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Exclusionary Incorporation:

Race and Immigration Status in Latina/o High School Students'

Academic Integration and Social Exclusion

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Sociology

by

Karina Chavarria

2018

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Exclusionary Incorporation:

Race and Immigration Status in Latina/o High School Students'

Academic Integration and Social Exclusion.

by

Karina Chavarria

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Vilma Ortiz, Chair

Much of the scholarship on Latina/o undocumented young adults has focused on their college and labor market participation, with few studies documenting on-the-ground their experiences in K-12 schools. Even fewer studies comparatively examine U.S. born and undocumented Latina/o students' incorporation in the academic and social spaces in schools. To fill these gaps in scholarship, I draw on five years of school ethnography, in-depth interviews with 50 Latina/o high school students (25 undocumented immigrant and 25 U.S. born), and follow-up conversations one year post-high school. I find that Latina/o students, irrespective of immigration status, experience an exclusionary incorporation in school because the racial dynamics within K-12 educational institutions continue to fragment their opportunities to

succeed. Specifically, I explore how race, undocumented immigration status, and working-class position influence their structural integration in academic programs and inclusion in the social channels at Hillcrest high school. While immigrant incorporation scholars point to Latina/o youth's trailing patterns in educational attainment, I argue that we need to examine the centrality of race and racialization in schools as these affect Latina/o youth's divergent paths of participation in social institutions. Thus, I conceive of school incorporation as a process by which students become structurally integrated in the school's academic hierarchy and socially included to reap the benefits of participating in top academic programs, capturing structural and inter-personal features of school processes that shape racial disparities in educational attainment. This emphasizes the centrality of racism in K-12 schools, and demonstrates its impact on the exclusionary incorporation of immigrant youth and the children of immigrants.

The dissertation of Karina Chavarria is approved.

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University of California, Los Angeles

2018

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INTRODUCTION

> I would eavesdrop on conversations and I would hear 'oh Mexicans just come to have babies' and 'Mexicans should just go back to their country, have their babies there and die over there' and it's like 'Woah'. They make it seem like Mexican is so bad, there's so much hatred towards Mexicans and that's the thing that upsets me [Marisa, 12th grade]

Marisa, an undocumented high school student who arrived in the U.S. at the age of 5, shares the racist nativist comments she has dealt with in school and the cumulative emotional impact of hearing the deep hate against, unbeknownst to the speakers, her. The comments Marisa overhears reflect the broader and ever present racist anti-immigrant discourse that constructs all brown looking bodies as Mexican and forever foreign, criminal irrespective of immigration or citizenship status. The sentiments of hate in comments such as that above highlight how Latina/o[1] undocumented immigrant and U.S. born students' schooling experiences come to be shaped by longstanding racialization processes within schools (Barajas & Ronnkvist 2007; Lewis & Diamond 2015). Research on the racial disparities in Mexican-American students' academic success has focused on their persistent low attainment, subtractive-schooling, and segregation and reveals how students continue to confront inequitable educational opportunities (Valenzuela 1999; Conchas 2001; Yosso and Solorzano 2006; Conchas and Vigil 2010; Ochoa 2013; Lewis & Diamond 2015). This extensive literature highlights the structural barriers Latina/o students face in K-12 educational institutions, yet we have a relatively limited understanding about the relationship between racialization, immigration status, and working-class position in shaping their incorporation in school thereby laying the paths for post-high school transitions. Critically, Latina/o students' agency in re-defining their schooling and challenging structural barriers

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[1] I use Latina/o and Mexican-American interchangeably, though Latina/o has been deployed by some scholars as a pan-ethnic label to incorporate individuals with ancestry in Latin American countries that are not Mexico (Chang 1999; Romero 2008).

remains under-explored.

This dissertation takes an interdisciplinary approach to unpack the relationships between racialization, immigration status, and working-class position in shaping Latina/o undocumented and U.S. born students' incorporation experiences and post-high school transitions. I conceive of school incorporation as defined by structural integration in the school's academic hierarchy and inclusion in the social channels that allows students to reap the benefits of integration in top academic programs, thus capturing inter-personal and structural features of schools that influence racial disparities in educational attainment. Through this comparative case, I contribute to a growing field of scholarship that seeks to center race in immigration research (Romero 2008; Jung 2009; Abdulrahim et. al., 2012; Treitler 2015; San Juanita Garcia 2017; Valdez and Golas-Boza 2017). The comparative case of undocumented and U.S. born Latina/o students enables a nuanced analysis of the influence of racialization, immigration status, and working-class position on the mechanisms that sustain structural inequalities in schools.

