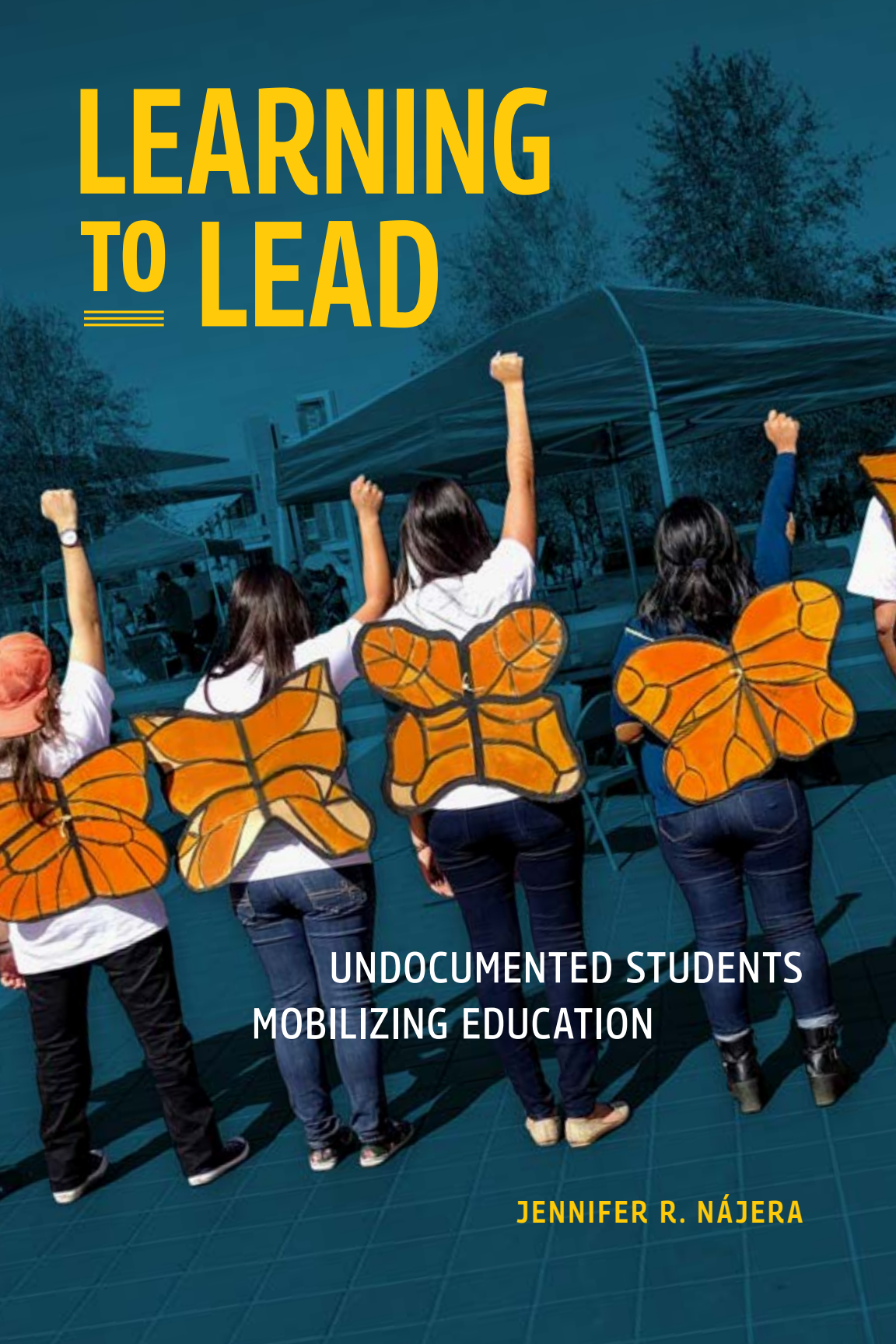
LEARNING TO LEAD



UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS MOBILIZING EDUCATION

JENNIFER R. NÁJERA

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Undocumented Students Mobilizing Education

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Cover art: Students with butterfly wings after the Coming Out of the Shadows event. Photo courtesy of Mafalda Gueta.

To the members of PODER *past, present, and future*

In memory of Joe Najera

And maybe there is no nation of citizenry; they're just territories mapped in place of family, in place of love, the infinite country.

Patricia Engel, *Infinite Country*

Political action on the side of the oppressed must be pedagogical action in the authentic sense of the word.

