Chapter 2 Practices of Authorization and Legitimation in the Undocumented Immigrants’ Movement

This chapter takes up the first question posed by the book: how does a group of activists without formal legal status, organizing in a state that has denied them all indices of membership, develop the sense of authorization necessary to engage in political claims-making, and the legitimation necessary to mount a credible, effective social movement? I argue that three sets of practices common to undocumented organizations in Phoenix have fostered activists’ political authorization, and guided their efforts to achieve internal and external legitimation: storytelling, organizational emotion cultures, and tactics of performative citizenship. The chapter opens with a discussion of storytelling, a unifying tactic in the movement of undocumented immigrants. Storytelling fosters the personal and political agency of participants, empowering them to emerge into visibility as public participants, and to take on the outward-facing tasks of activism. Storytelling, in turn, relies on a kind of learning that is supported by the emotion cultures of undocumented organizations. These cultures fuel the solidarity that can buttress participation; support the intense, affectively-charged forms of communication that characterize the movement; and enable activists to manage the fear, frustration, and disappointment that can arise in their political activity. These two practices, which follow activists from their organizations onto the political field, are joined by a third, which is specific to outward-facing political activity. Tactics of “performative citizenship” place undocumented activists in roles that are culturally associated with citizenship. From registering voters to marching to engaging in civil disobedience, these tactics underscore the contribution of undocumented immigrants for elected officials and for members of the public. They also enable activists to learn the roles of citizens from the inside: knowledge of institutions, processes, and strategies of influence, and appreciation of the accountability of elected officials, can help activists feel that they belong in the political domain.

I. Storytelling

A. Storytelling as a Unifying Tactic in the Immigrant Rights Movement

Experiential storytelling is a long-standing practice across social movements: it highlights the subjectivity of the disenfranchised, and allows neglected experiences that shed critical light on familiar assumptions and practices to reach decisionmakers and members of the public. In the immigrant rights

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1 Although it has been particularly useful for members of disenfranchised groups, see e.g., Richard Delgado, Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others, 87 Mich. L. Rev. 2411 (1989), the practice of storytelling has also been supported by a broader “confessional” impetus in American culture. See Francesca Polletta, It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Politics and Protest [intro ch] (2006) (tracing influence back to literal confessions of religious revivalists and 19th century abolitionist discourse).

2 These claims for storytelling have been examined in a varied and extensive literature, in law, sociology, and the humanities. In law, storytelling has been examined most systematically by feminist legal theorists and critical race theorists. See e.g., Richard Delgado, The Rodrigo Chronicles: Conversations about America and Race (1995); Patricia Williams, The Alchemy of Race and Rights (1991); Derrick Bell, And We Are Not Saved: The Elusive Quest for Racial Justice (1987); Jane Barron, Resistance to Stories, 67 S. Cal. L. Rev. 255 (1994); William Eskridge, Gaylegal Narratives, 46 Stan. L. Rev. 607 (1992-93); Kathryn Abrams, Hearing the Call of Stories, 79 Calif. L. rev. 971 (1991); Richard Delgado, Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative, 87 Mich. L. Rev. 2411 (1989);
movement, however, first-person, experiential storytelling has played a particularly robust and pervasive role. It is employed in organizational settings, to recruit and socialize new members; it is offered in public communications, in long and short forms, alone and in conjunction with other tactics; it is directed to state actors, to prospective voters, to members of the public, and to other activists. It is the product of an intentional and well-developed social practice, that has been honed in recent years by organizations of undocumented immigrants. My research suggests that this practice has been central to enhancing the personal and political agency of activists, thereby assisting in their mobilization.

Experiential stories, as I define them in this chapter, have several features. They relate a series of events in the life of an individual: in the case of most undocumented stories, this individual is the speaker herself. These events are organized temporally, so as to present a “beginning, middle, and end.” Finally, this sequence of events gains coherence and meaning through its relation to a conceptual structure, frequently an “opposition or struggle.” For example, the stories youth learn to tell in the civic engagement trainings described in Chapter 4, involve “a challenge, a choice, and an outcome.” Stories

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3 I employ a non-specialized understanding of agency, as encompassing the ability to direct one’s course and make choices that advance one’s preferred values. Whether person, moral or political, agency is inevitably partial, as it may be constrained by the self-assertion of others, or by the requirements of various collectivities. It is also constrained in a sense that is more internal: to act in these ways, one must see oneself as a functioning agent capable of various forms of responsibility and choice. This can be complicated by a variety of factors, including legal and social structures and cultural depictions that cast doubt on these assumptions. Members of marginalized groups, for example, must contend with structure and depictions that question their capacity for (sound) choice or judgment, or their ability to take responsibility for their circumstances. Understood in this sense, agency may denote the ability to formulate and act on a conception of self that is not decisively shaped by dominant, stigmatizing conceptions. The sense of efficacy, value, and capacity for self-direction associated with these forms of agency helps activists to move into public visibility, and assert themselves politically.

4 The understanding of “stories” framed here synthesizes a number of works of narrative theory and the sociology of narrative. See e.g., Diana Tietjens Meyers, Victims’ Stories and the Advancement of Human Rights (2016); Francesca Polletta, It Was Like a Fever, supra note [ ]; Hayden White; Anthony Amsterdam and Jerome Bruner; Marshall Ganz, Why Stories Matter: The Art and Craft of Social Change, Sojourner (March 2009), at http://sojo.net; Patricia Ewick and Susan Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales: Toward a Sociology of Narrative, 29 Law & Society Review 197 (1995). My understanding of storytelling as a socially-structured practice draws on the particularly helpful framing of Ewick and Silbey, supra.

5 Ewick and Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales, supra note [ ], at 200.

6 Ewick and Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales, supra note [ ], at 200.

7 This frame comes from the theorization of storytelling used by sociologist Marshall Ganz, who organized with Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers’ movement. See Ganz, Why Stories Matter, supra. Ganz’s conception of storytelling is used in the training of DREAMers at the national level by organizations such as United We Dream,
are socially organized. Even when they reflect individual experience, stories are shaped by the groups or institutions or contexts in which they are told. These settings influence not only the storylines or content that is viewed as acceptable, but the circumstances of elicitation (ie, when it is considered useful or appropriate to offer an experiential story), the manner in which they are received (ie, what is an appropriate way to respond to a story), and the purposes for which they are offered.

Storytelling is a prominent and ritualized feature of life in many undocumented organizations. Long before activists tell their stories to state actors or members of the public, they learn to craft, share, and respond to experiential stories within organizations. Although this activity is more visible in DREAMer or other youth-based organizations, even community organizations like Puente, which do not incorporate storytelling explicitly in the format of their community meetings, encourage one-on-one sharing with prospective members, and highlight storytelling by those most affected at rallies or vigils. The circumstances under which stories are offered in these organizations are exceptionally broad. One central occasion is the socialization of new members. As I explore in Chapter 3, storytelling serves many roles in orienting and empowering new members. It allows for a kind of consciousness-raising in which they can re-interpret the sources of their oppression or constraint, placing responsibility for their circumstances more firmly in the state. It makes clear that systematic a form of disadvantage requires a collective form of response. More centrally, storytelling challenges the stigmatizing imagery propagated through “enforcement by attrition” with new accounts of what it means to be undocumented: accounts that highlight resourcefulness, tenacity, contribution, skill, or achievement. While some stories emphasize strengths that storytellers possessed even before they became activists, others highlight ways in which participants have become more knowledgeable, skilled, or assertive through their collaboration with others. But if storytelling works cognitively to stress the value of collectivity, it also works affectively toward the same goal. Because it reveals powerful, often painful threads of shared experience, storytelling forges potent emotional bonds between people who have often lived in isolation, even from each other. Through these effects, storytelling becomes part of an emotional pedagogy that eases shame, cultivates pride, and establishes bonds of solidarity among participants. As it conveys these lessons, storytelling within organizations allows new participants to prepare for the crucial task of sharing stories with the public.

Storytelling outside organizations displays even greater variety than storytelling within them. Stories may be aimed at other immigrants, at members of the general public, at legislators or enforcement officials at either state or federal level. They may foreground effort, accomplishment, pride, anger, or pain. Stories also vary with the campaign, or the tactics that are employed. In contexts such as rallies or vigils, full-length “stories of self,” which introduce undocumented immigrants to the

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and in Arizona, and in the training of undocumented canvassers by organizations such as LUCHA and Promise-Arizona.

8 See Ewick and Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales, supra note [], at (describing the “circumstances of elicitation” for stories in particular settings).

9 See Ewick and Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales, supra note [], at
public, may be the primary focus of the activity. In actions such as canvassing for voter registration,\textsuperscript{10} storytelling may be part of a larger encounter aimed at explaining the importance of the vote. In still other settings, such as episodes of civil disobedience, a brief “kernel” story from participants may explain the act of resistance that is the primary focus of the action. The public context, and the need to address audiences that are variable and less experientially proximate, make these instances of storytelling more daunting for undocumented activists. As activists turn outward to public engagement, they rely not only on the practice and support that they have obtained by sharing stories within organizations, but on shared beliefs, or “metanarratives,” about the role of stories in the movement’s politics.

B. Metanarratives: Organizational Stories about Stories

“Metanarratives”\textsuperscript{11} are the larger storylines that support the shared values of a particular community. Metanarratives may support the dominant values of a political community, such as the United States. For example, the “Horatio Alger story,” of upward mobility through individualized effort, expresses and supports the dominant norm of individualism and may serve to explain or justify the unequal distribution of resources. These metanarratives may be embodied in full-length, paradigmatic stories (like the original fictions published by Horatio Alger), or signaled by phrases or tropes (ie, the “Horatio Alger story”). Experiential stories told by outsider groups may align with familiar metanarratives, as a means of legitimizing the group.\textsuperscript{12} The DREAMer story, which depicts the striving of a hardworking, upwardly-mobile youth toward American belonging, affirms the metanarrative of the “good immigrant” (itself a “Horatio Alger”-like story of success through individual effort).\textsuperscript{13} Outsiders may also challenge familiar metanarratives, as a means of introducing or supporting competing norms. As we will see in Chapter 5, Not1More Deportation stories, that challenge the Obama administration’s distinction between “families” and “felons” (and, implicitly, “good” and “bad” immigrants)\textsuperscript{14} contest these same

\textsuperscript{10} As I explain in Chapter 4, “civic engagement” campaigns, in which undocumented youth canvas extensively in predominantly-Latino neighborhoods in order to register and/or turn out voters, are a focal activity of many undocumented organizations in Phoenix.

\textsuperscript{11} See Ewick and Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales, supra note [ ] at 213 (using term “cultural metanarrative”). Ewick and Silbey also use other terms to reference the shared cultural understandings in relation to which experiential tales may orient themselves, such as “existing structures of meaning or power ” or features of “hegemony.” I prefer to use the term “metanarrative” for this chapter, because it evokes the sense in which some dominant understandings are framed as narratives or as what Francesca Polletta would call “kernel stories.”