Drawing on five years of fieldwork at Hillcrest[2] high school and 50 student interviews (25 U.S. born and 25 undocumented), including follow-up conversations one year post-high school, I examine how immigration status, working-class position, and racialized identities shape students' school incorporation (academic and social participation) and post-high school transition paths. I find that Latina/o students, irrespective of immigration status, experience an exclusionary incorporation in school because the racial dynamics within K-12 educational institutions continue to limit their opportunities to fully participate in all dimensions of their school. While immigrant incorporation scholars point to Latina/o youth's trailing patterns in educational attainment, I argue that we need to examine the centrality of racism within schools in

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[2] Hillcrest is a pseudonym to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

(re)producing processes that shape Latina/o youth's divergent paths of participation in social institutions. Using frameworks from sociology and education, my work presents a fuller understanding of how the structural and social barriers encountered in high school shape Latina/o students' struggles in achieving educational parity, simultaneously these barriers also inform how students enact agency to defy the inequitable opportunities they confront.

STRUCTURAL BARRIERS IN LATINA/O EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES: RACE AND UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRATION STATUS

The Latino[3] population is the largest minority group in the U.S. (Pew Research Center 2016). In 2003, over 2.75 million Latino adolescents were enrolled in high schools throughout the country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Their presence in secondary educational institutions, however, does not translate into high school diplomas. In 2008, only 60% of Latinas/os 25 or older had received a high school degree (Snyder, 2010), compared to 90% of Whites 25 and over. The disparities in college attendance are even more stark with Latina/o post-secondary education participation rates at 26% among 18-24 year olds (Aud and Fox 2010). We know that educational attainment matters for accessing better paying jobs, attaining economic stability, and interrupting mechanisms that reproduce intergenerational poverty.

Research examining the dramatic decrease in Latina/o's enrollment in post-secondary institutions identifies the troubling trickling down that occurs across the educational pipeline from K-12 to college (Yosso and Solorzano 2006). Out of 100 students who begin elementary school, only 26 enroll in 2-or 4-year college institutions. Even more unsettling is the static actual degree attainment, 8 from the 100 students who began elementary school will receive a B.A. degree. Scholarship documenting Latinas/os K-12 schooling experiences sheds some light on

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[3] I acknowledge the complexities in defining the Latino population in the U.S. and use Latino and Hispanic interchangeably to reflect such complexity as well as students' self-identification.

how their educational outcomes are influenced by structural inequities within schools. For example, some scholars contend that schools are significant socializing spaces that shape students' notions of where they stand in relation to social divisions within society (Anyon 1980; MacLeod 1987; Bowles and Gintis 2002). These scholars argue that students of different social class backgrounds are exposed to qualitatively different types of educational experiences (Anyon 1980; Valdés 1996; Lareau and Horvat 1999; Tyson 2002). One of the mechanisms through which students receive a different education is academic tracking practices which not only affect students' access to academic knowledge and hidden curriculum, but also impact the nature of social interactions with peers and teachers (Valencia 1999; Conchas 2001; Solorzano and Ornelas 2002; Lopez 2003; Oakes 2005; Rios 2011; Delpit 2012). Academic tracking practices, thus, represent structured forms by which students are afforded or denied access to academic and social experiences that influence their post-high school opportunities.

Scholars seeking to address marginalized youth's educational experiences draw our attention to the structural ways in which inequitable schooling persists (Lopez, 2003; Yosso, 2005; Ochoa, 2013). For example, extensive research demonstrates that being a racial minority, low-income, and first-generation student leads to lower curriculum tracking which makes it difficult to access the structural support and institutional knowledge necessary to attend college (Stanton-Salazar, 1997; Conchas, 2006; Ochoa, 2013). This research specifies that inequalities in opportunities and resources within schools reflect institutionalized hierarchies that work to establish inequitable structures, which predominantly limit marginalized students' educational and life opportunities (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Jain, Bernal, & Solorzano, 2011). Other scholars focus on the role of racialization in Latina/o and Black students' schooling and document that perceived discrimination is associated with

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negative academic outcomes including lower levels of academic motivation (Wong et al., 2003; Eccles et al., 2006), lower GPAs or grades (Martinez et al. 2004; Neblett et al. 2006;), increased likelihood of dropping out of school (Martinez et al. 1996), and lower levels of academic well-being in general (DeGarmo and Martinez 2006). For Latina/o students, research demonstrates that access to equitable educational opportunities has been limited by race-based educational inequities such as banning Spanish-language use, school segregation policies, and culturally deficient epistemologies (Solorzano & Yosso, 2000; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Ochoa, 2013).