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

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INTRODUCTION

Undocumented Education

Anahí was in seventh grade when Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents showed up at her door.[1] Her family shared a house with her aunt and uncle in the southeastern part of the urban sprawl of Los Angeles. Almost every day her parents would leave in the morning to sell tamales and return late in the afternoon. That day they had just returned home to Anahí and her two younger brothers when the agents knocked. A couple of years earlier, Anahí's aunt had petitioned to fix her immigration status. This entailed regular meetings in court, but as the process dragged on, Anahí's aunt eventually stopped going to the appointments. Her aunt knew that the judge could issue an arrest warrant, but after time passed and nothing happened, Anahí's aunt no longer thought much about it. Until the afternoon that ICE agents came to the house. With the warrant, ICE agents—clad in

dark bulletproof vests and utility belts—asserted their right to enter and found Anahí's aunt. They handcuffed her, then surveyed the other people in the house. One of the agents turned to Anahí's father and asked him—and she remembers this phrasing—"Are you an illegal?" She recalls that one of the agents spoke Spanish. He was talking directly to her parents, and they understood.

"Eres ilegal?"

Her dad nodded, and the agent handcuffed him.

Then he asked her mom. "Are you an illegal?"

Her mother said yes.

Anahí recalls her younger brothers clinging to their mother. She remembers looking at her father, who was handcuffed, and his dark eyes were fixed on her. She couldn't read his look. She thought it might have something to do with her being the oldest; about knowing what her responsibilities would be if both of her parents were deported. Or maybe he was looking at her and wondering how they would all rebuild their lives in Mexico. Though it was happening in a matter of minutes—seconds—the weight of their collective fear made the moment feel long.

Then something unexpected happened.

The Spanish-speaking ICE agent asked Anahí's mother, "Do you have any US-born children?"

"Yes. My son," she told him, motioning to the one of the young boys whose arms were encircling her body. He looked down at the children as if he were seeing them for the first time.

"Is there anyone who can take care of him?"

"No," Anahí's mother said. "He's little. There's no one who can take care of him."

"OK," the agent told her. "Because you have a US-born son, we're not going to take you."

Anahí's surprise and relief that ICE was not going to arrest her mother turned quickly to a pang of despair as she watched the agents walk her father and her aunt outside, into a white van. She watched it drive away. She would see that van in her mind's eye every time she felt her father's absence. When she felt as if he had abandoned them, she would conjure that image to remind herself that he had not left them. He had been taken.

This moment was one of Anahí's earliest lessons about US immigration policy: this was what it meant to be undocumented—vulnerable, deportable. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was the kind of "police" who could take them away.

Years later, as a student at the University of California (UC), Riverside, Anahí would deepen her understanding of immigration policy in her sociology and Chicano/a studies classes. She learned that ICE was the enforcement arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). She would join an advocacy group for undocumented students on campus called PODER (Providing Opportunities, Dreams, and Education in Riverside). Through PODER she would meet other undocumented students, some of whom had also experienced the deportation of a family member. A father. They were all now part of the UC, a premier public university system that espoused a commitment to supporting its diverse student body, including undocumented students. It was also a system that had appointed Janet Napolitano, the former head of DHS, to its top position the year before Anahí began her freshman year.

In July 2013, when the UC Regents announced Napolitano's appointment as president of the system, student protests erupted across the state (figure I.1). Undocumented students and allies were shocked and angry that the UC system would now be run by the person who—in her capacity as the head of DHS—had overseen thousands of deportations of migrants. By way of response, in her first major speech as president Napolitano pledged thousands of dollars for undocumented students and their families in the UC system in the form of financial aid, campus programming, and legal support.[2] Then, in the spring of 2015, she spearheaded the first National Summit on Undocumented Students, an event that would bring undocumented students from each of the nine UC campuses to Oakland, where they would hear from university administrators, politicians, and some of the most prominent legal advocates for migrant rights at the state and federal levels. Anahí was selected as one of the student representatives from UC Riverside to attend the summit.

A quick plane ride from Southern California delivered her to the San Francisco Bay Area in the late afternoon with some of the other students from Riverside who would be attending the event. Many, like her, were involved in PODER, but there were some that she was meeting for the first time. At the Oakland Marriott, where the summit was being held, Anahí's excitement grew. She was meeting dozens of other undocumented students from across the UC system. She had known some of them through their online presence, and now she was able to interact with them in person. Underneath this current of excitement, Anahí could also feel a communal sense of discomfort and even suspicion. Speaking with one another, they realized that the UC Office of the President (UCOP) had planned the sum-

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NAPOLITANO VISITS UCR:
STUDENTS VOICE SUPPORT, PROTEST

VINCENT TA/HIGHLANDER

UC President Janet Napolitano's visit to UC Riverside sparked protest among students who were dissatisfied with her appointment as the head of the UC system.

