore, the resolution of this debate is important to the core research question of this dissertation, with the process of resource mobilization within SIM, or at least that are perceived to be within SIM, helping to strengthen SIM’s collective identity by providing examples of the kinds of collective agency that establish a sense of unity and “we-ness” (Snow and McAdam 2000). Likewise, the processes by which social movement actors are able to leverage outside resources depends upon relationships with outside actors. As such, this helps to develop the potential for certification by those outside actors. Taken together, these processes of resource mobilization, whether internal or external, contribute to the constitution of new political actors.

The remainder of this chapter will trace mechanisms through which SIM acquired, controlled, and deployed resources through three cases. First, I will explain how SIM managed the transition from its parent organization by leveraging the acquisition of material, human, socio-organizational and moral resources, but not cultural resources. Second, I will then trace the self-production and aggregation of cultural resources in the form of public narratives that undocumented immigrant students developed from the “raw materials” of their life experiences with inclusion or exclusion in the United States. This acquisition of these narratives also required
the *appropriation* and the cultural *patronage* to train participants in public narrative development.

II.  **Re-Building the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM)**

In 2005, SIM was officially founded as a program within the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition, a larger immigrant rights organization that serves the state. SIM continued as a program of MIRA until December 2008 when a new executive director of MIRA laid off the two SIM full-time organizers, Jorge and Ernesto along with two other MIRA staff members. They were informed that the decision was based on a lack of funding for SIM’s work; however, privately, SIM organizers and leaders believed that the reasons reflected a combination of personality clashes between Jorge and the new executive director and different philosophies about how to influence public policy between MIRA’s professionalized lobbying approach and SIM’s emerging philosophy of community organizing. Regardless, as a result, the organization would lose access to funding, relationships and legitimacy. In fact, SIM faced the possibility of being discontinued as a program. In many ways, this experience represented a ‘ground zero’ from which the process of acquiring new organizational resources would begin.

*An Emergency Meeting with SIM’s Leadership*

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45 The lay-offs were announced to Jorge, Ernesto and the other staff on October 31, 2008, but implemented in December.
When I arrived at Jorge’s parents’ home for the emergency meeting called in the wake of SIM’s impending split from MIRA, I found him already talking with Ernesto at his parents’ kitchen table. Leaders began to arrive and I met Neil, Tiago, Orfelia, Mariana and Elena\textsuperscript{46}, for the first time. Miguel, whom I already knew, arrived late. Jorge began the meeting by announcing that the entire staff of SIM and two other staff members of MIRA had been laid off by a new executive director with a different philosophy of advocacy.

Before delving into a discussion of the organization and membership, the leaders responded to this news by asking about the personal well-being of Jorge and Ernesto.\textsuperscript{47} The two organizers redirected the group’s attention to the work, and minimized any emphasis on this as a personal loss. Emphasizing what McAdam (1988) and others have referred to as “biographical availability,” Ernesto said, “I don’t see this as me not having a job. This is so much bigger than that. I’m 19 years old. I live with my parents!” Jorge then noted, “I have a Green Card now, so I can get unemployment!” This seemed to give leaders permission to express a clear sense that they would continue SIM. Both Jorge and Ernesto were going to leverage personal (material) resources, in the form of support from family or unemployment insurance to continue their work with SIM. The concern showed by the leaders also suggested that they needed, and received, some level of reassurance that the nature of their relationships with the two organizers would remain the

\textsuperscript{46} Elena was a core leader of SIM through July 2009. She moved away from the area afterwards and is the only core leader between 2008 and 2010 that I did not interview.

\textsuperscript{47} I felt relieved that the leaders asked this question. In my role as an observer of this moment, and new to the group, I did not want to intervene, but I had been wondering the same question about how, on a practical level, they could continue without paid employment.
same, despite the fact that they were not being paid. In other words, organizing SIM was not just a means to a paycheck for Jorge and Ernesto. In particular, Ernesto’s comment that “this is not about me not having a job, this is so much bigger than that” reflected a sense of personal mission that both Jorge and he felt. Such commitment seemed to help reassure the leaders. In addition, in this way, Jorge and Ernesto were able to add value to SIM by producing the necessary human resources to continue their staff roles internally (Edwards and McCarthy 2004).

SIM’s leadership agreed that they would continue the organization without their parent organization. They began to brainstorm plans for fundraising such as holding shows, concerts, a BBQ, or car wash. SIM’s leadership agreed that they would continue without their parent organization. “I hear there is no stopping us,” Jorge reflected back to the group.

Although the continuation of the organization seemed tenuous in my mind, Tiago remembers that, for him, after Jorge and Ernesto described how they would support themselves (or rely on the support of others), there was no doubt that they would continue:

And then there was the meeting in Jorge’ kitchen ... they were just like, we will just continue working and Ernesto was like, “Oh, I will just not get paid” and Jorge was like, “I will just go on unemployment and we will keep going”, and I was like ok, that sounds good. To me it was just like ..., that sounds good, we’ll do that then. I don’t think that ... to me personally that it seemed like as dramatic a moment. ...I think it became dramatic in my mind later on when I realized, and when I stopped to think about what had happened, and how not just SIM was cut, and other people had been fired and or had resigned because of this decision, and what it represented.

As Tiago described, the scene became more dramatic when he looked back on it later and stopped to think about the implications of MIRA’s actions. As he notes,
the feedback from Jorge and Ernesto to continue with personal support from parents in lieu of salaries ended the consideration of whether SIM would continue.

The meeting then turned most of its attention to how to mobilize the members of the organization, or the human resources they needed to advance their campaigns. Members held one of three kinds of positions within the structure of SIM, in addition to the organizers and leaders. At this time, Jorge and Ernesto were the full-time organizing staff who managed all day-to-day operations for SIM, and recruited the leaders and members by holding meetings and planning legislative strategies. Until this point, the organizers had been the only paid staff in SIM. The leaders who attended the kitchen table meeting served as the decision making body for SIM. They understood their role as taking responsibility for recruiting members in SIM and helping organize events and meetings. Criteria for becoming a leader remained informal and at the discretion of the organizers. The leaders met regularly, but were not responsible for the day-to-day activities of the two organizers that constituted the staff, and in many ways, were deferential to the organizing staff that had recruited and trained them. So, it would be up to the combined efforts of the organizers and the leaders to mobilize members. The “members” consisted of a larger body of participants who could be recruited to attend large meetings and receive training. SIM’s membership. In late 2008, the membership consisted of a loose network of estimated to be about fifty immigrant students who had been recruited primarily from four cities in Massachusetts where Jorge had been developing chapters. SIM also had developed a less-active network of almost two hundred undocumented students comprised of long-term members.
who had not attended meetings lately. Many of these were names on a list, but who
might be recruited at a future date. SIM organizers maintained copies of those lists
when they left MIRA.

The emergency meeting ended with a plan to contact members across the
state, and to leverage their sympathy from this the transition to engage them in
more active campaigns to pass in-state tuition legislation and the DREAM Act. The
SIM leaders and organizers scheduled a membership meeting in two weeks (the
Saturday before Thanksgiving) to develop a fundraising plan and co-sponsorship for
the in-state tuition bill. At the end of the meeting, Jorge said, "MIRA is not going to
have the final say on what we do. This is our organization."

Jorge's claim represented a sense of ownership of SIM by undocumented
students. During this emergency meeting with these leaders in Jorge’s kitchen, I
watched the organizers (Jorge and Ernesto) reposition this major set-back of being
fired into an opportunity to galvanize support from within the organization, starting
with the leaders, and then looking at the membership. Jorge's statement “This is our
organization,” reflected the sentiment in the meeting by these undocumented
immigrant student leaders to reclaim their organization from “adult” control,
reminiscent of Polletta’s (1998:143) analysis of the Student Nonviolent
Coordinating Committee (SNCC)'s adoption of a student-activist identity:

“Highly regarded roles within communities may come to be linked with activism in a way
that makes participation a requirement of the role. In the early part of the civil rights
movement, activism was linked with – normatively required of – churchgoers; in 1960,
student became linked to activist, became a “prized social identity” that supplied the
selective incentives to participation.”
In SNCC, the “student as activist” identity became established as distinct from adult identity through the telling and re-telling of stories about sit-ins as spontaneous (Polletta 1998:138).

Similarly, SIM leaders saw the gradualism of adults in MIRA as distinct from the risk-taking that they were engaged in. For instance, Tiago reflected on the differences between SIM and MIRA. In the below quote, Tiago describes how he saw SIM as “always doing something crazy” or as “fighters,” in contrast with MIRA.

That’s always been my impression of SIM. I guess that’s the thing because to me, we were always like, we were always doing something that was outside of my experience. So to me it was always like, we were always doing something like crazy or something. Like even if it was something like, being on a panel at Harvard, I remember being on a panel thinking that this was the coolest thing ever … that was the way we referred to ourselves, and how we talked to ourselves, and being the movement and being fighters. … Because even in like, meetings that we had when MIRA was so involved, we would have with legislators, or even internal meetings, the dynamics of how MIRA talked to people and how we talked to people were very different, … at the time, I didn’t think of it in those terms, but, because they have a larger agenda, they are never confrontational, they’re like, they talk about the issue or whatever. And to us, that was like, “what do you mean you are not supporting in-state?” That’s how we felt.

These distinctions between “how MIRA talked to people and how we talked to people” begin to capture how SIM members perceived themselves as a youth-led organization for undocumented students that differed from the larger, adult and more established immigrant rights movement.

Orfelia also reflected on the change after SIM separated from MIRA and the feeling that they were re-claiming ownership over SIM:

We had an emergency meeting and we sat down and said, ‘o.k., what are our next steps.” So the leadership, we went down to look at the paperwork to make SIM an independent organization. Because basically it was all for us.

As Orfelia notes, the meeting at Jorge’s house catalyzed a focus on strategic decision-making to re-build the organization. The discussion at the time to make SIM an
independent organization reflected a desire to fully legitimize the ownership of this group. In the above discussion, when Jorge said “this is our organization,” “SIM” became an object that could be possessed. For them, it was no longer a program within MIRA, but rather the leaders and organizers appropriated SIM from MIRA. As noted above, co-optation/appropriation is a mechanism of resource mobilization that refers to “how social movements exploit relationships that they have with existing forms of social organization that were not formed for explicit movement purposes” (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:134). Furthermore, while co-optation refers to the transparent, permitted borrowing of resources that have already been aggregated by such groups, appropriation refers to “the surreptitious exploitation of previously aggregated resources of other groups” (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:134). Given the decision to lay off Jorge and Ernesto and the uncertainty of the program’s future at MIRA, when the leaders claimed, “this is our organization,” they were appropriating the social-organizational resource of SIM from MIRA. In the weeks between the announcement of the lay-offs and Jorge’s last day of work, he met with the new executive director who agreed that they could keep the name and the organization of SIM, thereby making this transfer of the social-organizational resource of “SIM” transparent, and an instance of ‘co-optation’ rather than appropriation.

As a result of this transition, the political space for immigrant rights work in Massachusetts began to shift. MIRA no longer maintained a space, organizationally, for undocumented immigrant students. As such, when policies such as in-state tuition or the DREAM Act gained public attention, MIRA’s participation in those
discussions would rely upon maintaining a working relationship with SIM organizers and leaders. SIM had acquired the organizational and policy niche for its claims around educational access and policies for undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. as children that was no longer under the oversight of MIRA. Instead, SIM organizers gathered a group of people who could play the role of trusted advisors to discuss the future of SIM in the form of a transition team.

*The Transition Team*

As Orfelia noted above, to formalize this ownership of SIM, Jorge and leaders submitted paperwork with the state to form a non-profit organization, but did not follow-through on this idea to create an entirely new organization. As they explored the option of creating a new organization, Jorge convened a group of external advisors in series of gatherings called the “transition team meetings.” The group consisted of seven or eight people who had been active in past campaigns to support SIM, as well as Jorge, Ernesto and sometimes Miguel. Given my new-ness to SIM, I was surprised to find myself invited to three of these meetings, which took place in evenings at the homes of transition team members, often with dinner and wine. Rachel who had been the original MIRA organizer who hired Jorge and helped found SIM played a key role in convening and facilitating these meetings. Rachel’s inclusion as an ‘outside ally’ points to the presence of grey areas when distinguishing between ‘indigenous’ and ‘external’ resources to a social movement organization. While the specified roles of SIM meant that Rachel at that time qualified as ‘external,’ the dynamic and fluid nature of those role structures,
especially during these transitional periods, is important to recognize. In short, Rachel had been an organizer of SIM a year earlier, but now was not. Looking ahead a year from this point in late 2008, Jorge would no longer be working at SIM, but instead would be working at a national movement organization.

The mobilization (through the mechanism of co-optation) of Rachel and these other key friends of SIM during this period of transition helped to provide SIM leaders with human resources in the forms of skills and knowledge about fundraising, program design, and non-profit incorporation (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). In addition the meetings may have provided an emotional support role for the staff during this period of transition. As has been noted by Gould (2009), such emotional work in social movements is often unrecognized, though vitally important to those involved with social movements.

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, when the lay-offs were announced, the Educational Opportunity Act (that would allow undocumented immigrants to pay in-state tuition at state colleges and universities) faced a fast-approaching deadline for the first week of February 2009. SIM continued to work closely with Jackie Davis, a member of the staff at MIRA. Jackie attended and even hosted several of the transition team meetings in November and December 2009. In her role at MIRA, she helped ensure continued support for in-state tuition legislation in the new session of the state legislature. By January 2009, the in-state tuition legislation was filed on time with 47 co-sponsors, just short of the 50 co-sponsors targeted. Shortly after this legislation was filed, Jackie resigned from MIRA. Although some leaders speculated that this was partially driven by a
statement of solidarity with the lay off of MIRA staff, she explained to me that it was
due to health reasons and a desire to live in her home country in Latin America.

The transition team did not continue to meet beyond January 2009, though
members of SIM’s transition team, including Rachel, Jackie and me, continued to be
actively involved with SIM in the years to come. All three of us joined an advisory
board for SIM in September 2009, which continued meeting for about ten months.
Both the transition team and the advisory board came together during periods of
transition for SIM as intentional bridging structures to provide social organizational
support to staff and leaders (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:127).

The literature has long recognized that social movement organizations adopt
workable and often fluid internal organizational structures to manage transitions
and respond to challenges (Zald and Ash, 1966; Gamson 1975; Staggenborg 1989).
Much of the focus of this literature has focused on concerns about the
bureaucratization and centralization of such movement organizations (Gamson
analyzed organizational structure and ideology and its effect on organizational
maintenance in two social movement organizations for women’s rights: Chicago
NOW and the Chicago Women’s Liberation Union (CWLU). As part of her analysis,
Staggenborg (1989) notes the structure of Chicago NOW’s formal board of directors
in managing organizational and staffing changes, compared to CWLU which was
based on a non-hierarchical democratic structure that evolved over time. Although
there were advantages and disadvantages to both types of structure, the more
formal organizational structure of Chicago NOW facilitated the coordination of
resources. The discussion of these two groups points to the challenges facing a group that un-constituted subjects face without existing organization capacities. In late 2008, SIM’s structure had more in common with CWLA than Chicago NOW, since SIM had not yet developed clear procedures, including whether or not to become a formal independent organization. This structure seemed appropriate given that the primary challenge in 2008 was to rapidly mobilize resources. At one meeting, the transition team did consider the pros and cons of whether to create an independent organization with a formal organizational structure. The group discussed the long-term prospect of creating an independent non-profit organization, but that founding such an organization faced considerable challenges. First, the creation of an independent organization might take time and attention away from campaign work. In the meantime, the group feared that they would lose the real opportunity to obtain funding from grant-making entities and potential donors for pressing operational expenses including office space, telephones, transportation, and materials, not to mention the salaries of the two organizers. Second, an independent organization dedicated to undocumented immigrant rights might attract attention from anti-immigrant groups or the government into the legal status of members or staff. So, the reasons the organizers and transition team members decided to not incorporate SIM as an independent organization reflected a combination of organizational resource and strategy concerns.

Given these challenges, the group decided to approach other immigrant rights and social justice organizations who might be willing to provide fiscal

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48 By 2011, SIM established a board of directors and a more formal structure.
sponsorship, without taking ‘hands-on’ control of the operations of SIM. As noted above, Jorge, Ernesto and the undocumented student leaders felt strongly that SIM belonged to them, so any fiscal sponsor would be expected to respect their management decisions. In mid-January 2009, the group identified an organization, Communities United for Power (CUP),\(^49\) who agreed to serve this role.

*Fiscal Sponsorship: Communities United for Power*

CUP is a state-wide progressive organization dedicated to building leadership among low-income, multi-racial and multi-ethnic groups that advocate for political and economic justice. Its agreement with Jorge and Ernesto allowed SIM to function as a ‘non-incorporated association responsible to the stewardship of the leadership team. CUP would provide fiscal and administrative support to the organization, but would not attempt to influence its political campaign work.

To reach that agreement, Jorge had met with Luis Juno, executive director of CUP and explained the circumstances of their situation. Luis agreed that CUP would receive a fee from SIM in exchange for administrative costs of managing grants and paying expenses, including paying the organizers. Importantly, the SIM’s organizing staff was not considered employees of CUP, but rather ‘consultants’ who submitted invoices for their work. Still, this association was not without risk for CUP should government agencies or anti-immigrant groups want to expose this situation. Luis explained to me that he agreed to serve as the fiscal sponsor for SIM based on a

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\(^49\) This is a pseudonym for this organization.
more fundamental commitment to justice. As he explained to me, “We are committed to SIM, no matter what.”

This relationship with CUP enabled SIM’s transparent and permitted borrowing or co-optation of socio-organizational and material resources. First, SIM gained the socio-organizational resources of CUP, who administered grants and fiscal accounts for SIM. Second, by entering into this relationship, SIM gained access to material resources. Because CUP had a non-profit status, this fiscal relationship with CUP allowed SIM to apply for grants and to fund-raise from outside individuals who were sympathetic to the cause of these undocumented immigrant students. Solicitation letters were sent and calls were made by Rachel, Jorge and leaders of SIM. The response was positive. By mid-January, SIM had raised $6,000 in private donations. This funding allowed them to pay for travel and office supplies, as well as a new printer. Such funding represents the activation of yet another resource mobilization mechanism: patronage. Patronage refers to “the bestowal of resources upon an SMO by an individual or organization” (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:135), often involving outside groups who specialize in providing resources to organizations.

The initial $6,000 did not cover SIM’s expenses for very long, and although applications for new grants were being written by Rachel and Lori, another member of the transition team with experience writing grants, receiving such grants would take time, even if they were granted. Mariana remembers realizing at the emergency meeting in Jorge’s kitchen that she and the other leaders at the table needed to take responsibility for the survival of the organization. She prioritized the
financial needs of SIM, and was nervous about whether SIM would be able survive without financial resources.

I thought, these are the people at the table that are going to have to keep it alive. And I remember us talking about these fundraising ideas and all of these ideas that we had.

In the above narrative, Mariana recognized that in order for SIM to continue, it required money that could only be gained through her efforts and the efforts of the others at that meeting. This realization rested on a common sense of ownership for SIM that had not existed in quite the same way before the separation from MIRA. Mariana recalled how her concerns about SIM’s financial problems led her to make plans to address these problems through fundraising. Fundraising here refers to the set of activities such as researching grants, building relationships with funders, writing grants, maintaining budgets and financial records, writing reports and (in general) keeping the work related to acquiring material resources for groups, especially in the non-profit sectors. Although grants are bestowed upon organizations through patronage, they require time and effort by the groups seeking those grants. This dynamic highlights a reality often glossed over in the debate about internal/external sources of resources: internal and external energy, time and expenses are frequently intertwined. In order to acquire fungible resources from foundations and other grant providers, the human and material resources that are within an organization need to be mobilized towards that end.

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50 I am using this term broadly here by including SIM, as an unincorporated group within a parent organization that has non-profit status with the IRS.
Although Mariana had not been a professional fundraiser or grant writer before, she became the key person within the leadership to work with members of the transition team to apply for grants from area foundations in the early months of 2009. In September 2009, as Jorge planned to leave SIM, he hired Mariana as coordinator of fundraising, under the condition that she raise her own salary. At the time, she recalls that SIM had $7,000 in their bank account, which would be enough for one month of salaries, rent and other expenses. I asked her what she did to build the organizations’ material resources, and she explained:

Just writing grants, but not even just writing grants, because I’m not a professional grant writer and so I would just build relationships with a lot of the foundations and try to get connections through them. Like I hosted the business breakfast and getting foundations to come to those and helping students to tell their stories, about what SIM is doing but through stories.

As Mariana notes, other leaders were actively involved in raising fungible material resources for SIM through events such as a business breakfast, fundraising events, raffles and door-to-door canvassing. As a result of all of these efforts, SIM was able to leverage over $300,000 in external grants and donations for SIM by May 2011. Unlike when SIM was a program of MIRA where a development director and staff applied for grants, the effort that went into SIM’s fundraising efforts relied on the voluntary (self-)production of human resources in the form of time, effort, and learning (e.g. how to write grants, etc.). Mariana was able to attend trainings in grant writing. She was also able to ask for support from friends of SIM on the transition team and their socio-organizational support from a grant writer at CUP. Thus, both socio-organizational and human resources were leveraged in order to
acquire material resources to build SIM as an organization by nurturing indigenous leadership.\textsuperscript{51}

As the above shows, the ability of SIM to obtain fungible material resources depended upon a combination of the \textit{patronage} of outside foundations and other funders, and the active agency of SIM members, leaders and staff like Mariana. At the same time, it demonstrates that two other resource mobilization mechanisms underlie and precede the acquisition of material resources from funders. First, the application for grants required the willing co-optation of a fiscal agent, CUP. Second, the receipt of funding required Mariana’s (and others’) self-production of human resources by volunteering time and learning the skills of fund raising and grant writing on behalf of SIM.

\textit{A New Space : Encuentro Cinco (E5)}

In January 2009, Ernesto and Jorge submitted a successful application to rent office space at Encuentro Cinco (E5), a converted warehouse on the third floor of a six-story building in a bustling downtown neighborhood of Boston within a 15-minute walk from the Massachusetts state house. E5 was and remains a collaborative project and space dedicated to supporting progressive causes and issues through various resource sharing events and programs. The space itself was about 70 yards deep (North/South) with windows along the North and West sides. The room also extended about 30 yards to the East, but that section was not

\textsuperscript{51} Ganz (2009) discusses the central importance of cultivating leadership in United Farmworkers Campaigns, as does Warren (2001) in discussing the IAF in San Antonio, TX.
renovated and remained unused. To the west, the room extended about 70 yards and there are four cubicles spaces along each of the North and South walls of the room, leaving a large (about 30 feet) of space as a center hall. For most of the large membership meetings, SIM organizers and leaders set up chairs and tables in the center space for public meetings.

Typically in the literature, office space is considered a material resource (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). In this case, however, the nature of E5 as a collaborative project helps us to see how SIM’s acquisition of space represented a more expansive range of added resources. Posters with the names of social movement organizations that organize around issues such as health care, women’s rights, environment, LGBQT issues, global development, and peace (anti-war) emblazoned walls around the cubicles on either side of the room. SIM’s banner hung across one of the four windowless office cubicles along the South wall. This ‘marking’ of their space with their name, helped to reinforce the organizational identity of SIM. While I am not suggesting that this organizational identity, in itself, is equivalent to the collective identity of “DREAMers,” the creation of a space dedicated to SIM as an organization provides a pre-figurative sense of “we” within which other, more personal forms of collective identity could be nurtured and sustained.

In addition to the sense of “we” as “students,” members of SIM would sometimes use the term “SIMer” to describe their affiliation. While this term was less common than the others, it is worth noting, both to highlight the organizational components of identity as well as to contrast this label with the term DREAMer.
Tiago used the term “SIMer” five times in his interview to identify fellow members of the organization SIM. Mariana and Orfelia used the term as well, though others did not. Still, when any of them used it, the use of “SIMers” was primarily descriptive and incidental as in “there were other SIMers in my class.” At one point, however, Tiago directly described his identification with the organization SIM through the term:

But y’know I always felt like SIM was like central to, I always identified as a SIMer and it was central to like how I talked to people about things. I’ve always, I’ve never, ever since I joined SIM, I always said like oh, I work for this human rights organization. I have always said that, y’know, whether I was in or out for whatever length of time, I always identified with SIM.

The SIMer label denoted a membership in or belonging to SIM. During my ethnographic observations, I occasionally heard others use the term as well. Still, in all of my time with SIM, unlike the term ”student” or DREAMer, I noticed it was used primarily as in a means of recognizing participation, without as much of a distinction from others who were not SIMers. Further, the term was not used as a symbolic representation of self, on websites or in chants the way the term “students” and “DREAMers” was. It seems to have remained a term of inclusion that remained a part of private communication without the type of emotional or cultural meanings that were attached to both the term “student” that are described above, or and later, “DREAMer.”

In this way, SIM acquired a combination of material and socio-organizational resource by moving its office into E5, enabling them to build an organizational collective identity. In addition, however, SIM gained a moral resource in the form of “standing” or legitimacy. E5 was located several blocks from the offices of CUP, the
fiscal agent. In this way, SIM organizers and leaders (all of whom were in their late teens or early 20's) were de facto, if not officially, leading an independent organization, without the oversight of a parent organization. SIM became ‘youth-led’ and the presence amidst other established social movement and activist organizations in E5 helped to establish the group’s standing among progressive groups in the area.

In February 2009 the EOA coalition met for the first time in the SIM office. The group had been meeting for months in the MIRA office, and the change of location brought coalition members from labor groups, immigrant rights groups and allied organizations together to a meeting co-led by Jackie form MIRA and Jorge from SIM, with SIM as the host. At that meeting the group celebrated the 47 co-sponsors, since the bill had never received more than 27 co-sponsors in the past. More importantly though, SIM had established itself as an independent group that had survived a major transition and appropriated the necessary material resources of funding and space to operate.

Re-building the Student Immigrant Movement

This discussion of how the Student Immigrant Movement re-built itself emphasizes the ways in which – through mechanisms of aggregation, self-production, co-optation /appropriation, and patronage – this disenfranchised group of undocumented immigrant students were able to mobilize human, social-
organizational, material, and moral resources\textsuperscript{52} after losing their sponsorship from MIRA. The decision by SIM leaders to claim ownership in SIM exemplified an underlying mechanism by the organizers to self-produce the needed material and human resources of time and talent to continue the organization's work, despite losing their salaries and organizational base. This began by leaders claiming ownership over SIM.

Second, the development of a new organizational structure in the form of a temporary transition team leveraged allies and friends to provide support for SIM during a period of transition. This process, referred to as co-optation among resource mobilization scholars (Edwards and McCarthy 2004), reflects a response to developing needed organizational systems that an un-constituted organization required during a time of crisis that demanded the immediate acquisition of resources.

Third, SIM's acquisition of a fiscal sponsor, through the process of co-optation of CUP provided them with immediate socio-organizational resources, which, when combined with the self-production of human resources by SIM leaders, led to the acquisition of material resources that were bestowed on the organizations through the mechanism of patronage. The self-production of human resources by SIM leaders is especially relevant to SIM's constitution as a political actor, since it reflects the types of resources that were lost when SIM separated from MIRA.

Fourth, the move to E5 allowed SIM to acquire material and socio-organizational resources, and that these allowed SIM to leverage the moral resource of legitimacy

\textsuperscript{52} Note: as we will see, the acquisition of cultural resources came later.
with other challenger groups working in the Educational Opportunity Act (EOA) coalition.

In sum, the discussion about how SIM re-established itself as an organization demonstrates an important element in its constitution as a new political actor. In a matter of months, SIM went from being a group of undocumented immigrant students without access or control of resources, to leveraging the human, material, social-organizational, and moral resources. It did so through a set of mechanisms that relied upon both sources internal to the movement through of aggregation and self-development; and sources external to the movement through appropriation/co-optation and patronage.

The reliance on both internal and external sources for resources is relevant when we consider the forthcoming emergence of DREAMers as a new collective identity. While social movement actors take pride in the claims of independence, there is something paradoxical about the juxtaposition of the co-optation and patronage associated with CUP and outside fund-raising groups and SIM leaders’ new-found recognition that ‘this is our organization’. Exactly at the time that SIM began to take ownership over their organization, they became most dependent on the organizational processes to maintain that independence.

The next section turns to the mobilization of a type of resource that is primarily indigenous to the undocumented immigrant student movement. Biographical resources, which I define as the personal experiences of undocumented immigrant students that serve as raw materials for the self-construction of life narratives, were put into use for the social movement through leadership development activities that
helped to the craft public narratives. In so doing, while this first section relates to the organizational visibility and acquisition of legitimacy for SIM, the second section relates more directly to the establishment of a collective identity.

III. Crafting Biographical Resources Into Public Narratives

As noted in Chapter 3, the biographical experiences-cum-resources of undocumented students who came to the United States as children, attended schools and were socialized in U.S. schools served as the basis of the stories that SIM members would tell as part of future campaigns. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of and attention to the role of narrative in social movements, in particular how such narratives are deployed both as claims-making vehicles and as bases for the development of collective identity (Polletta 2006). Using a curriculum developed by Marshall Ganz (2010) at Harvard University, SIM led a series of trainings on how to craft public narratives. Ganz’s well-respected course on community organizing provided these cultural resources in the form of patronage to SIM and like groups. By participating in trainings on how to tell their “stories of self,” members of SIM engaged in the self-production of these narratives. These narratives, as cultural objects, became resources that the social movement could aggregate and appropriate towards movement goals during large events.

*Developing Narratives as part of Leadership Training within SIM*

In late May 2009, Jorge recruited six teams of three leaders each from SIM chapters in different communities to attend a full-day leadership retreat. Eliza,
Andrea and Marileydi attended from a small city in the north. Neil and two new members left their homes at 7:30am and travelled from a town two hours south to be here. Ali from a Boston suburb represented her team. The purpose of the gathering was to hold the first “SIM Retreat” that trained new leaders in SIM. A core part of that training involves the emphasis on telling stories in public to provoke social change, a process called *public narrative* (Ganz 2010).

These retreats were part of the preparation for campaigns scheduled to begin in June, but also a priority of SIM’s organizers to build the capacity of its members. SIM’s approach was generally to integrate leadership development into the practice of the organizational and campaign work of SIM (Polletta 2002). While these retreats represented a concentrated opportunity to examine SIM’s approach to leadership development, the activities involved in training and developing leaders continued in the form of frequent one-on-one meetings between organizers and leaders that emphasized accountability and learning from experiences.

Furthermore, SIM leadership development pedagogy built upon the life experiences of its members by cultivating stories from the undocumented immigrant subjects that would later serve strategic purposes in the movement.

After introductions, Jorge introduced the purpose of the retreat by talking about ‘stories’ and the context of being an undocumented immigrant student in the United States.

"Is it really an American Dream – at least for us, I mean for immigrants who are undocumented? People are getting detained and in jail. So how do we start telling our stories, before somebody else tells it for us? So who tells our stories? We do our selves. Are there other places? T.V. Media. These people tell our stories all the time. Family members. Even within our families there are stories about us. But there are stories between Brazilians, the Salvadorans, among Dominicans. Like different stories right? But the point of this is
In the above, Jorge explained the purpose of the retreat. Using the lessons he gained from Ganz’s (2010) curriculum, he presented the urgency of the situation that immigrants faced. Jorge then outlined the three-step process of how to tell stories of self, us and now:

*We will start with the story of self which is why have you been called to what you have been called to? You have been here working for immigrant rights. Being here, being active in your community. Why? There has gotta be a reason – right? From there we will move into the stories of us. There is a reason why you guys are teams, right, because there must be some commonality that you found out about one another. Like being undocumented – because there is a value in that. The story of now is what is the challenges that we are faced now in our communities. The challenges that we face in the Cape are different from Lawrence and different from Somerville. The story of now is what are we asking people to do.*

The above short introduction has all of the elements for ‘public narrative’ trainings that Jorge had learned (Ganz 2010). Public narrative became a core strategy of social change for the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) in Massachusetts and later, the national movement for undocumented immigrant students. As the retreat continued, Jorge worked with participants at both retreats to self-produce public narratives from their life experiences beginning with the “stories of self.” Jorge also described the five elements of a public narrative: character, plot, choice, outcome and a moral. In particular, he emphasized the plot that should follow a three-part narrative structure of challenge, choice and outcome, which serves as the spine for the stories that participants would tell:

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Each of you think of stories of yourself. Think of one challenge that you have been facing in your life, and then what choice have you made about it? And then, what was the outcome of that choice?

To construct this plot, participants were asked to recall experiences from their life in response to the following three questions: (1) What was a challenge that
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you faced? (2) What choice did you make? (3) What was the outcome of this choice? The participants practiced their stories with the small groups, and then Jorge asked others to comment on what they heard in the story. Some of the members found the stories highly moving. The following is one of the stories in its entirety, as told by Dee.

My story is very personal and also very sad. My father came to the US in 1990 when I was only three years old. He came here because he wanted to give me and my mother a better life. I didn’t grow up with my father but thankfully I had a father figure, my grandfather. As I grew up in Chile I had everything – food, house and friends – everything that I asked for...because my father never forgot us, so we had a great economic situation in Chile. But, by the time I was 12 years old I had only seen my father twice. My father wanted his family to come here. I didn't want to because I was 12 and I had boyfriend. But I was forced to come here because I wasn't old enough to make my own decisions.

