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Transforming the Borders of Citizenship:
Domestic Worker Organizing from the Ground Up

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Urban Planning

by

Maureen Gaddis Purtill

2013

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Transforming the Borders of Citizenship:
Domestic Worker Organizing from the Ground Up

by

Maureen Gaddis Purtill

Doctor of Philosophy in Urban Planning

University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Professor Leobardo Estrada, Chair

Domestic workers are the workers that make all other work possible. They are nannies, housekeepers, and caregivers for the elderly and for people with disabilities. Despite the importance of this work with our families and our homes, domestic workers and their labor are often undervalued. Because of the historic and systemic devaluing of domestic workers and domestic work, domestic workers are organizing at multiple scales for dignity, membership, respect, and recognition as real workers, and as full and valid members of society. Their organizing efforts transform what it means to be a citizen in the United States, and challenge common assumptions within the urban citizenship literature about which sites of contestation are most important in the neoliberal era.

Despite the fact that the majority of domestic workers today are immigrant women of color, who may be among the least likely to have access to formal citizenship rights, many are organizing at the forefront of “transformative organizing”, an organizing model that seeks to heal the world by healing ourselves, and by building power fueled by love and a recognition of our interdependence. These contestations not only demand rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship, but invite us to view citizenship as a relationship between people based in our interdependence and mutual respect as human beings on this earth. I argue that these organizing efforts offer a new set of practices and conceptualization around *transformative citizenship*, at a time when US society is grappling with questions of who should belong, and who should be excluded from formal citizenship.

ALMAS, Alianza de Mujeres Activas y Solidarias, or The Women’s Action and Solidarity Alliance, is a domestic worker organization that has been organizing around domestic workers rights since 2005 in Northern California. ALMAS is the domestic worker project of the Graton Day Labor Center, and is a member of the steering committee of the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition (CDWRC), and a member of the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA). Through participant-observation in the domestic worker movement as an organizer and researcher with ALMAS, I incorporate an intersectional analysis to questions around domestic work, contestations around membership and citizenship, and the impact of intersecting identities and scales of influence on ALMAS members in their struggles for justice.

A focus on primarily unauthorized immigrant women of color organizing along a shared point of unity as domestic workers helps to shed light on the multi-scalar nature of citizenship as it is contested by people who lack both formal citizenship status and substantive worker citizenship, and workers' rights, at the intersection of the gendered immigration and racialized sector of domestic work.

This dissertation is an in-depth case study of the organizing efforts of ALMAS, in the context of its work as a member of broader local, state¹, and national groups, coalitions, and alliances. Their organizing efforts challenge some of the major assumptions within the Urban Citizenship literature, which suggest that the city or local is the most relevant scale where citizenship and membership are being contested in the neoliberal era. While the assertion that the local is important is not incorrect, it does not fully explain the transformative citizenship and organizing practices of domestic worker groups. The city or local is important, but considering the multiple ways that domestic workers are excluded, organizing efforts to expand citizenship, membership, and women's and workers' rights must happen at multiple scales simultaneously, with the city being only one of many sites of contestation. Important sites and scales of contestation also include the body, the home as workplace, the state, and the nation, among others.

¹ At times I use the term "state" to refer the national state, or the state level (i.e. California). When not clarified, I am referring to the national state.

The dissertation of Maureen Gaddis Purtil is approved.

Jacqueline Leavitt

Laura Pulido

Chris Tilly

Leobardo Estrada, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2013

*For Maria Guadalupe Guzman Gutierrez and Ivis Susana Sanchez Morales,
my sisters in struggle, you have made this project possible in more ways than you know*

*For ALMAS, and for all domestic workers who have worked, lived, created, and organized at
the intersections of racism, patriarchy, and a broken immigration system in the United States*

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Maureen Purtill completed her bachelor's degree in Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley in 2002, and dual master's degrees in Urban Planning and Latin American Studies at UCLA in 2008. She has worked as an academic advisor to children of migrant farm workers, and as a popular educator and curriculum developer for various community-based and immigrant rights groups, including the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, the Downtown Women's Center in the Skid Row area of Los Angeles, and Trust South LA (formerly known as the Figueroa Corridor Community Land Trust). She was the organizer for ALMAS, the Women's Action and Solidarity Alliance, of the Graton Day Labor Center in Northern California, for the duration of this dissertation research. At the time of this writing, she is creating the project and fund development plan to scale-up the organizing efforts of ALMAS, and to integrate somatics and transformative organizing practices into domestic worker and community organizing efforts in Sonoma County, CA. She hopes to eventually teach at the Community College or State University level while continuing to strengthen and support movements for transformative social justice.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

There is no more appropriate time to explore the citizenship practices of undocumented immigrant women workers, than when their fate is being debated and discussed at the national scale. At the time of this writing, the US government is debating how to move forward with Comprehensive Immigration Reform. This research highlights the exemplary citizenship practices of a group of primarily undocumented immigrant women workers, and makes the case that they not only deserve access to legal and formal citizenship in the United States, but that their current practices of transformative citizenship are a model for the rest of us who take that legal status for granted.

This dissertation seeks to contribute to the urban citizenship literature by exploring how the organizing efforts of primarily undocumented² immigrant women of color transform the boundaries of what it means to be a citizen in the United States. Specifically, I explore how the organizing practices of a collective of domestic workers are redefining the boundaries of substantive citizenship *practices* in the face of racist and exclusionary formal citizenship and labor *policies*. This Participatory Action Research interrogates major assumptions about scale within the urban citizenship literature vis-à-vis the experiences of primarily undocumented immigrant women workers of color, and offers an intersectional analysis around the impact of identities, as rooted in systems of oppression, on

² Some question the term “undocumented” in part, because many immigrant workers who lack legal authorization to work in the United States do have legal documentation, ie. the Mexican Matricular identification card, or other ID or documents issued by their employer, school, or their home country. “Unauthorized worker” is a preferred term to handle this issue. I use both terms in this paper, and recognize that any term associated with immigrants is rooted in social constructions and ascribed identities as placed on by them by the society at large and various systems of oppression.

contestations around citizenship. These contestations not only demand rights and responsibilities associated with formal citizenship, but invite us to view citizenship as a *relationship* between people based in our interdependence and mutual respect as human beings. I argue that domestic worker organizing efforts offer a set of practices and conceptualizations around transformative community organizing, and transformative citizenship.

Citizenship has been a contested topic since people began to live together in communities. Contained within these contestations are questions around membership and scale. The question: *Who belongs?* necessitates the counter-question: *Who should be excluded from belonging?* Furthermore, *What scale delineates belonging? Where are the borders of our community? And where do struggles to define ourselves, and the outsider, take place?* And finally: *What does belonging even mean?*

The answers to these questions are multiple, contextual, and historical. They are always contested, and the process by which a society or community grapples with these questions serves to challenge, or reproduce, systems of power and oppression. This Participatory Action Research project grapples with these questions towards an emancipatory future where systems of power and privilege are dismantled, and new forms of belonging, relating, and ultimately caring for each other are normalized. Domestic worker organizing efforts for justice provide an opportunity for this exploration.

The concept of citizenship is unclear, and has been the center of intellectual and community debate for centuries. Citizenship as “contested terrain (Rocco 2000)” is an important concept for planners, community developers, and community organizers to grapple with because membership informs who has access to the policies and plans we create. We cannot limit our concept of citizen to a singular attribute of an individual defined by the nation-state, but must expand our awareness of the concept as multiple and contextual, while also rooted in systems of oppression.

When I use the term “systems of oppression” in this dissertation, I am referring to the sets of ideas and beliefs that elevate some groups over others, and create, maintain, and perpetuate relationships of power, domination, subordination, or control³. These systems are rooted in, and make use of identity categories to demarcate who is belonging of privilege, and who is a target for oppression under each given system. These systems influence experiences of belonging, membership, and citizenship. In Chapter 2 I provide a frame for understanding systems of oppression, and how intersecting identities rooted in those systems impact the organizing and citizenship practices of domestic workers.

When the norms of a society, like the US, are rooted in the historical legacy of white supremacy, patriarchy, and other systems of oppression, formal inclusion of groups in citizenship and protection under labor laws do not always equate to an improvement in the material conditions of everyday life. Even when subordinated groups are granted formal citizenship rights, the daily lived experiences of people may not reflect the ideals of equal

³ For more discussions around systems of oppression or systems of power, see Berger and Guidroz 2009; Rothenberg 2008; Marvasti and McKinney 2004; hooks 2000; and Freire 1990

membership in a democratic society. For example, while Black men and women eventually won the right to vote, that victory did not erase the impact of the historical legacy of slavery and oppression against women and Black people. When systems of oppression, like white supremacy, manifest in power dynamics, like racism, groups of people who are targeted for oppression within these systems will be caught in a struggle for membership, equality, and justice. When multiple systems of oppression intersect, the resulting experiences are unique to people living within those intersections. For example, the lives of Latina, undocumented immigrant, women of color in the United States are impacted by the intersections of three (or more) systems of oppression: Nationalism, xenophobia, patriarchy, and white supremacy. These intersections produce a unique experience of oppression that say, immigrant men of color might not experience in the same way. With that said, an experience of shared intersecting oppressions may also produce unique forms of resistance and contestation in particular places and scales.

Experiences of oppression and struggles for liberation, equality and justice, are rooted in places. Urban scholars exploring various contestations of citizenship in the United States are observing that the city or local scale has become the most important site of contestation around the meanings of citizenship in the neo-liberal era. They note that the term citizenship itself has its roots in the city (Isin ed. 2000), and that because of global economic restructuring and rescaling of power centers, manifestations of power and systems of oppression produce more extreme experiences of inequality, exclusion, and manifestations of oppression (Sassen 1996; 2000). However, it has been observed that this literature largely omits the experiences of people who lack formal citizenship or

immigration status. Few scholars have interrogated the urban citizenship literature vis-à-vis the experiences of undocumented immigrants (with Varsanyi 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008 providing a notable exception), and debates remain about the impact of oppression, multiplicity, and diversity within these contestations (Isin ed. 2000).

The Women's Action and Solidarity Alliance, or Alianza de Mujeres Activas y Solidarias (ALMAS), is the domestic worker group of the Graton Day Labor Center / Centro Laboral de Graton (CLG). ALMAS has been organizing around domestic workers rights in Northern California since 2005. ALMAS is a member of the steering committee of the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition (CDWRC), and a member of the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA). Through participant-observation in the domestic worker movement as an organizer and researcher with ALMAS, I incorporate an intersectional analysis to questions around domestic work, contestations around membership and citizenship, and the impact of identities and scales of influence on ALMAS members in their struggles for justice.

The concept of "urban citizenship" recognizes that the city is a political space, or space of contestation, where rights, membership, and power are claimed, denied, and contested (Painter 2005). The urban citizenship literature concerns itself with how contestations over membership and citizenship have been rescaled to the urban or local level in the era of neoliberal globalization, and has major implications for what it means to claim a right to the city (Isin 2000; Harvey 2008; Purcell 2003, 2008). In my review of this literature I found little mention of the specific experiences of domestic workers. To insert the

experiences of unauthorized immigrant women of color in this literature challenges some of the major assumptions about the importance of the local scale in contesting citizenship in the global era, and highlights the impacts of structural racism and other interconnected systems of oppression on such contestations.

The industry of domestic work, and domestic workers have been at the center of questions around citizenship and membership in a racialized US society (Taylor Phillips 2013) since the beginning of colonization. The first domestic workers in the United States were either enslaved African women, indentured servants from various parts of Europe, or indentured indigenous Native American women. All three of these groups of domestic workers toiled under systems of employment rooted in the exploitation of their labor and the denial of their rights as equal members of society (Caldwell 2013; Burnham and Theodore 2012)⁴.

After the civil war European or white women moved out of the sphere of domestic work, leaving primarily Black women as the largest group of domestic workers in the country. Many ex-slave African American women migrated to the north and found employment as paid domestic servants. “The 1870 Census showed that 52 percent of employed women worked in ‘domestic and personal service’ (Caldwell 2013). During the New Deal, progressive labor laws were passed, like the Fair Labor Standards Act, to protect workers and develop a minimum standard for workplace conditions. During this time when over-time protections, meal and rest breaks, and the eight-hour work day were established,

⁴ It should be noted that all women were initially denied access to citizenship in the early United States, but the working conditions for domestic workers placed them in a more oppressed position than free white women.

domestic workers and farm workers were deliberately excluded from the laws during negotiations with racist southern lawmakers. They would only allow the laws to be enacted, so long as Black workers could not benefit (Bernhardt et al eds. 2009; Caldwell 2013). At the time of this writing, over 75 years later, domestic workers are still excluded from some of the most basic labor laws that all other workers enjoy. How can this be? Within the ever-present system of patriarchy, the domestic sphere has always been devalued and invisibilized. The domestic unpaid labor of women has been seen as “women’s work”, and undeserving of equal pay or value as the work done in the public sphere⁵. Even participants in various manifestations of the feminist movement have devalued domestic work (Matthews 1987). As new waves of immigrant workers have entered the United States, the demographic face of domestic workers has changed, but the exploitation of workers and their exclusion from both citizenship and labor protections has persisted (Chang 2000; Glenn 2010; Burnham and Theodore 2012; Caldwell 2013).

Feminist scholars from all waves of feminism have grappled with the question of how our society values women, from first wave feminists fighting for the right for white women to vote, to women of color feminists and third wave postcolonial feminists arguing for an anti-oppressive multiplistic approach to valuing women in many cultural and geopolitical contexts (Kemp and Squires eds. 1998; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981). What has been clear, and remains clear to me as a woman, a mother, an organizer, and an academic, is that

⁵ I speak here in the progressive past tense because I do hold a strong belief that we can change these norms. I think the words we use to describe oppressive systems must also reflect our commitment to deconstructing them and replacing them with liberatory structures. In this paper I will make every effort to refer to systems of oppression as historical, and on-going, *and* with the possibility of being destroyed, i.e. “Domestic work *has been* undervalued”, as opposed to “Domestic work *is* undervalued.”

women are still not valued equally to men in our society - not for our contributions in the public sphere as “professionals”, nor for our contributions in the private sphere and our socially reproductive roles as mothers and caregivers.

Domestic workers are mostly women who work in paid positions doing the traditionally unpaid “women’s work” in the home⁶. They are caught between the *highly valued public* and *deeply undervalued private* spheres, and continue to work and struggle at the intersections of patriarchy, xenophobia, and white supremacy, and in the context of an undervalued, invisibilized place of work: the home.

Furthermore, women’s bodies have been gendered and racialized to serve as the site of oppression in order for capitalism, white supremacy and patriarchy to emerge and take global power for centuries. Federici (2004) argues that attacks on women and women’s bodies through witch burnings and other acts of violence were tools of the capitalist class to subordinate the power of women and to relegate them and their bodies to unpaid labor that would allow for capital accumulation to occur. The oppression and exploitation of today’s domestic workers continues this legacy, as domestic workers “make all other work possible”⁷, while their labor is undervalued, and they are excluded from many basic labor protections and social rights associated with full membership and citizenship in our society.

⁶ It should be noted that men also serve as domestic workers. Their experience is largely omitted in the literature considering domestic work, with some notable exceptions. See Kilkey 2010.

⁷ This is a common slogan used within the domestic worker movement in the United States.

Domestic workers' bodies are both the tools of their profession, as well as the sites of discrimination, exploitation, organization, strategy, and liberation. A closer look at the social justice organizing efforts of domestic workers reveals the complex and multi-scalar nature of their contestations for membership, equality, and ultimately citizenship in the United States, starting with their bodies and moving out to the global scale.

Locating myself in this research

My primary point of entry into the domestic workers rights movement is as an ally. When considering various systems of oppression and corresponding identity categories that are either targeted for oppression or privilege, I consider myself to be extremely privileged. I am a white woman, raised in an upper-middle class family by two highly educated parents. I am a US born citizen of the United States, whose first language is English. I was afforded many educational and extracurricular opportunities as a young person. I do not struggle with any physical or mental disabilities, and I have always had access to transportation.

While I have experienced oppression and trauma as a woman in a patriarchal society, my primary source of privilege and power in my community comes from my skin color, race⁸ and nationality. As a white person I recognize that I have deeply benefitted from the system of white supremacy and various manifestations of racism. Because I was born with white skin people have a tendency to trust me, to value what I have to say, and to assume that I

⁸ I want to recognize that "race" is a socially constructed category, deeply rooted in and reinforced by the system of racism and white supremacy. This project treats races as a social construct, and not as a biological reality.

will be competent and responsible. White people and people of color alike have been more likely to assume my opinion is correct over my women of color counterparts in many contexts and scenarios along my educational and professional journey. I was extremely privileged to have two loving parents who adored me and lifted me up along my path. They were and are progressive, thoughtful, communicative people who love each other and me, and provided everything I could ever need to live a healthy and happy life. While I could never fully express how grateful I am for this amazing foundation, I have also been deeply saddened to realize that not every little girl is afforded the same support and opportunities. I grew up in west Sonoma County, a semi-rural community in Northern California. My family home was built on an apple orchard where migrant farm workers from Mexico would tend to the trees every year. I was never told, and I never asked, about who they were, where they came from, and why they did the work they did. I mainly grew up thinking that I was a progressive, open-minded, anti-racist feminist. For most of my childhood I had no idea how much I had internalized my own supremacy as a white person, and how I was able to perpetuate that myth in my immediate circles.

My school was made up of mostly white privileged students, and children of migrant farm workers. Although I started out my school age years best friends with a Mexican girl named Venus⁹, along the way our paths separated. I didn't even realize that we had lost each other

⁹ Out of respect for confidentiality, all individual names used in this dissertation are pseudonyms. When engaging in the Participatory Action Research process I asked participants how they wanted pseudonyms to be chosen. The group decided that I should use names of important women in their lives, i.e. the name of one of their grandmothers, or influential women leaders in the past. It was also decided that I should use the names of goddesses from various traditions, since these were some of the first women figures to be uplifted, empowered and honored in various societies over time. For these names, I often use the Spanish version of the name, i.e. for Athena, I use Atenéa.

and our friendship until I ran into her one day that I was home visiting from college. I went into a local restaurant, and there she was, working behind the counter. A rush of shame and embarrassment came over me as I realized what had happened. I had allowed racial segregation and racism to end our friendship over a decade ago, and never even noticed! Out of this shame, I pretended not to recognize her, ordered and paid for my food, and ran out of there as soon as I could. I was too embarrassed in the moment to recognize her, and then even more ashamed of how I acted that day. I was shocked at my own actions. I share this story because it exemplifies how insidious and pervasive racism and white supremacy can be. This, and other systems of oppression impact us every day in a racialized US, and inform the ways we interpret and interact with the sphere of domestic work and domestic workers.

Up until that moment I had considered myself to be progressive anti-racist, and generally a champion for social justice. My sense of self was totally turned upside down, and I realized that I had a life-time of work to do to understand my own privilege and the ways that I too perpetuate racism and various systems of oppression. Thus began my journey into ethnic studies and white privilege. I studied abroad in Central America and Mexico because I wanted to learn about the cultures and experiences of immigrants living in my home community. I committed myself to learning Spanish, and to return home to help bridge the racial and cultural gaps that were so prevalent and pervasive in my community. After college I started working with children of migrant farm workers in the local schools, and

volunteered at the Graton Day Labor Center¹⁰. After a few years I became frustrated with the institutional barriers facing undocumented students, and decided to continue my formal education in urban planning.

I pursued master's degrees in Latin American Studies and Urban Planning to further deepen my understanding of radical community development and popular education and organizing. I was deeply influenced by Latin American scholars and organizers like Brazilian educator Paolo Freire, and the poets and leaders of popular revolutionary movements in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua like Calixta Gabriel Xiquín, Julia Esquivel, Roque Dalton, Gioconda Belli, and Ernesto Cardenal. Anti-racist and radical women planning practitioners like Gilda Haas, Jacqueline Leavitt, Marie Kennedy, Margaret Ledwith, June Manning Thomas and Leonie Sandercock (among many others) have helped guide and shape my intellectual analysis of planning as a radical grassroots effort to develop communities by and for the people who live in them. They have also taught me to centralize the voices of women and to empower myself as one of those voices.

Throughout my time at UCLA I helped develop a Critical Race Studies program where we could draw from the theories, practices, and methods of Critical Race Theory as developed in the legal, education, and social work fields. Major contributors to my development as a critical race scholar are Kimberlé Crenshaw, Judith Browne-Dianis, Devon Carbado, Richard Delgado, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Laura Pulido, and Jean Stefancic.

¹⁰ This refers to the Labor Center where I ultimately conducted participant action research for this dissertation

I make mention of these names in my introduction, as opposed to the acknowledgements section, because I think it is important to acknowledge and honor the people and scholars who have helped me develop myself intellectually, and also to be transparent about my own research assumptions and agenda. This is not a neutral, unbiased report of the actions of a particular group of women. This project is rooted in the assumption that racism and other manifestations of systems of oppression are real, pervasive, and part of everyday life. It is rooted in a much larger goal of social justice, and equal membership for all people in the world. I have a very clear agenda in highlighting the voices and actions of organized domestic workers in the hope that this reflection and writing will help advance the goals of tearing down borders, of winning comprehensive immigration reform in the United States, of dismantling oppressive systems, and moving us forward toward collective liberation as humans on this planet together.

Organized domestic workers are living and struggling at the intersections of multiple systems of oppression, *and* they are organizing at the forefront of a transformational organizing process that might just lead our society into a new way of being, of loving, and of caring for one another, in our homes, in our cities, and around our globe.

While people of all genders, races, and immigration statuses are and can be domestic workers in the United States, I use the term “domestic worker” in this dissertation primarily to refer to unauthorized immigrant women of color who work in the homes of their employer(s) doing child care, care giving for the elderly or for people with disabilities, or house cleaning. Because the shared experience of all the women in my study in their

participation in ALMAS and the Graton Day Labor Center, questions of employment and workers' rights are central to discussions around collective claims for membership in the larger community. I also want to make clear that this is not a study of all domestic workers. I am specifically looking at a group of domestic workers who are consciously engaging in organizing efforts for social justice, hence my use of the term "organized domestic workers".

Because unauthorized immigrants are mostly excluded from the rights and benefits associated with formal citizenship status, community organizing efforts to expand rights of unauthorized immigrant domestic workers can be seen as exemplary forms of substantive citizenship practice. Domestic workers are organizing at multiple scales to expand citizenship and membership rights and practices; to change labor laws; to defend the rights of domestic and other excluded or undocumented workers; and ultimately to transform the way we care for one another in our society, our communities, and our homes. Domestic worker organizing efforts are rooted in love, and in a shared vision to make the domestic work industry, and our society more just, equal, dignified and free from oppression.

Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized as follows: In Chapter 2 I describe the purpose of this project and the problem I am attempting to address in this research, rooting my exploration in the Urban Citizenship literature. I also provide a frame for understanding transformative community organizing as a transformative community development process, and provide a

frame for understanding systems of oppression and intersecting identities. I also speak to my approach around intersectionality and participant voice through narratives. In Chapter 3 I provide a review of the Urban Citizenship literature and offer intersectionality as a partial approach and method for exploring my research questions. Chapter 4 lays out my research questions, design and methodology. In Chapters 5 I provide an overview of the National Domestic Workers Alliance and the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition to contextualize this research and my participant-observation in the broader movement for domestic workers rights. In Chapter 6 I explore the organizing and citizenship practices of my case study, ALMAS, the domestic worker organizing project of the Graton Day Labor Center. In Chapter 7, I conduct an intersectional analysis of the impacts of various identities on the goals and organizing efforts of ALMAS, as well as the various scales at which organizing and contestations around citizenship are most relevant. In Chapter 8 I engage some of the remaining debates within the urban citizenship literature, and conclude by offering some implications of domestic worker organizing efforts for advancing an inclusive and broad definition of citizenship and membership in the United States. I also explore the implications of this research for community organizing, radical planning, and community development practice or praxis.

Community development practitioners, radical planners, and community organizers working in collectives for social justice should be interested in concepts of citizenship as contested terrain. It is the terrain where we plan, where we organize, and ultimately where we will redefine membership in our society. The voices of some of the women at the forefront of this struggle are the heart of this effort and this project.

CHAPTER 2: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is threefold:

1) To grapple with questions around citizenship and membership vis-à-vis the experiences of domestic workers in a way that is relevant to community organizers, community developers, and radical urban planners by rooting this exploration in the Urban Citizenship literature and transformative community development.

2) To incorporate intersectionality in the research in order to acknowledge the systemic and pervasive nature of systems of oppression as they impact contestations for membership in contemporary U.S. society, at multiple scales of influence.

3) “To research up”, as defined within Feminist Standpoint Theory (Kemp and Squires eds. 1998), from the perspectives of domestic workers to offer an intersectional and multi-scalar definition of citizenship as it is conceptualized, articulated, and practiced by them.

Here I expand on each of these three goals by rooting this project in the Urban Citizenship literature, and by providing 1) A conceptualization of transformative community organizing *as* a transformative community development process; 2) A frame for understanding how systems of oppression are related with intersecting identities that are targeted for oppression or privilege and 3) A review of the use of narratives and storytelling as a feminist and Critical Race methodological approach to this research.

Rooting this study in Urban Citizenship

In the neoliberal era the city has become an important site of contestation for struggles for social justice and various conceptualizations of citizenship (Holston and Appadurai 1996; Rocco 1999; Sassen 2000; Isin ed. 2000; Brenner and Theodore 2002; Purcell 2003; Painter 2005; Orr 2007; Harvey 2008). This shift has been visible in the immigrant rights movement, which historically has targeted the nation state to change federal law regarding immigration. After hopes for winning immigration reform at the scale of the National state were crumbled by the backlash against immigrants and people of color post 9/11, efforts to contest membership and citizenship for immigrants (both documented and undocumented) were rescaled to the local/ city, or state. It was also at these scales where undocumented immigrant communities started to face increased harassment and targeting because of the Secure Communities Program, 287g agreements, and State wide legislation like Arizona's SB1070 which essentially legalized racial profiling.

In economic justice movements, we also saw a shift in target from the national state to the local / city level during the first decade of the 21st century. While reacting to the national and global economic crisis brought on by neoliberal globalization, the Occupy Movement rooted itself in cities and locales all over the country, and world, demanding justice for the 99% in the face of economic crises brought on by the greed of the 1%¹¹.

¹¹ It should be noted that the 99% is not one homogenous group who is impacted by economic or political crises in the same way, but I use this example to show how cities are targeted as locations and sites for organizing and claims-making.

The urban citizenship literature seeks to understand and explore how contestations over membership and citizenship have been rescaled to the city or local scale. Despite the widespread interest in studying the city or local as the most important site of contestation for membership, the case of domestic worker organizing offers an alternative view of citizenship as contested terrain. When we consider the impact of intersecting identities and corresponding experiences of oppression and privilege that many organized domestic workers share, we see that the city or local is only one of many important and critical locations to organize and ultimately make demands for change. This dissertation seeks to insert the experiences of organized domestic workers into the Urban Citizenship literature and highlight the ways that the city may *not* be the most relevant site of contestation for everyone. This project also seeks to broaden the debate around citizenship practices to include the transformative organizing and citizenship practices of domestic workers. I use city and local interchangeably when examining my case study, because it is located in a semi-urban, semi-rural area where many cities offer locations of engagement and organizing. “Local”, as a more general term, encompasses both specific cities or towns, as well as non-incorporated areas of Sonoma County, CA, where this research is based.

Authors within the Urban Citizenship literature mainly agree that the city has become the most relevant site of contestation for citizenship in the neoliberal era; that neoliberal globalization has shifted power away from the nation-state; and that due to the rise in the human rights era, the nation-state is in a state of crisis. These agreements will be further elaborated in the next chapter, along with remaining debates that this project hopes to engage. Remaining debates focus on the impact that multiplicity and diversity have on the

relative importance of the city, and what formulations of citizenship make sense, considering the contestations for membership of groups denied access to citizenship.

Transformative Community Development and Transformative Community Organizing

I consider community organizing¹² to be an integral part of transformative community development because both share the same roots, motivations, and goals with regard to social justice. For Marie Kennedy (1996) transformative community development combines “material development with the development of people,” thus increasing community capacity for taking control of development in the future. For Kennedy effective community development requires a “comprehensive approach to meeting community needs – an approach that recognizes the interrelationship of economic, physical, and social development. Community development is linked to empowerment and to valuing diversity of cultures (Kennedy 1996, p.93).” I interpret Kennedy’s involvement of community members in part as a call for expanded multiracial citizen participation. In her definition of transformative community development, community members are seen as active subjects instead of passive objects of planning. They are active, engaged and increasingly more able to participate in the development of their communities, and to have “citizen control” over policies and plans being developed (Arnstein 1969).

¹² Right-wing conservative groups most definitely do community organizing. The emergence of the Tea Party illustrates the ability of the right to organize massive grass-roots movements to advance a conservative agenda. For the purpose of this dissertation, however, when I refer to community organizing, I am referring to community-based or grassroots efforts to organize for progressive changes, rooted in an overall framework of inclusion, equity, and social justice.

Along the same lines, community organizer, scholar, and popular education practitioner Gilda Haas, argues that community development occurs when communities can claim that “we own it, we planned it, we captured the capital (no date)”. For Haas community (economic) development should address “the needs of working class people and their communities.” This form of community development sees the citizen participant as the principle actor in planning, where community members claim ownership over development processes that influence their lives. Wekerle (2000) explores the ways that women’s urban struggles for voice in planning decisions, and inclusion in municipal governments are often framed as struggles for space in the city. Women's claims to urban citizenship in the city are often spatial or territorial, focusing on place-based strategies for new political spaces of inclusion and participation (p. 210). For Sandercock (1998) and others, the purpose of transformative planning should be the empowerment of those systematically disempowered by structural inequalities of class, race and gender (Sandercock 1998a, p. 65), in other words, those systematically excluded from real citizen control in planning because of the impact of various systems of oppression.

In short, transformative community development involves the development of individuals, in the context of developing a community. This could manifest as an individual community member developing skills to get a new job, in the context of increased employment opportunities for the entire community. For domestic workers, it could look like an individual domestic worker developing the courage and skills to stand up to an abusive employer, in the context of the community changing norms around acceptable domestic work employer-employee relationships and standards. Transformative community

development can happen through formal planning channels, or through grass-roots community organizing efforts. This project focuses on the latter.

In *Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change*, Kristina Smock (2004) offers five models of community organizing:

- Power-based model: Build power through mass organization of peoples' organizations
- Community-building model: Rebuild the social fabric through collaborative partnerships
- Civic model: Restore the social order through informal forums with community members and law enforcement / public officials
- Women-centered model: Link the public and private spheres via social support networks of primarily women
- Transformative model: Create structural change through the development of social movements

For the purpose of this project, I imagine domestic workers organizing for justice to *be* “planners”. I imagine domestic workers rights campaigns to *be* community development projects in pursuit of radical and transformative change. In this way I view community organizers to be community developers and planners. I view organizing efforts to be community development and planning projects.

While there is a substantial literature on transformative community development within planning (See McKnight 1987; Kennedy 1996; Sandercock 1998 and 2003; and Fung 2003

for examples), the literature on transformative organizing is scant to non-existent.

Researchers and leaders within the domestic worker movement acknowledge that little academic research has been completed regarding new forms of transformative organizing, as it is being developed and practiced through the domestic worker movement.¹³ When “transformative organizing” does appear in academic literature, it is usually referencing Smock (2004), such as in Lowe and Brugge (2007), or is in line with the model as she describes it (See Mann 2011).

Smock’s transformative model provides some foundation to understand the term as it is practiced and promoted through domestic worker groups and allies, but it does not provide the whole picture. In Smock’s transformative model, organizing efforts are aimed at “creating critical consciousness”, “practicing unitary democracy based on shared objective interests” and “challenging unjust social structures.” Eric Mann offers this definition of transformative organizing in his book *Playbook for Progressives* (2011):

“Transformative organizing works to transform the system, transform the consciousness of the people being organized, and, in the process, transform the consciousness of the organizer.”

Both Mann and Smock’s transformative models are heavily rooted in changing society through consciousness-raising, or rooting our efforts to change the world in our efforts to change our minds. As this dissertation will elaborate, the transformative organizing model

¹³ This is based in conversations with researchers through PERE at USC, who conducted research on NDWA during the same period that I conducted research for this dissertation. The findings for their report were not made available by the time of this writing, but through conversations we shared via email correspondence about the lack of academic research in the area of transformative organizing, as it is being practiced within the domestic worker movement.

practiced and being developed through the domestic worker movement is not only centered in changing our minds, but also in the body.

ALMAS, and The National Domestic Worker Alliance (NDWA) (which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6) promote a transformative organizing model that incorporates all of the elements from Smock's model, but also draws from some Women Centered, Community Based, and Power Based elements. From the Power Based model, domestic worker practices of transformative organizing include "building self-confident residents into strong public actors (p. 38)" and "building the community's clout". From Smock's Women Centered model, domestic workers aim to "bring low-income residents into public life for the first time (p. 44)", encourage "unitary democracy based on face-to-face consensus", and "build family-friendly communities". In line with Smock's Community Building model, domestic workers ally with affiliate organizations to "[create a unified vision of the common good] and to "strengthen the community's social and economic fabric]." ¹⁴ The combination of several of Smock's models helps offer a starting point for understanding transformative community organizing in the domestic worker movement. This dissertation will expand on that initial definition, in the context of "citizenship as contested terrain".

By viewing community organizing and transformative community development practices as tools for contesting citizenship, I will explore the ways that domestic workers, through their efforts, offer a conceptualization of what it means to be a transformative citizen in the

¹⁴ Smock recognized that her typologies were not meant to be exact models for community organizing projects, but that there is substantial overlap between models.

US today. Isin (2000) argues that: “Being politically engaged means practicing substantive citizenship...” I argue that the participation of domestic workers in organizing efforts to claim rights, dignity, respect, and ultimately recognition as equal members of society represents an exemplary form of democratic and civic engagement, or substantive citizenship. Furthermore, these contestations may be viewed through the lens of transformative community development and community organizing because domestic workers use these tools to transform the boundaries of citizenship at multiple scales. I conceptualize the community organizing efforts of domestic workers to *be* transformative community development projects, and the substantive citizenship practices of domestic worker groups to offer a new set of practices around *transformative organizing* and *transformative citizenship*.

Transforming the Borders of Citizenship

In 1990 Iris Marion Young looked to the social movements of the 1960s to offer a reconceptualization of social justice. She argued that while justice had been the primary concern of political theorists since the beginning of the field, a grounded analysis, rooted in the movements and practices of those most denied justice was missing. This dissertation project in part seeks to do with *citizenship* what Young did with *justice*, by looking at the ways that a particular group most denied access to the benefits and rights associated with both formal and substantive citizenship, are organizing to transform the borders and boundaries of what it means to be a citizen or member in the United States.

Organized domestic workers, as primarily undocumented immigrant women of color, are organizing to demand justice, equality, and ultimately membership in our society. This process can appropriately be viewed through the discussion within the urban citizenship literature about the importance of scale in determining the most influential space to contest citizenship and membership. While formal citizenship is conferred at the level of the nation state, and the nation state remains an important site of contestation, domestic worker organizing also occurs at the level of the state (i.e. NY or CA), the city, the home as workplace, and even the body.

A focus on primarily unauthorized immigrant women of color organizing along a shared point of unity as domestic workers will help to shed light on the multi-scalar nature of citizenship as it is contested by people who lack both formal citizenship status and substantive worker citizenship / workers' rights at the intersection of the gendered immigration and racialized sector of domestic work.

Systems of oppression

In the table below I provide a partial list of systems of oppression that are alive and well in contemporary US society and the world, along with corresponding identity categories that are rooted in these systems. In the third and fourth columns I provide examples of specific identity groups that are generally either targeted for privilege or oppression. This frame will be useful for exploring the impact of intersecting identities on organized domestic workers, as they are rooted in systems of oppression / privilege in future chapters.