Extensive empirical studies on Latina/o students' school experiences have long documented how the subtractive practices in schools, teachers' perception of the cultural and linguistic characteristics of these students as deficits, hamper these students' academic success (Valenzuela, 1997; Conchas 2001; Gibson et al. 2004). For example, Valenzuela (1997) challenges cultural deficit models that blame families and students for their underachievement, demonstrating that the historical racialization of Mexican descent peoples is inextricably embedded in schooling practices via a politics of caring. In turn, some students respond to "subtractive schooling" practices by disengaging from academic instruction and school altogether (Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco, 1995; Conchas and Vigil, 2010). This suggests that leaving school is a coping strategy students enact against being subjected to greater discrimination by teachers/counselors/administrators and reveals that racialization of Latina/o students and racist school practices have detrimentally affected these students' educational experiences and outcomes. Tackling the centrality of race in Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' school incorporation will contribute to developing more comprehensive models for understanding the life chances and processes of integration among immigrants and their children.

Undocumented Young Adults.

Undocumented immigrant youth are immigrants who arrive at a young age without documentation to enter and/or reside in the United States. Although the majority of undocumented immigrant youth are Latinos, this population also includes Asians, South East Asians, Africans, and Europeans. Since these students grow up in the United States, they obtain their primary and secondary education in the U.S. These educational experiences mean that, much like their documented and citizen peers, undocumented immigrant youth have experienced similar racialized and classed experiences in high school. But because of their undocumented immigration status, these experiences are compounded by the dark realities of having to endure unequal access to higher education and an inability to formally participate in U.S. institutions (Abrego, 2006; Huber and Malagon, 2007; Perez, 2009).

Much of the literature on undocumented immigrant youth and young adults has been concerned with the barriers they confront in trying to participate within various social institutions. These barriers often include being denied participation in the formal labor market, not completing high school, or being impeded from accessing a post-secondary education. Often, undocumented immigrant youth transition from being entitled to attend and having attended K-12 public educational institutions into undocumented immigrant adults whose rights are severely restricted (Gonzales 2011). While they may value education, undocumented immigrant youth face financial obstacles as well as legal barriers that lead to feelings of hopelessness and a decreased commitment to academic pursuits. For example, studies documenting the nearly insurmountable obstacles of financing a college education point to its devastating effect on working-class undocumented students' prospects for their futures (Guillen 2003; Seif 2004; Flores 2010). Scholars investigating undocumented students' experiences have found that

immigration status negatively affects their perceptions of future educational opportunities after high school (Abrego 2006; Gonzalez 2010). These students perceive difficulties in financing a post-secondary education, and regard the possibility of finding employment in the professions for which they prepared as non-existent. Their transition out of K-12 schools then is often one of despair followed by stifled resignation. Scholars document how this resignation is coupled with a stalling in undocumented immigrant youth's educational attainment point to the numerous obstacles encountered in K-12 schools, including limited school resources, structural inequalities, and negative educational stereotypes. Given the myriad obstacles that undocumented immigrant youth confront, investigating the educational progress of these students is a central concern of contemporary scholarship (Abrego 2006; Gonzales 2007; Enriquez 2011).

Studies on undocumented immigrant students who manage to transition on to post-secondary education find that the challenges associated with an unprotected immigration status can be buffered by their status as college students (Gonzalez 2007). Once in college, some undocumented students become engaged in social activism, advocating for legislative changes to improve conditions for undocumented immigrants. Scholars (Abrego and Gonzales, 2010; Gonzales, 2008) demonstrate that through activism some of these students manage to overcome the obstacles of financing a college education and are able to complete a post-secondary degree. Nonetheless, many of the studies on undocumented young adults are based on retrospective reports about their high school experiences with few scholars documenting on-the-ground school incorporation. Research into how schools' structural mechanisms shape academic and social experiences of high achieving undocumented students is still in its infancy.