Challenges. I didn't speak English and people could be cruel. “She is an immigrant and doesn't speak English”. In high school things started to be fine, but in a couple of years I started to face my other challenge that I couldn't go to college. I grew up in a family where education was very important. My sister had to get married to get legal status so she could go to college. Since that, I became jealous and I thought why my sister, could go to college, but not me. In high school, my father always provided for us, we lived in Arlington which is a nice city. In the year 2006, my father passed away. Things really started to go bad (crying). I couldn't go to college, I lost my father and that sense of economic safety. Since my sister was in college it was only me and my mom. We were forced to move to Revere and we barely had money to eat. I was able to deal with the situation for a while until the year 2008. I actually met a guy and we started dating. And he told me well, I can get you out of that situation – we can get married and you can have legal status. Things were going well because I thought that guy is going to change my life. But, we broke up... and things got bad again. So, I learned that I can't let anyone else fix my problem. I can’t let anyone else fix my problem. The moral of this story is I want all undocumented students to have opportunities.

The above story is, as Dee says, sad and personal. Her first draft of this public narrative spends considerable time on the challenges that she faced. With revisions, she began to sharpen the challenges and heighten the drama of her choice and its consequences. Also, not all stories were sad. Some SIM members described experiences that were inspirational, emphasizing ways participants overcame obstacles to achieve something. A couple of stories brought laughter from participants.
In some instances, the story-teller described something that did not seem to fall within the rules of a narrative, that is, without a beginning, middle and end, or lacking one or more of the five elements that the Jorge had identified. The following dialogue between the Jorge and Pedro, a participant in one of these retreats, illustrates a form of the Socratic method as Jorge probes and pushes Pedro to focus their story:

Pedro: I grew up in a family that emphasized compassion for owning the problem even if it is not yours. My inspiration was 3 years ago in high school. It was in high school when two of my best friends could not enroll in a tech college because of their statuses. They had to join the workforce and could pursue their dreams. That was the thing that most inspired me – that was in the summer of 2006. Ever since the whole immigration thing and the Spanish shows of people telling their stories. It is as if something you can connect to one to the other. I feel strongly about this, specifically about this, my two friends – I had an open minded family. We shared the same values and beliefs. In 2006 I met the person that most inspired me and she taught me that sometimes you may not be affected but you should try to make people’s lives. I believe in opportunity and equality and I believe in people following the law as well....but most people

Jorge: What is your challenge?

Pedro: Prejudice. It just makes me sick... You know, the prejudice. People say, they want to go to school and they want to get financial aid. I challenge you to find an article that says that people are getting financial aid. People are making their own judgments without anything.

Jorge: Why do you care about that?

Pedro: My values. My parents.

Jorge: Why do you care?

Pedro: I believe that people should care. It’s the way that my parents raised me.

Jorge: Is there a specific story?

Pedro: When I met that person in 2007.

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The above exchange illustrates several aspects of SIM’s engagement in strategic narrative construction. First, it demonstrates that not everything is a ‘narrative’ (Polletta 2006). The dialogue of this participant does not follow a pattern of experiences linked by chronological sequence (plot), shaped by choices, by participants (character) who experience an outcome (Ganz 2010; Polletta 2006). Instead, this is a combination of argument (ex.- “I challenge you to find an article
that says…”) and proclamation (ex. - “I believe in opportunity.”). Narrative is different from presenting a set of ‘categories’, in that it motivates by providing settings, characters and a plot that exploits a set of underlying values that move people to take action or get involved (Polletta 2006:9). Second, the exchange above illustrates the intentional development of public narratives that is a part of SIM’s pedagogical approach. By pushing Pedro to focus on the core questions (i.e.- what is your challenge?), Jorge sought to improve the participant’s ability to tell his story by elaborating on details of setting, character and plot. Finally, it illustrates how challenging it could be for people who were not themselves undocumented immigrant students to share stories of self, once a core narrative around the experiences of undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. as children had been established. Pedro struggles to explain his compassion and empathy for those immigrants who are undocumented as a story of ‘self.’ This struggle suggests that the boundaries of an emerging identity for undocumented immigrant students are being shaped in such a way that the collective narrative works well for Dee, but not as well for Pedro.

Another possible explanation for Pedro’s difficulty in telling a story related to undocumented immigrants might be in the canonical nature of stories, since “stories outside of the canon should be difficult to tell” (Polletta 2006:14). The canonical nature of stories refers to the way “events in a story seem coherent, true and normatively salient because stories conform to stories we have heard before” (pg.169). There is a repertoire of plots from which stories may be drawn in order to be effective (pg. 26). In this case, the tools of public narratives can be considered
'cultural resources’ within a canon of narrative forms that are widely available and accessible to individuals (Edwards and McCarthy 2004:126). While these cultural resources provided tools or means of production for the creation of stories of self, their biographical resources provided the raw materials or content to craft these stories. As undocumented immigrant students constructed their ‘stories of self’ they were drawing upon their life experiences to construct narratives. In this way, stories of self were examples of processing biographical resources through the mechanism of self-production (Edwards and McCarthy 2010).

The retreats then moved from these ‘stories of self’ to ‘stories of us’ and ‘stories of now’ in a similar way, thereby demonstrating the organizers intention to bring people together around unique and individual stories that share a set of common values, and to motivate them to action. As with the stories of self, the stories of us and now were adopted from Ganz’s (2010) community organizing curriculum.

**Patronage and an organizing curriculum**

Ganz’s approach to telling stories in public applies lessons from the tradition of community organizing as well as his 40-year career as a community organizer with the Civil Rights Movement, the United Farm Workers, labor groups and others (Ganz 2009). In many ways, SIM’s proximity to Harvard University and Ganz reflected a human resource that was geographically available to the organizers of this Massachusetts based group. This proximity, and Ganz’s open-ness to the group, made it possible for Jorge, Rachel, Ernesto and other leaders of SIM to attend Ganz’s
course as students. Jorge’s acquisition of the lessons from Ganz’s course for the purposes of building the leadership of SIM can be understood through patronage (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). In this case, as an educator who routinely provides cultural resources to students through the pedagogical methods and an established curriculum, which constitutes a ‘specialty’ of educators in bestowing cultural resources on students, including undocumented immigrant students who can become social movement actors.

In 2009, Ganz began working with the National Organizing Institute to develop and deploy a version of his curriculum that would serve as a training module for communities working with Reform Immigration for America (RIFA) campaign for comprehensive immigration reform. In this way, teams of activists from across the country would begin to gain the skills in public narrative, relational organizing, team building and strategy that Jorge and Ernesto had been already adopted for members of SIM. The first training was held in Florida in September 2009. Given their previous relationship as students in his course, Ganz invited Jorge and Ernesto join him as two members of the training team for this first meeting. The two organizers told me how excited they were, since in addition to having the opportunity to be part of this experience from the start, there was a stipend attached to the training experience. Neither had received a steady paycheck for their work at SIM in several months and were eager to earn some income.

The Florida training used a ‘train the trainers’ model. Soon there were other similar trainings for the RIFA campaign occurring around the country. When Jorge left SIM to become the national organizer for Untied We DREAM, the newly formed
national umbrella organization for the DREAM movement, he quickly seized on the idea of developing a training similar to the RIFA trainings that would focus on the DREAM Act. He approached SIM to host the very first DREAM Camp and offered them funding from the national budget to support such an event.

In preparation for the DREAM Camp, I drove with a dozen SIM members to attend one of these RIFA trainings in Ithaca, New York, in early January 2010. I participated fully with the team, as SIM leaders learned how to train others so they would be prepared to host the first such DREAM Camp in February 2010. Such trainings became a means for building the human resources of leaders in SIM, who in turn, could establish these lessons into the organizational culture of SIM.

_DREAM Camp_

The DREAM Camp was a two-day training sponsored by United We Dream and the Student Immigrant Movement held on February 13-14, 2010 at UMASS Boston. Since multiple members of SIM were also enrolled as students, and had garnered the support of upper-level administrators there, they reserved space for the conference through existing UMASS-Boston student organizations, an example of the mechanism of appropriation of material resources. In this case, the use of these campus facilities designed for student use were put into service of this social movement organization by covert actions of one or two SIM leaders who attended the college.

The stated purpose of the DREAM Camp was:

for new leaders, particularly youth, in the movement for immigration reform. Each training will provide a comprehensive introduction to organizing and leadership,
including learning to tell your story and working effectively in teams to create a shared strategy and produce measurable actions. (DREAM Camp Recruitment Flyer)

Specifically, DREAM Camp was designed around the following curriculum topics: (1) teach basic organizing skills; (2) help participants learn to tell their own stories and speak in public; (3) train participants in the use of social media tools for outreach and organizing; (4) provide an insider’s overview of the immigration debate; (5) build leadership teams of five to six people in a geographic area; and (6) conduct a brief action to give participants a chance to practice newly learned skills.

As this list of topics indicates, telling stories, or “public narrative” was a core part of the DREAM Camp training for attendees. In the large group, leaders and organizers of SIM told their stories as inspiration for attendees, but also as examples for the others to see and learn. In this way, public narrative was established as a central organizing strategy and norm for the movement. This strategy would ask undocumented immigrant students to draw from their personal experiences as students, family members, or immigrants to develop a cohesive “story of self” that told people “who you are and why you are called to the work you are doing.” As with Jorge’s training, the public narrative including character, plot, choice, outcome and a moral, and followed a basic structure of presenting a challenge, choice and outcome (Ganz 2010). In addition, later parts of the training focused on combining these individual stories of self, into a story of “us and now” which interweaves the stories of self with other stories of the “us” in the room and moves towards a response to a collective challenge (”stories of now”) that would motivate attendees
into acting together (Ganz 2010). These trainings were conducted in small groups that met several times with the same facilitator over the course of the two-day event.

Although SIM leaders had expected that they were going to organize the entire DREAM Camp on their own, there were fewer than two-dozen registered participants with only three weeks to go before the event. Jorge, now at United We DREAM, bestowed resources upon SIM to ensure the DREAM Camp would be successful. To coordinate the DREAM Camp, United We DREAM recruited Rachel Moody and a team of a half-dozen veteran trainers with public narrative experience in immigration and other political work such as the 2008 Obama campaign. Several of these outside trainers were college educated and older than the members of SIM. This training team was introduced to SIM leaders on a conference phone call two weeks before the planned DREAM Camp. The team held a full-day training before the DREAM Camp and regular meetings in the mornings. In this way, the national United We DREAM provided material, human and socio-organizational resources to SIM. This process co-occurred with the bestowal of cultural resources in the form of public narrative training from Marshall Ganz. All of these resources were acquired from outside sources to SIM through the patronage of Ganz and United We DREAM.

The first DREAM Camp was attended by over 75 new or novice members of SIM, including groups from Maine, Connecticut and Rhode Island. DREAM Camp also launched new energy into the campaign for the DREAM Act that included the “coming out” actions the following month (see Chapter 6). The DREAM Camp helped to reinvigorate leaders of SIM such as Eliza, Neil, Tiago and Mariana, and to
mobilize newcomers, such as Victor and others who experienced a powerful sense of transformation by attending the DREAM Camp and developing their ability to tell stories of self (See previous chapter). By understanding that telling his story in public could be a strategy, Victor's narrative gained value as political currency in the mobilization of the DREAM Movement. At the same time, his story of self, and his realization that it could be used to mobilize others helped Victor see himself as a leader, and as a part of a larger movement. This process of personal change that was experienced by many of the undocumented students in SIM who told their story in public created a receptivity to a larger whole, and thus helped to construct a sense of DREAMer collective identity among SIM members.

Near the end of the DREAM Camp, Marshall Ganz arrived and spoke with the students, using the narrative of David and Goliath to represent the moral and strategic struggle of under-resourced social movement organizations against larger forces (Goliath) who threaten them.53 This discussion related to the planning at the DREAM Camp, where SIM leaders proposed a new strategy that involved national “Coming Out” events to begin in March 2010. These events would center on the deployment of the skills they had trained for and will be discussed further in Chapter 6. At this point, however, Ganz’s presence at the DREAM Camp, via his own biography as a United Farm Workers (UFW) community organizer, helped to certify this group as belonging to an extended family of social movement actors that could be traced to Cesar Chavez and the UFW.

53 In his book, Why David Sometimes Wins (2009), Ganz tells an extended version of this story.
Crafting Experiences Into Public Narratives

Trainings where undocumented immigrant students practiced their public narratives in these small groups, and especially large gatherings such as the DREAM Camp, demonstrate how SIM acquired different kinds of resources through all four available mechanisms: self-production, appropriation/co-optation, aggregation and patronage.

First, story telling was a craft intended to serve a strategic end in building the social movement that improved with practice. The SIM members and leaders acquired this human and cultural resource by participating in this training, but also, as noted above, developed stories through the mechanism of self-production since the public narratives depended on the cultivation of past life experiences of participants (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). As noted above, these narratives represent ‘cultural resources’ since they are drawn from canonical cultural repertoires of plots (Polletta 2006). At the same time, the “raw materials” for these plots were drawn from experiences in the lives of undocumented immigrant students, and not from the larger culture. Although these are cultural resources, I would argue that a more nuanced term for life experiences might be ‘biographical resources.’ While cultural resources are modular and can originate in the larger culture, biographical resources belong to individuals, and can only be authentically deployed in public by the individuals with those particular experiences. Thus, although biographical resources may be aggregated, as in this case, DREAMer stories are collected and told one after another, they cannot be substituted by one
teller for another. So, if Jorge told Mariana’s story, and the audience knew, the public narrative would lose its legitimacy and power as a tool for mobilization.

Second, these training gatherings were sites of *aggregation* (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). At the SIM Retreats or DREAM Camp, individuals came together, shared stories, and planned strategies. When they did, their names were recorded on new lists of membership for SIM, thereby aggregating human resources. In addition, the stories of self were gathered, and in some cases, written and posted on websites, thereby aggregating these biographical resources. Experienced members of SIM began to recognize different stories, and could recognize the difference between “Mariana’s story” or “Neil’s story.”

Additionally, the elements of these ‘stories of self’ were incorporated into larger stories of “us and now.” It is here that the aggregation began to shift into a form of co-optation, whereby narrative elements of particular stories might be mentioned by a story teller who wanted to represent a story of “us” for the entire gathering of DREAM Camp, or for that matter, the undocumented immigrant student movement. Such *stories of us* often pulled together collective themes that helped shape the spine of a public narrative for the DREAM movement in general.

Third, the DREAM Camp both appropriated material resources and provided a vehicle to acquire new human resources. As noted above, SIM leaders appropriated space and other material resources (i.e.- projectors, screens, sound system, etc.) for the event from the University that some of the leaders attended by having student organizations co-sponsor the DREAM Camp. SIM’s appropriation of these resources reflected a sense of ‘resourcefulness’ that built upon its existing
membership and networks, which had differed from the resources available when SIM was a part of MIRA. As students at local colleges and universities, SIM members acquired access that might have otherwise been unavailable to groups of adult professionals.

In addition, the DREAM Camp served to recruit new members thereby allowing SIM to acquire new human resources. In fact, SIM’s membership grew substantially as a result of the DREAM Camp, allowing the organization to establish chapters in new locations across Massachusetts. While leaders noted that most of these chapters were short-lived, the leaders gained political leverage in a handful of regions of Massachusetts that had been neglected previously.

Finally, SIM was fortunate to have access to the expertise of Marshall Ganz, who bestowed his wisdom and experience on the group in the form of knowledge and skills in community organizing and public knowledge, as well as a curriculum for training members and leaders in those skills. In fact, SIM’s early adoption of public narrative as a strategy was due in part to their geographic proximity that allowed access to the source of this key resource in Ganz’s organizing course.

This curriculum provided SIM with cultural resources, but also Ganz’s presence at the DREAM Camp and story about community organizing granted a level of legitimacy to SIM and the DREAM Camp, all through the mechanism of patronage. Other examples of patronage for SIM were seen in its relationship with United We DREAM who provided funding for the DREAM Camp, staff support and an organizational structure to manage the DREAM Camp, thereby bestowing material, human and socio-organizational resources on SIM.
V. Conclusion

This chapter traces two cases in which SIM acquired different types of resources. Table 4.1 summarizes the cases in this chapter with the six types of resources (human, material, socio-organizational, cultural, moral and biographical) and four mechanisms by which they were mobilized (aggregation, self-production, co-optation/appropriation and patronage).

Table 4.1. Summary of Types of resources and Mechanisms for Acquiring Them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Resources</th>
<th>Self-production</th>
<th>Aggregation</th>
<th>Co-optation/Appropriation</th>
<th>Patronage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3, 7</td>
<td>3, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Organizational</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>1, 3, 5</td>
<td>1, 7</td>
<td>2, 7</td>
<td>6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>5, 7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
<td>6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimacy/Moral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical</td>
<td>5, 6, 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key to Table 5.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Re-building SIM</th>
<th>Crafting Biographical Resources Into Public Narratives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = An Emergency Meeting with SIM’s Leaders</td>
<td>5 = Developing Narratives as Part of Leadership Training with SIM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 = The Transition Team;</td>
<td>6 = Patronage and an Organizing Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 = Fiscal Sponsorship</td>
<td>7 = DREAM Camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 = A New Space: Encuentro Cinco.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first case, SIM effectively acquired material resources to re-build itself as an organization after losing the support of MIRA as a parent organization. All four mechanisms contributed to re-building the organization. Furthermore, this
task of re-building SIM involved human, material, socio-organizational and moral resources but not cultural resources. The exclusion of cultural resource mobilization towards this end reflects the fact that the task of re-building SIM was not primarily a public task. Much of the process was private to a small group of supportive friends and advisors of SIM’s organizing team. As such, cultural resources may have been less relevant to the group at this point in time.

In the second case, SIM was able to transform the biographical resources of undocumented immigrant students into more coherent and strategically useful public narratives through the mobilization of all resources by all four mechanisms. SIM’s public narrative work demonstrates how personal experiences of undocumented immigrant students were cultivated into public narratives, as cultural objects. These public narratives were later deployed by students as part of campaigns for the DREAM Act and against anti-immigrant amendments. Furthermore, the DREAM Act portion of this case shows the value of patrons who are able to impart different types of resources, such as Marshall Ganz’s bestowal of human and cultural resources to the organizers and leaders of SIM in a form that educators are familiar with – teaching and educating. The second patron, United We DREAM, provide SIM with the material, human and socio-organizational resources it needed to organize a DREAM Camp.54

These two cases also reveal insights into the nature of mechanisms that allow social movement contenders to acquire resources. First, the debate about whether

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54 From the point of view of United We DREAM, SIM provided material and human resources to be the site for their first DREAM Camp training through the mechanism of co-optation.
the source of such resources is internal or external to the movement reflects a binary choice that the experiences of undocumented immigrant students reject. Instead, the cases of reflect the mobilization of resources form both within and outside

Second, the focus on mechanisms in general, and the four mechanisms developed by Edwards and McCarthy (2004) provides important leverage for analyzing the way social movement actors acquire resources for social movements. This framework provides a helpful analytic way for explaining how social movement organizations acquire a mix of different types of resources through several different types of processes. Through this analytic disaggregation of these processes and types of resource acquisition, this framework sheds light on how certain resource types were most compatible with certain processes. In particular, the acquisition of the moral resource of legitimacy, which is central to the constitution of political actors, depended in large part on the patronage of external groups.

Third, the distinctions between the five types of resources provides a ‘currency’ for richer analysis of how social movement organizations establish themselves and a way to think about resources. If anything, a more nuanced examination might make further distinctions in this typology of resources through a new category of biographical resources. As this chapter demonstrated, biographical resources are neglected in the typology employed here. In this case, this new category refers to resources developed from the lived experiences of social movement actors, and through a process of public narrative training, can be
transformed into the cultural and symbolic tools for social change.

In sum, this chapter has sheds light on how resources are acquired, as well as how they contribute to the development and legitimization of collective identity within social movement organizations. By engaging with the case of how SIM acquired the resources it needed to constitute itself as a political actor, the chapter demonstrates how the group began to construct a collective identity through the establishment of an autonomous organizational presence and the work of constructing public narratives from the raw materials of undocumented immigrant student biographical resources. As SIM established itself as an organization, cultivated and strategically deployed public narratives, and sought legitimacy, it moved closer to developing the collective identity and public certification it needed to become a constituted actor in the political arena.
Chapter 5. Policy Arenas of the Student Immigrant Movement

At just before 6pm on June 1, 2009, I arrived at the SIM office to see folding chairs arranged in rows and a flip chart at the back of the room. There were about a dozen bags off to the side of the chairs. The planned agenda for the evening was to hold a short meeting (6pm-7pm) for the leaders who would be traveling overnight to Washington, DC, in a van to attend a conference that will kick-off the Campaign to Reform Immigration for America (RIFA). Afterwards, Jorge invited a broader network of members, leaders and allies to see the SIM members off. His intent was to crystallize the lesson that the 12 leaders who travelled to DC represented a constituency based on the principle that “Leadership means taking responsibility for someone else.” All of this was communicated during the leadership meeting.

By 6:45 people began to arrive for the community meeting until the chairs were full and Jorge needed to unfold more (about 40 people attended in total). Elena opened the community meeting by energetically saying, “We are opening our ears and we are ready to listen and learn what we should take to DC.” She asked everyone to introduce themselves. In addition to SIM members, there were about fifteen allies from labor groups, progressive organizations, colleges and other immigrant rights organizations.

After the introductions, Jorge welcomed everyone and divided the attendees into six small groups of six or seven people each to discuss the DREAM Act and Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Afterwards, spokespeople from each of the small groups summarized and presented their discussions to everyone in the room. The discussion exposed some of the tensions between the DREAM Act and Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Several attendees wondered why the community service option that had been in the 2007 version of the DREAM Act had been taken out of the 2009 bill. Some were offended by the military requirement in the bill. One attendee argued that everyone who wants to should be legalized (without the age restrictions or other claims), while another undocumented immigrant student felt that only people who learned English should be allowed to obtain legal status.

Another theme that emerged in this discussion was whether the DREAM Act should be rolled into Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) or considered as a separate bill. One member noted that CIR had not yet been proposed, so we didn’t know what it would look like. Reflecting on this conversation with some of the leaders later, they were surprised at the diversity of opinions about the DREAM Act that emerged during the conversation. The meeting ended when the group of 15 delegates stood in front of the room and received the applause and blessings from this community of allies and members.

The meeting described above provides insight into the political ecology of organizations that the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) operated within. The
above meeting occurred on the night before members of SIM travelled from Boston, Massachusetts to Washington, DC, in what was a physical but also social, cultural and psychological journey from participating in a state-level policy arena to a national one. As they prepared to leave on this journey, SIM organizers had invited people from a web of institutional relationships with other immigrant organizations, but also other groups who allied themselves with SIM such as K-12 and higher education, faith-based, labor, legal, human rights, and broad-based progressive organizations. The people in attendance who had primarily engaged in strategic political action around Massachusetts immigration policy issues, formed important sectors of the Massachusetts immigration policy arena but who also had a range of opinions and interests in national political issues. The discussion that ensued surfaced tensions within different policy visions of the DREAM Act, as well as between the DREAM Act and comprehensive immigration reform (CIR). Such discussions and exchanges of ideas helped to form the discursive community of actors who maintained an ongoing set of institutional relationships over time, within which strategic actions were interpreted and given meaning, and how actors were legitimated. Furthermore, this meeting helped to focus the attention of these state-level political actors on a constellation of players at the national level and in other states, reflecting a multi-lateral policy that shaped and was shaped by SIM’s strategic actions.

By situating themselves as representatives for the Massachusetts immigrant rights groups, and receiving their blessing, the delegation of SIM members on their trip acquired a sense of legitimacy as representatives for this range of voices in
Massachusetts within the national immigration policy arena. In so doing, this meeting showed a way that SIM strategically framed the purpose of their trip such that their actions were certified by existing actors in Massachusetts to enter the national policy arena. As noted earlier in this dissertation, certification refers to the process in which existing actors recognize and grant legitimacy to new groups within an arena, and in combination with the establishment of a collective identity, are central elements the constitution of new political actors. Given that existing challengers and members in a political rena play a key role in granting legitimacy to a new actor, it is essential to explain the evolution of challengers and members in the Massachusetts and national policy arenas, and their relationship to one another in order to understand the political emergence of SIM and the undocumented immigrant students.

This chapter maps national and state institutional relationships or arenas where SIM engaged in its political action. Arenas have been defined as “institutional arrangements for social mobilization, which facilitate the development of protest movements in some instances and constrain them in others” (Jasper 2012:12). In the past decade, there has been an explosion of scholarly interest in such institutional arrangements from a cross-fertilization of social movement and organizational theories (Walker 2012; Soule 2012; Fliqstein and McAdam 2011, 2012; Jasper 2012). As part of this attention, and in addition to the term “arenas,” a host of metaphors have been deployed by scholars to better conceptualize the terrain of these institutional relationships, including social movement industries (Soule and King 2008, Zald and McCarthy 1980; McCarthy and Zald 1977;), sectors
(Mische 2008), fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), and socio-political contexts (Bosi 2008). In part, these scholars seek analytic leverage to move beyond explanations of static contexts that contain opportunities for action, and instead consider concepts that explain the socially constructed and dynamic nature of these spaces that shape and are shaped by strategic actions (Walker 2012; Jasper 2012). As the next section describes, recent thinking about arenas and fields has evolved from critiques of the overly broad structural emphasis of scholarship on political opportunities/threats to identify and bound the strategic and dynamic processes of political actors within established institutional sets of relationships (Walker 2012; Jasper 2012; Fligstein and McAdam 2012).

The remainder of this chapter will then explore the dynamics of the two political arenas within which undocumented immigrant students in SIM were certified to become recognized political actors. First, I map the actors and interests within the national arena for immigrant policy by identifying members, challengers and other actors. After mapping the players and interests, I then describe the dynamic interactions within the national arena between 2008 and 2010 (Mische and Pattison 2000). I then turn towards the Massachusetts arena relevant to SIM members’ emergence as political actors, analyzing the changes in relationships among these players between 2008 and 2010.

I. From Political Opportunity Structure to Policy Arenas

As noted in the introduction to this dissertation, the polity model suggests that political actors compete for control of scarce resources within a given political
arena (Gamson 1975; Tilly 1978). Tilly (1978) proposed a polity-centered approach to the study of social movements, with a focus on *members* (including the government) as political actors who have routine access to resources and decisions that affect them within the polity and *challengers* who are political actors that lack such routine access (Tilly 1978; McAdam et al., 2001). An aspect of the polity model is the establishment of *coalitions*, comprised of multiple and diverse political actors who “coordinate their collective action” to align their interests and constituencies (Tilly 1978:52).

Through the polity-centered model, social movement scholars emphasized the contextual opportunities or threats that lend advantages or disadvantages to particular political actors seeking to advance collective and strategic goals (Tilly 1978; Meyer 2004). The differential availability of opportunities and threats (both over time and across contending groups) came to be defined as the political opportunity structure (McAdam 1999; Tarrow 1998; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Tarrow (1998) defined political opportunities as “consistent – but not necessarily formal or permanent – dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting people’s expectations for success or failure” (pp. 76-77).

Over the past two decades, social movement theorists debated and sought to refine the concept of “political opportunity structure” in particular, along with the theory of political opportunities in general (Meyer 2004; Meyer and Minkoff 2004; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996; Kurzman 1996; Goodwin and Jasper 2003). Varied critics challenged the use of theories of political opportunity as implying objective
shifts that disregarded human interpretation (Kurzman 1996), conflating short-term openings with long-term structural shifts, neglecting cultural factors (Goodwin and Jasper 2003), and incorporating too many factors that left the concept “in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up everything in the social movement environment.” (Jasper 2012; Meyer 2004; Meyer and Minkoff 2004 citing Gamson and Meyer 1996: 275). In response to the broadening of this concept, McAdam (1996) offered a “highly consensual” list of four aspects of political opportunities: (1) the relative open-ness or closure of the institutionalized political system, (2) the stability or instability of a broad set of elite arrangements that typically undergird a polity, (3) the presence or absence of elite allies; and (4) the state’s capacity and propensity for repression.

As a more ambitious remedy to these perceived conceptual shortcomings, scholars have called for more attention to the dynamic strategies of political actors within bounded environments (McAdam et al 2001; Jasper 2012; Meyer and Minkoff 2004). These conversations have moved social movement theory away from political opportunities as simply context, to emphasizing how such political actors help to create, shape, provoke or reveal new opportunities and threats through their strategic actions (Jasper 2012:9). In this reformulation, one actor’s opportunity can be a threat or opportunity to other actors by shifting the distribution of resources, discursive frames, emotions and interpretations of actions within a given arena.

Concurrent with this re-conceptualization of political opportunities has been a fruitful cross-fertilization between social movement and organizational theories. For instance, recently, Fligstein and McAdam (2012, 2011) proposed a “general
theory of strategic action fields” guided by three primary propositional elements:

(1) strategic action fields (SAFs) which refer to meso-level social orders, as the basic building blocks of modern political/organizational life in the economy, civil society and the state;
(2) any given field may be embedded within a broader environment consisting of countless proximate or distal fields as well as states, which are themselves organized as intricate systems of strategic action fields; and
(3) embedded actors seek to fashion and maintain order in a given field (Fligstein and McAdam 2012:3).

This approach builds on theoretical foundations of sociology, especially the work of Pierre Bourdieu who developed his theory of “habitus/field” to refer to socially constructed “sites of struggle” (Reed-Denahay 2005:11). Fligstein and McAdam (2012), however, depart from Bourdieu’s concept of field, first by focusing not only on individual but collective actors within fields; and second by emphasizing the way “actors produced new identities and frames to form new fields or transform existing ones” (25-26). The theory helps to establish the institutional relationships among social movement groups as an object of study. In so doing, the theory provides analytic leverage to explain how actors within a given field have common understandings of one another and of the purposes and rules of the field. Further, the theory seeks to explain why some groups are included or not, have power or not, and how they respond or do not respond to changing constellation of relationships (Fligstein and McAdam 2011: 3).

Jasper (2012) is also interested in how players (either individuals or groups)55 engage in complex cultural processes of both cooperation and conflict

55 Note: While I adopt Jasper’s term ‘arena,’ I have maintained the use of the term ‘political actors’ in this dissertation.
with other players and arenas. In his formulation, *arenas* are “institutional arrangements, a conceptually crisp set of national laws for making and implementing decisions” (pg. 12). Arenas represent the more enduring, albeit not permanent, conceptualizations of the terrains within which players, or political actors, engage in strategic actions with other players. Within these arenas, opportunities or threats for particular sets of actors are temporary windows, which open and close. Arenas provide the “stakes, rules and often physical venues” for political actors (pg, 18).

Furthermore, players are not limited to participation in a single arena, but rather, can migrate from one arena to another based on perceived advantages, and back again. In this case, that might mean how political actors shift from policy discussions in state arenas to national arenas and international arenas with different sets of actors. Also, such shifts might be discursive, such as how actors connect news from immigration policy arenas to national security arenas, economic arenas, or faith arenas, as discourses about immigration policy bled into these arenas.

Jasper’s (2012) discussion of arenas is a useful step towards developing a conceptual tool that establishes a fixed set of players or actors who inhabit a set of institutional relationships. Following Walker’s (2012) emphasis on the similarities between arenas and fields, I use them interchangeably here.\(^{56}\) While I adopt the use of the term ‘arena’ to refer to the space within which immigrant rights policies are

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\(^{56}\) For the sake of clarity, I primarily adopt the term “arenas,” qualifying the analytic differences between my use of the term and Jasper’s (2012).
constructed and negotiated and recognize the strategic processes through which undocumented immigrant students and other political actors shaped such spaces, I argue for incorporating aspects of the polity into the discussion of arenas, as an ‘anchoring’ or relatively fixed point around which strategic actors engage with one another. In contrast Jasper’s (2012: 15) invokes Foucault’s concepts of a more pervasive and socially diffuse concept of power to call for ‘de-centering’ state actors (15). In the case of undocumented immigrant students whose campaigns center on public policy, state actors remain central members of these arenas.

In addition, my conception of the ‘polity’ includes different policy arenas, each with competing issues and networks of associations among member and challenger groups that strategize to advance their interests. For example, there are arenas focused on economic issues comprised of members that might include federal agencies such as the Department of Commerce, the Department of Labor, and the Federal Reserve, as well as the White House, Congressional offices in both the House of Representatives and Senate. In addition, there are challenger groups comprised of business groups, consumers, farmers, etc. with different fiscal and economic interests who coalesce through a set of inter-related relationships. There may be multiple organizations representing each of these constituted actors, who each adopt different tactics to advance a policy agenda that also might differ from other groups within the same policy arena. Furthermore, this economic arena will overlap with and can sometimes compete with other arenas, such as health care arenas, education arenas, environmental arenas, and, most relevant to this dissertation, the national immigration policy arena.
Finally, within a given arena, existing actors certify or decertify new actors or players who enter those arenas (Jasper 2012; Fligstein and McAdam 2012). As such, understanding the construction of arenas is a core part of understanding the actor constitution process. The recognition and legitimation of undocumented immigrant students depended upon members of the established immigration policy arenas at both the Massachusetts level (for SIM) and national level for the larger group as a whole. Given the co-constitution of these national and state arenas, as undocumented immigrant students became certified as DREAMers nationally, so too did DREAMers in SIM become certified within Massachusetts.

This chapter identifies and describes the members and challengers within both the national and state immigration policy arenas between 2008 and 2010. At the same time, I also agree with Mische and Pattison (2000) who argue that “it is not enough simply to map the interests and projects at play within a given political field; instead, we must investigate the sociocultural mechanisms by which diverse actors are able to overcome their political differences and construct a provisional common purpose in fractured, contentious multi-sectoral political field” (2000:164).