Table 1: Systems of Oppression/ Privilege and Identities

Systems of Oppression/ Privilege	Identity Categories	Examples Targeted for Privilege	Examples Targeted for Oppression
Racism / White Supremacy	Race, Nationality, Skin Color, Ethnicity	White / Light skin	Black, Mexican, Dark Skinned, Muslim
Capitalism	Economic Status, Employment, Vocation	Rich, Employed, Professional, Capitalist	Poor, working-class, unemployed, domestic worker
Heteronormativity ¹⁵	Gender, sexuality	Man / Woman	LGBTQ, transgendered
Patriarchy	Sex, Gender, Sexuality	Male, Man, Masculine	Female, Woman, Feminine
Ableism	Physical / Mental Capacity	Able-bodied, "normal"	With mental or physical disability
Xenophobia ¹⁶ / Anti-immigrant	Immigration Status, Nationality, Race, Skin Color	Citizen, Resident	Undocumented or perceived to be undocumented

Current organizing efforts of domestic workers are challenging racism, xenophobia, patriarchy and other forms of oppression at the national, state and local levels - while rooted in the most local of scales: the home and the body. Intersectionality and transformative community development offer the analytical tools to explore contestations around citizenship as they happen at these intersections. By not only looking at the impact of immigration status, but the racialized and gendered immigration status of unauthorized

¹⁵ This system reinforces that heterosexuality is the norm and that all other sexualities deviate from that norm

¹⁶ For lack of a better term, I use xenophobia to refer to the unique experiences of oppression that immigrants experience in US society. There is no accepted term to explain the systemic oppression of immigrants. White supremacy refers to the systemic oppression of people of color, patriarchy refers to the systemic oppression of women, but we have yet to come up with a term to describe the unique ways that immigrants are systemically targeted for oppression in our society. The oppressive system of ideas and practices that targets immigrants includes anti-immigrant scapegoating, fear of the other (aka xenophobia), as well as gendered, racialized and class-based discrimination and exclusion, among other negative intersecting forces.

immigrant women of color, this project will contribute to the urban citizenship literature by bringing a much needed analysis of both institutional racism and immigration status to bear on how citizenship is contested. Since unauthorized immigrants are the ones most denied access to formal citizenship, the story of unauthorized immigrant workers must be integrated into the discussion of urban citizenship if we are to have a fuller understanding of the importance of scale. Are major assumptions within the urban citizenship literature correct in saying that the local scale is the most important site of contestation around citizenship? Or does the national scale and its interconnections with the state, local, and global continue to hold significant weight considering the privileges associated with formal citizenship status? Furthermore, how do the specific ways that domestic workers are impacted by intersecting systems of oppression determine which scales are most relevant for organizing?

Grounding this research in the voices of domestic workers: Narratives, Testimonies, and Storytelling

One of the central goals of this project, as rooted in feminist epistemologies and Critical Race approaches, is to place domestic workers' voices at the center in order to understand their experiences. To exemplify my approach, I offer below a testimony of one domestic worker member of ALMAS. From her testimony I analyze how her experience is influenced by intersecting identities that are rooted in systems of oppression, and explore how the use of narrative, testimony, and storytelling is central to both this project, and to the advancement of domestic workers rights in general.

One of Divina's stories

Divina has been a caregiver for nearly 20 years. She entered the United States on a tourist visa, but then overstayed when her visa expired. When she arrived she was able to get a driver's license, and used it to identify herself at banks, domestic work agencies¹⁷ and other institutions. For many years Divina obtained employment in Southern California as a caregiver through different domestic work agencies. She came to Northern California and the Graton Day Labor Center after a painful experience with one employer. When I asked Divina if she had ever felt discriminated against as a domestic worker, she shared this story with me:

“In the last job I had in Los Angeles, it's a long story, but I want many people to understand what happened. I made good money, I was there during the week, and then went to my house on the weekends. I got it through an agency, and they didn't charge me. They were a good business. They chose me because of my experience. They didn't judge me because of my size. The man was 96 years old. I worked a year and a half with them. On a Friday, when I left at 6pm, the lady arrived late. To not have problems, I left at that hour, but it would have been better to stay. I was going from Pasadena to Chino, it's a long drive. A few blocks from my house there was a

¹⁷ Domestic work agencies serve as contracting and hiring agencies where employers can find workers. There are housecleaning, nanny, and care giving agencies who place workers in the homes of their employers. This project did not focus much on these agencies since ALMAS members do not generally look for work through domestic work agencies. What I did learn through my involvement in the California Coalition and NDWA, is that many domestic work agencies set up institutional arrangements to exploit workers, and to profit off of their labor. In an informal, unpublished study done by members of the CA Coalition, it was found that on average, an agency will charge an employer \$2 for every \$1 they actually pay the worker. This was confirmed in a New York times article (Gross 2013). In reality, that means that domestic work employers would pay about \$24/hour to the agency for a live-in caregiver, and the agency would pay the worker \$10-12/hr. These workers are not afforded over time pay, regular meal and rest breaks, or the right to uninterrupted sleep.

checkpoint, and since my license was expired, they impounded my car. I knew it was bound to happen some day. Friends came and picked me up. When I got back to work without my car they said, "what happened?" I said it was impounded. [The daughter of my patient] asked, "how?" I said my license was expired. I needed to have a day off so I could go with a friend to pick up the car. "Why do you have to go with a friend!?" she asked? In the family, her brother was a sheriff, another was a fireman. She came to investigate everything. She was very angry. She said "I shared with you, you came to my house for Christmas, we shared our table with you, and I'm a citizen, how can you entrap me? The agency lied to me!" I said, no the agency didn't lie, they had all my information, I came to work, but if you don't want me, it's ok. She said, "you can't come here with that car!" and I said, But, my car is new! "I don't care!" she said. But I had to go get my car... That week I got a ride, and she said, "you're going in the bus, all my caregivers use the bus!" She had a brother I got along with well. He brought me fresh chickens from his ranch. She said "and don't get involved with [my brother!] You want him for a husband!" Within a month, she said, "you work only until Friday". She knew that if I left, I was going to get my car out. I didn't feel, you know... believe me, this hurt me so much, not the loss of the money, I felt so, I'm sorry to show so much emotion, but I felt so much humiliation, it was a humiliation. (crying). I got advice from my friends and family, about getting the car out... I didn't get it out because they asked me for more than \$2,000 to get my car out. This was the saddest experience I've had, of humiliation. I felt as low as the floor, and I thought, what did I do? I didn't do anything! And my friend told me, the same thing happened to her!

They asked "How did you enter? (the country)?" and I came in with a Visa, but it expired. I committed errors I know. After I left, that same day, the man fell. I asked her if she wanted me to train the incoming person and that made her angry... [another caregiver] worked on the weekends. She called and told me he had fallen, I said, why are you calling me? I'm not working there now. Ask [his daughter]. Then [his daughter] called the agencies and told them not to give me work. That's why I had to come here. She said that I had lied. And that's not fair, because I'm not the only one! That's discrimination! I said, I didn't want to come here, but I didn't have another option. It was for this. And I didn't want to give her problems, or sue her, because she had diabetes, and I didn't want to cause her more problems. Two months later the man died. I found out because I called [the daughter] and said, "Hi! how are you?" She was annoyed. "How is your brother?" She thought I wanted him as my husband, but no, we got along well. And so, I called, and she told me, "My dad already died." She's white, but of the older generation, she's racist... Like these people in Claremont, with these old mentalities - that they are the only people who should be in the country. It's painful to remember but as Coelho says, 'Past, Present, Mystery'."

Divina's story highlights the impact of multiple intersections of oppression, *and* shows her capacity to care, have empathy, and consider the needs of her employers, even when they are exploitative or discriminatory. She was hired for the job because the domestic worker agency knew and trusted her. She was more than qualified to do the work. When it became

apparent to her employer that she did not hold legal immigration status, the employer humiliated her, demeaned her, prevented her from retrieving her vehicle (taking her mode of transportation), and ultimately fired her. To add insult to injury, the employer took it a step further and prevented Divina from being able to obtain any employment in the Los Angeles region by cutting off her source of jobs through domestic work agencies. This personal attack against Divina was not based on her job performance, but in the employer's racism, xenophobia, and personal sense of superiority over Divina who was an undocumented immigrant woman of color domestic worker. Furthermore, the employer did not treat Divina as an autonomous adult employee. She patronized her by saying that "all my caregivers use the bus" suggesting that the caregivers she employed belonged to her, and that they were not only dependent on public transportation, but that they should be. Again, crossing a line around professionalism, the employer attempts to control Divina's personal life, demanding that she not get involved romantically with her brother, almost suggesting that interracial or interclass dating would be unacceptable. From this story, we see Divina's experience impacted by her identities as a woman, as an undocumented immigrant, as a person without access to regular transportation, as a person of color, and as a domestic worker. These intersections, as manipulated by her employer, make Divina vulnerable to discrimination and abuse, resulting in her not only losing her job and her mode of transportation, but also losing any hope of obtaining employment in the region in the future. Because of this, Divina was forced to move to Northern California to search for employment, just two years before she had planned to retire.

As I mentioned above, this story also highlights Divina's capacity for empathy and forgiveness. Even after being treated horribly by her employer, she called her to check in with the family. She wanted to know how her former client and his son were doing, and took the high road by speaking with her former employer in a friendly tone. She knew that she was treated unfairly, but she decided not to go after her because of her health conditions (diabetes) and because she understood that the woman was part of an older generation of racists, who she would likely not be able to change.

When Divina came to ALMAS and the Graton Day Labor Center, she had never participated in a women's group or any other community organizing project or community organization. Despite this lack of experience with collective work, within weeks of joining ALMAS, Divina was acting as spokesperson for the group during campaign activities, giving radio interviews, and taking leadership roles at the Labor Center. When I asked her what her personal and collective goals were through ALMAS, she said her personal goal was to "leave a legacy", and that she feels the collective goals of ALMAS are "to build power, to have laws, so that this is seen as real work."

Narratives and Storytelling

From Divina's story above, we can see how intersecting identities, as rooted in systems of oppression, have impacted her as a domestic worker in a negative way. Without hearing her specific story, and the stories of many domestic workers, we may miss many of the nuances of experience. Part of the reason why her story is so powerful, is that she is not alone in experiencing discrimination around the intersections of race, immigration status,

employment, and gender. The use of narratives and stories is consistent with feminist and Critical Race approaches, that insist on the recognition of experiential knowledge of people of color in analyzing society (Delgado and Stefancic 1993, 2000, 2001; Delgado 1989; Barnes 1990; Ladson-Billings and Tate IV 1995; Solórzano 1998; Ikemoto 2000; Dixson and Rousseau 2006). Because much of reality is socially constructed, and because political and moral analyses are situational, narratives provide a vehicle for psychic self-preservation; they open a window into ignored or alternative realities (Delgado and Stefancic 2001); and the exchange of stories from teller to listener can help overcome ethnocentrism that leads to viewing the world in only one way (Ladson-Billings and Tate IV 1995, 57).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) scholars assert that experiential knowledge of women and men of color is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination. Methods to incorporate experiential knowledge include storytelling, family history, biographies, scenarios, parables, *cuentos*, chronicles, and narratives (Solórzano 1998). In community organizing, narratives, and “one-on-ones” are tools used to elicit personal testimonies about why a person engages in social justice organizing. Testimonies are also central to domestic worker struggles. The many stories of abuse, discrimination, and denial of basic labor and human rights that so many domestic workers share, are the stories that tug at the hearts and minds of potential allies and legislators. It is through testimonials that domestic workers realize they are not alone in their experiences, but that there are thousands of women who have gone through what they go through. Narratives, testimonies, and storytelling are central to the methodology of this research. I expand on this in detail in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3: URBAN CITIZENSHIP LITERATURE REVIEW

This dissertation interrogates the Urban Citizenship literature vis-à-vis the organizing efforts of domestic workers. In order to provide the appropriate context for this research, I briefly take an interdisciplinary approach to review where and how domestic workers are associated with concepts of citizenship as contested terrain in various literatures. I offer a review of the urban citizenship literature and highlight where gaps exist when we consider the experiences of domestic workers. I then offer intersectionality as a way to respond to some of the remaining debates within Urban Citizenship around the impacts of diversity on contestations around citizenship.

Domestic workers and Citizenship struggles in multiple disciplines

Domestic workers have been the subject of debate and exploration in various lines of inquiry and through various methodological approaches, including Labor Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, etc. There are two major approaches to studying and talking about domestic workers: as objects and as agents. The first approach looks at the objective experiences of domestic workers in the domestic work industry (i.e. Chang 2000; Glenn 2010; Burnham and Theodore 2012). The majority of this literature explores the experiences of domestic workers on the job, and serves to highlight the rampant abuses and discrimination they have faced historically, and continue to face today. These works are critical in advancing the movement for domestic workers rights because they unearth the ways that domestic workers have been excluded from formal, substantive, economic,

and cultural citizenship rights at the intersection of gendered, racialized, and other forms of oppression. These works help set the stage for why domestic workers organize to demand inclusion, and ultimately substantive and cultural citizenship rights and relationships in the U.S. and around the globe.

The second approach within domestic worker literature highlights the agency of domestic workers (i.e. Lee 2006; Coll 2010; Marchevsky 2011; Poo 2011) This interdisciplinary body of work highlights the ways domestic workers have fought back against the historical legacies of slavery, patriarchy, and anti-immigrant policies and practices to assert their power and lay claim to their full humanity and subjective and cultural citizenship rights and relationships.

In addition to academic literature, domestic workers, as objects and agents, have emerged in the news media on the global stage. Articles written in local, national, and global media outlets have in recent years explored the prevalence of abuse that domestic workers face, as well as the triumphant organizing practices of domestic workers around the globe (i.e. Poo 2013; Hilton 2011; Wassermann 2011; Simpson 2012). This exposure in the media has been a crucial component to the domestic worker movement at multiple scales, as will be discussed in my findings chapters.

This dissertation most closely resembles the work of Kathleen Coll in *Remaking Citizenship* (2010). Coll explores the ways that a similar collective of domestic workers in San Francisco challenges the definition of cultural citizenship through their collective

experiences as Latina immigrants and as mothers. Coll aims “to understand the specific social processes through which citizenship and motherhood were mutually constituted in the lived experiences of one group of Latin American immigrant women, the members of the Mujeres Unidas y Activas grassroots community organization in San Francisco, California. Coll draws on notions of cultural citizenship to understand and frame the practices and articulations of citizenship of members of her case study. The frame of cultural citizenship allows Coll to view the making and shaping of citizenship as a process that is not necessarily tied to the definitions of formal citizenship as bestowed by a national state. She views “citizenship as a cultural, social, political, and historical process (p. 29),” and argues that the women in her study “constitute immigrant women as active participants in the remaking of what it means to be a full political and social member of U.S. society (p11).”

While the subjects of my research are similar to those in Coll’s *Remaking Citizenship*, my approach and frame are substantially different. While grappling with similar questions of agency and citizenship as contested terrain, my frame and use of community development, intersectionality, as well as rooting my questions within the Urban Citizenship literature make this a very different project.

This dissertation considers domestic workers first and foremost as agents of change in their own lives. While there is no doubt that the objective experiences of abuse and discrimination that ALMAS members experience will be explored in these pages, the focus

of this research is on their agency, responses, and organizing practices, as they inform new meanings of citizenship and community development practices.

Urban Citizenship: A Review of the Literature

For the purpose of this research, it is important to distinguish between formal and substantive citizenship. While formal citizenship refers to a legal status that is bestowed upon an individual by the nation-state, substantive citizenship practices refer to the normative actions, values, and qualities of people within a certain community. For example, someone who has legal citizenship status may not actually act like a “good citizen”, whereas a person who does not have formal citizenship status may be an exemplary “citizen” as shown by their daily habits, actions, and ways of being in relation to others within a community. While formal citizenship refers to “membership in a political community”, substantive citizenship “concerns the array of civil, political, and social rights available to people” (Holston 1998, p. 50). By looking at transformative community development and transformative community organizing as highly democratic processes, this project will explore the ways that organized domestic workers offer lessons about what it means to be a “good”, or active and engaged citizen in substance, despite the fact that many of them do not qualify for formal citizenship status under current immigration law, and are not included in basic labor protections as domestic workers.

As mentioned above, this dissertation grapples with citizenship as “contested terrain”.

There are multiple meanings of citizenship, and multiple scales and spaces where

citizenship or membership is more relevant or more contested. Despite the fact that immigration is a federal policy issue, contestations over unauthorized immigrants' rights have also happened at the local or state level (Varsanyi 2005). While the mission and mandate of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency is to apprehend, detain, and deport unlawful residents, millions of unauthorized immigrants have settled and integrated as active members of local communities. It is in these local communities that unauthorized immigrants interface with planning policies and local issues such as access to jobs, adequate housing, transportation, environmental hazards, health care, educational opportunities, local law enforcement, and the enforcement of immigration law. It is in these local communities that groups of unauthorized immigrants and their allies are organizing to expand membership and citizenship rights in the face of exclusionary local, state, and federal policies. The re-scaling of contestations over membership from the national to the local level after September 11, 2001, is indicative of observations within the urban citizenship literature, that the local level is becoming increasingly important in the face of neoliberal globalization and economic restructuring (Isin 2000; Sasken 2000). In 2000 and 2001 the immigrant rights movement was hopeful about winning immigration reform from the Bush administration. This hope was lost after September 11, 2001, when it became clear that national immigration reform would be politically impossible in the wake of the escalating "war on terror" and further criminalization and racialization of the immigrant as "other", and the immigrant as terrorist. This backlash was also uniquely gendered, as we saw immigrant mothers specifically targeted as the bearers of "terror babies"¹⁸.

¹⁸ This refers to the unsubstantiated claim made by Fox news that immigrant mothers were coming to the United States to give birth to future terrorists. Fox News anchors suggested that it was possible that immigrant women would give birth to US born-citizen children, return to their home

Domestic workers, while focusing organizing efforts at the local level, are also working for policy change on the state, national, and international stages. Because the urban citizenship literature largely omits the experiences of unauthorized immigrants and domestic workers, there is insufficient discussion about the impact of formal citizenship status, or formal labor practices and policies on the importance of scale in determining membership and citizenship. It may be true that the local level is becoming an important site for contesting citizenship for those who already hold formal status and access to basic labor laws, but the question of undocumented or unprotected status is largely understudied (with Varsanyi 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008ab providing a notable exception). Domestic worker organizing exemplifies the multiplistic, contested, and complex nature of citizenship, and offers a way to explore not only manifestations of substantive citizenship practices, but also of formal economic and political citizenship rights claims.

Racism and citizenship status have been deeply wedded since the first immigration and citizenship laws in the United States. Over the years citizenship laws have been written and altered to explicitly exclude non-white immigrants and Black people. Whether through overt exclusionary policy, or through less blatant forms of exclusion, such as land ownership or literacy requirements, people of color have had to fight to win recognition as formal citizens of the United States (Sinha 2010; Bell et al 1990; Motomura 2006). While in the contemporary era formal citizenship status is commonly associated with the nation-state, the etymological and historical origins of citizenship lie within the city (Baubock

countries to indoctrinate their children to hate the United States, and then once grown, those children would have free access to return to commit an act of terrorism against the US.

2003). An emerging literature on “urban citizenship” explores the city and local scale as a renewed and increasingly important site of contestation around membership and citizenship in the era of neoliberal globalization (Isin ed 2000).

Citizenship is an inherently contested concept in part because of the ways that formal and substantive citizenship do not necessarily lead to or guarantee the other (Isin 2000; Rocco 2000). On the one hand, As Holston and Appadurai (1996) elaborate, formal citizenship rights don't necessarily lead to substantive equality. On the other hand, formal citizenship is not required to access all substantive rights, only some (voting in national elections, jury duty, etc). These "disjunctions between the form and substance of citizenship have made defining it in terms of membership in the nation-state less convincing" (Holston and Appadurai 1996, p. 190). Thus, the distinction between formal and substantive citizenship highlights an important component of theories of urban citizenship: that the declining importance of the nation-state in determining citizenship increases the importance of the local or urban scale. As will be elaborated below, it is in the context of the decreasing power of the nation-state to define membership that the urban or local scale emerges as central to debates around citizenship and membership formation and contestation.

Due to massive urban migrations and increasing diversity in cities, formal citizenship is an increasingly problematic category, considering the creation of insider-outsider status. To further complicate the issue, citizenship is multi-scalar. “Citizens are made not only at the national level through constitutions and elections, but also in their day-to-day engagements with the local state” (Heller and Evans 2009, p. 2-3). From the late 19th to early 20th

century, immigrants to the US could vote in local elections in many areas, but not in national elections. Today, some localities are opening up local elections for school board to undocumented immigrants who lack any form of legal immigration status whatsoever. There are different degrees of citizenship, both within a single society and across societies, such as full citizens, disenfranchised felons, green card holders, Palestinians within Israel proper, or black people under apartheid in South Africa, among other examples. Brodie (2000) argues that citizenship is not fixed or finite in content or in practice. It is much more than "formal membership in a national community" but an "object of ongoing political struggle and a pivotal component of a broader historical matrix of governance"...

Citizenship over time is associated with "different technologies of power, different spaces for political engagement and claims-making on the state, and different webs of inclusion and exclusion" (p. 111).

In most traditions citizenship is viewed as an attribute of a person, where a person *is* or *is not* a citizen in a particular national context. Within the nation-state citizenship paradigm, the definition doesn't allow for citizenship to be a set of practices or relationships (Rocco 2000, p. 218-219). Somers re-conceptualizes citizenship as a set of practices "enacted through universal membership rules and legal institutions" within the context of a particular society. Therefore citizenship practices become a source of social identity (Rocco 2000). In a relational or sociological definition of citizenship a person can be a good "citizen" with or without legal status (Isin 2000). In this framework citizenship must now be viewed as a social process through which individuals and groups claim, expand, or lose rights:

"Being politically engaged means practicing substantive citizenship, which in turn implies that members of a polity always struggle to shape its fate. This can be considered as the sociological definition of citizenship in that the emphasis is less on legal rules and more on norms, practices, meanings and identities" (Isin, 2000, p. 3).

Citizenship is being contested in the context of globalization and neoliberalism. For Urry (2000) "globalization appears to be changing what it is to be a citizen" (p. 63). Within a globalized world, we see multiple forms of citizenship emerging beyond Marshall's social citizenship (1963) that focuses on occupation, income and class. Urry highlights a number of these emergent forms of citizenship, including citizenship within the city and ecological citizenship. There are new claims to cultural citizenship and the right to cultural participation (Turner 1993a), minority and mobility citizenship (Yashar 2005; Urry 2000), and the rights to enter and remain for immigrants (Yuval-Davis 1997).

It is generally undisputed that we live in an increasingly globalized and neoliberal world. What is still up for debate, however, is the impact of these forces on citizenship and the city as the main locus for granting, allocating, contesting, and defining it. Drawing from political and urban theorists, urban citizenship scholars explore the relevance of the city and citizenship in the context of neoliberalism and globalization. While there are a number of shared agreements within this literature, debates and contentions exist around the relationships between scale (local, state, national, global) and the impacts of specific institutions and diversity on contestations over membership. As Hanagan and Tilly (2009, p.1) reveal, this "preoccupation with the power of the state, with the social organization of

cities, with the connections between the two, and with the implications of both for the lives of ordinary people, dates back to the origins of social science.” Neoliberal globalization makes this debate particularly relevant for contemporary studies of urban life, participation, and what it means to be a powerful member of a community.

The economic and geopolitical context that exacerbates and perpetuates uneven power dynamics in the contemporary moment is most accurately described as “neoliberal globalization”. The beginning of the neoliberal era is most commonly associated with a confluence of factors around the globe in the late 1970s and early 1980s. David Harvey, in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* reviews this history (2009), and notes the impacts of Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, US chairman of the Federal Reserve Paul Volker, and Deng Xiaoping of China in shaping neoliberal policies that would impact the globe in the decades to come. He argues that these four influential actors strategized to intentionally create new economic and political structures towards a neoliberal approach, but that they did not work alone. Neoliberal policies and ideologies were widely supported by news media and the global right wing, as well as the new and emerging global elite that would reclaim control through neoliberalism, later to be called the “one percent” by the Occupy Everywhere movement.

While the ideology and theory of neoliberalism is rooted in the concepts of individualism, private property, and freedom, the reality and result of neoliberal practice has been destructive and divisive, drawing an enormous wedge between the global elite and the impoverished, pushing forth an agenda that restores power to the elite ruling classes at the

expense of the world's workers, migrants, and the marginalized - most severely impacting women and people of color (Sassen 1996; Harvey 2009).

In short, neoliberalism in theory is predicated on the values of individualism and private property, and that the freedom of the market is the best way to allocate resources at a global scale. Neoliberal trade policies, based in these beliefs, serve to facilitate the mobility of capital and finance, as well as culture and consumption patterns, but do not take into account the subsequent human and labor migrations that might occur as a result.

While immigrants have faced marginalization (Motomura 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 2006), racialization (Carbado 2005; Romero 2008; Sinha 2010; Calmore 1995; Tehranian 2000), and scapegoating (Raphael and Ronconi 2007) since the inception of the nation, US immigration in the context of the neoliberal era takes on new textures. Increasing global inequality, neoliberal trade policies, and US imperial penetration into foreign markets and cultures has impacted both the reasons Latin American's migrate north, and how they experience, make, and shape urban spaces once they arrive in the United States (Portes and Rumbaut 2006). It has also influenced the ways immigrants are received or excluded once they arrive. Purcell (2008) argues that nativism and neoliberalization are at home together because there is a need to balance the labor needs of capital with the anti-immigrant sentiments of nativists. This produces the "ebb and flow of migration enforcement, a combination of nationalist protectionism and selective and tentative liberalization" (Purcell 2008, p.23). All of these forces intertwined pave the way for low-income undocumented immigrant women of color domestic workers to experience increased marginalization,

work place violations, and political disempowerment in the context of the neoliberal US city. But as Purcell (2008) argues, spaces of resistance and transformation are created and emerge as people respond to restrictive, exclusionary, and racist neoliberal policies (hooks 1993).

The organizing efforts of domestic workers offer a shining light of hope to counter the destructive forces of neoliberal globalization in our society. Despite struggling to survive at the crossroads of racism, xenophobia, patriarchy, and the systemic and historic devaluing of their labor, domestic workers are organizing to win rights, dignity, and justice, not only for themselves, but for their families, their communities, and even for their employers.

Agreements within Urban Citizenship:

There are three main agreements within the urban citizenship literature. The first shared agreement is that neoliberal globalization leads to an increasing presence of non-governmental actors and agencies that hold transnational and local power. Second, this process in the context of the human rights era challenges the relevancy of the nation-state, leaving it in a state of crisis. And finally, in the face of globalization and the resulting decrease in the importance of the nation-state, we see an increasing importance of the city in determining membership and citizenship, thus opening the possibilities for urban citizenship.

Agreement 1: Neoliberal globalization shifts power

Urban citizenship scholars agree that power has been shifting away from national governments to private and non-governmental agencies at the local, state, and national levels (Ruppert 2000; Holston and Appadurai 1996; Isin 2000). Under neoliberalism, the global city that was once democratic becomes privatized, "professionalized, marketized, entrepreneurial and managerial", where marginalized groups that want to make claims on the city face non-governmental bodies, actors, and agencies instead of publically accountable representatives (Ruppert 2000). In addition, there has been a shift of functions and accountabilities within and across government agencies that is multi-directional (Brodie 2000). Power is shifting from the nation-state down to the local and regional levels, and up to transnational institutions and corporations (Beauregard and Bounds 2000). Within this process Ruppert (2000) and others maintain that the city remains the locus, or "relevant political - administrative units" involved.

Ruppert (2000) argues that state practices that weaken local government institutions in the global city increase the influence of private, non-state actors at the local level. With less local autonomy and state control over property taxes and municipal restructuring, we have seen the "fragmentation of local service delivery to numerous non-elected agencies (Ruppert 2000, p. 276)." Furthermore changes in state-local finance structures concentrates power at the state level, reducing the local level's ability to respond to direct citizen concerns (Ruppert 2000, p. 278). Neoliberal economic restructuring demands that local economies change to be more competitive in the global economy, but this increased global competitiveness leads to a decrease in local democracy and citizenship (Ruppert

2000, p. 279). Isin (2000a) adds that a rise in power of global agents corresponds with a decrease in capacity for sovereign nation-states to set policies regarding formal citizenship.

At the global level, we see a transformation of global governance because of the increase in transnational advocacy networks (Appadurai 2001), and the increasing control that international organizations have over the global economy (Brodie 2000). These processes lead to city governments with less power, at a time when the destructive impacts of neoliberalism lead to an increased demand for local democratic citizenship practices:

"Instead of being the incubator for a new urban democratic citizenship, the city becomes a container of the economic, environmental and social costs of globalization, and the home of those marginalized by an increasingly polarized polity (Brodie 2000, p. 121)".

The economic and political impacts of neoliberal globalization and transnationalism are felt at the level of the city (Holston and Appadurai 1996). Isin (2000) and Ruppert (2000) observe a shift from local government to *local governance*, which Ruppert calls *corporate localism*, noting that cities are no longer controlled or managed by publically elected officials, but by "non-elected, locally unaccountable bodies which are mandated to focus on the cost-efficient delivery of services, not on democratic principles of representation, transparency, participation and accountability" (Ruppert 2000, p. 281).

For Isin (2000b), in advanced liberalism (aka neoliberalism) "the focus of urban politics has shifted from local government as a locus of power to diverse spaces of power such as

private and non-governmental provision and delivery of services (p. 162)." These shifts produce an:

unstable mix of the legal and the illegal, and of various forms of each, [which] turns the city into a honeycomb of jurisdictions in which there are in effect as many kinds of citizens as there are kinds of law. Such multiplicity delegitimizes the national justice system and its framework of uniform law, both hallmarks of national citizenship" (Holston and Appadurai 1996, p. 199).

Any rights claiming by citizens on cities must consider that "neo-liberal mentalities towards the city have shifted power to professional, procedural, performative and auditing technologies without democratic mechanisms of deliberation, accountability and responsibility (Ruppert 2000, p. 286)." In this framework the citizen is often relegated to consumer, enacting their democratic freedoms through consumption, opinion polls, and focus groups etc. (Rose 2000).

Agreement 2: The nation-state is in a state of crisis in the era of human rights

While the etymological and historical origins of citizenship are in the city (Baubock 2003), contemporary notions of citizenship have been deeply connected to the formation of the nation state. Urban citizenship scholars agree however, that the nation-state is in a state of crisis with respect to its ability to define and determine the meaning of membership and citizenship. For Appadurai (2001) this crisis is one of redundancy, as opposed to one of legitimacy. Because of the processes and power dynamics within neoliberal globalization, the hegemony of nation-state sovereignty is being replaced by local and global forces. This crisis has major ramifications for a democracy predicated on citizenship as determined by

the nation-state, and creates the necessary openings for the emergence of new theories (Kuhn 1986) of urban citizenship, as well as "operational and conceptual openings for other actors and subjects (Sassen 2000, p. 48)" to define what it means to be a valid stakeholder and member in a given society.

Globalization limits the ability of the state to govern because of shifting power dynamics in the era of human rights (Brodie 2000; Turner 2000; and Soysal 1994). Sassen (2000) points out that the state is no longer the only actor / subject with respect to international law and relations, but that new actors/ subjects have emerged with a voice on the international scale. Immigrants, NGOs, first-nation peoples, women, and other marginalized groups are using the openings created by human rights doctrines and international organizing networks to assert themselves on the global stage (Sassen 2000, Wekerle 2000). Drawing from human rights doctrine and precedence, the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), as a member of the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN), won an International Labor Organization (ILO) convention on the status of Domestic Workers in 2011:

"On June 16, 2011, Governments, Employers and Workers of the world at the 100th International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva, Switzerland adopted the First Convention and accompanying Recommendation on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. When the vote was announced, domestic workers unfurled a banner that read "C189: Congratulations! Now for the "domestic work" of governments-RATIFY." Support for the Convention was overwhelming, with 396 voting in favor, and only 16 voting against (all employers), with an additional 63 abstaining. The

Recommendation passed with 90% approval (NDWA
<http://www.domesticworkers.org/ilo>)."

This increase in non-state actors in international arenas represents "the expansion of an international civil society" and an "unbundling of the exclusive authority over territory and people we have long associated with the national state (Sassen 2000, p. 48)."

In addition to human rights discourses, the nation-state is challenged by cultural diversity and identity-based social movements (Burayidi 2003; Beauregard and Bounds 2000). The combination of globalization and post-modernization leads to the "erosion of national loyalties and identities based upon a traditional racial homogeneity (Turner 2000)". This in part is due to the increase in labor migration as a result of global economic processes. Multiculturalism can also lead to the weakening of the nation-state through intensified localism as the protection of homogeneity and whiteness is performed in defensive reaction to increasing diversity (Turner 2000; Holton 2000).

Because of globalization, multiculturalism, and the impact of international human rights discourses and power dynamics, "national sovereignty, democratic accountability and citizenship rights all appear to have been cast adrift from their modernist and territorial moorings (Brodie 2000, p. 125)." Contemporary contestations over citizenship are less associated with the nation-state, and instead occur at the level of the city (Rose 2000, Baubock 2003) within the context of shifting global dynamics. Movements of the urban poor reconstitute citizenship in cities by taking part in efforts towards deep democratic

practice (Appadurai 2001) and by creating spaces of insurgent citizenship (Holston and Appadurai 1996).

Agreement 3: The city is becoming an increasingly important site of contestation over membership and citizenship

Within the context of globalization, the crisis of the nation-state, and the impacts of neoliberalism on democracy (Purcell 2008), political urban theorists are searching for new forms of citizenship (Beauregard and Bounds 2000; Isin 2000). There is much agreement within the urban citizenship literature that the proper location for this search is within the context of the city (Alsayyad and Roy 2006; Appadurai 2001; Magnusson 2000; Holston and Appadurai 1996).

It might sound contradictory to say that with the rise of the global, we see an increased importance of the local, but in fact, the global city is what keeps globalization expanding (Harvey 2008). Not only are cities where the headquarters and dealings of transnational corporations located (Appadurai 2001; Sassen 2000), but they are also where the impacts of increasing inequality and neo-liberalization the most felt and reacted to (Harvey 2008). The city becomes the place where global processes are facilitated and grassroots, insurgent, and tactical spaces of citizenship are created and contested (Lee 2006; Isin 2000; Holston 1998; Wekerle 2000; Ruppert 2000).

Tocqueville wrote of the importance of the local public spirit, and citizens' affection for their own local township. He observed that people felt strong membership ties to their

local communities and took care in managing them. Nearly 175 years after Tocqueville wrote on American democracy, the local is still important in terms of membership and democratic spirit. The local is "concrete, familiar and bounded, seemingly more compatible with the everyday concerns of citizens" (Brodie 2000, p. 118). Brodie argues that the local is the potential site for citizenship politics "dependent on a sustained campaign to reinvent the very idea of the public and to expand the terrain of democratic citizenship" (Brodie 2000, p. 111). For Baubock, democratic citizenship "is the outcome of struggles over who should be included in or excluded from the polity" (2003, p. 139), and the city is the context in which these struggles are waged (Isin 2000b). Holston and Appadurai argue then, that we must treat the city as central in "the realization of a meaningfully democratic citizenship" (1996, p.202).

The importance of the city rises and falls inversely with that of the nation-state. Urban citizenship scholars, observing the crisis of the nation-state, and recognizing citizenship's roots in the city, ask: "Will the city once again become the birthplace of a new conception of citizenship for the twenty-first century that overcomes the nineteenth and twentieth century models of national membership?" (Baubock 2003, p. 156) Remaining debates about citizenship, democracy, and diversity attempt to grapple with the nuances of this question.

Remaining debates in Urban Citizenship

Aside from the basic agreements above, some of the remaining debates in the urban citizenship literature focus on 1) the relationships between the global, transnational, state,

and local scales in contesting citizenship, 2) different manifestations of urban citizenship from *bounded* to *grounded* urban citizenship, 3) the impact of difference and multiplicity in contesting citizenship; and 4) the impact of specific institutions and policies on contestations around membership.

Debate 1: The importance of scale

In the face of neoliberal globalization, debates remain about the extent to which national, international, transnational, regional, or state-centered citizenship is as important as local or urban citizenship. The relationship between each of these scales is debated where some argue that the state and local cannot be disconnected, while others argue for a citizenship grounded only at the local scale. While some argue that citizenship should be considered differently at the local vs. national level where each have different criteria for conferring citizenship rights to residents (Baubock 2003), others suggest that the local and national are interrelated and that national contexts matter because the local is situated within them (Baiocchi 2005).