\textsuperscript{12} Ewick and Silbey describe stories that support dominant norms or metanarratives as “hegemonic” and those that contest them – through exposure of their operation or effects – as “subversive.” See Ewick and Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales, supra note [ ], at .

\textsuperscript{13} See Walter J. Nicholls, Making Undocumented Immigrants into a Legitimate Political Subject: Theoretical Observations from the US and France, 30 Theory, Culture & Society 82, 92–98 (2013).

metanarratives. Not all stories intended to be subversive achieve their goal, however: their normative divergence may make them unintelligible or unpersuasive to dominant audiences, or they may be interpreted in ways that assimilate them to dominant norms.\textsuperscript{15}

Metanarratives may also express the shared norms of sub-communities, including social movement organizations. In describing the work of undocumented organizations, I identify a set of metanarratives that reflect group-based understandings about the political and moral status of undocumented immigrants, and about the norms that govern their collective action. Some of the most important metanarratives, as this chapter explains, concern stories. They are not fully-elaborated narratives, but “kernel stories”\textsuperscript{16}: brief plotlines, phrases, or aphorisms that reflect shared understandings of the way that stories contribute value to the movement. Through a combination of practices relating to storytelling, and metanarratives reflecting shared beliefs about how they function, undocumented organizations construct storytelling as a central practice that enhances the agency and fosters the participation of activists.

I identified these metanarratives almost serendipitously in the course of my research. During my first months in Arizona, I was struck by the ubiquity of storytelling in undocumented activism; I began to question activists about why stories were so prevalent and what benefits they offered the movement. I assumed, perhaps unreflectively, that their answers would help me to craft a first-order, descriptive account of how storytelling functioned in the movement. But what I heard in the answers I received was something different. I heard activists speak with conviction about effects of storytelling that they couldn’t predictably discern, from their position as storytellers: for example, how, precisely, it functioned to persuade listeners. I heard them offer confident views on questions whose answers struck me as indeterminate or as a matter of perspective: for example, what kind of knowledge is most important in making immigration policy. I also noticed more overlap than I had expected in the answers I was hearing. Finally, I sensed in some of the statements about storytelling a kind of affective intensity that gave them more the character of a credo than of a simple description. I gradually realized that I was hearing not so much a quasi-factual account of how narrative functioned, as the received wisdom, or shared views, within organizations, about how narrative functioned. I found support for some of these understandings in the training materials used, for example, in civic engagement campaigns.\textsuperscript{17} But more of them appeared to be inferred -- from trainings, or storytelling in organizations or in the field -- and circulated between activists until they became a kind of received organizational wisdom. A common feature of these metanarratives is that they construct storytelling as a source of strength and contribution for activists; viewing storytelling in this way helps to foster their outward-facing participation.\textsuperscript{18} An examination of three organizationally-prominent metanarratives illustrates this point.

\textsuperscript{15} See Ewick and Silbey, Hegemonic and Subversive Tales, supra note [], at .


\textsuperscript{17} See Campaign for Arizona’s Future: Where Real Power Begins, Training Guide, June 2012 (Adapted from the work of Marshall Ganz of Harvard University, modified by the New Organizing Institute). This training guide was used in the “Adios Arpaio” civic engagement campaign, led by PAZ, and discussed in Chapter 4, supra.
Metanarrative #1: Stories are a unique vehicle for persuasion, because of their detail, immediacy, and the emotional connection they create between teller and listener.

The first metanarrative speaks to a common question among new activists: why do we tell stories when we advocate for (ourselves as) undocumented immigrants? Stories offered by undocumented activists present the primary “frames” of the movement: the paradigmatic figure(s) of the undocumented immigrant around whom organizing takes place; the injury or wrongs suffered by those figures; the institutional or public response that may ameliorate these wrongs. These messages may be delivered in other ways: as abstract claims, or as arguments buttressed by various forms of data, or empirical evidence. The benefits of storytelling within organizations may become rapidly apparent to activists, while the advantages of stories in the public sphere remain elusive. The first metanarrative speaks to this question. It roots the claim of stories in two features: their concreteness and immediacy, and the emotional bonds they forge between storyteller and listener. These advantages, often illustrated by activists with examples from their own experience, are central to the ways that stories are formulated and narrated in the movement.

Storytelling gains purchase, first, from its concreteness: the description of lived experience lends detail and immediacy that would not be present in a more abstract account. One DREAMer explained this advantage through a specific example:

a lot of people just assume that ... crossing the border is hard. But unless you walk through the desert yourself, unless you felt that kind of thirst, or unless you saw all the little graves out there in the desert from the people that just didn’t make it, they don’t really know what it means to cross the desert.

An experientially-grounded narrative can provide the small yet revealing details – the searing thirst, the crosses marking the barren landscape of the desert – that engage the imagination of the listener. They help audiences to see, hear, or feel the details of a situation they may never have witnessed. This last insight points to the second major claim for storytelling: its affective charge creates a bond between storyteller and listener.

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18 See Robert Benford and David Snow, Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment, 26 Annual Review of Sociology 611, 614 (2000) (frames are means of “simplifying and condensing aspects of the “world out there” ... in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demoralize antagonists”).

19 These views of the strengths of storytelling held by activists are also shared, in large degree, by scholars. See e.g., Polletta, It Was Like a Fever, supra note [, at (describing power of affective connection between storyteller and audience); Meyers, Victims’ Stories and the Advancement of Human Rights, supra note [, at (describing effect of vivid, often painful details conveyed by narrative) and [, at (describing strength and range of affective responses to narrative). But narrative theorists also point to other qualities that contribute to the persuasiveness of stories in protest, politics, and policymaking. See e.g., Polletta, It Was Like a Fever, supra note [, at (pointing to ellipsis as a vehicle for engaging listeners), and at (arguing that literary devices such as irony, unexpected reversals, changes in verb tense, may render ‘victim’ stories more credible and persuasive).

20 Interview with DV (March 2013).
A story is not simply an array of details; it is also an important life experience that evokes an emotional response in its narrator. It may be a powerful response, an echo of the joy or terror evoked by the initial experience; or it may be a subtler response, a moment of wistfulness or pride produced by the process of recollection, a current of impatience or urgency. Whatever their magnitude or coloration, these responses reveal the familiar human being, in what might otherwise be an unfamiliar story. They invite listeners to engage the story affectively as well as cognitively, to empathize with the person before them. This empathic connection, in turn, creates receptivity to the narrator’s message. Activists convey this insight in different ways. Some convey it more broadly, referencing the heart as the metaphorical seat of affective connection. “[Y]ou can motivate and mobilize an entire community based on stories,” declared an ADAC activist. “Of course, you need facts to back up those stories and to reinforce it to the people that are more business-minded, but everyone has a heart, and you can reach out to them through those stories.” Other activists describe a more specific process of empathic identification. With storytelling, another DREAMer explained:

[you] pretty much force your shoes [onto somebody] and tell them to walk a mile. Because a lot of people, they’re not open to that, and they try to disassociate ... any type of human connection... [But with a story,] you tell them, “No, we’re both humans here. Put on these shoes. They fit you too.” That’s when they start saying, “You know what? I think, in your shoes, I would have done the same thing.”

By helping listeners to see the storyteller as a human being like themselves, experiential narratives can enlist the empathy of audiences who may be experientially distant from the events that stories relate.

At one level, this metanarrative may seem neutral in its effects on the authorization of activists. Its nominal focus is not on activists, but on what makes stories an effective way to communicate the frames of the movement. These strengths become desiderata that help activists take the first steps toward shaping the raw material of their lives into compelling stories. At another level, however, this metanarrative embodies a strong claim about who can wield the power of storytelling. The qualities that distinguish stories in the minds of activists are not the skills of the artist or expert. While narrative theorists might highlight the unexpected reversal, or the abrupt shift in narrative perspective, undocumented activists cite the more straightforward virtues of concrete detail and affective valence. If these are indeed the advantages of storytelling, then the vast majority of activists can achieve them. It requires no specialized skill to evoke the details of an experience you had, or share to some version of the feeling an experience produced in you. This view of narrative persuasion is democratizing and authorizing: it makes clear that a range of activists can confidently contribute to the movement. This theme is captured directly in the second metanarrative.

Metanarrative #2: Everyone has a story and you can use it to change people’s minds

21 Interview with DV (March 2013).

22 Interview with JZ (Phoenix AZ May 2014).

23 Interestingly, Francesca Polletta, one of the most astute analysts of storytelling in social movements, highlights these very literary virtues as potential strengths of “victim” narratives. See Polletta, It Was Like a Fever, supra note [], at [chapter on victim narratives].
Undocumented activists view stories not simply as exemplary tales, that capture the circumstances of undocumented immigrants in particularly compelling ways, but as resources that every person possesses, that give them the capacity for engaging the outside world. This metanarrative is communicated explicitly in the course of many organization-based trainings. But it is also expressed and reinforced through casual conversations among activists. The following story, from a canvasser at PAZ, is typical:

I was talking to a volunteer, and we were waiting for the bus or the light rail ...I was like, “So what’s your story? Why are you here?” And she’s like, “I don’t have a story.” And throughout my ... trainings, they taught me that everybody has a story. So I started asking her questions, and she told me why she got involved. Her family’s undocumented. One of her brothers went to jail. And she just started telling me basically everything that I didn’t know about her. After that, I told her that that was her story, that she could use that when she went out to talk to her friends and to strangers. Then a few days ago, she was out registering people to vote, and I remember they came back in the van, and [she said], “We were going to register this guy, and he didn’t want to, but I told him my story and totally changed his mind, and he registered to vote.” So it’s just like giving that voice to people that they don’t know they have.

Several elements in this story tend to recur in narratives communicating this shared insight. The first is the context of an unscripted conversation between fellow activists. The second is the doubt expressed by the newer activist: notwithstanding the emphasis of trainers, the new recruit remains unsure that she has a personal story distinctive or compelling enough to do the work of the movement. The third is a moment in which the more experienced activist elicits and affirms her colleague’s story, by asking a few simple questions about her life. What is striking about this aspect of the story is its non-specificity. The senior activist elicits a few details about her colleague’s life and declares them sufficient to constitute her ‘story.’ These details are closer to annals or chronicles than to a full-fledged story: as described by the senior activist, her colleague’s ‘story’ reflects no temporal organization, no narrative structure. Hearing this brief account, we are not certain exactly what in this ‘story’ would persuade a listener. But persuade it does: the final element of this type of narrative is almost always the report that the novice’s story has been offered, and has produced a change of mind in a listener. In some stories like the one above, the dynamic that produced the change remains obscure. In other variants, activists report that the story permitted them to reach an unlikely listener through an unexpected connection. In stories that convey this metanarrative, the opacity at the heart of the account may, paradoxically, be its strength.

Neither the vector of change nor the specific character of the story is crucial, because this metanarrative

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24 See Campaign for Arizona’s Future, supra note [], at 17 (“each of us has a compelling story to tell”). Note also that some interview responses, such as the one quoted immediately below, trace this metanarrative to training.