Towards this end, I will interrogate the dynamics within the national and Massachusetts state arenas for immigrant rights, tracing the strategic interactions between members and challengers and the perceived opportunities within each arena, and how these relate to the certification or de-certification of SIM and undocumented immigrant students (in general) as they became as political actors.

The next section examines the national political arenas for immigration policy by mapping the members and challengers in this arena, and then describing
the broad dynamics of their interactions during the 111th Congress. This will be followed by a discussion of the Massachusetts state immigration policy arena during the same period of time. The Student Immigrant Movement participated in campaigns around both state and national policies, by strategizing in relationship to opportunities and threats within the arenas constituted within both levels of government. The national and state policy arenas focus on different policy goals, rules, and sets of actors. As such, and as a matter of analytic convenience, these two arenas are presented here separately, though in fact they were inter-related and co-constituted, therefore affecting one another (Jasper 2012; McAdam and Fligstein 2012).

II. The National Immigration Policy Arena

“You can’t tell the players without a scorecard.” – Anonymous 20th Century phrase used by baseball vendors

As baseball game vendors understood, in order to follow the action within the arena of a game, fans of either team need to be able to recognize the players. This section identifies the players within the national immigrant rights policy arena, by describing the (A) members, (B) challengers and (C) other political actors within the national policy arena that shaped the immigration policy for undocumented immigrant students in general, and SIM in particular.

A. Members of the National Immigration Policy Arena
Thus far, I have defined members as those who have routine access to resources and power within a polity (Gamson 1975; Tilly 1978; McAdam et al. 2001). Primarily, those with such access are attached to the state, though the bureaucratic functioning of U.S. governments is by no means simple. Within the national immigration policy arena in the United States, members include the (1) Judicial branch consisting of the courts, including the Supreme Court; (2) the Executive branch consisting of the President and executive agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security, (3) Congress including both the House of Representatives and the Senate and (4) political parties. In addition to identifying the political actors in each arena vis-à-vis immigrant rights debates, I will highlight aspects of the positioning of these actors that helped shape the long-standing institutional relationships with one another and with challengers during the 2008 to 2010 period.

1. Judicial Branch: Courts

It is widely understood that the U.S. government operates on a system of ‘checks and balances’ among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. As their most basic functions, the legislative branch, with its two houses of Congress, makes laws, the executive branch including the president enacts these laws, and the courts provide oversight to the other branches to ensure proper functioning of

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57 In addition, “members” include elite actors whose interests are often reflected in the actions of many government actors (Mills 1956). I have excluded these from analysis due largely to their opaque and difficult to observe influence within the field settings of a social movement organization.
government. There are, however, exceptions to this balance of power. Immigration policy is one of those exceptions.

For over a century, the U.S. Supreme Court has upheld that decisions about who may be included or excluded from the United States are immune from judicial review by the courts through a legal framework called “plenary power doctrine” (Chin 2000). Thus, the Supreme Court has repeatedly held that the federal legislative and executive branches of the United States have the sole responsibility for determining admittance into the United States, including the right to discriminate based on race, gender or other factors (Chin 2000:260). Plenary power doctrine evolved from a set of decisions around the treatment of Native Americans and other indigenous persons in unincorporated territories under U.S. jurisdiction (i.e. Guam, Philippines, Virgin Islands, etc.). Its first application by the courts to immigrants living within the United States involved legal challenges to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Chin 2000). In all of these cases, the court has maintained that it cannot review decisions related to the granting of citizenship or entry of persons into the United States. Plenary power doctrine is consistent with the bureaucratic positioning of immigration courts and judges, not within the judicial branch of the U.S. government, but instead in the executive branch of government within the Department of Justice’s Executive Office for Immigration Review.

While the courts do not provide oversight for Congress or the Executive branch’s implementation of immigration laws, the Supreme Court has ruled on issues that influence the treatment of immigrants, including undocumented
immigrant students, in two ways. First, the Courts have upheld the 14th Amendment’s equal protection clause that grants all persons equal protection under the law in cases involving undocumented immigrant students attending public schools. In Plyler vs. Doe (1982) the Supreme Court ruled that all children had a right to public education, and that schools could not inquire into, much less discriminate based on, the immigration status of their students (Brennan 1982; Olivas 2008). This decision helped pave the way for the social and cultural inclusion of undocumented immigrant students who entered the United States as children.

A second way that courts have shaped the immigration policy arena has been by repeatedly reinforcing the primacy of the federal government (as opposed to localities or states) as the sole arbitrator of immigration laws. Most recently, this principle was upheld on June 25, 2012 in Arizona et al., v. United States (2012), when the court upheld the Federal Government’s broad authority over determining immigration status, thereby striking down most aspects of an Arizona law that penalized undocumented immigrants.

2. The Executive Branch

58 The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution’s equal protection clause reads “No State shall...deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” (bold added) In the majority opinion on the Plyler vs. Doe ruling, Justice Brennan noted that the provision of education rested on this clause in past cases, so the key distinction rested on whether or not undocumented immigrant children would be considered ‘persons’ by the intentions of the founders of the Constitution. Brenan and a majority of justices agreed, with this ruling, that undocumented immigrant children are persons, and thereby entitled to public education in the U.S.
An over-simplification of U.S. policy-making is that Congress creates laws and the President merely implements them. In actuality, Presidents can “shape the national agenda” (Derthick 1990: 51), and they also have considerable leeway to interpret such laws. The election of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States in 2008, and more so, as the first person of color to be elected to the office, certainly captured public euphoria, as Derthick (1990: 52) observes:

Presidents and their entourages, consisting of both immediate White House staff and appointees to the departments, arrive in Washington euphoric and impatient. Exulting the outcome of the last election, they are already looking to the next. Victory has given them a license to act, and the American political history tells them that they must do so in a hurry. There is only a fleeting moment of opportunity before the president’s hard-won influence begins to dissipate.

As Derthick predicts, the euphoria felt by President Obama’s followers quickly evaporated, as challenges related to a global financial crisis quickly obscured many elements of candidate Barack Obama’s 2008 platform, including immigration reform. The moment for the Obama administration to launch bold new initiatives on issues such as health care, global climate change and immigration reform was indeed fleeting.

When President Obama’s term began, the agencies most relevant to national immigration policy arena had only recently undergone drastic changes. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agency was established within the Department of Labor in 1933, and was moved to the Department of Justice (DOJ) in 1940 (USCIS website). It remained there until 2003, when, as part of a post-9/11 re-organization of government, the INS was dismantled by an act of Congress. Although, as previously noted, immigration courts remained within DOJ, the functions of INS were re-distributed to three new agencies within the Department of
Homeland Security (DHS)\textsuperscript{59}: (1) U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), which supports the application and integration of immigrants into the United States, including processing legalization cases and supporting integration; (2) the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) which is responsible for investigating and enforcing immigration and customs laws; and (3) U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), which is charged with “regulating and facilitating international trade, collecting import duties, and enforcing U.S. regulations, including trade, customs, and immigration” (DHS website, Accessed 7/5/2013). Since this bureaucratic reorganization, the number of deportations increased each year, reaching an annual record high of over 400,000 persons who were deported in 2012 (DHS Annual Report 2013). During the first two years of the Obama administration, the number of deportations carried out by ICE and CBP continued to increase substantially, and by September 2011, it was widely reported that the number had surpassed one million. It is of note that although the President oversees the agendas of federal agencies, presidents have historically not been able to exercise direct command control over the actions of these federal agencies\textsuperscript{60}. (Wilson 1989; Derthick 1990).

\textsuperscript{59} As has been noted by Alexandra Piñeros Shields (2007) the bureaucratic placement of immigration functions within the organizational context of homeland security re-frames the subject of immigrants. In the Department of Labor, immigrants might be “workers,” in the Department of Justice the function frames immigrants as “criminals” and in the Department of Homeland Security as “terrorists.”

\textsuperscript{60} Rational models of policy implementation rarely (if ever) fully explain why people working in federal organizations do what they do. In analyses of armies, prisons and schools (Wilson 1989), the social security administration (Derthick 1994), welfare agencies (Melnick 1994), and economic development programs (Pressman and Wildavsky 1974), policy scholars have repeatedly noted that government agencies are complex bureaucracies whose operations may be explained, not only by their formal goals or the direction of top-down leadership, by rank-and-file career employees. As Wilson (1989) summarizes: “The formal goals of the organization are sometimes helpful in explaining this, but more often what operators do will depend on the situations they encounter, their prior experiences and personal beliefs, the expectations of their peers, the array of interests in which
The dynamics between the president and agencies is complicated, but suffice to say, the president assumes the political responsibility for the actions of executive agencies. One consequence of increased immigration enforcement was the declining popularity of President Obama among Latinos, the fastest growing demographic in the United States (Lopez, et al., December 28, 2011).

3. Congress

As a member of the polity, Congress is constitutionally responsible for creating new laws. Within Congress, however, there are multiple groups of political actors who themselves will jockey for position and influence around immigration legislation. The most formal division within Congress, and the only division recognized by the U.S. Constitution, is between the U.S. Senate with 100 members and the House of Representatives with 433 seats in the 111th Congress. As challengers considered pushing legislation for immigration reform and later the DREAM Act, one strategic consideration involved which body of Congress would take up legislation first. For example, in 2009, journalists reported that the biggest obstacle to passing immigration reform would be the House of Representatives (Wallsten, 6/20/2009). So some SIM members theorized that passage of either the
DREAM Act or a more comprehensive bill in the Senate first, might influence the House of Representatives to pass the bill.

Both the Senate and House operate by a set of both stated rules and tacit traditions in which relevant committees usually consider bills before they can be brought before all members of their respective house for a vote.\(^61\) When immigration bills traditionally are being considered, they tend to be forwarded to either the House or Senate Judiciary Committees, both of whom have sub-committees that focus on immigration and border security issues. In the Senate, Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy served as a member and later chair of the Senate Judiciary sub-committee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security for over 40 years, where he helped pass the Immigration Act of 1965. One of the considerations for challengers who were seeking to pass legislation involved whether some committee arenas would provide greater opportunities for advancing legislation than others\(^62\). For instance, in the months of 2010, some members of SIM discussed with me the prospect of the Senate or the House considering the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill, and if so, whether the Education committee might be a more advantageous route than the Judiciary committee.\(^63\) More often, however, challengers consider Congressional members of such committees to be key targets in their attempts to advance legislation.

\(^{61}\) A notable exception was the DREAM Act votes in November and December 2010 in the House and Senate, respectively, which took place after the mid-term elections.  
\(^{62}\) Fligstein and McAdam (2011, 2012) apply a metaphor of ‘Russian dolls’ to suggest that such committees could themselves be considered fields (or arenas), which are embedded in larger fields.  
\(^{63}\) Aside from the informal conversations with members of SIM, I have no reason to believe that such a strategy was given any formal consideration.
In addition to committees, another way that members in both the House of Representatives and U.S. Senate discuss issues of concern is through caucuses,\textsuperscript{64} which refer to “an informal organization of members of the House or the Senate, or both, that exists to discuss issues of mutual concern and possibly to perform legislative research and policy planning for its members” (U.S. Senate website, \textit{Accessed 7/4/2013}). One such caucus is the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which had 29 members, including one Senator and 28 Representatives.

Finally, the congressional term lengths and legislative cycles help to bound the dynamics of policy creation. Regular elections for members of the House of Representatives occur every two years in districts distributed by population, and Senators are elected to serve six-year terms, which are staggered so that a third of Senators will change every two years. The result is that every configured “Congress” lasts two years. Legislation that is not considered or does not pass in a two-year term of Congress needs to be re-introduced in the next term. The 111\textsuperscript{th} Congress began January 3, 2009 and ended January 3, 2011. The co-sponsors of the DREAM Act in 2010 are attached in Appendix D. As can be noted, although past version of the DREAM Act since 2002 had received bi-partisan support, the 111\textsuperscript{th} Congress was much more partisan. Democrats supported the DREAM Act, while Republicans – including Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), who co-authored and first introduced the DREAM Act in 2001, and Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), who championed immigration reform in the past – maintained a filibuster that blocked consideration of the bill.

\textsuperscript{64} The word “caucus” comes from the Algonquian Indian language where a caucus meant “to meet together.” (\texttt{www.senate.gov/reference/glossary_term/caucus.htm})
4. Political Parties

The founders of the United States, especially federalists such as John Adams, James Madison and George Washington, warned about the risk of factions that political parties posed to the workings of government (Madison 1787). Despite these warnings, factions exist, and leaders of political parties have become institutionalized political actors into the operations of government, and especially the legislative bodies. Within the United States today two political parties, the Democrats and Republicans, help to shape the political arenas, and in so doing elevate some political actors and their interests at the expense of others.

After the 2008 election, the Democratic Party’s candidate won the White House, but also, the party had won a majority of seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate. In both cases, these majorities grant the party in power special privileges, such as selecting the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Senate Majority Leader, both of whom establish the schedules for the business of their respective houses, thereby helping to govern the pace and scope of decisions within their respective legislative bodies. The majority parties also assign members to serve on committees and allocate resources.

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65 In Federalist papers #10, Madison warned against the risk of domestic factions to the stability of the republic. His recommendation is to limit the effects of faction, based on a defense of political liberty, rather than a suppression of it: “Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.”
In the House of Representatives, majority rule was especially important because House rules allow legislation to be adopted by a simple majority vote. In the Senate, however, legislation can pass by a majority vote, but Senate rules require the approval of 60 of the 100 Senators for the consideration of legislation, often referred to as a “super-majority.” As the 111th Congress began, Democrats, with 58 Senators were just short of obtaining this super majority. In April 2009, Republican Senator Arlen Spector (PA) switched allegiances to join the Democrats, bringing the number of Democrats Senators to 59. Then, on June 30th, 2009, Minnesota’s Supreme Court resolved an election dispute, and allowed Al Franken (D) to replace Republican Senator Norm Coleman, thereby providing the Democratic Party with a 60 member super-majority, which it held for seven months. Democrats lost this filibuster-proof super-majority in January 2010, when voters in Massachusetts elected Republican Scott Brown to the U.S. Senate in a special election to fill vacancy left by the death of Senator Ted Kennedy.66

B. Challengers in the National Immigration Policy Arena

SIM is an affiliate of the United We Dream coalition, a national umbrella organization for the undocumented student immigrant movement. Their constituents are primarily undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as children. This group, by definition, represents a subset of all undocumented immigrants, who themselves are a sub-set of the constituency of

66 Senator Paul Kirk (D) was appointed by the Governor to temporarily serve in the U.S. Senate on behalf of the people of Massachusetts between September 2009 and February 2010.
immigrants. Within the national immigration policy arena, SIM and other undocumented student organizations are a part of a larger constellation of contending organizations. When the DREAM Act legislation was incorporated into Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR), undocumented immigrant students joined the broader campaign for immigration policy reform. The consequence of this nested relationship is such that student movement groups, such as SIM, jockey for positions of influence, not only with members of the polity, but also with other challengers.

In June 2009, the Campaign to Reform Immigration FOR America (RIFA) was launched to build support for workable comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) legislation that would promote economic opportunity, be comprehensive and lead to long term solutions to problems associated with the current set of laws and policies that comprise the United States immigration system. The primary organizers of RIFA were the National Immigration Forum, The Center for Community Change/Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM), and over a dozen other groups who were represented on the management team, but the campaign had over 200 local and national organizations who had signed onto the RIFA Campaign as of May 29, 2009. The RIFA campaign highlighted multiple pieces of legislation that would be incorporated into a future, broad CIR legislative package, including the Reuniting Families Act, the Agricultural Job Opportunities Benefits and Security (AgJOBS) Act and the DREAM Act. While these different challenging groups shared common purposes around comprehensive immigration reform, they were, at times in competition for attention and influence.
The fissures between undocumented immigrant students and the larger CIR were notable even during the kick-off of RIFA. As RIFA was being launched, a network of undocumented immigrant students began to establish itself, having just received funding to create a new coalition organization that would become United We DREAM (UWD) in a few short months. The loose national network consisted of groups of men and women, mostly in their early 20’s from different nationalities and several different geographic states including those present at the RIFA kick-off from California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Texas, Washington, DC, and Wisconsin. SIM became one of the more influential organizations involved in founding UWD. In addition to Jorge becoming UWD’s first national organizer, some of the members of SIM (Orfelia, Eliza, Mariana, etc.) served as board members and national and regional contacts for UWD.

C. Other Political Actors of the National Immigration Policy Arena

1. Federalism and State Arenas

In addition the elements of the federal government, a national immigration policy arena can be partially constructed within the policy arenas of states. Similarly, opportunities and threats in the national arena shape state and local arenas. As an example of the interconnected nature of national-local political arenas, Polletta (2012) examines the case of Greenwood, MS, where in 1962, white county government officials retaliated against SNCC organizing efforts by cutting the distribution of surplus government food to African Americans in the area,
prompting national attention increased voter registration drives and local protests. As Polletta (2012:152) summarizes: "The Greenwood case suggests that members of the aggrieved group who nevertheless enjoy national influence can play an important role in conveying political opportunities to local activists and drumming up support for them nationally." In cases like Mississippi, local actors were elevated as players in national policy arena. Their actions, then, became focal points of the national political arena, and the events in the local arenas served to become emblematic of discursive victories or failures for national civil rights challengers.

Likewise, during the 111th Congress, events in several states became the focus of the national immigration policy arena, as those states introduced their own immigration enforcement policies as a result of what they claimed was ‘federal inaction.’ Most notably the state of Arizona passed legislation called Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act (SB-1070), which Governor Jan Brewer signed into law on April 23, 2010. The new law gave unprecedented powers to local police to stop and search persons suspected of being in the United States illegally. As this bill passed, Arizona became a focal point of controversy as challengers within the immigrant rights community criticized the law for racial profiling, and local actors like Sheriff Joseph Arpaio became a national symbol of the immigration enforcement debate. The political response against the law included a proposed boycott of the state of Arizona by sports figures, musicians, celebrities, other local governments and businesses from across the country. Immigrant rights activists and their allies organized protests nationally, as well as the boycott and online petitions. Activists also descended on Arizona’s state house to participate in
protests and vigils, between the date this legislation passed and the date it was scheduled to be enacted on July 29, 2010.

Not all of the responses to the Arizona law were negative. The episode in the Arizona immigration policy arena shaped the discourse around immigration, and polls indicated that a majority of people in other states supported tough laws like Arizona’s SB 1070 (Archibold and Thee-Brenan, 5/3/2010). In part, this encouraged lawmakers in other states, including Massachusetts, to propose similar laws that would seek to enforce immigration laws in 2010. Five states subsequently passed such laws: Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina and Utah (ACLU website, Accessed 7/5/2013). The executive branch’s DOJ sued the state of Arizona on July 6, 2010 to overturn the law. As noted above, the Supreme Court eventually struck down most of the provisions of SB-1070 in Arizona in 2012.

2. Mass Media, a non-polity member of the political arena

Overall, mass media plays a unique role in the construction and maintenance of policy arenas. Historically the media sits uncomfortably as an actor in the political arena, under pressure to demonstrate its objectivity from powerful and influential elites to whom they maintain regular access. Still, it is well-established that political actors may look to the mass media to frame and certify their interests, but also that the mass media can especially distort and undermine challenger groups within a political arena (Gitlin 2003; Sobieraj 2011).

Within the mass media, however, it is important to distinguish some of the sub-groups of players. First, there is an important distinction between the English-
speaking media and other language media, especially the Spanish-speaking media in the United States today. Within the national immigration policy arena, the coverage of immigration-related stories differed, with Spanish language media outlets reporting more and more favorable stories about immigration than English language mass media outlets (Branton and Dunaway 2008). In my own observations at SIM and other immigration events, Telemundo, Univision and other Spanish-speaking news outlets frequently covered these events, and sometimes were the only media attending. When they did attend, they also tended to be more likely to conduct interviews with leaders or members of SIM.

Second, the politicization of mass media in general, but especially around immigration-related topics has itself been a topic of discussion by both academics and journalists (Suarez-Orozco, Louie and Suro 2011). Mass media companies, especially print news, have been challenged to remain in business with the expanded use of digital online media sources (Pew Center for Excellence in Journalism, 2013, 2011). One response has been for previously objective news programs to begin to pander to niche audiences based on political ideological values, such as the right-leaning Fox-News and left-leaning MSNBC (Folkenflick 2009). In particular, the experience of Lou Dobbs highlights the perils of such “activist journalism” around immigration. Lou Dobbs was a founding anchor of CNN, but became a harsh critic of illegal immigration, sometimes mis-stating claims that he later had to apologize for and rescind, including attributing a “startling rise in leprosy cases from illegal immigrants from Latin America” when no such increase existed (Folkenflick 2009). He also came under scrutiny and criticism around his
support of the ‘birther’ movement (Folkenflick 2009). Dobbs announced a sudden resignation from CNN to seek a more activist role on November 12, 2009.

Dobbs, FOX News and others demonstrate the public discourses that the mass media deployed to shape the national immigration policy arena (Chavez 2008). Discourses refer “a formation or cluster of ideas, images, and practices that construct knowledge of, ways of talking about, and forms of conduct associated with a particular topic, social activity, or institutional site in society (Chavez 2008:22). In The Latino Threat, Chavez (2008) describes how mass media outlets deployed racialized and alarmist discourses about immigrants used metaphors of immigrants as invaders in the wake of 9/11 (40). In this way, members of the media play something of an arbitrator role for discourses within the social construction of policy arenas, at times legitimizing some discourses and actors while de-legitimizing others (Gitlin 2003).

D. Dynamic and Strategic Actions within the National Immigration Policy Arena, 2008-2010

As a candidate, Barack Obama made a promise to work towards immigration reform in the first four years of his presidency. Specifically, he announced at the 2008 Democratic Convention, that “one thing we can do right now is to pass the DREAM Act.” Although the undocumented immigrant students in SIM could not vote, many participated in the 2008 Obama campaign through actions such as knocking on doors, making phone calls and holding signs. When President Obama was elected in November of that year, students from SIM were optimistic. In December,
Miguel told me, “We will definitely have the DREAM Act in the next four years. And I think, in-state tuition.” This demonstrates the way President Obama and other members of the polity helped to shape the expectations among undocumented immigrant students and other challengers.

Soon, however, other issues obscured the change that undocumented students hoped Obama’s election would bring. On January 20, 2009, President Obama’s inaugural speech prioritized the economic challenges facing the country without mention of immigration reform, or other social reforms that had been discussed during the campaign. In addition to the economy, the Obama administration prioritized health care reform in the first months of his presidency.

Although the DREAM Act 2009 was introduced in the House and Senate on March 26, 2009, Senate sponsors announced that the DREAM Act would not be considered as a separate piece of legislation and instead would be incorporated into a future broader Comprehensive Immigration Reform legislative package (Senator Durbin Staff, Conference Call, April 2009). This future comprehensive immigration reform package would include the components of the DREAM Act, as well as proposals to create a path to citizenship for farmworkers, day laborers, families, and other undocumented immigrants.

Based on the confidence that the Administration would push for comprehensive immigration reform in 2009, national leaders of the immigrant rights movement (of which the undocumented students were only one strand) organized a national Summit to kick-off comprehensive immigration reform in early June. Between the evening of Tuesday June 2 until Saturday morning June 6th,
twelve SIM leaders, Jorge, Ernesto and I traveled from Boston to Washington, DC in a 15-passenger rented van to attend the Summit to kick-off the Campaign to Reform Immigration FOR America (RIFA) at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC. Over 800 people representing a diverse civic, labor, faith-based, educational, and (of course) immigrant rights groups from across the country attended the Summit, which was scheduled to occur at the time that a bill for Comprehensive Immigration Reform would be introduced in Congress. This gathering helped to establish the common purpose and rules of engagement for the national immigration policy arena. Attendees were presented with a platform with a common narrative that had been developed by professional communication consultants to the campaign using focus groups and a metrics based approach.

A week before the conference President Obama had postponed his previously scheduled White House announcement on immigration reform for a week, until June 15th. Upon our arrival at the Summit, we learned from speakers that the legislation’s introduction would be postponed to the following week. Two weeks later the legislation had still not been introduced and was postponed again, until ‘after health care reform passed,’ or possibly after the mid-term elections (Wallsten, 6/20/2009). Later in July, Senator Schumer (D-NY) promised that a comprehensive immigration reform policy would be introduced into Congress before Labor Day, but such legislation was not introduced then either.

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67 On Friday June 12th, the White House postponed the meeting and any announcement a second time, and instead held an informal closed conversation about immigration with congressional leaders.
The Summit surfaced some of the tensions between the supporters of the DREAM Act and comprehensive immigration reform. Jorge had heard from a staff person at a national organization that “if Congress does not move on CIR by October, they (the national organizations involved in RIFA) will pursue the DREAM Act.” This planned shift in tactics also did not occur in October. In fact, it was resisted through the spring and into Summer 2010. In hindsight, these delays seem to have been a severe tactical blunder.

During one of the small group discussions at the Summit, two members of a UWD affiliate said that they were upset by the tension and conflict that seemed to exist between adults who were pushing for Comprehensive Immigration Reform and the youth who wanted to push for the DREAM Act. These undocumented immigrant students had worked hard for a long time on the DREAM Act. And, they had been successful in getting the Dream Act introduced. These students felt that they had built power and needed to be acknowledged by the adults. Some reported that they felt that they have been cast aside. For example, one noted that the DREAM language does not appear anywhere in the statement of principles for comprehensive immigration reform.

One of the women described the FIRM summit two years earlier (2007) where, she noted adult leaders had virtually ignored, and even insulted the young people. Other young people took responsibility for the divisions.

We have not developed a plan of outreach for comprehensive immigration reform. Maybe the adults are threatened by us or maybe they think we are rejecting them when we talk about the Dream Act of describe it as ‘youth-led.’ We need to communicate that we are for BOTH the Dream Act and Comprehensive Immigration Reform. It is not either/or.
These tensions persisted as challengers continued to wait for comprehensive immigration reform to be introduced in Congress. By August 2009, several events began to signal the depth of opposition facing any federal comprehensive immigration reform legislation. First, Congress approved and President Obama signed into law “Operation Stonegarden” with a June 2009 allocation of $60 million dollars, and an additional $30 million budget allocation in August that would increase enforcement of the Southern border of the U.S. (Napolitano, 8/11/2009).

A week after the $30 million allocation, President Obama announced that Comprehensive Immigration Reform legislation would need to be postponed until the following year, or even after the mid-term elections.

By early September, even health care reform legislation had not passed in Congress. In order to advance health care reform, President Obama addressed both houses of Congress on September 9, 2009 where he stated:

There are also those who claim that our reform effort will insure illegal immigrants." This, too, is false — the reforms I’m proposing would not apply to those who are here illegally.

As President Obama uttered the above statement in the U.S. Capitol before a joint meeting of Congress, in a breach of decorum, Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC) interrupted the President by shouting “You Lie!” This incident reveals a policy assumption that characterizes illegal immigrants as undeserving recipients of public services (Chavez 2008). Both President Obama and Rep. Joe Wilson’s statements publically agreed that undocumented immigrants should not receive health care,
thereby representing a bipartisan consensus in denying health benefits to undocumented immigrants.  

Given these setbacks, delays and increasing vitriolic tone in discussions about immigration, it is perplexing that RIFA leaders seemed to maintain their strategy and accept a ‘wait and see’ approach to CIR. In a conference call with RIFA leaders in early fall, a group of media experts described the results of a set of focus groups and surveys on their strategies based on the same data that they presented at the June kick-off event. The messaging and approach remained the same.

Also that fall, the prospect of comprehensive immigration reform faced another setback with the death of Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA). At the time of his death, Senator Kennedy had been the longest serving member on the Senate Judiciary’s Subcommittee on Immigration. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) described Senator Kennedy as the “most dominant political figure on the immigration debate for the past four decades (Chishti and Bergeron, MPI, September 15, 2009). On January 2010, Massachusetts voters elected Republican Scott Brown to the “Kennedy seat.” In addition to Senator Brown’s history of opposing policies to support new immigrants, and especially the undocumented, his election shifted the balance of power in the Senate by eliminating the ‘super majority’ of Democratic votes in the Senate.

68 Rep. Wilson had proposed two amendments to require the health exchanges to verify citizenship of participants. Both amendments were defeated. (Hamby and Walsh, CNN 9/10/09 http://articles.cnn.com/2009-09-10/politics/obama.heckled.speech_1_illegal-immigrants-illegal-aliens-rep-joe-wilson?_s=PM:POLITICS, accessed December 1, 2012)
The U.S. Senate passed a version of Health Care Reform before the election of Scott Brown, which put pressure on the House of Representatives to accept the Senate version of the bill. On March 21, 2010 the House of Representatives passed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which was signed into law by the President later that week. Newspapers across the country led with the story of the House Vote, often noting the handful of protestors who shouted names at the elected officials entering the building. According to Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ) Weekly News Coverage Index that tracks news stories news agenda of 52 different outlets from five sectors of the media: print, online, network TV, cable and radio, the topic of “health care reform” generated its biggest week of coverage between March 15-21st, with 37% of all news, This news dwarfed the coverage of an event across the lawn on that same day, where over 200,000 people (including almost 100 members of SIM) had gathered to call for comprehensive immigration reform for the “March for America.” Immigration Reform and the March was not even mentioned in the PEJ report, suggesting that it represented less than 1% of all news for the week. Such media responses to protest are not uncommon, and help to demonstrate the role of the major media outlets in managing the competition among different and competing policy arenas in the larger public sphere (Sobieraj 2011).

The call for CIR went unanswered during the remainder of the 111th Congress, where no comprehensive immigration reform legislation was considered. Some of the undocumented student leaders watched these events with frustration that the political window of opportunity for comprehensive immigration reform
was passing. Their criticism also reflected a general growing sense that the national leadership for CIR was lacking both direction and momentum.

Unlike the national leaders of RIFA, undocumented immigrant students acknowledged these closing political opportunities in the existing political arena, and began to adapt their strategies and push for the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill. For instance, this period of frustration with the national immigration policy arena for CIR coincided with a series of DREAM Camp Trainings that began in Boston in February 2009. After this DREAM Camp, SIM leaders discussed the need to increase the pressure by mobilizing their base through “coming out” actions. Mariana describes her experience with ‘coming out’ around that time:

I was talking to Rachel one day, and I said, we need to be bold. There were students talking, they had this idea of maybe getting detained. And I wanted to be bold, but I wanted to do something in a different way that was bold. And so I told Rachel that we should be brave. We should tell our stories to the media and we should be using our names that we are not afraid. And Rachel was like “Yeah! Yeah!” and one week later Rachel calls me and it was before the March for America, and she was like, Remember our conversation? Well, ABC wants to do an interview with an undocumented person who is not afraid to say their name. And I was like ‘ok.” I was kind of like, alright, now I have to prove that I am not just all talk. And then the person interviewed me from ABC News. And they asked me, “What is your name?” and I said, my name is Mariana Cividini(pseudonym). And she was like, are you sure you want to use your full name, and I said, ‘yes.’ And I hung up the phone and I was like “Crap! What I have done? (laugh) I didn’t know, I was kind of scared.

SIM leaders and members, then, began to come out in public setting, sharing public narratives of their lives. While the past chapter demonstrated the role that new resources played in preparing undocumented immigrant students to engage in these coming out routines, the closing opportunities within the national immigration policy arena of 111th Congress helped to intensify the urgency that these public needed to be deployed. Indeed, undocumented immigrant student organizations in Chicago, Florida, and California, began engaging in more public
forms of contentious action in larger numbers across the country. A group of four Florida undocumented students walked from Miami to Washington, DC during Spring 2010 as part of the Trail of DREAMs. In Chicago, the Immigrant Youth Justice League created a new slogan, “Undocumented and Unafraid,” as they began public protests in front of DHS offices. As will be discussed in the next chapter, during that Spring, the phrase, “Undocumented and Unafraid” and this pattern of “coming out” was quickly adopted by undocumented immigrant student groups across the country, including SIM. The strategic decisions to shift from the broad and highly controversial CIR policies to the more narrow and less controversial DREAM Act began to sharpen the focus on undocumented immigrant students as a distinct group, thereby reinforcing their own collective identity development.

Meanwhile, undocumented immigrant students seemed to lack the necessary legitimacy to influence leading immigrant rights groups to take up the DREAM Act. These groups continued to promote CIR, and not the DREAM Act, deep into Summer 2010. During a visit to congressional offices in early August 2010, congressional aides told me that the Hispanic caucus was behind the push for CIR and were adamantly opposed to advancing the DREAM Act as a standalone bill. These tensions reflected the widening fissure among different groups within the previously established arena around comprehensive immigration reform. Later, a staff member involved in RIFA shared that the labor groups wanted to ensure that agricultural jobs were included in immigration reform, and therefore, were blocking the DREAM Act as a standalone bill. While it is not clear how or why CIR evolved as it did, it seemed clear that as of the early part of 2010, undocumented immigrant
students were, at best, a marginal part of the national immigration policy arena. In other words, they had not been ‘certified’ as political actors with standing in this national arena. Their identity and claims for recognition were suppressed in relation to other agendas and strategies. Instead, the plans for comprehensive immigration reform, and not the DREAM Act, reflected a sense of how members of the polity considered undocumented immigrant students to be a part of a larger collective group of actors known as “immigrants.” The lack of recognition and legitimacy of this group meant that their claims could not be disentangled from other groups of immigrants seeking policy changes. Whatever the reason, CIR was never taken up, and the DREAM Act was not considered as a stand-alone bill until very late in the 111th Congress.