In response to the decline in national sovereignty in the globalizing era and the corresponding need for new integrative mechanisms, Beauregard and Bounds (2000) observe that two camps have emerged: universalism, and particularism. Universal citizenship focuses on commonalities, and "rejects radical pluralism and the localism of civil society (Beauregard and Bounds 2000, p. 245)," centralizing its conception of citizenship at the scale of the global (Magnusson 2000). Particularism emphasizes difference, or "differentiated citizenship" (Young 1999) and "rejects cultural conformity

(Beauregard and Bounds 2000, p. 245)," within the context of the city. These two camps are often referred to as supra-national (global in scope), or sub-national (state or city-centered citizenship). The particularistic approach makes space for contestations within the context of the city that are rooted in group-differentiated experiences with respect to race, gender, immigration status, nationality etc., where universalists call for a "one world" approach to defining membership. In a lecture on the meaning of race and color-blind racism, law professor Vernellia Randall argued that "to say that we are all one race is as meaningful as saying that we are all one world." In other words, racism and differentiated experiences based on race or legal status are real and grounded in the daily lives of people in cities, similar to the way that membership in a given nation state impacts a person's relative quality of life and chances for survival on the global scale. A particularist approach recognizes this, where a universalistic approach does not.

Transnational citizenship is proposed to account for the multiple forms of allegiances and associations people have between nation-states. Massive international migrations lead to a world where vast numbers of people consider themselves to be members of more than one nation-state, regardless of legal citizenship status.

The case of the European Union's integration offers an interesting case study about cities and integration at the national / supra-national level. Delanty (2000) shows that with integration, "the separation of expert knowledge and personal, experiential knowledge is declining" (p. 88). As knowledge loses identification with experts, democracy loses identification with the state, and the increase in discursive spaces in the city leads to an

emergence of "a wider range of voices than those of experts and capitalists (Delanty 2000, p. 89)." In this regard the city's challenge to the state could be to open up new discursive spaces that give "a real basis to a discursive democracy of participation (Delanty 2000, p. 89)," within the contexts of the national and supra-national.

Holston (1998) argues that to plan the "ethnographically possible" we need to integrate both local and state resources. To make his case for the integration of the state with the local he warns about the dangers of localized democratic processes that may result in unjust outcomes¹⁹. The lesson from the paradox of local democracy is that planning should engage insurgent forms of the social and "resources of the state to define, and occasionally impose, a more encompassing conception of right than is sometimes possible to find at the local level (Holston 1998, p. 54)." This connection between the local and national state could also serve to protect against "the emergence of an almost medieval body of overlapping, heterogeneous, nonuniform, and increasingly private memberships (Holston and Appadurai 1996, p. 200)" in an increasingly diverse society.

Using a similar line of argument, Brodie (2000) recognizes that the global and local are and should be interrelated. He suggests that it is not productive to see the local as separate from the global, but that the local is part of the global. He prefers the term "glocal" (coined by Robertson 1995), which allows us to see "processes of economic globalization as concrete economic, social, and political forms 'situated in specific places' (Brodie 2000, p. 119)." Appadurai (2001) describes "the Mumbai Alliance of urban activists as part of an

¹⁹ Also see Brodie 2000; Buček and Smith 2000 regarding the dangers of local democracy in privileging private property interests.

emergent political horizon, global in its scope, that presents a post-Marxist and post-developmental vision of how the global and the local can become reciprocal instruments in the deepening of democracy (Appadurai 2001, p. 26)." For these authors, urban citizenship, broadly conceived, cannot be considered in isolation from the state, national, and global contexts.

Debate 2: Manifestations of urban citizenship: from bounded to grounded urban citizenship

The supra-national approaches to the re-scaling of citizenship as mentioned above are often countered by arguments for an *urban citizenship*, or citizenship predicated on membership and residence in a particular city or locale.

Some urban citizenship scholars argue for a normative and bounded model of citizenship based in the urban public realm "where people of diverse backgrounds engage each other" (Beauregard and Bounds 2000, p. 243), and where cities operate as autonomous entities - as opposed to acting from their place in the hierarchy of the nation-state (Purcell 2003; Harvey 2008). They argue that a bounded model of urban citizenship creates the appropriate container for community organizing efforts to claim a right to the city.

The urban scale, for Beauregard and Bounds (2000) is where "rights and responsibilities of citizenship are exercised, civic sentiments are formed and identities are realized (p. 243)." City-based citizenship has the potential for the transformation of "national identities and nationalist ideologies from below and from within (Baubock 2003, p. 157)." Dagger (2000) affirms that the city is the proper breeding ground for citizenship, but not without

attention to three threats of size, fragmentation, and mobility. The main premise of Dagger's urban citizenship is that civic memory is needed to shape the future. We need to address these three problems and their impacts on civic memory to foster ethical and responsible citizenship at the level of the city. Dagger offers potential reforms to account for these threats. If cities are too big, too fragmented, or the population is too mobile, then civic memory will be lost. "Collective memory" is essential to creating a "sense of identity as citizens". Because of these three threats to civic memory, the "modern metropolis does not serve as a breeding ground for citizenship (Dagger 2000, p. 25)", and must be reformed through policies that account for size, fragmentation, and mobility of residents.

In an attempt to interrogate the urban citizenship literature with respect to undocumented immigrants, Varsanyi (2006) reviews the universal and urban citizenship approaches as discussed above, and offers a "grounded" (as opposed to bounded) urban citizenship. She critiques bounded urban citizenship for creating two classes of citizens, "one which had nation-state citizenship and urban citizenship, and one which had only urban citizenship (p. 239)". The creation of second-class citizens is antithetical to the ideals of universality and liberalism. Within this model, urban citizenship could be seen as a means for maintaining the marginalization of those who only possess urban citizenship without national citizenship. To counter this, Varsanyi offers a normative model for grounded urban citizenship:

"a citizenship in which full membership would not be dependent upon an explicit consent to enter and remain in a bounded community, as is the case with contemporary citizenship in the liberal democratic welfare state, but instead upon

the mere reality of *presence* and *residence* in a place. As an unbounded model of citizenship, there would be no necessary difference in status between insiders and outsiders, and in this sense, legal status would cease to be a defining characteristic (Varsanyi 2006, p. 240)."

Varsanyi's grounded citizenship model most closely resembles the types of citizenship being called for and practiced by organized domestic workers in the U.S., as will be elaborated in my findings.

Debate 3: Impact of difference and multiplicity

While the bounded model of urban citizenship falls within the postmodern value of harmony within multiplicity, Garber (2000) challenges the abstractness of postmodernism's treatment of space and universalism, arguing for an urban politics based in particularity, arising from real material conditions and physical spaces that impact people's lives.

Baubock (2003) argues for an urban citizenship that is autonomous from the state, where the "social and political boundaries of cities ought to be broadly congruent (p. 141)" and the city is reunited with its peripheries. As opposed to forcing integration of currently segregated neighborhoods, Baubock calls for increased representation at the level of the neighborhood to account for previous inequalities in power. To challenge the role of the nation-state, cities should take part in the arenas of immigration, trade, and foreign policy. He imagines local citizenship as a formal status "that is based on residence and disconnected from nationality", which allows "for multiple local citizenship and voting

rights within and across national borders,” (Baubock 2003, p. 141-142) independent of national citizenship status.

Recognizing that societies need multiple integrative devices, and that people are capable of having multiple membership affiliations, Beauregard and Bounds (2000) propose an urban citizenship that accounts for multiplicity, and that includes a set of rights and responsibilities that is rooted in the public realm. For their model, there are five components necessary for urban citizenship to function: 1) Safety: People must feel safe in the public realm for citizenship to happen, otherwise the elite will retreat to enclaves and gated communities and leave the city unvalued and less safe than before. This is of particular importance to women; 2) Tolerance: We must make room for the perceived strange and different; 3) Political engagement: We must be active in the decision making processes that affect our lives; 4) Recognition of identity: a moral obligation to respect others outside your own group; and 5) Freedom: from commercialization and politicization (p. 250-252).

A particularist conception of urban citizenship is appropriate in the context of globalization because the increasing inequality brought by neoliberal globalization is felt at the level of the city. Sassen (2000) and others (Harvey 2008, Purcell 2008) argue that this leads to struggles over the right to the city and the right to place:

“The centrality of place in a context of global processes makes possible a transnational economic and political opening for the formulation of new claims and

hence for the constitution of entitlements, notably rights to place. At the limit, this could be an opening for new forms of 'citizenship' (Sassen 2000, p. 49-50)."

Local struggles in the context of the global raise the question: "Whose city is it?" (Sassen 2000, p. 50) Within global cities Sassen (2000, p. 50) observes two main "...transnationalized actors with unifying properties internally and in contestation with each other": global capitalists and immigrant workers. We see an increase in inequality since one is valued while the other is devalued. Sassen (2000) urges us to look at the "localizations of the global" to understand multiple cross border identities and solidarities, as well as the global city as "one strategic site of the "multiple locations" of globalization (p. 52)." If conceptualizations of new forms of citizenship are to embrace the universal while being grounded in the particular (out of respect for the real difference that racialized and other differences make), then it should be grounded in the city and in Sassen's "localizations of the global." As I elaborate in my conclusion, the "localizations of the global" for domestic workers, are not necessarily found in the city. The urban citizenship literature engages with questions about the impact of difference and multiplicity but does not incorporate an intersectional approach. This dissertation project will help fill that gap in the literature, as described below.

Debate 4: Impacts of specific institutions and sites of contestations

Rocco (2000) faults political theorists for failing to account for the "institutional embeddedness" of citizenship, arguing that institutions, associations, and places are where the everyday contestations of citizenship are carried out. He offers a model of urban citizenship where the "relationship between rights-claims, civil society and place [offer] a

strategy for responding to this concern (Rocco 2000, p. 218)." For Rocco, we must take place into account when recognizing the rights-claims of "marginalized social, political and cultural locations (p. 232)." These places, or "sites of mediation", are the places where every day activities are carried out, and "where the effects of the practices of power are experienced, where the boundaries set by the configurations of privilege, status and access are encountered as the limits of action (Rocco 2000, p. 235)." Sites of association and networks of activity refer to the activities that sustain "survival, identity and sense of worth (p. 235)", and also engage people with the 'public sphere'. For participants in this study, ALMAS, and the Graton Day Labor Center provide such sites of association, and support the incubation of substantive citizenship practices that get acted out at multiple scales, as will be elaborated in my findings.

While many urban citizenship scholars recognize there is a negative impact of neoliberal globalization on marginalized communities, an extensive exploration of the institutions, spaces, and processes that exacerbate their exploitation is needed (Rocco 2000; Varsanyi 2005, 2006; Holston 1998). There is a call within this literature and among radical planners (Sandercock 1998; Holston 1998; Yiftachel 1998) to look more deeply at the margins, and at the sites of insurgent citizenship practices to explore how grassroots efforts contest and expand conceptions of citizenship at the local and other scales.

Varsanyi (2005; 2006) looks at contemporary immigrant political mobilization and the case of undocumented immigrants in the context of the urban citizenship literature. She

argues that the increasing presence of undocumented immigrants presents a unique challenge to:

“...notions of popular sovereignty and democracy... undocumented residents are subject to the laws of their communities, and are impacted by the outcome of electoral contests, yet are unable to influence the constitution of these laws directly. As Walzer argues, if democracy in a liberal democratic state is restricted to a privileged class of citizens, then democracy cannot exist” (Varsanyi 2005, p. 777-778 referencing Walzer 1983).

A two-tiered membership regime is developing in the U.S. "with citizen increasingly becoming an elite “insider” status, and non-citizen, most particularly in the case of undocumented residents, becoming the status of this exploitable, racially othered and disenfranchised working class”(Varsanyi 2005, p. 777). Migration and the political mobilization of undocumented immigrants will lead to more "struggles over the meaning and constitution of membership and citizenship (Varsanyi 2005, p. 790)"... and "the boundaries of suffrage and of citizenship will have to be redrawn again to include all of those residents who have a stake in their communities (Varsanyi 2005, p. 790)." How those boundaries are being redrawn is yet to be explored within this literature, and is under major current debate around immigration reform in the United States at the time of this writing.

Holston (1998) developed the concept of “sites of insurgent citizenship” to encourage planners to look more deeply at the “ethnographical reality” of cities. He offers a critique of modernist planning because it "does not admit or develop productively the paradoxes of its

imagined future. Instead, it attempts to be a plan without contradiction, without conflict” (46). For Holston, sites of insurgent citizenship are found in “organized grassroots mobilizations and in everyday practices that, in different ways, empower, parody, derail, or subvert state agendas. They are found, in other words, in struggles over what it means to be a member of the modern state” (p. 47). These sites exist at the intersection of processes of expansion (of rights claims) and erosion (through violence, segregation etc). They vary with time and place, and insert new identities and practices into the city “that disturb established histories (p. 48).” They are the result of global processes and change, migration, and reterritorialization that disrupted “the normative and assumed categories of social life (p. 50).”

Gap to be filled in the urban citizenship literature

The urban citizenship literature explores the impacts of global dynamics on immigrants and people of color generally, but pays little attention to how patriarchy, structural racism and unauthorized immigration status and other systems of oppression *intersect* to influence quality of life, citizenship practices, and contestations over membership at multiple scales. Domestic workers are mostly omitted from the discussion. Despite the fact that many organized domestic workers are immigrants or lack legal citizenship status, their transformative practices of citizenship offer lessons on what it means to be an active and engaged citizen in substantive terms, while challenging the relevancy of a state-centric notion of formal status, and city-centric notions of citizenship as contested terrain.

There are two main reasons why the urban citizenship literature is an important point of departure for understanding the experiences of domestic workers: 1) If we consider insurgent or substantive forms of citizenship, we find that domestic workers' collective claims-making efforts to expand the limits of citizenship challenge common notions of what it means to be a good citizen. It can be argued that despite lacking formal citizenship status, organized domestic workers are more civically and democratically engaged than those of us who take our legal status for granted. This is especially important for progressive or radical urban planners who seek to engage active "citizen participants" in local planning processes; And 2) Debates about the weakening of national citizenship in the face of globalization are incomplete unless we discuss the counter-experience of people who lack legal status as granted by the nation-state.

Some urban citizenship literature centralizes the struggles and voices of marginalized peoples, highlighting various forms of insurgent citizenship. Authors in other disciplines grapple with questions of citizenship and agency among domestic workers as a group targeted for multiple forms of oppression at multiple spaces / locations. But there is little to no discussion about the organizing efforts of domestic workers within the Urban Citizenship literature. This dissertation seeks to make the connection between these literatures, while grounding the discussion in transformative community planning and citizenship practices of a population, and at a scale, largely understudied in the field of Urban Citizenship.

Operational Definition of Citizenships

This dissertation seeks to understand the ways that citizenship is practiced and conceptualized by organized domestic workers. In order to explore the implications of these practices, I offer here an operational definition of citizenship so as to measure the ways domestic worker organizing efforts are, or are not, exemplary of transformed, re-scaled, or re-imagined citizenship in the United States.

Citizenship is either viewed as a concept, or as a practice. Conceptualizations of citizenship vary and are contested. Some concepts of citizenship found in various literatures include: formal, substantive, cultural (Coll 2010), visible (Appadurai 2001), economic / financial (Appadurai 2001), liberal / modernist (Holston and Appadurai 1996), multicultural Kymlicka (1996), transnational (Beauregard and Bounds 2000), cosmopolitan (Linklater 1998), insurgent (Holston 1998), global (Urry 2000), tactical (Lee 2006), as well as urban citizenships (Isin ed. 2000). Each of these concepts of citizenship have their own body of literature that explores them in detail, and in various historical and cultural contexts. This project focuses on various substantive citizenship *practices*, in particular places and at various scales of influence, within the context of the urban citizenship literature. More specifically, by exploring the *practices* of citizenship of ALMAS, I aimed to understand what *concepts* of citizenship seemed most relevant, in the context of major questions and debates within the urban citizenship literature around scales of influence.

So what do I mean by *practices* of substantive citizenship? Operationally, practices of citizenship involve at least two elements: experienced identity and ascribed identity. How

do we experience our selves in terms of belonging, of membership, and of having equal rights and recognition in a given arena, polity, or scale? Alternatively, how do others ascribe meanings of belonging or not belonging onto us, and what impact does that have? Given my participation and observation with ALMAS and the domestic worker movement, I would add a third element of citizenship practice that is rooted in relationships. Given power dynamics in society, how do various relationships play out to impact the equal or unequal treatment of someone by members and institutional representatives of the larger society? How do people who are denied access to equality view relationships with members of society who are deemed as “belonging”? (i.e. how do domestic workers view their relationships with their employers in regards to equality, membership, and belonging?)

Inserting an Intersectional analysis to contestations around citizenship at multiple scales

The women in my case study share a complex combination of intersecting identities. The majority of participants identify with each other in terms of race, gender, nationality, employment, skin color, language, and other identity categories. Intersectionality offers a frame and methodology that is crucial to understand how the organizing efforts of domestic workers contest citizenship and membership at multiple scales.

Critical Race Studies and Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged from Critical Legal Studies and has its roots in feminist literature. Mari Matsuda defines CRT as "the work of progressive legal scholars of color who are attempting to develop a jurisprudence that

accounts for the role of racism in American law and that works toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination" (as referenced in Solórzano 1998).

Critical Race Theory is rooted in questions of race, racism, and white supremacy, but its usefulness as a conceptual frame for research goes beyond questions of racial power dynamics. While race is, of course, central to CRT, it is not my intention to say that race is *the most* important factor influencing domestic worker contestations around citizenship. While it is certain that the continued exclusion and exploitation of domestic workers is rooted in the historical legacies of slavery, intersectionality, as developed through CRT, helps me explore how identity-based power dynamics such as class, gender, immigration status, employment, age, etc. intersect with race to impact contestations around citizenship and membership for domestic workers.

One of the most important contributions of CRT to feminist, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive research is the use of intersectionality as both an analytical and methodological tool. Here I explain how the use of intersectionality has impacted the research design, methodology, and analysis of the project.

Intersectionality has received much attention in recent years in multiple disciplines. Born from third wave women of color feminists and Critical Race Scholars, intersectionality is used as a frame to understand the complex ways that identities, while rooted in systems of oppression and privilege, intersect to impact people's lives in different ways. Many ALMAS

members have shared intersecting identities that are targeted for oppression under contemporary systems of power. While these intersections position them to experience hardship in a similar way, they also bring them together in unity and in struggle, and provide the context for them to create transformative community development projects / transformative community organizing campaigns, and ultimately to articulate and perform transformative citizenship practices.

“Intersectionality means the examination of race, sex, class, national origin, and sexual orientation, and how their combination plays out in various settings (Delgado and Stefancic 2001, 51).” Intersectionality, anti-essentialism, and recognizing the tension between nationalism and assimilation help scholars examine the interplay of power and authority within minority communities and movements (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). Berger and Guidroz (2009) use the term “intersectional approach” to describe the many ways that scholars incorporate intersectionality into their research. They acknowledge that researchers will “socially locate” their research subjects with respect to their socially produced identities, as they are impacted by social systems of power. Recognizing multidimensional oppressions acknowledges that in most instances, multiple sources of disempowerment affect people's lives in concrete ways (Hutchinson 2000; Crenshaw 1991; Solórzano 1998; Carbado 2000; Volpp 2001). Furthermore, an intersectional analysis allows policy makers and practitioners to develop more appropriate interventions that meet the needs of people with diverse experiences.

If domestic workers are organizing to win recognition as “real” and valid workers, then doesn’t that beg the question why they are not considered to be so already? The answer lies within the intersections of patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and the gendered discrimination of unauthorized immigrant women workers. Since domestic workers take on tasks traditionally done by stay-at-home moms, or “women’s work”, and this type of work has been historically discounted as not being “real work” in a patriarchal society, gender power dynamics have a major role to play. Domestic work is also primarily low-wage work, so class dynamics further delegitimize domestic work. Finally, since many domestic workers are immigrant women of color, race and immigration status play a role in creating a dynamic where home-based employees are exploited, *othered*, and /or marginalized in a position of subordination to their employers (remember Divina’s story above). Racism and the othering of immigrant women can contribute in large part to the devaluing of domestic work as real work, because the very women who do this work are devalued and dehumanized through the process of gendered racism in our society in general. A structural or critical race analysis, specifically looking at intersectionality will help uncover these intersecting dynamics around the dehumanization and devaluing of domestic workers and domestic work, and the ways domestic workers are organizing to value themselves as real workers.

Critical Race Theory offers a set of assumptions, frames, and both methodological and analytical tools to explore *intersectionality*, and its impact on citizenship, scale, and the meanings of membership within the domestic worker movement in the United States. This should have implications for the Urban Citizenship literature in general because this

project considers the city as an important scale of contestation, yet also creates the space to challenge that main assumption by studying a group that is also organizing at other scales of influence apart from the city or local. While race, gender, class and other identity groups are considered within the Urban Citizenship literature, the impact of the *intersections* of these and other identity groups, like the domestic work sphere, or legal immigration status, has not fully been explored.

Domestic work is the site of one of the largest concentrations of unauthorized immigrant women of color in the work force (Burnham and Theodore 2012). Domestic workers as a group have been historically denied access to both legal citizenship status, as well as economic and work-place rights. Through exclusions from labor laws, as well as literacy requirements and non-legal barriers to access to formal citizenship, African American domestic workers were initially denied citizenship rights and labor protections. Today domestic work remains a site of exclusion and exploitation for a majority immigrant women workforce, including both documented and undocumented immigrants (Burnham and Theodore 2012).

The history of progressive labor laws for most US workers is a history of exclusion for domestic workers. When progressive labor laws *have* passed, domestic workers have generally been excluded from their benefits. This exclusion has either occurred because they were explicitly excluded, or because the isolated nature of domestic work employment prevented them from benefitting from the protections (Caldwell 2013). For example, domestic workers were explicitly excluded from the Wagner Act of 1935 (which provided

important openings for union organizing), the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. Although not explicitly excluded from others, they were unable to access rights and privileges associated with laws like the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, because these only apply to places of employment with a minimum of 15-20 workers (Caldwell 2013). While one domestic worker may have many employers, each location of employment is an individual home, where she (or he) is unlikely to have 14 or more co-workers.

The denial of workplace rights and protections is interconnected with the systematic exclusion from formal citizenship status, racism, and xenophobia (Chang 2000). Domestic workers (along with farm workers) were intentionally excluded from progressive labor laws in the 30s as part of negotiations with racist Southern lawmakers who did not want Black workers to gain protections (Caldwell 2013). But why, after the gains of civil rights, and over 75 years, are domestic workers still excluded from basic labor laws? Organizers in the movement, who I observed, claim that the continued exclusion of workers from these basic protections can be explained by the pervasiveness of racism, xenophobia, and the devaluing of women's labor. This is exemplified by common phrases used during campaigns such as "Domestic work is *real* work, workers deserve *real* protections", or "Domestic workers make all other work possible". To have to continually assert that domestic work is *real* work, and that domestic workers *deserve* real protections suggests that the status quo holds it to be true that domestic work is *not* real work, and that domestic workers do *not* deserve equal treatment.

Intersectionality, Urban Citizenship and Immigration

There is an important relationship between intersectionality, Urban Citizenship, and immigration (Ruiz 2008). Race and the protection of whiteness have been highly influential in the granting of citizenship in the United States (Tehrani 2000), as is highlighted by the fact that 90 percent of the undocumented people are people of color (Sinha 2010). This is not accidental. From its inception in 1790, immigration law was intentionally racially restrictive until the Immigration Act of 1965, which finally prohibited quotas based on national origin. The 1790 Immigration Act restricted American citizenship to free White persons. Following that, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 suspended the immigration of Chinese nationals to the United States. In 1924 quotas were created to favor migration from white countries and limit Asian, and Eastern and Southern European migration (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Tichenor 2002; Sinha 2010). Even when universal citizenship has been promised by the US government, literacy requirements have been used to exclude Blacks and other groups who had been systematically excluded from educational opportunities (Yashar 2005). The 1965 Immigration Act, which revised the quota system and created other channels for entry, was the result of the civil rights movements and progressive reforms nation-wide. As a result of the civil rights movement, scholars have observed the prevalence of less overt forms of racial discrimination, or “color-blind racism” (Bonilla-Silva 2001), where racism is perpetuated by every day acts and institutions, but in less overt ways as before the civil rights movement. Despite the fact that overt discrimination in immigration law is no longer allowed, immigrants of color continue to

face racially disparate treatment, as shown in unequal access to adequate housing²⁰ and labor exploitation.

How people talk about immigration and immigrant workers is a racialized and gendered discourse in the United States (Chavez 1998; Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2006). We cannot talk about Mexicans without thinking of immigration. We cannot talk about farm workers without thinking of immigrant men of color from south of the border. When we think of domestic workers, women of color and power dynamics automatically come to mind.

The question of *who belongs* in US society has often been answered with a racial bias. Formal citizenship rights were first only afforded to property-owning white males with good moral character. Our “founding fathers” are highlighted in American mainstream historical accounts as the ideal citizens. We still use the term citizenship in schools to evaluate a student’s strength of character and moral attributes. When we are asked to associate with being a good citizen, we are simultaneously reminded of these grand white men who set the standard of American citizenry, and whose images are still reproduced in public school historical texts. Efforts exist to integrate the stories and histories of women and people of color, (i.e. Black History Month, Ethnic Studies programs etc), but these efforts have not reach a scale large enough to transform the ways we value the contributions of women, immigrants, and people of color in the United States.

²⁰ In *A Right to Housing: Foundation for a new social agenda* (2006), Bratt and Stone show that even when controlling for income and rent, Latino immigrants were more likely to live in substandard housing conditions, when compared with white or black non-immigrant counterparts. In their analysis, this was in part because undocumented immigrant tenants were less likely to complain to landlords when repairs were needed because of fear of retaliation based on their vulnerable immigration status.

Recently the movie *The Help*²¹ highlighted part of the racialized and gendered history of the domestic work industry, revealing its roots in slavery, racial inequality, and patriarchy. While the racial power dynamics shown in *The Help* are not often assumed to be the norm in contemporary U.S. society, domestic workers across the country share stories and narratives of similar mistreatment and abuse because of their gender, race, immigration status, and often because of the intersection of all three (Chang 2000; Glenn 2010; Burnham and Theodore 2012).

As I detail in my methods section, I incorporate an intersectional approach to my research and analysis. In addition to identifying the “social locations” of my research participants, I also ask them to use their own words to locate themselves so as not to assume or ascribe identities onto participants. While some attention has been paid within Urban Citizenship to the impact of multiculturalism and diversity in contestations around citizenship at multiple scales, little to no attention has been given to the impact of *intersecting* identities and power dynamics.

²¹It should be noted that Black feminists heavily critiqued *The Help* because of the way that it perpetuated the stereotypical Black woman, and for “glossing over much of the racial terror of the pre-civil-rights South (Caldwell 2013)”. With that said, the movie was also used as a tactic to bring awareness to the contemporary conditions of domestic workers.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

As mentioned above, there are a number of notable gaps within the Urban Citizenship literature when we consider the experiences of organized domestic workers in the United States. To review, the major agreements within Urban Citizenship suggest that the local has become the most relevant scale to contest citizenship in the neoliberal era, and questions remain regarding the importance of scale, identity, and institutions on citizenship as contested terrain. To contribute to this literature, and to insert the experiences of domestic workers into the debate, my research has been guided by the following main research questions:

- (Q1) How are domestic workers organizing for justice, inclusion, and various forms of citizenship in the United States?
- (Q2) At what scale(s) are their organizing efforts and contestations most relevant?
- (Q3) How do intersecting identities and institutional power dynamics impact the organizing efforts of domestic workers at multiple scales?
- (Q4) How do the organizing efforts of domestic workers challenge, support, or reframe some of the major agreements and remaining debates within Urban Citizenship?

This particular set of social problems and research questions calls for a mixed-method case study approach. According to Yin (2000), it is appropriate to do a case study when the research questions require an in-depth analysis of a contemporary phenomenon, for which there will be more variables of interest than data points. The case study research design

allows me to ask descriptive, exploratory, as well as explanatory questions about the multi-scalar contestations around citizenship of organized domestic workers. As opposed to discovering generalizable causal relationships, this case study supports the expansion of theoretical, or analytic generalizations about democracy, citizenship, and the city with respect to the experiences of domestic workers in the context of institutional racism, xenophobia, patriarchy and white supremacy, among other systems of oppression. Given unlimited resources it would have been appropriate to do case studies of multiple domestic worker organizations around the nation or globe. However, given the constraints of my capacity and this project, I select one case to ground this exploration.

Below I describe my research design, case study selection and rationale, phases of research, the respective methods and tools of analyses I used to explore my research questions, and relevant locations of participant observation.

Research Design and Methodology

This is a single, holistic case study of ALMAS, the Women's Action and Solidarity Alliance / Alianza de Mujeres Activas y Solidarias of the Graton Day Labor Center / Centro Laboral de Graton (CLG) in west Sonoma County, CA²². This is a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project that involves multiple methods in two overlapping phases of research over nearly two years from May 2011 to March 2013. In May of 2011 I started working part time as an

²² When I mentioned to ALMAS members the likelihood that I would use a pseudonym to hide the real identity and location of the organization I was met with overwhelming opposition. ALMAS members wanted me to name their group truthfully in order to share with a wide audience the work that they are so proud to be doing.

organizer with ALMAS and focused on developing trusting and open relationships with ALMAS members. During the first phase I conducted archival research as well as participant observation as an organizer with ALMAS, and as a member of the steering committee of the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition (CDWRC) with ALMAS members, and as a participant in the National Domestic Workers Alliance's (NDWA) two-year leadership training and retreat program, called SOL (which will be described in detail below). In the second year I engaged ALMAS members in Participatory Action Research where I gathered testimonies and narratives through interviews, and facilitated a process of collective analysis and evaluation.

Over the course of the project, over 50 ALMAS members took part in the research process in some substantial way, either as active members of ALMAS, as participatory action researchers, and/or as interview respondents. I also gathered information regarding the history and practices of ALMAS, NDWA and the CDWRC from three previous ALMAS organizers, one lawyer who supports the CDWRC, and two organizers from different domestic worker organizations in California via email correspondence.

For nearly two years, I conducted participant observation four to five days a week at the Graton Day Labor Center, in biweekly meetings and external activities with ALMAS, as well as during meetings, retreats, trainings, conferences and convenings with local coalitions, the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition and the National Domestic Workers Alliance. In total I conducted participant observation for nearly 2,000 hours over the course of this project.

Case Study Selection and Rationale

To understand multi-scalar organizing efforts to contest citizenship and membership rights for domestic workers, I conducted a search for an organization to serve as my primary case study where a pre-existing group of mostly unauthorized immigrant women domestic workers were organizing to expand workplace and substantive citizenship rights in the context of local, state, and national struggles for justice. I searched for an organization located in a community that met the following criteria:

- Located within a community in the United States with a substantial immigrant population, but that is not the majority of the population (20-49% of the population)
- With a pre-existing geographically based “local” identity, whether it be a city, suburb or county (To explore claims that citizenship is most relevantly being contested at the local level)
- Where existing groups of unauthorized immigrants and their allies have been working to expand membership / citizenship rights at the scale of the local community (as opposed to directing efforts only at the federal level)
- Where existing groups of primarily unauthorized women workers were organizing together as domestic workers in the context of state and national organizing efforts.
- Where I could gain access to conduct interviews and / or focus groups with domestic workers
- Where domestic worker organizing efforts were primarily led and directed by unauthorized immigrant women of color, meaning their voices were the driving force behind organizing.

Sonoma County is a semi-rural, semi-urban county located one hour north of San Francisco, CA. It boasts successful wine and agricultural industries, and is home to many working professionals who commute daily to San Francisco. Migrant farm workers and domestic workers, primarily from Mexico, find jobs in the vineyards, businesses, and homes of Sonoma County. While migrant workers from Mexico and other parts of Latin America have called Sonoma County home since before California was lost from Mexican territory in 1848, racial tensions and xenophobia are alive and well in this so-called progressive community²³. On the surface, west Sonoma County, where the Graton Day Labor Center is located, is known to be an extremely progressive community. According to a salesman at one local Toyota dealership, Sebastopol (the largest town in west Sonoma County) is the “Prius capital of the world”²⁴. The Sebastopol City Council was the first in the nation to be composed of majority Green Party members, and the area is considered to be one of the epicenters of the environmental movement²⁵.

Sonoma County provides an important context for studying the case of unauthorized immigrant and domestic worker organizing efforts. Despite the fact that Sonoma County is known for being an extremely “progressive” county, race, racism, and white privilege receive little attention in main stream progressive discourse. The contradiction between

²³ In the four years preceding this research project, at least four separate groups formed to combat racism and anti-immigrant sentiment and actions in Sonoma County. The emergence of these groups shows the prevalence of overt racist and anti-immigrant policies and sentiment, and the need to organize against them.

²⁴ He said this during a conversation with me in 2004. When I went to test drive a Prius, he started by saying: “Oh, you must be from Sebastopol!...”

²⁵ I make all of these claims based on having lived my entire life in West Sonoma County. These claims may be hard to substantiate based on existing academic research, but they are all parts of what one would consider to be identities of the region by those of us who live there.

being progressive, yet perpetuating racism provides an interesting case where an intersectional analysis will help shed light on some of the underlying and systemic forces of racism, xenophobia, and patriarchy, that are obscured by the so-called progressive nature of the community, and hidden behind the closed doors of domestic work.

ALMAS is the women's group of the Graton Day Labor Center / Centro Laboral de Graton (CLG). CLG is a model day labor center that has been serving west Sonoma County since 2000. CLG underwent significant staffing changes and transitions during the course of this research. At the outset of this project, CLG was composed of a board of directors, with two day laborers and one domestic worker sitting on the board, an executive director, a lead organizer, a health program coordinator, a hiring and site coordinator, a day laborer leader in training, and myself, the domestic worker organizer. Over the course of two years, the only remaining original staff are myself, the day laborer leader in training, and the health program coordinator. A new executive director took over half way through the project, and towards the end of this research the Labor Center hired a program manager to replace the former lead organizer and hiring and site coordinator. The board of directors, at the time of this writing is composed of seven people, including only one day laborer.

In 2005, the women's group²⁶ formed to organize for employment rights and opportunities, and to engage in local, state, and national efforts to expand workplace rights and recognition for domestic workers. I have a longstanding relationship with this organization. From 2003-2005 I was a volunteer day labor organizer and board member. I was invited to

²⁶ The women's group was originally named CLAM, standing for "Centro Laboral en Apoyo de las Mujeres". In 2011 the group changed its name to ALMAS.

join the staff in 2008 as the organizer for ALMAS, with the understanding that I would also conduct Participatory Action Research for my dissertation.

The organizing efforts of ALMAS at CLG is multi-scalar. In terms of a research design, I conceptualize this project as a single holistic case study, where I explore larger theoretical questions about citizenship and domestic worker organizing efforts at multiple scales, through the lens of ALMAS, and in my role as organizer. I do not view these multiple scales as separate or embedded cases, but as inclusive of the work of ALMAS at multiple scales of contestation. As Figure 1 below shows, the multiple scales at which ALMAS organizes is conceived as concentric circles of influence, starting with each domestic worker herself, or the body, and moving out to the home as residence; the home as place of work; ALMAS; Centro Laboral de Graton; the city, local, region, or county; the state; the national; and the global, international or transnational scales. I chose these specific scales to direct my research questions based on over a year of observation. I created this image as a tool for discussion during the interview process, which will be elaborated below.



Figure 1. Scales of organizing

Notably, some scales of influence are omitted, like the family or household, because they did not come up in conversations with ALMAS members in the context of organizing efforts. This is not to say that these scales do not impact the lives of ALMAS members, but they were not significant when they specifically talked about organizing.

I describe below my rationale, methods, and plan for analysis for both phases of research. First, I want to offer some general comments about methodological concerns, including coding, content analysis, and validation of the accuracy of findings, since these three issues were relevant for all phases of my research. I also provide a summary of all data gathered during the course of research.

Coding - I used coding to organize, analyze, and reflect on research data I gathered throughout the course of the project. This includes field notes, interview transcripts, and transcriptions of other recorded data (i.e. radio interviews with ALMAS members). Coding

is a process by which certain phrases, content, words, or sets of meanings are grouped into larger sets of meaning. In other words, it is a tool for organizing massive amounts of data into recognizable and analyzable pieces. I discuss my coding process of interviews in more detail below.

Qualitative Analysis - Drawing from coded data and archival sources, I was able to draw larger theoretical and analytical generalizations regarding my study. Throughout the entire research process, I wrote short memos summarizing potential findings in relation to my research questions, and continually reflected on the relationship between my participation, observations, field notes, and conversations about this process with my committee, supervisor, and research participants. Case study research calls for detailed descriptions about people and settings, followed by an analysis of such settings for dominant themes or issues (Creswell 2003). These memos provided the bricks and mortar for building the larger theoretical and thematic picture created by the entire case study research process.