25 Interview with D, K, M (August 2012).

26 As described by Hayden White, annals are simply a list (without temporality or unifying theme), and a chronicle is a temporally organized account without thematic closure. See Hayden White, The Content of the Form [pg] (1987).

27 See Polletta, It Was Like a Fever, supra note [], at [chapter on Civil Rights Sit-Ins] (arguing that gaps or ellipses or unexplained features of stories is draw readers in, challenging them to reflect on what they are hearing)
is not a story about how stories persuade. It is, rather, a story about how the life circumstances of virtually any undocumented activist can yield the desired effect: in other words, how virtually any undocumented immigrant can contribute to the work of the movement. This message is particularly powerful for participants who are young, shy, or believe that their experience has given them no obvious resources – such as a story of detention or deportation might provide – with which they can contribute to the movement. This lesson about the resources that inhere even in apparently undramatic lives, and the sometimes-surprising results they can produce, has helped many reticent organizational members emerge as robust public participants.28

Metanarrative #3: Manifesting vulnerability through storytelling incites action in listeners

The first two metanarratives answer two questions: who can tell a story? and what attributes make storytelling more compelling than other modes of political communication? But they say little about what makes one story better than another – that is, about the content of stories, or the specific ways in which they should be told. This third metanarrative combines a view of the kind of substantive messages that prospective audiences need to hear, with a view of how those messages should be conveyed.

One purpose of public storytelling is to introduce undocumented immigrants to those who may have had no direct contact – or may believe they have had no direct contact – with their lives. When you have looked a person in the eye, and experienced that person as a fellow human being, it may be harder to accept demonizing narratives, such as those popularized by “enforcement by attrition.” But simple visibility is not enough. If undocumented activists want listeners to take action, they must describe an injury arising from their lack of status that demands a remedy. DREAMers are thwarted in their efforts to secure an education or work in their chosen fields; they require the naturalization provided by the DREAM Act, or the work permits associated with DACA, to allow them to achieve their goals. Families facing immigration enforcement have suffered the loss of a loved one; they require executive relief from deportation. In one sense this metanarrative, emphasizing the manifestation of vulnerability, concerns the content or structure of stories: you must tell a story that explains the harms you have suffered at the hands of state officials, in order to motivate listeners to take action.

But this metanarrative also conveys a view about how stories should be told. Because stories work by creating affective bonds between storytellers and listeners, storytellers must not only convey (factual) vulnerability to the state; they must also manifest (emotional) vulnerability before their audiences. This means making present to the listener, in a direct and vivid way, their experiences of fear, anguish, or

28 Despite the lessons of this metanarrative, some activists remain reluctant about telling their stories. In ADAC, for example, two DREAMers who were reluctant to tell their stories were mentioned intermittently as I interviewed other participants. Although group members did not press them to share their stories, members treated their reluctance as a noteworthy difference. Yet, when I interviewed these reluctant storytellers, they described other ways they had found of contributing to the storytelling activities of the movement. One, a graphic artist fascinated by the challenge of representing the movement, developed a skill at photography, founding a chapter of devoted to artistic representations. The other became the internet coordinator for the organization, using a talent for recognizing hashtags and memes that could distill the messages of the movement. These adaptations made me wonder if even reluctant storytellers felt authorized by this metanarrative. Perhaps “everyone has a story” is understood by activists not (simply) as a literal statement, but as a reminder that everyone possesses resources that can contribute to the movement.
hopelessness, in order to elicit some kind of response. As one youth activist put it, expressing pain “cause[s] pity, that causes a feeling of empathy or anger ... and that can lead to action.” To initiate this dynamic, emotions that might otherwise be considered private must be allowed to surface in public settings. Another DREAMer cited her own experience: “So I found myself tearing up in front of 300 people. And then I look out to the audience, and then these 300 people are crying. They’re hugging each other. And then I knew that that’s when my message would come across the strongest...”

While this metanarrative may be authorizing in its inclusiveness – any participant, at least in theory, can communicate difficult emotions –it evokes ambivalence in some participants. Its incitement to vulnerability may feel like a denial of the defiance activists have begun to cultivate, or the stoicism many have long embraced as a survival skill. Organizations and activists highlight personal or collective agency, even as they manifest pain or suffering. For most activists, as I explain in Chapter 3, such narratives represent a sustainable compromise between sharing vulnerability and feeling agency; for some, manifesting vulnerability erodes their sense of personal agency, even if they believe it contributes to their collective political empowerment.

A more common feeling, particularly among new activists, is a need for guidance and support. After years of suppressing, neglecting, or redirecting painful emotions as a means of “moving forward” under challenging circumstances, new participants may need direction and reassurance about attempting greater emotional transparency. One PAZ canvasser voiced this view: “I can [now] connect to others the way I could never do it before, because ... [I allow] myself to be a little vulnerable, in a way. So it’s something that you have to work on a lot. You don’t develop being genuine all by yourself. It takes a lot. It takes a village to raise a child, they said, so it takes a village to become who you are in [a public campaign]... Offering this and other guidance that enables undocumented activists to function in an unfamiliar and often challenging public sphere is the goal of a second practice: the creation of organizational “emotion cultures.”

II. Organizational “Emotion Cultures”

Emotions play a complex, yet pivotal, role in undocumented activism. Emotion pervades the public life of this movement: marches are buoyed by solidarity, by turns dignified, hopeful, and defiant. The words of speakers are flooded with feeling: whether pride or resolve, anger or despair. Within organizations, emotions also run close to the surface. Participants tear up in the course of meetings; they express their commitment to each other in words, and through touches, hugs, enthusiastic snaps. These emotions are vivid and spontaneous, reflecting and enhancing the meaning of activism to participants. Yet, within organizations, emotions may also be visibly supported, cultivated, even managed. Organizers remind participants that “DREAMers never quit,” or that “moving outside your comfort zone is how you grow.” Members attest to each other that the community “has their back” and the safest place is “out, as part

29 Interview with IS and RM (August 2016).
30 Interview with DV (March 2013).
31 Interview with G (December 2012) (emphasis added).
of an organized community. These practices are part of an “emotion culture”\textsuperscript{32} that has emerged, in varying forms, in Phoenix’s undocumented organizations. Through this culture, organizations introduce and normalize a set of emotional dispositions toward activism, other activists, and state actors; they also offer a more explicit emotional pedagogy that suggests the kinds of feelings activists should be experiencing, and when. This section will explore the practices that shape the emotional lives of activists, both new and more experienced participants.

The recognition that organizational “emotion cultures” may be crucial for activists – particularly those mobilizing from the political margins – is not new, either for organizers or for scholars of social movements. These practices were present in the Civil Rights Movement, where mass meetings, replete with storytelling, song, and emotional exchange, helped persuade activists of their “first class citizenship”\textsuperscript{33} and counter their fears of repressive, state-supported violence.\textsuperscript{34} This work, however, is particularly vital in undocumented organizations. Lack of status, and targeting through enforcement by attrition, can engender feelings of shame, powerlessness, or demoralization. These feelings can impede mobilization: they undermine the sense of confidence or desert necessary to engage in public claims-making. And if potentially mobilizing emotions are difficult to foster, the de-mobilizing emotions of fear and frustration may arise all too easily in a movement that faces real dangers of apprehension, detention, and deportation, and has often been thwarted in its larger policy aspirations.

This section explores two kinds of work performed by “emotion cultures” in Phoenix organizations. First, organizations cultivate an environment that stabilizes ambivalent feelings provoked by undocumented experience, in favor of mobilizing emotions. Utilizing storytelling to counter stigmatizing imagery and highlight strengths that participants already possess, and fostering solidarity that brings meaning and greater security to outward-facing activism, organizations cultivate feelings of worthiness and capability in new participants. They do not wholly extinguish feelings of stigma, fear or disempowerment: sharing these facets of undocumented experience allows activists to reach and motivate allies. But participants

\textsuperscript{32} My understanding of emotion culture is shaped by the literature on another outsider movement in which the expression and management of emotion has been crucial: the LGBT movement. I take the term “emotion culture” from Lynette Chua, \textit{The Politics of Love: LGBT Mobilization and Human Rights as a Way of Life} (2018). The culture(s) I identify respond to different challenges than the emotion culture Chua describes among emerging LGBT activists in Myanmar. Yet both work to prepare an unlikely set of participants for activism, foster deep solidarity among them, and cultivate in them the commitment, tenacity, and resilience to remain in the political field. In its fostering of emotional dispositions or orientations toward state actors, the public, or the issues on which they aim to engage, what I call “emotion culture” is similar in some ways to the “emotional habitus” Deborah Gould identifies in the LGBT anti-AIDS movement. See Deborah Gould, \textit{Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT-UP’s Fight Against AIDS} [Ch 1] (2009). However, Gould’s notion of “habitus” may be less suggestive of purposive cultivation, except at moments (such as the founding of ACT-UP) when it is undergoing critical transition.


learn a new balance between demobilizing and authorizing emotions, that empowers them to become visible and to engage members of the public. Second, organizations manage emotions that impede or discourage ongoing movement activity. Drawing on language, role modeling, and emotionally-infused practices, organizations ease fears of apprehension, detention or deportation, counter the exhaustion that can arise from a steep learning curve, and allay the frustrations produced by governmental delays, hypocrisy, or failures of recognition.

One question that arises with emotion cultures—as with other organizational practices described in this chapter—is the question of intentionality. How consciously are activists thinking about the emotional practices I describe here? How purposefully do they craft them to secure certain benefits, and how often do they rely on something more like intuition as they make these moves? Though it is a difficult question to answer with any kind of empirical confidence,35 my research points toward a combination of intentionality and intuition, and a mix that varies at different times and for different activists. Long-time activists or lead organizers sometimes described the cultivation of certain emotions in intentional or strategic terms. When Monica Sandschafer, the founding director of LUCHA, talked about the importance of “celebrating small victories”36 or when Carlos Garcia, the director and lead organizer at Puente, described giving people a sense of connection to each other that reduced the impulse to “self-deport,”37 they were describing practices that reflected deliberation on the part of organizers. But it is not always so clear. When ADAC members teared up while sharing their stories at organizational meetings, they may have been helping new participants to grasp the human connection that can flow from the sharing of emotion, they may simply have been letting their guard down with a group of people with whom they felt powerful kinship, or they may have been doing some combination of the two. This confluence of intentionality and intuition seems to characterize tactics of performative citizenship (discussed below) as well. While I occasionally heard activists speak of modeling a certain kind of civic commitment, as when members of LUCHA planned a cleanup of the neighborhood immediately around the capitol,38 more often there was simply an unspoken—yet symbolically powerful—connection between the roles taken on by undocumented activists and culturally familiar performances of citizenship. Activists sometimes articulated this connection, even when organizers did not: for example, the ADAC activist who said of her citizen-like work in registering voters, “if you want it, you have to be it, you know?”39

A. Enabling Activism through Emotion Culture

35 This is true in part because I did not focus on the question of intentionality through most of my interviewing; it emerged as I reflected on what activists were telling me, and described what I had observed to others. It is also difficult to formulate a general answer to this question because, in my experience, some organizers are much more intentional and tactical in the way they think about even such issues as the cultivation of emotion, and others are much more intuitive.