Undocumented students attend K-12 schools and are socialized into U.S. society by

learning the history, culture, and language of the United States (Abrego, 2006). This knowledge of U.S. society can result in feelings of inclusion among undocumented students, which is important to student success as they face academic, personal, and financial obstacles (Perez Huber, 2009). Yet, at the same time, public schools structure access to institutional and social support so that only a few undocumented students find the institutional knowledge, social support, and financial resources necessary for graduation and the pursuit of post-secondary education (Gonzales, 2010). Recent scholarship has assessed the impact of changes between 2012 and 2015 in state financial aid eligibility (CA Dream Act) and federal deferred action policy (DACA) intended to directly benefit undocumented immigrant youth and young adults. Scholars find that DACA enabled recipients some educational and economic mobility with some increased peace of mind (Patler and Cabrera, 2015). State financial aid legislation has opened more opportunities for undocumented immigrant students to pursue a college education, yet students still encounter financial barriers that hinder their successful completion of a college degree (Murillo 2017). In sum, research on undocumented students has focused on their experiences within and outside post-secondary settings, but there is minimal analysis of how undocumented immigration status, working-class position, and racialization impacts the high school experiences of this population.

An understanding of undocumented immigrant youth's incorporation in high school can yield insights into how they may navigate incorporation in other institutional settings. Specifically, a focus on how school structure and schooling processes shape this population's academic and social experiences can enhance our understanding of their post-high school trajectories. By examining the myriad ways immigration status, race, and working-class position influence their academic participation and social inclusion, we can identify how immigration

status intersects with racializing processes in schools to shape their post-high school transitions. I assist in moving scholarship forward by connecting undocumented immigrant youth's K-12 experiences to growing research on the barriers and limitations confronted as they seek to access post-secondary institutions and participate in the labor market.

IMMIGRANT INCORPORATION:

PARTICIPATION AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

Immigrants' incorporation has predominantly been examined through assimilation frameworks, which include immigrants achieving parity with a White, middle-class mainstream, downward incorporation into an underclass, and upward paths into middle-class through ethnic communities (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). These three models of assimilation seek to explain different incorporation patterns for varied ethnic/racial groups by examining the influence of participation in social institutions on increases in levels of incorporation. That is, full incorporation is limited by structural barriers that hinder participation. For instance, an extensive literature focuses on determining the structural features, such as the organization of co-ethnic communities and state policies, shaping the ways immigrant groups are able to participate in society (Alba and Nee 1997; Zhou and Bankston III 1998; Menjívar 2000; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou and Kim 2006). However, this scholarship failed to tackle head on the ways racism and racist ideologies are the pillars in structural barriers limiting immigrants and their children's full incorporation.

Further, a predominant emphasis on specifying the structural factors affecting incorporation has meant scholars center their analysis on particular participation outcomes to assess incorporation patterns across various social institution. For political incorporation, scholars examine voting patterns, community advocacy, naturalization rates, and serving in political office (Bloemraad 2006; Wong 2006; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Telles and Ortiz 2008) while

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economic incorporation is evaluated through hours worked per week, employment status, occupation, homeownership, and wealth (Kasinitz et al. 2008; Telles and Ortiz 2008). Finally, test scores, GPAs, high school graduation rates, and post-secondary degree attainment are used to assess educational incorporation patterns (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Brown 2007; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Bean et. al., 2011). Given the centrality of educational institutions in shaping incorporation patterns, I shift the analytical focus to processes within schools to gain a fuller understanding of the structural mechanisms and social dynamics that shape disparities in educational attainment and contribute to fragmented incorporation patterns. Specifically, I call attention to the role of racist ideologies informing school practices and their impact on Latina/o undocumented immigrant and U.S. born students' school incorporation. The racialization processes immigrants of color confront warrants study especially in contemporary anti-immigrant and anti-Mexican climates (Sanchez & Romero, 2010; Sáenz & Douglas, 2015). Immigrants enter a racialized society where people of color confront persistent discrimination and racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Feagin, 2000, 2006). In this racialized society, those of Mexican descent are oftentimes perceived to be undocumented, leading to unfair treatment irrespective of generation status. This is especially true for dark-skinned Mexican Americans (Telles & Murguia, 1990; Murguia & Telles, 1996). Thus, I contribute to a growing scholarship that aims to problematize the Black/white racial lens in assimilation frameworks which dichotomize communities of color and advocates for centering analysis on conceptualization of race to address its impact on integration processes for immigrants and their children.