Validity and accuracy of findings

Creswell (2003) offers a number of tools that I used in order to ensure the validity and accuracy of my findings, including:

- Triangulation of data: using multiple sources for each set of findings
- Member-checking: taking sections of the report or findings back to participants to ensure accuracy of my analysis
- The use of rich, thick description to convey findings

- Clarify my own researcher-bias that I bring to the study, by journaling and reflective discussions with my committee, supervisor, and research participants
- Present negative and discrepant information that runs counter to the themes I highlight
- Spend prolonged time in the field, and
- The use of peer debriefing

As I conducted my research with and about ALMAS, I paid special attention to three main practices of citizenship that were rooted in questions of belonging, membership, and relationship. 1) How did ALMAS members view themselves in terms of identity and belonging? (experienced identity) 2) How did ALMAS members talk about the way they were treated or viewed by others? (ascribed identity), and finally, 3) How did relationships among ALMAS members, or between ALMAS members and people who were granted equal membership in society, impact ALMAS members interpretations, actions, opinions, and conceptions of themselves in their struggle for inclusion and justice? Finally, because this project is rooted in Urban Citizenship, I paid special attention to the ways ALMAS members discussed and interacted with concepts of scale. Where did they focus their attention in terms of organizing? In terms of struggle? At what scale were issues of membership and belonging most relevant for them in the pursuit of their collective and personal goals?

Summary of Data gathered

Through archival research, participant observation, and Participatory Action Research, I was able to gather the following primary and secondary data sets, which will be described in detail below:

Table 2: Summary of Data Gathered

Method	Data Gathered
Archival Research	All meeting agendas, notes, sign-in sheets since formation of ALMAS in 2005 through March 2013 Newspaper articles re: ALMAS and / or CLG CLG newsletters ALMAS emergency fund records Recordings or transcriptions of ALMAS members interviewed on radio / TV / for print media / promotional materials
Participant Observation	Field notes re: interactions with 50 ALMAS members over more than a year in multiple settings including: meetings, informal conversations, long car / bus rides to actions; in Coalition and Alliance meetings, conferences, or trainings; protest marches, rallies, and press conferences; outreach presentations; while ALMAS members were interviewed by the media; ALMAS retreats; social events and gatherings Informal notes from my participation in SOL / with NDWA Email conversations with NDWA staff / allies / organizers re: the history of ALMAS / NDWA etc.
Participatory Action Research	Notes from informal discussions with members re: PAR process Field notes and agendas from meetings with PAR core team Transcriptions from 20 in-depth interviews which include their thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and experiences around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Work • Personal and Collective Goals through ALMAS • Important scales and campaigns for organizing • Impact of intersecting identities on all above Field notes from groups discussion and evaluation of initial findings

Here I elaborate on each of the two phases in my research process, including the rationale, methods, and plan for analysis during each phase.

Phase / Year 1) Develop trusting relationships as an organizer with ALMAS

This research project began when I started working as an organizer with ALMAS at the Graton Day Labor Center in May of 2011. It was extremely important to me to develop open

and honest relationships with ALMAS members, especially considering my dual role as organizer and researcher. It is no secret that some researchers have taken advantage of marginalized communities, by coming into a community, extracting information, and leaving without offering something in terms of reciprocity or relationship. I wanted to make sure that ALMAS members knew what my intentions were from the beginning of the project.

My primary research methods during this time were participant observation and archival research. During this phase I gathered testimonies and made observations based on interactions with 50 ALMAS members in various settings. Over the course of one year, I conducted participant observation and took extensive field notes about my observations on a nearly daily basis. During this time I spent four to five days a week at the Labor Center with ALMAS members, attended all ALMAS bi-weekly meetings, as well as two to three activities per month outside of the Labor Center, including national trainings, retreats, conferences and convenings, as well as state wide coalition efforts to win a California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, and with a local coalition for social justice, the North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP). Each of these activities and locations offered a space to observe and interact with ALMAS members, or with domestic worker leaders and organizers from other organizations. During these activities I paid special attention to the words and actions of ALMAS members at the Center, in relationship with each other and employers, as well as in the broader community. I also reflected with leaders and other organizers in other organizations about the domestic worker movement in general, considering both the state and national contexts for domestic worker organizing. Archival data sources included

all past ALMAS meeting notes, agendas of ALMAS meetings, records of financial statements pertaining to ALMAS at CLG, and newspaper articles written about the Labor Center or members of ALMAS.

Participant Observation and field notes

Participant observation was my primary research method during phase one of this research. Here I describe in detail both what I was looking for in my observations, and how I approached taking and analyzing my field notes.

As I learned and engaged with ALMAS during the first year of this project, I was not only observing, but also trying to find out what it was that I needed to observe. I simultaneously was interested in 1) How were ALMAS member defining and articulating multiple and multi-scalar citizenship practices? and 2) How were ALMAS members then acting out their own version of those meanings of citizenship? To clarify, I paid special attention to the words that ALMAS members used to describe how they understood their own participation, membership, ascribed identities, attributes of belonging, as well as relationships of inclusion or exclusion with each other, their employers, or other social actors, institutions or society at large. I then also observed what actions they took to exemplify those words; what stories or testimonies they shared that may have influenced or been impacted by their own relationships to practices of citizenship, belonging and membership, as well as experiences of exclusion, denial of rights, or discrimination.

After each interaction with ALMAS members I took extensive field notes or recorded voice memos to gather primary data for my study. In these notes and voice memos I described the physical setting or environment; who was present; and what was said to whom and in what tone (as I interpreted it). I noted if the tone was neutral, positive, negative, with a tired or uplifting voice, discouraged, sad, etc. I paid special attention to any power dynamics that I observed, as well as emotional expression and the unspoken forms of communication, including facial expressions. I considered the space and nature of the space where the activity or observation occurred, as well as any power dynamics associated with that space and the individuals in it (Whitehead 2005).

Considerations for Participatory Research

One must recognize that the interaction between the researcher and the informants has an indirect impact on the responses. Advantages of doing this type of research outweigh the disadvantages, but caution must be exercised. The researcher is advised to avoid believing there is a right or wrong interpretation or thinking. Instead, such information can be used to conclude that at different levels things may be interpreted differently, which can have implications for what the researcher is examining (Yin 2008).²⁷

As an organizer within the context of domestic worker organizing I paid special attention to the ways that I, as a participant in my own study, impacted the outcomes of my research.

Each day that I would record my field notes I would also note when and how my influence

²⁷ See Apostolidis (2010) and Lopez (2004) for examples of researchers conducting participant observation while supporting labor or community organizing efforts of participants.

may have impacted the actions and voices of ALMAS members. To account for researcher influence in the context of organizing, I frequently checked in with organizers in sister organizations to see if my actions were within or outside of the norms of domestic worker organizers, and reflected on these conversations and my interactions with ALMAS members with my supervisor at CLG.

When I was initially deciding whether or not to accept the job of organizer, I met with the leadership committee of ALMAS and explained my intention to conduct Participatory Action Research alongside my role as organizer. They and the woman who would be my supervisor were extremely supportive of the idea and welcomed the opportunity to learn more about their own organizing process. They were especially excited about the potential for the voices and actions of domestic workers to be highlighted and uplifted as models for exemplary citizenship in practice and substance. I shared a concern I had about accepting the position. Although I spoke fluent Spanish, and had spent many years working in the Latino immigrant community, I wasn't sure that it was appropriate for me as a white woman, who had never worked as a domestic worker, to be organizing with ALMAS. My supervisor at the time, who is a woman of color, offered to hold me accountable with regards to race and privilege, and support me in my effort to develop an anti-racist organizing practice with ALMAS. We met on a weekly basis to talk about my role as organizer, and to check in about how my race / skin color may be affecting the research process and / or the organizing process. Half way through my project my supervisor left the organization, but we remained friends and colleagues, and she continued to support this project by providing me feedback and accountability with regards to race and power

dynamics with ALMAS. She and I both developed a transparent critique of whiteness, as it is conceptualized in Critical Race Theory.

Critique of whiteness

There is an extensive body of literature on white privilege, the white race, and of the social construction of whiteness (Rothenburg 2008; Yancy 2004; Harris 1993; Alcoff 1998; Pulido 2002; Delgado and Stefancic 2001). Whiteness has historically been deeply wedded to definitions of citizenship. From colonization on, whiteness has been constructed as pure, good, normative, property, and 'the standard' in the US. From 1790 to 1952 naturalization was limited to whites only, and during this time the question of who was white, was often contested in the courts (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). Whites of various socioeconomic backgrounds employ white supremacy as a catalyst to negotiate policy differences through compromises that sacrifice the rights of people of color. Even lower class whites have a stake in their sense of racial superiority and are rendered more willing to accept their lesser share of the benefits of whiteness, (Bell Jr. 2000) falling back on the claim that, "at least I'm not black". Given the fact that urban planning is a field dominated by white people and rooted in white norms and epistemologies (Pulido 2002, Thomas 2008), a critical analysis of whiteness must be central to the struggle for racial justice within the realm of planning and community development.

My approach to organizing is rooted in Freirean popular education pedagogy (Freire 1993) and transformative community development (Kennedy 1996; Ledwith 2005). I see my role as primarily the facilitator and supporter of the organizing process - not the leader or

figurehead. This approach has allowed me to protect for certain forms of participant biases with regard to participatory research, and develop a practice of observation and learning as the women and I co-developed the organizing and educational process together.

Participant observation is an important and useful methodological tool when the researcher takes an active role in the case being studied. As with any method, there are potential risks associated with participant observation. This method is most often critiqued because researchers fail to account for biases and the influences they have on the outcomes of the study in question. When one fails to acknowledge and account for the conflicts between objectivity and subjectivity, research results can be skewed and unreliable. I take the stance most commonly associated with qualitative and feminist research, that there is no such thing as “objective” qualitative research (Kemp and Squires eds. 1998). There is no perfect case study where the researcher has no influence, since the very act of being researched can have affects on knowing participants, and the researcher herself can be challenged and transformed through the course of a project, which can influence how data are interpreted.

Given the subjective nature of all qualitative research, and uniquely subjective and interpersonal nature of participant observation, there are a number of ways I worked to account for research / participant biases and influence over outcomes. First, since my research questions were concerned with the ways that domestic workers organize and contest citizenship, and I am not a domestic worker, I did not feel that my support and facilitation of organizing efforts changed the motivations, feelings, or goals of the women

involved. As an organizer I helped create the space for these contestations to occur, but it is not and should not be my role to determine how or why they should occur.

As part of accounting for my dual role as researcher / organizer, I had frequent and transparent conversations with participants about this potential issue, and when needed, reinforced that the ultimate voice, actions, and contestations were theirs, not mine. In addition to taking extensive field notes I kept a separate and confidential journal where I explored whatever emotions, biases, concerns, fears etc that came up with regard to my role and how my participation may have been influencing the outcome of my own analysis. I then reflected on these notes with my dissertation committee and supervisor at CLG, to ask for support and guidance around accounting for these issues. For example, I would regularly facilitate an evaluation process with ALMAS members about the work they were doing, and specifically my role in supporting them in their efforts. On numerous occasions, from different ALMAS leaders, I received the same feedback: “We want you to be more demanding of us”. As a white woman with more privilege in society, based on my race, class, language, immigration and employment status etc. it felt inappropriate for me to be “demanding” of the women who I thought should be the center of all movement within the organization. I shared my concerns about this request with ALMAS leadership and my supervisor, and we came to an understanding that it is the job of the organizer to be demanding, but in a way that is respectful, non-hierarchical, and loving. ALMAS leadership was asking me to call them up to their highest self. That was not meant to reproduce power dynamics, but to empower them as full actors in their own struggle.

Archival data

During this first phase I also gathered all archival data available through the Graton Day Labor Center regarding ALMAS since it was founded in 2005. This data included past membership rosters, meeting notes, news articles that mentioned ALMAS, and past meeting agendas and documents.

I transcribed, coded and analyzed my field notes, and archival data. This initial observation and learning phase set the tone for the remainder of the research process. From this initial analysis and reflection I was able to initially answer some of my research questions, and set the stage for a Participatory Action Research process rooted in ALMAS' organizing efforts to transform the borders of citizenship at multiple scales.

Phase / Year 2) Participatory Action Research

In the second phase, and second year, of my research, I continued working as an organizer with ALMAS 20 hours a week, and invited ALMAS members to engage in a participatory action research project about their own organizing efforts. Participatory Action Research, or PAR, is a research method that engages participants as actors in the research process, and has the goal of supporting efforts for progressive social change (Greenwood, Whyte, and Harkavy 1993). Participants are engaged in all aspects of the research, from stating a problem, to developing research questions and appropriate methods, to analyzing the data gathered. From this process information and analysis is used to support the collective and

individual goals of research participants, and build power for previously subordinated or marginalized groups.

I invited all ALMAS members to participate in the PAR process. Over the course of three months about thirty members contributed their ideas and suggestions to the creation of the project. I introduced the general topics of my dissertation, letting them know that I was exploring how the organizing practices of domestic workers were challenging notions of citizenship in multiple ways at multiple scales. I told them that citizenship as contested terrain, scale, and intersecting identities were central to my investigation, but that there was flexibility with regard to the direction of the project. Through multiple focus groups and one-on-one conversations, a core team of eight women formed to help me develop questions for in-depth interviews that I would conduct with ALMAS members.

At the time I began the interview process there were 35 ALMAS members participating at the Center and available to contact (15 of the original 50 had returned to Mexico or Fiji²⁸, or were no longer in the local area). I invited all 35 of them to participate in the interview process, and 20 of them agreed to be interviewed within the time constraints of the project. Those that weren't interviewed didn't respond to my request in time, or didn't respond at all. The 20 interview participants were all ALMAS members, meaning they had participated in ALMAS meetings and supported the mission and vision of the group either in the past or

²⁸ Out of the twenty main research participants who were interviewed, only one of them was from Fiji. To protect her confidentiality, I do not identify her as Fijian when exploring the implications of her thoughts, opinions, etc. Furthermore, I do not make comparisons or contrast between the differences in approach between her and the other participants, but leave this for further research.

at the time of the interview. They represented various levels of involvement and time spent at the Center and with ALMAS, and reflected the diversity of ALMAS in terms of national origin, language ability, immigration or formal citizenship status and other identity categories, which will be shown in detail in the findings chapters below.

Each interview consisted of two parts. In some cases the interviews were conducted on two separate occasions, where in others we completed both parts on the same day, depending on the availability of the participant and considerations such as child care etc. Most interviews were conducted in Spanish, some were done in both English and Spanish, and two were conducted only in English. On average, the interviews lasted two to three hours in total length. Interviews were either conducted at the Graton Day Labor Center after hours, or at my home in order to provide a quiet and confidential space to talk. I digitally recorded all interviews, and then at a later date transcribed them and organized them into themes and data points. When I transcribed each interview, I translated the Spanish speakers into English, and organized the information according to the specific questions in the interview protocol (as shown in Appendix A). When I was finished transcribing all of the interviews, I was then able to explore how each of the participants responded to each of the questions, and then manually coded the data and organized it into themes across all participants.

Intersectional approach and rationale behind interview questions

As the PAR core team of ALMAS members and I developed the interview protocol we wanted to make sure we were getting at the intersections of identity, the sphere of

domestic work, and the experiences and locations of struggles for justice, membership, as well as substantive, economic, cultural, and worker citizenship rights.

As shown in Appendix A, there were two main sections of the interview protocol. The first section focused on participants' identities (experienced and ascribed) as they intersected to impact them as domestic workers and as part of ALMAS' efforts to organize for justice. The second part of the interview asked participants to reflect on which parts of their identity impacted their organizing efforts at various scales, and at what scales their struggles for justice were most relevant.

Participants were asked to identify themselves in terms of many different identity categories, such as race, economic status, immigration status, gender, sex, employment, mobility, education, key relationships etc. Using their own words to describe their various identities, they wrote down how they identified in each identity category on cards. I then asked them to reflect on how these parts of their identities impacted them, either in a positive or negative way, in terms of 1) their experiences as a domestic worker; 2) in the pursuit of their personal goals as a member of ALMAS, and 3) in the pursuit of the collective goals of ALMAS. Participants arranged their identity cards into groups to show if and how parts of their identities intersected to impact them in each of these three areas. I also asked them to connect identities that they felt intersected to impact them in a particular way and to explain why.

I took pictures of each of the identity card arrangements for later analysis and reflection.

This approach to the interviews allowed me to use an intersectional analysis to explore the unique experiences of ALMAS members as domestic workers, and as organizers at multiple scales.

[illegible]

Figure 3: Examples of how participants placed identity cards to show intersections of identity and scales of influence in organizing



Through this approach I was able to gather data and conduct an intersectional analysis regarding the following intersections: intersecting identities and experiences with domestic work, intersecting identities and the pursuit of personal goals through ALMAS, intersecting identities and the pursuit of collective goals of ALMAS, and intersecting identities and relevant scales and sites of contestation for social justice struggles or campaigns (in the pursuit of individual or collective goals of ALMAS).

In the final step of my intersectional analysis, I looked at the intersections of identities as they impacted each interview participant as a domestic worker and in pursuit of their personal and collective goals. Then, I did the same analysis looking at all ALMAS members as a group. In this way I could determine which identities intersected to impact each individual ALMAS member, as well as which identities were identified by many ALMAS members as having a particular impact on them and their organizing efforts. This dual

approach to the intersectional analysis added a richness to my findings which will be explored in detail in the following chapters.

ALMAS Profiles and Analysis

I created profiles for each of the 20 interview participants. These profiles served as individual sets of data that form a substantial portion of the larger case study. In each of the profiles I included information I gathered from both my observations over the course of almost two years of participant observation, and data gathered from the interviews. I conducted an analysis of each of the 20 interview participants in relation to my research questions, as well as looked at commonalities and possible generalizations that could be made when looking at the group as a whole. In this way I was able to ask my research questions about each of the 20 interview participants, for example: How does this particular woman seem to define and/ or contest citizenship at what scale(s)? How does she define her identities? And how do they interact to impact her? Then, using my primary and secondary data, field notes, and interview transcripts, I was able to answer those primary research questions about each of the main participants in the study. The group as a whole included those 20 interview respondents, plus the 30 other women who were present in the study in other ways over the course of the project. From the twenty main participants, plus supplementary information gathered from the other 30, I was able to draw general themes, commonalities, and discrepancies in order to develop my findings about the group as a whole, while also holding space for the diversity and divergent experiences of individual ALMAS members.

Reflection, Evaluation, and Validity Concerns

Throughout the PAR process I reflected back with ALMAS at CLG to ensure internal validity to my findings. Throughout the research process I occasionally met with ALMAS members to present my preliminary research findings. I developed a participatory and interactive way to do this, including small group discussions with 2-4 women, so that participants felt comfortable sharing their opinions and suggestions. At the larger forum, I presented general data and findings based on nearly two years of participant observation, twenty in-depth interviews, and archival research. Again, I made this as interactive as possible to provide a space where people with multiple ways of communicating would feel comfortable to share their opinions. I asked for feedback, critiques, suggestions etc. At the end of each interview and during these small group and large forum discussions, I asked the participants how they wanted to use this information to support local organizing efforts. The collective answers to that question will be shared in my concluding remarks.

Based on the individual and group feedback, and larger forum, I reflected on the input and suggestions of participants to ensure that my results were congruent with their experiences. As any conflicts or contentions arose as a result of my findings, I developed a transparent and multi-faceted process to uncover if my findings were indeed accurate. Interview participants were also invited to help analyze and code data gathered through the research process.

I engaged in analysis throughout the process of data collection, frequently checking my new data with ongoing analyses to adjust my research approach if needed. I organized my

data in a matrix showing how I explored each of my research questions with each methodological approach (archival, participant observation, and in-depth interviews). Because each line of inquiry was explored via multiple methods, and in multiple phases of my research, I was able to triangulate my findings to ensure validity to my claims.

As a final check for external and internal validity, I shared my findings with other domestic worker leaders and organizers from other organizations with a similar membership base and mission. I took note of their reflections and reactions in my field notes. Through these conversations I was able to assess whether and how my dual role as organizer and researcher impacted my assessment and analysis of ALMAS' organizing efforts. These conversations were extremely helpful in beginning to determine how generalizable the theoretical contributions of this research may be. I discuss this further in my findings and concluding chapters.

Locations of Participant Observation

There are three main locations or contexts where I conducted research for this project:

1. With ALMAS members in various settings, as described above
2. As a member of the steering committee with the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition (CDWRC), some times accompanied by ALMAS members, and some times without them.
3. As a participant in SOL, the two-year leadership development program offered by the National Domestic Workers Alliance and partner organizations, which stood for Strategy. Organizing. Leadership. (which will be described in detail in Chapter 5)

Chapter 5 draws heavily from my participant-observation as part of both the CA state coalition, and the National Alliance. I consider these arenas to be important sites of participant observation when I was accompanied by members of ALMAS, but not so centrally when I participated without them. For example, as a member of the steering committee for the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, I was nearly always accompanied by ALMAS members at Coalition events, but I participated on weekly conference calls with other steering committee members without an ALMAS member present. Two ALMAS members participated in the first SOL retreat, and one different ALMAS member participated in the last three SOL retreats. When not accompanied by an ALMAS member at SOL, I was more of a participant than a researcher. I did not take extensive field notes, but rather reflected back on program training materials and my informal notes that I took as a participant in the program. When ALMAS members did join me at SOL, and I do include my observations of them and their own reflections as they recounted them to me during in-depth interviews.

In contexts where ALMAS members were not present with me, I paid more attention to the ways that organizers in other domestic worker organizations talked about the organizing practices of their members, and in the ways that I was learning or being affected by the experience I was having as an organizer. In these contexts, I took less rigorous field notes, since I was not accompanied by ALMAS members, but gathered data on organizing strategy as compiled through meeting minutes and training materials.

In addition to the participation of three ALMAS members in SOL, many members also participated in NDWA trainings, congresses, convenings, and mobilizations, apart from SOL. ALMAS members attended and led trainings during the Caring Across Generations Congress in San Francisco in 2012, traveled to Washington DC for the NDWA National Care Congress, and participated in two national lobby efforts in Washington DC to win Comprehensive Immigration Reform as part of NDWA's "We Belong Together" campaign.

As the organizer for ALMAS, I was responsible for engaging ALMAS members as leaders in both the steering committee for the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition (CA Coalition) and the campaign to win the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights (BOR). There are two main ways that this has informed my research. First, as a member of a coalition with sister organizations around the state, I was able to engage with other organizers, check in with them about their organizing models and strategies, and also get a sense of how my role as researcher-organizer may have influenced participants in my case study. Through many one-on-one conversations with other organizers in the CA Coalition, I was assured that what I and we were doing in ALMAS, was similar to what was being done in other domestic worker-led organizations. This helped account for any impact I may have had on the specific organizing efforts of ALMAS.

The second major impact of ALMAS' participation in the CA Coalition, for this study, is that I was able to participate with and observe many ALMAS members engaging in a specific and long-term transformative organizing campaign, directed at the state level, but waged at various scales of influence. Through the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights

campaign, ALMAS members planned and participated in rallies, marches, lobby visits, vigils, and trainings, in Sonoma County, in San Francisco, in Los Angeles, and at the state Capitol in Sacramento. They drew from local resources, reaching out to develop relationships with allies at the Labor Center and throughout Sonoma County, and leveraged that power to join sister organizations from other cities to converge on the state capital. This campaign was the primary campaign of ALMAS during the course of this study, and offers an important container through which to explore the various essential components of ALMAS organizing efforts in general.

Overview of Findings Chapters

In my final chapters, I explore the many ways that members of ALMAS, as participants in the domestic worker movement, are challenging and framing what it means to be a citizen in the neoliberal era; where their struggle is most relevant and effective; and how intersecting systems of oppression and identities have impacted them in their efforts. In chapter 5 I provide the context for ALMAS' organizing efforts by offering a descriptive overview of domestic worker organizing in the United States and the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), and domestic worker organizing in California, with special attention paid to the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights Campaign. In chapter 6, I explore the specific ways that ALMAS contests and struggles for inclusion, membership, social justice, and ultimately citizenship at multiple scales. In chapter 7, I explore the impact of intersecting systems of oppression and identities on the multi-scalar organizing efforts of ALMAS. Finally, in Chapter 8 I engage some of the remaining debates within the Urban Citizenship literature, and attempt to resolve some of these debates considering the

lived experiences and voices of ALMAS and domestic workers organizing for justice in the United States. I also offer lessons for radical planning practitioners and community organizers interested in promoting transformative organizing for collective liberation in our cities and communities.

CHAPTER 5: THE LANDSCAPE OF DOMESTIC WORKER ORGANIZING IN THE UNITED STATES AND CALIFORNIA

The U.S. domestic worker movement would not exist as it does today if it were not for the historical exclusion and oppression of domestic workers, and the social movements that emerged to fight for women's, civil, and immigrant's rights²⁹. Most domestic workers that I have observed to be engaged in the domestic worker movement are immigrant women of color, fighting to be viewed as real workers. Domestic work and citizenship have been racialized and gendered in relation to one another, in the service of capitalism, throughout history. The formal exclusion of domestic workers from the Fair Labor Standards Act and other progressive labor reforms in the 1930s, was connected to the racialization of Irish and Black domestic workers in late 19th and early 20th centuries (Phillips 2013), and attempts to deny those workers both substantive and formal citizenship and labor rights. Seventy-five years later, it is still a struggle to have the labor of immigrant women of color be viewed as equal and valuable work, deserving of the same labor protections other workers enjoy.

At the time of this writing, the:

²⁹ The labor movement is notably missing here from the list of movements responsible for the making of the domestic worker movement in the US today. I did not exclude it because it has not made an impact, but because when presenting on the roots of the movement at a leadership development training, the lead researcher for the NDWA, Linda Burnham, did not mention it. Perhaps this is because the labor movement in the United States has not traditionally prioritized the struggle for immigrant women of color's labor rights. Fortunately we are seeing significant change in this regard in the contemporary labor movement, as allies within the AFL-CIO, including President Richard Trumka, have stepped up in support of the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and other protections for domestic workers.

“National Domestic Workers Alliance is the nation’s leading voice for the millions of domestic workers in the United States, most of whom are women. NDWA is powered by 39 local, membership-based affiliate organizations of over 10,000 nannies, housekeepers and caregivers for the elderly located in 14 states, plus the District of Columbia (NDWA website).”

The NDWA was formed at the US Social Forum in 2007. The coming together of key domestic worker organizations represented the start of a national movement for domestic workers rights in the United States, but the roots of this movement date back over a century. In 1881 the Atlanta Washing Society held a 10 day strike:

“Some domestic workers in the Reconstruction South organized and held strikes in Jackson, Mississippi, and Galveston, Texas, to demand better pay. In Atlanta, a group of laundresses not only demanded higher wages, but also control of the city’s washing industry. Police arrested and fined the participants, but the Washing Society gained 3,000 members (Caldwell 2013).”

Furthermore, one of the first domestic worker organizing groups, the Working Women’s Association, formed in 1901, “After a Chicago newswoman went undercover as a live-in servant to expose domestic workers’ experiences of mistreatment and long hours with little pay, some workers were inspired to form a union (Caldwell 2013)”. And in 1934:

“Domestic servant Dora Lee Jones launched the Domestic Workers Union, which enlisted 75,000 members and initiated the “Stand Up a Lady for Work Campaign,” encouraging African American female domestic servants to demand fair pay and hours from employers. It lobbied the state and federal government for wage and

hour laws and inclusion in the Social Security Act, and later affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (Caldwell 2013)."

Leaders within NDWA acknowledge that the contemporary domestic workers movement would not be possible if it were not for the gains made by freedom fighters in multiple waves of the feminist movement, the civil rights movement, and the immigrant rights movement. These historical roots impact the ways that the domestic worker movement grows and moves forward, and in the ways that the movement represents a contestation for citizenship in the United States.

Like the immigrant rights movement, NDWA's fight for equality and membership is multi-scalar and inclusive of immigrant workers regardless of legal immigration status. Similar to the civil rights movement's efforts to extend civil rights to all people, one of NDWA's primary goals is to extend the basic labor laws and protections to domestic workers that most other workers enjoy. Finally, deeply rooted in the intersectional analyses developed by third wave women of color feminists, the NDWA is promoting a feminine-centered model for organizing to build power with love and inclusion of difference, and multiplicity at the intersections of multiple sites of oppression. As one ALMAS member said:

"The rights we have right now as women, were fought for and won by other women who came before. They fought for the common interest of women, and we get to benefit now" ~Isis

NDWA is not only seeking formal citizenship rights for its members, but is trying to transform the culture of our society to be one that is life-affirming, rooted in love and

interdependence, and will be inclusive enough to support the development of healthy relationships of mutual care and respect within the domestic work industry and beyond it. Building from the legacy of feminism, civil rights, and immigrant rights, the domestic worker movement in the United States also represents the struggle for economic citizenship and workers rights. The struggle is multi-scalar because domestic workers have been excluded from membership at multiple scales. To build power, the sources of liberation, inclusion, and justice must also be multi-scalar, starting with the body, or individual, and reaching out to the globe in international and transnational solidarity.

*The landscape of domestic worker organizing at the National Scale: Leading with Love*³⁰

For the purpose and scope of this project I limit my review of the domestic worker movement to the context of the United States. With that said, I must mention that the domestic worker movement is a global, transnational organizing effort connected through domestic worker-led organizations, coalitions, networks, and alliances through the International Domestic Workers Network (IDWN)³¹ which is steadily advancing the material and social conditions of domestic workers around the world. Rooted in the lived experiences and voices of domestic worker leaders, and through the organizing efforts of member organizations and the NDWA, domestic workers are organizing at the national and global scales at the forefront of what we are calling *transformative organizing*.

Transformative organizing is a relatively new concept in the world of community

³⁰ *Leading with Love* was the title for the NDWA's fifth year anniversary gala and celebration that I attended with one ALMAS member in Washington DC

³¹ See <http://www.idwn.info/> for more information regarding the International Domestic Workers Network, of which NDWA is a member.

organizers, and so the definition is still being collectively developed among leaders, organizers, and allied researchers³². In addition to the definitions of transformative organizing offered by Smock and others, the transformative organizing practices within the domestic worker movement go beyond raising consciousness, and integrate *somatics* and the embodiment of healing and personal transformation, in order to transform our world. Because it is centered in the body, and not only the mind, I argue that this is a deeply feminist and feminine-centered model for community organizing.

Returning to the U.S. based movement, member organizations of the NDWA, including ALMAS of the Graton Day Labor Center, are committed to advancing domestic workers rights, and to developing individual domestic workers into empowered leaders. Some member organizations are day labor or community centers. Others provide a space for women to come together around shared struggles with domestic violence, poverty, or employment.

Not your traditional labor movement

As opposed to traditional union organizing that organizes industry-wide campaigns around one particular work site or employer, the nature of domestic work, and the lived experiences of domestic workers, calls for a different approach. This approach is closely aligned to the community-based organizing approaches of many day laborer or workers centers (See Fine (2006) for a thorough study of workers centers in the US).

³² When I reached out to fellow researchers focusing on NDWA and transformative organizing via email, they shared that they also found this topic has not received much scholarly attention

Similar to the labor movement, building a base of members to build power is central to winning campaigns for workers rights. However, because any one domestic worker can have multiple employers under varying working conditions, defining a target for a campaign can be more complicated. NDWA member organizations do regularly organize campaigns around individual employers who have attempted to abuse or exploit workers. Campaigns are and should be waged against individual exploitative employers, but they should be done in the context of the larger movement vision. Winning back wages, or changing the behavior of one employer, isn't going to transform the way that domestic work is seen by the larger society. On the other hand, state and nationally directed campaigns for new labor laws and protections ensure that a wider audience has access to the lived realities of domestic workers, and that widespread change could happen³³.

Domestic worker campaigns always have dual goals, internal and external: Win the campaign, and build your base to build a movement (Mather 2012). The director of the NDWA, Ai-jen Poo, echoed this sentiment at one of the SOL retreats, but saying that domestic worker organizing always takes into account internal development and growth of members and organizations (aka base-building), in the context of winning broader transformative campaigns to change society.

The use of media and community pressure is central to winning these campaigns, and leveraging those wins to make larger gains at the state or national levels. For example, a

³³ It should be noted that the United Farm Workers (UFW) has also turned to the state or federal governments as an organizing strategy, in part because farm workers have a shared history with domestic workers: They were both excluded from the Fair Labor Standards Act and other labor laws in the 1930s.

lead organizer with Domestic Workers United (DWU), one of the anchor organizations responsible for winning the New York Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in 2010, shared that a key tactic to winning the Bill of Rights campaign in New York, was to highlight the rampant cases of abuse perpetuated by individual employers. By winning a wage claim against an abusive employer, they were able to highlight in the media the prevalence of such abuse in the industry, thus swaying public opinion toward their favor. This campaign also attracted new domestic worker members to the New York coalition organizations, strengthening their base, and thus strengthening the movement. Winning public favor and building their base were both central to winning the New York State Bill of Rights. Individual wage campaigns are one of many tactics used in the overall New York strategy, but highlight the different approaches needed than one would find in traditional union organizing.

Where in union organizing the battle is often waged between workers and employers, where workers are organized to leverage their collective power over their employer, the domestic worker movement calls on allies in faith communities, student groups, labor and elsewhere to collectively demand new laws to govern the employment relationships between domestic work employers and workers, all in the context of a vision for a transformed society.

Using Smock's typology of community organizing models (as described above) I would argue that the form of transformative organizing being developed partially through NDWA is a combination of Smock's women-centered, power-based, and transformative models,

and embodies the theory and practice of somatics, which I will explain below. When I refer to transformative organizing in this paper, I am referring to this more expansive definition.

Based in my research, observations, and participation with NDWA and SOL, the CDWRC, and as an organizer with ALMAS, I view transformative organizing as a model for organizing, which places at the center, personal healing and transformation, in order to bring about collective liberation, and social change. Through intentional work on our selves, we are more equipped to be change agents at the levels of our organizations, our communities, and beyond. This model recognizes the multi-scalar nature of organizing for justice, since we are impacted by unhealthy and oppressive power dynamics at all scales. Collective Liberation, as I use it, refers to the fact that we are all interdependent in society, and recognizes that we are all hurt by systems of oppression, even when we are supposedly privileged by them. Collective liberation means that by dismantling racism, patriarchy, or other systems of oppression, white people, men, etc will benefit because their full humanity will be restored. Under current systems of oppression and privilege, we are all hurting, because the denial of one person's humanity essentially compromises the humanity of the collective. (See long time organizer Chris Crass' work "Towards Collective Liberation" (2013) for an excellent discussion of this topic).

The transformative organizing model practiced by domestic workers looks at multiple and embedded sites of *oppression* as multiple and embedded potential sites and sources of *liberation*. For example, internalized oppression happens when we take on the negative ascribed identities and descriptions of who we are based in societal power dynamics of

oppression. For example, women living in a patriarchal society can internalize ideas that perpetuate our own subordination to men, and in turn we can become the ones who hurt each other the most on a daily basis. For one ALMAS member, who is Mexican, internalizing oppression means regularly complaining that Mexicans don't help each other and that they are not contributing in a positive way to the larger society. "We are ignorant, we don't learn, we don't want to grow." Even though she is also an immigrant from Mexico, she has lived and worked primarily with white employers as a live-in caregiver, and has internalized negative stereotypes about herself and her fellow *paisanos*³⁴. On the other hand, another ALMAS member, Gloria recently responded to her by saying "don't kid yourself, we aren't all the same, many of us help each other."

Freire (1990) argues that oppressive societies serve to perpetuate the power and wealth of the oppressor, and that the oppressed perpetuate their own situation because they have internalized the oppressor within them. This internalization is complex and difficult to see without looking at the situation critically. If we are unaware of our situation, then we do not have the power to change it. Internalizing the oppressor as part of ourselves prevents us from challenging that entity within us. Therefore it is through greater awareness of our situation that we can begin to change it.