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UC President Janet Napolitano continued her month-long tour of each of the 10 UC campuses this past Monday, Nov. 4 with a trip to UC Riverside. It proved to be an eventful visit full of meetings and discussions with administrators, faculty members and student leaders, in addition to protests by some of her fiercest critics.

Meetings with campus leaders

The sky was cloudy and the air still chilly as Napolitano arrived at the Alumni and Visitor Center at 7 a.m., starting her long day of visits by convening with a diverse group of student leaders.

During the talks, a series of questions "ranging from fiscal discussion to social justice causes," were brought up, according to ASUCR Vice President of External Affairs Kareem Aref, who attended the meeting.

"She seemed to be listening and engaging with the students and I am hopeful to see more actions being taken like her allocation of $15 million to students," said Aref, referring to the $5 million in non-state, non-tuition funds that will each go toward funding undocumented students, postdoctoral fellows and graduate researchers.

Napolitano's campus tour was kept low-profile, as she was accompanied by only a handful of aides and her itinerary was not released to the public until the visit.

"She was there to listen, and that's what she did," David Chavez, a second-year Ph.D. student said. "Unfortunately, she came 15 minutes late to the meeting and left 15 minutes early, so unfortunately we didn't get to have a full chance with her today." In the time the UC president was there, topics discussed ranged from gender-neutral bathrooms to supporting student veterans.

After convening with students, Napolitano met with the UCR administration, including Chancellor Kim Wilcox, and embarked on a tour of the campus proper.

"We talked about the traditions of the past, the values of inclusion that are here (and) the value of academic excellence that we're built on," Wilcox said. "She's here to learn and it's a great opportunity for us to help her understand what we're all about here at UCR."

Following up on a suggestion by a student, Napolitano made a brief, unscheduled stop at Chicano Student Programs (CSP). CSP Director Estella Acuna was in the middle of a meeting when a student stepped in to report that Napolitano had arrived.

"I'm glad she came to visit our space," Acuna remarked, noting that Napolitano asked questions about the uniqueness and benefits CSP provided students. Napolitano then opened the floor for student questions, but only one student was able to receive a response before Napolitano moved on.

After visiting a variety of additional locations on campus, Napolitano stopped by the School of Medicine Education building, where she spoke with the inaugural class of the school of medicine and had lunch with the 10 deans of UCR. She also met with creative writing professor and California Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera and eight graduate and undergraduate students.

She exhibited great interest in the students' academic pursuits, asking them questions such as, "When do you know the poem is really working?" and "What poets are you studying?"

"We invented poetry on the spot, sang it in 'opera' voices, and invited President Napolitano to do the same — and she did. This was inspiring — she even rhymed!" Herrera recalled. "The

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Winter is Coming, but a Game of Thrones-inspired beer is here now! Check it out at the **21 and Over Club.**
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For Wu-Tang fans and hip-hop aficionados alike, **GZA's presentation** at the HUB was nothing short of incredible.
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SPORTS
Men's soccer advances to the Big West tournament in a decisive do-or-die game against Cal State Fullerton.
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I.1 UC Riverside newspaper coverage of students protesting the appointment of Janet Napolitano as president of the UC system.

mit largely without input from students. Students from some campuses had no idea how their representatives had been chosen; they worried that it was not a good representative cross-section of undocumented students' experiences. Others questioned the impressive lineup of speakers. Despite their high profiles as lawyers, scholars, and policy advocates, few could speak to the experience of being undocumented. It seemed to be a summit about undocumented students, but not *for* them.[3] Perhaps most acutely, many students felt deep discomfort that the summit was credited to Napolitano. Still feeling the sting of her appointment to the position of president of the UC system, some students felt wary, if not outright betrayed, that she was at the helm of the college education that they would receive. They

believed that this summit was simply a public relations event for Napolitano to heal the perception that she was anti-immigrant, especially given the racially and ethnically diverse student demographics at the UC's nine campuses.

That evening, Anahí joined several of her peers to vent their frustration about the planning and intent of the summit. Twenty or thirty of them sat shoulder to shoulder in one of their hotel rooms at the Marriott. Articulating their frustration in community turned into a decision to mount a protest. The UC Office of the President had not asked them what they wanted out of the summit; this was a way for them to make their voices heard.