EXCLUSIONARY INCORPORATION: THE ACADEMIC INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF LATINA/O HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.

Though immigrant incorporation scholars have long pointed to Latina/o disparities in

educational attainment and its impact on their participation in other social institutions, my findings indicate that Latina/o high school students (irrespective of immigration status) confront an exclusionary incorporation in school because though they are academically integrated into academic programs, they still experience an exclusion from social spaces that would enable them to be fully incorporated into all the schools spaces and places. I argue that we need to examine the centrality of racist structures within schools that (re)produce processes which limit Latina/o youth's opportunities to participate in social institutions.

Latina/o students' participation in equitable educational opportunities has been limited by race-based educational inequities such as banning Spanish-language use, school segregation policies, and culturally deficient epistemologies (Solorzano & Yosso, 2000; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Ochoa, 2013). This research reveals that racialization of Latina/o students and racist school practices have detrimentally affected their educational experiences and outcomes. Within immigrant incorporation scholarship, race is generally considered as a contextual feature of society, yet there are minimal analyses of how conceptions of race and racist ideologies inform structural inequalities in school. For instance, Portes and Rumbaut (2006) point to the difficulties Mexican descent student experience in school by addressing language as a barrier to their integration in high track courses. Though scholars acknowledge the importance of race in Latian/o students' educational experiences, conflating conceptions of ethnicity with race fails to clarify how Latina/o students are racialized in school or the impact of these racialization processes on students' school incorporation and educational attainment. Tackling the centrality of race in Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' school incorporation will contribute to developing more comprehensive models for understanding the life chances and processes of integration among immigrants and their children.

Even though undocumented immigrant youth are able to attend K-12 schools, because of their undocumented immigration status, their experiences are compounded by the dark realities of having to endure unequal access to higher education and limited opportunities to formally participate in U.S. institutions (Abrego, 2006; Huber and Malagon, 2007; Perez, 2009; Enriquez, 2011; Gleeson and Gonzales, 2012). Further, much like their documented and citizen peers, they have confronted racialized and classed experiences in high school such as stigmatized identities, minimal support from educators and staff, and lack of safe spaces (Contreras, 2009; Gonzales, 2010; Nienhusser, 2013; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). These early experiences with exclusion begin to show undocumented immigrant students that working hard and doing well academically are not enough to ensure their full incorporation in school. In other words, their early experiences of exclusion within K-12 schools become the training ground for how they learn to navigate and challenge barriers to full incorporation in other social institutions.

While immigrant incorporation scholars point to Latina/o youth's trailing patterns in educational attainment, I argue that we need to examine the centrality of race within schools and its influence on incorporation processes for Latina/o youth. I suggest that identifying the structural and social aspects of incorporation in schools will enable us to clarify the importance of participation and inclusion as defining features of full incorporation in society. Here, full incorporation entails both equitable opportunities for accessing social mobility routes and inclusion in the informal social channels through which resources and benefits are secured. For example, schools continue academic tracking practices that structure inequitable access to academic courses which disproportionally impact students of color thereby limiting their opportunities to pursue a postsecondary education. In turn, participation in the structured hierarchy of top academic courses and programs (e.g. magnets) does not guarantee inclusion in

social channels of peer networks, clubs, extra-curricular activities through which students reap the benefits and resources of their academic participation. Contemporary frameworks of incorporation would predict that Latina/o U.S. born youth, irrespective of immigration status, would experience high levels of participation and inclusion in school because they can access opportunities to take part in academic and extra-curricular programs. However, my research illustrates that race, immigration status, and working-class position shape how students are academically integrated while socially excluded thus leading to their exclusionary incorporation in high school. Yet, the barriers to social inclusion inform these students enactment of agency to defy the exclusionary mechanisms they confront.

A comparative analysis of Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' experiences of incorporation in high school sheds light on the influence of early barriers to full incorporation in K-12 schools and obstacles to participation as well as inclusion in other social institutions. I conceive of school incorporation as composed of both structural integration in the academic hierarchy and inclusion into social channels of interaction, capturing the effects of structural and inter-personal school features on students' participation within and inclusion in school. Here, structural elements include the academic programs (Small Learning Communities/Magnets, tracking) while inter-personal are the non-academic (clubs, sports, afterschool programs, peer networks) social features of a school. This focus on both structural and social features allows for documenting the top-down restrictive inclusionary/exclusionary effects on students' experience of school incorporation. Identifying the distinctions and relationship between structural integration and social inclusion as central to incorporation allows us to determine how Latina/o students, regardless of immigration status, can be structurally integrated in top academic programs yet simultaneously socially excluded from school spaces.