Through the SOL training, three organizations: NDWA, generative Somatics, and Social Justice Leadership put forth the argument that with an intentional practice of centering and

³⁴ The spanish term *paisano* most often refers to people not only from the same country (i.e. Mexico), but even from the same state (i.e. Oaxaca) or village. I use the term broadly to encompass all of these shared relationships with home country, but will clarify when important, if I am referring to people from the same state or town in Mexico.

self-awareness, we can also recognize the ways we have embodied oppression in order to challenge it and liberate ourselves, in community with one another, and as part of a broader social movement for justice and freedom. In a paper produced by Social Justice Leadership (SJL 2010) , Transformative Organizing “is about creating deep change at multiple levels simultaneously: how we are as people, how we relate to each other, and how we structure society. It brings together impactful grassroots organizing with ideological development and personal transformation to create a new paradigm for organizing”. They go on to say that “the long term goal of Transformative Organizing is simple: to help transform society into one that is free from oppression and free from suffering (p. 5).” SJL distinguishes between *oppression* and *suffering*, arguing that oppression is an experience we have based on interactions with the broader society and systems of domination, oppression, and privilege. Suffering, on the other hand, is “an internal response to the external conditions we face.” Suffering then becomes a barrier for people to bring our “best selves” forward, in our relationships, and in our organizing. As I described above, the domestic worker movement is always interested in achieving internal and external goals. In this conception of transformative organizing, the “abolition of oppression requires that we engage society’s structures, whereas the extinguishing of suffering requires that we engage ourselves (p.8).”

With this emerging conceptualization of transformative organizing mind, NDWA and partners have embarked on a journey to integrate *somatics* with community organizing, as central to developing the transformative organizing model with domestic workers.

According to NDWA, *Transformative Organizing* involves “transformation at the individual, community, movement and society levels” It embodies “changing conditions in which we live, changing ourselves and our relationships.” A transformative organizing campaign “is an organized plan to leverage collective power to win demands that transform current conditions towards our long term vision.” Somatics-based transformative organizing involves developing practices around centering, which I will describe at length below.

SOL - Strategy. Organizing. Leadership.

The funding for my position as the organizer for ALMAS was tied to my participation in a two-year somatics-based, leadership development program through the National Domestic Workers Alliance. SOL, which stands for Strategy Organizing and Leadership, consisted of five four-day intensive retreats and monthly conference calls, as well as follow-up activities between each of the retreats to put into practice what we had learned through the program.

During my participation in SOL, I was more of a participant than a participant-observer. I was not always accompanied by a member of ALMAS, and so did not view it as a central location for my research, but as part of the participatory experience I had as an organizer while conducting research for this dissertation. I am clarifying this because while I do want to draw from my experience at SOL and with NDWA to provide the context for the work that ALMAS is doing, this is not meant to be a rigorous and thorough analysis of NDWA, or of transformative organizing. Here I provide a descriptive narrative of my experience with

SOL so as to share what I feel are some of the building blocks for the domestic worker movement at the national scale. As mentioned in my methods section, I rely on notes I took as a participant in the program, and all program handouts and materials.

The building blocks of domestic worker and transformative organizing, as developed through SOL and NDWA, inform and resonate with the work being done by ALMAS and so offer a broader context for my case study, and allow me to generalize some of my findings for the broader domestic worker movement in general. My experience with SOL was an extremely formative and transformative experience personally, and so it is important to explore the ways that my participation impacted my approach to organizing, and on ALMAS members once I returned back to the Labor Center having participated in SOL.

SOL is a joint collaboration between three organizations, the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), Generative Somatics (gS), and Social Justice Leadership (SjL). Each of these groups have a shared mission and vision of collective liberation and social change, including a commitment to personal transformation in the pursuit of changing our world. Leaders within these organizations came together to offer SOL in order to bring the embodied practices of somatics to the domestic worker movement, as part of a broader goal to integrate somatics, and what we are calling transformative organizing, into community organizing around multiple social justice concerns.

Here I provide working definitions for some of the main concepts developed and promoted through SOL, and note which organization provided each definition. I then explore the ways

that these concepts impacted me as a person and as an organizer in order to be transparent about the ways I was shaped as an organizer through the SOL experience. When I dive further into the organizing practices of ALMAS, and my role as organizer, I will refer back to these concepts and experiences when relevant.

Key Terms and Definitions offered by the organizers of SOL³⁵

Interdependence “is the practice of being in relationship with people and organizations from a place of intent, rather than happenstance or habit. This practice acknowledges that we cannot reach success alone, and that all relationships large and small will better meet the needs of the parties if they are approached with attention and intention. Interdependence recognizes that social justice organizations will only be successful if the broader movement is successful, and that an important component of our work therefore must be movement-building (SJL).” Interdependence is also useful when considering the interconnected and interdependent relationship of a domestic worker and the person she cares for. Central to the movement for domestic workers rights is a recognition that people who need care deserve to have it with dignity and respect (NDWA).

When one hears the word “somatics” we could think of common uses of the term like “psycho-somatic”, where we experience emotional or mental realities at the scale of the body. Somatics can refer to the mind-body connection. For example, when someone is

³⁵ These definitions were included in training materials at SOL

stressed, and that manifests in a stomach ache, we could call that a psycho-somatic response to an emotional experience. Here is the definition of somatics offered by leaders of SOL in the context of transformative organizing:

Somatics “is an embodied path of transformation. What does that mean? We embody or internalize our individual experiences and social environments. We then form a variety of survival strategies to navigate this complex maze. Oppression and privilege are two huge forces that influence or shape us, getting us to act, think and behave from these rather than our values. We say we want one thing, but our actions and words show another. Somatics understands transformation, both creating and sustaining it, through a radically different framework. It approaches people and systems as an integrated whole – thinking, feeling, emotional, biological/physiological, spiritual and social/relational beings. Its principles and practices are grounded in the interdependence between the mind, body, spirit, land, relationship and social context (gS).”

Acting from Center “is the practice of engaging work and life from the place where we have the most balance, poise, thoughtfulness, and power. Acting from Center recognizes that many things threaten to throw us off balance, but that our greatest strength lies in our ability to return to Center and respond to life with clarity, effectiveness, and precision rather than react from a place of *unbalanced*³⁶ thought, emotion, or action (SJL).”

³⁶ I italicize here for emphasis

Each SOL retreat had a theme or focus, and asked participants to develop work plans to engage our membership and organizations in lessons learned between the retreats.

Retreat 1: Vision, Mission, and Strategy (for individuals and for organizations)

In this retreat we learned about *somatics* and *centering* practices. We learned about conditioned tendencies (fight, flight, freeze, appease, dissociate), and the more powerful alternatives to these when we *act from center*. We began to develop personal and leadership commitments, and got clear on the mission, vision, and strategies of the NDWA. Finally, we prepared to integrate lessons from SOL in our organizations in the two years to come. During this retreat I met with my supervisor and the two ALMAS members who attended this retreat to develop a plan for strengthening the group. We came up with the idea to have a retreat for ALMAS members to develop a vision and work plan for moving forward.

Retreat 2: Base-building for Movement Building

Here we developed base-building strategies and plans to take home, described our membership structures, and explored how building a base of domestic workers can support the broader movement for domestic workers rights. At this retreat I was not accompanied by an ALMAS members, but reviewed the materials with my supervisor upon my return to the Labor Center and discussed some of the challenges to base-building with a group that also sees each other as competition for obtaining employment. This became a point of contention for the group, and will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

Retreat 3. Embodying Collective Change: Waging Transformative Campaigns

Here we learned about the *arc of transformation*, strategy, and organizing effective and transformative social justice campaigns. We also deepened our strategy around campaigns we were working on in our organizations or state-wide coalitions. At this and the final two retreats, I was accompanied by ALMAS member Tonantzin. She and I met throughout the retreat to reflect on what we were learning, and how to incorporate some of the tools into the work and every day practices of ALMAS. We decided to introduce the *arc of transformation* and the concept of transformative organizing campaigns as a way to understand how we, as a group, were approaching the CA Bill of Rights Campaign. This will be discussed further below.

Retreat 4. Healing trauma and Building Resilience Through Individual and Collective Action

In this retreat we explored the ways we have each experienced trauma or suffering, and the ways that trauma, often rooted in oppressive societal forces (broken immigration system and the separation of families; patriarchy and violence against women etc) impact our lives and abilities to organize and act from center. We explored the ways we do and can build resilience to help heal this trauma, and the potential collective power that that process can produce.

Retreat 5. Assessing Conditions and Making Strategy

In the fifth and final SOL retreat we reinforced what we had learned throughout the two-year program, including how to complete a power analysis, and how to give meaningful

assessments or evaluations to individuals, and for our collective work. We finished the program with talking about long-term strategy and how to make key tactical decisions along the way in a transformative organizing campaign.

Taking somatics and transformative organizing home to ALMAS

There are several main practices and models that I took from SOL and integrated into my organizing efforts with ALMAS. Some of these were already utilized by ALMAS members before I came to the organization, such as base-building, one-on-ones, leadership development and campaign strategies. Others were new lessons that I integrated into the practices and norms of ALMAS. These included somatic practices of centering and developing embodied leadership and personal commitments, and the arc of transformation. I want to focus here, on the models that I integrated into ALMAS that were not previously being used by the organization, to acknowledge the impact I may have had on the organizing practices of ALMAS members over the course of this project.

Somatics, Centering practices, and Embodied Commitments

During each SOL retreat we were invited to “center” several times a day, each day. A trained somatics facilitator would guide us in a *centering practice* by asking us to stand in a circle with our eyes open. She would then ask us to notice our bodies, our sensations, where we are hot or cold, how we feel, how the clothes on our bodies feel on our skin, where we are tense, where we are light, where we are relaxed or where we are holding on

to stress etc. She would then invite us to center around four axes: our length, our width, our depth, and around what we care about, or our center.

In centering around length, she would remind us that this represents our dignity, and that we should be rooted into the earth, and reaching up into our height to express our full dignity. In centering around our width we would be reminded that our side-to-side body should expand, representing both our engagement in community, as well as our ability to have boundaries to protect ourselves. In centering in our depth (front to back), we would be reminded of all who came before us, who have our back, our ancestors, other women and men who have fought and struggled for what we are struggling for, and who have made it possible for us to be in the room today. In front of us, we were asked to envision our vision, our personal or collective goals for the domestic worker movement or a better society in general. Finally, we would center around what we care about, or our center. For some this could be our physical center, found by placing our hands on our bellies, a few inches down from our belly buttons. Here we were reminded to center around what we care about, or what we are a personal or leadership commitment to. Again we would be reminded to settle into our bodies, to extend in our height and dignity, out through our width and community, and forward towards our vision, rooted in all that has come before us.

Depending on the facilitator the specific details and length of these centering practices would vary. A centering practice could be done in one deep breath, or could take up to 20

minutes (In my experience at SOL). In essence these were the main core elements that are incorporated in each centering practice.

Centering is the core somatics practice that we learned at SOL, and that I took home with me to ALMAS. For the first year of SOL I did a centering practice on a daily basis with my supervisor at the Graton Day Labor Center. She and I would often go outside to “center”, and to practice some of the other somatics-based centering practices we had learned at SOL. After about a year of practicing, I started to facilitate a centering practice during ALMAS meetings. Somatics is a rigorous practice that can take decades to learn to facilitate for others, and we were asked to take great care in how we integrated it into our organizations, in order to maintain the integrity of the practice. Centering is now something that we commonly do to open and to close ALMAS meetings.

I know that for me personally, centering has made me a stronger leader and more powerful organizer. I am more able to bring my whole self to complex situations and conflict. Instead of reacting out of my conditioned tendencies to fight, flee, or freeze, I am more able to “act from center”. I am not 100% sure how my own personal transformation has impacted individual ALMAS members, but my feeling is that by showing up in a more centered way, invites others to do the same. ALMAS members have told me that centering helps them feel “more powerful”, “more capable to fight”, “more united with each other”, and “more peaceful”. It is a practice that we are just beginning to integrate in a rigorous way, but I do feel like it has already reinforced the power and strength that ALMAS members have always carried with them.

Somatics and transformative organizing is about *embodying* the world we want to live in. The language and tools used to advance this model reflect that intention. For example, instead of saying, I am committed to organizing with domestic workers. A somatics and transformative approach would be to say: *I am a commitment* to organizing with domestic workers. In this way, we aren't just saying what we would like to do, but we are embodying that commitment by taking it on as part of who we are. I am a commitment to finishing my PhD. I am a commitment to being a strong and powerful woman and leader rooted in the domestic worker movement. Using this language *feels* more powerful to me, and it is a tool that I am just beginning to bring to ALMAS to support the group's efforts towards embodied and transformative social change at multiple scales. With that said, and as I will describe in detail in the following chapters, ALMAS members were already embodying the types of social change that SOL and the NDWA promoted through SOL. To me this speaks to the natural link between transformative organizing and the lived realities of domestic worker leaders who have been engaging in the domestic worker rights struggle for many years.

The Arc of Transformation: Current Shape, Openings, and Intended Shape

The arc of transformation model, in its most simple form, includes three main components. At the left, bottom of the arc, is *current shape*. At the center and top of the arc is an *Opening*, and at the bottom right side of the arc is an *intended shape*. This model is useful for envisioning and embodying transformation at any scale (individual, organization,

community, movement, society etc.). *Current shape* represents where we as individuals, or we as a movement etc are today. *Future shape* represents where we want to be. *Openings* are moments, opportunities, conflicts, campaigns, experiences, etc, that we must move through in order to obtain our intended shape. For example, at the scale of the home (as workplace), we could envision the current shape of domestic workers as one that is vulnerable, exploited, abused, and excluded from protections. By moving through the openings of transformative organizing campaigns, and the struggle, negotiation, and work that that entails, ALMAS could move toward embodying the future shape of domestic workers: one that is strong, valued, included in workplace protections, and that is visible and seen as a real worker.

SOL trainers argue that if we move through openings *from center*, then we are more capable to achieve the shape we desire to embody. I introduced this model to ALMAS as a way to explore our current shape and where we wanted to be as a group in the future. When conflicts arose in the group later on, members would recall the arc of transformation and call the conflict an “opening” that we could walk through together to hopefully be stronger.

Some times the use of the *arc of transformation* was effective, and the group was able to move through conflict and stay united. On the other hand, there were also times when the opening was too painful to be overcome, and the result was lack of unity and even withdrawal from ALMAS altogether. On one occasion, an ALMAS member was upset because she thought that another member was saying offensive things about her behind

her back³⁷. The woman accused of talking badly about her fellow member asked for an emergency ALMAS meeting to clarify what she actually said, and to make sure that everyone knew that she didn't say what she was accused of saying. One of the most established leaders of the group reminded everyone of the arc of transformation and suggested that this conversation could be an opening for everyone to move through to be more united. What ended up happening, was that both women involved felt so hurt and betrayed by the other, even though through clarification it was apparent to everyone else that nothing was specifically done or said in bad faith, that they both stopped coming to the Labor Center, and stopped participating in ALMAS. There were other factors at play in their withdrawal from the group. One obtained regular employment as a farmworker, but the other stopped coming immediately after the emergency ALMAS meeting, and didn't return any of my phone calls. Prior to this experience, the two women involved were good friends, who had a shared experience of being sexually harassed at a job site. Personal conflicts, rooted in shared oppression, are discussed further in the section below regarding challenges for ALMAS.

The California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, and the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition

California domestic worker organizing efforts started emerging in San Francisco and Los Angeles in 2004. At this time, domestic worker leaders and organizers from Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA), Pilipino Workers Center (PWC), and the Coalition for Humane

³⁷ I recount this story in a vague way so as to protect the confidentiality of ALMAS members who were involved.

Immigration Reform Los Angeles (CHIRLA) starting engaging in conversations about the need to join forces in coalition to introduce legislation for domestic workers rights³⁸. These conversations were held in part because a coalition of domestic worker organizations, led by Domestic Workers United (DWU), in the State of New York, had also formed and was forging ahead to win the first State Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. Following New York and California's efforts to win state level Bills of Rights, similar legislative campaigns emerged in Hawaii, Illinois, and Massachusetts, among others (NDWA website). The California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition was formed in 2005.

At the time of this writing, the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition is led by a steering committee of seven domestic worker membership-based organizations, including ALMAS of the Graton Day Labor Center, MUA, PWC, CHIRLA, Filipino Advocates for Justice (FAJ), the Women's Collective of Dolores Street Community Services (La Colectiva), and the Instituto de Educación Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA). In addition to the steering committee, the CDWRC is also composed of other groups who organize domestic workers, like People Organized to Win Employment Rights (POWER), the San Diego Day Laborers and Household Workers Association, as well as allied groups and organizations representing many faith, disability, employer, and student communities across the State.

After the CDRWC was formed in 2005, founding member organizations held regional and statewide congresses to identify coalition priorities, and met with supportive Assembly-

³⁸ Information regarding the history of California domestic worker organizing was gathered through email correspondence with lead organizers at NDWA and MUA who were part of the initial development of NDWA and the state Coalition.

member Cindy Montanez in the fall of 2005 to introduce legislation in January 2006. This legislation was unsuccessful, but paved the way for evaluation and growth to continue ahead with future efforts in the coming years. The Coalition grew and supported the creation of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, and built momentum for a new legislative campaign in California. In 2009 the Coalition held a workers congress in the San Francisco Bay Area, and in 2010 was successful in passing a resolution in support of domestic workers rights at the state level with the support of Assembly-member Manuel Perez. Assembly Bill 889 (AB889), the CA Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, co-authored by Assembly-members Tom Ammiano and Manuel Perez, was first introduced in 2011, but got stuck in “suspense”³⁹ in August of 2011. In 2012, AB889 passed through the entire legislative process, winning majority support in both the Assembly and Senate, but was ultimately vetoed by Governor Jerry Brown in the last minutes of the legislative year, the evening of September 30th, 2012. In 2013, the Bill of Rights was reintroduced, this time under the number AB241 with the same legislators authoring the Bill.

ALMAS and the Graton Day Labor Center joined NDWA in November 2009, and shortly thereafter participated as a member of the CDWRC. In 2010, ALMAS played a supportive role to pass the resolution in support of domestic workers, and in 2011 and 2012 ALMAS was a member of the steering committee for the state Coalition, and prioritized the struggle

³⁹ When proposed legislation is seen to have a fiscal impact on the state, it is often taken from the Senate or Assembly Appropriations committees and placed in the “suspense” file for further investigation into the actual cost of the proposed bill.

to win the CA Domestic Worker Bill of Rights as its major external campaign for justice for domestic workers.⁴⁰

Over the three years of the Bill of Rights Campaign, the provisions included in the Bill have changed and been modified through intense negotiations and amendments. At each step of the way, domestic worker leaders, including members of ALMAS, played a central role in negotiation and decision-making. Although Assembly member Tom Ammiano was the official author of the Bill, he and his office treated the steering committee as a partner in a grass-roots effort to win the legislation. All major decisions around negotiations and changes to the Bill were made by the steering committee, in consultation with Ammiano's office.

At steering committee in-person and phone meetings, ALMAS members were asked by Coalition leadership to make strategic campaign decisions, and to weigh in on what their priorities were for the Bill. At an in-person steering committee meeting held at the Graton Day Labor Center, domestic worker leaders and organizers from all steering committee groups, including ALMAS, participated in discussions and activities to explore what the bottom line would be for the campaign. In other words, what could be won, so that steering committee members still felt that the Bill was a victory? Coalition coordinators reviewed the legislative process, reminding everyone present that it was likely for provisions to be changed or lost as the Bill passes through Assembly and Senate Committees. In an interactive activity, participants were asked to stand on one side of the room. Various

⁴⁰ Any information I use regarding ALMAS prior to the start of my research project was gathered from former organizers or member leaders of ALMAS, and confirmed by at least one other source.

statements were read out loud, and we were asked to move our bodies towards one side or another. Each side represented an opinion about the statement, i.e. I agree, I strongly disagree. For example, one statement was: "It is more important to me to have a right to over time pay than it is for me to have workers compensation." In this way, participants were asked to use their bodies to express their opinions about potential changes in the Bill, and be visibly taken into account during the process. After each statement was read, participants moved their bodies to the space in the room that represented their opinion. Once there, participants were asked to discuss with the people around them how they felt about the particular issue, and one person shared back with the whole group what was discussed. Through activities like this, members of the steering committee were able to collectively prioritize what was most important, and inform future negotiations with regard to provisions in the Bill.

In addition to making strategic decisions about the Bill of Rights, ALMAS members also did outreach to garner support from allies, and co-organized massive mobilizations to Sacramento for press conferences, marches, rallies, and lobby visits. They engaged as active members in the steering committee of the coalition by attending meetings in San Francisco and Los Angeles, and spoke on behalf of the Coalition in public events, on the radio, and via news print, TV, and online media outlets.

When the California Bill of Rights was first introduced, ALMAS members and members of the other steering committee organizations, developed a set of demands to be included in the legislation. These points or provisions included the Right to:

1. Over time pay
2. Workers Compensation
3. Meal and Rest Breaks
4. Cost of Living Adjustment
5. Use of Kitchen Facilities and right to cook own food
6. Uninterrupted Sleep
7. Paid Sick Days
8. Paid Vacation Days
9. Reporting time pay
10. 21 days notice for termination of employment
11. Cal OSHA (Health and Safety in the Workplace)

It should be noted that domestic workers are classified in many different ways under federal and state law. For example, the labor protections that cover live-in personal assistants or caregivers, are not the same laws that protect live-out housecleaners, or live-out caregivers⁴¹. It is beyond the scope of this project to outline the many and complicated ways that domestic workers are, or are not, covered under various state or federal laws, but it is important for this study to recognize the ways that the lack of uniform laws has left the industry of domestic work very unclear and workers easy to exploit⁴². The legal reality is that there are some laws that protect domestic workers, but as ALMAS members, and

⁴¹ This information was gathered through conversations and emails with the legal team supporting the CA BOR campaign and CDWRC

⁴² For an example of the complexities surrounding classifying domestic workers, and which laws do or do not cover them, see this website created to help employers of nannies understand what rights their employees have on the job <http://www.nannynetwork.com/library/Parentlib/flsa.cfm>

members of other domestic worker groups, repeatedly share through testimonies, the lived reality is that many workers who are already covered under some laws are still denied access to those rights. Live-out domestic workers who clean houses, like the majority of ALMAS members, already have the right to over time pay and meal and rest breaks, but as we will explore below, every ALMAS member has been denied access to those rights at least once, if not every time they work.

Over the course of the campaign many of the above provisions were lost because of amendments required by various Assembly or Senate committee members and through negotiations with opposition groups. By the time AB889 reached the governor's desk in the fall of 2012, only Over time pay, Meal and Rest Breaks and the Use of Kitchen facilities remained in the Bill. When AB241 was re-introduced in early spring 2013, the Coalition steering committee, including members of ALMAS, decided to include six provisions: Overtime pay; Meal and Rest Breaks, Workers Compensation; The use of Kitchen Facilities, Uninterrupted Sleep, and three personal / sick days. The end result of this legislative campaign is yet to be seen at the time of this writing.

As an organizer with ALMAS, one of my primary responsibilities, as outlined to me by ALMAS members, was to maintain accountable and transparent communication between ALMAS and the Coalition. To do this I participated in weekly conference calls with the coalition, developed worker-led committees within ALMAS dedicated to the work of the Coalition, and provided logistics support (transportation, etc) to ensure ALMAS members were able to participate with the Coalition. Organizing in coalition with other domestic

worker-led organizations in California helped to highlight some of the major tenets of the domestic worker movement in general, and how organized domestic workers define and practice various forms of citizenship. In the next chapter I review some of the central organizing principles as I observed through participating with ALMAS in the Coalition's campaign to win the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in California, among other scales where struggles for citizenship are waged and substantive citizenship is practiced and articulated.

CHAPTER 6: ALIANZA DE MUJERES ACTIVAS Y SOLIDARIAS (ALMAS)

Graton, CA is a small rural town located west of Santa Rosa and north of Sebastopol in Sonoma County, Northern California. Nestled down in a green valley surrounded by vineyards and apple orchards, the commercial district of this rural village is only two blocks long. You wouldn't suspect that this would be where 40-100+ people would congregate on its street corners on any given day in search of work.

When I first started organizing with the Graton Day Labor Center / Centro Laboral de Graton (CLG) as a volunteer day laborer organizer and board member in 2003, there was no physical building or Center. We organized workers on the street corners of the small town of Graton, around a small folding card table. Graton has historically been a site where day laborers would congregate on the street corners in search of work. In the early to mid 1900's Irish and eventually Chinese immigrant male workers would stand in groups on the street corners to look for work. Today the majority of workers are immigrants from Latin America, primarily Mexico, with a large proportion of workers coming from the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca.

The Vision of the Graton Day Labor Center is:

“To Promote healthy communities that value tolerance and respect, so that day laborers, domestic workers and their families may live and work with justice and dignity (CLG website).”

To move this vision forward, the Mission of CLG is:

“To advance and protect the human, labor and civil rights of day laborers, domestic workers and their families by promoting participatory democratic leadership and worker solidarity, in order to develop greater opportunities for employment, health, education and civic participation (CLG website).”

ALMAS, Alianza de Mujeres Activas y Solidarias, or in English, the Women’s Action and Solidarity Alliance⁴³, is the women’s organizing project of CLG. It was founded by the first women who started coming to search for work in Graton in 2005. At first only a couple of women came to the corner. They were greeted with mixed sentiments from their *paisanos*. Some were told that they shouldn’t be there, that “this is no place for a woman”. Others were encouraged. Those who stayed and contributed to the foundation of the women’s group felt that they had a right to look for work since they had the same need as the men to make money and support their families.

Over the years CLG grew into a strong and well-established organization, supported by an active and engaged volunteer board of directors, earning the support and trust of the local community⁴⁴, and relative financial stability through grants and donations from supportive foundations and individuals. Because of this widespread community support, CLG was able

⁴³ The original name for the women’s group was CLAM, Centro Laboral en Apoyo de las Mujeres / Labor Center in Support of Women. ALMAS members went through a lengthy process to change the name to ALMAS in order to have the name more accurately reflect the vision and mission of the group.

⁴⁴ The story of how the Center earned this trust is a fascinating one, but is outside of the scope of this research project. Over the course of more than a year, CLG and a group of local concerned community members engaged in a facilitated and rigorous consensus process to define and create the terms and agreements by which the center would operate in order to both achieve its own goals, and to appease concerns from local residents and stakeholders.

to move off of the street corner and into a double-wide trailer in 2007, surrounded by beautiful landscaping, a community garden, and a large parking lot to accommodate workers and employers (half of which is used as a volleyball court during operating hours). Most of the landscaping and deck construction was made possible through the volunteer efforts of men and women day laborers themselves, plus dozens of supportive community members and neighbors. One of the founding members of ALMAS spoke about the importance of the Center for her community:

“For me the center is really beautiful, because it is a refuge for all of the *compañeros* who don't have to suffer outside on the street corners. Now the Center has a roof. I hope it continues to grow more, so that it doesn't fall apart. It's really beautiful because people organize themselves. There is respect between men and women, you can find your own benefits, and for others” ~Serenidad

Guadalupe was the first woman who came to the street corner to look for work before the Center had a physical home. She recounted the importance of having a Center like CLG, and how she volunteered to help get the project started, even when she wasn't in need of employment anymore:

When I came to the CLG it was because I wanted people to have a space to work well. I never knew when I would need that space, and so for me it's really important. In the past, when I was here for many years, I wanted to find if there was a place where I could obtain work, and a place that honors you, that's respectful. I couldn't find a place like that, because unfortunately this place wasn't here yet. I would really like for this Center to continue to grow in this place,

because in all moments, what I can see, is there is a right, and a respect that they give you. Whatever problem there is, you can resolve it. There is someone who can help you. Like I said, in the past, it wasn't here, and it was really difficult. I came to wait with the men for work but, I don't know. I was in a difficult time, and sometimes I was there... before there were women. I was the first woman there. I can say that, because after me, [another really active woman] came. I'm pretty sure there isn't another person who can say the same.

I asked her what it was like to look for work on the corner as a woman, surrounded by so many men:

“I said, I can work like you can work. I have my daughter in Mexico... it was all men, there weren't any women. My uncle said: “this isn't a place for you, they are all men there, they are going to disrespect you”. I was there two or three days, but then I got a job, and left, and I didn't return. The [employers] wouldn't look at a woman, “I want a man”. When they organized the center, is when we started asking for help for women.

Once the Center had a physical home, women started to feel more and more comfortable to utilize the space and the services offered. Primarily, women wanted a safe and dignified way to look for employment as domestic workers, and organized to promote their services through the Center. Employers who had always thought of day laborers as men, started to receive flyers announcing the presence of women workers available on a daily basis.

Through collective action, and democratic decision making processes, the founding members of ALMAS created an initial process for the fair and just distribution of domestic work jobs. From the beginning, this process included a way for women to benefit from the

Center's hiring process, and outlined the ways in which participation, action, and solidarity were required in order to be a member. Over the years the details of the hiring process has changed, but the core tenet of ALMAS has remained the same: In order to benefit from the group, you have to give back. The ways that ALMAS has defined what it means to "give back" to the group, I argue, offer some of the most essential elements of the citizenship practices of ALMAS members.

Chapter Overview

Here I provide a general overview of ALMAS, including the internal and external goals of the group, as well as of individual members. I then describe what multi-scalar domestic worker organizing looks like for ALMAS. Because the uniting experience and shared identity of nearly all ALMAS members is the fact that they are domestic workers, I explore some of the lived experiences and testimonies of workers about domestic work, and the home (as place of work) as a site for organizing. I then outline the multiple scales where ALMAS members are organizing, and begin to synthesize the key components of ALMAS' organizing efforts and citizenship practices. Finally, I offer some reflections about the challenges to the group and what hinders their efforts to achieve their personal and collective goals.

Throughout this chapter, I explore the multi-scalar nature of ALMAS' contestations around citizenship and membership. Through this exploration it becomes very clear that the local scale or city is not as important as other sites of contestation for domestic workers

organizing for justice with ALMAS and around the country. Despite this main assertion in the Urban Citizenship literature, the organizing efforts for citizenship, membership, and inclusion for domestic workers, tell a much different story about where organizing is most relevant.

Overview of ALMAS: Internal and external goals

When I started officially organizing with ALMAS in May of 2011 the group had already established various procedures, rules, committees, and projects. In an effort to learn about the goals and work of the group I facilitated a visioning process with members. From this exercise two main sets of goals emerged: Internal goals and external goals.

ALMAS' Internal goals: These refer to the efforts to create more safe, dignified, and just employment opportunities for women through the Center. The ways ALMAS had been doing this, and recommitted to doing was three-fold: 1) Promote the fact that there are women workers available through the center by handing out flyers and placing promotional ads in local news media outlets, 2) Educate themselves and their employers about their labor rights, and collectively assert a minimum wage of \$15/hr for housecleaning, with an asking rate of \$20/hour for the first three hours, and \$15/hour for any additional time thereafter, and 3) Develop and implement trainings around health and safety and job skills. These trainings were to be developed by ALMAS members and offered to new members on a regular basis.

ALMAS' External goals: To fight for justice for domestic workers, to support struggles for social justice and immigrants' rights, in order to make the world a better place for domestic workers and their families to live, work, and play.

As NDWA director, Ai-jen Poo, said about transformative organizing campaigns during one of the SOL retreats, there is always an internal and an external goal. The internal goals refer to developing a strong membership base, and the external goals refer to winning campaigns for reform towards the broader vision of social justice and inclusion. Nearly every ALMAS member initially came through the door because she had a pre-existing shared goal of obtaining work through the Center. Because of the structures and norms created by the group around collective accountability and responsibility, every ALMAS member leaves the Center as a member of an active and engaged organizing project, participating at multiple scales for domestic workers rights and social justice.

This does not mean that every ALMAS member feels the same about her involvement, or brings the same intention, or experiences the same growth or development through the process. Not everyone who comes to ALMAS returns. But it does mean that over the course of seven years, ALMAS members have deepened their commitment to the main tenet of their group: that to receive you have to give. Translated to questions of citizenship and membership, ALMAS has developed a rigorous standard around rights and responsibilities often associated with formal citizenship status. In order to have access to the rights and benefits associated with the Center, the group has developed a set of responsibilities that it

wants to follow and wants others to follow to ensure the vibrancy and viability of the group in the future.

Personal and Collective goals of ALMAS in their own words: “¡Que seamos mas unidas, mas fuertes, y que sigamos creciendo!”

During the Participatory Action Research phase of this project I interviewed 20 ALMAS members to explore in detail how they view and describe their own organizing efforts. Here I explore, in the words of ALMAS members, what their personal goals are as members of ALMAS and what they view the collective goals of ALMAS to be. I interpret these goals to be the *intentional shape* (referring to the arc of transformation model), or outcome, that participants hope to achieve together. These goals represent the main objectives of individuals and the collective, and provide the dependent variable by which to analyze the impacts of systems of oppression and intersecting identities on domestic worker organizing, in the pursuit of those goals, at multiple scales.

Over the course of two years of participant observation, during group and one-on-one conversations as well as during in-depth interviews, whenever I asked ALMAS members to describe their objectives with the group, the resounding response was this: *“¡Que seamos mas unidas, mas fuertes, y que sigamos creciendo!”* (That we are more united, that we get stronger, and that we continue to grow bigger!). Inherent in this objective is the recognition that through numbers we become stronger, and that by being united we can achieve what we set out to achieve. So what are the goals of ALMAS members? What do they hope to

achieve by coming together? What are they organizing for and what does that mean for contestations of citizenship at multiple scales?

Personal goals

When asked about their personal goals through membership with ALMAS, participants shared goals around personal development and what they hoped to achieve in terms of education and leadership development for themselves as individuals. They also had personal goals that encompassed benefitting the whole group, and how they felt they were best suited to support the group. Finally, a primary shared personal goal of individual members was to win the CA Bill of Rights Campaign, and go as far as possible with that campaign to win justice for domestic workers, not only in ALMAS, but in other organizations, other communities, and for generations to come.

On an individual basis participants shared their personal goals were either to improve their skills to obtain better employment, or to strengthen their leadership capacity. In terms of job skills, individual ALMAS members have the goal to improve their English language abilities, to “have regular employment”; to have “my own work”. In terms of increasing leadership capacity, participants want “to be more involved with the group”, “to become a leader”, “to learn to facilitate meetings by practicing in ALMAS”, to experience “personal growth as a leader”, “to learn more”, “to have higher self confidence”, to “be able to express myself in public”, to “continue participating and learning”, “to have satisfaction from

helping, even though I don't need to come to look for work", and to come to an event as a leader and be able to say "I brought them".

In addition to personal goals that would directly benefit individual members, participants also shared personal goals that would improve the lives of other members and strengthen ALMAS as a whole. Personal goals involving collective benefit included: "I want to share with other women what I've learned"; for us to "to win"; for me to "be more active and participate in San Francisco and Sacramento"; for us to "achieve what we are asking for because I am participating"; to "serve the community of ALMAS and one day be the organizer of ALMAS"; "to spend time getting to know the other women more"; to have "camaraderie, be part of a community, and help in the Auntie role, to be a babysitter for ALMAS members so they can go to work"; "that the group gets better, stronger, more united, and with understanding"; "that the Center benefits" from what I do; "for the group to be recognized and united, to help more women".

An important goal that many respondents considered to be their personal goal, was the effort to win the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights:

"My goal for ALMAS is that we get to where we want to achieve, to where we have fought and struggled, with the Bill of Rights. My goal is that they give us this law, not just for the women's group, but for all the allied groups, and for all the workers who aren't involved, but are domestic workers. My personal goal is that they give us this law." ~Serenidad

Other participants echoed this sentiment: My goal is to “continue in the struggle to support the Bill of Rights to the end”, for us to “go as far as we want with the Bill of Rights, and to [personally] know a lot about it”, to “win the Bill of Rights and then do more campaigns”. “My personal goal is for there to be justice for every domestic worker, for people to know about the domestic worker Bill of Rights, and for other caregivers to know their rights and have good working conditions”.

Finally, the majority of ALMAS members want to “leave a legacy”. They want the organizing efforts they are engaging in to have impact far beyond themselves personally, or collectively as a group. They want future generations of workers to have the dignity, respect, and equal rights that they have been so unjustly denied:

“The struggle is so that the next generations can have a good future, and not go through the bad things we went through in the past” ~Juana Ines

Another member shared that her personal goal is:

"That the group is recognized, unified, and, very strong. But it already is... That it continues to be strong, and also that the group can help more women in some way, even if they aren't part of ALMAS" ~Atenía

It is important to note how community-based, and collective the *personal* goals of ALMAS members are. They are not only concerned with their own employment status or language abilities, but are deeply motivated by their desires to support the group, to develop a strong and united force that is “more united, stronger, and gets bigger”. This shows a deep *personal* commitment to *collective* power and social change.