They decided that they would disrupt Napolitano's opening comments the next morning—the first morning of the official program. They would stand with their fists in the air when Napolitano began to speak. *Would they all be facing her*? No, they would turn their backs to her to respond symbolically to how she had turned her back on them in planning the summit. They would deliver a speech of their own. *How many people would speak*? One from each campus to demonstrate that this was truly a collective action. *What about the student representatives who had not yet arrived*? Students would tell peers from their own campuses about the protest before the program began and let them decide whether or not they would participate. *Who would write the speech*? The students nominated one person from each UC school to read out the speech. These people would stay behind to write it that evening.

Anahí's first impulse was to volunteer to be the student from UC Riverside who would speak. It was the end of her first year at the university, and she had already been very involved with PODER. She had helped plan events; she had publicly delivered her personal testimonio about how she came to be undocumented. But in that room, even alongside so many other undocumented students, she hesitated. Anahí understood that the protest was being planned because she and her fellow students wanted to feel a greater sense of inclusion in the summit. If they were to participate in it, the event had to be more than a public relations event for Napolitano. But she also knew that the action was a way for them to stand up to the woman who, as head of the DHS, had authorized thousands of deportations, including her father's. Anahí felt enough anger and indignation to want to be part of the action, but she also felt fear. They would be protesting the *president* of the UC system. She was not sure that she would be able to deliver her portion of the speech without faltering. She might cry. Anahí knew that even though she was outwardly engaged, she still carried with her the image of

that white van taking her father away. She could easily tell people that she was undocumented. But she could not say that she was unafraid. Not yet.

Anahí decided not to volunteer to read out UC Riverside's part of the speech. Her friend Mafalda, who was a third-year student and an officer in PODER, would be a good representative for the university.[4] She knew that she could lean on this community to do what they needed to do together, and this allayed some of her fear. Anahí felt nervous excitement when she returned to her hotel room that night because she knew that, even though she wouldn't be speaking, she and her peers would make a statement the next day that would reverberate across the state.

Though I would not find out about the protest until the next morning, I arrived at the UC Undocumented Student Summit in Oakland the evening that Anahí and her peers were planning it. Years later, I would call Anahí to ask her perspective of the summit action. Instead, she told me about the day ICE raided her home. For her, a significant part of the protest was deciding not to be the Riverside speaker, a decision that was directly connected to the residual trauma from her father's deportation. This was important for me to understand because it was a reminder that there are always personal, unseen undercurrents to each large-scale political action. Student activism in California has had a significant impact on university policy toward its undocumented students. It demonstrates a powerful way that students can leverage their education and position as college students to enact change. Within this movement, however, are individual students whose activism is rooted in intimate connections to their families and communities.

This book explores the intersections between education and activism among undocumented students involved at UC Riverside. It examines how students' experiences in college—both in and outside the classroom—can affect their activism and advocacy work. Conversely, it also looks at how activism and advocacy work can be seen as an educational project. In my analysis, I take an expansive view of education. In addition to what students learn in their college classrooms, I include knowledge they gain from their families, communities, and peers, as well as from student and political organizations. In these different spaces, students learned how to navigate community and, later, college life as undocumented people; they were learning about immigration and education policy in practice—the social, economic, and political limits imposed on them because of their legal status. These lessons began at home and were deepened in college spaces. Student and political organizations were integral to undocumented education because

they cultivated students' leadership skills and helped students understand that they were not alone. These organizations provided much needed community to undocumented young people and helped students to understand that their individual experiences of illegality (e.g., being unable to get a driver's license, the deportation of a parent) were part of a larger structure of legal violence. This type of education empowered students to make their way to and through college.

The undocumented students I worked with did not solely receive education. They grappled with it; they embodied it; and, most important, they mobilized it through social and political action. A key part of the work of members of PODER was to teach others what they had learned and to pay it forward. These were often practical educational projects, such as how to fill out a financial aid application or hosting Know Your Rights workshops. More profoundly, however, were their public-facing actions about specific political demands and the desire to be recognized as fully human. These actions included protests, such as the one at the UC Undocumented Student Summit, where students forced the UC president to recognize what they actually needed from the university system. They also included public events where students would share testimonios, personal stories that served as "counternarratives" to dispel narrow and negative stereotypes about the undocumented migrant community and where they could make known their humanity.