36 Interview with Monica Sandschafer (November 2012).

37 Interview with Carlos Garcia (March 2015).

38 Fieldnotes [LUCHA Thursday evening membership meeting, Spring 2013(?)]

39 Interview with CC (July 2013).
Undocumented immigrants in the political setting of the United States struggle with a complex mix of feelings. These feelings are neither inherent nor inevitable for those who lack legal status; they are formed through interaction with the environment, including laws that that exclude, stigmatize, criminalize undocumented immigrants, and with a public that may have internalized the message of such laws. Foremost may be a feeling of fear or vulnerability, of ongoing susceptibility to state enforcement efforts. This is particularly strong among undocumented adults, who are the most frequent targets of enforcement; but it emerges also among youth. Immigrants understand they are subject to enforcement and exclusion, and they are unsure how to keep themselves safe, particularly in an environment like Arizona. These circumstances induce a feeling of powerlessness, which may make organizing seem impossible or futile. Many immigrants cope with these feelings by choosing to live far from public visibility, and declining to discuss their status, even within their own communities. As one activist explained, when it comes to your status “you don’t ask and you don’t tell – even within your family.” This inclination to shield one’s life from public view may increase one’s sense of security, but it often comes at a cost. Immigrants may isolate themselves from public institutions, including those to which they may legally turn: they may avoid visiting a hospital emergency room, meeting with their children’s public school teachers, or accessing public benefits for children who are citizens. Living far from public view may also create a sense that they are invisible to the society to which they given their lives and their labor; it may fuel a feeling of isolation from others, even those who face similar constraints. These feelings can result in ambivalence and confusion: undocumented immigrants may suffer in their isolation and constraint; but the pull toward greater visibility or connection feels unacceptably risky.

Second, undocumented immigrants may feel a sense of shame or stigma, arising from the negative meanings ascribed by law and surrounding culture to their identities. This feeling, too, is mixed with competing pulls and intuitions. Immigrants may feel a precarious sense of pride in the lives they have struggled to create. Most are working very hard, either at work or at school. Adults are sacrificing to create a better future for their children and families; youth are learning a new language and culture, and

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40 For a nuanced discussion of the political environment created by the federal government’s regime of enforcement, and its effects on the political consciousness of immigrants, see Ming Hsu Chen, Pursuing Citizenship in the Enforcement Era (forthcoming Stanford University Press).

41 Interview with LD (July 2013).

42 In their systematic and illuminating study of the effects of restrictive or punitive immigration law on the lives of immigrants, Abrego and Menjivar refer to this kind of fear and reluctance to access public institutions as “structural violence.” See Leisy Abrego and Cecilia Menjivar, Legal Violence: Immigration Law and the Lives of Central American Immigrants, 117 Amer. J. Sociol. 1380 (2012).

43 This internalization of stigma is part of what Menjivar and Abrego refer to as the “symbolic” violence of immigration law. See Abrego and Menjivar, Legal Violence, supra note 42 at 1380.
through their socialization at school,\textsuperscript{44} coming to feel increasingly “American.” Both feel that they are improving the lives of their families, and contributing to their communities: this is what they say within their homes, and share with their neighbors, if they get to know their neighbors. But undocumented immigrants also receive more difficult messages from the larger society and from laws that comprise “attrition by enforcement”: that they are lawbreakers, criminals, opportunistic drains on society, responsible for bringing Mexican drug wars over the border, and more. Though these messages are painful and factually untrue, they are dominant in places like Arizona; social scientists find that these views may be internalized by those they target.\textsuperscript{45} Even youth, who may feel more integrated into American society than their parents, confront demoralizing barriers as they approach the end of high school, and find that they are unable to work or obtain in-state tuition for college.\textsuperscript{46} These mixed messages leave immigrants feeling confused about their contribution, and whether they are worthy of better treatment than they are receiving.

This mix of emotions creates both challenges and opportunities for organizations. On the one hand, those who fear visibility, assimilate a stigmatized view of their identities, and feel largely powerless in the face of state actors may feel distinctively ill-equipped to mobilize against state oppression. Yet competing pulls – toward connection and recognition, toward a pride or satisfaction in their efforts – provide a set of inchoate feelings that can be nurtured into strength. The emotion cultures of undocumented organizations act to mitigate, channel and counter de-mobilizing emotions, while cultivating those that can fuel self-assertion or resistance.

As Part I makes clear, the emotional education of undocumented activists often begins with storytelling. Storytelling counters feelings of stigma or powerlessness that can impede the activism of undocumented immigrants. It helps them see themselves, and connect to others, in ways that make visibility and public engagement possible. For many, the first response to stories of others is an unexpected sense of relief and solidarity: experiences that they viewed as not simply painful but isolating, are in fact shared by people in the same room. This recognition fosters a powerful sense of kinship and connection. As one ADAC co-founder expressed it: "...when we had these group meetings, it felt like we knew each other for years, even though we had just met."\textsuperscript{47} As participants grasp more clearly the shared dimension of their disadvantage, they may also see that addressing it requires not simply individual self-assertion, but collective forms of resistance.

\textsuperscript{44} This process has also been set in motion by law, namely Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982), a Supreme Court decision that interpreted the Constitution to require states to provide K-12 education for undocumented children and youth.

\textsuperscript{45} See Abrego and Menjivar, Legal Violence, supra note [ ], at . .

\textsuperscript{46} Roberto Gonzales elaborates this phenomenon in his landmark article, Learning to Be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Shifting Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood, 76 American Sociological Review 602 (2011), and his recent book on the same subject, Lives in Limbo: Undocumented and Coming of Age in America (2016). This dynamic, and its relation to activism, will be discussed in Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{47} Interview with DM (July 2014) (emphasis added).
Organizational storytelling also conveys to new participants a sense of capacity to engage in such resistance. The stories told within organizations do not simply highlight suffering under a regime of deprivation or harsh enforcement; they are stories of resourcefulness, tenacity, or achievement—of many kinds—wring from inhospitable circumstances. These stories frankly challenge the stereotypes associated with undocumented status, easing an often-entrenched sense of stigma. As importantly, they create a positive, can-do environment that new participants notice and appreciate. One ADAC member explained: “just their positivity … that’s something I couldn’t walk away from, because I was tired of living in self-pity. I didn’t want to pity myself anymore. And just like surrounding yourself with so much positive energy—that just brings you up.” If stories underscore for undocumented participants the initiative, skill, or judgment that each possesses, even prior to organizing, they also show how individual agency can be enhanced by collaboration with others. Storytellers reference the resources of interdependence on which they have drawn: some cite a family member, a teacher or coach; many stress the capacity they have gained through organizing.

Storytelling is only the first example of a cultivation of solidarity that is pervasive in undocumented organizations. Its message that you are not alone, you are seen and understood, by people whose experience is similar to your own is perhaps the most palpable emotional pedagogy of undocumented organizations. This message may sometimes be articulated explicitly: leaders may literally remind their members that they are never alone, even at moments of greatest personal danger. Solidarity is also conveyed symbolically, through the warmth that infuses organizational meetings, through the Cesar Chavez unity clap that closes meetings at virtually all organizations, or by practices of forming circles or holding hands, particularly at difficult times for the movement or for individual organizations. It is demonstrated tangibly, as activists offer political, emotional, and financial support to participants or their family members facing detention or deportation.

This message shapes the ambivalent feelings of undocumented immigrants, in a direction that enables public action. New members feel seen and valued, after years or decades of invisibility or stigma. This may loosen the hold of shame, or of feeling “less than,” in ways that permit immigrants to turn outward, or contemplate public visibility. This experience of mirroring, affirmation, and solidarity also creates intense emotional bonds between members of organizations. Such bonds are prevalent in social movement groups generally; but the depth of connection between undocumented activists—who say they come to feel “like family” — was particularly striking in my research. The motivation to act for those they care about becomes part of the motivation for group mobilization. As one teenage participant put

48 Interview with BBV (April (?) 2013).

49 See e.g., Interview with DV (March (?) 2013); Interview with IS (August 2012); Interview with JZ (May 2014). I noted these same themes of interdependence and agency when I heard IS and JZ tell their stories at ADAC General Meetings. [See Fieldnotes]


51 See e.g. Fieldnotes, October 2012; June 2014, January 2015. See also Fieldnotes February 2014; January 2017 (RM’s decision to form circle, hold hands at Aliento fundraiser, and at prayer vigil following arrest of activists during the February 2014 Hunger Strike).
it, “the fact that they’re your friends, you’re pretty much doing it ... not [so] much for yourself but for them as well, in honor of the friendship.”52 These connections build not just a sense of affinity, but a sense of empowerment. New members feel less vulnerable because they see that others are asserting themselves similarly, and are willing to act on their behalf, if they are arrested or detained in the course of their efforts. Even if activists retain some ambivalence about their power as individuals, they feel an enabling confidence in the collectivity.

Yet while organizations aim to mitigate painful emotions that can be de-mobilizing, they also encourage activists to access some of these emotions in public storytelling. Making vivid the pain of undocumented experience, as we saw in Part I, is an integral means of reaching the public, that can also be challenging for activists. Organizations find many ways of communicating the insight that “manifesting vulnerability in storytelling incites action in listeners.”53 The injunction to access difficult emotions may occasionally be explicit: in the Not1More Deportation campaign described in Chapter 5, organizers advised affected families that the visible manifestation of their anguish was the best way to help their detained loved ones.54 Expression of emotional struggle may also be modeled by more experienced activists, whose stories unflinchingly evoke the suffering caused by their status. Emotional transparency also pervades youth organizations more generally: participants frequently share feelings of nervousness, exhilaration, confusion, and ambivalence, as they discuss their experiences and plans.55 These practices seek actively to manage the emotional pain of undocumented experience: it is bounded by emotional and narrative strategies, that preserve its impetus while preventing it from overwhelming participants.

B. Enabling Persistence Through Emotion Culture

As new participants turn outward to engage the public or its leaders, they become increasingly aware that they have joined a demanding, high-risk movement. Participants must manage an ongoing fear that their public action will bring them to the attention of law enforcement, and expose them to apprehension, detention, and deportation. There is also a steep learning curve for people with little public experience or exposure: activists often feel overwhelmed by the tasks they are required to take on. Beyond these movement-specific challenges, participants face a range of emotions that inflect most social movement participation: they must deal with frustration, fatigue, and disappointments large and

52 Interview with D, M, & K (August 2012).

53 This insight, described as “metanarrative #3” is discussed above, in Part I.

54 Interview with Carlos Garcia, Director Puente-AZ (March 2015).

55 I found candid discussions of nervousness or self-consciousness to be a notable theme at ADAC’s general meetings. Members discussed their nervousness about speaking before each other, about coming within organizational time limits for the discussion of particular issues, about speaking in Spanish when the organization moved to a Spanish-dominant format (virtually all members were bilingual but some youth felt more comfortable speaking in English). Revelation of nervousness -- which was often done in a light-hearted way --struck me as an useful way of practicing or transitioning to greater emotional transparency: nervousness is a feeling that people don’t often discuss publicly, but disclosing it seems less revelatory or difficult than sharing feelings of fear, helplessness, or despair.
small. Some participants must confront these challenges even as they are managing the emotional and logistical fallout from a family member’s detention or deportation. Consequently, organizations regularly engage activists who are feeling fearful, frustrated, disappointed, or generally overwhelmed or exhausted. Organizations in Phoenix have developed a multi-faceted emotional pedagogy for addressing these challenges.