My conceptual framework of school incorporation represents a multilevel and process oriented approach that is informed by bridging scholarship in the fields of education and sociology. In bridging these literatures, I enhance our understanding of how Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' high school experiences influence their incorporation into other social institutions. Immigrant incorporation scholars have sought to define incorporation as participation in social institutions (Alba and Nee 1997; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou and Kim 2006). I suggest that there is a distinction between participating and being included in a social institution. In examining participation and inclusion as distinct aspects of incorporation, we can identify how structural and social features of institutions shape the process of incorporation. A comparative analysis of Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' experiences of incorporation in high school sheds light on the impact of early barriers to incorporation in K-12 schools and obstacles to participation as well as inclusion in other social institutions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To address the substantive and theoretical gaps in the literature, this dissertation addresses the following questions:

1. How does race and immigration status impact Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' participation and inclusion in school?

2. How do levels of participation and inclusion affect Latina/o undocumented immigrant working-class students' experiences of applying to college?

3. How does a schooling model that values marginalized youth's social identities shape Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' prospects for full school incorporation?

METHODOLOGY

California is home to the largest number of undocumented immigrants in the country. Of the 10.3 million immigrants living in California, 2.6 million are estimated to be undocumented (Pastor & Marcelli, 2013). Moreover, close to 1 million reside in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. California has addressed the presence of its immigrant and undocumented population by implementing policies that have improved undocumented immigrants' pursuit of higher education by granting them access to receive financial aid. In 2012 and then 2015, the legislature approved and Governor Jerry Brown (D-CA) signed AB 130 and AB 131, collectively known as the California Dream Act. The policies grant undocumented immigrant youth who are eligible to receive in-state tuition access to non-state funded scholarships (AB 130) and state financial aid (AB 131) making college more affordable. Further, Los Angeles metropolitan area has one-million undocumented immigrants with undocumented high school students constituting 59% of the undocumented population in California (Passel and Cohn, 2009). The city has the second largest school district in the country with Latino students making up 73% of its overall student population (LAUSD, 2009-2010). A comparative sample of Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students represents a valuable case for assessing the role of race, working-class position, and immigration status on school incorporation and post-high school trajectories.

I draw on qualitative approaches, utilizing in-depth interviews and participant observations in classrooms and the school's open spaces over a five-year period, to follow student respondents over time and document how they were integrated into the academic structure yet excluded from social circles. Through in-depth interviews, I gathered information about how their social identities-race and undocumented immigration status- shaped their school

experiences. According to Anderson-Levitt (2006), ethnography serves three main purposes for researchers: (1) discovering what meanings individuals make of a situation; (2) developing an understanding of all the complexity in local situations; and (3) providing opportunities to observe and understand processes as they happen.

Site. The data was collected at Hillcrest, a public urban high school in Los Angeles. The school is located on the city's west side, considered to be a more middle and upper-class area. However, the actual neighborhood area composition includes numerous pockets of poor and working-class minority communities. These communities influence the school's student body making it diverse with respect to race/ethnicity and socio-economic status-defined by percentage of students enrolled in free or reduced priced lunch- in comparison to the majority of other LAUSD high schools. Between the beginning of data collection in 2012 and end in 2017, the school's student population remained mostly the same, composed of Latina/o 49.7 %, Blacks 27%, Whites 17.1%, Asians 4.1%, and the rest divided between Filipino, Pacific Islander, and Alaskan native. Although relatively more diverse in student body than other schools in the district, it is still a majority minority school with Latino and Black students making up about 76% of its student population. In addition, 45% of its students participate in free or reduced-price lunch. The school then is different in terms of student population diversity but not unique since it is neither extremely poor nor extremely wealthy.

Sample. I followed 50 Latina/o high school students (25 U.S. born and 25 undocumented) over a two-year period, beginning at end of 11th grade and through 6-months post-high school. All student participants are Latina/o, most being of Mexican descent, and were between the ages of 16-18. Most undocumented immigrant students entered the United States between the ages of 4-8, thus making them part of the 1.5 generation. Since they have completed most of their

education in the U.S., a relative measure of uniformity is established with Latina/o U.S. born students in terms of years in and experiences within U.S. educational institutions.