These educational interventions were particularly important within the context of an increasingly neoliberal university system. Within institutions where diversity among undergraduate students has become a kind of capital, undocumented students are viewed as adding value to the university because of the traumas and hardships they have endured while still managing to be "high-achieving" or "Dreamers."[5] Administrators often laud university diversity but are not always committed to addressing the needs of such students. This includes conceptualizing how university cultures should change to be more inclusive. Gabrielle Cabrera argues that when undocumented student activists push back against their tokenization by university they are "self-making their own subjectivity."[6] This was particularly apparent during the UCOP protest. In that moment, undocumented students insisted that Napolitano hear their concerns: their continued legal precarity, the false binaries between good and bad immigrants, the fallacy of undocumented students as "Dreamers" when their parents were criminalized. Students at the summit refused to be "good"; rather, they demanded to be seen in their full humanity. We can understand their action at the summit as a teaching moment, a lesson to university administrators.

Lessons about policy, how to live in the United States as an undocumented person, and the advocacy work that included demands for dignity all constitute what I came to understand as undocumented education. This education is undocumented because it is education for undocumented people. It is also undocumented because it is often informal and unsanctioned by the university. Undocumented education encompasses the ways that undocumented young people learn, both in formal settings and in their families and communities. Undocumented education often has deeply personal and high stakes. Knowledge about immigration and education policies and how to manage "illegality" can affect both quality of life and life paths for many undocumented people. Undocumented education is not stagnant; rather, it shifts to respond to the political moment or an individual's political consciousness. Like all education, undocumented education can be mobilized. It also posits that undocumented young people's advocacy work and activism is inherently pedagogical. Education is an integral part of political work and, ultimately, social transformation.

This work builds on and is deeply influenced by critical scholarship in education, anthropology, Chicanx studies, and ethnic studies that has shed light on the life circumstances of undocumented youth. In this book, I rely on theoretical frameworks that include multigenerational punishment, pedagogies of home, community cultural wealth, the politics of deservingness, and undocumented legal consciousness to interpret and analyze the situations of students in PODER. At its heart, however, this book is about the limits and the possibilities of education to humanize undocumented communities. I draw primarily from the Brazilian scholar Paulo Freire's ideas about education and its potential for social change. Specifically, Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* provided an important way for me to understand the knowledge that students gain from their families and communities before they set foot in any college classrooms. Freire's problem-posing model of education helped me more deeply comprehend how critical educational spaces could validate students' existing knowledge and build on it through an exchange of ideas. It also provided the basis for me to recognize how students could be teachers to others at the university and in other public spaces. Finally, and perhaps most important, Freire's model of educational praxis—reflection, theory, action—provided the blueprint for me to see how undocumented students mobilized their education in an effort to create a better world for themselves, their families, and their communities.

"You Can't Leave a DACA Clinic These Days without Three People Trying to Get You to Fill Out Their Survey": Methodological Considerations

Though I had known students who were active in PODER and had attended their annual scholarship banquets, at the beginning of the fall of 2013 I did not know any of the group's current members. I scheduled a meeting with the group's new president to discuss the possibility of research with PODER. She had come to my office and was sitting in the same blue chair students used for office hours, directly across from me. When I finished telling her about my idea for research, she said, "You can't leave a DACA clinic these days without three people trying to get you to fill out their survey." She wanted to know what benefit students might see from my work. Her comment startled me, but it made me reflect on the timing of this project. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), the Obama-era executive action that offered limited protection from deportation for certain undocumented youth, had been in effect for just over a year, and the program had gained the attention of researchers. Until that moment, it had not occurred to me that undocumented young people might be experiencing research fatigue; that they might be tired of being "studied." I would be doing fieldwork and interviews with students, not survey research, but I knew that she was asking me for something more.

Undocumented college students understand that research is important. It gives college administrators and politicians data to advocate for important policies such as DACA and inclusive financial aid. At a certain point, however, it is exhausting to give energy and time to researchers you are likely never to see again. It was not enough for me to say that my research would help people better understand the situation of undocumented students. I would have to consider what it would mean to act ethically as a researcher and how to be responsive to students' unique positionalities and needs.

In considering the ethical imperatives of working with undocumented students, I was influenced by discourses around decolonial anthropology, Indigenous research imperatives, and activist anthropology. While decolonial anthropology calls for researchers to disrupt power relations, I knew that I could not shed my privileges as a citizen—someone who has never experienced life without papers—and as a professor in a student space. Once the members of PODER welcomed me to the group's meetings and events, I positioned myself as an ally and as someone who was there to learn. I tried to make sure that the voices of undocumented members of

the group, and then their student allies, were heard first. Listening was not solely about "observing" in the traditional anthropological model of participant observation. Responding to decolonial and Indigenous scholars, I listened to understand the issues that were most pressing for my students and then to adjust my research questions accordingly.[7] My primary interest was how undocumented college students leveraged their education in their activist work. During my time with students, however, I heard students speak consistently about their families. There was a clear desire to disrupt the deserving "Dreamer" narrative that had emerged over the previous decade that seemed to position them against their parents, who were often rendered as "undeserving."[8] Students' concerns about their undocumented parents pushed me to include their families in my research, analyzing how pedagogies of home were a key component of undocumented education.