Collective goals

When asked specifically about what they thought were the collective goals of ALMAS, participants talked about how they aim to provide mutual support to one another and to strengthen the collective; the need for better employment opportunities for all women at the Center; the goal to develop themselves as leaders who can impact change beyond ALMAS at various scales; and the commitment to winning the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights for themselves and the women who will come after them.

ALMAS members have a shared collective goal to support each individual member in her own “personal growth”, so that the group can “continue being united, move forward and grow bigger.” Many participants talked about the need to “educate each other”. One participant thought: “it should be mandatory for ALMAS to study English to improve ourselves personally”. Others saw a collective goal where “we all participate, we have enthusiasm” and that we “orient ourselves”. By developing themselves as individuals as part of the collective efforts of the group, ALMAS will be able “to grow, to be stronger,” and ultimately be “well organized” and “function well”.

A core and primary shared collective goal of ALMAS members is to “obtain better jobs, have various regular days of work”, so “that we have sources of income”, have more opportunities for work, and to ultimately “move up in work”. This goal is discussed in a collective way. The clear message is that ALMAS members want “work for everyone, that

we all benefit”, and so that in general, conditions around “domestic work are improved” so that workers have “job satisfaction” and are “happy”. Some participants also stated a collective goal for women *and* men to have greater employment opportunities through the Center, and one thought the collective goal for ALMAS should be for all to have “a stable job with benefits.”

Beyond goals around employment, ALMAS members share a collective goal of developing themselves as individuals and as a collective as leaders who have the capacity to impact change at various scales of influence beyond the group. Participants said the collective goals of ALMAS involve being “more involved with the community” and to “stand up, to take a role in society”:

“And you know, we’re the mothers and the sisters and... you can’t exactly explain it, but there’s a concept I learned about years ago, it’s servant leadership. In order to be a leader, and to lead people, you’re a caretaker first. I think that that’s a role that women play, again, that tends to be like, not invisible, but it’s not seen and not valued, but it’s really important in terms of, we all need it. I mean. The world needs it. I guess that’s what I see, just standing up and saying hey, we’re here.” ~Brigit

In addition to wanting rights for domestic workers, ALMAS members connect themselves and the group with the struggle for immigrants rights more broadly. Undocumented immigration status is a big concern for many ALMAS members, and they view the expansion of rights for undocumented immigrants as a collective goal of the group. This was mentioned by participants who had varying degrees of immigration status, from US citizens to legal residents to undocumented workers.

Finally, the most important collective goal for ALMAS was to win the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this campaign began in 2011, was nearly won in 2012, and at the time of this writing continues to be the primary transformative campaign that ALMAS and sister organizations are engaged in at the state level. For ALMAS, to win the Bill of Rights requires growing their base and membership and developing ally relationships with supporters and funders. A victory in this historic campaign will mean improved working conditions and “rights, that we are respected and valued”, “that future generations have a better life”, and employers and employees will come to agreement around fair and safe employment relationships:

“The collective goal of ALMAS is that the Bill of Rights passes, and that we have more support and strength so the bill passes, and more participation within the group, and from the people who support us.” ~Isis

Again, the resounding intention of the groups is “that we continue, that we struggle” and that through the Bill of Rights campaign ALMAS will grow and develop, and build capacity to tackle new issues as they emerge.

The Bill of Rights Campaign is a campaign targeted at the scale of the state government of California, because domestic worker organizations around the country agree that federally and state-based campaigns are needed to change the labor laws that govern domestic workers. As mentioned above, targeting individual employers to change behavior doesn’t reach a large enough scale to impact the experiences of domestic workers in general.

ALMAS and the members of the CA Coalition focus a large majority of their time, energy

and staff resources at the state level, because that is where they feel they can impact the largest change around the particular set of injustices and abuses that their members face. For domestic workers the home of their employers is their work place. The *home* as site of work is the site where abuses and denial of rights are carried out, but the state of California is seen as the most relevant site to contest such abuses and exclusions. Here I provide a brief overview of the experiences of ALMAS members at the site of the home as work place. I then explore the major tenets and components of ALMAS' organizing efforts at multiple scales, and how these efforts define membership, citizenship and social justice.

Domestic Work, and the "Home" as a site of contestation

Nearly every ALMAS member came to the group by way of the Graton Day Labor Center because of her intention to look for work as a domestic worker⁴⁵. Having worked as a housecleaner, nanny, or caregiver ties ALMAS members together through shared work experiences and struggles. They are also connected by way of shared positive experiences with domestic work, and the ways they develop their skills and pride as domestic workers. Here I provide an overview of how ALMAS members view domestic work. What are the positive things they say and feel about it? What are some of their struggles? What rights or conditions have they worked under? And how does this relate to the personal and collective goals of ALMAS? Ultimately, I argue that these collective experiences help form

⁴⁵ There are a few ALMAS members who heard of ALMAS on the radio or through word of mouth who decided to join the group because they wanted to be part of the domestic workers rights movement, not because they were looking for work through the Center. Some ALMAS members prefer to work in the vineyards and other farm work, instead of in domestic work, but are still part of ALMAS. When asked why they prefer to work in the field, ALMAS members share that they feel "isolated doing domestic work, where in the fields you have community around you".

and shape the nature of how ALMAS challenges and frames citizenship, membership and belonging at multiple scales.

Positive feelings towards domestic work

ALMAS members generally have a positive view of domestic work. They take pride and feel satisfaction for the work they accomplish, and enjoy the relative freedom and autonomy that the domestic work environment can at times provide. When asked what they enjoy about being a domestic worker, ALMAS members generally talk about autonomy in the work place, pride in what they accomplish, and satisfaction around building trusting, respectful, and caring relationships with some of their employers. Selene, a housecleaner, said “I like working by myself, because you can work at your own pace, sometimes fast, but you feel good.” For Maria Ygnacia, also a housecleaner, building trusting relationships with her employers makes her feel happy, increases her job satisfaction, and improves her job performance:

“I like to feel the trust of my employers. If you feel their trust, you work fast, your day flies by, you do a good job. That's the best thing, and I know it's not easy. It would be the same for me, if I hired someone I didn't know to work in my house, that would be difficult for me. I feel very happy that they are happy with my work, or even if they just say ‘thank you for being here’, if they introduce you to their family, that's what makes you feel happy.”

Several ALMAS members work in domestic work because they are not able to obtain employment in the field where they were trained or where they worked in their home country. This doesn't necessarily mean that they don't enjoy the work they are doing. For

Kali, a caregiver for the elderly and for people with disabilities, caring for others brings her deep satisfaction:

“In my home country I worked in the office, and here I'm more focused on domestic work. Looking after the old person, making sure they are fed, and living comfortably, bringing about change and happiness and laughter to a persons life, it can make them feel happy. I love to interact with people. I love it because it's a different feeling of work, because I'm working with the vulnerable. I love to apply what makes them happy. Those are the main things, to make them happy and to give them the best care that I can, and make them feel accepted and loved.” ~Kali (caregiver)

Nearly all ALMAS members assert that they have positive relationships with some or even the majority, if not all, of their employers. This is in part due to the fact that most of their employers chose to hire them through the Graton Day Labor Center, which is known to be an organization advancing workers' and immigrants' rights. Employers who are more likely to exploit workers are not as likely to hire someone through the Center. This may also be true because through the mutual support and collective efforts of ALMAS over the years, the women have created a culture within themselves around not accepting poor working conditions or wages.

Through the development of ALMAS over the years, members have learned to assert their rights, demand improved working conditions, and even have chosen to leave jobs where they were not treated with respect.

More experienced ALMAS members regularly remind new members that they used to feel scared to speak out, but that over time they learned that they not only have a right to speak, but they have to. The message shared over and over in worker-led orientations is that even if you have financial need to work, you still have the right to leave a job if you aren't being treated with respect, dignity, and fairness. Not only are new members reminded of this right, they are encouraged to do it. Demanding a certain level of treatment or wages helps raise the bar for domestic workers in general in the area. ALMAS has developed over time an analysis of wage depression through supply and demand, and has encouraged members to not accept anything less than \$15 an hour for house cleaning. Despite the fact that domestic workers don't have a bargaining unit, as found in traditional labor organizing, this collective action has resulted in the general increase in wages for domestic workers in the region, and has helped change the norm around expected wages in the eyes of employers that come to the Center. For example, when I first started organizing with ALMAS in May of 2011, it was common for employers to sound surprised or even argue with me when I told them the asking rates were \$20/hr for the first three hours, and \$15/hr for any time thereafter. Employers would say "that's more than I make", or, "I only pay \$10/hr for housecleaning". After almost two years of coordinating employment for ALMAS, I rarely hear any surprise or receive pushback from employers around wages, not even from new employers who are hiring from the center for the first time.

Power dynamics, vulnerability and exclusion from labor laws

The *home as workplace* is an important site of struggle for domestic workers because there are few labor laws that protect them as workers; the laws that do exist to ensure workers

rights are often not followed; and the culture around domestic work is still deeply tied to systems of oppression like patriarchy and the devaluing of women and women's labor, racism and the exploitation of people of color, and xenophobia and the exploitation of unauthorized immigrant workers based on legal status.

In the *home as workplace*, it is easy for abuses and exploitation to be carried out because it literally happens behind closed doors, without the legal and social infrastructure in place to govern acceptable employment relationships. Despite sharing a generally positive view around domestic work, all ALMAS members have felt either directly targeted for discrimination, disrespected, or denied basic rights that they are already entitled to under particular wage orders and federal laws. All ALMAS members have been denied access to some of the basic rights they are fighting for through the CA Bill of Rights, and all ALMAS members have felt either nervous, uncomfortable, or discriminated against on the job at one time or another.

Some individual experiences of abuse, exploitation, or basic disrespect are more severe than others. Juana Ines came to Sonoma County in search of work as a domestic worker so she could send money back to her family in her home country. For several years she found work through family connections and personal referrals through her church. She came to the Center and joined ALMAS after having worked as a live-in caregiver for an elderly, disabled man. When she took the job the agreement was for her to work five hours every morning, preparing food, attending to her client's needs, and cleaning the house. She was supposed to have every afternoon off so she could find another part time job or go to

school. She was paid \$500 a month. In reality, her employer started requiring her to be home by a certain time to make him dinner, and forced her to spend time with him in the evenings, watching TV and talking with him. She ended up working 10 hours a day, but was not given any additional financial compensation. This meant that she was being paid \$2.50/hr. After several months of this, she decided to leave her job, even though she had no other source of employment lined up. Even though Juana Ines is legally entitled to receive back wages, she refuses to file suit against her former employer because he was elderly with multiple disabilities. Since then Juana Ines has obtained regular nanny and housecleaning jobs through the Labor Center, and has become one of the most active and engaged members of ALMAS, traveling on behalf of ALMAS to Washington DC, and speaking on behalf of ALMAS at local rallies in support of immigration reform.

Members of ALMAS and domestic workers organizing with sister organizations around the country recognize that not every employer is exploitative or abusive. They also recognize that workers shouldn't have to rely on luck, or the individual good will of their employers to have a healthy and respectful work environment. The exclusion of domestic workers from many labor protections has left this particular industry of workers vulnerable to abuse, and calls for the collective action of those most directly impacted to take a stand wherever that struggle will be most effective in making change.

Multi-scalar organizing efforts of ALMAS: Contesting and defining citizenship and membership

Since domestic workers are living and working at the intersections of multiple systems of oppression, their struggle for change is not limited to making legislative change at the state or national scale. ALMAS members engage in organizing efforts at multiple scales. These efforts embody practices of substantive citizenship and deepen our understanding of what it means to be a member in our society. Nine physical or geographic scales of influence emerged through the course of my study as being important or relevant for ALMAS: the Body; the Home (as place of residence); the Home (as place of work); ALMAS; Centro Laboral de Graton; the Local, City, Region or County; the State of California; the United States; and the World, International, or Transnational (As shown in Figure 1 above).

Here I provide an explanation of how ALMAS members articulate struggles, contestations, and organizing efforts at each of these nine scales. What experiences do they have organizing around each of these scales? What did they, or do they, hope to change at each scale? What did they learn? Why was it an important arena to engage in struggles for social justice? In the following chapter I will provide a more in-depth and intersectional analysis of how intersecting oppressions, identities, and scales of influence impact the organizing efforts and meanings of citizenship and membership for ALMAS.

Body

The body is where we center. It is also the main tool of domestic workers in their daily activities. Domestic workers take care of our most intimate and personal spaces and relationships. This is no easy task. Domestic workers use the strength and skills of their bodies to clean, to lift or transfer patients, and to carry out multiple tasks around the home:

“A lot of the work that I do is highly dependent on my body. I have to be alert, to do what I have to do, to transfer somebody takes my strength, to move someone from bed to wheel chair, to toilet, shower.” ~Tonantzin

The body is also the container for our identities. It is by looking at our bodies that people organize us into their frame of reference around race, gender, age, ability, and even immigration status.

“Something negative is that they see us as immigrants. You feel it, when people who are above you, they see you, and you feel it, they see you with different eyes. This impacts you negatively. For example when you go to marches and they look at the group, I think they think, they are undocumented. They discriminate against you for this.” ~Coyolxauhqui

The body is the central site or location of oppression, and can be used as a powerful source of resilience, centering, and liberation. ALMAS members don’t regularly talk about the body as a site for organizing campaigns for justice, but they do have a keen analysis around the importance of taking care of ourselves so we can take care of others:

“I want to achieve in my self, my personality, to change more still, to be better every day, not only for me, but also to help other people, who like me, are in this situation.

That's what I want to achieve in myself before other people. I want to achieve it for myself... I haven't been able to get out of this situation, but those who have been able to get out of this situation are my children, to have healthy bodies, to be healthy women, that's the most important for me, in all situations that life can give you, we can deal with it and be better." ~Guadalupe

Our bodies are also sources of power in efforts to win transformative organizing campaigns, and as tools for understanding systems of oppression. When asked how the body can be a tool for winning the Bill of Rights Campaign, Tonantzin shared:

"By marching, I think we are using our bodies. When we speak we are using our bodies. I think our presence in general has been part of the movement... Health wise, it's highly important that we think about our bodies. If we aren't healthy we can't march, we can't do any of the things that are being done if we can't take care of our bodies"

She went on to reflect about a somatics practice we learned at the SOL retreat where we were asked to use our bodies to create human sculptures that represented oppression and privilege:

"I really liked in the SOL retreat training, the statues that we made, expressing our interpretation of power and powerlessness and we used our bodies to express that. It was really powerful to see that, in a negative and a positive way." ~Tonantzin

Home (as place of residence)

Throughout my observations with ALMAS I assumed that the home as place of residence would come out during interviews as an important and relevant site of struggle or source of resilience. Instead, very few participants mentioned this scale at all, and when asked specifically about it, only a few of them mentioned that the scale of the home is important because there you can rest and be among family and people who support you:

“I feel peaceful there. For example, I can go in my room and I have things that remind me, that make me feel like I'm in the place where I'm from I have fotos from my children, de la virgen, pieces of my roots, ... its a small place, but to me it feels like my castle, because everything else is left outside... to relax after work.” ~Atenía

I assumed there would be more discussion around struggles with partners for the ability to participate in ALMAS or the campaigns they are part of, but this did not come up during the interviews. On separate occasions ALMAS members would share with me that their partners were extremely supportive of their participation in the movement, and they felt lucky, because that is not always the case for women in their community. In fact, most members of ALMAS who continue to participate over time, and who agreed to be interviewed, were single or in relationships that they considered to be very supportive. This could suggest that women who have unsupportive partners, or demands at the level of home as residence, do not come to the Labor Center at all, or do not seek to participate in groups like ALMAS that require some level of time commitment, mobility, and freedom from expectations at this scale. This will be discussed more in the section regarding challenges for ALMAS.

Home (as place of work)

As I mentioned above, the home as place of work is an important site of struggle and contestation for ALMAS members. Through their organizing at other scales (ie. The State), they are attempting to address hardships and injustices that they experience at the scale of the work site. While many ALMAS members shared that they feel accepted and part of the households where they work, others felt at times excluded from membership. For Kali,

“It depends. Most of the families I work for make us feel comfortable, like I am part of the family. Except that one family makes me feel like an outsider.”

When I asked her what would need to change in order for her to feel like a member at that scale she said that its about “hospitality and the acceptance, and the recognition that you are the main person... that you are looking after their mom, and not an alien in the house.”

Most ALMAS members responded that they do feel like members in their places of employment. They cite positive and trusting relationships with their employers for creating this feeling. They feel like members when they are treated with respect, when their work is seen, valued, and appreciated, and when they are afforded the same common hospitality and courtesy as anyone else coming into the home. Other participants responded that they do not feel like members, and that they do not want to:

“I could never feel that, it's work, I take it as work, and that's good. It's important to differentiate it, between the house and your work. It's your work. I want to feel like an employee.” ~Divina

The nature of the domestic worker employer -employee relationship is at times unclear and undefined. With little guidance from the state and federal legislatures, employers and

domestic workers are forced to develop their own norms and relationships around domestic work. For some, that can look like integrating the worker as “part of the family”, where for others, they feel as if though they should be treated that way, but aren’t. With so little guidance and confusion around the validity of domestic work as *real work*, workers are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, sometimes *because* they are seen as part of the family. These experiences are rampant and widespread, and are the major impetus for organizing along the shared experiences that domestic workers have in their work place.

When discussing the sphere of home as place of residence within the group, ALMAS members are empowered to tell each other to have the courage to leave abusive situations, but when in the home of their employers, they are not always so forthright with asserting their rights. When cases of abuse are extreme, ALMAS members leave the job, but even those who cite respectful relationships with their employers often do not ask for paid breaks, or to be paid over time pay. It is because of the delicate nature of the employer-employee relationship, that ALMAS members instead direct their attention to the level of the State to dictate to their employers, that they should have a right to a 15 minute break, or other basic labor protections.

ALMAS

ALMAS is seen as the most important site to engage in organizing efforts that target change at other scales. For example, the growth and development of individual ALMAS members, and the group as a whole, is seen as an integral part of winning the California Bill of Rights.

The group develops itself internally in order to win campaigns and change within its own membership, and at local, state and national levels:

“When the group grows, we will have more strength to struggle, to fight... so that workers, we will have our rights be recognized. Not just at the state level, but at the national level, so that the voice of the woman is heard, so that they don't discriminate against us. That's what I want for ALMAS, to grow.” ~Serenidad

ALMAS provides the space where women can come together to learn, to pursue their individual and collective goals, and to be inspired to continue moving forward in the face of hardship and struggle:

“My experience has been really lovely. I've learned a lot of things. I've felt important as a person. I've felt more confidence. Because me, in my house, every day, without going anywhere...coming here is like an injection of energy. To be able to listen, to participate, to understand the daily lives of domestic workers. I like this, I've had a great experience.” ~Isis

ALMAS is essentially the vehicle that members have made for themselves to be able to advance their own agenda for rights, dignity and value, for themselves and others:

“That's something I like about the group. I think you grow, and its something I can see in the group. At least for me, when you go to Sacramento to speak with the politicians, to lobby, I think it fills you with value. Because its not every day that you get up and go to Sacramento and speak with them. It fills you with strength, and you

grow. You see, this person is a person like me. I mean obviously they work there and I don't, but they are a human being equal to me." ~Artemisa

Centro Laboral de Graton

Similar to ALMAS, the Graton Day Labor Center provides a space and a vehicle for advancing and promoting domestic workers and day laborers' rights at other scales. The Labor Center is the physical space where ALMAS organizing is made possible. It is by walking through the doors of the Center that the majority of ALMAS members join in organizing efforts for domestic workers rights. ALMAS members are extremely grateful for the Center and all of the services and support that it provides. Some call it a "refuge" for workers seeking work. Others refer to it as a "community center" where "I feel I am with my family". Many participants share that they appreciate how the Center does not discriminate and that everyone is welcome.

In terms of organizing, the Center has facilitated the involvement of ALMAS members' participation in local mobilizations with the North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP), a local power-based, interfaith, and diverse coalition working to advance social, environmental, economic, and racial justice in Sonoma County. ALMAS has been able to participate with NBOP, as part of the Graton Day Labor Center, to call for an end to local police collaboration with Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to demand that local police officials accept the Mexican matricular identification card as a valid form of ID, and to call for inclusive and comprehensive immigration reform.

ALMAS and the Graton Day Labor Center are important sites of contestation, organization, and mobilization. Through ALMAS and the Graton Day Labor Center, domestic worker leaders are able to develop themselves, create collective analysis around injustice, and organize for transformative campaigns and social justice at the local, state, and national scales.

Local, City, Region, or County

As mentioned above, the main local organizing efforts of ALMAS have been as part of the North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP). NBOP is a diverse, multi-issue power-based organization, that seeks to develop power and leadership throughout Sonoma County, with hopes to expand throughout the North San Francisco Bay Area. Some highly active ALMAS members have taken leadership roles in NBOP, mobilizing entire congregations of people to public meetings, and taking on leadership roles such as the chair of the fundraising committee.

When asked about the local scale as an important or relevant site for organizing, interview participants talked about their local interactions with government agents, like the local police or sheriff, struggles around mobility, and the need for a drivers license. Reflecting on why organizing at the local level is important, Maria Ygnacia shared:

“I like, when you see so many people involved... I thought I was going to see all immigrants, but no, you see people of many different races, and you feel good. I like it because the themes that are the most important to the community are discussed.

The thing I felt most proud of was about the impounding of cars, and that they (local

police and sheriff) now accept the Matricula as a valid form of identification. In the future I would like to see the governor give us a drivers license. From a small group, you can create big change. I think that's why we should start with the community, with the local, to impact big change from there."

The need for driver's licenses is actually a California state issue, but the daily reality of people driving without a license is played out at the local level. For Maria Ygnacia and others, the local level represents the locations of interacting with the state, be it state of California, or federal agents like ICE. Because the impact on lived experience happens at the local level, ALMAS and other organizers with NBOP decided to target local officials to accept the Matricular ID card⁴⁶. This way, unlicensed drivers would not be detained and arrested for fingerprinting, and then handed over to ICE (Which was happening at alarming rates under Obama's "Secure Communities" program). This campaign had a local target (local police agencies), considering a local and transnational experience (detentions and deportations), and rooted in a national problem (immigration reform). Another solution would be to target the state of California to allow undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers licenses, but this was decided to not be the most strategic course of action at that time.

Having participated in this campaign and winning, many ALMAS members were invigorated and further inspired to keep the momentum going for their primary campaign at the state level, the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.

⁴⁶ It was a strategic decision to leave the State struggle for driver's licenses for a time when that campaign would be more feasibly winnable.

State of California

ALMAS started organizing at the state level as part of the California Domestic Workers Rights Coalition over a year before I came on as organizer. Over the course of about three years organizing for this issue, over 100 ALMAS members have participated in the campaign, either locally, or by attending one or more trainings, mobilizations, marches, press conferences, rallies, meetings, strategy sessions, conference calls, or lobby days.

The level of participation has varied among ALMAS members. Some have participated silently in various activities, and shown with the presence of their bodies, that they support the effort. Others have taken a more active and vocal role in pushing for the Bill of Rights to pass. ALMAS members have given testimonies in front of Senate and Assembly committees, and have been interviewed by many radio, online, and print media outlets. Some ALMAS members have challenged themselves to develop skills as public speakers, and have stepped up to host press conferences or MC rallies with more than 500 people in attendance. Members have been asked to represent ALMAS or the Coalition at other social justice or immigrants' rights events, panel discussions, marches, and rallies.

Even some of the children of ALMAS members have stepped into the movement as spokespeople, calling for their moms to have the same rights and dignity as every other worker. On one occasion the Graton Day Labor Center took 50 people to Sacramento as part of a massive mobilization and children's march, organized by ALMAS and other steering committee organizations of the state Coalition. On this trip we were about one

third ALMAS members, one third children, and one third day laborer men who wanted to come and show their solidarity for ALMAS and the movement.

The Bill of Rights campaign, without a doubt, represents the most important site of struggle for inclusion, membership, and citizenship rights that ALMAS has engaged in. When asked to talk about their experiences and feelings about organizing at the state level, participants share that it is important to reach out as far as you can, to have the greatest impact. Again, if domestic workers organize to change the behavior of a single employer, then the impact will be minimal. It is hard to imagine an actual target for a campaign at the local or city level, since the only institutions, other than ALMAS itself, that is involved with the domestic work industry are domestic work agencies, and ALMAS members do not tend to look for work through those agencies. The State of California has become conceptualized as the main potential source of justice, since it is seen as being capable of passing laws to prevent the exploitation and abuse that ALMAS members have faced:

“At the state everything is at a broadened level. When a bill is passed in the state, then of course the state will enforce these things, so employers will have to abide by them. They will have no choice but to go with it, and we will have something to fall back on as workers that govern us. And there will be written rules that we can work with every day.” ~Kali

ALMAS members are well aware that enforcement and application of the new law will provide additional challenges, but it is a first step towards building the infrastructure to demand equal rights and treatment. ALMAS members see that to make change they must carry their testimonies, narratives, and struggles to the right places and the right people:

“It’s important because the governor isn’t going to come to us to ask us what we want from him! It’s important to go to him and express what we want. Which is that we can express the stories of all the immigrant workers working in the homes.”

~Juana Ines

United States

ALMAS has focused so much of its energy at the state level for the Bill of Rights Campaign, that it has not had the staff or organizational capacity to engage that much with national issues. One way that ALMAS members view the national scale, is as a potential target for future domestic worker rights campaigns:

“Thinking of the State Bill of Rights, one could think about the whole nation as well.

The California struggle will impact the national level. This approach would get more recognition at the national level, the United States.” ~Atenea

Some ALMAS members with a particular interest in the national scale formed a committee that was responsible for building and maintaining a bridge between the NDWA and ALMAS, and was committed to participating in national conference calls and convenings when possible. Members of this committee traveled to Washington DC on a number of occasions to represent ALMAS at NDWA’s conventions, and to lobby for immigration reform that includes domestic workers and day laborers.

Most recently, with the upsurge in interest around immigration reform, ALMAS members have been asked to attend and to speak at conferences, prayer vigils and rallies, both locally

and in Washington DC, to highlight the need for comprehensive immigration reform that will not have exclusionary provisions that would keep domestic workers and day laborers from benefitting. They have done this by gathering testimonies and opinions of other ALMAS members, in order to accurately represent the voices of the group. When I asked for volunteers who would be willing to speak on behalf of ALMAS at a local prayer vigil organized by NBOP, two women happily offered. To prepare for these public speaking opportunities, we held a small meeting of ALMAS members present at the Center to help prepare the talking points. The process was motivational and collective. Different opinions were shared about what to include. Members who weren't going to be the one behind the podium shared their support and excitement for what was being shared and for the person who would speak on behalf of the group. When two members were preparing to travel to Washington DC on behalf of the group as part of an NDWA delegation in support of Comprehensive Immigration Reform, other ALMAS members wrote down their testimonies and stories and gave them to the representatives to carry with them to share in DC.

World, International, Transnational

As I mentioned earlier, the domestic worker movement is global and transnational. Although ALMAS has not directly engaged at the global scale to win a particular transformative campaign, they represent a global and transnational mentality and lived experience as migrants and trans-migrants. This global sensibility is not only reflected in their consideration for their families back home, but also in their sense of collective ownership and responsibility towards the earth itself. When asked what campaigns they would like to be waged at the global scale, many participants responded that we need to

take better care of our environment. For ALMAS members, environmental sustainability is central to the sustainability of people, and we as people, need to start with changing ourselves to create the world we want to live in. Bringing it full circle back to the individual and the body, one ALMAS member, in reflecting on the *global scale*, shared:

“Everything depends in each of us. We have to change ourselves in our homes, the education that we give our children. We have to change ourselves. If we don't change ourselves, we aren't going to change anything. That's it, in few words”.

~Coyolxauhqui

When I asked ALMAS members where they thought the most important site of struggle was, they either said the body, ALMAS, the local / city scale, or the State level. In many cases they were still referring to the State-wide Bill of Rights Campaign: by improving ourselves, or by organizing with ALMAS, or by building a bigger base of domestic workers locally, we will be more equipped to win the Bill of Rights in California.

Key Components of ALMAS' multi-scalar organizing efforts and citizenship practices

It is clear that ALMAS is organizing at multiple scales for justice, dignity, rights, respect, and ultimately equal membership and citizenship. Because the domestic worker movement is rooted in three converging movements for immigrant, women's and civil rights, the citizenship practices embodied by ALMAS, and the domestic worker movement, are inherently and deeply feminist, anti-racist, and inclusive of all people regardless of immigration status.

To begin to conceptualize the citizenship practices of ALMAS, I want to synthesize what I see as the six main components of their organizing practices at multiple scales:

1. Start with ourselves to change the world: Embodied transformation
2. The three R's: Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships
3. Interdependence
4. Love and Rigor
5. Consensus and Collective Action
6. Organize everyone and everywhere

1) Start with ourselves to change the world: Embodied transformation

ALMAS wants to change the world. Members talk about the importance of starting with the individual self, or at the scale of the body, to begin this important work. The body is seen as both the sites of oppression, as well as the tool of the job, and a source of liberation from internalized oppression. This is exemplified through ALMAS' primary internal goal to support the development of more dignified, just, and regular employment for women through the Center, and through the regular attention paid to providing mutual support to one another through their collective experiences. During the interview phase of this research participants regularly acknowledged the importance of taking care of their bodies in both physical and emotional ways in order to bring their full selves to the group and the movement.

When starting with the individual self, in the context of a broader vision for transformative social change, ALMAS pursues its internal goals at the scale of the body, the home as workplace, within the group ALMAS, and as part of the Graton Day Labor Center. These four scales are discussed and acknowledged when talking about how to strengthen each member's ability to achieve her personal goals, and when exploring how best to meet the group's collective external goals of creating social change beyond the four walls of the Labor Center, and specifically through the Bill of Rights campaign.

Starting with ourselves means taking care of our bodies, promoting healthy eating and self-care practices between ALMAS members; and developing practices of integrity and agency. It also means recognizing the intersecting ways that systems of oppression have impacted us as individuals, and how we can come together to draw on these experiences as a source of strength. As the next chapter will elaborate, ALMAS members often view their racialized identities and other experiences rooted in systemic oppression as both negative *and* positive: Negative in the ways that racism, capitalism etc hurt them in their lives, and positive in the ways that these collective and shared struggles make them unified and in solidarity with each other.

Through mutual support and encouragement, ALMAS members have developed a culture around consent with regards to employment. Where five years ago, it was the norm for domestic workers to remain in unhealthy, abusive, or exploitative working conditions, today the norm of the group is to say no to these types of scenarios. At ALMAS meetings, more experienced leaders regularly tell their own personal stories of learning to practice

consent with their employers. On a related note, during SOL, we learned different somatics-based practices around how to practice consent in daily life. Even though I didn't bring this practice back to ALMAS, they had already been developing cultural and group norms around consent on their own.

2) The three R's: Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships

The discourse around rights and responsibilities is common in various citizenship studies. Rooted in liberal / modernist citizenship, the idea is that in order to benefit from membership in society, one also has to give back to that society. For example, in contemporary US formal citizenship, responsibilities include paying taxes and serving on juries. These two basic responsibilities are associated with the rights and benefits that formal citizens can enjoy.

Even though nearly all ALMAS members are *not* formal citizens of the United States, they have created their own structure around rights and responsibilities, but in a way that is also connected with relationships. As mentioned above, in order to benefit from membership in ALMAS (i.e. to be able to obtain work through the hiring list), members must also participate in meetings, and in "acts of solidarity". Inherent in these actions is the expectation that members will create working and public relationships with each other and in the broader public sphere. As many ALMAS members have said, "we are not here to make friends, we are here to be united." Public relationships as members of the collective serve as the foundation for the collective benefit and actions that the group produces and reproduces:

“Obviously we are part of the group because we have a common objective and we have relationships among ourselves. Each of us identifies with each other in what we are doing. To have a group that is only for women has a lot of value.” ~Artemisa

3) Interdependence

The definition of interdependence offered by trainers at SOL acknowledges the ways that organizations must come together in solidarity to build a movement. We cannot operate in silos and still achieve a long term vision for real social change. For ALMAS, and many other domestic worker organizations I have observed, interdependence is also about the relationships workers have with each other, and with their employers. As shown above, many ALMAS members are proud of the positive and respectful relationships they have been able to foster with their employers. In addition to grounding the work in relationships with one another, relationships with domestic work employers are also critical in understanding the citizenship practices of ALMAS members. The majority of ALMAS members want to have respectful working relationship with their employers, and want their employers to receive the service or care that they deserve with respect and dignity. Without a doubt, domestic work is a labor of love, rooted in the desire to form equally and mutually beneficial relationships at work and within ALMAS. Domestic workers are organizing for justice and dignity, not only for themselves, but for the people they work for as well. Recall Divina’s story from above. Even when she was humiliated by her employer, she called the family months later to check on the health and well being of her client, and decided not to take action against her unjust firing because she was concerned for the health and well being of her employer who had diabetes. Also recall the story of Juana Ines.

She was not interested in pursuing a wage claim against her employer who only paid her \$2.50/hour because she was concerned for his health. These stories highlight the compassion and care that domestic workers have for their employers. As one caregiver recounted, “You want to care for them like you would care for your own mother or father.”

During the Bill of Rights Campaign, interdependence with employers has been central to engaging employers as allies for the campaign. Hand in Hand, the Domestic Employers Association, was formed with the support of MUA, to organize supportive employers to stand up and share why they want the Bill of Rights to pass as well. It is not just in the self-interest of workers for the domestic work industry to be clearly protected via labor protections. Employers who want to do the right thing by their employees struggle to find clear guidelines for how to set up respectful and dignified employment relationships in their homes. Through working with Hand in Hand, ALMAS and the state Coalition have developed relationships with disability rights advocates, as well as employers of nannies, housekeepers, and caregivers, in order to highlight the interdependent nature of domestic work itself. In addition to California Coalition efforts to ally with individual disabled employers and advocacy groups, the NDWA organizes Care Councils around the nation, which are groups composed of domestic worker organizations, disabled and elderly employers, as well as allied faith, community, and student groups. These congresses bring together anywhere from 200-500 people at a time to discuss the current “crisis of care” (NDWA website), and how diverse groups can work together to win a broader campaign to transform the care industry in the United States. (See the NDWA website for details about the Caring Across Generations and other related Campaigns).

4) Love and Rigor

When at SOL, there was one occasion when a woman stood up and said something that was racist, and offended many people in the room. She appeared to be a Latina woman with very dark skin or some African ancestry. Her comment referred to Black people as lazy, suggesting that “Blacks don’t work”. Her comment was extremely hurtful for most of the nearly 80 people in the room. People responded by gasping, sitting up straighter in their chairs, frowning expressively, or shouting “Ouch!” To respond to this experience, the SOL leadership team offered us the concept of “Love and Rigor”. In order to support that individual woman in learning what the impact of her words were, and to show us how to move through conflict, they shared that we need to have love for each other’s humanity, and we need to be rigorous with the ways we call each other up to embody our personal and leadership commitments in the context of our movement. To embody this dual concept of love and rigor, means to have understanding and compassion when we “mess up”, but to also respond and engage with each other in a way that is not coddling or codependent, but rigorous. At SOL, the way we did that as a group, was to ask the woman what she meant by what she said, and to also share honestly what the impact of her words were for people, and provide some historical context for why what she said was hurtful and counter to the movement. Instead of holding in anger towards her, or aggressively blaming her for saying what she did, the group held her accountable in a loving and rigorous way. This was a successful approach because the woman who said the comment continued to attend subsequent SOL retreats, instead of leaving the cohort out of shame (which several observers around me thought would be a likely response to having been the center of such a painful conflict).

Some ALMAS members came to the group because of personal connections with previous members, or personal friendships. Friendship, however, is not the goal of the group. It is very clear through group norms, discourse, and meeting dialogues, that the collective goals and work of the group are the priority. With that said, internal, interpersonal, and group conflicts have come up, as described above, and at times derailed the group from achieving its goals. As the organizer for the group, I have offered tools, like the *arc of transformation*, and concepts such as *centering* and *openings*, to help the group navigate these challenges. Individual ALMAS members have also stepped up to help support those involved with conflict to move through the conflict together, through communication and re-grounding in what is most important: the collective. It is with love, and a commitment to rigor, that ALMAS continues to move forward, even in the face of real, painful, and complicated conflicts within the group.