The selection criteria for purposes of comparison were twofold. The first criteria was immigration status, selecting equal numbers of U.S born (25) and undocumented immigrant (25) students. Most students (46/50) are of Mexican descent and the majority of undocumented immigrant students (17/25) have lived in the U.S. the most of their lives. A breakdown of number of years in the U.S. and national origin can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of student participants by immigration status and years in U.S.

	Mexican	Central American	Total
Years in U.S.			
6-10	7	1	8
10-16	16	1	17
Immigration Status			
U.S. Born	23	2	25
Undocumented	23	2	25
Total			50

To examine the influence of academic hierarchy and school organization on students' academic and social experiences, I recruited students from all 6 small learning communities and academic tracks. The literature on school structured opportunities suggests that students' participation in the academic hierarchy of schools shapes their access to both academic and extra-curricular programs that ensure their eligibility for transitioning and completing a college degree (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Conchas, 2006; Jain, Bernal, & Solorzano, 2011; Ochoa 2013). The number of Latina/o undocumented immigrant and U.S. born students enrolled in each of the small learning communities can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Number of student participants by small learning community and immigration status.

	Arts Academy	Liberal Arts Magnet	Medicine	Media	World Studies	Business
Immigration Status						
Undocumented	5	4	3	6	6	3
U.S. born	3	4	1	5	7	3
Total	8	8	4	11	13	6

I recruited participants using snowball sampling beginning with students I worked with on campus. Because of concerns over their undocumented immigration status, students may not openly discuss or informed school staff about their status. Rather, they tend to share concerns over their status with friends, who are also undocumented immigrant youth. Peers, then, were the second method of recruitment. Finally, to increase representativeness from across small learning communities and academic tracks, I recruited students by presenting in classrooms and giving interested students flyers describing what their participation would entail.

Interviews with students took place once a month, with the first interview lasting between 60-90 minutes and subsequent check-in interviews lasting 10-20 minutes. During the initial interview, we discussed their educational histories, their day-to-day interactions in school's social circles, and extra-curricular activities. In the check-in interviews, I focused on guidance received, use of guidance and information received, and any changes in their interactions with their peer networks and school staff. I also participated within the whole school and classrooms. I was present at the school Monday-Friday, spending 30 to 40 hours per week at the school. I shadowed students in their classes, club meetings, sports games, assemblies, lunch, and passing between classes. I noted interactions with peers, staff, and various spaces across the school. I also participated in faculty department meetings, meetings with administration, parent-teacher

conferences, and teacher-student meetings.

Finally, I employ a methodology that is participatory and advocacy oriented, directly intervening in students' school experiences by advising and offering student information for pursuing postsecondary education and advocating for their communities. My participation in and advocacy for undocumented immigrant students is akin to the research conducted through participatory research methodologies aligned towards increasing participation of disempowered communities and achieving social change (Stoecker and Bonacich 1992; Stoecker 1999; Gatenby and Humphries 2000). My interventions into students' school experiences took on both a structural and personal level. During the five years of this research, I was established at the high school campus working, in collaboration with school staff, with Latino and undocumented immigrant student populations. I spent additional hours at the school beyond my part-time employment to conduct interviews with students and carry out participant observations.

I worked part-time, 20 hours/week, at the school through a non-profit organization and collaborated with other campus groups to increase English language learners and undocumented immigrant students' participation in school-wide activities, facilitating school programs (college application and financial aid workshops) as well as outreaching to students and faculty. At the personal level, I worked with a combined population of between 200-300 English Language Learners and undocumented immigrant students guiding them through the school's structure ensuring they were taking the required courses to be eligible for post-secondary education, empowering them to be self-advocates for their education with teachers and counselors, and implementing programs to inform parents and students on their rights to an equitable education. For the undocumented immigrant students whom I worked with, I referred them to staff who were knowledgeable about the difficulties and concerns of undocumented students. In addition, I

provided these students with a list of organizations that provide resources and assist immigrant communities (See Appendix B). I also provided students information about legislations passed in California, such as the Dream Act, which allows undocumented students' access to financial aid from the state. During the interviews, I tracked whether students shared information with their undocumented peers, how the students I worked with made sense of the information, and how these students used information I provided. Critically, since my job involved offering direct support and information to undocumented immigrant students, some of the respondents gained more information about resources and successfully transitioned to post-secondary institutions. The post-high school outcomes of students whom I worked with and those whom I did not became a central comparison in the analysis of data.