The emotional resource that most counters fear is solidarity. Deep ties to similarly-situated others do not simply persuade activists that they have value, and that their capacity will be extended through collectivity. These ties also form a defense against ongoing anxiety surrounding enforcement. In a practice that draws both on meta-narratives and on organizational examples, participants affirm that the safest place for an undocumented person facing the possibility of enforcement is “out, proud, and part of an organized community.” Organizers remind activists of those occasions when community response has mobilized the public, or moved the government to exercise its discretion, when members are detained. Activists see regularly how their fellow members rally to support the families of those who are subject to enforcement. They report that they feel more willing to come out as undocumented or to engage in acts of civil disobedience, because they know that their colleagues will do everything to secure their release, and to assist their families, if they are taken by immigration enforcement.

Organizers deploy similar forms of emotional pedagogy to address other painful emotions that can arise in long or difficult campaigns. They may address feelings of inadequacy or exhaustion, for example, by offering participants new frames for understanding what they are feeling. One example is aphorisms – memorable, oft-repeated expressions -- that help participants to reinterpret uncomfortable feelings associated with activism. Leaders in youth organizations often tell new participants that “working outside your comfort zone is the way you grow.” An organizer’s version of “pain is weakness leaving the body,” this aphorism encourages new participants to interpret their frequent sense of being out of their depth as a sign that they are acquiring new skills and growing as activists. A related example is the use of “emotives”: descriptive statements about what people are feeling that function as normative directives, encouraging the feelings they purport to describe in those who utter them, and in others.

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56 This theme emerged regularly in my interviews with activists. See e.g., Interview with RM and IS (August 2016); Interview with EA (April 2015); Interview with JZ (May 2014), Interview with YG (May 2014).


58 This is a recurrent theme at Puente’s general meetings and in their communications, both with community members and with the public.

59 See e.g., Interview with GT (March 2015); interview with IS (February 2015).

60 See e.g., Interview with DV (April 2013); Interview with G (December 2012). But see also Interview with DM (July 2014) (maybe this expression means “we need to do more mentoring…”).

61 William Reddy, Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions, 38 Current Anthropology 327 (1997). Reddy argues that emotives are neither strictly constative (descriptive) nor strictly performative, but they have “1) a descriptive appearance; 2) a relational intent; 3) a self-exploratory or self-altering effect.” William
Some emotives tie the identity of activists to a particular emotional response: “DREAMers never quit” or “we thrive on adversity.”62 The normative force of the description arises not simply from its (repeated) assertion, but from its connection to a new and valued identity: of DREAMer, of empowered immigrant, of activist.63

Perhaps the most powerful emotive in the movement is its now-famous rallying cry, “we are undocumented and unafraid.”64 This phrase is not a straightforward description of what people are feeling: in fact, some activists have described using it when they felt very much afraid.65 In part, “undocumented and unafraid” articulates an aspiration: it is the stance in which undocumented activists aim to engage state actors. Among activists, expressing this aspiration can help to resolve ambivalence in the direction of pride, belonging, and self-assertion. One activist explained, “speaking in publicly is very scary. Sharing your story is very scary. Having a one-on-one civil debate with an anti-immigrant person is very scary.” But, for this activist, proclaiming herself to be “undocumented and unafraid” means that “I refuse to be a victim of my circumstances. I refuse to be turned into this little person because of a situation I’m in.”66

This emotive may also achieve its effect through re-assertion over time. As activists repeat it, and state actors and members of the public respond to it, feeling “undocumented and unafraid” can become a self-fulfilling prophesy, often reinforced by the fearless actions participants take as they claim it: whether “coming out” at a public rally, or engaging in civil disobedience. Another youth activist explained:

[in the beginning] it was ... I guess, like an empowerment phrase ... even if [people] were still afraid, they didn’t have to show they were afraid to the public ... even if they were dying inside... you had to put that face on where it was – “you know what? I’m not afraid.” As people started telling their stories and started coming out, they started noticing that it really wasn’t something to be afraid of; that it was something you could live with, that you were ok with. [And] when you said so, certainly people believe[d] you ...so even if it started as ... an empowerment phrase, it became true over the years.67


62 These emotives surfaced not only in collective settings, but in interviews that I did with individual organizers.

63 Lynette Chua also finds that connecting particular emotions with new and valued identities can be an effective form of emotional pedagogy. See The Politics of Love, supra note [] at .

64 The tactical role of this posture, in several campaigns through which youth and adults addressed the state, is explored in Chapter 4. Here I discuss the emotional effects (the “emotive” force) of the descriptive claim itself.

65 See e.g., AS (March 2012); DV (April 2012).

66 Interview with DV (April 2013).

67 Interview with CC (July 2013).
In the sense that it produces, over time, the feeling states it claims to describe, being “undocumented and unafraid” is a performative strategy that works in the domain of the emotions.

A final strategy for mitigating fear and disappointment is the purposeful fostering of counter-emotions: particularly, present-focused emotion of joy, the future-focused emotion of hope, and the broadly fortifying emotion of solidarity with others. This strategy has a legacy among high-risk movements: sociologists have described the role of song in the civil rights movement as bringing solidaristic joy and release to fearful participants. As we will see in Chapter 3, Puente has cultivated an approach it describes as the “open hand,” to nurture a sense of connection, and even enjoyment, among community members, and give undocumented immigrants facing “enforcement by attrition” a reason to remain in the state. Joy and pleasure, experienced collectively, may ease the perceived weight of fear, fatigue, uncertainty, and bolster community members for the struggles ahead. This approach has made parties, cultural events, and art displays a valuable counterpoint to the group’s more overtly political tactics. During the Not1More Deportation campaign, for example, protesters led by Puente marched to the Phoenix ICE Building to for a mass civil disobedience action; when they found the office closed, they staged a fiesta on the grounds of the Phoenix ICE Building, dancing for hours under garlands of paper flowers. The fiesta was an act of defiance in the face of ICE office’s defensive strike; but it was also an occasion for release, cohesion, and joy, among tense protesters with a long campaign ahead of them. Organizations may also cultivate a feeling of hope or possibility by celebrating small victories, in a campaign whose larger outcomes may be disappointing or uncertain. A week after the 2012 elections, the “Adios Arpaio” campaign staged a picket and rally, with the announced goal of urging the Secretary of State to complete the counting of provisional ballots. A rally that might have been colored


69 I began to focus on this practice when a particular member repeatedly asked me if I was going to attend a dance or party planned by the group. At first, I thought she was simply being hospitable; but I gradually realized she saw these events as being as much part of the activism as the rallies and protests I conscientiously observed. See e.g., Notes on conversation with CP following press conference, November 21, 2014.

70 This campaign is discussed in Chapter 5.

71 Several days before the strike, ICE agents in Tuscon had been surprised by a mass civil disobedience action in which protesters chained themselves to busses transporting migrants for “Operation Streamline” court proceedings. [article on Tuscon bus action] Because the Phoenix action came at the end of a major conference organized by Puente to introduce the next phase of Not1More Deportation, leaders speculated that the Phoenix ICE office may have been trying to avoid a similar confrontation.


73 LUCHA’s founding director, Monica Sandschafer was the first to describe this approach to me. Interview with Monica Sandschafter (November 2012).

74 This campaign is discussed in Chapter 4.
by the disappointing victory of Arpaio became instead a celebration of the 50,000 new voters who had been registered for the election. Participants chanted, cheered, and lifted improvised candles to the possibility of “turning Arizona Blue.” This exuberant expression of hope in the future buoyed exhausted campaigners for the continuation of their efforts.

III. Tactics of Performative Citizenship

The two practices discussed above begin their authorizing work within organizations, and continue to shape activists as they turn outward: emotion cultures prevent fear, fatigue, and demoralization from short-circuiting activism, and stories become a vehicle through which activists navigate state response, sometimes shifting the direction of the movement, as we will see in Chapters 4 and 5. The work of performative citizenship, in contrast, begins once activists are in the political field. By taking on visible and unexpected roles -- roles associated in the public mind with citizens -- undocumented immigrants claim the status to which they aspire, altering the political terrain on which they act. In the longer term, performative citizenship may bring activists closer to the membership they perform through two kinds of legitimation. First, these tactics may transform perceptions of undocumented immigrants held by political actors and the public. Second, they may provide undocumented activists with the experience, knowledge, and expectations that allow them to internalize the new subjectivity they assert.

A. From Acts of Citizenship to Performative Citizenship

Arizona activists are not the first non-citizens to take on political roles traditionally performed by citizens, nor is this book the first to reflect on that phenomenon. In the US and in other immigrant-receiving nations, activists without legal status have participated in a variety of public campaigns. They have demonstrated and advocated, displaying the knowledge, commitment, and authority conventionally associated with citizenship. These campaigns may seek rights or benefits paradigmatically associated with formal membership, such as the right to vote in school board or local elections, or access to in-state tuition at educational institutions. They may seek legislation that makes the lives of undocumented residents less precarious, such as protections from retaliation or wage theft in the workplace. Some scholars have characterized these efforts as reflecting an alternate form of citizenship, often though not always focused on local institutions, which contrasts with the weak engagement that has become typical of formal membership. Rachel Meyer and Janice Fine, for example, highlight what they call “grassroots citizenship,” a practice by undocumented immigrants of “acting like citizens in arenas where no formal rights exist.” This alternate mode of participation which, they

75 Fieldnotes, November [], 2012.

76 See e.g., Mary McThomas, Performing Citizenship: Undocumented Migrants in the United States (2016); Janice Fine and Rachel Meyer, Grassroots Citizenship at Multiple Scales: Rethinking Immigrant Civic Participation, 30 International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society 323 (2017) (describing campaigns for citizen-like rights such as drivers’ licenses or the right to vote in local school board elections).

77 See e.g., Fine and Meyer, Grassroots Citizenship, supra note [], at (discussing “Justice for Janitors” campaign).

78 Fine and Meyer, Grassroots Citizenship, supra note [], at 4.
argue, displays the distinctive attributes of solidarity, critical analysis, and collective action, not only benefits undocumented immigrants. Meyer and Fine also see in it the potential to reinvigorate the increasingly attenuated practices of formal citizenship.