In addition, I knew that I was not simply going to be an observer in the group. When I asked permission to research PODER members' activities, I told them that I could offer my perspective as a professor—my knowledge of university bureaucracy, as well as my institutional knowledge. When appropriate, then, I offered my opinions and advice. Given that this research was with a politically vulnerable community, I also made an effort to align my approach with activist anthropological research. Shannon Speed defines activist anthropology as "the overt commitment to an engagement with our research subjects that is directed toward a shared political goal."[9] In this case, the goal is increased rights and resources for undocumented students on campus, as well as the broader struggle for migrant rights in the US public sphere. This meant that in administrative spaces I was an advocate for students. When the federal government announced the termination of the DACA program in September 2017, I was at demonstrations along with current and former students. I would be learning from those events, but I was also present to add my voice to the protests.

More than activist anthropology, however, my methodology is better described as research acompañamiento. The concept of acompañamiento has been used in theology, as well as in education and anthropology contexts. I rely most directly on work by the education scholar Enrique Sepúlveda, who outlines the ways that acompañamiento can be used both as a pedagogy and as a research approach when working with migrant and undocumented youth. Drawing from the liberation theologian Roberto Goizueta, Sepúlveda describes acompañamiento as a praxis that includes being with another, as well as feeling and doing with another.[10] My research with undocumented

students was inherently relational. In attending their meetings and events, I came to know them not just as members of a group, but as individuals with particular life situations and trajectories. I shared in their moments of struggle and joy, and they shared in mine. Acknowledging my privilege as a citizen who was a professor at a university where they were students, I was intentional about being in community with the students in PODER. As Sepúlveda writes, "In the process of liberation, the voices of those on the margins must be recentered. Strong communities are sustained by authentic and supportive relationships that cut across all spheres, often including allies from more privileged backgrounds."[11] I wanted students to be able to use my allyship as a way to further their political and educational goals. I also understood that community building was a central part of the radical humanizing possibilities of undocumented education.[12]

When I proposed to work with PODER in the fall of 2013, I delivered a presentation explaining my research to the group at one of its regular meetings. After members asked me some questions about my methodology and how I would use the information that I gathered, I left the meeting so that they could deliberate whether and how they would participate. The president contacted me the next day to tell me that the group had decided to give me full access to their meeting spaces and permission to attend their events. Individual students would decide whether or not they wanted to consent to interviews. With this consent, between 2013 and 2015, I attended the group's weekly meetings, student conferences, public actions, talking circles, presentations at local high schools, socials, and annual scholarship banquet. During that time, I interviewed eighteen students—most currently enrolled, but also some alumni—to better understand the group's history and trajectory. These interviews were semi-structured and focused on individual life stories and perspectives about education and activism in broad terms. Similar to the decolonial interviewing process that Carolina Alonso Bejarano, Lucia López Juárez, Mirian Mijangos García, and Daniel Goldstein deployed in *Decolonizing Ethnography*, when issues or problems arose in the interview about the need for educational or legal support, I would try to direct students to university and community resources.[13] Chicano/a and Undocumented Student Affairs staff invited me, as an ally, to take part in meetings between students and the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs when they were creating a budget for institutionalized undocumented student support. In those meetings, I witnessed undocumented student advocacy and learned more about what they needed from the university.

By the 2015–16 school year, I felt as if I had a strong sense of the rhythm of PODER: the group's major events throughout the year and the smaller events in which it participated. At that time, I decided to wind down my fieldwork, conducting just a few interviews and attending fewer events. Even as my research was ending, I continued to meet students for meals and coffee, sometimes hosting them in office hours. Many were graduating and wanted to talk about their next steps; I was invested in continuing to accompany them as they transitioned to the subsequent stages of their lives. I was compelled to pick up my research again after the 2016 presidential election, knowing that I needed to understand how that dramatic political event affected the students and their approach to advocacy. I began to attend meetings and events again, though not as consistently. I attended several protests, attended meetings, and sometimes spoke publicly to advocate for sanctuary for immigrants on campus and in the city of Riverside. This type of advocacy work in research is consistent with the activist anthropology detailed by Charles Hale and Shannon Speed, but I was primarily there because of my own political beliefs and to stand alongside—acompañar—the students I had come to know and care about.[14] A new generation of PODER students was emerging, but my primary relationships were with the cohort that graduated in the mid-2010s. I ended my fieldwork in 2017, except for the occasional follow-up interview. My relationships with former members of PODER continue to this day.