III. Massachusetts Immigrant Policy Arenas

Massachusetts was ranked 7th among all states in the number of immigrants in 2000 and 2010, with just under 773,000 foreign-born residents according to the 2000 Census. That number increased to 983,564 in the 2010 Census, with the associated proportion of the overall state population rising from 12% to 15% of the Massachusetts population (MPI Data Hub, accessed Feb 6, 2013). In 2010, the highest proportion of immigrants (35.7%) in Massachusetts came from Latin America (Central America, South America and Caribbean) (MPI Data Hub, Accessede Feb 6, 2013). Broken down by country rather than region, the highest proportion of immigrants in Massachusetts were from China, Brazil and Portugal (MPI Data Hub, Accessed Feb 6, 2013). Although numbers of immigrants who are undocumented
are difficult to obtain, the best estimates are that there were 190,000 undocumented immigrants living in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2007, though that number had decreased to 160,000 by 2010 (Passel and Cohn 2011).

The Massachusetts immigration policy arena consists of a set of members, challengers and other groups that, in many ways, parallel the national policy arena, however, the content and scope of immigration policy related to the state government differs from that national immigration policy arena. Due to plenary power doctrine, states do not usually take on issues of admittance and immigration enforcement. Instead, state policies involve issues of incorporation, the distribution of services and cooperation with federal authorities.

A. Members

In 1780 Massachusetts adopted its constitution, which is now the oldest working written constitution in the world. The Massachusetts Constitution was and authored by John Adams, who is credited with having developed the idea of the separation of powers as a form of check and balance across executive, legislative and judicial branches of the government (Hogarty 2002:6). Given this, the Massachusetts state governmental apparatus is organized in similar ways to the federal government with (1) a Governor and Lieutenant Governor; (2) the legislature, which includes both the House and Senate; and (3) a state judicial system and (4) political parties, as at the federal level. Unlike the national immigration policy arena, the state judicial branch of government has not been active in the Massachusetts immigration policy arena.
1. The Governor

When Deval Patrick was first elected Governor in 2006 for his first four-year term, the economy, gambling, and marriage equality were top issues, and Massachusetts was spotlighted as an innovator for health care reform. Still, many immigrant rights groups were hopeful that the new Governor would push for policies that would expand their access to services and support the integration of new immigrant groups.

In 2009, Governor Deval Patrick initiated the “New Americans Agenda,” For the stated purpose of moving “past the media debates about national admission policy and status into an intentional state strategy of inclusion” (Egmont et al., 2009: 5). The report made over 130 recommendations for integrating new immigrants into the Commonwealth. In a series of regional public meetings held in Springfield, Fitchburg, New Bedford, Lowell, Hyannis, and Chelsea with over 1,200 people, the only two recommended policy issues identified by attendees at every meeting were (1) access to driver’s licenses and (2) access to in-state tuition for all immigrant residents, both of which are currently denied to undocumented immigrant residents (Egmont et al, 2009:45). Governor Patrick has repeatedly indicated his willingness to approve in-state tuition legislation, which his predecessor, Governor Mitt Romney, had vetoed. Since his taking office in 2007, the full Democratic legislature has not voted on another in-state tuition bill.

Members of SIM believed that an alternative to waiting for such a bill to pass would be for the Governor to approve the granting of in-state tuition to
undocumented immigrant students from Massachusetts high schools through executive action, thereby by-passing the Legislature. In spring 2008, members of SIM and MIRA, including Jorge, Tiago and Mariana, met with Governor Patrick to explore this possibility of by-passing the legislative process. According to attendees at that meeting and members of the EOA Coalition at later meetings, the legal advisors to the governor's office counseled him that such action would not hold up to legal scrutiny. As such the Governor refused.

2. Legislature

As with the federal Congress, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a Senate with 40 members and a House of Representatives with 160 members, both of whose members are elected for 2-year terms. Unlike the U.S. Congress, many of the committees that consider legislation are joint committees where both Senators and Representatives serve.

Massachusetts has had a mixed record on policies favorable for immigrants. Boston helped to pilot test a set of partnerships between the federal government’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the local police, known as Secure Communities. These partnerships extend the surveillance and enforcement of the federal government by asking local police to check fingerprints of people who are arrested (though not necessarily convicted of a crime) against the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) immigration database, and automatically notifying ICE if there is a “hit” (National Immigration Forum). The policy has been vehemently opposed by immigrant rights organizations at both the national and state levels.
In addition, while 11 other states have granted immigrant students access to in-state tuition as of January 2010, Massachusetts had no such policy. Massachusetts legislators had considered and passed in-state tuition legislation in 2004, but the bill was vetoed by Governor Romney. In 2006 the bill failed to pass the House of Representatives. Though the bill had significant support, when it became clear that it would not pass with the two-thirds majority required to over-ride Governor Romney’s anticipated veto, several Representatives responded to what they saw as a political threat and decided to switch their vote at the last minute. According to a political lobbyist involved in counting the votes at that time, “they did the political calculation that they did not want to spend political capital on a bill that would not become law, so they all jumped ship.”

3. Political Parties

Despite its progressive reputation as a Democratically dominant “blue state”, the largest proportion of registered voters in the Commonwealth for the past decade have been registered independents, a proportion that increased to a majority between 2004 and 2012 (Boston Globe, February 27, 2012). Also, while the Massachusetts legislature has had a majority of Democrats since 1958, the Republican Party of Massachusetts has been very effective in getting candidates elected to statewide elections, with Republican governors serving between January 1991, when Governor Weld assumed the office, and January 2007, when Governor Mitt Romney left office. Governor Romney was succeeded by Deval Patrick, the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ first African American governor, and also the first Democrat to assume the office in sixteen years.

B. Challengers

Among the challengers who represent the interests of immigrants in the Massachusetts immigration policy arena, the Massachusetts Immigrant Rights and Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition is generally considered the leading actor. MIRA’s coalition includes over 140 organizational members including community-based groups, social service organizations, ethnic associations, schools, refugee resettlement agencies, health centers, hospitals, religious institutions, unions and law firms (MIRA Website, accessed 7/7/2013). As noted earlier, MIRA was the fiscal sponsor of the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) from before its founding (in 2005) until November 2008. Most MIRA organizations have emphasized social service delivery, policy research, or legal advice more than community organizing, lobbying or social movement work.

The ecology of immigrant rights organizations in Massachusetts, however, also includes several organizations outside of the members of MIRA, and a number of its member organizations have been vocal critics of some of MIRA’s strategic decisions. Some of these organizations positioned themselves as social change organizations that more openly challenged government actions, including groups that focused on issues of deportation and detention (i.e.-Deported Diaspora and Resist the Raids), groups that focused on wage theft and labor rights for day laborers (i.e.- immigrant workers center collaborative), and ethnicity based community groups seeking
progressive political change (i.e.- Centro Presente, Chinese Progressive Association).

As was previously noted, when SIM left MIRA, it re-located its office to Encuentro Cinco (E5), and the organizers came into daily contact with several of these groups. During this time, SIM began to develop a list of organizations with whom they had contact and could invite into coalition work. The organizations consisted of other college student groups (n=30), high schools (n=15), immigrant rights groups (n=14), faith based groups (n=10) community groups (n=10), which included six geographic communities and four ethnic communities, progressive organization (n=8), human rights groups (n=5); labor groups (n=5); peace groups (n=5), youth groups (n=3), and one healthcare advocacy group.

Such coalition work was based on organizers and leaders of SIM building relationships with organizers and leaders of these other groups. These relationships helped SIM gain recognition and legitimacy as a group that had re-constituted itself. In fact, their continued struggle against state policy makers who sought to dismiss them, or despite the loss of funding and institutional support from MIRA, helped to frame SIM as a ‘challenger’ with ‘street cred.’ SIM’s ongoing campaign work and organizational presence at meetings represented a set of actors who were not giving up, despite policy set-backs and organizational challenges (i.e.- being cut from MIRA). As such, SIM began to establish a tacitly implied collective narrative as a group that had faced challenges, made choices and as a result, continued to fight. This narrative helped SIM to leverage resources, as noted in the past chapter, but also to become a regular presence and, eventually, a legitimate, certified actor among other challenger groups in Massachusetts.
In addition, several of these groups, including youth groups, colleges and high school groups, identified with SIM as a youth-led organization, rather than its immigration policy focus, thereby re-shaping the political arenas in which SIM would mobilize people around its issues. In this way, SIM’s position as youth members within the immigration policy arena paralleled other groups in other arenas. For example, youth organizations that focused on education reform also sought legitimacy from school boards or policy makers, all of whom were adults.

C. Dynamic and Strategic Actions within the Massachusetts Arena

On January 19, 2010, Scott Brown was elected to the U.S. Senate in a special election. The next day, the chair of the joint committee on higher education announced that he had scheduled a hearing for a bill to allow undocumented students to receive in-state tuition the following week. The bill, named the Educational Opportunity Act (SD1982 in the House and S603 in the Senate) was scheduled for a hearing before the Joint Committee on Higher Education on January 26, 2010.

A coalition co-led by SIM and MIRA had been meeting since fall 2008 to advance the EOA to allow undocumented immigrant students who attended Massachusetts high schools to pay in-state rates at state colleges and universities. The tactics of the EOA Coalition primarily consisted of professional lobbying and discussions of how to frame policy points. Even the name of the bill itself had gone through several iterations in an attempt to ‘frame’ the legislation in the most politically acceptable terms. In this case, the economic crisis led committee
members to seek to emphasize the economic contribution of in-state tuition to the state. So, what was being called the “Education Equality Act” and then the “Educational Parity Act” was renamed to be Educational Opportunity Act (EOA). Casually, however, many elected leaders and advocates for and against the bill referred to it as the ‘in-state tuition’ bill.

The 2009-2010 campaign for in-state tuition legislation in Massachusetts faced several challenges. First, there was a leadership problem with the legislation. In fall 2009, the lead Senate sponsor of the Educational Opportunity Act was arrested and convicted of leaving the scene of an accident after having his license revoked for driving under the influence of alcohol. He stepped down from his position as a Massachusetts Senator. Although the bill had other co-sponsors, the loss of its leading proponent did not bode well for passage.

Second, several Massachusetts legislators interpreted Scott Brown’s special election victory in January 2009 as a message that citizens of the Commonwealth desired more conservative policies and leadership. The day before the hearing, as Roberto entered his second week as the lead organizer of SIM, it became clear that he needed a sense of what to expect from the representatives directly. Together we walked from the SIM office to the state house, and visited the offices of the seven representatives on the Joint Committee on Higher Education who had previously agreed to co-sponsor the Education Opportunity Act (EOA). As I had come to learn was a common experience when constituents arrive without a scheduled meeting.

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69 Torrisi (North Andover), Downing (Berkshire), Spilka (Norfolk), Rosenberg (Hampshire), Pignatelli (Lenox) Provost (Somerville), and Aguilar (Fall River).
(or even if a meeting is scheduled), none were able to meet with us directly. As we were stepping out of one office, we met a supportive Representative. She invited us to come into her office where she told us the prospects for the bill being sent to the floor for debate were unlikely. She had done her own informal polling of the committee members. “You have to understand how politically toxic this bill is.” She explained that Scott Brown’s surprising upset of Martha Coakley had made many elected officials nervous about their own re-election prospects. “It has become harder because members feel this is a dangerous and unpopular vote. There is pressure on the leadership and by the leadership to keep this bill from going to the floor.” The Representative spoke to us with a candidness uncommon during our visits. This meeting suggested that the window of opportunity for passing in-state tuition had virtually closed. Furthermore, the sentiment demonstrated how a shift in the national political arena could influence the state government. In this case, the U.S. Senatorial vote in Massachusetts penetrated the strategic decisions of Massachusetts lawmakers.

As the hearing loomed, the coalition for in-state tuition faced challenges and conflicts from within as well. In particular, tensions between MIRA and SIM remained, in part due to the memory of MIRA’s dismissal of former SIM organizers from the staff of MIRA. The split had been exacerbated by SIM’s more recent moves to adopt different strategies for political change than other groups in the coalition.

70 I have chosen to withhold the name of this Representative, since the conversation had the feel of being ‘off the record’ and her candid insights with us might potentially create political problems for her.
As noted earlier, SIM was evolving away from traditional lobbying towards new tactics that incorporated a level of “public narrative.”

One exchange indicated the tactical and cultural differences between SIM and the adult allies in the coalition. At a meeting before the hearing, the coalition discussed who should give testimony at the hearing. One of the MIRA staff members stated that no one who is undocumented should speak at the hearing. The discussion became tense over this issue. Mariana recounts her experience at that meeting:

So MIRA didn’t want anyone who is undocumented. And I was angry about that, and I was like, No. And [MIRA STAFF] said, yeah, maybe they could speak, but they shouldn’t say their status, and they should give a different name, and...I kind of agreed to those terms, I was like, I will get students to speak. And they asked Miguel to speak, because he used to be undocumented. ... But I was like, nobody undocumented is speaking on the panel, and I was like, “I’ll speak” and I think I called a couple of students to see if they could speak, but either they had work or were too far away. I asked Eliza to speak and she was like “ok I’ll speak”, but then, I think it was the night before, she called me to say “I can’t do it.” She was at that MIRA meeting and she saw the tension and the lack of support and she was like, “I can’t do it.” And I was really upset, and I said, well, ok, I guess I’ll have to do it. I’ll have to tell my story and be honest to them, and say this affects me...

The above scene reveals the mistrust between some allies and leaders of SIM. This is not the type of image that either SIM or MIRA wanted portrayed in public. It represents a striving for acceptance not only as undocumented immigrants, but as young activists seeking a seat at the table.

On January 26, 2010, the hearing took place in a wide room in the basement of the State House. Several legislators and Senators spoke. They were followed by invited speakers who represented businesses and higher education institutions. This was followed by public testimony. The first public speakers were from the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM). Miguel and Mariana took their seats in the
wooden table facing the committee members. Miguel spoke first by saying, “I am very shy, so speaking is very difficult for me,” before sharing his story in testimony that lasted close to ten minutes. One of the Representatives said to him as he finished, ”I think you have gotten over being shy,” provoking laughter.

Miguel was followed by Mariana, who shared the experience of her mother’s voluntary departure from the United States and their continued separation. She later described the experience of giving testimony before the committee:

What I remember from that hearing is I just gave a short speech...like two minutes long, and then at the end of it, they asked me what is your status now? And I remember that, I could feel like everybody just was really quiet, waiting for me to respond and I saw all the legislators looking at me, like how is she going to respond to this question. And I just said, I was like I’m going to try to say it as loudly as I can and not stutter when I say it, and I was like “I AM UNDOCUMENTED.” I think, I don’t know if people were shocked by that. But I just did it. And I could tell that some of the people at MIRA were upset by it. And I saw a couple of them walk out of the hearing room really angry and they couldn’t look me in the eye after I did and I was, I was really upset.

As Mariana describes, when asked about her current immigration status, she replied “I am undocumented.” In early February 2010, before the DREAM Camp and the series of coming out strategies, Mariana’s action was understood to be a bold and innovative tactic. It is difficult to know whether anyone at MIRA actually was ‘upset’ by her disclosure. Professional organizations that work with undocumented immigrants had historically worked to advise undocumented immigrants about the potential negative repercussions of revealing their immigration status. Mariana, however, had already completed public narrative training, and understood the consequences and experienced the advice of these allies to be patronizing and an attempt to silence her. She had, then, already joined other undocumented immigrant students in a strategic shift towards ‘coming out’ that these staff
members MIRA were not yet ready to accept. For Mariana, this strategic shift reflected an emerging collective identity, and a request for legitimacy by presenting herself honestly and courageously in public. This shift also had implications among challenger organizations within the Massachusetts immigration policy arena. As Mariana and other undocumented immigrant students began to come out publically, and gain political traction and attention in the media for doing so, the ‘rules’ of this arena began to change too. Actors were forced to re-consider these old patterns of ‘protecting’ undocumented immigrant students from themselves, as coming out routines were adopted and promoted with increasing frequency.

Despite the testimony and the overwhelming number of people who attended the hearing in support of the bill, a few weeks later the joint committee on higher education sent the in-state tuition bill ‘to study,’ an action that essentially eliminated any likelihood that it would be moved to the larger Massachusetts legislature for a vote.

At the EOA Coalition meeting in March, the attendees reviewed the hearing, concluding that sending a bill to study was the end for legislation in support of undocumented immigrant students to receive in-state tuition. Sending the bill “to study” was akin to dismissing and ignoring the claims of SIM and undocumented immigrant students in Massachusetts. While the bill was not ‘rejected,’ it was quietly dismissed. The decision to avoid or ignore controversial topics, like educational access for undocumented immigrants, can be understood as a way that members of the polity were able to de-certify the legitimacy of the claims and actions of this group of challengers. The process of quiet decertification
successfully avoids controversy for the polity members, allowing other interests to be considered.

Despite this, SIM and allies did not completely give up the campaign for granting undocumented immigrants in-state tuition at public universities. Instead, they discussed the possibility of the Governor granting in-state tuition through an executive decision, thereby strategically exploiting multi-path possibilities enabled by the structure of the state-level policy arena.

At the DREAM Camp, SIM members began to develop a strategy to ‘bird dog’ the governor. The strategy meant showing up at every public event that the Governor held with signs to pressure him to take executive action on their behalf. As part of this, SIM members began engaging in a series of ‘Coming Out’ Actions that first targeted the Governor. Repeatedly, in private meetings with allies of SIM and in statements by his aids, the Governor refused to grant in-state tuition to undocumented immigrant students without a new law by the legislature. The governor dismissed and ignored SIM’s call for administrative action. The campaign for attention from the governor failed to gain traction and withered. This helps to show the effect of de-certification, whereby an existing member de-legitimizes the presence, claims or actions of challengers.

In April 2010, SIM leaders, including Mariana and Eliza, attended a United We DREAM conference in North Carolina. On the way back, the two of them discussed shifting strategies to target the only nationally elected official from Massachusetts who had not agreed to co-sponsor the DREAM Act – the newly elected Senator Scott Brown. Mariana and Eliza introduced the idea to the leaders at a SIM membership
meeting on April 24, 2010. Within a week, they shifted the target of their bird-dogging campaign from Governor Patrick to U.S. Senator Scott Brown, thereby shifting their strategies from state to national arenas. In effect, the decision by members of SIM was based on an assessment of political opportunities. SIM leaders felt public pressure from other undocumented immigrant student groups in United We DREAM network to push for the national legislation, the DREAM Act. Further, since Senator Scott Brown had publically positioned himself as ‘independent’ of the Republican Party, they believed that he might be willing to support the DREAM Act, providing the all-important 60th vote that they needed to pass the bill. In any case, he was the only Massachusetts national representative in either the Senate or the House who had not already signed on to support the DREAM Act.

The shift in target towards Senator Brown and the DREAM Act was not the end of the engagement of SIM in the Massachusetts policy arena. Just before the Memorial Day weekend in late May 2010, Massachusetts state Senators held 20 minutes of debate and then voted 28 to 10 to pass a series of budget amendments (specifically SA-17.1) that would criminalize undocumented immigrants. The amendments were modeled after Arizona SB-1070 bill, which attracted national attention after they were signed into law in Arizona in April. The proposed amendments in Massachusetts called for an anonymous toll-free hotline for any person to report anyone suspected of being in the U.S. without authorization, blocked access to health care for undocumented people, required stricter requirements for housing, social security and health benefits for all immigrants and poor people, required all businesses that work with the state to use a verification
system to prove legal status of employees, increased fines for being caught with false documents for the purpose of obtaining work\textsuperscript{71}, and explicitly prohibited non-citizens without documentation from receiving benefits such as in-state tuition at public colleges or universities\textsuperscript{72}. The Senate amendments were added to the budget that had originally been introduced by the governor and passed by the House Ways and Means Committee, so a committee to reconcile Senate and House versions of the budget had the power to drop the amendments before putting a final budget forth to the Governor who was expected to approve the budget before the end of June, but could veto elements of the budget if need be.

This move demonstrated an example of Massachusetts legislators taking advantage of what they saw as an opportunity to advance legislation in a growing climate of anti-immigrant discourse nationally. The penetration of this national discourse into the Massachusetts policy arena reflects the inter-relationship of the national and state policy arenas. Even though Massachusetts in no way faces the same types of challenges as Arizona, Massachusetts Senators proposed these amendments in the wake of this anti-immigrant national discourse. The Senate passage of these amendments surprised both pro and anti-immigration advocates. The \textit{Boston Globe} reported the response of a local Tea Party activist as follows:

"Whoo hoo! They voted for it. Must be an election year," said Christen Varley, president of the Greater Boston Tea Party, who said the measure exceeded her group's demands. "I'm surprised it passed in the Senate. I really am. (Bierman and Sacchetti, \textit{Boston Globe Online}, 5/28/10)"

\textsuperscript{71} The bill would have made it a $250 fine for having false documents to obtain work, but maintain the $50 fine for having false documents for other purposes, such as purchasing alcohol illegally.

\textsuperscript{72} As noted previously in this dissertation, states like Massachusetts had no policy, either prohibiting or allowing undocumented students from paying in-state tuition at public colleges.
It is difficult to understand how Massachusetts Senators in a Democratic majority legislature with a Democratic governor could vote for budget amendments that surpassed the expectations of Tea Party activists. One explanation may be that Senators felt they needed to respond to the vehemence of the anti-immigrant activists. One representative told Roberto that Representatives who voted against the anti-immigrant amendments in the House had received threats of death. Another explanation might be that members of the Senate misunderstood the legislation. One ally described a member of the Senate, who not ‘anti-immigrant’ but voted for the bill because he thought that it was only enforcing existing federal laws. It is notable, that although the Arizona bill was being debated nationally, these opinions were expressed weeks before the Federal government sued the State of Arizona for similar laws, and before the Supreme Court determined that most of the state’s law was unconstitutional. In this way, different members of the national immigration policy arena contested these actions. One way to understand this contestation is that as a dynamic, fluid process of discursive de-certification and certification of undocumented immigrants as a group by different members of that political arena.

On June 1st, the Educational Opportunity Act (EOA) Coalition came together to discuss the situation. One member bemoaned a poll from Suffolk University that had found that 84% of people in Massachusetts supported taking benefits away from immigrants, and 54% said that the Arizona law was a good thing. A labor rights lobbyist on the committee said, “This is as bad as it could be. The Governor and the House are under pressure to vote for this or some version of these
amendments.” He went on to assess the problem from the point of view of an experienced lobbyist:

My problem is I am in a position as a person who has been roundly defeated. I have to reassess. All my strategic assessments were wrong. When the Arizona thing happened, I thought that would set us in a positive way. The situation is much worse than I thought it was a week ago. The work on our side is completely fragmented. I get an email about it last minute – like the rally on Saturday. It feels like flailing to me.

As the above sentiment suggests, members of this group who had met for almost 18 months felt deeply disheartened. Further, he and others noted that the immigrant rights groups in Massachusetts lacked unity. MIRA held one set of meetings to discuss the crisis. Another group with support from a national group held a separate rally, and the EOA committee met to plan a third. One of the EOA members said, “It feels disjointed.” The group discussed the importance of taking an electoral strategy in the coming year. The labor activist quoted above encouraged SIM to take this issue on, rather than focusing on the “Brown is Beautiful” campaign.

A week after this meeting, SIM responded to this crisis by holding a dramatic, public 24 hours/day vigil for twenty days. This strategic decision will be discussed in the next chapter as an event that leveraged the respect and recognition of other challenger groups within the Massachusetts political arena, thereby certifying SIM as a political actor.

IV. Conclusion

This chapter describes the closing political opportunities for comprehensive immigration reform in the 111th Congress, reflecting a competing national agenda around the economy and Health Care reform, as well as a reaction within the
Arizona state arena to perceived federal inaction on immigration reform. Such perceptions were exacerbated by racialized, anti-immigrant discourses that the media deployed, thereby affecting public opinion, and consequently, new legislative initiatives in other states. Such state actions were bounded, however, by federal precedents, especially plenary power and the 14th Amendment, which helped to shape the contours of what is possible within state arenas for immigration policy. Meanwhile perception of these closing opportunities by undocumented immigrant students during the 111th Congress, combined with the availability of new resources (i.e.- public narrative trainings discussed in previous chapter) led to a series of ‘coming out’ actions by undocumented immigrant students across the country, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

In addition, the above discussion of the national immigration policy arena highlights the tensions that were present between proponents of CIR and the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill. These tensions evolved from differences in strategy between student and ‘adult’ immigrant rights groups, but also reflected the point that the interests of undocumented immigrant students were not fully constituted during the early part of the 111th Congress. Likewise in Massachusetts, the narrowing opportunities for the in-state tuition legislation, combined with the effect of Sen. Scott Brown’s (R-MA) surprise election in January 2010, and growing momentum around national DREAM Act campaigns shaped SIM’s strategic decisions to more intentionally shift its attention towards the national political arena.

Furthermore, this chapter reveals several lessons about the nature of public policy arenas, and their contribution to the constitution of political actors. First,
this chapter helps to disaggregate a monolithic representation of different actors within the polity model. In particular, this review of both national and state actors in the immigration policy arenas reveals conflicting and competing agendas between and within groups of members and challengers. Such tensions include conflicts between the president and executive agencies, between the President and Congress, between the houses of Congress, between political parties within Congress, between the media and members of the polity, and, of course, between members and challengers of the political arena, as well as among different challengers. As such, this long-standing framing of ‘challenger’ and ‘member’ should be considered as a heuristic to assist with analysis, as a ‘rough model’ of interaction, and not as the final word on the dynamics of such interactions (Tilly 1978:58).

Second, this chapter highlights the nature of arenas as spaces for interaction among actors, which are dynamic and permeable. This permeability is seen in two ways. First, I surface the way that arenas co-constitute one another. While the federal penetration and influence on state policies arenas receives wide-spread public attention, at the same time the dynamics of federal arenas can be shaped by the actions within state arenas which penetrate the federal institutional relationships and discourses. For example, the Arizona policies of SB-1070 shaped public discourses around immigration policies nationally. A second example of the permeability of arenas involves the way political actors, such as undocumented immigrant students, can at times travel between, but even more importantly, simultaneously participate in different national and state level arenas. Such
simultaneity demonstrates, in part, an ability of these political actors to shift
discursively and strategically between federal and state arenas, not only over the
course of weeks or days, but within seconds, through the use of new technologies
such as smart phones and new media such as Twitter, Facebook, and text messaging.
In this case, the shift between “bird dogging” Governor Patrick in the state arena and
Senator Brown in the national arena became a seamless strategic shift that reflected
the modularity of tactics (Tarrow 1998).

Finally, political arenas reflect an important component in the certification of
new political actors. Furthermore, this case shows the consequences of not being
certified within a political arena. In Massachusetts, for instance, the legislature and
governor were both able to ignore SIM’s claims for in-state tuition, quietly and
without controversy, thereby de-certifying this group’s claims of legitimacy.
Furthermore, the fact that national immigration policy arena members did not
recognize DREAMers as legitimate political actors, in their own right at that time, in
part explains the serious delays in putting any public pressure on political leaders to
move ahead with the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill until the twilight of the 111th
Congress.
Chapter 6: “Undocumented and Unafraid”: Evolving Repertoires of Contention

In September 2009, I joined a small group of SIM leaders on a trip to visit historical sites of the Civil Rights Movement, including a stop at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Alabama. The exhibits included displays that documented the challenges faced by African Americans in the South, including the violence of lynching and hatred from white supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Across the street from the museum is the re-built 16th Street Baptist Church where four children were killed by a Klan-planted bomb in 1963. After leaving the museum, the group gathered on a corner to reflect on what we had experienced in the museum. This reflection felt particularly auspicious to several members of SIM, due to Jorge’s presentation of a vision for undocumented immigrant students in the movement to begin to ‘come out’ and overcome the shame of being undocumented:

We have to come out. I mean, they always say there are 65,000 students who cannot go to school. I’ve never seen them. I want to see them. I want them to say who they are, their names, what they want to be when they grow up or what they’re already going to school for. For us to change this country, this country needs to know that we’re everywhere. It looks like you Caterina. It looks like you Neil. It looks like me. It looks like Mariana. It could look like Ernesto, Dee. It could look like any of us and that it’s okay to be undocumented….That was their sacrifice for me to get a good education. Maybe the same way that their parents at Little Rock sent them to Central High School, you know. My parents worked their butts off for me to go to that school. Ah, but, my parents always created that dynamic so when I was in high school it was never an issue of being undocumented because for me that means to be poor and I thought that was great. I thought that being undocumented built my character and I think it builds all of our character.”
Some in the group nod and say, “Yeah.”

Jorge: “So we have to make it be okay and we have to make it that this is a morality thing. Being undocumented is not something we should be ashamed of and if we speak about it as a shameful thing then everybody is going to think that it’s a shameful thing, but if we speak about it with pride...then it’s not going to be, you know? It’s the difference from being, you know, this black man in the fifties or black woman in the fifties that is oppressed (he lowers his head and motions his hand as if covering his face with shame) and cannot do things to this person who is fighting for their rights and because, you know, it doesn’t matter what is the color of your skin. We have to make being undocumented a prideful thing. It has to have morality... It’s really a lot of great values that come from our situation that we have to live.

Jorge adroitly uses elements of public narrative by appropriating the cultural meanings of belonging to the United States and involving his audience of listeners in that sense of belonging: “It (this country) looks like you Caterina. It looks like you Neil. It looks like me. It looks like Mariana.” Jorge appropriated the identities of these individual undocumented immigrant students, elevating them as part of a collective, thereby strengthening their sense of “we-ness” and thus collective identity in the process. Furthermore, he drew upon a repertoire of social movement tactics from other social movements, overtly from the civil rights movement and tacitly from the Lesbian, Gay Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) rights movement by saying “we have to come out.”

In so doing, Jorge presaged the ‘coming out’ actions where undocumented immigrant students would share their narratives in more public settings a few months hence. As has been well-documented, coming out actions have been part of the repertoires activists within the LGBT movement and they involve the revealing of personal identity for strategic purposes (Bernstein 1997; Chabot and Duyvendak

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73 Specifically, Jorge’s story here follows the narrative elements of the story of “us” and “now” that Ganz (2010) developed. First, he established a common sense of “us” among the participants, and then outlines a course of action.
For LGBT activists, “coming out” involved public revelations of queer identity. Similarly, though with differing implications, SIM members ‘came out’ in public settings by revealing their immigration status publically. The adoption of these coming out routines was one of several strategic tactical innovations between 2008 and 2010 associated with the constitution of undocumented immigrant students as political actors.

Although community organizers have argued that the choice of tactics is an instrumental strategic choice, challengers’ choice of tactics has a significant cultural component. Such decisions are bound by historical and cultural knowledge and expectations, as well as actors’ perceptions of opportunities and threats (Tilly 2006, 2008). Furthermore, these strategies and tactics constitute public portraits of SIM and undocumented immigrant students, thereby shaping both the way they come to understand themselves collectively and how they come to be understood by others. Thus, the evolution of tactics helps shape the collective identity and certification of this group of new political actors in both national and state policy arenas.

This chapter explores strategies and tactics, and their relationship to collective identity and legitimacy. In particular, it examines how SIM’s innovative actions helped to constitute undocumented immigrant students as political actors by examining two campaigns, one around the DREAM Act and the second in response to proposed anti-immigrant legislation in Massachusetts. First, I describe SIM’s efforts in the national immigration policy arena as it pushed to gain support for the DREAM Act, initially in Summer 2009, and then again after Scott Brown’s election in early spring 2010. In so doing, I trace how the established set of tactics
used by SIM shifted from institutional lobbying towards a series of ‘coming out’ actions in 2010 that deployed the narratives of undocumented immigrant students. Second, I describe actions taken during June 2010 in the Massachusetts state immigration policy arena, when undocumented immigrant students held a constant vigil on the steps of the Massachusetts Statehouse for 20 days and 19 nights in response to a set of anti-immigrant amendments. For both of these, I trace the evolution of tactics and their contribution to constituting SIM as a political actor.

I. Tactics and Strategies in the Literature

“Tactics means doing what you can with what you have. Tactics are those consciously deliberate acts by which human beings live with each other and deal with the world around them. In the world of give and take, tactics is the art of how to take and how to give. Here our concern is with the tactic of taking: how the Have-Nots can take power away from the Haves.” – Saul Alinsky (1971:126)

Tactics are central to the practice of organizing (Alinsky 1971; Ganz 2009; Jacoby Brown 2006; Warren 2001; Wood 2002; Delgado 1986; Kahn 1982). In the above quote taken from Rules for Radicals by Saul Alinsky, tactics are “consciously deliberate acts.” Alinksy and other community organizers considered tactics to be conscious and deliberate because they were part of intentional strategies. Ganz (2009) defined strategy as “how we turn what we have into what we need to get what we want” (Ganz 2009: 8). He goes on to note that “Strategy is intentional – a pathway that we shape by making a series of choices about how to use resources in the present to achieve goals in the future” (Ganz 2009: 8). Alinsky, as the ‘father’ of community organizing in the United States, and Ganz, who spent over forty years practicing and later writing about community organizing, both emphasize the
rational agency of community organizers to develop and implement strategies and tactics.