Other scholars argue that political contestation by undocumented activists goes beyond reinvigoration to challenge conventional understandings of citizenship. Anne McNevin sees this potential in “urban citizenship”: mobilizations by non-citizen immigrants in “global cities” created by broader patterns of transnational movement. As migrants claim roles that are more typical of citizens, mobilizing for labor or political rights, they present themselves as “equal political subjects,” despite their location beyond the bounds of formal citizenship. Their robust activity has the power to frame citizenship less as a status than as a “process”: this shift unsettles conventional views of citizenship as a binary, and sovereign nation-states as controlling their boundaries and their membership.

Such analyses highlight the way that political engagement by non-citizens can inaugurate new beginnings the polities in where it occurs, and transform participants themselves. Some scholars have consequently described it as “performative citizenship” because, like J. L. Austin’s performative utterances, it can enact the change – the political “subjectification” of new participants and the consequent transformation of the polity -- that it asserts. Or, like Butler’s performance of gender, it

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79 McNevin uses the category “irregular migrants.” Irregular migrants, “are those who have crossed state borders or remain in state territory without the explicit and ongoing sanction of the host state.” McNevin, Doing What Citizens Do, supra note [ ], at 70. This category, which includes those who cross without documents or overstay their visas, also includes asylum seekers.


81 McNevin, Doing What Citizens Do, supra note [ ], at 74.

82 McNevin, Doing What Citizens Do, supra note [ ], at 68.

83 The notion of the performative, or performativity, may have originated in Austin’s notion of “performative utterances,” words which produce effects in the world when uttered by particular actors in specified contexts, according to recognized protocols, see J.L. Austin, How To Do Things With Words (1962). But it has (varied) iterations in a range of fields including gender studies, see Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990); Eve Sedgwick, Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity (2003); sociology, Charles Tilly, Contentious Performances (2008); Erving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959); theories of enactment in philosophy, see Robert Ware, Acts and Action (1973); and the humanities-based field of Performance Studies, Richard Schechner, Performance Studies: An Introduction (2002). Its trajectory through the literature on citizenship and immigration, which is more recent, is the focus of my discussion below.

84 See J.L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words, supra.

can remake (and remake) a binary than was presumed to be given.86 Performative citizenship can produce change through two kinds of effects: an immediate effect that creates a rupture in conventional practices of citizenship, and a longer-term effect that may enable the products of that rupture to take root, reconstituting civic reality and of the subjects of politics. Although much of the current literature focuses on rupture, my primary focus, in this chapter and those that follow, will be on reconstitution.

The vision of civic performance as rupture is most fully elaborated by Engin Isin. Isin seeks to understand how a sharp divergence from political habitus (“ways of thought and conduct that are internalized over a relatively long period of time”87) enables subjects to become claimants “under surprising conditions or within a relatively short period of time.”88 To investigate this question, he distinguishes between the actions of citizenship – the familiar practices through which formal citizens vote, serve on juries, and the like – and what he calls “acts of citizenship.” Acts of citizenship, Isin explains: “disrupt habitus” and “shift established practices, status, and order.89 They may do so by posing unfamiliar questions, or inaugurating new modes of political engagement. But they also transform the political domain by producing new political actors: through citizenship acts, “regardless of status and substance, subjects constitute themselves as citizens, or, better still, as those to whom the right to have rights is due.”90

This self-constituting dimension of citizenship acts is, of course, directly germane to the mobilization of undocumented immigrants. Through their appearance on the political scene undocumented activists constitute themselves as political subjects by claiming a role associated with citizens.91 Political theorist Cristina Beltran has made this argument about the appearance of undocumented immigrants in the 2006 “Big Marches” against the Sensenbrenner Bill. Beltran argues that protesters did not simply

Hildenbrant and Isin invoke the Austinian performative (although Isin offers a broad analogy and Hildebrant both references the Austinian performative and notes that those lacking citizenship may effect an “unhappy” performative because they lack the requisite authority to bring the belonging asserted into being.). I suspect that Isin, in particular, favors the Austinian account because, in the vision of performative citizenship that he favors – the rupture – the change can be accomplished quickly and abruptly by the assertion.

86See e.g., See Judith Butler, Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory, 40 Theater J. 519, 527-28 (1988). See generally, Judith Butler, Gender Trouble, supra note []]. I tend to draw more on the Butlerian analogy, because its challenge to the “given-ness” of the binary in question (in this case citizenship/non-citizenship, ostensibly established by the state, rather than male/female or masculine/feminine, ostensibly established by nature), and its ongoing, recursive process of making and remaking the spectrum that displaces the binary, better suit my longer-term vision of how undocumented activism produces change.

87 Id. at 15.

88 Id. at 17.


90 Id. at 2.

91 Self-authorization, as I have argued, begins long before the public appearance of undocumented immigrants, as organizations use stories and emotion regulation to prepare undocumented participants for outward-facing activism. But activists constitute themselves publicly as citizens when they appear in the political domain.
“express a desire for national belonging”\textsuperscript{92} they dramatically and unexpectedly claimed the space of citizenship, challenging citizens’ expectations and inaugurating a new political reality in which non-citizens – even those with lacking any formal status – could be engaged participants. Through the “extraordinary and unanticipated act of noncitizen mass protest,” Beltran explains, immigrants “were actualizing a power they did not yet have.”\textsuperscript{93} However, Beltran does not focus solely on this assertion and actualization of power,\textsuperscript{94} she also emphasizes its effects. By claiming the political space that had been presumed to be the domain of citizens,\textsuperscript{95} undocumented protesters disrupted the expectations of the public and reshaped the contours of the political landscape, which now encompassed the political activity of non-citizens.

Peter Nyers makes a similar point about self-identification: voicing one’s undocumented status. “To publicly identify as ‘non-status’ is to engage in a political act, or better – an act of political subjectification (ie., transforming oneself into a political subject) ...”\textsuperscript{96} Because, as a matter of history and habitus, “citizenship has been the identity through which claims to be political are enacted,”\textsuperscript{97} undocumented activists who break their prescribed silence and “assert themselves as [] visible and speaking being[s]”\textsuperscript{98} rupture that order and reconstitute themselves as political participants.

Though moments of rupture may upend expectations and inaugurate something new, the recuperative power of political habitus is great. The legacy of the 2006 marches suggests the limits of even powerful disruption. Though the marches rolled out across the country, the vote\textsuperscript{99} – and other attributes of membership – proved elusive. Whether a rupture to can do more than seize the momentary attention of the public, or suggest provocative but distant possibilities, depends on what happens next.

Here a second kind of performative citizenship enters in. This form of civic performance aims to reconstitute the public domain, and citizenship itself. It yields not simply a rupture, or the possibility of a

\textsuperscript{92} Beltran, Going Public, supra note [], at 596.

\textsuperscript{93} Beltran, Going Public, supra note [], at 597.

\textsuperscript{94} Beltran connects this assertion with political theorist Bonnie Honig’s image of the “taking foreigner,” who does not receive power as a grateful subject, but rather claims and redistributes it through popular action, “stretch[ing] the bounds of citizenship and modeling transgressive forms of agency.” Beltran, Going Public, supra note [], at 607-08 (discussing Bonnie Honig, \textit{Democracy and the Foreigner} 8 (2003)).

\textsuperscript{95} Beltran connects this act with the “performative vocabulary”\textsuperscript{95} of Hannah Arendt, who describes the political as the creation of “spaces of freedom and common appearance where none existed before.” Beltran, Going Public, supra note [], at 597.

\textsuperscript{96} Peter Nyers, No One Is Illegal Between Between City and Nation, in Isin and Nielsen, Acts of Citizenship, supra note [], at 162-63.

\textsuperscript{97} Id. at 162.

\textsuperscript{98} Id. at 165.

\textsuperscript{99} “Today we march, tomorrow we vote,” was one of the signature chants of the 2006 marches.
new beginning; rather, it enables activists to bring about or bring closer “the reality they speak of.” 100 This new reality encompasses what Hildebrant and Peters call “the successful civic performative” 101: the changes in the polity that respond to unconventional participants or demands. It also encompasses the changes that make unconventional participants into political subjects. Both of these efforts rely on forms of legitimacy. The public who sees an undocumented activist appearing and speaking in politics may witness something they haven’t previously envisioned; but before they can respond to her demands, they need to accept and integrate this new vision of the public participant. A participant’s sense of herself as a political subject may be glimpsed in a moment but becomes a more durable, familiar identity – the kind necessary to sustain ongoing participation in a movement – only through action and reflection over time. The mode of performative citizenship that addresses these internal and external needs for legitimacy, like the mode that produces rupture, involves taking on roles paradigmatically associated with citizenship. However, these are not brief, disruptive roles such as appearance or self-identification, but more sustained activities or responsibilities of citizenship.

Often these reflect familiar roles, parts of the political habitus: from asserting rights, to lobbying Congress, to registering voters. The re-constitution implicit in such engagement comes not from the innovative character of the acts, but from the novel demands they embody, and, more importantly, from their performance by those without legal status. This performance may itself create a moment of rupture; but what allows it to transform the public sphere in more durable ways are the changes in perspective that it can produce, in observers and participants themselves. 102 Sometimes, however, these roles involve departures from political habitus, taking activists outside formal political institutions, or even outside the law. Activists may reach for these roles because they feel that they are not being heard within institutions, or because state actors view their demands as beyond their power to provide. Although these ‘performances’ do not lie within the quotidian activities of citizenship, they can nonetheless claim a form of cultural currency. Protest is, among some groups in American society, a valued activity of citizenship. These riskier, less conventional activities may bolster the political confidence of participants: they critique institutional solutions, make subtle political trade-offs, experience intense forms of solidarity. Despite their oppositional posture, they may feel more acutely that they are members of the polity they protest. These roles can legitimate activists in the eyes of observers who understand or have experienced the legacy of protest: they may imbue participants in this movement with the cultural legitimacy of the Civil Rights Movement, or the LGBT struggle. Yet they

100 Hildebrant and Peters, Introduction, in Hildebrant et al, Performing Citizenship, supra note [], at [get pg].


102 In this view, I differ from Hildebrand and Peters, who contend that for activists, citizenship acts or performative citizenship includes “a dimension of ‘fate it ‘til you make it.’” Hildebrant and Peters, Performing Citizenship: Testing New Forms of Togetherness in Hildebrant et al., Performative Citizenship, supra note [], at 7. While they may experience moments of pure, groundless self-assertion, undocumented activists generally enter the public sphere buttressed by their belief in the value of their stories, and gain a sense of confidence, or of their own legitimacy as participants, from the political and institutional lessons they learn as ‘performative citizens.’
may evoke a more equivocal response from those whose approach to citizenship is more quiescent; their unease may be exacerbated by participants’ lack of status.