The ethnography in this book is primarily based on interviews and field research. To write about the events that students recounted to me but I did not personally witness, I drew from additional primary and secondary sources. The storytelling in these chapters might read like Clifford Geertz's "thick description."[15] However, I consider the writing more akin to that of feminist anthropologists who blur the lines of ethnography and creative nonfiction to critique objectivism and capture the emotional force of people's stories.[16] This style of ethnographic writing also heeds calls of Chicanx studies scholars to write in a way that is accessible to community members outside of the academy. As an extension of my methodological approach into my writing, all of the students I write about in this book have had the opportunity to read and comment on drafts of the ethnography that pertains to them. This was done for accuracy and to ensure that my research continued to be accountable to the students who shared their stories with me.

Structure of the Book

This book is divided into two sections. The first (chapters 1–2) explores the idea of undocumented pedagogies of home, lessons young people learn from their families about immigration policy and policing, as well as about work ethic and advocacy. The second section (chapters 3–5) looks at the kinds of education undocumented students receive in college—both in and outside the classroom—and how this education informs and shapes their advocacy and activism. Taken together, the chapters reveal the many sites of education for undocumented young people and the ways young people can mobilize political knowledge.

Chapter 1 is about the undocumented migration of a parent. It is rare that the discourses around undocumented migration and undocumented student education intersect, but young people are often deeply affected by their parents' migration stories. While most of the students I interviewed did not remember their own migration, they knew their parents' migration stories well. Stories of undocumented migration in a family were primary lessons about border policy and policing. The story that I highlight in chapter 1 also shows the intimate connections between a father facing a harrowing unauthorized border crossing while his son, a college student, awaited news for him on the other side. This migration story provided an all-too-intimate understanding of border militarization.

Chapter 2 uses pedagogies of home as a theoretical framework to understand how undocumented parents educate their children, especially in light of under-resourced schools and anti-immigrant policies.[17] It examines implicit lessons, such as modeling good work ethics, as well as providing students with an understanding of labor exploitation among the undocumented working class, which helps to build aspirational capital. The chapter also details the explicit lessons that parents teach their children about policing, racial profiling, and advocacy, which help to build their navigational capital. Even though some of these lessons are shaped by structural violence, I argue that students grapple with the education that they receive at home and that, ultimately, these pedagogies of home set the stage for the development of students' political identities in college.

The second section opens with a chapter about how two undocumented students develop political consciousness in college and become advocates for the undocumented community. It highlights the role that Latinx student organizations play in creating safe space for undocumented students and how peers can teach one another about social issues and imagine a

different social reality. These student-oriented spaces were critical to the undocumented political education of the two young people highlighted in chapter 3. Chapter 4 more deeply explores how undocumented young people mobilize their political knowledge. In that chapter I demonstrate how, through their advocacy and activism, students teach others about the experiences of being undocumented in this country and the stakes of immigration policy and push to change common understandings and ideologies about the undocumented migrant community, as well as for pro-migrant policies.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, examines the aftermath of the 2016 presidential election within the undocumented student community at UC Riverside. The election results sent waves of fear and anxiety through the undocumented student community as they and their families began to make contingency plans in the event of mass deportations. It forced students to mobilize their education to advocate for their communities in a more defensive way. That moment also brought to bear the importance of community and the primary goal of human dignity. The epilogue of the book presents an ethnographic vignette of Raza Graduation in which one undocumented student reflects on her educational journey and her hopes for the future.

The Summit

It was just after eight o'clock in the morning when I approached the open doors of the Oakland Marriott ballroom. As I stepped inside, I saw a vast room full of people dressed in blazers, pencil skirts, and collared shirts. They were seated around white-tableclothed tables, on maroon-padded chairs, with well-heeled shoes resting on the giant swirls of the autumn colored carpet. Most noticeable, however, were the dozens of students with their fists in the air and backs turned toward Janet Napolitano, who was standing at podium in the front of the room. She was silent even though she had the microphone, and it was the students who were speaking. Nine students—one from each campus—were standing on ballroom chairs, facing Napolitano and projecting their voices so that she and everyone else in the room could hear.

"We are not here to simply fill these seats for your political gain!"