While not rejecting their instrumentality, other scholars of contentious politics emphasize how tactics and strategies are selected from a limited, familiar, historical and culturally created array of possible actions, or what Tilly (1977, 2008) called *repertoires of contention* (Tilly 2006: vii; See also McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Tilly 2002, 2005, 2008). In Tilly’s (2006, 2008) formulation, contentious repertoires culturally bound and shape the rational choices of organizers. Indeed, repertoires change over time as social movement leaders readjust strategies, learn, or adapt to their changing environment of opportunities and threats (McAdam 1983; Tilly 2006, 2008). At the same time, they evolve as such choices interact with changing opportunities and threats within and across arenas (Tilly 2006). The conceptualization of strategic action as repertoires of contention provides leverage for understanding the modularity and transferability of specific types of actions from one setting to another (Tarrow 2005, 1998; Wada 2012; Chabot and Duyvendak 2002). One aspect of tactics that the evocation of modular repertoires helps explain has been their evolution and change over time in relationship to cycles of increasing and decreasing protest activity (Wada 2012, Tarrow 1998).

The remainder of this chapter traces the evolution of tactics and strategies by undocumented immigrant students in SIM, in both the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. In response to new resources (Chapter 4) and shifting opportunities and threats (Chapter 5), undocumented immigrant students in SIM developed, selected, and in some cases innovated the tactics and strategies that they
applied to advancing their interests. As noted above, one of the ways that the repertoires of contention shifted or evolved among undocumented immigrant students involved the appropriation of tactics from LGBT movement actors, by “coming out.” Bernstein (1997) suggests that coming out routines might be understood as the deployment of identity, which she defines as “expressing identity such that the terrain of conflict becomes the individual person so that the values, categories and practices of individuals become subject to debate.” (Bernstein 1997). As I will discuss, undocumented immigrant students deployed aspects of their identity (or ’biographical resources) through public narratives to constitute themselves as political actors.

At the Massachusetts level, as noted in the previous chapter, SIM found itself increasingly marginalized by political threats, especially the Massachusetts Senate’s passage of anti-immigrant budget amendments in May 2010. Furthermore, the divisions within the Massachusetts immigration policy arena weakened the response to these threats by the array of existing challengers. As noted earlier, two separate protest events had gone virtually unnoticed by political leaders after the passage of these amendments. SIM’s response centered on a political performance drew upon the more public tactical repertoires of “coming out,” and helped unify challengers. In the process, SIM gained considerable recognition and legitimacy as a political actor within the Massachusetts immigration policy arena.

This discussion of tactics and strategies has particular relevance to the constitution of new political actors within a given arena. By definition, challengers and subjects do not have routine access to the proper channels for decision-making
in the polity, so they take action that may be outside of the ‘proper channels’ (Gamson 1975, Tilly 1978). As such, social movements have been referred to as politics ‘by other means.’ Given this, tactics and strategies become frameworks and means through which new challengers signify to current political actors their legitimate candidacy for being constituted within an arena. These new challengers present their case based on tactics and strategies that demonstrate their worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment (WUNC) (Tilly 2005). Such WUNC displays take the form of different slogans, phrases, labels, performances, etc.. While the formats and specific circumstances of these performances vary, the intentions share the goal of demonstrating one or more of the four WUNC elements (2005:54). Importantly to our discussion of the certification of a new group of political actors, potential political actors must select strategies that balance their needs to acquire resources (especially moral resources of legitimacy) in a given arena without acquiescing to rules of that arena such that they become ‘co-opted’ (Gamson 1975).

The next section picks up this discussion by looking at the case of undocumented immigrant students in SIM, as they emerged as political actors during the early part of 2010, especially how they began to deploy identities by “coming out” as undocumented immigrants in support of the DREAM Act. I then turn to a set of tactics and strategies that SIM developed in response to proposed anti-immigrant policies that the Massachusetts Senate amended to the state budget in May and June 2010.

II. Campaigns for The DREAM Act
During the 111th Congress, SIM engaged in a series of strategic campaigns to help pass the DREAM Act, each of which responded to perceived opportunities at that point in time. As a baseline for understanding SIM’s engagement with the national arena, I begin by discussing the Summer 2009 10 for 10 Campaign. 10 for 10 was based on lobbying tactics that were contained and private, in contrast to the contentious, public performances and “coming out” actions that characterized later movement activities.

A. The 10 for 10 Campaign, Summer 2009

As previously noted, Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) included the DREAM Act. During the Campaign to Reform Immigration for America (RIFA) Summit, SIM leaders joined MIRA and the Massachusetts delegation in efforts to ask members of congress to co-sponsor the DREAM Act, AgJobs Act and a future piece of legislation for CIR.

Three weeks after the RIFA summit on June 23rd, SIM brought 55 students to join over 300 other undocumented immigrant students from New York, Wisconsin, Texas, California, Maryland, New Jersey and other states returned to Washington, DC to hold a “DREAM Graduation” on the lawn next to the one of the reflecting pools that surround the Capitol building. One of the national organizers shouted to them, “all of you are from different states, but you are here for the same reason!” The students responded, “The Dream Act!” The undocumented students wore graduation gowns and mortar boards, and entered in an organized queue until they filled the 35 rows of 14 folding chairs each, while a solo violin played the “pomp and
circumstances” graduation march. The National “DREAM” Graduation Ceremony was a public performance that dramatized the irony that these students faced at their high school graduations around the country. The ironic message of the Graduation Ceremony was that these participants graduated from high schools across the United States, but now, their options were limited and for some, they faced a hostile society that does not see them as young people with dreams but as ‘illegal immigrants.” The group listened to undocumented immigrant student speakers, as well as leaders from business, labor unions and national organizations. After the ceremony, still wearing graduation robes, the undocumented immigrant students walked into the congressional office buildings to lobby House and Senate members to co-sponsor the DREAM Act.

One meeting had been pre-scheduled with Congressman Lynch (who had not yet co-sponsored the DREAM Act) and seven SIM members, several of whom were from the Congressman’s home district. As they approached the office, the SIM members discussed strategies to approach the congressman, clarifying who would tell their story, who would ask for his co-sponsorship and who would take notes of the meeting. When they arrived, however, they were told that the Congressman was unavailable and that instead they would have to meet with his staff person. The team leader, Mariana was frustrated, but at that moment, Representative Lynch stepped out of his office, about 20 yards away down the hall. Mariana called to him,

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74 The high pitch of the solo violin music sends a message that something is not right with this graduation. Rather than this song bellowing out with the robust confidence of a horn section or the harmony of a band, the solo violin sounds creepy. Rachel later informs me that this musical choice was intentional.
“Representative Lynch!” As he turned, she and the other members of the delegation ran to him. They introduced themselves as part of SIM, and from his district. They said that they wanted to talk with him about the DREAM Act. He asked them to talk to his scheduler, but Mariana responded, “Oh, but we were on a bus with fifty other students.”

“You came down on a bus?” the congressman asked. “Yes.” she answered. The congressman invited them into a conference room in his office to talk. According to multiple members of the group, Rep. Lynch asked about the sports teams in Brockton, but the delegation brought the subject back to the DREAM Act. He remained non-committal in his responses. As the meeting closed, Mariana said, “So in a week or two we can meet you in the district and would like to see what you decided regarding the DREAM Act.” One of the SIM leaders noted, “He seemed impressed with us.” Two days later, Mariana and others in the delegation received an email from Rep. Lynch’s office that he had co-sponsored the DREAM Act.

During these two trips to Washington, DC, in June 2009, SIM had secured the DREAM Act co-sponsorship of seven out of ten members of congress from Massachusetts at a time when there was no actual proposed legislation for comprehensive immigration reform. Additionally, SIM established a goal of gaining the co-sponsorship of the remaining three members of congress: Rep. Richard Neal, Rep. John Tierney, and Rep. Nikki Tsongas. Each case provides an example of strategies taken by undocumented immigrant students and the subsequent decision by representatives to officially co-sponsor the DREAM Act.
In the first case, SIM leveraged support through an outside ally. SIM held two meetings in DC with Rep. Neal, who represents the Worcester area, but could not secure a commitment. Then, SIM organizers approached a lobbyist from a labor union who served on the in-state tuition committee. The labor union representative met with Rep. Neal and was able to secure a commitment from him to co-sponsor the DREAM Act. This type of network of support for legislation demonstrated the ability of SIM to mobilize not only its own base, but to build supportive relationships with powerful political groups such as a national labor union.

In the second case, SIM’s strategy involved taking a Congressman by surprise. Given Representative Tierney’s history of strong support for immigration issues and education issues, the DREAM Act seemed like a bill that was well-aligned with his positions. The group was confused by the Congressman’s absence on the list of co-sponsors and called him to schedule a meeting at his home office. Then, quite by chance, members of the North Shore SIM chapter heard that the Congressman would be holding a public hearing about health care in his district. According to Roberto, then a SIM leader, “We went to that meeting because we also care about health care, but we had another agenda.” At the question and answer session, the group asked the Congressman about his position on the DREAM Act. He answered that he thought he was a co-sponsor already, and at the following Monday meeting, Rep. Tierney clarified this position and confirmed his willingness to co-sponsor the bill. He also discussed Comprehensive Immigration Reform, sharing that he could not state a position, since there was not yet a bill that he could consider.
The third strategy involved the threat of public pressure on a member of Congress. By the middle of July, SIM organizers sent an email message out to the SIM membership. It announced that Representative Tierney’s decision to co-sponsor the DREAM Act made the tally 9 out of 10 U.S. Representatives from Massachusetts. SIM organizers went to work to pressure Representative Tsongas. During a meeting in Washington, DC, an aide to Rep. Tsongas reported that she was generally supportive of Comprehensive Immigration Reform, and wanted to take these bills together. In the third week of July, it seemed that she was not planning to co-sponsor the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill. The SIM chapter from Tsongas’ district organized a letter writing campaign and made telephone calls to her office. According to a leader, “We were talking to everyone.” The leadership called regularly to schedule a meeting. They met weekly and began to plan a local campaign in her district to gain public support that would pressure the Congresswoman to co-Sponsor the DREAM Act. One of the SIM organizers gave an interview with a Spanish-speaking television station (*Univision*) in which he pointed out that Nikki Tsongas was the only US Representative from Massachusetts who had not co-sponsored the legislation. Finally, a local advocacy group that had been working in partnership with the local Lawrence chapter of SIM (the Merrimack Valley for Peace) sent her a letter. On July 28, 2009 Nikki Tsongas became the tenth Massachusetts member of the U.S. House of Representatives to co-sponsor the DREAM Act.

The use of three different types of strategies to pressure these three members of Congress to formally co-sponsor the DREAM Act is instructive as a
successful effort in a relatively ‘open’ political environment of an all-democratic slate of representatives from Massachusetts during a still-early point in the 111th Congress. Even the fact that SIM deployed three different types of tactics, and took advantage of unexpected opportunities such as the Tierney community event, reinforce the idea that SIM’s selection of strategies was primarily based on a cultural pattern that involved using existing opportunities and patterns of pressure to demonstrate a mans of change. Furthermore, only the work to secure the support of Tsongas began to approach the public pressure that would characterize most of the campaign work in the later portion of 2010, when the DREAM Act was being considered. During the Summer 2009, national members of the immigration policy arena were still sending signals that a Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill might be taken up.

B. DREAM Act Campaigns of 2010

As the last chapter demonstrated, 2010 brought more challenges for proponents of comprehensive immigration reform with growing anti-immigrant rhetoric, the election of Scott Brown to the U.S. Senate, and new legislation that sought increased surveillance and state repression of immigrants, especially the undocumented in Arizona and other states. In the face of these threats and closing opportunities, undocumented immigrant student groups were poised to enter into more contentious forms of action, having secured needed resources for organizations (like SIM and United We DREAM) and trained leaders in public narrative through DREAM Camps.
The February 2010 DREAM Camp trained SIM members and catalyzed undocumented immigrant students to “come out” in a series of events planned in March 2010. In contrast to past activism where undocumented immigrants would use pseudonyms or not be spokespeople, undocumented students began telling public stories about their experiences with being undocumented and using their real names. To illustrate the effect of the DREAM Camp on participants, when I asked Eliza “what were some of the things that you did after the DREAM Camp?” she responded:

Coming out. That was the biggest... It was national coming out day where all the undocumented students came out... and I came out at Harvard. And that was very powerful... and I had all of these smart people around me and SIM people and I was like I’m going to do it, and I don’t know what I’m saying but I am just going to do it. And all the (chapter) members were there and they were like ’You just came out!’ Then they came out back home.

Eliza contrasted these experiences with how she felt a year earlier when a reporter approached her.

I will never forget, a reporter came up to me and they were like, do you want to share your story? And I was like, sure. And she asked me, “Are you undocumented?” And I said, “No.” I lied because I was really ashamed. And I was really afraid. I was like, what if everyone sees this? But it’s so different now because now a year later, I am no longer afraid. I can say it. So it was different.

As Eliza indicated, something was different after her year of participating as a central member of SIM’s leadership and attending DREAM Camp. The story shows that she understood herself differently, and seems to imply that while she lied about being undocumented to a random reporter in 2009 because she was ‘ashamed,’ she had lost this fear over the course of the year. By March 2010 Eliza “came out” at a rally at Harvard University in public and before the media where she used her name and exposed her status as undocumented, and she attributes her change to her
experiences in SIM. Specifically, she describes the pressure to perform as a ‘leader’ within SIM. She notes that other members were watching her come out, which inspired them to come out.

Meanwhile, other SIM members were coming out across the state. These members described feelings that were similar to Eliza. “Empowered” was a word often used by members who had ‘come out.’ Others described the sense of relief at finally ‘being themselves’ and ‘not having to lie anymore.’ At a leadership meeting, Tiago described, “The act of coming out was very empowering and liberating. It was different to tell my story and it was just ‘I’m undocumented.’ It was very liberating.” As he said this, members of SIM around the room began to snap their fingers. The act of “snapping” was itself a collective routine – a technique that they had practiced at SIM camp, to show appreciation for something people said.

In late February and early March, SIM leaders held “coming out events” in different regions including five teams in the Boston area (East Boston, Somerville, Quincy, Cambridge, and the University Team), Worcester, Lawrence, North Shore and Cape Cod. In all of the sessions, individual SIM members shared their stories and asked a broad audience of community members to support the DREAM Act. The stories were combined with fliers and hand-outs about the DREAM Act, and in some cases, combined with power point presentations about the DREAM Act. In Lawrence the group went on the local radio station every day.

Elsewhere in the country, undocumented students had also begun to “come out” in innovative ways. In January, a group of four undocumented immigrant students began to walk the 1,500 miles from Florida to Washington, DC, in what
they are calling the “Trail of DREAMs.” They blogged about the experiences of their walk, describing encounters and conversations with people who held strong anti-immigrant beliefs, including those expressed at a KKK rally in Georgia.

Undocumented students around the country followed the events of their journey with anticipation. In February, Eliza told me, “I check the blog every day.” The Trail of DREAMs arrived in Washington, DC on May 1, 2010. Ernesto explained to me, “the original plan was for the walkers to willingly get arrested.” Instead, Representative Gutierrez (D-IL) and other protestors who were not undocumented, held yellow and orange signs with letters that spelled out “Trail of Dreams” and agreed to be arrested in their place. Rep. Gutierrez (D-IL) was a member of the Hispanic Caucus and one of the leading congress people supporting comprehensive immigration reform, and cited Arizona’s SB1070 legislation as his motivation for getting arrested. Some members of SIM would later question the congressman’s motives, and suggest that he stole the spotlight from the four undocumented immigrant students from Florida. Regardless of his intentions, the Representative’s arrest garnered headlines.

Another action that influenced SIM’s tactics occurred in Chicago on March 10th, when the Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL) held a mass rally in Federal Plaza outside of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) offices. Eight members of IYJL publically announced their immigration status, shouting a new slogan, “Undocumented and Unafraid.” Describing the event later, one of the eight explained:

“We finally lost the fear of talking about our long-kept secret: we are undocumented. We had realized the power of speaking about our experiences in public and using our voices to
Sway opinions and counter the toxic anti-immigrant rhetoric that has flooded our country” (Unzueta 2012:66).

SIM and these groups across the country described this loss of fear by revealing their immigration status in public. Undocumented students repeatedly described the experiences of “coming out” as liberating in much the same way as coming out repertoires of contention among LGBT activists (Seidman and Meeks 2011; Bernstein 1997; Chabot and Duyvendak 2002; Phelan 1993). In some ways, these parallels are clear and undeniable, but the tactic was marked by important distinctions across these movements.

In the LGBT movement repertoire, “coming out” served as a tactic that recognized systemic hetero-normality as a form of socially dispersed power present in the larger culture. As such, “coming out” often involved first “coming out” to yourself, and later, revealing sexual identity to family and friends who were often a part of the system to be challenged (Seidman and Weeks 2011).

In contrast, some undocumented immigrants learned of their undocumented status from parents. In fact, much of the anti-immigrant rhetoric about undocumented immigrant students has centered on the culpability of the parents. So, when undocumented immigrant students revealed their status in public, it carried risks not only for themselves, but also for parents and siblings who might also be undocumented. Several undocumented immigrant students reported that their parents and siblings were deeply concerned about their public activism. Even Eliza, who described her sense of liberation after coming out above, also
experienced tensions of being caught between her family and the SIM members who looked up to her:

It was more scary to say it in (home town), because she (her mother) was really well known and nobody knows that she is undocumented, but everyone knows that I am her daughter, so my mom was pressuring me not to do it. At the same time that I was afraid, I had to motivate these people (the SIM members) to tell their story, but they are like, “why don’t you tell your story?” And I was like, how do I motivate someone when I am not really following that? So how do I give them that power, if you’re not like doing it? …But then I would go home and my mom was like, ‘You better not be coming out!’ And I’m like “no, of course not.” So it was kind of like I was watching my back, but not theirs. So it was really a growing tension. At the end I ended up coming out and my mom was not happy with that. I had a meeting with a lot of people that my mom knew. … I told my story and people told my mom. And people were like, “I didn’t know your daughter was undocumented.” And she was like, “I don’t want you to do that.” And I told her, well you have to understand that I am not ashamed. Now she is fine with it. She makes a joke and says, “when you are in deportation proceedings, do not claim me as your mom.” She is like really scared about that... And my sister too. My sister just told me three days ago, both of my sisters, my older sister and my middle sister, they told me, “I am tired of you putting your Facebook status about you being undocumented.” They were like you don’t think of about how that affects us. You saying that you are undocumented and unafraid, but what about us? Y’know, we are your sisters and we don’t want everyone to know about you. We don’t want everyone to know your story. And it is really hard for me, because at the same time, this is what I love to do, but I have to think about my sisters and my parents back home.

Eliza was not unique in experiencing such a reaction from her parents and siblings.

As was discussed earlier, “being undocumented” was a family secret for many of the young immigrant students in SIM. Some undocumented students reported that their parents prevented them from participating in SIM events. During a planning meeting in 2010, one member of SIM joined the meeting via conference call by leaving her house secretly and calling in from a pay phone because her mother had taken her cell phone and grounded her to prevent her from participating in SIM. So for undocumented immigrant students, engaging in public ‘coming out’ repertoires still sometimes led conflict between children and parents, but the underlying nature of those conflicts differed since the revelation of undocumented immigrant status did not target parents, but rather, included an element of risk for the parents.
Parents’ concerns were understandable, given the growing anti-immigrant rhetoric in the larger society. While undocumented immigrant students increased their public activism, the national discourse around illegal immigration became increasingly hostile, and gained political influence. In particular, in the state of Arizona, legislation provoked fear and anger from undocumented immigrant students and their families. Given this threatening discourse and new policies, some undocumented immigrant student activists felt that these ‘coming out’ actions fell short of the type of strategic pressure that they believed was necessary to transform U.S. policy on immigration reform. Instead, they began to consider civil disobedience by intentionally breaking the law to get arrested.

Among those who supported civil disobedience was former SIM organizer, Ernesto. In March, Ernesto announced that he would be leaving SIM to help family affected by a major earthquake in his home country of Chile. In the weeks that passed, Ernesto did not make the trip to Chile, but instead, helped to organize a national group who were secretly planning civil disobedience actions for the DREAM Act. In mid-April, I received a phone call from Ernesto, with an invitation to attend a ‘secret meeting’ with the organizers of this group. We met at a restaurant in Chinatown. That night I learned that Ernesto and one of the other national leaders had stayed up late talking about their concerns for the movement and envisioning a plan for civil disobedience. The group was considering strategic and symbolic targets such as Ellis Island or Congressional offices. They had established relationships with lawyers and developed plans for gaining public sympathy and support for the undocumented immigrant student activists who would be arrested.
The small group of candidates, who these organizers called "noodles," were selected intentionally to be clearly sympathetic cases, or cases that the U.S. government might not want to deport. For example, one of the “noodles” was an openly gay Iranian-born man who attended a highly prestigious university. The group banked on the likelihood that if the U.S. considered deporting an openly gay man to Iran, there would be tremendous political blowback from human rights groups.75

Using an online platform, the group mysteriously announced ‘The DREAM is Coming.” So, it was not a total surprise when five members of this group, dressed in caps and gowns, occupied Senator John McCain’s office on May 16, 2010. Four were arrested. In a New York Times article the next day, Julia Preston wrote, “It was the first time students have directly risked deportation in an effort to prompt Congress to take up a bill that would benefit illegal immigrant youths” (NYT 5/17/2010).

Ernesto himself was not one of the students who sat in at the office. Instead, he was among the student organizers who were outside McCain’s office building, managing press, encouraging protests, and helping to pass messages to and from the five “noodles” who came to be known as the McCain 5 (Mateo et al., 2012). In fact, at one point, the local police had been called and were going to release the activists,

75 I left the meeting with wishes for their success, but I did not meet with any of the attendees again, except for Ernesto. In the months that followed, he would occasionally share news about the group’s plans, but never specifics. It is difficult to interpret these experiences and encounters with the DREAM is Coming group, even now. I wondered then, as I do now, whether some members of the group really ‘trusted me’ or if this was a performance of some kind. Given past experiences of social movement groups with covert infiltrators, I wondered repeatedly whether they considered me, a white male sociologist to be secretly working for a government organization or for an anti-immigrant organization, and raised this with Ernesto directly. For his part, Ernesto was not alarmed by this prospect, re-stating his trust in me, and that "if anyone did try to infiltrate this group, they would just come to realize the power that is in this room.
but according to Ernesto, his allies called the Immigration and Customs (ICE) office to ensure that the activists would be detained. This was a strategic decision to intentionally provoke and heighten the arrests in a way that would dramatize the injustice of the detention and deportation system.

The leaders of the *DREAM is Coming* eventually (in early 2011) split from United We DREAM entirely and founded the National Immigrant Youth Alliance (NIYA) citing a host of grievances against the UWD leadership and strategic directions, and against Jorge and SIM personally. Their process of radicalization is well beyond the scope of this dissertation, which focuses on SIM. Still, it is of note that the two organizers of SIM when I began my data collection (Jorge and Ernesto) in October 2008 went on to become involved as core leaders of the two largest undocumented immigrant student organizations in the country (United We DREAM and NIYA).

Other SIM leaders, meanwhile, stopped short of specifically endorsing civil disobedience. As a group, they chose to target the only nationally elected representative from Massachusetts who had not agreed to co-sponsor the DREAM Act, Senator Scott Brown. This decision had visibly materialized by April 2010. As the group’s members returned from the United We DREAM field meeting in North Carolina, Mariana and Eliza discussed the need to pressure Senator Scott Brown to support the DREAM Act. They launched a campaign that they called “Brown is Beautiful” with an intended double meaning. As Mariana noted, “We are giving him props while giving them to ourselves too.” T-shirts and banners with the “Brown is Beautiful” slogan were produced and distributed for a series of actions.
Many of SIM’s allies were critical of the decision to approach Scott Brown. One ally, who was deeply involved in the Massachusetts Democratic party, voiced this criticism publically, which angered SIM’s leadership. Other allies held private conversations with the staff or leadership to dissuade them from offering to support Senator Brown. SIM, however, saw Senator Brown as a Republican in a largely Democratic state, who had won an election in which he campaigned as an ‘independent.’ They recognized that the Senator needed issues in which he could distance himself from the ideas of Republican party. Furthermore, the DREAM Act contains a provision for providing legal status to undocumented immigrants who serve in the military. They hoped that this might appeal to Senator Brown’s positions in support of the military. They wanted Senator Brown to commit to either support or not support the DREAM Act. Instead, he hinted that he would consider the DREAM Act, but refused to commit either way.

Eliza and others participated in a “study-in” at U.S. Senator Scott Brown’s Boston office, joining other SIM members as they occupied the front office (by studying) and refused to leave until the senator would meet with them. The story of the SIM’s study-in attracted the attention of local news media who noted the “Brown is Beautiful” logo, and SIM’s request to meet with Senator Brown, which had gone unanswered. Senator Brown’s staff reported to the news media that they would not meet with anyone who was in the United States illegally, but that they would meet with John, a Harvard University student who was a white U.S. citizen. At a SIM leadership meeting on April 17th, John expressed his discomfort with the situation, saying, “It’s more important that he meets with an undocumented person and looks
in their eyes, and thinks about them when he is voting.” The group, however, encouraged John to meet with Senator Brown and ask for the Senator to meet the undocumented immigrant students in SIM, which he did. Senator Brown reported that he would consider meeting with members of SIM. On April 16, 2010, the Senator’s staff announced to the news media that he would agree to meet with members of SIM in about 4-6 weeks. Meanwhile, the leadership also planned a series of events, including attending the graduation of Scott Brown’s daughter at Boston College.

On Tuesday May 25th, 2010, roughly six weeks after Brown had announced that he would meet with members of SIM, they held a press conference on the steps of the state house. About 40 members of immigrant rights groups and media watched as 51 SIM members sat on the steps holding American flags and signs that read “Help us work and serve through the DREAM Act.” A Quaker reverend and leader of an inter-faith organization led the group in a prayer. Then, Paul, a new member who wanted to join the military if the DREAM Act passed, spoke about his desire to serve his country. A new leader, Leigh, led a series of chants, where she shouted, “we want to ask Senator Brown to support the DREAM Act as a stand alone bill.” I looked at a staff person from MIRA while Leigh said this, and noticed his scowl. Without intentionally deciding as a group, SIM had publically shifted its rhetoric towards support of the DREAM Act, and away from Comprehensive Immigration Reform. While SIM had held internal discussions about wanting to make this shift as the prospects for CIR continued to recede, the nature of this speech reflected either a choice by one leader who was speaking out of turn, or a
more subtle transition in the collective understanding of the group. No one mentioned it again, but the group began to refer to the DREAM Act more regularly by that spring and summer of 2010.

A group of the attendees from the press conference then marched from the state house to Senator Brown’s office in the Federal Building. Mariana and Paul carried two boxes of completed petition cards (with over 1,000 names). The plan was for Mariana and Paul, two undocumented students, to arrive in Senator Brown’s office to deliver the petitions and ask to meet with the Senator. They reported, “Some of us will sit in Senator Brown’s office until he gives us a reaction. We will wait for a response.” Upon arriving at the federal building, SIM delegates encountered the ICE officers who guard the building. An officer approached the head of the protest, and Neil stepped up to hold a conversation with him. Meanwhile the rest of the group stood on the steps, shouting slogans. The officer allowed two representatives into the building. Mariana and Paul were chosen to deliver the petitions, joined by a reporter from the Boston Globe. While they were in the building, Neil, Eliza, Roberto and Rachel gathered in a corner to brainstorm their next steps. They had not anticipated that the group would be turned away at the Federal building.

Meanwhile, on the steps, I watched members of SIM begin to do something that they had practiced for months – tell their stories. Members of SIM were invited to take turns holding a megaphone, and they told their story. Tiago, Max, Inez, and Dee all took turns using their public narrative training to share their life experiences. This pattern of filling time with a combination of chants and story-telling had
become already become a pattern among SIM members at public gatherings. Such story sharing helped to establish a sense of collective belonging among SIM members. By this time, the group had begun to dwindle to about 30 SIM members. After almost an hour, Mariana and Paul re-emerged from the Federal Building. They announced that the Senator’s staff would not meet with them, so they promised to be back with the petitions.

During the summer and through the fall of 2010, undocumented immigrant students in SIM continued to press Senator Brown and other Senators to support the DREAM Act. Throughout, their tactics continued to evolve. SIM leaders organized a series of vigils outside of the federal building that combined continuous lobbying of Senator Brown’s staff with public vigil and information sharing to people passing by. SIM also expanded its outreach to churches and new ally groups. All the while, attention to SIM grew among Massachusetts immigrant rights challenger groups as well as foundations and other funding groups, as public attention shifted from local concerns to see SIM as part of a national struggle. The national campaigns entered into a period of intensive activity of increasingly frequent actions in response to rumors that the Senate or House might consider the DREAM Act before the mid-term election in November.

In Washington, DC in July and August, United We DREAM hosted a “DREAM University” that Jorge and other UWD leaders modeled in part on the SIM Vigil. Students held signs saying, “If they don’t let us go to school, we will build our own DREAM University.” College professors and graduate students were recruited to offer ‘teach-in’ style classes, literally, in the streets in events that combined public
protests and lobbying, with classes, calisthenics led by Paul and other DREAMers intending to join the military, and dancing (especially the “Cha Cha Slide”). The DREAM University occurred outside of the White House from morning until late in the day for several weeks in the heat of the summer.

At the same time, the use of civil disobedience tactics continued as well in various locations throughout the country. Twelve undocumented students and allies boarded a van in Los Angeles as part of their “Freedom Rides” from UCLA Downtown Labor Center, through Nevada (to visit Senate Majority leader Harry Reid’s office), Arizona, Colorado, Chicago, and on to Washington, DC. The DREAM Freedom Ride combined lobbying in multiple states, publicity and opportunities for participants to learn and grow (Bendezu 2012). On July 20, 2010, eight students were arrested in the Senate building (including Harry Reid’s office) to urge the 111th Congress to take up the DREAM Act before the end of the year (Lopez 2012). Also, several groups of undocumented immigrant students began hunger strikes in California, Texas, New York, North Carolina, Minnesota, Arizona and Indiana (Amador 2012). For the most part, SIM did not participate in the civil disobedience actions.

SIM and national undocumented immigrant student leaders claimed that their advocacy pushed Senator Harry Reid to attach the DREAM Act and the repeal of an anti-LGBT Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy in the military, to an appropriations bill that granted funding to the military in September 2010. During a visit to Washington, DC a few days before the vote on these appropriations, I spoke with staff at Senator Reid’s office who noted that Senator Reid was a long-time supporter
of the DREAM Act, and that it was the right thing to do. Neither the explanation by undocumented immigrant student activists nor those of Senator Reid’s office, of course, acknowledged the claim by Republicans that this was a stunt to attract votes before a hotly contested mid-term election. Whatever the reason, the Senate military appropriations amendment did not gain enough votes to be attached to the budget. However, after the mid-term elections, the lame duck 111th Congress took up the DREAM Act again. The House of Representatives passed the DREAM Act by a vote of 216 to 198 on December 8, 2010. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had tears in her eyes as she announced the successful passage of the bill. Ten days later (December 18, 2010) the U.S. Senate failed to advance the DREAM Act with 55 votes in favor of moving the bill forward to a floor vote the Senate was five short of the needed 60 votes (41 voted against the bill and 4 Senators did not vote). Despite this loss, however, this series of votes and testimony on the floor of both houses helped to certify DREAMers as political actors in the national immigration policy arena.

C. The DREAM Act Campaigns as Innovative Action

The above describes how SIM’s repertoire of contention evolved from the 10 for 10 campaign through more public and contentious tactics in 2010. It should be noted that SIM did not discontinue traditional lobbying techniques, but rather supplemented them by engaging in more “politics by other means.” Furthermore SIM used a range of public performances as tactics in response to perceived opportunities and a culturally understood range of tactics. An implication of these
examples is to surface the way national and state arenas evolve and take place on multiple levels. For example, SIM deployed local tactics to pressure Massachusetts national representatives to support immigration legislation in their district, demonstrating the saying of former Speaker of the House, Tip O’Neil (D-MA) that, “all politics are local.”

Perhaps more importantly to the central question of this dissertation, is that the evolution of these tactical repertoires helped to solidify SIM as a political actor. First, the above description helps to explain the way SIM’s particular collective identity evolved. For members of SIM, these new ‘coming out’ tactics were experienced as liberating and empowering. Further, their use helped shape the collective identity of SIM members, as DREAMers, who were part of a national movement of ‘coming out’ actions. This identity was tied to the diffusion of such public tactics through a social network of relationships with other undocumented immigrant students in across the United States.

Second, SIM’s campaign to target Senator Scott Brown, forced them to focus more explicitly on framing their messages around traditionally conservative themes such as military service, prayer and contributing to society. This was, in some ways, in contrast to other parts of the DREAMer movement in which undocumented immigrant students had engaged in civil disobedience and been arrested. In fact, civil disobedience evolved not only from, but in reaction to and in contrast with public narratives. The activists who started the DREAM is Coming and later NIYA were critical that such training had not gone far enough. Only one core member of SIM became actively involved in the civil disobedience actions of NIYA initially.
In addition to the collective identity of DREAMers, the evolution of tactics helped shape public recognition and the bestowal of legitimacy on SIM and other such groups of undocumented immigrant students across the country. SIM experienced this newfound legitimacy through increased funding revenue from foundations. In addition, they experienced more media attention, and relationships with political leaders. Despite the lack of a successful policy outcome for the DREAM Act, undocumented immigrant students from across the country were able to influence the Senate to take up the legislation twice, and to succeed in passing the bill in the House of Representatives. These debates helped to bring recognition to undocumented immigrant students. Despite this emerging recognition as political actors, SIM was not able to obtain a meeting with Senator Brown, nor his vote for the DREAM Act.