The following section highlights three modes of performative citizenship that have emerged among activists in Phoenix: institutional participation, oppositional participation, and a more legal mode of participation I describe as “rights-bearing.” These modes of performative citizenship arise not from ex ante calculation by organizations or activists. Rather they seem to emerge more organically, from the varied political contexts in which activists engage state actors, and from the felt needs of a movement whose authorization and legitimacy may be steadily asserted but are always subject to question. 103 The effects of these efforts also emerge organically, and to some degree unpredictably. In the best case, activists’ performance of familiar attributes of citizenship not only shapes the awareness of state officials or the public; it also shapes their own consciousness, as they come to understand and inhabit the roles they claim. Yet the effects of performative citizenship depend on many factors: not simply whether the roles embraced conform to or deviate from political habitus, but whether the “performance” confers on participants institutional knowledge or a sense of control within political processes; how public officials respond to activists’ self-presentation; whether the campaigns that utilize these tactics succeed, and more. In the remainder of this chapter, I explore how these modes of performative citizenship emerged within undocumented activism, and how they have the potential to legitimate activism and foster new forms of political subjectivity. In Chapters 3-6, I consider whether and where this potential has been achieved.

B. Three Modes of Performative Citizenship

1. Institutional Citizenship

The most important policies affecting undocumented immigrants are made within formal institutions: Congress regulates formal citizenship status through the Immigration and Naturalization Act; the executive branch grants deferrals from deportation; state legislatures determine what benefits, from health care access to in-state tuition, are available to undocumented residents. Thus many forms of activity by undocumented participants occur within institutional, often legislative, settings. Although the primary goal of intervention by activists is to secure substantive change, appearance in these settings has a performative dimension: in their institutional appearances, activists model a kind of (super)citizenship that demonstrates their knowledge of, respect for, and commitment to political institutions and processes. 104 Their mode of presentation signals the kinds of contributors to the state

103 As Engin Isin puts it, “While acts of citizenship involve decisions, those decisions cannot be reduced to calculability, intentionality, and responsibility. But because they are irreducible to those qualities, they can be enacted without subjects being able to articulate reasons for becoming activist citizens.” Engin Isin, Theorizing Acts of Citizenship, in Isin and Nielsen, Acts of Citizenship, supra note [ ], at 38-39. As I note above, however, sometimes activists can and do articulate reasons for taking on these roles.

104 Because they are contending for status in a domain that has traditionally been the purview of citizens, undocumented immigrants often feel constrained to be “supercitizens,” a point lawyer and legal theorist Muneer Ahmad makes about representing undocumented clients in court:
and nation they would be, if permitted to live securely, as members of the polity. This ‘institutional’ register of performative citizenship may be the easiest for activists to take on and for audiences to take in. Though its routines are being performed by those who lack formal status, and though they exceed the usual contributions of those who are actual citizens, the routines are at the heart of political habitus: they are widely accepted as symbols of commitment to the polity.

Two activities of this kind have been particularly prominent among Phoenix activists. The first is legislative activity, which includes testimony at hearings, and meetings with members of Congress, and other activities focused on the design or enactment of legislation. This was an early strategy of pro-immigrant organizations; its performative impact was often striking, even if its substantive contribution was unclear. Within several years in the late 2000’s, a public which would never have expected to see DREAMers advocating before members of Congress, became acclimated to the legislative participation of undocumented youth. This shift in expectations occurred, in part, because undocumented activists acquitted themselves so capably in a series of legislative campaigns during this period.105 Although the target of this legislative activity was Congress and the public, Immigrant activists reaped benefits themselves: participation in institutionalized political processes came to feel familiar; and participants developed the networks, the detailed institutional knowledge, and the practical judgment relevant to those institutional settings. This knowledge provided an important ground of authorization for continuing political action.

As legislation alternately progressed and stalled, activists brought new, direct action tactics to their legislative efforts: these tactics were intended to demonstrate resolve and to attract the attention of a public that might bear on reluctant legislators. DREAMers held mock graduation ceremonies outside governmental buildings in Washington, as Congress debated various iterations of the DREAM Act; they orchestrated mock citizenship ceremonies during the campaign for CIR. When S. 744 stalled in the House of Representatives, activists from Arizona staged a series of pray-ins to appeal to Republican members. These tactics lie slightly outside the habitus of conventional political activity. They are not the bread-and-butter routines of citizenship: as such, they reflect (and enhance) the confidence activists have acquired through their earlier legislative work. But these demonstrations are also relatively

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... a rights-asserting immigrant is a model citizen in every way but for status citizenship. Indeed, nor only ... [do immigrants] conform to citizenship scripts, they over-conform, performing a kind of supercitizenship that is neither expected nor typical of the status citizen, and yet is demanded of them precisely because they are definitionally noncitizen.

Muneer Ahmad, Developing Citizenship, Issues in Legal Scholarship Vol 9: Issue 1, 10-12 (2011) This tendency to enact super-citizenship is also reflected in the observation of Fine and Meyer, Grassroots Citizenship at Multiple Scales, supra note [ ], that the citizenship of non-status immigrants is more robust than the conventional activity of formal citizens.

105 It also occurred in part because DREAMers moved so easily into the role of citizens: their profile as high achieving, largely assimilated immigrants who were not responsible for their unauthorized presence made them seem to legislators and observers like “citizens in everything but the papers” and their socialization within the American educational system made them feel the same way.
uncontroversial modes of protest; they are themselves legal, as are the demands with which they are associated. However, where such activities have been ambivalently received – as in the campaigns for the DREAM Act and S. 744 – this has also created a sense of dissonance among some undocumented activists. This tension will be explored further in Chapters 5 and 6.

A second, more serendipitous example, has been the involvement of undocumented youth in “civic engagement” campaigns. These campaigns were a staple of nationwide organizations such as Mi Familia Vota and Voto Latino, which sought to encourage registration and voting among underrepresented Latino voters, in part as a vehicle for securing changes in immigration policy. As attrition by enforcement made clear the need for changes in the leadership and electorate in Arizona, Phoenix organizations – often supported by national non-profits – sent scores of canvassers into Latino neighborhood, for doorstep conversations with prospective voters. Organizations like PAZ and LUCHA began to enlist undocumented teenagers for this effort recruiting at local high schools. The flexible schedules, physical energy, and compelling life stories of immigrant youth made them ideal candidates for the task. As they went door to door speaking to citizens about the importance of the vote, this performance of a quintessential, if unglamorous, citizen-like function challenged public views of undocumented immigrants. More importantly, it conferred on teenage activists – many of whom had never participated in politics before -- knowledge of local institutions, understanding of the dynamics of the electoral process, and appreciation of the accountability of public officials to their constituents. This tactic, which is explored in Chapters 4 and 6, has not only proved effective in expanding the electorate in Arizona; it has had powerful effects on the self-understanding and political commitment of many of its young canvassers.

2. “Oppositional” Citizenship

Institutional processes do not always respond to political action by undocumented immigrants. In some cases, explored in Chapters 4 and 5, activists may feel that they have been sidelined by more professionalized activists, or denied access to settings in which the actual decision-making takes place. Thus, undocumented activists have also learned to engage in more contentious action outside formal institutions: to place pressure on elected officials (if possible); to critique institutional inaction (if necessary); and to engage a public whose involvement can alter the status quo. These tactics are not uncontroversially within the habitus of citizen activity; yet they are performances that may move some audiences, because of their larger cultural resonance. These tactics are expressions of what has been called “oppositional” citizenship: mobilizations by those at the political margins who are excluded from, or critical of, political institutions.

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106 Engin Isin for example, describes that habitus as including acts such as voting, jury service, and (where applicable) military service. See. This may reinforce the point made by Fine and Meyer that the repertoire of most formal citizens is quite restricted – or impoverished – when compared with the activities of immigrant activists. See Fine and Meyer, Grassroots Citizenship at Multiple Scales, supra note [ ], at .

A march is perhaps the simplest form of oppositional participation. Marches are a form of appearance which can create a political rupture, as discussed about. But as they occur over time, they are forms of activity that can reshape public perceptions and buttress the political subjectivity of undocumented activists. The least controversial form of protest, marching has a long, legitimating legacy as an embodiment of First Amendment rights, and as a preferred tactic of respected social movement groups. Marching can also be distinctively authorizing for undocumented participants. Though it may at first feel risky to those unaccustomed to public visibility, it is among the most accessible forms of oppositional performance. It demands neither specialized knowledge, nor significant exposure, nor major commitment of time. As one youth put it “they can lose that fear that they have and they can feel empowered without feeling intimidated, because they are in a group, they are with their community.” They can experience the public joy of standing for themselves, of shouting, and of beginning to perceive themselves as an “us” communicating crucial messages to a “them.” These are crucial lessons, particularly for those just beginning to see themselves as participants.

In some contexts, however, activists feel a need to use more confrontational tactics, to achieve greater visibility, or exert greater pressure on specific political targets. Direct action, which may include boycotts, hunger strikes, physical occupation of targeted spaces, and confrontations aimed at specific elected officials, may be utilized for this purpose. In direct action, the demand for accountability takes place outside the formal institutions of the state, and uses forms of physical extremity, self-sacrifice or confrontation to replace the more conventional pressure of institutional processes. As a Puente activist said of members of Congress: “We need to pressure them so that we will be heard and treated equally, because we are a very important part of this country...” These tactics are well outside the most familiar performances of citizenship: although they remain within the law, they tend to evoke more ambivalent responses from state actors and members of the public. On the one hand, observers may admire the commitment it requires to execute a three-week hunger strike, or a 60-mile walk into the desert; but, on the other, they may be wary of the extremity of these tactics and skeptical of efforts that work outside the formal channels of political institutions, particularly when those who undertake them

108 One interesting discovery of my research is that marches are staged for a variety of purposes by Phoenix organizations, some of which are directed more at bearing witness, demonstrating persistence, or activating the community than at protesting (in)action by state or federal officials. Marches may be staged on holidays (Mothers’ Day or May 1), or on anniversaries of landmark events such as the passage of DACA or SB 1070. They may be staged to show support for an institutional effort that is flagging, such as the October 5, 2013 march to demonstrate support for CIR. Many of the activists whom I interviewed recalled participating in multiple marches over time.

109 Interview MG (August 2013).

110 Interview LF (June 2013).

111 Interview BBV (April 2013). (“... when I shout, I feel like I shout from my heart: we can do this, “si, se puede”; we are together””); Interview LF (June 2013) (“I feel good shouting out, it felt good finally being in the streets...”).

112 Interview BBV (April 2013) (“And people need to hear us; they need to hear us shout...”).

113 Interview with MCR (April 2015).
lack formal status. The physicality and extremity some observers find unnerving, however, can be empowering to those in the movement. The bodily expression of resistance – much like marching and shouting – can fortify connections among activists and sharpen their opposition to their target. Direct action tactics modeled on earlier movements – coming out as “undocumented and unafraid”\(^{114}\) or freedom-riding on the Undocubus\(^{115}\) – may also connect participants to the resistant spirit of those efforts. These more contentious examples of performative citizenship will be discussed in Chapter 4.