Though the early May day outside was cold and gray, the university administrators, staff, policy makers and advocates, and, especially, student protesters in the room were bathed in the golden light streaming from the elegant light fixtures above. The students had disrupted the UC president's

I.2 Students protest the UC National Summit on Undocumented Students in May 2015. Courtesy of Mafalda Gueta.

opening remarks (figure I.2), and though there was tension in the room, there was also a current of energy. The students were forcibly reorienting the summit to their needs and concerns.[18]

I recognized Mafalda, one of the students from UC Riverside, as he read out his part of the speech: "In your own words Ms. Napolitano, 'may these next two days result in positive, action-oriented DISCUSSIONS' and not just polished and practiced soundbites that skew the reality of the struggles we face."

The final student speaker ended the speech by saying, "We demand that you LISTEN to us," then shouted, "Undocumented!"

"Unafraid!" the student collective shouted in response. I then watched in awe as the students—the speakers and those who had their backs turned—began to stream out of the room. I saw Anahí and Mafalda, students I knew from PODER, as well as others whom I would meet and get to know better over the next two days and several months. There were no smiles; there was no chatter—just quiet determination as they walked into the outside light.

NOTES

Introduction. Undocumented Education

1 Unless noted otherwise, all of the names of undocumented individuals in this book are pseudonyms.

2 Gordon, "Napolitano Commits Funds to Aid UC Students Who Entered US Illegally."

3 See also Cabrera, "Disrupting Diversity."

4 Mafalda is not a pseudonym.

5 Cabrera, "Disrupting Diversity," 80.

6 Ramirez Resendiz, "Subjectivity Making in Undocumented Student Organizing," 45.

7 Alonso Bejarano et al., *Decolonizing Ethnography*; Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*.

8 Ábrego and Negrón-Gonzales, *We Are Not Dreamers*.

9 Speed, "At the Crossroads of Human Rights and Anthropology."

10 Sepúlveda, "Toward a Pedagogy of Acompañamiento," 71.

11 Sepúlveda, "Toward a Pedagogy of Acompañamiento," 559.

12 In her work with Oaxacan philharmonic bands, Xóchitl Chávez asserts that accompaniment with the Oaxaqueño community created the kind of trust that enabled bringing the bands to the university space. Chávez, "La Sierra de Juárez en Riverside."

13 Alonso Bejarano et al., *Decolonizing Ethnography*.

14 Hale, "What Is Activist Research?"; Speed, "At the Crossroads of Human Rights and Anthropology."
15 Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*.
16 See Behar and Gordon, *Women Writing Culture*; Visweswaran, *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*.
17 Bernal, "Learning and Living Pedagogies of the Home."
18 Richman, "Undocumented Students Disrupt Janet Napolitano's Speech at UC Summit."

Chapter 1. The Original Dreamers

1 Nájera, "Remembering Migrant Life."
2 Negrón-Gonzales et al., "Introduction: Immigrant Latina/o Youth and Illegality."
3 Negrón-Gonzales et al., "Introduction: Immigrant Latina/o Youth and Illegality," 7.
4 De Genova, "Migrant 'Illegality,'" 425.
5 Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*; Salinas, *Managed Migrations*.
6 Chavez, *The Latino Threat*.
7 It is important to note that the Dreamer profile was part of a political strategy to achieve piecemeal immigration reform. For an excellent history of the trajectory of the term *Dreamer*, see Ábrego and Negrón-Gonzales, *We Are Not Dreamers*.
8 Nicholls, *The DREAMers*.
9 Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race*.
10 This young woman was not alone in this sentiment. Many young people disagreed with this political strategy, and by 2010, the youth-led aspect of the movement became outwardly more inclusive of undocumented people who did not fit the initial Dreamer profile.
11 In the spring of 2021, President Joe Biden ordered US immigration enforcement agencies to cease using the phrase "illegal alien." Rose, "Immigration Agencies Ordered Not to Use Term 'Illegal Alien' under New Biden Policy."
12 Enriquez, *Of Love and Papers*, 7.
13 Minian, *Undocumented Lives*.
14 Inda, *Targeting Immigrants*; Minian, *Undocumented Lives*.
15 Durand and Massey, "The Costs of Contradiction"; Inda, *Targeting Immigrants*.
16 De Leon, *The Land of Open Graves*; Urrea, *The Devil's Highway*.
17 See Jonathan Inda's compelling work on the rationale/knowledge base behind these machinations of border control. Inda, *Targeting Immigrants*.
18 Cornelius, "Death at the Border"; Inda, *Targeting Immigrants*.
19 The distinction between a political boundary and a politicized boundary