III. The MassHope 2010 Vigil at the Statehouse

While the above case focused on the national arena, and emphasized how the evolution of tactics and strategies helped members of SIM define their collective identity, events in Massachusetts more squarely relate to the certification of SIM as a political actor by existing members of the Massachusetts immigration policy arena. As with the national case, in the evolving nature of tactics in this arena by SIM suggest that both emotion and culture played important roles in the application of particular tactical choices.

On May 27, 2010, Massachusetts State Senators passed a series of budget amendments that sought to enforce federal immigration laws and restrict
immigrant rights, including a specific ban on in-state tuition for undocumented immigrant students at state colleges and universities. The response by immigrant rights groups was fractured, with different sets of political actors meeting and organizing events separately.

While this legislation moved forward, SIM staff members were busy preparing for a retreat and training for almost seventy members at a local university for the day. The goals of the retreat were to:

1. Introduce the new structure of SIM to the membership
2. Re-energize the membership of SIM
3. Provide information about the state of campaigns for in-state tuition, Brown is Beautiful and the DREAM Act.
4. Develop a new strategy for the DREAM Act campaign

In hindsight, it is notable that none of these goals referred to the new threats that these budget amendments posed. Jorge agreed to work with the staff to facilitate some of the discussions for the day-long retreat (9:00 am – 9:00 pm). Seventy members of SIM arrived at the college campus on the outskirts of Boston. Many of the members were new to SIM, and a large proportion were not undocumented immigrant students themselves.

Three of the staff members (Mariana, Neil and Roberto) led most of the morning discussions, which involved presenting history and structure of SIM, while Eliza arranged lunch and other logistics. After lunch, the conversation turned toward campaign strategy. Jorge provided an update on the DREAM Act, identifying
the need to push for the DREAM Act in the coming months before the mid-term election. Relatedly, Mariana described local actions that would attempt to gain the support of Senator Scott Brown. Neil then provided an update about statewide legislation, reviewing the state of in-state tuition legislation, and giving his analysis of the anti-immigrant budget amendments in Massachusetts. The assembled members were then instructed to divide into groups to begin to answer the question, “What is the strategy we want?”

I joined a group with Max, Julie, Carly and Tiago, noticing that Tiago was the only undocumented immigrant in the group. Our group immediately identified the pressing need to stop the anti-immigrant budget amendments from passing, rather than focusing on the DREAM Act. We began to brainstorm possible targets: (1) ‘flip-floppers’ who had previously supported in-state tuition but voted for the anti-immigrant amendments, (2) the members of the reconciliation committee who were going to propose a budget to the Governor in the coming days or weeks, (3) the governor himself and (4) the ten “heroes of SIM” who had voted against the amendments and deserved support. The small group then brainstormed specific tactics and strategies that they might deploy against these targets. Julie mentioned that in Arizona, immigrant rights advocates had begun a 24 hour/day and 7-day/week vigil. As a symbol of solidarity, a few weeks earlier, SIM held an evening vigil on the steps of the Massachusetts statehouse, at which Neil played a guitar while members of SIM sang, prayed and shared stories by candlelight. The group discussed building on this experience by holding an ongoing vigil at the Statehouse. The idea was to hold meetings at the vigil encampment, and to invite allies to hold
their meetings there too. They would hold press conferences, marches or other actions from the site of the vigil. The groups then returned to the large auditorium, where each of the small groups reported back.

Tiago led the presentation of this small group. He felt passionate about the plans from that small group and participated vigorously in the large group meeting:

I was very engaged during the vigil because, ... because I felt I had to because, when we were in that break-out group, we came up with the vigil and we came back, and I did what I do sometimes, which is if I'm confident in an idea, I can push it; and I pushed it a lot. And I can be persuasive. At the retreat I pushed.... and later on, Jorge came to me and said, you've got to talk less, you are talking too much... but a lot of the people in the room I didn't know. I didn't know where they were coming from, they were brand new. I was like, no I'm not going to let those people make that decision. I'm sorry. I'm not.... I don't know who they are or where they are coming from. And then there were people from other organizations and stuff, and I was like, why are they making these decisions, why are they making any of these decisions...But that's how I felt at that time. Since I really drove that conversation. I felt like I was really pushing for that, I was like no, I'm busy with work and I've got to go sleep at the state house.

Tiago was a long-time member of SIM, whose longevity with the group gave him a sense of ownership, and a recognition that many of the other attendees at the retreat were much newer to SIM. Tiago's charisma and passion provided part of the influence over the group, but the ensuing discussion revealed that these proposed amendments had touched on fears of several of the people in the room. Andrea shared that her parents had already discussed leaving the U.S. if these amendments passed. Several people in the room nodded in agreement. Then Angela described her fear that these amendments might pass, and if it were to pass, what it might mean for her two-year old nephew who is a U.S. citizen if her sister were detained or deported. Jorge called on each hand raised and person after person shared fears and concerns about these amendments. Estella described her situation:

Me and my mom are scared. We are making plans to go back to Chile. That is not my country. I am diabetic. I am in a country where I don't get benefits and I can't do what I need to do. (Crying)
Marsha described the community’s fears: “Everyday I talk to people who are terrified. There is a sense of fear that not a lot of people know what to do next.” As the above quotes suggest, this conversation was emotional.

The discussion moved quickly to logistics around how they might hold a vigil and whether they could begin the vigil the next day. Max and Carly volunteered to be the first to sleep at the State House, and it seemed the plan was in place. The group then took more time deciding the name of the campaign and website. They settled on the name of MassHope 2010 campaign, and Eliza immediately went on line to reserve the url: MassHope2010.com.

The events leading to beginning the MassHope 2010 vigil demonstrate that leaders and organizers sometimes develop and execute strategies in response to perceived threats and emotion. The threat of these anti-immigrant budget amendments sidetracked other discussions, especially about the DREAM Act because, among the attendees, this legislation was perceived as a threat to the “taken-for-granted routines and attitudes of everyday life” which Snow, Cress, Downey & Jones (1998) call the “Quotidian.” The authors identified four conditions of quotidian disruption that were most likely to lead to social movement action:

(1) accidents that throw a community’s routines into doubt and/or threaten its existence; (2) actual or threatened intrusion into and/or violation of citizens’ sense of privacy, safety, and control; (3) alteration in subsistence routines because unfavorable ratios of resources to claimants or demand; and (4) dramatic changes in structures of social control. (Snow et al., 1)

Unlike the campaigns for the DREAM Act or In-state Tuition policy, which were proactive in their orientation to seeking new government legislation, the MassHope2010 campaign to prevent these budget amendments was ‘reactive’ in
that it sought to prevent changes in government policy (Van Dyke and Soule 2002). For the undocumented immigrants in Massachusetts, this represented both a ‘threatened intrusion into and/or violation of’ these non-citizens (sic) sense of control as well as a ‘dramatic change in structures of social control’ (Snow, Cress, Downey & Jones 1998).

In the discussion at the retreat, the emotional pleas of Angela, Estella, Marsha, and Andrea helped to establish the sense of urgency for this action. Staff and allies (including myself) had spent so much time on issues related to internal processes or existing campaigns that the meeting with the membership might be seen as a way that SIM re-focused itself on its members’ needs, thereby breaking their own routines and plans. The establishment of such open spaces for discussion provided an opportunity for organizers and leaders to re-consider their approaches and to innovate in response to new threats.

But the explanation that the SIM vigil was a response of the collective will of all members of SIM does not fully explain this type of innovation. A small group of persuasive and influential SIM members and allies pushed the agenda. It is of note that in the small group that presented this tactical innovation, only Tiago was an undocumented immigrant with a long-term relationship to SIM. Julia, Carly, Max and myself were allies, but not undocumented ourselves. At the time, Julia was not even very active in SIM, though through the experience of the Vigil she would soon become a leader in the organization. As will be seen, as the vigil began and continued, some of these distinctions continued to evolve.
A.  *The Vigil Begins*

On Monday June 7, 2010, SIM responded to these budget amendments with a 24-hour/day vigil that lasted 19 nights and 20 days. The *MassHope 2010* vigil did not begin with a dramatic public act, but rather started quietly and without any public proclamations, press releases or announcements. Attendees began to arrive about 30 minutes after the scheduled start time, but the leadership did not arrive for another hour for a previously scheduled leadership meeting. The idea to meet at the vigil revealed new logistical problems since it was windy and noise from traffic made the conversation difficult to hear. Roberto, Neil, Max, Marina and Eliza sat on the top steps, with Julie on the next step, and Jessica Leigh and I below them. Julie and Leigh began to lead the meeting. Neil, a member of the staff, called for everyone’s attention again and asked Roberto to lead the meeting. This small act was an early example of the kinds of micro-aggressive ways that leaders and staff competed for decision-making roles within the organization. Roberto welcomed and thanked everyone. Each person gave reports, but Roberto asked Julie and Leigh to go first because they needed to be at another meeting at 6pm. I noticed that as Julie gave her report on outreach, Roberto seemed to be staring at the street. Roberto asked Julie to repeat what she just said. As I watch these dynamics, I become aware of the shifting membership in SIM. Roberto, Julie and Leigh are all immigrants or children of immigrants, but none of them are undocumented. Further, Roberto’s approach to community organizing was very different from Jorge or Ernesto, past organizers. Unlike Jorge and Ernesto who saw themselves as leading and teaching a group such as this, Roberto asked the leaders to play active
roles in leading the meeting. In this way, SIM experienced a growth in leadership and membership that was facilitated by Roberto’s open and inclusive approach to community organizing. In addition, these new leaders brought new ideas, energy and new forms of social resources in the form of relationships with other groups. In addition, however, the presence of these new members provoked racial and class issues for the now emerging collective identity of DREAMers. Both Julie and Leigh were Asian-American and college-educated members of SIM, among a membership that had been predominantly Latino/a and Brazilian undocumented immigrants who were not finished with college. While their participation as new leaders complicated DREAMer identity, they brought considerable skills in as activists in past campaigns on issues of social justice, race, sexuality and gender groups to the campaign.

As the leadership meeting ended, a staff member from another immigrant rights organization returned from a meeting of a group called “Resist the Raids” with news that they will come on Thursday and bring their drum circle. Resist the Raids occupied the cubicle next to SIM in Encuentro Cinco, so their staff and SIM’s staff would sometimes share information. At about the same time, Julie and Leigh left the meeting to attend a meeting of a faith-based immigration group known as Sanctuary, a faith-based group that began in the 1980’s by providing safe haven for Central American refugees fleeing civil wars and conflicts, despite lacking legal status to be in the United States. Four members of the Sanctuary meeting returned with them. The group of about a dozen people took seats on the steps of the state house. Most attendees seemed to be college aged and of either Latino/a or Asian
descent, and included more women than men. Leigh took a sheet of paper and wrote “Day 1” on it. She taped it to a sign that leaned against the statehouse steps.

In the days that followed, SIM organized public events in conjunction with the vigil included rallies and speeches, combined with lobby visits to members of state government, especially the reconciliation budget committee but also drum circles, potluck dinners, teach-ins and trainings, and a soccer match held “in solidarity with Mass Hope 2010.” For example, SIM coordinated with new groups to hold events planned around the scheduled Boston Pride March on the first Saturday of the vigil (June 12th). The Pride March was entitled “Riots to Rights: 1970-2010”, and brought together thousands of people to support and celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer rights in a series of public celebrations, culminating in a day-long parade that travelled directly past the Mass Hope 2010 vigil site in front of the State House. SIM leaders anticipated the convergence of these two events occurring simultaneously, and sought to reach out to LGBT organizations to build support for the MassHope 2010 agenda.

On Tuesday (Day 2 of the vigil), Julie, who self-identifies as queer, led a delegation of SIM leaders to a meeting of a LGBT rights organization to request that the group make a public statement in support of the MassHope 2010 vigil and against the proposed budget amendments. As they returned from the meeting, the look of frustration and disappointment was visible. Julie, especially, was angry. She described people at the meeting as ‘ignorant.’ While some people at the meeting were vocally supportive of her proposal, the LGBT rights group whose mission,
according to Julie, promotes ‘inclusivity’ had not wanted to take on the divisive issue of immigration.

At 10 pm that night, members of an organization who had been sympathetic to Julie’s request arrived at the vigil. They launched into a celebratory chant, borrowed from the LGBT Pride rally, “We’re here, we’re undocumented, get used to it.”

The above descriptions help to show how the vigil, as a tactic, served to build coalitional relationships with new organizations, who in turn, helped to certify SIM as a political actor. Groups who shared similar concerns to SIM, such as Resist the Raids and Sanctuary, could enter the ‘space’ of SIM, and therefore join in their campaign, MassHope 2010. Despite the fact that these groups, had worked on issues that were related, they had not been a significant part of policy work for in-state tuition or other legislation that had characterized SIM in the past, especially when it was still part of MIRA. Other groups and events, such as the pre-scheduled LGBT Pride rally, provided opportunities for visibility and alliance building with activists in new policy arenas. Both processes helped to provided recognition, status and legitimacy to SIM in the eyes of a broader and more energized coalition. The public nature of the vigil also brought SIM into direct contact with a group of actors that many undocumented immigrants had reasons to avoid - law enforcement.

B. Encounters with Law Enforcement

76 The now-canonical chant from the Pride Rally is “We’re here, we’re queer, get used to it.”
The first visit by any law enforcement officer occurred just before 8pm. The man was wearing a police uniform and a badge, and asked “What are you doing here? Can you show us the signs?” Max and Carly shared their signs about the amendment. The officer said, “so you are staying here overnight?” When several members said ‘yes’ together, he responded, “Good luck!” and walked away. About an hour later another man who I considered Irish looking with white thinning hair combed straight back, wearing a two-piece suit and tie and a badge on his belt approached the vigil. He seemed to direct his questions to me, but I deferred to Carly and Max who stood up to greet the officer. Roberto and I looked on as the man introduced himself as Captain Owens, the person responsible for security of the State House. He told us, “You need a permit from the City of Boston because there are lots of groups here and they need to coordinate this.” Carly responded “We called them and they said this was free space and because it is political it is a matter of freedom of speech so we didn’t need a permit.”

Captain Owens then asked, “Is this about protesting the budget?” Carly and Max replied together that it was. He said he would call the police to let them know what we are doing, and then added cordially, “Good luck!” I left by 11pm, but during that first night, Max reported to Roberto that police came by and were watching them but did not say anything or approach again.

On the second day of the vigil, Roberto called me to say that Captain Owens returned and repeated his claim that SIM needed a permit. Roberto visited the Representatives and Senators who had been most supportive of SIM in the past. Senator Chang-Diaz did not in support of the vigil, and suggested that other
approaches to preventing these budget amendments might be more effective.

Representative Provost’s aides gave Roberto their cards and suggested that if the security officers ‘gave them any more trouble, to hand them the cards and have them call them.” Meanwhile, Max went to visit the Governor’s office. Max had previously been involved in state politics and had worked closely with the Governor’s daughter. He attempted to leverage this relationship in helping to keep the protest going. Later that day, Max received a phone call from the Governor’s office saying, “not to worry, it was O.K. for SIM to stay there.” Leveraging political relationships with existing members of the polity helped to maintain the tactic of the spontaneous 24-hour/day vigil, but also, it put SIM members into direct relationship with members of the polity. In so doing, SIM became recognized as a group.

The interactions with law enforcement did not end, however. On the advice of lawyers, attendees at the vigil kept a log of encounters with law enforcement. According to log notes for the first week of the vigil, officers from the State Department of Conservation and Recreation, came to the vigil (once or twice each day) to ensure that ‘free standing signs’ were not left on the statehouse steps. The rule was that people could hold signs, but signs could not be left on the steps. Likewise, on the 15th, Captain Owens told Roberto that the sleeping supplied and food could be on the bricks but not the steps in front of the statehouse. On June 16th, an officer passed by and said, “you are good” referring to the cleanliness of the area. Such contentious give-and-take between challenging groups and the agencies responsible for security of the polity and their space provides insight into how tactics like SIM’s vigil reflect a strategic oddity. The debate SIM wanted to engage in
was whether or not Massachusetts policy makers should withdraw the proposed
anti-immigrant amendments. Instead, the debate revolved around sometimes
confusing rules about tactics that were allowed and tactics that were not. For
example, during one night of the vigil, Roberto was approached by Sargeant Owens
from the State House, with two uniformed state police officers, a member of the
Boston Police and members of the U.S. Parks Department. According to Roberto,
they all agreed that SIM, without a permit, could not stay on the statehouse steps. At
the same time, they could not decide who was responsible for asking the group to
leave. Each officer pointed to the part of the space that they were responsible for –
the local police were responsible for the space nearest the street, the state was
responsible for the steps and actual structure of the statehouse, and the federal law
enforcement was responsible for the Parks Department space in between.

In general, Roberto managed relationships with the law enforcement officers.
He kept relationships cordial. Furthermore, not all of the encounters with the
police were related to patrolling the vigil attendees. For one thing, the vigil
attendees relied on the knowledge that the police would protect them from
criminals who might be attracted to the vigil. On one occasion, according to the log,
State Senator Richard Ross (R) visited the vigil at 11:15pm challenging SIM’s
campaign and calling them “illegal.” Carly reported she heard yelling between
Senator Ross and Captain Owens. According to the log, Captain Owens told Richard
Ross to “leave us alone.”

The relationships with the police became important since the police were
literally the boundary keepers for this political arena. They helped to establish the
rules and terms within which SIM would be able to occupy the steps of the statehouse. Further, SIM’s ability to find political footing to remain at the statehouse rested on gaining support from members of the polity (inside the building), placating the law enforcement actors, and exploiting ambiguities within existing structural and institutional relationships. Such mechanisms helped SIM to continue this particular tactical innovation, whose strength rested on the longevity of the group’s ability to occupy a piece of public space. With each passing day, Leigh’s sign changed, from “Day 1” to Days 2, 3, 4, all the way through Day 19. The continuity of this tactic became a part of the culture of the SIM members who participated in the vigil action.

C. **Routines and Donations as Legitimation**

A daily mantra of the vigil attendees was to ‘hold the space.’ Several of the leaders began to remind each other and newcomers of the importance of ‘holding the space’ by saying that if the space were unattended, “they” are going to kick us out. As such, in some cases volunteers stayed at the vigil, cancelling work or other appointments to ‘hold the space.’ “Holding the space” became something of a tactical imperative for the SIM leadership, and the concept of continuity became an organizing principle for participating in the vigil. To accomplish this perceived need to ‘hold the space,’ SIM leaders developed a set of routines by the third day of the vigil. First, each day was broken up into three shifts for the morning, afternoon and overnight, with a SIM leader responsible for each shift. The creation of these shifts and roles helped to provide a sense of rationality and routine to the vigil space.
In another effort to create order out of chaos, Leigh developed a notebook that the person in charge of holding the space would keep. The book contained an instruction sheet with emergency contacts and shift responsibilities, a schedule of events, a sign-in-sheet (that was rarely used), a full contact list of all SIM Leaders and members who attended the SIM retreat, and other members to be called and recruited to attend events or volunteer for a shift at the vigil, contact information with names and phone numbers of people at other immigrant rights organizations to be invited to the vigil, and call-in scripts, phone numbers, petitions and flyers to urge elected officials on the conference committee to “remove the anti-immigrant amendments” from the budget. Vigil attendees were asked to call senators who had voted ‘yes’ for Amendment 172.1 on May 27th to express their concerns and to thank those who had voted “no” for the amendments. There was also a “Know your rights: What to do if stopped by immigration” document developed by the Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project.

During the vigil, SIM members and leaders would arrive and leave at various times during a given day or night. In general, there were between five and twenty members present at a given time at the vigil. The SIM leaders established a goal of having ten people in attendance during each day, and five people to spend each night. During weekly meetings, leaders reported that the average attendance was three to four people from 8:00am to 3:00pm, but that from 3pm-10pm, the numbers increased to between 24 and 40 attendees each night. Overnight, except on rare occasions, at least three to five people slept at the vigil.
Logistics played an important part in allowing the vigil to continue, which in turn provided earned SIM a level of public legitimacy and status among existing actors in the Massachusetts immigration policy arena. Their continued effort was be a point of admiration for other groups referred to the vigil as an example of “doing something” to respond to growing anti-immigrant sentiments. In response, many other challenger groups looked for a way to help and support SIM in its fight. SIM received donations in the form of food, water, umbrellas and sleeping bags at the vigil. One leader reported “People are coming in at 2 AM, dropping off bed sheets, water, donations of sleeping bags, fruit, food. At 6-7am, people drop off coffee.” Max reported that local Dunkin Donut's employees brought them food regularly. “America runs on Dunkin. Dunkin runs on immigrants!” Another leader described:

There is a community that has been great. It is hard to mobilize our community because most of our community works all the time. That and the fear that is instilled in our community. That has always been the immigrant rights community’s Achilles tendon.”

The mobilizing effect of the vigil on other challengers and members became clear to SIM leaders. Other examples of support for the vigil came from members of the polity. At 4pm on the third day of the vigil (June 10th) Senator Eldridge, one of the Senators who voted against the budget amendments arrived at the vigil with six pizzas. He stayed with the SIM protestors and spoke to them for about a half-hour. In addition to the Senator’s pizza delivery, SIM members received support and information from several elected leaders including Senator Wolf and Representatives Sanchez, Sciortino and Provost, all Democrats. Representative Sciortino asked SIM protestors for a ‘wish list’ of things that they needed to sustain
the vigil. Representative Provost came to the vigil each week day, and sometimes twice per day.

D. *MassHope 2010 in the Media*

On the second day of the vigil, AP Journalist Russell Contreras arrived and stayed at the vigil for about a $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. The next day (June 8th), a story appeared on the AP newswire about the vigil. The story was picked up by a newspaper in Brattleboro, VT, but not the Boston Globe or Herald. When Fox 25 arrived at the vigil on the third day, none of the SIM’s core leaders or staff were there. While Ernesto was present, he did not feel comfortable speaking on behalf of SIM77, and he later reported that the new members in attendance were ‘acting foolishly.’ In general, however, the media initially disregarded the vigil’s kick-off.78

On the fourth day of the vigil (Thursday June 10, 2010), a reporter from the New York Times was on her way into the Statehouse when she noticed the crowd of students in front of the statehouse. She stopped to talk with Max. As a result, an article in the late edition of the June 11, 2010 *New York Times*, entitled, “Surprising Immigration Crackdown Advances.” The story also quoted Mariana and Roberto, and described the mixed reactions to the vigil by pedestrians passing by. Still, the New York Times noticed the lack of response to the proposed budget amendments:

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77 This was during the weeks before the DREAM is coming staged its first sit-in, but Ernesto had already left the staff position at SIM.

78 This type of disregard for public protests is a recognized pattern for how mainstream media outlets generally ignore protest events. For more on media portrayals of protest, see Soberieraj (2011).
And but for the group on the steps with their signs, candles and blankets, there appeared to be little focus on the issue this week; a banner across the Statehouse facade cheered on the Boston Celtics, who are facing the Los Angeles Lakers in the National Basketball Association finals and are dominating public attention here. (Goodnough, A, New York Times, June 9, 2010: 19).

A day after the New York Times story was published, a man in a red plaid shirt and jeans shows up. He has curly hair and a 2-day beard. He walks up and says, “Can I join you guys?” Lilly, and others shout “Yea!” His name is Jerry. “You were in the NY Times. I pass by on my bike on the way to work every day.” Jerry, a student at a local college, became a regular part of the vigil for its remaining two weeks, and also continued to become a leader in SIM for the next year. He was one of about a dozen new members who joined the organization as a result of the vigil in the coming months.

The discursive effect of the media stories about the vigil provided new attention and recognition of SIM among new members, like Jerry, among local Massachusetts challenger groups, members, and also members and other challenger groups within the national immigrant policy arena. In the second and third weeks of the vigil, SIM received a visit from a host of national players, including a national president of a major labor union. On another night, Jorge returned with two of the four walkers from the Trail of DREAMs. They had heard about the vigil from the combination of mainstream media, but even more from Facebook and other social media, and now wanted to see the event for themselves. They stayed one night and returned to Washington, DC the next day. As with Jorge, some of the visitors had past experiences with SIM. In particular, the director of the National Immigration Forum and RIFA, Ali Noorani, was the previous executive director of MIRA when SIM was first founded in 2005. He visited the vigil, unannounced, and sat with
Tiago whom he asked to weigh in on policy directions for the national campaign. Tiago was taken aback by the conversation at the time, but it suggests, at least that Noorani, and perhaps other national leaders, had begun to see SIM’s vigil as a legitimate and innovative tactic worth learning from. It also suggests a newfound respect and status being granted upon SIM as a certified political actor.

E. MassHope 2010: A New Coalition of Allies

In planning the MassHope 2010 vigil, SIM leaders intended to help bring focus to the scattered responses to these amendments by immigrant rights groups in Massachusetts. As noted above, the vigil provided an opportunity for SIM staff and leaders to build relationships with people in other organizations. These relationships began to be formalized as some of these groups discussed what they saw as a need for a state-wide immigrant rights coalition with a more grassroots activist agenda that MIRA.

On June 19th, in a refreshingly air conditioned office, two blocks from the site of the vigil, leaders of twelve of the immigrant rights organizations in the Boston area came together for an “emergency meeting” to respond to the budget amendments. A skilled facilitator from an outside organization led the discussion of the meeting. One purpose of the meeting was to envision victory in this campaign, and to identify strategies and tactics that the collection of groups might take to ensure such both short-term victory and long-term coalition building. Each of the meeting attendees introduced themselves. Roberto introduced himself as follows:

"Our office is in front of the state house. We are a youth-led organization. Most of us are undocumented. We have youth and energy. We have some new ideas that have not been
Several others described being inspired by the ‘courage’ of the SIM ‘youth’ for taking action and launching a 24/7 symbolic vigil. One of the organizers of the meeting said, “we have to do more support to the youth. I have their faces in my heart.” The group then discussed their long-term goal of building a movement, and their short term goal of stopping the amendments.

This discussion took place in the last days of the vigil, as leaders came together to establish a sense of order to an ongoing action that had already emerged, not from planning, but from a quick response to emotional demands of members. The ‘emotional factor’ of SIM’s strategizing deserves attention, not because it was not effective, but because, despite the lack of plains and strategies, it was successful both in the intended outcomes of stopping the budget amendments, and as an instructive case that provides insight into how SIM was certified as existing members and challengers of the Massachusetts immigration policy arena recognized this group of political actors in new ways.

F. Victory

On the 18th night of the vigil, SIM held an interfaith prayer meeting at the vigil. At about 7:00pm, groups of people arrived carrying signs. Most were adults – ranging in age from their 30’s to one much older white man who was short and thin, seemingly feeble, but walking with a cane towards the center of the protest. An
African American man with long grey hair took a place in the now forming circle. A priest that I recognized from a nearby church began, “We are gathered here in solidarity to stand with the courage of the Student Immigrant Movement against these amendments.” He invited people, “as they are so moved” to introduce themselves and their church, and to share “who they are channeling” into the space of the vigil. The group represented a mix of Catholic, Unitarian, United Church of Christ, Episcopal, Baptist and several others faith groups. Members began to pray for blessings on the vigil, SIM and the people inside the building making decisions.

During these prayers, Neil arrived in the circle, standing quietly with a grin on his face. He whispered something into the speaker’s ear and then made an announcement, “They pulled out the tuition prohibition. They dropped the hotline. So, basically, for everything we were fighting for, we won. We won.” The group applauded and cheered. The budget reconciliation committee had taken the amendments out.

One of the older and respected elders (a bishop) in attendance asked what was included and suggested to wait and be sure. Before making a public announcement, he recommended that the group check the actual language of the budget. Several people agreed. Roberto and SIM leaders decided to stay one more night, and scheduled a press conference to close the vigil the next morning. As it turned out, the budget would continue to withhold health benefits from immigrants, but the other provisions such as the immigration ‘hotline,’ stricter penalties for false identification and the prohibiting immigrants from receiving in-state tuition were repealed.
In the end, the policies that SIM saw as most abhorrent to its caused allowed them to claim victory. It is difficult to know the full range of motivations that lay behind the decisions of elected officials to insert or remove amendments from a budget, but it is reasonable, at least to suggest that public attention through dramatic actions such as SIM’s vigil in 2010, helped to provide greater scrutiny of such actions.

G. MassHope 2010 Vigil as Innovative Action

Perhaps unsurprisingly, an innovative tactic that has been seen as successful, such as the vigil, tends to be adopted repeated by a group (Wada 2012). After the vigil in summer 2010, SIM began to incorporate more public vigils, usually smaller in scale, into their efforts. As noted above, in summer 2010, United We DREAM launched the DREAM University. Jorge explained to me that the vigil was one of the inspirations for the idea. Other vigils in Massachusetts around the DREAM Act were held in September and December 2010. The following year in summer 2011, SIM leaders held another vigil at the statehouse when legislators again attempted to resurrect the anti-immigrant budget amendments of the previous year. In this way, the innovation of using vigils became an expected and normative routine tactic that leaders continued to deploy.

SIM’s experiences with holding an ongoing vigil are instructive for understanding the strategies and tactics that they deployed, as well as the impact of those actions on the certification of the group. SIM’s decision to act preceded long analyses of the legislation. In response to this threat, SIM was side-tracked from
advocating for proactive legislation such as the DREAM Act. Instead, they mobilized quickly, beginning a vigil the next day, and adapting as they learned what they needed to carry out the plan.

It is notable that SIM staff and leaders, as well as national leaders at United We Dream did not immediately plan to take action against the anti-immigrant amendments, and again, reinforces the finding that strategic, rational planning by organizers cannot always explain the choice of strategy for social movement groups. Just as leaders of RIFA continued to push comprehensive immigration reform agenda, despite evidence that the opportunities for a bill were passing, Jorge, Mariana and other SIM leaders began the retreat in early June with plans to mobilize members to engage in campaigns for the national DREAM Act, not the state budget.

The case of the vigil also helped to leverage a considerable amount of legitimacy from political actors in the Massachusetts and national immigration policy arenas for SIM. At the most local level, SIM’s encounters with law enforcement took advantage of ambiguities in policy, especially where different state actors are in conflict with one another. In this case, the State House security referred SIM to the City who referred SIM back to the State, who then referred SIM to the U.S. Parks Department. SIM further leveraged support from parts of the state in their efforts against other parts of the state by cultivating allies among supportive Senators and Representatives, as well as the Governor’s office. Over time, SIM leaders felt that they had earned a level of respect from police and security officers.

More broadly, the vigil action re-shaped SIM’s ‘standing’ as an actor within the Massachusetts immigration policy arena. The public nature of the vigil helped to
leverage opportunities for building allies, such as the outreach during the Boston Pride march. Furthermore, the vigils created opportunities for SIM to build relationships with established political actors such as legislators, Senators, the media and other immigrant rights groups. This recognition was formalized and SIM experienced certification, when the MassHope 2010’s coalition met. This group represented a space to assess opportunities and resources within the Massachusetts immigrant rights arena, and also, helped SIM to become recognized as a key actor within this arena. Even three years after the vigil, members of the Massachusetts immigration policy arena still praise SIM and the vigil as an example of the type of courageous action that young people can take in response to injustice and threats. For example, at a recent event, I met Sen. Eldridge, who reminded me of the pizzas that he delivered to SIM. This shows how the vigil, as a tactic, allowed members to be involved, to help and participate, was an important way that this particular protest tactic established legitimacy for SIM.

Finally, SIM’s experiences in this vigil, also has a mixed effect on the establishment of a collective identity within SIM. On the one hand, the vigil created its own routines and cultural meanings. The space became a time for discussion, strategizing and planning. On the other hand, a host of new members joined SIM as a result of the vigil. In particular, these people were not undocumented immigrants themselves, but affiliated with the cause. As such, they brought new ideas, energy and new forms of social capital or relationships with LGBT community, Asian American community. In addition, several new members had attended or
graduated from elite colleges. This influx of new members created a diffusion of the common collective identity of SIM members as DREAMers.

IV. Conclusion

The evolving tactics and strategies of SIM and undocumented immigrant students across the United States helped to establish DREAMers as political actors in the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. Furthermore, the collective identity of this group had ‘gone public’ through ‘coming out tactics and public events (such as the MassHope 2010 Vigil). This combination of recognition and collective identity will be discussed further in the next and concluding chapter of this dissertation.
On April 10, 2006, members of the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) made a 15 by 35 foot banner that read “Pass the Dream Act” and marched in Boston, chanting “Everywhere we go, people want to know, who we are, so we tell them, we are the students, the mighty mighty students.” (Rudy interview, May 2006). A little over four years later, something about this chant had changed. On a warm June 2010 day at the same location, I marched with members of SIM singing “Everywhere we go, people want to know, who we are, so we tell them, we are the DREAMers, the mighty mighty DREAMers.” To re-emphasize the name of this group, we carried a hand-painted banner that read, “We are the DREAMers.”