At the most challenging end of the spectrum of direct action is civil disobedience. Civil disobedience involves the purposeful violation of a law\(^{116}\) undertaken in circumstances of high visibility, to highlight the injustice of the law itself or of an immigration policy embraced by state actors. Civil disobedience by undocumented immigrants began with DREAMers: activists from Arizona and elsewhere staged sit-ins at congressional offices in support of the DREAM Act. It was taken up by adult riders on the Undocubus -- in Phoenix, and at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte. Acts of civil disobedience aimed at jamming the apparatus of immigration enforcement became a central part of the Not1More Deportation campaign.

With civil disobedience, activists move outside political habitus, outside political institutions, and outside the law itself. Performative citizenship of this type can be controversial with its audiences, both because it is associated with a potent critique of the institutional status quo, and because it involves tactics that some view as beyond the scope of legitimate protest or participation. Moreover, even those who grudgingly tolerate civil disobedience when performed by citizens, may find it unacceptable when performed by undocumented immigrants. Yet this tactic, like direct action, has the potential to confer legitimacy with some audiences because of its cultural resonance: it has been a staple of venerated protest movements, such as the Civil Rights Movement. And among undocumented activists, civil disobedience has often proved to be distinctively authorizing, whether for those who participate directly or for those who observe disobedience by their fellow participants. The tactical and emotional work that civil disobedience requires – deciding what circumstances require an intensification of tactics, assessing the assessing the trade-offs between collective benefits, and collective and individual risks – is some of the most challenging an activist can undertake. Engaging in that individual and collective labor, and

\(^{114}\) See e.g., Cristina Beltran, Undocumented, Unafraid, and Unapologetic: DREAM Activists, Immigrant Politics, and the Queering of Democracy, in Danielle Allen and Jennifer Light, eds., From Voice to Influence: Understanding Citizenship in a Digital Age 80-104 (2015);


\(^{116}\) Participants may be arrested and charged with violating the law they aim to expose, or some ancillary law (such as a regulation of trespassing) that helps them highlight a central issue in their campaign.
“taking control”\textsuperscript{117} of their greatest fear, by purposefully risking arrest, detention and deportation, can create a powerful sense of pride and efficacy. These effects emerge in the campaigns detailed in Chapters 4 and 5.

3. Rights-Assertion

Finally, because many problems faced by Arizona’s undocumented immigrants arise from excessive or discriminatory enforcement activity, activists have also engaged in rights-assertion against law enforcement officials. This rights-assertion may occur in the course of individual encounters with law enforcement officials; in more extreme cases, activists may also engage the (federal) courts, to enforce constitutional limits on law enforcement officials. In both contexts undocumented activists are performing in a third register of citizenship: that of a “rights-bearer.” The assertion of constitutionally-protected individual rights – though it arguably occurs in the domain of the “legal” rather than the “political” -- is a familiar and deeply-valued expression of citizenship. When constitutional rights are asserted by non-citizens, particularly those without status, it can arouse a range of responses in observers. It may create a sense of disorientation or rupture, particularly for those who may not recognize that many constitutional rights guaranteed to “persons” rather than “citizens.” It may associate undocumented activists with those respected citizens who have struggled to give meaning to the constitutional rights they formally enjoy. However, rights assertion is a less public activity than the previous examples of performative citizenship. Law enforcement encounters are not publicly-witnessed activities, and fewer members of the public may be aware of court challenges, particularly at the lower levels. Consequently, the performative effects of action in this register may flow more to participants than to public officials or citizen-observers.

In Phoenix organizations, there are at least two important ways that immigrants assert their rights.\textsuperscript{118} First, schooled by the pervasive practice of “Know Your Rights” (KYR) trainings, undocumented activists have asserted their rights in encounters with law enforcement officials. As will be described in Chapter 3, these trainings teach undocumented immigrants how to respond when stopped by ICE agents or local police or sheriff’s department officers. KYR trainings explain the contexts in which such encounters may occur, the kinds of questions that may be asked, and the ways in which undocumented immigrants are, and are not, obliged to answer. At the most basic level, KYR trainings aim to create a sense of recourse. Participants learn that there are some limits to the way they can be treated by police, and they have some power to defend themselves. Rights assertion in this context may produce a practical change in the lives of immigrants, by rendering them more secure. Those who have completed KYR trainings are less likely to make unnecessary statements that unwittingly point to their status; more importantly, they

\textsuperscript{117} [Quote from Mo Abdulahi on civil disobedience at office of Sen. John McCain].

\textsuperscript{118} It is possible to think of marching or protesting, as described above, as vindicating rights of speech or assembly. In my research, however, I have found that immigrant activists less often conceive marches in these terms, whereas as they invariably understand trainings for police encounters, or lawsuits, as being about the vindication of rights.
may refuse to sign “voluntary” departure forms – a major vehicle for rapid deportation -- without obtaining translation or legal advice.

But rights assertion is also performative in that it shapes the political consciousness of activists. As activists undergo training, they begin to develop attitudes, affective responses, and ways of understanding their choices, that may infuse their future encounters with law enforcement officials. Adult participants may learn to question an intuitive deference toward law enforcement instilled in countries of origin: “one of thing things I have learned here in Arizona” one Puente activist noted, is that “we don’t have to become friends with the police officer, we have the choice to answer some of the questions and not everything.”119 Participants of all ages may internalize more confident ways of approaching police encounters, be they a kind of proceduralism or a feeling of self-sufficiency, even defiance, at the moment of encounter. The procedural rights of undocumented immigrants are undoubtedly limited, a point that KYR trainings make clear; yet learning that they have some recourse, where most believed they had none, may be authorizing within and beyond the police encounter.

Undocumented immigrants may also act as rights bearers by enlisting the courts to curtail the excesses of state officials. Involvement in lawsuits against enforcement officials such as Joe Arpaio, or Governor Jan Brewer was not an intentional strategy of undocumented organizations. It arose through their information gathering,120 or through their recruitment as named plaintiffs by the Arizona ACLU.121 But such legal actions have the potential to empower organizational litigants. The power of undocumented organizations to make the highest state officials in the state answerable in courts of law has the potential to confer a robust, tangible sense of de facto membership. Francesca Polletta has written movingly, for example, of the strength that black community activists in 1960s Mississippi drew from observing and participating in the trials of whites accused of racial violence.122 Even when defendants were acquitted – as they almost inevitably were – the trials demonstrated that whites could be made answerable to the law. The same claim could be made about anti-immigrant state officials, particularly when undocumented immigrants themselves are the plaintiffs. Local organizations’ lawsuits against Arizona officials, moreover, have conferred benefits beyond the symbolic: they have produced concrete victories for undocumented immigrants.123 Yet as we will see in Chapter 6, if litigation provides another

119 Interview with GT (August 2016).

120 As described in Chapter 1, Puente and the Respect/Respeto hotline shared information with the Department of Justice and civil rights organizations in the investigations that culminated in Melendres v. Arpaio.

121 This was the case in the Arizona drivers’ licenses litigation, ADAC v. Brewer. In Puente v. Arpaio, described in Chapters 5-6, the litigation was planned more collaboratively by Puente and the Arizona ACLU. However, Puente turned to the courts only after a long public campaign directed at the Sheriff’s Office, the Phoenix Police Department, and the City Attorney’s Office proved unavailing.

122 Polletta, The Structural Context of Novel Rights Claims, supra note [ ].

123 ADAC ultimately prevailed in its action to compel Jan Brewer to issue state drivers’ licenses to DACA recipients. See ADAC v. Brewer 757 F.3d 1053 (9th Cir. 2014) (reversing district courts’ denial of motion for preliminary injunction, finding equal protection violation and irreparable harm). See also ADAC v. Brewer, No. 15-15307 D.C. No. 2:12-cv-02546- DGC (9th cir, April 5, 2016, affirming district court grant of permanent injunction, using
tactical arrow in the quiver of undocumented organizations, its effect on the subjectivity of activists themselves has been more equivocal. Litigation is too technical and the control of undocumented plaintiffs too limited to enable a sense of mastery or confidence for most participants.

C. Performative Effects in Undocumented Campaigns

Beyond the rupture that destabilizes the status quo, there are many ways that tactics of performative citizenship bring undocumented activists closer to their goals. Some tactics clarify or extend the scope of possible action by participants, helping activists who face unusual risks as political participants determine what actions are possible for them to take. Before undocumented immigrants publicly announced their status as “undocumented and unafraid,” or engaged in civil disobedience, or refused to answer the questions of a law enforcement officers, it was not known whether these tactics would result in immediate detention and deportation. Discovering that they did not has expanded the tactical repertoire of undocumented activists, giving them more tools through which they can seek alienage benefits, protection from deportation, or changes in legal status. Tactics of performative citizenship may also bring such changes closer to realization by challenging perceptions of undocumented immigrants, among state actors and the public.124 Public actors who view undocumented immigrants not as passive residents, or as drains on the public fisc, but as active, knowledgeable participants in the lives of their communities, may be more willing to act on their substantive demands. But the greatest “performative” potential of these tactics may lie in their effects on the consciousness of activists themselves. By occupying some of the most venerated roles of citizens, undocumented participants experience American political institutions and processes from the inside. This experience, and the concrete understanding it instills, give undocumented participants a sense of legitimacy. This growing feeling that they deserve to be present on the political scene enables not just their voice but their ongoing participation.

Whether and how the potential of this strategy materializes is one of the most interesting questions raised by this movement. In the chapters that follow, I trace the trajectory of undocumented activism in constitutional avoidance doctrine to ground decision on preemption). And Puente’s action against Sheriff Joe Arpaio’s workplace raids (and the subsequent prosecution of immigrants under new state identity theft and forgery statutes) also secured benefits for undocumented community members. Shortly after Puente filed its lawsuit, the Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office’s for disbanded the unit responsible for the workplace raids; moreover the district court granted a preliminary injunction against the raids and prosecutions which lasted more than a year, before it was reversed by the Court of Appeals. See Puente v. Arpaio 76 F.Supp.3d 833 (2015) (granting preliminary injunction against workplace raids based on two state statutes), rev’d 821 F.3d 1098 (2016)

124 Changing the perceptions of state officials and the public about undocumented immigrants is a central goal of performative citizenship: it is probably the goal that most strongly motivates it, to the extent this strategy is embraced intentionally by undocumented organizations. In the chapters that follow, I place less emphasis on these external effects of performative citizenship than on the internal effects on movement activists. In part, this is because my empirical focus is on activists, rather than on members of the public. The information I acquired about public views of undocumented activists emerged only indirectly from my empirical research. But in part I am drawn to this focus by the serendipity of a strategy that is aimed at officials, or at the public, producing unanticipated but sometimes transformative effects on activists.
Phoenix through a series of campaigns in which activists, shaped and bolstered through the organizational processes explored above, engaged state and national officials and members of the public. In these campaigns, storytelling and emotion management work as rudders that steer organizations and activists through varied institutional responses, in the direction of their goals. Yet performative citizenship – the aspiration of activists to alter the terrain of politics, by claiming and mastering the roles they seek formally to inhabit – is the steady engine of these campaigns. Where it secures for activists the sense of membership that they claim and where it falls short, what conditions may be required for the success of this performative strategy, are questions I will explore as this story unfolds.