5) Consensus and collective action

As mentioned above in my discussion of the Bill of Rights campaign, there were many occasions when ALMAS members were asked to make tough decisions about the Bill. At one critical moment in the campaign, we were asked to make a decision around whether to exclude a whole group of workers in order to gain the support of a powerful union⁴⁷. The conversations and debates lasted weeks, and culminated in an all day in-person meeting to make the final strategic decision. ALMAS members were engaged in this conversation at the

⁴⁷ Because, at the time of this writing, the Bill of Rights Campaign is still in process, I am intentionally leaving out specific details regarding the proposed group of workers to be excluded from the Bill and the specific Union proposing this potential agreement.

Labor Center leading up to the meeting, and then four delegates were chosen to accompany me to the in-person meeting of the steering committee in San Francisco. When discussing the issue among ALMAS members only, the group made a fairly unanimous decision to accept the compromise, but when we arrived in San Francisco and spent the day listening to other groups' arguments and feelings about the issue, the tone changed. While ALMAS members wanted to have their voices heard and taken into account, they were more concerned with "whatever the collective decides". They were not interested in winning over the other groups, or having their opinion be the deciding factor. They wanted unity among the coalition, and they also trusted that the collective may have more information and be better suited to make the final call. This attempt to reach consensus to move collective action forward is common for ALMAS. One member shared that the group wants consensus because women are more drawn to ensuring that the collective feels honored:

"Because almost always, its women who try to share our opinions, until we reach an agreement, in pursuit of what we want to achieve." ~Juana Ines

6) Organize everyone and everywhere

Authors within the Urban Citizenship literature assert that neoliberal globalization shifts power, and so the relevant site of organizing and contestation exists where the contestations around inclusion and exclusion are most palpable for people. While it may be true that the city has become an extremely important and relevant site of struggle, it is not the only one. For domestic workers, and for ALMAS, contestations around citizenship, membership, and equality happen at multiple scales, because exclusion and injustice happen for them at multiple scales. As the next will elaborate, certain intersecting

identities, as rooted in systems of oppression impact the lives and organizing efforts of ALMAS members at different scales differently (i.e. Being an undocumented immigrant and a person of color is associated as having negative impacts at the local level because of police racial profiling, and at the CA State level because of lack of access to driver's licenses).

In addition to shared struggle, members of ALMAS have a shared sense of beauty, love, and vision for a better world. They want the earth to be cared for. They want their homes to be healthy places where healthy relationships can flourish, and they want to embody the change they want to see in themselves, in ALMAS, and in their organization (the Graton Day Labor Center). They view the body, the home, ALMAS, and the Labor Center, as sites and sources of resilience and strength, in order to organize themselves in those places to develop campaigns and target change in other arenas, like the home as workplace, the city, the state, or the nation.

When asked where the least important place is to organize, nearly all interview respondents said some version of, "No, there is nowhere where we shouldn't organize, we should organize everyone, everywhere".

Challenges and conflicts

ALMAS is organizing at the forefront of transformative organizing, in collaboration with other domestic worker organizing groups around the State of California and the United

States. The work the group is trying to accomplish is difficult and at times wrought with conflict and barriers. There are three major challenges that inhibit ALMAS' ability to achieve its personal and collective goals:

1. Conflicts rooted in intersecting oppressions and identities
2. Organizational infrastructure and Financial sustainability
3. Space, geography, and logistics of organizing in a rural area

Conflicts rooted in intersecting oppressions and identities

Chapter 8 explores the ways that intersecting identities, as rooted in systems of oppression, impact ALMAS' organizing efforts externally (i.e. campaigns for justice). What I want to emphasize here, is the ways that intersecting identities impact ALMAS members in a challenging way internally for individuals, and interpersonally between individual members of the group.

There are two main ways that intersecting identities hinder ALMAS' abilities to succeed, one is the ways that they are connected, and the other stems from perceptions about how they might be different from one another. As described above, most ALMAS members walk through the door and join organizing efforts because of a primary need to look for work through the hiring process at the Graton Day Labor Center. This means that most ALMAS members are looking for work, and do not already have stable employment or income⁴⁸. As

⁴⁸ It can be assumed that any ALMAS member who came to the Center initially to look for work does not have regular employment. In order to obtain work through the Center workers must be present

a collective of women with this shared identity or experience, at times members tend to view one another as competition. When discussing the need to grow and build our base of domestic workers in the region, one concern is always raised: If we bring in more women to the group, there will be less work for the rest of us. This is a real and clear concern, but it results in a certain level of inaction when it comes to one of the most widely shared and stated goals: to get bigger, to grow stronger.

The second way that intersecting identities can cause conflict among members stems from the perception that certain people, because of perceived or ascribed identities, have more privilege, or more access to work than others. On numerous occasions, ALMAS members with lighter skin have confided in me that they felt ostracized or rejected from the group because they perceived that others were challenged by them and worried that they would get more work because they were white, spoke English or had papers. More often than not, the members with lighter skin in question also struggled with English or did not have papers, but felt that the perception from others, was that they had it easier.

Those who have regular employment, relatively secure income, dark skin, and are bilingual, view their identities around work as having a positive impact on them as domestic workers. Those who are suffering economically, do not have a regular source of income, are light skinned, and who are monolingual Spanish-speaking, associate these identities as having a negative impact on them as domestic workers. Darker skin is seen as a positive attribute by those with lighter skin because there is a feeling among lighter skinned ALMAS

at the Center on a regular basis between 9-11am. People who have regular employment already would not be able to use this service.

members, that they are not as welcome in the group, *and* that they are not seen by employers as equally competent employees, because their assumption is that employers assume that dark-skinned Mexican women workers work harder. This assumption is deeply rooted in a white supremacist society that perpetuates the myth that skin color determines one's ability to be intelligent, to work hard, or to be valuable. For people with white or light skin, their color is associated with superior intelligence. For dark-skinned people of color, this system dehumanizes them, equating them with animals whose purpose is to provide manual labor in service of white employers. As a white woman interacting with white employers, I found that white employers were fairly comfortable saying racially stereotypical things to me. For example, when one employer called me to provide a reference for a domestic worker, she asked me: "What is she?" I responded, *well, I'm not sure what you are asking?...* She replied "You know, what is she? Is she Mexican?" I asked her why she thought that would matter or why that was important for her to know in making her hiring decision. She backtracked, stumbling over her words, and said, "Oh, you know, I just want to know who I'm dealing with". On a separate occasion, another female employer called the Labor Center and wanted to hire a housecleaner. She said "I like to hire Mexican women because you know, they work so hard!" In the same conversation she said, "We really want someone who will be like part of the family." In one moment the employer simultaneously dehumanized the domestic worker, stereotyping her as a hard worker because of her perceived race or skin color, and at the same time suggested she should automatically become part of the family since she would be working in the home. This is an extremely patronizing approach to starting an employment relationship, one that many ALMAS members face on a regular basis.

Organizational infrastructure and Financial sustainability

ALMAS members know that if they don't grow, they could fail. Because of the nature of day labor domestic work, members of the organization are somewhat transient, and membership is cyclical. Over the course of two years, nearly 100 women came through the Graton Day Labor Center and ALMAS in search of work, and offered varying degrees of involvement and participation with the group, but at any given meeting there were only 5-15 members present. In order to truly build a base of domestic workers in the County or Region, ALMAS members have identified growth as a major goal. They not only want to bring in more domestic workers, they want to build power. If they can do that, I see the local scale becoming an increasingly important scale to target organizing efforts. Since most ALMAS members are also looking for work through the Graton Day Labor Center, the focus and scale of organizing is directed around the work place, and the state legislature. If ALMAS were able to expand to build a base of domestic workers more broadly, then organizing campaigns might include reforming the ways that domestic work agencies treat and pay workers locally, for example.

As I explore in detail through out this paper, ALMAS members are extremely active, engaged, and committed to their group and the work. With that said, the group does rely heavily on the infrastructure of the Graton Day Labor Center, the State coalition, and the National Alliance to do its organizing work. As the only paid, part time organizer with ALMAS, I saw how important it was for ALMAS members to have a dedicated organizer, to have support around participation, and to receive both financial and organizational

support from the Coalition and National Alliance. The position I held as organizer was paid entirely through grants obtained either directly or indirectly from NDWA and partners. On occasion I was unable to attend ALMAS meetings and asked the leadership if they wanted to have the meeting without me, or go ahead with the meeting as planned. On one occasion they preferred to cancel the meeting, and on another two members volunteered to facilitate the meeting and keep it scheduled as planned. On that day, only five ALMAS members came to the meeting, and they ended up not having it all. Usually ALMAS members are invited to participate in activities and meetings through text messages, phone calls, or messages via facebook or email. Although most ALMAS members are given a monthly calendar outlining the planned meetings and events, participation is impacted heavily by whether or not these additional outreach measures are taken to invite members to attend. When no outreach calls are made, between two to three people attend meetings, but when outreach calls are made, the average is closer to 10-15 members attending each meeting. At this point in time, ALMAS depends on having a dedicated staff person to coordinate, communicate, and support the development of leaders within the group.

Space, geography, and logistics of organizing in a rural area

ALMAS members live in many different dispersed towns and cities through out Sonoma County, and have chosen the Graton Day Labor Center as one of their main community centers. Most ALMAS members, and day laborers, only come to the Labor Center in the mornings when the hiring process is happening. When the hiring list closes, workers return home or to their residential communities to take care of their children, family or personal

needs. This means that it is really difficult to gather as a group at any other time in the day. It is financially and logistically difficult for many ALMAS members to come to the Center twice in one day. For some, it takes over an hour by bus *each way* to get to the Center, and so it is unrealistic to ask them to attend a night or afternoon strategy or organizing meeting.

Furthermore, because of financial restrictions, the physical space of the Graton Day Labor Center does not provide adequate private meeting spaces for women. The Center has embarked on a capital campaign to expand the physical space of the building, but for the duration of this research, the Center consisted of one double wide trailer, with no separate conference or meeting space for ALMAS. Meetings were usually conducted in the mornings to accommodate the transportation, financial, and time limitations of members, but this means that ALMAS meets with men day laborers observing them. The types of conversations and activities that can be done in this context are limited, since many of the members would not feel comfortable opening up about deeply emotional issues with people watching them from the outside.

The future, expanded vision of ALMAS, which will be discussed below, will include organizing various satellite ALMAS groups throughout the County, and will hopefully have the financial and organizational support ALMAS needs to have private meeting and gathering spaces to organize.

CHAPTER 7: INTERSECTIONS AND ORGANIZING

ALMAS members have a shared identity around being domestic workers, and many of them are also immigrant women of color from Mexico. A large group of founding ALMAS members all came from one of two rural villages in the southern, primarily indigenous Mexican State of Oaxaca. With that said, there are many diverging experiences with oppression and identities that impact the organizing efforts of the group. As explained in my review of the Urban Citizenship literature above, the impact of intersecting oppressions has not been fully explored in the literature, as they impact the abilities of groups to contest or define citizenship at multiple scales.

In this chapter I explore how the intersecting identities of ALMAS members impact them as domestic workers, in the pursuit of personal and collective goals, and in the overall efforts to organize for justice with ALMAS. First I outline the various ways that ALMAS members identify, in their own words, in terms of various identity categories. Then I explore how these identities, and intersections of these identities, impact them in positive and / or negative ways as domestic workers, and in the pursuit of their goals. Finally, I explore the ways that these intersections impact the scales at which ALMAS members choose to focus their collective organizing efforts, and finally show the implications for the meanings of citizenship and membership, as contested at multiple scales by ALMAS living and struggling at the intersections of systems of oppression.

Figure 4, below, shows the intersections of all of these variables. It is at these intersections where we can explore an intersectional, multi-scalar analysis of the organizing efforts of ALMAS, and integrate this analysis into the questions of membership, citizenship, and scale, that are central to the remaining debates within the Urban Citizenship Literature.

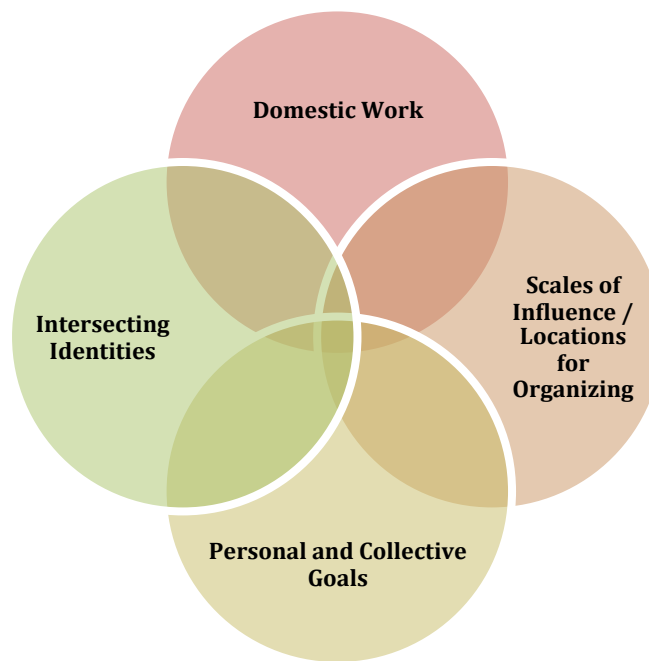


Figure 4: Framing an intersectional, multi-scalar analysis of domestic worker organizing

Experienced and Ascribed Identities of ALMAS, in their own words

During the interviews I asked participants to take part in an interactive activity to explore the ways that various parts of their identities impacted them as a domestic worker, or in the pursuit of their personal or collective goals at various scales. First, I gave each participant a stack of cards. On each card was written a different identity category (i.e. race,

gender, economic situation etc). I then asked each participant to write, in her own words, how she identified in that category (experienced identity), or how she thought other people commonly identified her (ascribed identity). I emphasized that what was most important, was that she use her own words to describe herself. In Table 3 below, I show all of the responses. The total number of respondents who shared the same identity are represented in parentheses (#). 20 total participants were interviewed.

Table 3: ALMAS' Identities in Their Own Words

Identity categories	ALMAS' experienced or ascribed identities in their own words
Age	Average of the (12) who shared exact age= 38 years old; Young (3); Mature (2); Old (1); Happy with age (1); ? (1)
Economic Status	Ok / Stable / Intermediate (10); Poor / Scary / Bad (7); Good or very good (2); no answer (1)
Education	Intermediate/ Medium / Secondary (6); High School (4); School of life (i.e. good mother, I feel well educated) (4); College (3); No answer (2); Very low (1)
Employment	Uncertain / Unemployed (7); Domestic Worker / Cleaning (7); Employed (4); Occasional work (1); Domestic Worker and Other employment (1)
Ethnicity	No answer (8); Latina (4); Hispano (3); Mexican (1); Warmth (1); Central American (1); Mixed (1); ALMAS (1)
Marital status	Single (10); Married / Committed relationship (7); Divorced (1); Widow (1); Daughter (1)
Gender	Female (12); Woman (5); Feminist (1); Good (1); no answer (1)
Immigration Status	Undocumented (7); Immigrant (6); Undocumented b/c overstayed visa (1); Unimportant (1); Business / Tourist Visa (1); Citizen (1); Resident (1); In process for work permit (1); ? (1)
Key relationships	Mother / Single Mother (10); Wife / partner (5); no answer (4); Friend (4); Daughter (2); Sister (1); Communication (1); Few (1); Substitute mother (1) [as a nanny]
Language abilities	Spanish only (6); Bilingual English/Spanish (6); Good / Competent (4); Not good (3) ; Bilingual Eng/Fijian (1)

Mobility	Drive a car (14); Ride the bus (3); No transport (3)
Nationality	Mexican (17); Latina (1); Panamanian (1); Fijian (1)
Personality	<div> Caring, loving, passionate Changes with the weather Fighter Strong Talk a lot Others see me as angry I follow through Presents self well, in word and character Spontaneous Medium </div> <div> No answer Persistent, bullheaded, peaceful Pretty good Sweet Calm Happy Humble, fun, talkative, modest Strong, firm, friendly, sociable Sentimental Sociable, responsible </div>
Physical or mental capacity	Normal (13); no answer (3); Mental or learning disability (3); Physical disability (1)
Race	Latina (6); no answer (5); Hispana (5); La Razita / Paisanos (1); Raza Huave (1); Fijian (1); Mexican (1)
Religion Spirituality	Catholic (9); Believe in something / God (4); Christian (3); Neutral (1); Mormon (1); No answer (1); Clarity (1)
Sex	Feminine (8); Woman (8); Female (2); Good (1); "I have been discriminated against because of preference" (1) [hiring a man over a woman]
Sexuality	Straight / Like men (9); No answer (3); Woman (2); Good or Positive thing (2); old (1); Conservative (1); Hidden (1); Gay (1)
Skin color	Morena / Morena Sabrosa / Azucar Morena [Brown, Delicious Brown, Brown Sugar] (9); White (5); Light Brown (1); Half caste (1); Ambiguous (1); No answer (1); Chocolate (1); Café [coffee] (1)
Vocation or profession	Help others/work (5); Domestic Worker (3); Unsure or none (3); Domestic Worker and something else, i.e health educator, seamstress (2); Mother (2); Educator (2); Prep cook (1); Community health worker (1); Mobile food service (1)
other	Human (1) Short (1) Fat (1)

While the above table represents all of the answers of all participants regarding self-identification in multiple categories, for the purpose of analysis, I combined some identity categories. For example, I look at race, ethnicity, nationality, and skin color together, since most respondent's identities across these four categories didn't seem to have much different impact on them. For example, a respondent who put Hispano, Latina, Mexican, and Brown skin, for the above four categories respectively, didn't differentiate much between the impact of one over the other. When individual identities did make a unique impact within those I combined, I make sure to recognize that.

After combining some of the identity categories for the purpose of analysis, I was left with 12 main identity categories: Age; Education; Economic Situation (combining economic status, vocation, and employment); Race (combining race, ethnicity, nationality and skin color); Relationships (Marital status or identities based on key relationships); Gender (combining sex, gender and sexuality⁴⁹); Immigration Status; Language Abilities; Mobility; Personality; Capacity; and Religion.

It should be noted up front, that conducting an intersectional analysis of identities of multiple people around multiple issues is a messy process. Furthermore, each ALMAS member represents an entire world of possibility around the intersections of her own identities. In what follows here, I do not attempt to provide an analysis of every single way

⁴⁹ Sexuality is clearly different from gender and sex, especially considering the experiences of people outside the hetero-normative paradigm. The only reason I combine sexuality with gender and sex here, is because gender identity always matched sexual identity for ALMAS (there are no transgendered ALMAS members at this time), and sexuality was not an important category for ALMAS members in relation to these topics.

that every part of each ALMAS member's identities intersect with each of their experiences. What I am looking for, are the commonalities between their intersecting experiences, and how these commonalities might help us understand what ALMAS' organizing efforts are all about.

To do this, I analyze which identities are chosen by at least six out of the 20 interview respondents to have an impact on them as a domestic worker, in the pursuit of their goals, or at various scales of influence or struggle. Where there is significant overlap in terms of which identity categories are deemed relevant, I provide an analysis of why, and how these intersections may impact organizing efforts and meanings of citizenship and membership at multiple scales for ALMAS. I look at the intersections of multiple identity categories on the same impact (i.e. the impact of race *and* language ability on the pursuit of collective goals), as well as the ways individual identity categories are seen to impact multiple areas of influence (i.e. how gender impacts them as domestic workers *and* in the pursuit of their personal goals).

Chapter Overview

First I explore which identities are deemed most impactful for ALMAS members as domestic workers, and in the pursuit of their personal and collective goals. Next, I look at which identities are associated with particular scales of influence or struggle, and finally, I attempt to synthesize the information and offer some concluding remarks about these

intersections and implications for the meanings and locations of contested citizenship vis-à-vis the experiences of ALMAS.

Intersecting Identities and Domestic Work, Personal Goals, and Collective Goals

After participants filled in their cards, I asked them to consider which parts of their identities impacted them, in a positive or negative way, as a domestic worker, or in the pursuit of their personal or collective goals. Using the SWOT analysis as a tool (standing for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, or Threats), I explained that positive impacts could include a strength, or provide a new opportunity that they would otherwise not have. Negative impacts would be something that either presented as a threat or was seen as a weakness for them in this context. Table 4 below provides a list of which identity categories were most often associated by participants to impact them in either a positive or negative way. The table is color coded, and staggered, to show how particular identity categories impact participants in different, and in more or less substantial ways.

Table 4: Impact of identities on Domestic Work, Personal Goals, and Collective Goals

	Domestic Work	Personal Goals	Collective Goals
Positive	<p>Economic Situation (9) Personality (9) Gender (9) Mobility (8) Race (7) Language Ability (6)</p>	<p>Economic Situation (12) Race (11)</p> <p>Personality (8) Education (7) Language Ability (6) Capacity (6) Gender (6) Relationships (6)</p>	<p>Economic Situation (9) Personality (9)</p> <p>Education (8) Race (8)</p> <p>Language Ability (6) Immigration Status (6)</p>
Negative	<p>Immigration Status (11) Language Ability (10) Economic Situation (8) Race (7)</p>	<p>No Negative Impact (12)</p>	<p>No Negative Impact (11)</p>

(#) = Represents the number of participants who associated each impact

Intersections: Economic Situation x Language Ability x Race x Immigration Status

What were seen as negative influences on experiences with domestic work were viewed as assets when considering the personal and collective goals of participants. Economic situation, language ability, and race are all seen to provide both a benefit and a challenge for different ALMAS members on the job as domestic workers. However, in terms of pursuing personal or collective goals, these three intersecting identities are only viewed as positive assets. As shown in the full demographics table above, the economic situation for the majority of ALMAS members is unstable, and challenging. One would assume that this would be viewed as a negative force in all areas of someone's life. However, because of the

shared struggle that ALMAS members have with each other to obtain decent, regular and just employment, they view this shared struggle as an asset and as a unifying force among them, since it is what brings them together in struggle.

Similarly, most ALMAS members are either brown or dark skinned, Latina, Mexican, or non-white. In a racist and white supremacist society, these identity groups are associated with oppression and discrimination. ALMAS members understand very acutely how racism impacts them in a negative way, but they also see it as a source of resilience. Participants take great pride in their racial, ethnic, or national identities. The shared struggle around race is viewed as a unifying force, and a source of strength in pursuing the goals of ALMAS, especially because racism impacts domestic workers in the workplace, and in their personal lives in negative ways.

Language abilities are viewed as a source of strength and a source of weakness, depending on what those abilities are. ALMAS members who identify as sufficiently bilingual view language abilities as an asset in domestic work, where those who are monolingual Spanish speaking identify language as having a negative impact on their ability to get and retain long term employment as a domestic worker. For both bilingual and monolingual speakers, language ability is seen as a positive influence in ALMAS. Again, the ability to either communicate with each other within the group, for monolingual Spanish speakers, or the ability to communicate the needs and demands of the group to the outside world, for those who are bilingual, connects the women together in shared struggle in the pursuit of their

personal and collective goals. Still, limited language abilities hinder ALMAS members' participation in the struggle:

“Oh yes, I've always dreamed to be the leader and introduce everyone. But it makes me nervous, because I don't speak a lot of English, and there are words that aren't familiar for me. For me I like to be a leader. I want to come and say I did this.”

~Gloria

Immigration status, like race, is seen to have a negative impact on ALMAS members in domestic work, but is viewed as a positive asset in terms of pursuing their collective goals. The vast majority of ALMAS members are, at the time of this writing, undocumented immigrant workers. It should be noted that those who identify in this category as “immigrant” (in the above demographics table) do not have legal authorization to work in the United States. Undocumented immigration status is a threat or challenge for domestic workers because it leaves them more vulnerable to the exploitation or abuse from their employers. Alternatively, those *with* legal documentation to work have felt discriminated against on the job, because employers wanted to hire an undocumented worker, so to be able to justify, in their mind, paying her less money for the same work. On one occasion I was on the phone with a female employer negotiating the conditions for a domestic work housecleaning job. The employer asked me how much the women charge who are “illegal” vs. how much women with papers charge. It is the policy of ALMAS and the Labor Center to value work based on what is being done, not on who is doing it, but this was not the intention of that employer.

For some ALMAS members, not having legal status means being forced to do domestic work, even though they don't like it. When I asked Artemisa, who has her bachelor's degree from her home country and is undocumented in the US, about her experience as a domestic worker she said, "The only thing I like is to take care of children", but you also do housecleaning? I asked, "Yes," she said, "But I don't like it". Then why do you do it? "Because I have to", she said.

The intersection of undocumented immigration status and race impact many ALMAS members in a negative way, but they are also both seen as a source of strength:

"I don't think that just because we are immigrants we can't struggle. That's not going to keep us back. Because we have rights, because we work, because we come here to work. I think that if an American has rights, then how can we not? If we are also human beings? Just because we don't have papers they can discriminate against us? For being immigrants and also for my race... And regardless of our race, be us Mexicans, Puerto Ricans. Being Mexican, and coming from [my] race, gives me strength. Because sometimes being Mexican makes us discriminated against more, but that gives us strength to struggle". ~Serenidad

However, it is not the shared struggle alone that brings strength to the group. The combination of *shared hardships* with race, language, immigration status, and economic situation, coupled with *assets* like strong personalities, being women, having good physical or mental capacity, being single or having supportive partners, having transportation, or

having access to higher levels of education, supports the pursuit of both individual and collective goals of ALMAS members.

Positive impacts: Personality, Gender, Education, Mobility, Capacity, and Relationship Status

Personality was viewed as a strength across the board. ALMAS members who identify their personalities in very different ways from each other considered their personality to have a big positive impact on them. From those who identified as “Strong, firm, friendly, and sociable”, or “Caring, loving, and passionate”, to “Persistent, bullheaded, and peaceful”, personality was identified by nearly half of all participants to provide an opportunity or strength for them in the context of domestic work and in organizing.

Despite common assumptions in Critical Race Theory and intersectionality literatures that assert that race, class and *gender* are the most important and relevant intersecting identities of oppression, ALMAS members tend to view their gender as women, female, feminine, or feminists (in their own words), in a positive light. This is not to say that they do not recognize their oppression as women, but that when asked to associate their identities in positive or negative ways in terms of being domestic workers, or in pursuit of their goals with ALMAS, gender was viewed in a positive way across the board. Their commitment to coming together as women is indicative of their awareness that women have a shared and collective struggle, rooted in oppression. This affirms that the organizing practices of ALMAS are deeply feminist, whether or not they actually use that term.

Being a woman is seen as an asset in domestic work because it is a gendered labor force. Employers are more likely to hire a woman to do domestic labor, although not all domestic workers are women. ALMAS members feel like they are well suited to do domestic work because it is the work they already do in their homes:

“We are the ones that have more responsibility in the home. The woman is in charge of all the problems, even the problems of the husbands. We come to look for work, and then the husband asks, why do you go? They want to be the leader in the relationship and in work. But for women, its good to have a group, we can share so many things. Even though we may not have the same physical capacity of men, we are capable to do many things. We can do double work, we can move forward.”

~Coyolxauhqui

In pursuing personal goals gender is viewed as a strength because being a woman is the *only* identity that *all* ALMAS members have in common. Women decided in 2005 that it was important for them to have their own group within the Graton Day Labor Center, so that they could provide mutual support to each other, and so that they could develop rules and processes around the distribution of work for women workers in a way that met their needs. When asked why it is important for ALMAS members to have a group that is primarily for women, some participants shared:

“Because we women are courageous, we are victorious! For me, the woman is courageous, strong, she fights, that's why God chose us for mothers, because we

fight like lions, the woman is strong! We are courageous! We don't give up easily. We fight until we achieve our goals. That's why I say we women are strong!" ~Adelita

"It's important because it's a support. Whatever you can't do alone, we can do together. Its like if you are going to lift up some furniture, you can't do it alone, you need the help of others. Its like what we are trying to achieve with ALMAS, it gives you the strength." ~Gaia

Being a woman is seen as a strength because it is a unifying force for the group. Positive messages about being women are perpetuated on a regular basis through group discourse, but pride in being a woman is something ALMAS members brought into the group with them. It was not only developed as part of the group. Adelita, as quoted above, had only been part of ALMAS for a couple of weeks when I interviewed her, and had only been able to attend two or three ALMAS meetings by that time. From the passion and tone of her voice when she talked about the power of being a woman, it was clear to me that this was not a new phenomenon for her.

Education is viewed as an important asset in terms of achieving both personal and collective goals. Participants with higher levels of formal education, or high opinions of themselves in terms of being well educated either culturally or behaviorally (*bien educada*), associate their level of education with an increased ability to achieve their goals. This is because of an increased ability to communicate with others outside of ALMAS, like the press or members of the state coalition, or within ALMAS:

“Being more educated makes me able to adjust myself with the group, engage myself with idea sharing, and give information and get information out of the group as well.” ~Kali

In a rural county with little public transportation, and the barriers to mobility for unlicensed drivers, access to reliable transportation is crucial for ALMAS members to be able to work, and to participate in the efforts of the group. Most ALMAS members share that they either have their own cars, or have managed to navigate the poor public transportation system in a way that meets their needs. Without mobility, ALMAS members would not be able to move, and would not be able to be part of the movement. This asset is not only individual, but is seen as a collective need. Over the two years of the study, many ALMAS members would regularly provide transportation to the Center for other members.

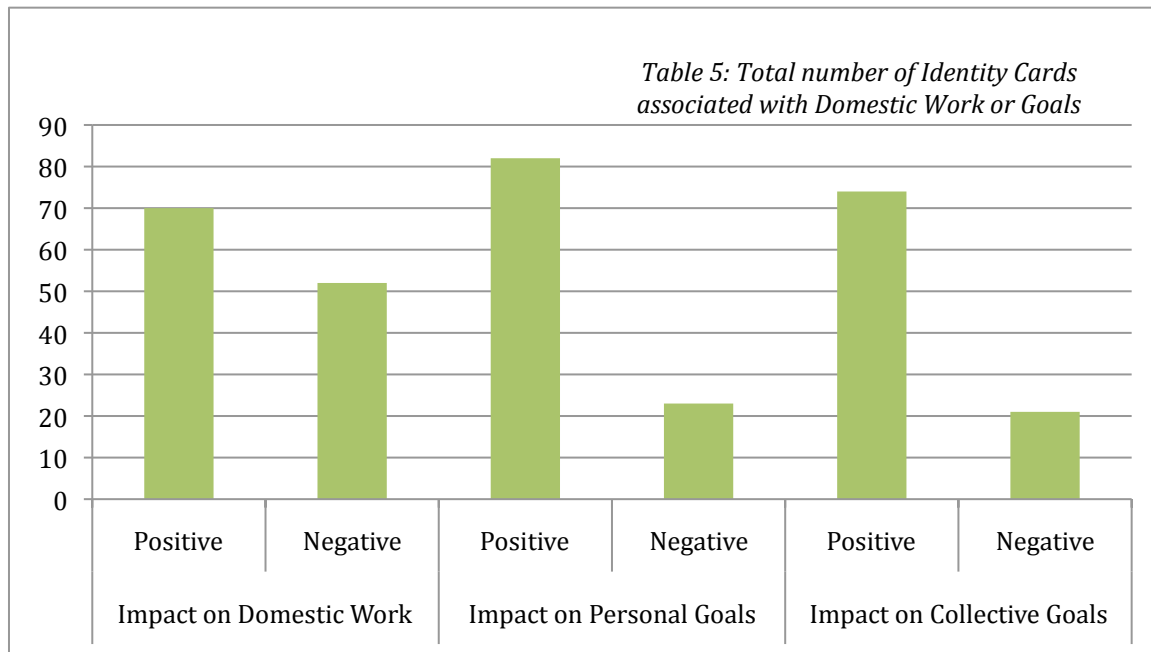
Most ALMAS members view themselves as physically or mentally capable or “normal”. They see their capacity as a strength in being able to work in the collective and in the pursuit of their own goals. ALMAS members who identified as having a physical or mental disability felt limited in their abilities to be part of the group. One member shared that her mental capacity “fluctuates with the weather”, and that makes it hard for her to show up on a regular basis to functions. Another active member said she was embarrassed for other members to know that she had a physical disability. She didn’t want them to know that she was on a government assisted disability program, because she was afraid they would see her as taking their jobs, when she already had a source of income. For her, the amount she

was paid by the government monthly was not enough to feed her three children. She had to look for work through the Labor Center to supplement this income to survive.

ALMAS members view being single as a positive thing because of the autonomy it gives them in their lives: “Being single is positive because I don’t have other responsibilities that keep me from participating in the group”. Others view their relationship with their partner as a positive asset because they recognize that their partners are more supportive than most, in terms of allowing them the space to participate and do what they want to do with their time. Another important identity based in relationship is being a mother, or a single mother. Mothers and single mothers identify the strength that they feel as mothers, and the responsibility they feel towards their children to not only make a living by working, but also to make the world a better place by organizing.

The Optimism of ALMAS

While many ALMAS members associated parts of their identities as having a negative impact on them as domestic workers, the majority of participants said that their identities had little to no negative impact on their ability to pursue their personal or collective goals with ALMAS. In looking at all of the identity cards placed or associated as having a positive or negative impact in all three categories, the general trend is positive. Table 5 shows that for each of the three areas of consideration: domestic work, personal goals, and collective goals, participants were much more likely to associate identities as providing strengths or opportunities, than they were to associate them as weaknesses or threats.



Based in my conversations with ALMAS members over the course of this project, I would argue that the general optimistic views shown here are rooted in some of the same major components of what compromises the organizing and citizenship practices of ALMAS in general. I will elaborate on this in my concluding remarks.

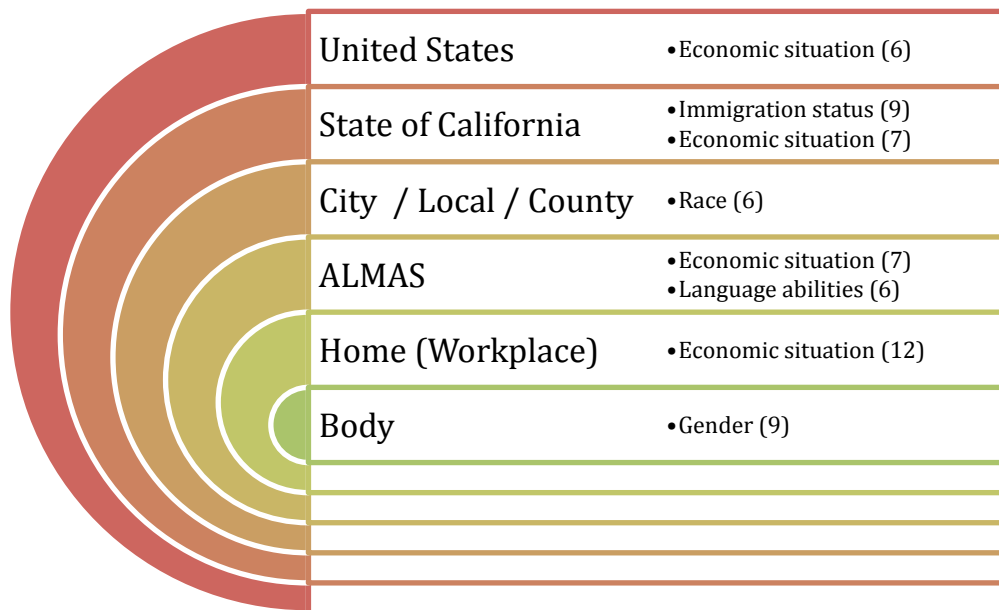
Intersecting Identities and Multi-scalar Organizing

Near the end of the interview, having discussed participants' experiences with domestic work, as a member of ALMAS, and the various ways they feel their identities impact them, I asked participants to reflect on scales of influence and locations of struggle. Using the visual I created of concentric circles, with the body in the center, and moving out to the globe, ALMAS members commented on where and how different parts of their identities impacted them at various scales. Overall, there was substantial commonality between

participants around five main identity categories: Economic Situation, Immigration Status, Gender, Language Abilities, and Race.

As Figure 5 below shows, Economic Situation is associated with experiences or struggles at multiple scales, most significantly at the scale of the home as workplace (12 participants), then with the State of California and ALMAS (7 each), and finally, with the United States (6).