The emergence of the chant “People want to know who we are…We are the DREAMers” asks and answers a question that is fundamentally about the acquiring legitimacy and collective identity. This chant captured the two dimensions associated with the construction of new political actors. First, it implicitly identifies SIM’s target audience – the ‘people that want to know, who we are.’ I have argued that this audience is comprised of existing political actors, including members of the

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Note: The spelling of “DREAMers” with “DREAM” in capitals when referencing those undocumented students and soldiers who would be eligible for the DREAM Act reflects the way members of the immigrant rights movement in general and undocumented student movement specifically have spelled the term. See for example the National Immigrant Youth Alliance, DREAMActivist.org, Change.org, and Reform Immigration for America (RIFA) as examples.
polity from positions in government and political parties, but also donors, the media and other established challenger groups at the national and Massachusetts levels. Some of these bodies bestowed resources on this nascent group after it left MIRA, providing the group with training and space to develop leaders and acquire public narrative skills. Still others were targets of sometimes contentious and public efforts by SIM to influence policies. Between 2008 and 2010, through the campaigns waged by the group and its allies, those within the national and state immigration policy arenas did indeed get to know who SIM was. In short, SIM and undocumented immigrant students were ‘certified’ by these existing actors within the national and state immigration policy arenas, meaning that they were recognized and engaged, and in the process granted the moral resource of legitimacy (McAdam et al., 2001; Andrews and McCarthy 2004).

In contrast, the chant’s conclusion, “We are the DREAMers” is a clear statement of collective identity. This chant and the name ‘DREAMers,’ represented an identity that emerged from a movement to pass the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act in 2010. Furthermore, in the time between the two marches that opened this chapter, the collective identity of SIM changed. In the earlier protest, the group presented themselves as “students” and thereby distinguished themselves from the larger immigrant rights movement while simultaneously signaling an allegiance with other young people seeking an education. In the 2010 chant the name ‘DREAMers’ carried the meaning of this emergent collective identity, corresponding to more robust organizational structures, an increasing identification with the national movement of
undocumented students and more public demonstrations and tactics. As such, the
‘naming’ of the undocumented immigrant students suggests that something about
the sense of ‘we’ (Tilly 2003) among undocumented immigrant students had
changed within SIM. This represented the manifestation of a shift in collective
identity. Taken together, this certification and shifting of collective identity”
enshrine the constitution of undocumented immigrant students as political actors,

Table 7.1 Summary of Conclusions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Were undocumented immigrant constituted as political actors?:</th>
<th>Collective Identity: How new actors saw themselves.</th>
<th>Legitimacy: How others saw these new actors.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of premise (Chs. 1 &amp; 7)</td>
<td>DREAMers” emerged as a new collective identity nationally and within SIM.</td>
<td>Legitimacy was certified in national and Massachusetts Immigration Policy arenas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. How and why were undocumented immigrant students in SIM constituted as political actors?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did SIM acquire the resources it needed to re-build its organization between 2008 and 2010? (Ch. 4)</th>
<th>SIM’s biographical resources provided raw materials for constructing a collective identity based on common experiences of physical/social inclusion and exclusion in relationship to social institutions</th>
<th>SIM acquired legitimacy from the tensions from the juxtaposition of processes of inclusion with processes of exclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did SIM participate in national and Massachusetts arenas for immigration policy? (Ch. 5)</td>
<td>SIM developed a collective identity by entering into national policy arenas with other DREAMers who formed associations.</td>
<td>SIM acquired legitimacy as a part of a national social movement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>How did SIM’s repertoires of contention evolve? (Ch. 6)</td>
<td>SIM developed a collective identity by strategically suppressing and deploying collective identity in campaigns around the DREAM Act.</td>
<td>SIM gained legitimacy in the eyes of existing political actors by engaging in public and innovative tactics, such as the vigil in response to anti-immigrant budget amendments in Massachusetts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
which includes a new collective identity and recognition of that identity by existing actors within a political arena (McAdam et. al. 2001).

This concluding chapter reviews the findings associated with the actor constitution process at the heart of this dissertation, by summarizing answers to the research question *How and why were undocumented immigrant students constituted as political actors in Massachusetts between 2008 and 2012?* I conducted ethnographic field observations, interviews and collected public information about SIM and undocumented immigrant students for over three years. Table 7.1 summarizes my conclusions.

In the next section, I will re-assert a premise that underlies my research question, that undocumented immigrant students in SIM were indeed constituted as political actors between 2008 and 2010, gaining names and standing in the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. First, the group of undocumented immigrant students in SIM established a new collective identity, called “DREAMers.” Second, *DREAMers* in SIM were certified by a wide range of existing political actors in the national and Massachusetts political arenas. The next section expands upon this explanation. Taken together, this new collective identity and certification by existing actors comprises the meaning of this group as constituted actors.

I will then explain *how and why* this group was constituted as political actors, by discussing each of the four major conclusions, which correspond to chapters in this dissertation. First, I argue that the experiences of undocumented students provided the biographical resources for their mobilization. Second, SIM acquired the resources it needed to re-build its organization, including a leadership that
crafted public narratives out of the stock of biographical resources. Third, SIM simultaneously engaged in both national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. Fourth, SIM’s tactics evolved and adapted to by struggling with opportunities and threats through improvisational tactics and strategies.

I will then discuss some of the lessons from this dissertation for other social movements. Finally, I will conclude this dissertation by discussing the contributions to scholarly understanding of undocumented immigrant students, public policy and contentious politics.

I. Were undocumented immigrant students in SIM constituted as political actors?

The research question of this dissertation presumes that this group became political actors. Furthermore, the answer to this research question depends upon the clarity of the two dimensions of actor constitution – collective identity and legitimacy. The next two sections summarize the arguments that undocumented immigrant students established a collective identity as DREAMers and acquired legitimacy, thereby becoming constituted political actors.

A. SIM established a collective identity of DREAMers

Between 2008 and 2010, the way undocumented immigrant students in SIM understood themselves, and the way they were understood by others, changed. These changed understandings were evidenced through seeing how their self-labeling and their referencing by others both shifted. By explaining the actor
constitution of undocumented immigrant students, I engage with how “segments of the civilian population acquire names and public political standing” (McAdam, et al., 2001: 315). An example of this process can be seen in the 1956 Montgomery bus boycott campaigns in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. In that campaign, boycott leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. painted a picture of a group of African American insurgents as “new Negros” (McAdam et al. 2001: 319). In so doing, Dr. King’s re-adjusted the discursive debate among segregationists and anti-segregationists by introducing a group with a new collective identity to the political arena around Black insurgency (319).

Like the Black insurgent activists in Montgomery, undocumented immigrant students shifted from being a general “segment of the civilian population” to acquire a new name, in this case “DREAMers.” This process occurred fluidly, in stages and often not as a linear absolute shift. Prior to the end of 2009, members referred to themselves as “students” or as “SIMers” but only later publically adopted the name “DREAMer.”

In earlier years of SIM, the members primarily called themselves “students.” Even the name “Student Immigrant Movement” was chosen to reflect the group’s collective identity at that time. Founding organizer Rachel Moody said, “The name captured who they were. We were in the immigrant rights movement. They were always the students.”

Orfelia also commented on the shift in identity and the desire to forge a shared identity within the larger immigrant rights movement:

Back in 2008...We met a lot of national other groups who were trying to emerge and find their own space for DREAMers - at the time we weren't called DREAMERS, we were just
students, Immigrant Students. And so, we were looking, y’know, what is our place in the immigrant rights movement?

During the 2009-2010 campaign for the DREAM Act, while SIM members continued to sometimes refer to themselves as students or SIMers, they increasingly adopted the name “DREAMers” in both public and private communications. The term “DREAMer” was a further distinction from the broader immigrant rights movement, but also a distinction from other youth and students who were not undocumented. On a practical level, the term “DREAMer” itself grew out of a reference to the DREAM Act, which has been discussed in an earlier chapter. In it’s most narrow, but perhaps most common interpretation, “DREAMer” referred to any person who was eligible for the DREAM Act.

The use of the word “dream” however, implies much more. On more than one occasion, I discussed this term with organizers and leaders of SIM. We observed how the name “dream” carries a sense of hope for a better future, and in the context of immigration reform suggests the “American Dream.” The word “DREAMer,” however, also embodies a history of civil rights struggles and the promise for full social inclusion, bringing to mind the “I have a Dream” speech of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.\(^\text{80}\). Also, the adoption of the term “DREAMers” may have been at least partially influenced by the song “Imagine” by John Lennon. On multiple occasions, when members of SIM would gather, after retreats or at the national conference they sang this song. When we approached the song’s refrain, “you may

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\(^\text{80}\) Recently on a trip to Ebeneezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA, where Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. (and Sr.) had preached, I noticed that the gift shop was selling a shirt emblazoned with the words “Home of the Dreamer,” an allusion to the “I Have a Dream” speech.
say that I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one” everyone in the room joined in and sang a little louder. I noticed members sharing smiles and knowing looks at the meaning of being a DREAMer – but not the only one. We were singing what one of SIM’s organizer’s has called “the anthem of the movement” (Rudy conversation 2011).

B. SIM was certified by a wide-range of existing political actors

The emergence of undocumented immigrant students as political actors has been widely recognized by political leaders, media and other actors in the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. These existing actors helped to ‘certify’ or provide legitimacy to SIM. “Certification” refers to the “validation of actors, their performances, and their claims by external parties, especially authorities” (McAdam et al., 2001: 316). As used in this dissertation, I have described this process as the granting of legitimacy, a moral resource, by existing political actors in a given political arena (Andrews and McCarthy 2005).

Certification can be bestowed or recalled by many parties simultaneously, highlighting the concept’s multi-dimensional character and demonstrating that one’s certification status should not be understood as dichotomously affirmed or not. In one sense, SIM in October 2008 became de-certified and dispossessed when the staff and organization were expelled from its parent organization, MIRA. As the leading challenger within the Massachusetts policy arena, MIRA’s decision carried a message (even if unintentional) about the legitimacy of this group of political actors and their chosen tactics. In the months and years that followed that break with
MIRA, SIM catalyzed new resources to gain legitimacy in the eyes of actors in both the Massachusetts and national immigration policy arenas.

In June 2012, the certification of DREAMers as a political category became institutionalized when President Obama announced a new administrative policy that would provide work permits for those undocumented immigrant students who qualified for the DREAM Act:

This morning, Secretary Napolitano announced new actions my administration will take to mend our nation’s immigration policy, to make it more fair, more efficient, and more just -- specifically for certain young people sometimes called “Dreamers.” These are young people who study in our schools, they play in our neighborhoods, they’re friends with our kids, they pledge allegiance to our flag. They are Americans in their heart, in their minds, in every single way but one: on paper. They were brought to this country by their parents -- sometimes even as infants -- and often have no idea that they’re undocumented until they apply for a job or a driver’s license, or a college scholarship.

On the morning of that speech, I joined almost 40 allies and members of SIM in the by-now familiar downtown turn-of-the century industrial warehouse building that provided office space at E5 to listen to the President on television. In addition to the allies and members of SIM, television, radio and print journalists filled the office to get a reaction from these young people that they would, for the first time since they were children, not face the prospect of deportation and be allowed to work legally in the United States under an administrative policy of “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” (DACA). Although this policy was relatively small in scope (i.e.- it excluded any relief for the vast majority of 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States) and temporary, it represented one of the only concrete policy steps that expanded opportunities for immigrants, and especially the undocumented, in the United States since the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.
This election-year policy decision prompted rhetorical backlash by some Republicans on procedural grounds and invited skepticism by others who suggested the President was merely pandering to the growing numbers of Latino voters. Within a day, blogs were being posted explaining how and why the President decided to take this action. Some pointed to the political expediency of this vote. Some bloggers recognized the need to get out ahead of Senator Rubio, Republican from Florida and – at that time – widely anticipated Vice Presidential running mate to Mitt Romney in the coming 2012 election.

While understanding the political factors at play, DREAMers recognized that the reasons the president’s decision to adopt DACA, in part, was a response to their work in the national immigration policy arena over several years. This sub-group of the immigrant-rights movement had created strong organizations by acquiring needed resources. The “DREAMers” had constructed public individual and collective narratives by highlighting the tensions of the “in-between-ness” of their life circumstances, thereby leveraging their demands that their state and federal government treat them differently. Then they “came out” and engaged in collective actions that included institutional means such as meetings with elected officials, as well as more confrontational means such as marches, vigils, hunger strikes and sit-ins. In short, they had emerged as political actors.

The bulk of this dissertation, of course, did not only consider whether these changes occurred or not, but rather, how and why they occurred. The next section summarizes and discusses this project’s core conclusions about the processes
through which undocumented immigrant students were constituted as political actors.

II. How and why did SIM acquire legitimacy and collective identity to become a certified political actors?

A. Biographical Resources

The life experiences of SIM’s undocumented immigrant student leaders explored the physical and social/cultural experiences of inclusion and exclusion for these young people. Analyzing narratives about the processes of physical inclusion reveals the way underlying structural patterns and the desire for family re-unification drove the migration of undocumented immigrant children to the United States. Furthermore, this migration as not experienced individually, but within the contexts of family and, by extension, community. Undocumented immigrant students’ narratives of social/cultural inclusion into the United States helped establish a sense of their academic worthiness. In contrast to these processes of inclusion, the undocumented immigrant students in SIM experienced forces that excluded them from participation in society, including what they interpreted as broken promises of educational rewards, isolation from and racism of peers, and denied rights of passages (i.e.- driver’s licenses, etc.). Finally, processes of physical expulsion of themselves or family members, while rare, represented an omnipresent fear among undocumented immigrant students in SIM.

Taken together, these experiences provided the “raw material” or “biographical resources” for narratives that emphasized the juxtaposition of processes of
physical/social inclusion and exclusion in relationship to social institutions. Undocumented immigrant students in SIM established the coherent and shared narratives that formed the thread with which they would stitch together a collective identity from their common experiences of inclusion and exclusion.

Furthermore, the tensions embedded in the juxtaposition of processes of inclusion and exclusion provided raw material for SIM to earn the sympathies of outside actors. By establishing a set of claims that leveraged their accomplished inclusion against the processes of exclusion, the life of undocumented immigrant students could be compellingly articulated as paradoxical. They were youth, but they had no future. They were undocumented, but through no fault of their own. They had earned a college acceptances or scholarships, but could not use them.

Finally, it is of note that all four of types of experiences emphasize a central importance of family in the lives of these young people. In the first, about physical inclusion, migration and family reunification were central to the narratives. The second type of experience of social inclusion - adapting in the new culture - received support from family members who provided support, encouragement and strategies. By asking undocumented immigrant students to not reveal their status, family members were often interpreters of and boundary setters in stories of social/cultural exclusion. And finally, the physical expulsion of members of undocumented immigrant students’ families from the U.S. was a fear for all, and became a motivator for some to become politically active. This inter-relationship between these narratives and members of families becomes important upon
passage of DACA, when the undocumented immigrant students receive benefits that their parents and other family members do not.

B. Mobilizing Resources to build a Social Movement Organization

How did undocumented immigrant students in SIM acquire the resources that they needed to accomplish their goals? Undocumented students effectively re-built SIM in the months after separating from MIRA, re-claiming SIM’s organizational name/identity, and acquiring office materials, new office space, funding, and fiscal sponsorship. Through four distinct processes (aggregation, self-development, appropriation, and patronage), they acquired different types of resources (material, socio-organizational, human and cultural).

Crucially, the process of re-building SIM both depended upon and predicated the acquisition of the legitimacy, a moral resource, from patrons. First, SIM acquired legitimacy by re-building its organization, thereby setting itself on a path towards engaging in the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. Within year after leaving MIRA, SIM was more financially stable, and had the autonomy to engage in the types of political activism that it wanted, something that had at times been limited in the context of their parent organization.

Second, SIM organizers and leaders developed trainings that would mobilize its most important resource – members. The content of these trainings drew largely on cultural and human resources bestowed by Marshall Ganz (2010), and emphasized a tactical innovation centered on public narratives, or what Ganz refers to as stories of self, us and now. Such public narratives were crafted and used as the
core curriculum for training undocumented immigrant students in SIM and nationally. The emphasis on public story-telling helped to structure the elements of the collective identity of undocumented immigrant students in SIM.

C. Participation in national and Massachusetts arenas for immigration policy

(Attribution of threat/opportunity):

SIM’s dynamic interactions with other challengers and established members brought them into the national and Massachusetts immigration policy arenas. When I began this research in 2008, undocumented immigrant students were hopeful that the coming two years would bring long-awaited policy gains for them. Instead, at the national level, they found the DREAM Act subsumed under comprehensive immigration reform (CIR), and the congressional consideration of CIR to be repeatedly delayed, even before the campaign for reform kicked-off. In fact, serious Congressional consideration of immigration policy never materialized in Obama’s first term. These delays highlighted tensions between comprehensive immigration reform and the DREAM Act as a stand-alone bill, and consequently, between undocumented immigrants as a category and undocumented immigrants who entered as children and came to be called ‘DREAMers”. The emergence of this collective identity occurred simultaneously with efforts to distinguish undocumented immigrant students from the larger immigration debates.

Meanwhile, public discourse and state actions began to present new threats to undocumented immigrants. In particular, Arizona’s SB-1070 provoked other states to attempt similar legislation, including a set of budget amendments in
Massachusetts. In response, undocumented immigrant student like SIM became radicalized and engaged increasingly in more direct and public forms of protest, including civil disobedience.

In Massachusetts, these dynamics were complicated by the election of Senator Scott Brown (R-MA), an event that re-shaped the national immigration policy arena by removing the 60 vote super-majority in the Senate and the Massachusetts immigration policy arena by sending a message to state law makers that statewide Massachusetts voters might vote Republican if given the chance. In the wake of Brown’s election, the in-state tuition bill was brought to a hearing and sent ‘to study’ where it died a quiet death. A few months later, the Massachusetts Senate passed a series of budget amendments to target undocumented immigrants.

The opportunities for broad or controversial policy changes in both the national and state arenas seemed to close between 2008 and 2011. Consequently, the movement outcomes for a group like DREAMers were limited to maintaining the status quo legislatively. At the same, time, however, this closing legislative opportunity provided new ways for a sub-group of immigrant rights actors to become accepted and recognized as new actors through innovative actions.

D. Innovative Action

Between 2008 and 2010, SIM’s tactical evolved, not from a planned and strategic set of decisions from organizers, but in response to shifting opportunities and threats and innovations that draw from the emotional and cultural repertoires, as much as logical cost/benefit analyses. This is not to suggest that strategy was not
intentional or that the emotional reactions to events over-rode savvy assessments of opportunities and threats. Instead, as Jorge would say at times, strategizing is a verb, not a noun. As such, it responds to dynamic shifts in the actions of members and other challengers in the political arena with innovation and imagination.

The national arena’s campaign around the DREAM Act helped demonstrate this tension between planned action and responsiveness to both external opportunities or threats and internal emotions or energy. During the 2009 10 for 10 campaign, SIM did not employ one specific recipe to leverage the DREAM Act support of three House members. In each case, the strategy responded to political situations that presented themselves: a conversation with a union ally, an opportunity to surprise a member at a community event and an implied threat of escalation were different but all effective in leveraging support. It is notable, however, that none of these direct lobbying strategies worked with Senator Brown in the Brown is Beautiful campaign.

Instead, during the “coming out” actions of 2010, SIM strategically suppressed and deployed aspects of their collective identity in campaigns around the DREAM Act. This strategy was still not effective in gaining Senator Brown’s vote, however, it did something else. The “coming out” strategies helped provide a public recognition that DREAMers were a distinct category of political actors. As this group chanted “We are the DREAMers” or “Undocumented and Unafraid, visited Capitol Hill in graduation robes and military uniforms, and held “boot camp” style calisthenics and college classes outside of the White House, they solidified a sense of “we-ness” as
DREAMers. Furthermore, they attracted the attention of the media and other established actors in the national immigration policy arena.

Closer to home, in Massachusetts, SIM’s use of innovative tactics did more to leverage legitimacy in the eyes of existing political actors. In particular the dramatic and public nature of holding a 24 hour/day 7 day/week vigil in response to anti-immigrant budget amendments in Massachusetts, at a time when the existing challengers in this arena were in a state of disarray, established SIM as a key influential actor for these issues. Their courage in holding the vigil was lauded by leaders of other immigrant rights groups. Meanwhile, the political negotiations involved in the day to day maintenance of the vigil space became a means for engaging directly with political actors in an improvised civic arena. During the vigil, groups came together. Strangers held conversations where they discussed immigration policy in a way that moved beyond the sound bites of typical public discourse on the subject. The vigil was a civic enterprise as much as, if not more than, a radical protest against some imagined monolithic state. Indeed, the vigil’s tactics worked best because it leveraged parts of the polity against other parts of the polity. In de-constructing different actors within the polity, the case of the vigil provides an important example of the type of contested certification/de-certification processes that co-occur when new actors enter an arena. In this case, SIM emerged as a certified political actor, with standing and a name among existing actors. Had the police been successful in removing the small group who slept on the state house steps on that first night in Boston, the event might have already been forgotten.
III. Lessons Learned from the Actor Constitution of DREAMers

In addition to the above theoretical contributions, the case of the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) during this period of constitution as political actors may provide important lessons for future undocumented immigrant student movement actors, and more broadly for other social movement actors as a whole.

First, the concept of biographical resources posited in this dissertation, demonstrated how experiences of physical and social/cultural inclusion could be processed and deployed through Ganz’s model of public narrative (2010). I would suggest that the concept of biographical resources holds relevance beyond the lived experiences of undocumented immigrant students, and includes other groups who have been marginalized and oppressed systematically. Furthermore, cultivating the ability of such groups to tell their own stories provides a rational for indigenous leadership within social movement organizations, despite trends that have elevated the roles of professionals in the work of social movements (Skocpol 2003).

A second and related lesson involves the sequencing of investments in training members to tell their stories in public that reaped rewards later when members had the capacity and preparation that allowed them to ‘come out’. This training in public narrative required initial time and resources, but moreso, the training helped to establish such story-telling as a cultural norm within the organization itself. For many members who later engaged in “coming out” or even civil disobedience, the normalization of story telling justifies the sequencing such training well before the public story-telling occurred. It seems hardly a coincidence that large scale investments in public narrative training would not have resulted in
more undocumented immigrants being willing to ‘tell their stories’ in public, and
counters the explanation that such tactical shifts emerge completely spontaneously
(Polletta 2006).

A third lesson that social movement actors might take from this dissertation
suggests that it was necessary for SIM leaders to mobilize material resources and
establish itself as an organization in Massachusetts, prior to engaging in more public
political actions. SIM’s organizational base and leadership served as an important
structure that provided a space to introduce information that responded to changes
in the national and state political arenas. So, as political opportunities seemed to
close, and threats began to manifest, the structures such as an office, an existing
network of leaders and membership meetings allowed the group to be responsive
through innovative tactics.

Fourth, political arenas are a social construction that is dynamic and
changing, and social movement leaders need to create spaces that allow them to
recognize these changes and to respond. Consider, first, the way the national
leaders of RIFA continued with their push for comprehensive immigration reform
into the spring and summer of 2010, despite strong indications that no such reform
would be forthcoming from Congress. In contrast, during a SIM retreat in early June
2010, leaders were able to surface deep concerns and develop an immediate
response to an impending threat by launching a public vigil at the Massachusetts
statehouse the very next day.

The analysis of political arenas provides an alternative to the sometimes
routine way many social movement actors seek exposure in the mass media as their
primary and sometimes only tactic, in what Sobieraj (2011) has called ‘media-centered’ activism. In contrast, a review of existing members and challenges in a given policy arena might reveal that sometimes other strategies – such as direct action or targeted lobbying - might be more beneficial to a cause than media-based campaigns.

Fifth, this dissertation provides an important lesson about the relative importance of internal and external resources, a topic that mirrors a classic divide in the social movements literature (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). Early resource mobilization theories emphasized external resources entirely (McCarthy and Zald 1977), while later theories explicitly focused on indigenous resources from within the group (McAdam 1999; Morris 1981). In the case of SIM, recall that SIM’s departure from MIRA heralded a stage in which SIM became a ‘youth led’ organization, thereby reflecting a shift in importance from an “external” to “internal” organizational and moral resource. Further, the notion of a youth-led organization became central to the group’s identity. Despite this shift, SIM remained dependent on outside resources. The roles of the transition team and the advisory group, as well as outside funders and its fiscal sponsor, became most crucial at exactly the point in time when Jorge and SIM’s leaders were declaring, “this is our organization.” This points to an important, albeit paradoxical, lesson that other social movement actors may glean from the case of SIM - that building a social movement organization requires both internal and external resources, even while the internal actors construct identities that minimize the roles of external providers of resources.

This lesson is consistent with the paradox of constituted actors (Krinsky and
As Krinsky and Mische (2013) note, the actor constitution paradox is that “contingent assemblages of social networks manage to create the illusion of determined, unified, self-motivated political actors, then to act publically as if they believed that illusion” (McAdam et al, 2001: 159). This presence of the illusion helps to explain why organizers describe tactics as entirely rational and self-determined, and under-emphasize how such strategies are drawn from an existing cultural reservoir of contentious routines.

As a final lesson from this dissertation, the actor constitution paradox points to a lesson about the consequences of constituting political actors, that is, that social movement groups might want to be careful to consider who is included and who is not in a given category of newly formed political actors. Despite its political expediency, the paradox between the illusion of DREAMers as political actors who were distinct from the larger undocumented immigrant population was and remains uncomfortable for many undocumented immigrant students, especially when they consider the road blocks towards legal status that their parents face. The example of how SIM and United We DREAM responded to President Obama’s administrative policy, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) reveals an important lesson for social movement groups seeking legitimacy as recognized actors. At first, members of SIM and other undocumented immigrants and their allies across the country celebrated. While far from comprehensive, DACA was a considerable policy achievement for this emerging social movement whose political campaigns sought exactly this type of administrative relief for the nearly two-million undocumented immigrant young people who had entered the United States.
as children since the December 2010 defeat of the Development Relief and Education of Alien Minors (DREAM) Act in the U.S. Senate. By August 2012 SIM hosted DACA information sessions in partnership with the Greater Boston Legal Services. Nationally, as of December 2010 an estimated 300,000 young people have applied for DACA (NYT 12/1/12).

Despite this jubilation, SIM and national leaders of United We DREAM became aware of the omnipresent need for other undocumented immigrants, including parents, families and friends to join in the system. I first came to realize this new emphasis on my way to the SIM office to hear the president’s announcement. While on the train, I saw Dee. Dee’s photograph had been included on the cover of Time magazine that had just been released. Then, that morning, she received the news that she could legally be employed in the U.S. She excitedly told her mother, who – she quickly realized – would reap no benefit from this new policy. Further, her co-workers at her job were ineligible. “Why me and not them?” she asked. A few weeks later, I had lunch with Tiago. He expressed a similar feeling. “It is always on our minds.” The guilt of receiving a federal benefit, when others who they felt were just as deserving remained ineligible, did not sit well with him and other undocumented immigrant students. The constitution of “DREAMers” had created a boundary of ‘worthy’ political actors that now, seemed uncomfortable for some.

These feeling, however, helped re-shape SIM’s tactics and strategies in the post-DACA political arena. At the annual fundraiser for SIM in October 2012, Tiago, Dee and others spoke to the attendees, and emphasized the desire to push for
immigration reform for all 11 million undocumented immigrants. They wanted to push beyond DACA, and beyond the DREAM Act. A month later, President Obama won re-election, due largely to the overwhelming support of Latino voters, the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. Latinos overwhelmingly supported President Obama, and part of the political explanation involved the hard line his opponent, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney had taken on immigration. This demographic reality, that national elections might require some support from the growing Latino electorate, led national Republican leaders to agree to pursue comprehensive immigration reform in the 113th Congress beginning in January 2013.

In December 2012, I joined the delegation from SIM and over 600 undocumented immigrant students from across the country at the United We DREAM Congress in Kansas City. One of the group decisions that provoked the most controversy involved the platform of UWD and the question of whether to pursue campaigns on behalf of families or only the DREAM Act. At least one delegation was upset by the forced choice. They argued, “you want us to choose between ourselves and our families?” The group settled on the plan to fight for family re-unification. The theme of bringing parents into the DREAM movement was a repeated theme of this Congress, as was LGBT unification. DREAMers felt buoyed by their successes with the implementation of DACA and the presidential election.

More recent campaigns have continued to emphasize reunification between parents and DREAMers. On June 11 2013, Mariana appeared in a photograph on
the front page of the New York Times. She was holding her mother’s hand through a gap in a rusted fence on the border of Arizona and Mexico. They were both crying. Then, on July 18, 2013, a member of NIYA (one of the McCain 5) released a video announcing that she had crossed the border in an effort to highlight what she saw as a bigger injustice of being separated from her family for so many years. It remains unclear if this young national leader of NIYA will be able to return. In these ways, DREAMers have shed elements of ‘exclusivity’ in their collective identity, and instead, accepted roles as activists who are fighting for the rights of their families. Their policy prospects, at least in the near future, remain uncertain.

IV. Contributions

The very public struggles of Mariana, as well as Jorge, Ernesto, Tiago, Eliza, Neil, Orfelia and the other members of SIM, who I met in Jorge’s kitchen in 2008 have been beyond anything that I could have imagined when I began this dissertation project. The evolution of this dissertation itself reflects an attempt to capture and understand the dynamic and sudden emergence of this group, who began as a local and under-resourced group that I worried would not exist long enough for me to collect data about. Instead, they have become participants in national discussions about public policy, and have appeared on the front covers of major magazines, national newspapers, on television reports and across the spectrum of online communications media including Twitter and YouTube. This dissertation contributes insight into how this process of emergence occurred, and how this group came to be seen and to see themselves as distinct political actors.
This dissertation helps provide new understandings about undocumented immigrant students who emerged as political actors within the immigration policy arenas at both the national and Massachusetts state levels. Scholars of social movements in general, and collective identity specifically, have come to understand recent political movements as based on creative reformulations of who they are, rather than making claims for participation in legal systems. See, for example, how Polletta and Jasper (2001: 287) have observed that legal inclusion in a society is a key distinction:

Unlike the civil rights and early labor movements, which pursued full inclusion as citizens, post-citizenship movements are peopled by those who already enjoy most or all of the normal rights of citizens, including the ability to mobilize legally and to put pressure on political decision makers. Participants in these movements do not usually have an identity imposed on them by the political and legal systems; accordingly, they have more freedom to engage in creative reformulations of who they are.

Such distinctions, however, are more fluid than this passage implies. The case of undocumented immigrant students constructing a collective identity as “DREAMers” contains elements of both “old” and “post-citizenship” movements. On the one hand, they are making claims for full-inclusion through policies that provide a path to citizenship. On the other hand, undocumented student movement actors engage have adopted actions from such “post-citizenship” movements such as the LGBT movement through coming out actions whereby, they engage in “creative reformulations of who they are.”

This phenomenon has attracted the attention of scholars (Nicholls 2013; Morrissey 2013; Gonzales 2009). In particular, Nicholls (2013) provides a valuable overview of the discursive opportunities that helped DREAMers mobilize during the 2010 campaigns for the DREAM Act. His analysis covers some of the similar terrain
as this dissertation\textsuperscript{81}, including the tensions between RIFA and DREAM Act and the emergence of new forms of innovative action, such as civil disobedience actions. In many ways, his work is an excellent complement to my own analysis, which has focused less on issues of framing and discourses in the media, and instead has emphasized dynamic interactions between groups of actors within political arenas. In part, this is because Nicholls (2013) draws his data primarily from secondary sources in the media and interviews with California-based leaders of the undocumented immigrant student movement who have also been studied by many other scholars. In contrast, my own analysis has been based on the less-studied, but influential, group of movement leaders on the East Coast, and is based on intensive ethnographic study that began well before the national media began to pay attention to undocumented immigrant students.

A second and more substantive point of departure between Nicholls argument and my own, reflects the space that undocumented immigrant students are emerging from and into. For Nicholls (2013), as many other scholars who have looked at this group, the discursive techniques of DREAMers has been a means overcoming the legacy of “illegality” in the culture and society of the United States (2013: 14). Instead, I suggest that undocumented immigrant students have followed a path that is less distinct from past social movement actors than immigration scholars have portrayed to date. As has been noted, the process of actor constitution for undocumented immigrant students may be compared with the Civil Rights Movement African American insurgents or with LGBT activists, who

\textsuperscript{81} Especially national politics covered in chapters 5 and 6.
established the modular tactic of “coming out” that undocumented immigrant students adopted.

In addition to these substantive contributions, this dissertation contributes to the field of contentious politics, and in particular, the application of the actor constitution process (McAdam et al., 2001). The actor constitution process reflects an evolution from the political process theories that explained movement emergence as a result of contexts, mobilizing structures, collective identity, political opportunities/threats and tactics. The actor constitution process, however, goes beyond the political process theories focusing on dynamic mechanisms that underlie more static relationships among these factors, and in so doing more readily brings identifies mechanisms for different ways that resources are acquired and used by groups, how meanings and identities are crafted and shaped culturally, the interactions between individual agency and spaces of domains, and how change occurs over time through improvisation and struggle. As such this dissertation is situated at the very heart of scholarship about social movements.

This dissertation brings aspects of this process into conversation with longstanding traditions associated with resource mobilization and tactical innovation, as well as newer frameworks centered on arenas and fields. For instance, Chapter 4 brings expands upon the theorization of ‘organizational appropriation’ by bringing this concept into the scholarly context of resource mobilization, and considering several other processes that co-occur and interact with the process of appropriation, including self-production, aggregation and patronage. In addition, I pay special attention to different types of resources
including material, socio-organizational, human, cultural and moral resources. Further, I propose the addition of ‘biographical resources’ to provide a tool for understanding the deployment of public narratives and identities. In this formulation, biographical resources recognize the narration of a person’s life or their biography as having a level of political currency when they are able to shed light on political or social conditions that a group seeks to ameliorate. In this case, biographical resources are experiences in society that provide “raw materials” to be processed into public narratives, and then deployed tactically as strategies.