Figure 5: Identity categories that ALMAS members most associate with organizing at various scales



It is interesting to note that immigration status is highly associated with the scale of the State of California, as opposed to the United States in general. Even though the United States is the governing body that makes decisions regarding immigration policy, ALMAS members associate their economic situation *and* their immigration status with struggles at the CA State level. This intersection shows that they view their struggle for workers rights

through a similar lens that they see their struggle as undocumented immigrants. This is critical for understanding how ALMAS organizing efforts for the Bill of Rights are embedded within the broader vision for immigration reform, and ultimately citizenship rights for immigrant women workers, and all people.

Language Abilities and Economic Situation are both seen to impact ALMAS members at the scale of the group itself. Within ALMAS there is a wide range of language ability. Those who feel confident with themselves regardless of their language ability, were more inclined to view this as a positive attribute. Monolingual and bilingual speakers identified language abilities, at the scale of ALMAS, in a positive way. Language is what unites people, and it is what creates bridges with allies as part of the movement for domestic workers rights. Through the use of testimonies and narrative, domestic worker leaders are able to elevate their lived experiences to the broader society, to ultimately win policy change because of their stories.

Race was commonly associated with experiences at the local scale. The reasons for this were mixed. Some participants felt that their race made them a target for police abuse, unfair traffic stops or profiling etc, where others associated their race locally because they feel like they are treated fairly, even though they aren't white.

Finally, nearly half of all participants associated their gender with the scale of the body. This is because identities as women, female, etc are physically located at the body, but also because ALMAS members draw strength, and tend to center in their power around being

women, in their bodies. This is a central component to a feminine-centered model for organizing, that will be discussed in my concluding chapter.

It should be noted that not all nine scales of influence were seen as intersecting in significant way with identities. Home, as a place of residence, the Graton Day Labor Center, and the World, were not locations where many ALMAS members associated particular parts of how they identify.

Weaving it all together: Transforming the Borders of Citizenship

I want to reflect on the intersecting identities as described by ALMAS members, as having impacted them in their work, in the pursuit of their goals, and at various scales of influence and organizing. Below, table 6 synthesizes the data from all of the identity exercises completed during the interviews. Shaded areas represent the intersections where six or more ALMAS members identified important impact of particular identity categories on each of the issues in question. Below I provide an analysis and attempt to weave together some of the aforementioned intersections, as they impact the organizing and citizenship practices of ALMAS.

Table 6: Total Identities Associated with Domestic Work, Personal and Collective Goals, and with Scales of Influence or Organizing

	Positive (+) or Negative (-) impact						Scales of Influence, Sites of Oppression, and Targets for Organizing								
	Domestic Work		Pers. Goals		Coll. Goals		Body	Home (live)	Home (work)	ALMAS	CLG	Local	State	USA	World
	+	-	+	-	+	-									
Age	3	4	2	3	4	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Education	5	2	7	0	8	1	2	2	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
Economic Situation	9	8	12	5	9	1	2	3	12	7	3	4	7	6	4
Race	7	7	11	4	8	1	4	0	2	5	4	6	5	4	4
Relational	4	2	6	1	5	4	4	2	0	3	3	1	1	2	3
Gender	9	2	6	0	4	1	9	1	3	5	4	3	4	4	5
Immigration	2	11	5	4	6	3	0	1	2	3	2	0	9	5	2
Language	6	10	7	2	6	2	3	2	5	6	2	5	5	0	1
Mobility	8	3	4	1	5	1	0	1	2	1	2	4	1	1	1
Personality	9	0	8	3	9	2	2	2	2	3	1	3	2	2	2
Capacity	4	1	6	0	5	1	3	1	2	4	4	1	1	0	1
Religion	4	1	3	0	2	0	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	1	2

Referring back to the image I offered at the beginning of this chapter of multiple, overlapping and intersecting circles (Figure 4), one can begin to imagine where some of these identities and experiences might intersect. For example, figure 6 below shows the intersections of intersecting identities, with experiences as domestic workers, in the context of the personal and collective goals of the group, and at which scales contestations and organizing are deemed most relevant.

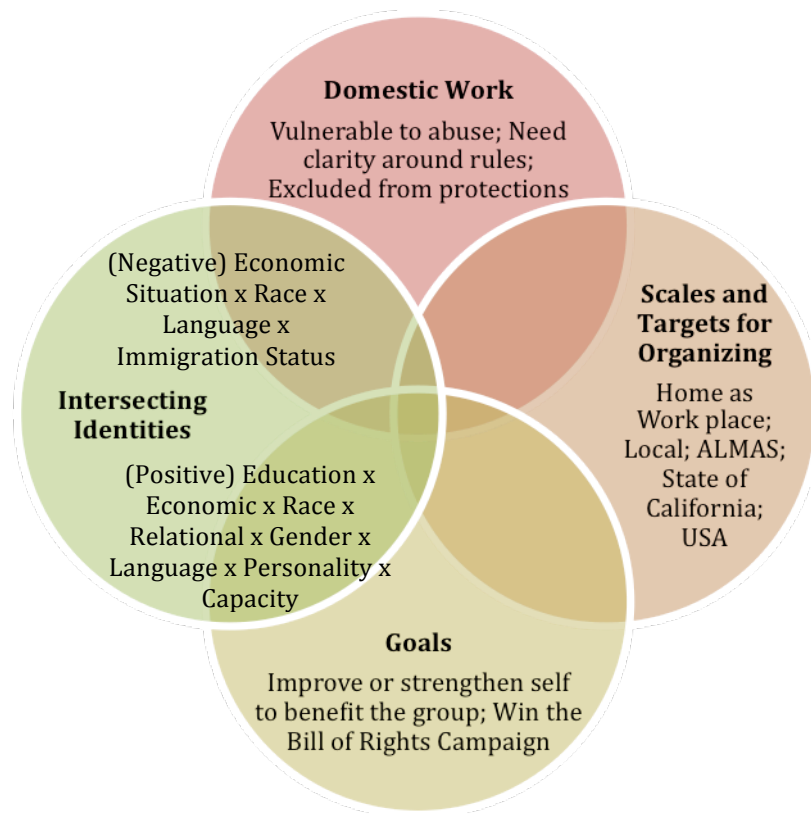


Figure 6: Exploring the Intersections of Identity, Organizing, and Scale

Economic situation is the identity category most associated with being a domestic worker, and the ability to pursue and achieve both personal and collective goals through ALMAS. It is also the category most often associated with particular sites or locations of struggle. Economic status is viewed by some ALMAS members as having a positive impact on them as domestic workers, because it is the profession they are working in, and it is what allows them to support their families. Others view their economic situation as negatively impacting them as a domestic worker because they feel as though they are underemployed, and would rather be working in a different field, or they feel they are mistreated as domestic workers and want to be afforded the same rights and privileges as all workers in

all other industries⁵⁰. Positive associations of identities with personal and collective goals are seen as strengths in being able to organize for change.

Identities around work are highly associated with locations of struggle. It is obviously the identity most associated with the home as workplace, or site where domestic work takes place. It is also heavily associated with ALMAS, the State of California, and the United States as spheres of influence or locations of struggle (i.e. potential targets for campaigns). Being domestic workers is one of the main identity groups that brings ALMAS members together. Nearly every ALMAS member is or has been a domestic worker, and the majority of organizing and claims-making that is promoted through the group is meant to directly impact and improve the lives of domestic workers. In general, participants view the California State struggle for the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights as inherently a worker's struggle: "As domestic workers we have no rights, we need the Bill of Rights to pass so that we can have the rights and dignity of all other workers".

It is not economic situation alone that brings ALMAS together to organize. As previously discussed, it is at the intersections of economic situation, language abilities, immigration status, and race, where ALMAS members have a shared struggle. Through that shared struggle, and reinforced by sources of resilience in gender, education, race, relational, language, personality, and capacity identities, ALMAS members are able to organize for change.

⁵⁰ As previously mentioned, farm workers are also excluded from many of the same labor laws that do not protect domestic workers.

Identities that are associated as having both a positive *and* negative impact on participants as domestics workers are mainly seen in a positive light when considering individual and collective goals. From collective struggle comes collective liberation. ALMAS members see that they have a shared struggle when it comes to economic situation, race, language abilities, and immigration status. It is these four identity categories that are viewed as both helping and challenging them as domestic workers, and it is through the shared struggles that they are able to organize around shared values for change.

ALMAS members are not naïve about the negative impacts of race, gender, immigration status, and economic situation on their lives and the lives of other members. What they have collectively done though, is take those shared struggles, come together in unity around those shared experiences, and view that collective experience as a source of strength and resilience. Women are oppressed under patriarchy. People of color are oppressed under white supremacy. Undocumented immigrants are exploited and abused under a nationalist system of xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment and policies. Being low-income brings with it an enormous bundle of disadvantages ranging from health to education disparities and more. It is precisely *because* of this reality, and through the collective behaviors and norms of the group, that ALMAS is beginning to articulate practices of claims making, citizenship, and membership, that draw strength from these injustices, while also calling them out for what they really are: dehumanizing, and wrong.

In the final concluding chapter, I synthesize the meanings and practices of citizenship, membership, and claims-making, as articulated by, and promoted through ALMAS. I also

reflect on some of the challenges for the group, and discuss the future of ALMAS. Finally I explore the implications of this research and this project for radical planning practitioners, community organizers, and community developers who are interested in integrating the type of transformative organizing that ALMAS and other domestic worker organizing projects around the globe are “leading with love.”

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Feminine-Centered Transformative Organizing: The Intersectional, Multi-scalar Organizing and Citizenship Practices of ALMAS

While many ALMAS members do not have access to formal citizenship rights, they act and organize as exemplary citizens. The substantive citizenship practices of ALMAS are rigorous, and rooted in both individual and collective benefit in relationship with one another and the society at large. To review, the main research questions guiding this project were as follows:

- (Q1) How are domestic workers organizing for justice, inclusion, and various forms of citizenship in the United States?
- (Q2) At what scale(s) are their organizing efforts and contestations most relevant?
- (Q3) How do intersecting identities and institutional power dynamics impact the organizing efforts of domestic workers at multiple scales?
- (Q4) How do the organizing efforts of domestic workers challenge, support, or reframe some of the major agreements and remaining debates within Urban Citizenship?

Below I synthesize my findings as they pertain to these main research questions and engage with remaining debates in the Urban Citizenship literature, vis-à-vis the organizing practices of ALMAS. Finally, I offer some implications of this research for radical planning and community development practitioners and community organizers interested in transformative organizing, transformative citizenship, and citizenship as contested terrain.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the essential elements of ALMAS' model for contesting citizenship and membership at multiple scales include:

1. Start with ourselves to change the world: Embodied transformation
2. Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships
3. Interdependence
4. Love and Rigor
5. Consensus and Collective Action
6. Organize everyone and everywhere

I argue that these elements embody a feminine-centered, transformative organizing approach, and represent a set of citizenship practices that are inherently anti-racist, feminist, inclusive, and transformational.

The substantive, cultural, and economic citizenship practices of ALMAS call for formal, economic, political and cultural citizenship rights, responsibilities, and relationships at multiple scales. The shared struggle of undocumented immigration status, while seen as a threat or challenge in the work place, is also viewed as a source of strength when organizing. That is not to suggest that ALMAS members need to be undocumented to organize! What it may mean, is that the shared struggle for immigration reform brings ALMAS together, and reinforces the need to fight for inclusion where they are formally excluded.

The Urban Citizenship literature largely fails to recognize the very real material consequences for people who are denied access to formal citizenship rights as conferred by the Nation State. For ALMAS, the reality of these exclusions are very poignant, and their organizing efforts, even though targeted at California and not the United States, represent the need to change federal and state laws in the pursuit of achieving full access to membership and inclusion at the federal level, and in society in general. When asked if she felt like a member at the scale of the United States, one ALMAS member shared:

"I don't feel like a member [of the US] because I have no rights. At least I feel I have no rights..."

I asked her what would need to change for her to feel like a member. She responded:

"For there to be Immigration Reform so that I could become a resident and then a citizen and then be able to vote to be able to have a say... I don't feel like a member because I feel like I'm not recognized as a human being. I feel like we're more treated as disposable objects..."

She then went on to clarify why she doesn't feel like a member of the US, by acknowledging frustration that the California Bill of Rights had been vetoed:

"I think I'm just feeling that way because Governor Brown vetoed it, and that's why I'm feeling that way. --Ok, we can use you, and make you work tons of hours and make you do this really important work, but no, you don't deserve any rights-- That's why I don't feel like a member of this country or the world because our work is not recognized. Even if I had papers I would feel that way. I think even more so in this country because I am undocumented, even more strongly, this level of national

level...its just the constant racism that I see and hear, against domestic workers and immigrants.” ~Tonantzin

For Tonantzin, feeling like a member would mean feeling treated like an equal human being, who is deserving of the same rights and protections as all other human beings. Many ALMAS members share that definition, and also add that membership means participating:

“Yes, membership means having a long time participating, being a member with more time. How great it is to participate, where they don't obligate you to go, but it comes from you. I go [to ALMAS] because I like to participate with the group and support people.” ~Serenidad

All participants in this study felt like a member of ALMAS. They cited feeling valued, seen, having their voices heard and respected, and being able and invited to make changes when needed, as the reasons for claiming membership. When asked if they felt like they were already members of the local area, or the state of California, many participants responded yes. The majority of those who felt like members of the state of California were undocumented immigrants, yet sited residence and participation at the local and state levels as the reasons for why they felt a sense of membership at these scales.

Similar to how positive and negative attributes of identity categories encouraged ALMAS to participate in social justice work, the conflicting feelings of belonging and not belonging are at play in terms of why they organize. Many of them organize at the State level because they do not feel that domestic workers are treated with dignity, respect, and equality at the site

of the home as workplace, *and*, they feel a sense of entitlement to make change by calling on the state of California to act. This sense of entitlement either comes from having lived in and contributed to California for many years, or from having participated in the Bill of Rights Campaign and seeing other women standing up for their rights.

For many ALMAS members, California has become their home. If they plan to leave to their original home country, they site California as being the place they would most likely return to, in the event that they come back to the United States. The majority have lived in California for more than five years, and plan to stay and raise their families here, or bring their children here from their home country if possible.

Engaging the major assumptions and debates within the Urban Citizenship Literature

Reflecting back to the Urban Citizenship literature review above, the organizing practices of ALMAS resemble some of the sociological practices of citizenship that Somers and Rocco discuss, where citizenship is a set of practices "enacted through universal membership rules and legal institutions (Somers as referenced in Rocco 2000)", and where "citizenship practices become a source of social identity (Rocco 2000)."

ALMAS itself has a system of universal membership, where everyone is welcome, no one is turned away, and there is "no discrimination". Even though it is a group for women, men are seen as strategic and important allies, and are not considered to be formally excluded from the group. For example, men are welcome to sign up on the domestic work hiring list,

so long as they actively engage in acts of solidarity to support the group. (None have taken ALMAS up on this offer, but it is possible).

Acting within the context of a group that is open to all and that allows the voices of many to emerge as leaders in a participatory democratic structure, facilitates the process by which members can act out citizenship as a “set of practices”. As described in detail above, there are norms, processes, and expectations around citizenship practices within the group, such as giving to receive, and supporting the collective through personal commitments and action. This at times can change the way members view themselves and their identity. As shown in the demographic table above, one ALMAS member even identified herself in the ethnicity category as “ALMAS”.

Here is a review of the major agreements and remaining debates within the Urban Citizenship literature, and describe how the citizenship practices of ALMAS confirm, challenge, re-frame, or answer some of these assertions or questions.

Major Agreements in Urban Citizenship

Major Agreement 1) Neoliberal globalization shifts power

The assertion that power has shifted away from state and national government to private actors is not wrong, but its relevancy is questionable when we consider the lived realities of undocumented immigrant, domestic workers. My main critique of the Urban Citizenship literature, is that its main premise that citizenship as conferred by the nation state holds

less importance, is absolutely not true for people who don't have access to it. Embedded within the literature is an expansive definition of citizenship as substance and practice, yet the main premise that contestations are being re-scaled to the city rely on the assumption that formal citizenship status exists. Domestic Workers organizing for justice, as primarily undocumented immigrant women of color, absolutely are impacted by formal citizenship status as conferred by the nation-state. This has not changed as neoliberal globalization has shifted power from the nation-state to private actors, or from local city governments to local governance bodies. Simply put, formal citizenship impacts contestations around citizenship. Where this main assumption within urban citizenship *does* resonate with the organizing practices of ALMAS and domestic workers broadly, is that there was, since September 11, 2001, a lost hope that efforts for immigration reform targeted at the national scale would result in any real reform. Any momentum building in the immigrants' rights movement prior to 9/11 was squashed with the backlash from that event. Efforts to expand undocumented immigrants' rights were then rescaled to the level of the state, (i.e. in opposition of Local collaboration with ICE, or against 287g agreements, or anti-immigrant laws like Arizona's SB1070), but this may have only been in part due to the trend observed within urban citizenship.

Major Agreement 2) The nation-state is in a state of crisis in the era of human rights

ALMAS hasn't had the capacity to organize at the global scale, but sister organizations within NDWA and the CA Coalition have traveled to Geneva, and elsewhere, as part of the global movement for domestic workers rights. Using human rights and international pressures to build from the ILO victory, domestic worker groups around the globe are

pressuring their own national governments to ratify the convention on safe and decent working conditions for domestic workers. This is a clear example of how the case of domestic worker organizing reinforces a main assumption in Urban Citizenship. Within the era of human rights, contestations around citizenship, drawing from supranational powers and morals, can impact how groups can contest citizenship and membership within the context of their nation-state.

Major Agreement 3) The city is becoming an increasingly important site of contestation over membership and citizenship

The City / Local is an important site of contestation for ALMAS and domestic worker organizing groups, but only when there is a clear target for change. In the case of ALMAS, as part of the Graton Day Labor Center, and as a member of NBOP, the city or local has been a target for campaigns around immigrants' rights. However, re-scaling even closer to home, to the site of the workplace, we find a site of struggle that is more relevant to the citizenship and membership struggles of ALMAS. Another local issue that might be of interest to potential ALMAS members would be access to viable public transportation. Since ALMAS and the CLG is located in a rural area with limited access to public transportation, people only participate in the organizing efforts if they can get there. I know there are many ALMAS members who would like to participate more if they had this access, and am aware of many unorganized domestic workers who simply do not have the ability to move around freely. Lack of access to public transportation then, is a key local / city issue that has kept potential members out of ALMAS, and out of this study.

Remaining Debates in Urban Citizenship

Remaining debate 1) What are the relationships between the global, transnational, state, and local scales in contesting citizenship?

The case of domestic worker organizing efforts reinforces some of the arguments put forth by Urban Citizenship scholars that suggest that the local and national are interrelated, and that national contexts matter because the local is situated within them (Baiocchi 2005).

Any ALMAS organizing efforts targeted at the local scale are done within the context of state or nation-wide campaigns. Work with NBOP to win local policy change is rooted in the national struggle for immigration reform. Outreach to garner support for domestic workers rights is done as part of the broader campaign to win the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, and the broader vision to change the culture of domestic work and immigrant women workers' experiences more broadly.

Situated within the "Universalist" and "Particularist" camps within the literature, domestic workers are at once asserting their rights rooted in the very real and specific struggles and lived realities they face as domestic workers (particularist), *and* are attempting to put forth a vision for a universalistic vision of citizenship, where they insert themselves as deserving of equal membership. The optimist view of ALMAS members about the impacts of the intersecting identities reinforces this universalistic frame, yet their specific campaigns and targets are situated in the particularist notion that groups with shared identities and

struggles must fight for their rights and inclusion as a group, in the context of oppressive social systems and policies.

An ALMAS-based conceptualization of citizenship would agree with some urban scholars like Brodie (2000) and Appadurai (2001), that urban citizenship, broadly conceived, cannot be considered in isolation from the state, national, and global contexts. The city, local, or region, is an important locale for organizing for ALMAS, but it is not the main *target* for the most essential campaigns of the group. The city is both source of power (the place where interdependent relationships with allies are developed), and it is a target for change in some cases (when the city is the perpetrator of injustice, as with the impounding of vehicles or collaboration with ICE), but it is not seen as the most important location for struggle and contestation. Looking at the local arena, as opposed to the city specifically, actually exposes more relevant targets for organizing in a semi-rural area, like domestic work agencies and specific employers of domestic workers.

Remaining debate 2) What are the different possible manifestations of urban citizenship from bounded to grounded urban citizenship?

As reviewed above, the bounded citizenship model, where individuals are granted citizenship in the context of the city based on residence in that place, would create two classes of citizens, those who have nation-based citizenship, and those who don't. This is essentially the lived reality of people in cities today. Most undocumented immigrants can exercise many local acts of citizenship, short of voting, by participating in local

communities and activities, by speaking out, and by developing community around shared interests, like through ALMAS and the Graton Day Labor Center. However, not having access to formal citizenship status as conferred by the nation-state remains a huge barrier for undocumented immigrants. Those undocumented immigrants who are also domestic workers are faced with an additional layer of exclusion and potential for exploitation, since they work behind closed doors, in a profession highly undervalued in a patriarchal society.

Monica Varsanyi (2006) offers a grounded model of citizenship, rooted in presence and residence, and that would essentially make formal citizenship status irrelevant. Within this model, living and acting in a place would entitle each individual to be a full and valid member in that place, not only locally, but in expanded and larger scales of influence. When asked about feelings of membership and belonging, many ALMAS members would say that they felt as though they were members of particular scales because these are the places where they live and contribute. When they did not feel as though they were granted equal membership, participants cited not being treated as a human being, or not having the same rights as others to make change or to participate. Varsanyi's grounded model is most in line with the essential elements of contesting citizenship that ALMAS members put forth. What needs to be considered within this model, however, is the impact of national identity and transnational membership on membership and citizenship. Many ALMAS members also feel as though they are members of their home countries, even if they haven't been there in decades. They maintain financial, cultural, and emotional ties with family and communities across national borders.

ALMAS puts forth a particularist struggle, within the vision of universalistic and global membership, by acting out a set of grounded and transformative citizenship practices. By acting from center (the body), in community (ALMAS and CLG), around shared struggles at work (Home as place of work), they can target local, state, and national government entities to make policy and cultural change. This multi-scalar organizing is done within the broader vision for one world, where human beings treat each other, and care for each other with dignity and respect, as promoted in emerging models of transformative organizing (SJL 2010).

Remaining debate 3) What is the impact of difference and multiplicity in contesting citizenship?

In further support of a particularist approach to urban citizenship, Saski Sassen (2000) urges us to look at the “localizations of the global” to understand multiple cross border identities and solidarities, as well as the global city as “one strategic site of the “multiple locations” of globalization (p. 52).” I do not argue here that the city is not one strategic site, but that it is not the *only* or *most important* site of what Sassen calls the “localizations of the global” *for domestic workers*. For ALMAS, and domestic workers organizing in coalition with ALMAS, the most essential manifestations of struggle in the context of neoliberal globalization happen at the site of the home as workplace, and in the bodies that serve as the main tools of domestic work.

Sassen and other globalization and global city scholars assert that neoliberal globalization has shifted power to the city and has exacerbated the gap between the global power elite, and a highly immigrant low-waged work force. This is clearly true for domestic workers. Many domestic workers clean the homes of the global power elite, or care for the elderly members of families with substantial wealth. The racial and gendered power dynamics of oppression and privilege that get perpetuated through the mechanisms of neoliberal globalization get acted out within the domestic work employment relationship. But the city is not the most critical space where this happens. The intersecting identities of domestic workers that are associated with systems of power and privilege are located on and in the body: race, skin color, gender, nationality, immigration status (recall the ALMAS member who felt eyes watching her and judging her as undocumented), etc. It is in the site of the home as workplace where abuse, exploitation, and denial of basic rights and humanity occur, because of shared oppressions that target the body. From that shared struggle, ALMAS comes together in community and in an organization to target the local, state and nation for change.

Remaining debate 4) What impact do specific institutions and policies have on contestations around membership?

Critics within Urban Citizenship are calling for an institutional analysis of contestations around citizenship. Institutions, sites of association, and networks of activity refer to the activities that sustain "survival, identity and sense of worth (Rocco 2000, p. 235)", and also engage people with the 'public sphere'. Institutions also carry out the oppressive work of systems of oppression by further perpetuating exploitation, and at times legally

legitimizing it. The 75 year old exclusion of domestic workers from many basic labor laws and protections institutionally legitimize the devaluing and exploitation of domestic workers' labor.

Locally, the only institutions that deal directly with the industry of domestic work are domestic work agencies, and community-based member organizations like the Graton Day Labor Center. On the one hand, domestic work agencies are seen as exploitative of workers, extracting much of the profits from their labor, where community-based organizations like the Graton Day Labor Center and ALMAS, provide the infrastructure and foundation for organizing to occur. Further exploration and research around the impact of domestic work agencies is needed to analyze the impact of these institutions on domestic workers lives and their organizing practices.

The Future of ALMAS, and Implications of this project for Community Organizers, Radical Urban Planners, and Community Development Practitioners

ALMAS has a vision for expansion that is rooted in somatics, transformative organizing, and basebuilding. The hope is to extend its work beyond the Graton Day Labor Center, reach out to more Latina and Fijian domestic workers, and to provide a vehicle for integrating and embodying a practice around somatics, to *act from center*, and to build power for collective liberation, rooted in the domestic worker movement. The executive director of CLG, staff, ALMAS leadership, and active board members of CLG are all committed to moving this vision forward. This would be done with the support of SOL leaders and the

NDWA. A fund development plan is being created at the time of this writing to realize this expanded vision for ALMAS in Sonoma County.

ALMAS organizing efforts have much to teach community organizers, radical urban planners, and community development practitioners. First and foremost, when planning or developing any community project, at any scale, practitioners and organizers should look to domestic worker organizing projects for participation, guidance, and vision. These projects, like ALMAS, are fueled by active and engaged immigrant women of color who have developed themselves as leaders, as spokespeople, and as advocates for themselves, their communities, and even their employers. They represent a highly capable and strategic sector of our society that should have a seat at the table as a valid stakeholder when making decisions that impact local communities. Many ALMAS leaders and members of other domestic worker groups have developed public speaking skills and are rooted in the needs of their communities. Women like them should have a seat at the table when discussing urban planning or community development projects that will impact their lives, and should be engaged in any local efforts to participate in planning hearings or actions.

Second, ALMAS members embody an exemplary form of citizenship in both practice and substance. The six core elements of the ALMAS organizing model provide an exemplary guide to those of us engaging in contestations for citizenship and membership. They remind us to improve our selves in the context of the collective need; to give in order to receive, in right relationships and interdependence with those around us; to be loving *and* rigorous in our organizing and planning; to aim for consensus in our collective efforts; and

to see every one and every place as a potential site for struggle, for organizing, and ultimately for liberation. The substantive citizenship practices of ALMAS demand that formal citizenship and labor protections be open and accessible for domestic workers, and immigrant women workers in general. At the time of this writing, the debate around Comprehensive Immigration Reform is escalating at the federal level, with the “gang of eight” already having proposed its plan for legalizing the more than 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. ALMAS and domestic worker organizations are taking advantage of this historical moment to insert the voices of domestic workers in the debate. Once again, domestic workers are poised to be potentially excluded from legislation this is supposedly intended to extend rights and protections to the formerly marginalized. If the larger public were made aware of the exemplary practices and substance of transformative citizenship as developed by and with domestic workers, perhaps their inclusion in immigration reform would be a given.

Finally, this project and the organizing practices of ALMAS contribute an intersectional analysis to the newly developing field of transformative organizing. While little scholarly attention has been paid to a feminine-centered transformative organizing model, domestic worker groups will provide an important area of study for further research that is motivated by the same goals of transformative organizing: to end suffering and to end oppression in our society. Transformative community organizers, radical planners and community developers should study the transformative organizing practices of domestic workers as they contribute to the development of this model. As mentioned above, ALMAS members were already embodying practices of transformative organizing before I brought

lessons about this model to the group from my participation in SOL and with NDWA. The domestic worker movement, because of its intersectional roots in civil rights, immigrant rights, and feminist movements, is unique, and offers an invaluable area of study for people interested in strengthening and developing practices around transformative organizing, and ultimately, transformative citizenship... in substance, form, and in place.

As ALMAS grows and expands to new, unorganized sectors of domestic workers, and as the domestic worker and immigrant rights movement in California and in the US grows, I see a number of important areas where further research may support this movement towards an inclusive conception of citizenship and membership.

First, as ALMAS reaches out to Fijian caregivers and domestic workers who obtain employment through domestic work agencies, it will be important to have rigorous data collection and research about the conditions of agency-placed workers. Fijian immigrant domestic workers are largely understudied as a group. Future research should engage Fijian caregivers in Sonoma County and beyond to broaden our understanding of gendered labor migration and citizenship as contested terrain.

Furthermore, the organizing process and elements of ALMAS may change once it reaches beyond the community of day laborer domestic workers at the Graton Day Labor Center. It will be interesting to see how the scale of the city changes in relative importance, once the membership of ALMAS lives throughout the region of the North Bay and Sonoma County.

Domestic worker groups are building power and organizing at the forefront of transformative organizing. Nearly all of the 39 member organizations of the NDWA participated in the SOL retreats in some way, and will continue to engage in the future versions of SOL offered by Social Justice Leadership, Generative Somatics, and NDWA. Some initial research has been conducted during SOL, about transformative organizing, by the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE)⁵¹ through the University of Southern California, but further qualitative research with member organizations of NDWA over the long-term will help us develop a more expansive understanding of transformative organizing and transformative citizenship, in the context of the domestic worker movement.

At the time of this writing the United States government and residents are engaging in heated debates about citizenship, belonging, and exclusion. While there is great hope that some form of legislation will be won that will open the door for millions of immigrants to obtain legal and formal citizenship status, domestic workers are once again threatened with being excluded from its benefits. Despite the common assumption that domestic work is not real work, and the stark reality that domestic workers are not treated as equal and valid workers, their organizing and citizenship practices challenge these norms, and invite us to transform the ways we think of them, ourselves, and the way we care for each other in our society. Domestic workers already embody deeply transformative citizenship identities and practices. They are the heart and soul of our economy, our homes, and our society. It is well beyond time for our government to recognize that.

⁵¹ This results of this research was not yet available at the time of this writing

APPENDIX A -Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol - Number 1 Organizing and Identities

1. CLG / ALMAS

- What brought you to the Graton Day Labor Center?
- Please share with me some of your experiences as part of ALMAS
- Why did you join the group at the beginning?
- Why did you stop participating? Or Why do you continue to participate?
- Do you have experiences with organizing or as part of other community based organizations? Now? In the past? Can you please tell me about them?

2. GOALS

- How would you describe the purpose of ALMAS?
- What are (were) your personal goals through being a member of the group?
- What are (were) the collective goals of the group in your opinion?

3. ACTIVITIES

- What are some examples of activities that you have participated in with ALMAS in order to achieve these goals? (Individual or collective)
- How did you feel during your participation in these activities?
- What did you learn?

4. DOMESTIC WORK

- What are some things that you like about your work as a domestic worker?

- Can you tell me about any situations while you are working in the home of an employer when you are made to feel:
 - Nervous?
 - Uncomfortable?
 - Satisfied?
 - Proud?
 - Scared?
 - Discriminated against?
 - Any other feelings? (Please explain them to me)
- Please share with me some stories about when you felt one or more of these feelings during your work as a domestic worker.... Or in other types of work?

5. DOMESTIC WORKERS BILL OF RIGHTS

A major campaign that ALMAS is trying to win is the campaign to win the The California Domestic Workers Bill or Rights (AB889). AB889 will extend the following labor protections to domestic workers:

- Over time pay (If you work over 40 hours a week)
- The right to meal and rest breaks (15 minutes paid breaks after 5 hours of work, 30 minutes of unpaid lunch, and another 15 minute paid break if you work 6-8 hours a day)
- Reporting time pay (if the job is cancelled at the last minute, you would still be paid for at least half the hours promised)

- Workers Compensation (If you were to be hurt on the job the employer would be responsible to pay for your medical bills)
- The right to eight hours of uninterrupted sleep (If you live and work 24 hours a day in the home of your employer)
- The right to use kitchen facilities to prepare your own food (For live in workers)
- Are there situations where you have not been given these rights?
- Which rights were denied to you?
- What happened?

6. IDENTITIES AND DOMESTIC WORK

I want to understand how discrimination has affected you as a domestic worker, and in your efforts to organize with ALMAS or other community groups.

I'm going to show you a number of different cards that say different types of identities that many people have (like race, gender, nationality). I will ask you to tell me in your own words, how you identify in each identity group, and we will write that down on the cards. It's possible that you won't identify with every category. It's also possible that your answer to multiple categories will be the same. The most important thing is that you use your own words to identify yourself, or to not identify.

- In your own words, how do you identify in terms of the following identity groups?
(Interviewer use Appendix A, and ask the participant to fill out cards in Appendix B)

- Looking at all of these parts of your identity, what parts of your identity have affected you as a domestic workers (in a positive or negative way)?
- Reflecting on what you have just shared with me about your experiences as a domestic worker, how have these parts of your identity affected you?
- Are there groups of identities that impact you in a specific way together? In other words, are there two or more identities that together impact you in a specific way in relation to domestic work? Please explain it to me.

7. IDENTITIES AND PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE GOALS

Now we are going to look at how your different identities have impacted your ability to organize with ALMAS, or other community groups. We will be looking specifically at the individual and collective goals you shared with me at the beginning of the interview.

- We are going to write down here what your personal and collective goals are that you mentioned before.
- Using your identity cards again, please show me which identities affect your ability to achieve your personal goals (in both positive or negative ways)
- Please share with me which of these identities give you strength or opportunities, and which ones present you with challenges or threats as you strive to achieve your personal goals.
- Are there groups of identities that affect you together? For example, are there two or more identities that together impact your personal goals in a specific way? Please explain it to me.

(The Interviewer should take a photo of each group of identities that the participant shows as important and note why)

- Repeat these steps in relation to collective goals.

8. The letters ALMAS stands for Women's Action and Solidarity Alliance (In Spanish)

- What does the word Alliance mean to you?
- What does the word Active mean to you?
- What does the word Solidarity mean to you?
- Why is it important to have a group for women?

9. ONWARD

- What is your vision for a better world?
- How do you think we can achieve that vision?
- What words of encouragement would you offer to someone who is not involved with the struggle for justice? How would you motivate them to participate?

Interview Protocol - Number 2

Organizing and Geographic scales of influence

This second section of the interview will focus on scale or geographic spaces where participants organize, define what citizenship means, and struggle for justice. It will also focus on the scales of influence where participants experience important things, events, etc in their lives.

The questions will be very open to allow for consideration of what participants will have already shared during the first interview.

1. REFLECTION FROM THE FIRST INTERVIEW (if interviews completed on two or more occasions)

- How did you feel after doing the first interview with me?
- Is there anything else you would like to share in relation to your goals, your identities, discrimination, or anything else that came up for you?

2. SCALES

During the first interview you mentioned a number of different scales or space where you work collectively / organize..... (For example at the level of the state, or at the level of the home as workplace - Interviewer will prepare a list based on first interview)

Also, you mention different scales or spaces where you have important experiences in your personal life (transnational, immigration etc.)

I would like to ask you some questions about every scale you mentioned:

- Tell me what sorts of experiences you have had at this scale?
- What did you like? What is something you would like to change at this scale?
- What do you hope to achieve by organizing at this scale?
- Why is it important for you to focus your efforts here?
- Do you feel like a member at or within this scale? Why or why not?

- If not, what would need to change in order for you to feel like a member of this scale (i.e. California)?

Probe if the following is not offered:

- Are there certain scales where you don't think it's important to organize?
- Are there certain scales that are more important than others in achieving you personal goals? Why?
- Are there certain scales that are more important than others in achieving your collective goals? Why?
- Are there scales that you haven't thought about organizing around? Why?

3. INTERSECTIONS

Now we are going to reflect back on the conversation we had during the first interview around important identities for you. (Using the identity cards that the participant created)

I would like to know how different parts of your identity affect you at different scales.

- Are there any identities or groups of identities that you associate with particular scales where you are organizing, struggling, or living? Please explain.

We are going to look at each scale, one at a time. Please select one or more identities that you think are most relevant at this area of your personal life, or in the collective struggles of ALMAS. Please explain to me why you selected them.

4. NEXT STEPS

- After thinking about discrimination, in the industry of domestic work, and the scales or areas of influence: What would you like to see ALMAS do in the future?
- What campaigns do you think should be organized in the future?
- What are some of your ideas to win them?
- How would you like to see ALMAS use the information that I am gathering through these interviews?
- Are you interested in helping with the analysis of information gathered?

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