Likewise, Chapter 5 brings the actor constitution process into conversation with new theories of arenas and fields (Jasper 2012; Fligstein and McAdam 2012). By tracing the members and challengers within these arenas, I have attempted to provide a space for a full spectrum of polity constituents within contending arenas. While much debate around the scope of contentious politics has focused on patterns of authority that extend beyond the state (e.g. Snow 2004), I focus here on how SIM has organized in direct interaction with polity arenas and emphasize here how careful conceptualization of such arenas should avoid monolithic conceptions of systems of authority.

This dissertation demonstrates the usefulness of analyzing dynamic interactions among actors in multiple policy arenas and over time. The evolving nature of the actors within these arenas, their organizations, their tactics and the circumstance that they struggle with, provides rich material for continued theorizing.
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Appendices

Appendix A. Summary of Interviewees

Appendix B. Protocols for Interviews with Undocumented Immigrant Students and Allies

Appendix C. Codebook

Appendix D. Summary of Legislation
   
   i. DREAM Act 2009 Summary of Legislation
   
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   iv. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

Appendix E. Conceptualization of Polity and Arenas

Appendix F. Timeline of Major Events for SIM
## Appendix A. Description of Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Alejandra</strong></td>
<td>Alejandra (24) came to the U.S. as at age 12 from Colombia. She enrolled in school where she learned English quickly and then excelled by participating in National Honor Society and several clubs. She joined SIM in 2006 and continues to attend membership meetings and rallies intermittently. She attends community college.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Andrea</strong></td>
<td>Andrea (21) immigrated from Mexico when she was 11 years old. She joined SIM in Fall 2008 and co-led organize the local chapter. She attends community college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Armstrong</strong></td>
<td>Armstrong (23) entered the U.S. from Brazil as a child at age 8? when his father was a student at divinity school and became a pastor at a church with a religious visa. He grew up with legal status, until his junior year in high school when his father’s religious visa was denied a renewal. His family continued to appeal for several years, but that denial prevented Armstrong from receiving financial aid and attending college. He attended community college and transferred to a state school where he took intermittent classes that he could afford. He joined SIM in spring 2008. He would travel from his home on the Cape to Boston for monthly meetings and worked to organize a chapter of SIM on the Cape. He joined the staff as the media coordinator in May 2010. He has been accepted to attend Brown University in Fall 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Azul</strong></td>
<td>Azul (22) travelled from El Salvador to the U.S. when she was 13 to be reunited with her mother. Azul joined SIM in 2007, travelled in spring 2008 to DC and continued to attend membership meetings and events intermittently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Tiago</strong></td>
<td>Tiago (24) moved to the US from Brazil as a child. He excelled at school and won the state academic decathlon from a low income school against more well resourced schools. He was recruited to SIM by Azul and soon became a leader. In Spring 2008 Tiago participated in In-State Tuition meetings with Marianna. He was part of the delegation to visit Gov. Patrick. Tiago has attended school intermittently at a state college. In August 2011 he joined the staff of SIM as a campaign coordinator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Eliza</strong></td>
<td>Eliza (19) came to the United States as a small child from the Dominican Republic. In fall 2009, as a high school senior she organized her local chapter of SIM and began attending statewide meetings. She travelled to DC in June 2009 for the RIFA kick-off and then raised almost $5,000 in three weeks to fund a follow-up trip back to DC again. She helped convince Rep. Nikki Tsongas to support the DREAM Act. In March 2010 she ‘came out’ publically as undocumented at an event at Harvard University. In April 2010 she was among the students who sat in at Sen. Scott Brown’s office, resulting in a meeting with him. In May 2010 Eliza joined the staff as the Administrative and Fundraising Coordinator of SIM. In May 2011 she began to transition to be the Organizer. She will begin enroll in a state university in Fall 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSEUDONYM</td>
<td>Short Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ernesto</td>
<td>Ernesto (22) entered the US from his native Chile when he was 13 years old. He struggled in school. He joined SIM in 2006 when his sister (who was a SIM founding member) invited the leaders to his house for a movie night. He talked to Jorge and became involved in learning to organize events for SIM. Ernesto was trained in Marshall Ganz’s model of organizing and served as co-organizer beginning in spring 2008 at MIRA. Alongside Jorge, he led SIM until 2009 when Jorge left. Ernesto and Mariana were the two staff between October 2009 and February 2010. In December 2010 Ernesto received his Green Card. In February, Ernesto left his position at SIM, and became a national leader of the National Immigrant Youth Alliance (NIYA), a more militant national network of undocumented activists who organized direct actions in the offices of political leaders, beginning with a sit-in at John McCain’s office in May 2010. Ernesto broke from SIM entirely in December 2010 with a public letter condemning SIM, Jorge and United We Dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Joanna</td>
<td>Joanna (24) is a founder of SIM in 2004. Because she had a visa application in process at the time of her organizing, she became 'the public face' of SIM at its founding. Joanna led outreach efforts for SIM from 2006 until 2008 when she enrolled in college in MA. She has interned in the office of John Kerry in Boston working on immigration related constituency claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Jorge</td>
<td>Jorge (24) came to the US as a child but received his green card in Spring 2008. He is the most prominent founder of SIM and served as lead organizer from 2005 in MIRA. In October 2009 Jorge was laid off from MIRA, but continued to organize SIM without a salary through 2009, by working from his parent's kitchen table. He co-led the in-state tuition campaign with members of MIRA, organized national lobbying events around the DREAM Act resulting in co-sponsorship of all Massachusetts delegates in Congress to sign on as co-sponsors of the act in Summer 2009. In August and September he began to lead the first national trainings for comprehensive immigration reform. In October 2009, he moved to Washington, DC to lead the national network of groups advocating for the DREAM Act called United We Dream (UWD). Even before leaving SIM, Jorge was trained as an organizer by PICO, IAF, and Marshall Ganz, among others. He continues to serve as an advisor to SIM informally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Mariana</td>
<td>Mariana came to the U.S. from Brazil when she was 6 years old. As a child, her father abandoned her family. In HS Mariana won the Abigail Adams Scholarship based on her high test scores, which she could not use due to her immigration status. Her brother and mother were detained when she was 18 (her first year in a state college). She joined SIM three month later in late Fall 2007 by participating in In-State Tuition Campaign meetings. She was part of the delegation that met Deval Patrick in spring 2008 and continued as an active leader the following school year, while also organizing events on her campus around immigration. In Fall 2009 she joined the staff as lead fundraiser, but also led the delegation to meet members of the Clinton 12 and Little Rock 9 that month. The documentary film-maker on that trip chose her to be the central actor in her documentary (still in progress). Mariana testified before the state of MA Joint Higher Education Committee in January 2010 and publicly in Spring 2010, including doing interviews with CNN, ABC-TV, BBC, Boston Globe, and several other national and international news programs. In all of these, she used her real name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudonym</td>
<td>Short Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marynelly</td>
<td>Marynelly was a local leader of a chapter in SIM in Lawrence MA in 2008-2009. She came to the US from Dominican Republic to live with her aunt for her education. She found school easy and wanted to attend college. She returned to her parents in the DR in summer 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miguel</td>
<td>Miguel (25) was a founding member of SIM. He was born in Guatemala and came to the U.S. at age 7. He graduated from high school in 2005 and attended community college. In 2006 Miguel was detained by immigration officials on a 'criminal sweep' of his neighborhood. Miguel, a 4.0 honors student, was mistakenly apprehended as part of this raid. His case drew the attention of local media as well as Senators Kennedy and Kerry who wrote letters on his behalf. Roberto was a soft-spoken young man had to speak publically as part of this campaign. After several continuances Miguel was granted amnesty in December 2009. Miguel has been an active SIM member, attending meetings and events, as well as fundraising and logistics, and helped lead the campaign for Harvard Student Eric Balderas in Summer 2010 when he was similarly arrested by ICE. Miguel was elected to the board of SIM in summer 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orfelia</td>
<td>Orfelia (21) came to the U.S. when she was an infant and remembers nothing of her native Honduras. She is 23 years old and now has a conditional/temporary work visa, but remains ineligible for financial aid. She is very bright, having read graduate level books. Unable to afford college, she has worked in several non-profit organizations in the area. She joined SIM in spring 2009, travelled to DC twice in June, and was an emerging leader when she abruptly left the group in August. She returned in summer 2010 and became an active leader in SIM and serves on the national board of UWD. Her hearing for permanent legal status was delayed for a year in January 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paula</td>
<td>Paula (23) joined SIM during a vigil in September 2010 and became increasingly active during the fall 2010 around the DREAM Act. She joined the leadership in January 2011 but left in August 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Victor’s (20) father immigrated to the United States shortly after he was born in Guatemala. His mother came within 5 years. Victor came to join them and crossed the border on the back of a ‘coyote’ at age 8. He was robbed of a back-pack of cash and avoided border patrol but was soon reunited with his mother. His family lived in New Bedford, MA where his mother worked in the Blanco Factory until the company was raided by ICE in March 2007. His mother was detained for 3 weeks, but finally released. Six months later she won her appeal and received work authorization. A year later, ICE officials arrived at Victor’s home to arrest his father. Victor’s father was not home, but decided to voluntarily turn himself into ICE. His case was deferred for over a year until 2 months after Victor’s high school graduation, at which time Victor’s father was detained and deported a month later. Victor dropped out of community college. He works at a company with other undocumented immigrants in his area. He joined SIM during the DREAM Camp in February 2010. He has travelled to DC for the march in March 2010 and DREAM University in August 2010. He participated in meetings, vigils and rallies and emerged as a leader of SIM in fall 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B. Interview Protocol

B.1 Protocol for Undocumented Immigrant Students

B.1.1. Background Questions
- Where are from?
- What do you remember about the country that you left?
- At what age did you leave to come to the United States?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- How old?
- Where do you live now?

B.1.2. Experiences in school and Attitudes Towards Education (Prior to SIM)
- What were your experiences like in school when you first arrived in the U.S.?
- Do you attend school now?
- Do you/did you like school?
  - What was your favorite subject?
  - Did you have a favorite teacher or favorite subject?
- What other things were you involved in school?
  - Sports?
  - Clubs?
  - Student government?
  - Did you receive any honors or awards?
- How important is/was studying hard and doing well in school compared to other parts of your life?

B.1.3. Career aspirations
- When you were in school, what did you want to be?

B.1.4. Work
- Do you work now?

B.1.5. Experience with SIM
- What other groups have you been involved in, if any?
- How did you get started in SIM?
- Prior to SIM, what was your attitude toward being active politically?
- What is your role in SIM?
- What have you done for SIM?
- Have there been any surprises as you participated in SIM?
- What have been the highlights?
- What (if any) frustrations have you encountered?
- What type (if any) training did you receive from SIM?

B.1.6. Impact on SIM Participants
- Why do you participate in SIM?
- What difference does SIM make for you?
- What do people say when you tell them of your involvement in SIM?
B.2. Questions for SIM Adult Allies

B. 2.1. Background
   o What is your title and/or organization?
   o What does your organization do?
   o How did your organization become involved in collaborating with SIM?

B.2.2. Experience with SIM
   o What has been your experience/history working with SIM?
   o In what ways is working with SIM similar to or different from other campaigns?
   o Has working with SIM (as a youth-led organization) differed from other collaborations or campaigns that you have been involved in? How?
   o Are there any added benefits to working with youth-led campaigns like SIM? Are there any added challenges to working with campaigns led by young people?
   o What would success look like in this campaign? What is the likelihood for success in this campaign? What do you or will you attribute that success to?
   o What challenges remain for SIM to tackle? What role will you play?
B.3. Additional Questions for SIM Organizers

B.3.1. SIM Origins
  o Can you re-tell the origin story of SIM that you told at the new member meeting last week.
  o Who decided to call it a “Movement”? How did SIM get its name?
  o How did you develop the plan for SIM outreach, training and actions?

B.3.2. SIM Descriptions
  o How many young people are involved in SIM?
  o How old are they?
  o Where do they come from (national origin)?
  o Where do they live now?
  o What is the goal of SIM now?

B.3.3. SIM Strategies
  o What are SIM’s campaigns?
  o How has SIM framed it’s issues
  o What choices have SIM leaders made about how to present their cause?
  o What have they done?

B.3.4. SIM Accomplishments
  o What have been ‘wins’ for SIM?
  o Have there been public responses to SIM (positive or negative)?
  o Were these different than if these had been adults

B.3.5. Organizer style and Strategies
  o Critique yourself as a leader.
    o What are your strongest traits?
    o What are your weaknesses?
    o What are you doing to develop?
  o How are you developing new members to lead?
  o Are there provisions or plans for how you work with parents? Likewise, with friends who are not undocumented?
  o What about age of youth? Do you see differences between the older youth (who may be in college) and the younger youth? How do you manage those?

B.3.6. SIM and Issues of RACE/ETHNIC COMPETITION
  o It seems that the majority of youth are Latino. Have you often had other ethnic/racial groups involved?
  o Do tensions or competition around race or national origin ever come up in a way that causes some members to feel left out?
## Appendix C. Interview Codebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Description/Rules for Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-Vivo Codes for Identity Labels</strong></td>
<td>Dreamer, Student, Immigrant, Latino, “Be” or “being” or “am” undocumented, “illegal”, “SIMMER”, Immigrant, National identity of sending nation (i.e.- Brazilian, Colombian, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity: Youth or Student</strong></td>
<td>Seeing oneself as a ‘youth’ or ‘student’; or being seen as a ‘youth or student’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity: Gender</strong></td>
<td>Seeing oneself as a ‘man’ or ‘woman’; alternatively ‘doing gender’ or references to gender issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity: Sexuality</strong></td>
<td>Seeing oneself as a queer/gay man/woman; references to LGBT issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity: Race or Ethnicity (Pan-ethnic)</strong></td>
<td>Including references to or stories about U.S. constructions of pan-ethnic identity “brown” or “Latino/a.” Excluding references to national identity (i.e.- Brazilian, South American, etc.) and Excluding identity in birth country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity: Immigrant</strong></td>
<td>Seeing oneself as an ‘immigrant.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity: Undocumented</strong></td>
<td>Seeing oneself as ‘undocumented.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Changes in Legal Status</strong></td>
<td>Losing or gaining legal status. (includes Liminal legality too).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity of &quot;Citizenship&quot;</strong></td>
<td>Types or ranges of citizenship. Examples of citizenship as contrast to ‘undocumented.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meanings of Legal Status</strong></td>
<td>Meanings of Immigration Status; references to “Papers”, “a card” or “Nine Digits,” “Driver’s Licenses,” Etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within Group Boundaries and Relations</strong></td>
<td>“Us”, Descriptors of “Belonging” or meeting people “Just like me”. Stories about “Us”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Across Group Boundaries/Relations</strong></td>
<td>“Them,” Descriptors of not belonging, highlighting differences or feelings of exclusion. Not include racism or abuse. Stories about “Them”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racism, direct experiences of.</strong></td>
<td>Experiences of being shamed, ostracized or marginalized including name calling, being laughed at, etc. Encounters with anti-immigrant people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constructing Identity</strong></td>
<td>Identify formation or brokerage. Encounters that define a sense of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiences with Lawyers</strong></td>
<td>Contact/advice from lawyers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Tension</strong></td>
<td>Tensions/conflict with parents, whether from school, activism, work or other. Also, including feelings of identity in relationship to parents. (Shame of belonging to family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Support/Encouragement</strong></td>
<td>Encouragement for education, support in adapting to U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Siblings Inspiration</strong></td>
<td>Feelings of wanting to work for/support/help younger siblings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sibling Tension</strong></td>
<td>Feelings of conflict with siblings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sibling Support</strong></td>
<td>Feelings of support or encouragement by siblings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher or Guidance Stories</strong></td>
<td>Stories of encouragement for education, support in adapting to U.S. by teachers. Also, in contrast, stories of bad teachers, lack of support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Involvement Stories</strong></td>
<td>Stories about or references to clubs or sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Achievement</strong></td>
<td>References to or stories about educational achievements such as honor societies, grades, test scores, scholarships or college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label</td>
<td>Description/Rules for Coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career or Education Goals</td>
<td>References or stories about career or educational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing Up/Rites of Passage</td>
<td>References to peer group regarding graduation, scholarships, applying to colleges, getting driver’s licenses, getting jobs, or other “rites of passage”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process: Understanding Self as “undocumented”</td>
<td>Coming to terms with or learning about undocumented status. Feelings. What it meant. Stories about learning about this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process: Coming Out to individuals</td>
<td>Coming out to teachers, friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process: Coming Out within SIM</td>
<td>Coming out to fellow members of SIM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence towards activism</td>
<td>Feelings of not wanting to “be” an activist, not being “Unafraid”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meanings of belonging to SIM (Indigenous Pre-figurative Space)</td>
<td>References to SIM becoming a “family”, as being ‘special’ or a safe place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meanings of belonging to a national movement (Trans movement Space)</td>
<td>References to National events, UWD, or other organizations/events across the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic deployment of Identity</td>
<td>Trainings; Learning to tell stories; Positioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreamer Cultural Artifacts</td>
<td>References to Songs, lyrics, symbols, clothing, etc. that symbolize “Dreamers”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded from being Dreamers</td>
<td>Adult Immigrant and CIRFA; 14th Amendment or “Anchor Babies”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D. Summary of Legislation

i. DREAM Act 2009 Summary of Legislation

ii. Co-sponsors in Senate and House of Representative

iii. Educational Opportunity Act 2009 (In-state Tuition in MA)

iv. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

i. DREAM Act 2009 Summary of Legislation by the Congressional Record

Service, Library of Congress

Latest Title: Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2009
Latest Major Action: 3/26/2009 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.


Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2009 or DREAM Act of 2009 - Amends the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to repeal the provision making unlawful aliens ineligible for higher education benefits based on state residence unless a U.S. citizen or national is eligible for such benefits without regard to state residence.

Authorizes the Secretary of Homeland Security to cancel the removal of, and adjust to conditional permanent resident status, an alien who: (1) entered the United States before his or her 16th birthday and has been present in the United States for at least five years immediately preceding enactment of this Act; (2) is a person of good moral character; (3) is not inadmissible or deportable under specified grounds of the Immigration and Nationality Act; (4) at the time of application, has been admitted to an institution of higher education or has earned a high school or equivalent diploma; (5) from the age of 16 and older, has never been under a final order of exclusion, deportation, or removal; and (6) was under age 35 on the date of this Act’s enactment.

Sets forth the conditions for conditional permanent resident status, including: (1) termination of status for violation of this Act; and (2) removal of conditional status to permanent status.

Authorizes an alien who has satisfied the appropriate requirements prior to enactment of this Act to petition the Secretary for conditional permanent resident status.

Provides for: (1) exclusive jurisdiction; (2) penalties for false application statements; (3) confidentiality; (4) fee prohibitions; (5) higher education assistance; and (6) a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report respecting the number of aliens adjusted under this Act.
ii. DREAM Act 2009 Co-sponsors in the 111th Congress with Massachusetts

Highlighted

S.729 Senate Co-sponsors (n=40)

Sen Akaka, Daniel K. [HI] - 3/22/2010
Sen Bayh, Evan [IN] - 6/17/2010
Sen Bennett, Michael F. [CO] - 9/24/2009
Sen Bingaman, Jeff [NM] - 3/30/2009
Sen Boxer, Barbara [CA] - 3/30/2009
Sen Cantwell, Maria [WA] - 4/22/2009
Sen Cardin, Benjamin L. [MD] - 9/30/2009
Sen Dodd, Christopher J. [CT] - 3/30/2009
Sen Feinstein, Dianne [CA] - 3/30/2009
Sen Franken, Al [MN] - 10/5/2009

Sen Lautenberg, Frank R. [NJ] - 4/12/2010
Sen Levin, Carl [MI] - 10/20/2009
Sen Merkley, Jeff [OR] - 5/13/2010
Sen Specter, Arlen [PA] - 10/14/2009

Source: http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d111:SN00729:&&!P

H.R.1751 Cosponsors (111th Congress) (n=139)


Rep Quigley, Mike [IL-5] - 4/30/2009
iii. Educational Opportunity Act 2009 (In-state Tuition in MA)

SENATE DOCKET, NO. FILED ON: 1/14/2009

SENATE . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:
Anthony D. Galluccio

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:
The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:
An Act relative to equal access to higher education and generating revenue for the commonwealth.

PETITION OF:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DISTRICT/ADDRESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthony D. Galluccio</td>
<td>Middlesex, Suffolk and Essex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonia Chang-Díaz</td>
<td>Second Suffolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James B. Eldridge</td>
<td>Middlesex and Worcester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AN ACT RELATIVE TO EQUAL ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND GENERATING REVENUE FOR THE COMMONWEALTH.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 9 of Chapter 15A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:—

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, for the purpose of determining eligibility for in-state tuition rates and fees at public institutions of higher education, except the University of Massachusetts Medical School, any individual admitted to such public institutions of higher education, other than a non-immigrant alien within the meaning of paragraph 15 of subsection (a) of Section 1101 of Title 8 of the United States Code, who has attended high school in the commonwealth for 3 or more years and has achieved graduation from a high school in the commonwealth or attained the equivalent thereof, shall be eligible to pay in-state tuition rates and fees at the University of Massachusetts, or any state or community college. No person qualified for in-state tuition rates and fees under this chapter shall be denied in-state tuition and fees as a result of the granting of eligibility under this paragraph. An eligible individual shall provide the University of Massachusetts, or the state or community college with (i) a document reflecting issuance of an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) in lieu of his or her social security number for such purposes as a social security number may be required under federal law and (ii) a signed affidavit stating that the individual will apply for citizenship or legal permanent residence in accordance with federal statute and federal regulations within 120 days of eligibility for such status.
iv. Memorandum establishing Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

June 15, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: David V. Aguilar
Acting Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Alejandro Mayorkas
Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

John Morton
Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

FROM: Janet Napolitano
Secretary of Homeland Security

SUBJECT: Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children

By this memorandum, I am setting forth how, in the exercise of our prosecutorial discretion, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) should enforce the Nation’s immigration laws against certain young people who were brought to this country as children and know only this country as home. As a general matter, these individuals lacked the intent to violate the law and our ongoing review of pending removal cases is already offering administrative closure to many of them. However, additional measures are necessary to ensure that our enforcement resources are not expended on these low priority cases but are instead appropriately focused on people who meet our enforcement priorities.

The following criteria should be satisfied before an individual is considered for an exercise of prosecutorial discretion pursuant to this memorandum:

- came to the United States under the age of sixteen;
- has continuously resided in the United States for a least five years preceding the date of this memorandum and is present in the United States on the date of this memorandum;
- is currently in school, has graduated from high school, has obtained a general education development certificate, or is an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States;
- has not been convicted of a felony offense, a significant misdemeanor offense, multiple misdemeanor offenses, or otherwise poses a threat to national security or public safety; and
- is not above the age of thirty.
Our Nation’s immigration laws must be enforced in a strong and sensible manner. They are not designed to be blindly enforced without consideration given to the individual circumstances of each case. Nor are they designed to remove productive young people to countries where they may not have lived or even speak the language. Indeed, many of these young people have already contributed to our country in significant ways. Prosecutorial discretion, which is used in so many other areas, is especially justified here.

As part of this exercise of prosecutorial discretion, the above criteria are to be considered whether or not an individual is already in removal proceedings or subject to a final order of removal. No individual should receive deferred action under this memorandum unless they first pass a background check and requests for relief pursuant to this memorandum are to be decided on a case by case basis. DHS cannot provide any assurance that relief will be granted in all cases.

1. With respect to individuals who are encountered by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS):

   - With respect to individuals who meet the above criteria, ICE and CBP should immediately exercise their discretion, on an individual basis, in order to prevent low priority individuals from being placed into removal proceedings or removed from the United States.
   - USCIS is instructed to implement this memorandum consistent with its existing guidance regarding the issuance of notices to appear.

2. With respect to individuals who are in removal proceedings but not yet subject to a final order of removal, and who meet the above criteria:

   - ICE should exercise prosecutorial discretion, on an individual basis, for individuals who meet the above criteria by deferring action for a period of two years, subject to renewal, in order to prevent low priority individuals from being removed from the United States.
   - ICE is instructed to use its Office of the Public Advocate to permit individuals who believe they meet the above criteria to identify themselves through a clear and efficient process.
   - ICE is directed to begin implementing this process within 60 days of the date of this memorandum.
   - ICE is also instructed to immediately begin the process of deferring action against individuals who meet the above criteria whose cases have already been identified through the ongoing review of pending cases before the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

3. With respect to the individuals who are not currently in removal proceedings and meet the above criteria, and pass a background check:

   - USCIS should establish a clear and efficient process for exercising prosecutorial discretion, on an individual basis, by deferring action against individuals who meet the
above criteria and are at least 15 years old, for a period of two years, subject to renewal, in order to prevent low priority individuals from being placed into removal proceedings or removed from the United States.

- The USCIS process shall also be available to individuals subject to a final order of removal regardless of their age.
- USCIS is directed to begin implementing this process within 60 days of the date of this memorandum.

For individuals who are granted deferred action by either ICE or USCIS, USCIS shall accept applications to determine whether these individuals qualify for work authorization during this period of deferred action.

This memorandum confers no substantive right, immigration status or pathway to citizenship. Only the Congress, acting through its legislative authority, can confer these rights. It remains for the executive branch, however, to set forth policy for the exercise of discretion within the framework of the existing law. I have done so here.

Janet Napolitano
Appendix E. Actor Constitution in Relation to Political Arenas and Polity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year and Month</th>
<th>Events in SIM organization</th>
<th>Events in Massachusetts Political Arenas</th>
<th>Events in National Political Arena</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>SIM leadership and recruitment meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SIM organizers (Jorge and Ernesto) laid off from MIRA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>SIM Leadership Meeting (Jorge’s kitchen Table)</td>
<td>In-State Tuition Coalition forms</td>
<td>Barack Obama elected President.</td>
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<td>SIM receives Dr. MLK Jr. Award from Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries</td>
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<td>SIM Recruitment Meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transition Team Meetings begin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SIM officially leaves MIRA (11/26/2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SIM Leadership and Organizing Training Meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Las Posadas in Boston</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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<td>January</td>
<td>SIM adopts Communities United for Power (CUP) as fiscal agent</td>
<td>Educational Opportunity Act (EOA) filed in MA</td>
<td>President Obama sworn in and prioritizes economic recovery and health care.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>SIM new office in Encuentro Cinco (E5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>DREAM Act 2009 introduced in Senate and House</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>SIM receives Jobs With Justice Youth Award</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
<td>Sen. Durbin’s office announces DREAM Act to be rolled into comprehensive immigration reform bill.</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>SIM holds lobby days at statehouse for in-state tuition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SIM hosts EOA Coalition Meeting in E5 for first time.</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
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<td>May</td>
<td>SIM May Day Fundraiser at Cantina La Mexicana</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SIM Retreats (First Public Narrative Training)</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
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<td>June</td>
<td>RIFA Kick-off Event, Washington, DC</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
<td>RIFA Kick-off Event, Washington, DC</td>
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<td>DREAM Graduation Ceremony, Washington, DC</td>
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<td>DREAM Graduation Ceremony, Washington, DC</td>
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<td>July</td>
<td>10 for 10 Campaign Ends</td>
<td>EOA Legislative vote counts/lobbying for Chairman Torrisi</td>
<td>Tea Party gains political attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>SIM Leadership Training Retreat (public narrative)</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
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<td>September</td>
<td>Mariana hired on staff. Mariana hired on staff. Jorge and Ernesto begin conducting trainings for RIFA nationally (Ganz’s syllabus)</td>
<td>I Am Little Rock ’09 Trip to Clinton, TN and Little Rock, AR</td>
<td>EOA Coalition Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Jorge leaves SIM to become UWD National Organizer</td>
<td>Jorge leaves SIM to become UWD National Organizer</td>
<td>EOA Petition</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Advisory Board begins meeting. SIM receives first large grant for $25,000</td>
<td>Advisory Board begins meeting. SIM receives first large grant for $25,000</td>
<td>Lou Dobbs let go by CNN</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>SIM announces DREAM Camp</td>
<td>SIM announces DREAM Camp</td>
<td>Senator Galluccio (Co-sponsor of EOA) arrested.</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>January</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Roberto hired as SIM organizer. In-State Tuition Hearing</td>
<td>Roberto hired as SIM organizer. In-State Tuition Hearing</td>
<td>Trail of DREAMs begins in Florida</td>
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<td>SIM leaders attend training in Ithaca, NY</td>
<td>SIM leaders attend training in Ithaca, NY</td>
<td>Scott Brown elected</td>
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<td>SIM Fundraiser breakfast</td>
<td>SIM Fundraiser breakfast</td>
<td>Scott Brown elected</td>
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<td>DREAM Camp</td>
<td>DREAM Camp</td>
<td>Matias Ramos, president of United We DREAM detained at Minnesota airport.</td>
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<td>Simone Panel and Rally at Statehouse: Launch Governor Patrick</td>
<td>Simone Panel and Rally at Statehouse: Launch Governor Patrick</td>
<td>Chicago group (IYJL) holds “Undocumented and Unafraid” direct actions.</td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>Administrative Action, Begin Coming Out Actions Monthly leadership</td>
<td>Administrative Action, Begin Coming Out Actions Monthly leadership</td>
<td>RIFA March for America, Washington, DC</td>
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<td>and membership meetings begin and continue.</td>
<td>and membership meetings begin and continue.</td>
<td>UWD Field Meeting in North Carolina</td>
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<td>Ernesto Leaves SIM</td>
<td>Ernesto Leaves SIM</td>
<td>Arizona passes SB1070</td>
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<td>RIFA March for America, Washington, DC</td>
<td>RIFA March for America, Washington, DC</td>
<td>Trail of DREAMs Ends in DC on May Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>UWD Field Meeting in North Carolina</td>
<td>UWD Field Meeting in North Carolina</td>
<td>Nine undocumented</td>
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<td>Vigil at statehouse in solidarity with Arizona</td>
<td>Vigil at statehouse in solidarity with Arizona</td>
<td>Nine undocumented</td>
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<td>Eliza and Neil hired to SIM staff. May Day rallies</td>
<td>Eliza and Neil hired to SIM staff. May Day rallies</td>
<td>Nine undocumented</td>
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<td>May</td>
<td>SIM expands faith-based and</td>
<td>SIM expands faith-based and</td>
<td>Nine undocumented</td>
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<td>University Outreach.</td>
<td>MA Senate passes anti-immigrant budget amendments EOA Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>June</strong></td>
<td>Tam Tran Memorial, Brown University CIR/DREAM Act Rally and Press Conference with Paul, a Military DREAMer Boston College Graduation Action: Scott Brown</td>
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<td>SIM Retreat</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MassHope 2010 Vigil at Statehouse Education Not Deportation (END) Campaign for Harvard Student Eric Balderas begins</td>
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<td><strong>July</strong></td>
<td>DREAM University begins, Washington, DC</td>
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<td><strong>August</strong></td>
<td>SIM DREAM University SIM vigil at Scott Brown’s office/City Hall Plaza SIM leaders travel to DC</td>
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<td><strong>September</strong></td>
<td>SIM “Let us learn; Let us serve” faith event at St. Paul’s Cathedral in Boston.</td>
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<td><strong>October</strong></td>
<td>Roberto announces leaving SIM staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>November</strong></td>
<td>SIM campaigns for DREAM Act and END for Selvin in Maine SIM 5th Annual Fundraiser</td>
<td>Mid-Term Election shifts balance to Republicans in House; Governor Patrick re-elected</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>December</strong></td>
<td>SIM Vigil and Lobbying at Sen. Brown’s office/City Hall Plaza SIM leaders travel to DC</td>
<td>House of Representatives Passes DREAM Act</td>
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<td>Jose leave SIM staff</td>
<td>Senate Republicans Block Cloture vote for DREAM Act</td>
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<td><strong>2011</strong></td>
<td>Board-Staff Conflict Resolution/Retreat Structure Committee forms Search for new coordinator staff begins Structure Committee meets END Campaign for Vinny and</td>
<td>National Immigrant Youth Alliance splits from United We DREAM.</td>
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<td><strong>February</strong></td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>Dennis begins Structure Committee meets SIM Structure Committee Retreat</td>
<td>Celina begins as coordinator</td>
<td>New In-state campaign begins, named Mass ASSET. MA Senate adds anti-immigrant amendments to 2011 budget</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>MassHope 2011 Vigil at Statehouse</td>
<td></td>
<td>United We DREAM confront President Obama by shouting “Yes You Can” pass the DREAM Act as an administrative action. Jose Antonio Vargas, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist comes out as undocumented.</td>
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<td>July</td>
<td>END Campaign for Vinny and Dennis succeeds SIM 6th Annual Fundraiser</td>
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<td>Candidate Mitt Romney states he would veto the DREAM Act if president.</td>
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<td>August</td>
<td>Teach-in at State House Eliza leaves SIM 7 SIM members appear on TIME Magazine cover</td>
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<td>President Obama announces Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<td>August</td>
<td>DACA registration begins</td>
<td>2012 Democratic National Convention: Benita Velez speaks</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>DACA registration</td>
<td>Mid-term Election, President Obama wins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>DACA registration</td>
<td>UWD National Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>SIM 7\textsuperscript{th} Annual Fundraiser: Jose Antonio Vargas is keynote.</td>
<td>UWD National Conference</td>
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<td>December</td>
<td>UWD National Conference</td>
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