ARTICLE OUTLINE

In the following three articles, I examine structural integration, social inclusion, race, and immigration status across the varied places and spaces of high school. Article 1 presents the school landscape shaping Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' schooling experiences and sets up the theoretical contributions by identifying the contradictions and significance of school incorporation. I find that students' experiences of racialization reveal how structural integration does not ensure full incorporation as they face barriers to social inclusion in the school. I show that the benefits of integration across academic hierarchy are dampened by their social exclusion limiting their full membership in school. At the same time, I demonstrate that these experiences represent opportunities for Latina/o students to develop critical frames and deploy counter-narratives to openly challenge the mechanisms through which they are socially excluded. Article 2 focuses on the impact of social exclusion in school and illustrates that undocumented immigrant students' path towards a post-secondary education is fragmented. This

fragmentation results from the compression of stages and compounding of steps in college and financial aid application processes. Their social exclusion meant that undocumented immigrant students confronted an institutional silence which exacerbated the challenges of a compressed and compounded college-going process. Despite most students being incorporated in the academic structure of the school, most were unable to reap the benefits of being students in the magnet programs or taking multiple Advanced Placement and honors classes. And, article 3 explores the potentialities in K-12 schools for enacting practices and establishing mechanisms that can ensure marginalized students' full incorporation in school, both structural integration across the academic hierarchies as well as social inclusion within the varied spaces. These potentialities in schools can serve to tackle inequities in school and support students in working to address social injustices that limit marginalized communities' full incorporation in society. I capture the contextualized interactions informing how Latina/o students and teachers co-construct transformative space for inclusion and student resistance. I find that students' sense of belonging to an academic classroom community leads to a conception of themselves as legitimate members of their school. I suggest that through transformative spaces in schools marginalized students can be included as legitimate members of that community by fostering students' awareness of systems of oppression and enacting strategies to affect social change.

ARTICLE 1

"Structural Integration and Social Exclusion: Re-conceptualizing Incorporation Through Latina/o Students' Experiences of Racialization"

Schools, as social institutions, have never been and are not immune from the power of race as a core organizing principle (Lewis and Diamond 2015). In fact, the United States has a long history of racialization and racism being a driving force in schooling, as evinced in Native American boarding schools spanning the 19th and most of the 20th century and segregated schools for African Americans and Mexican Americans (Du Bois, 1935; Drake, 1927; Gould, 1932; Spring, 1994; Irons, 2002). In spite of a legacy of racist educational policies and school practices, scholarship on the educational incorporation of immigrant students and immigrants' children has yet to directly analyze the role of racism in racial disparities in educational attainment patterns. Further, research on the mechanisms shaping reproduction of barriers to school incorporation for marginalized students remains sparse. Heeding calls for interdisciplinary analyses of Latina/o students racialized educational experiences (Hopson and Dixson, 2011; Dumas, 2016; Kohli, Pizarro, and Nevárez, 2017), this article centers on U.S. born and undocumented Latina/o high school students' experiences of racialization at a campus that is touted to be one of the most diverse in LAUSD. Specifically, I focus on how racialization impacts Latina/o students' incorporation in the structural and social features of the school.

I bring the literature on Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education in dialogue with scholarship on human geography to examine the institutional and interpersonal school mechanisms shaping Latina/o students' racialization in school. An analysis of the institutional and interpersonal mechanisms serves to identify how Latina/o students' racialization affects their incorporation in the structural and social elements of the school. Here, I deploy CRT in

education scholarship as a lens to identify and analyze the individual and institutional features of racialization in school and deploy this lens to reveal the spatial manifestation of Latina/o students' racialization across material-physical places and symbolic-ideological spaces in school. Racialization involves the assignment of racial categories to bodies and the association of symbols, attributes, qualities, and other meanings with those categories, which become understood to belong to such bodies in a primordial or natural way. Further, I define places as the material-physical buildings and architectural features of the school that are inhabited by students and staff. In turn, spaces are areas in material-physical place that are socially constituted as signifiers of symbolic meanings. Employing geography's spatial perspective allows for an analysis of how schools are defined and experienced as racialized places and spaces by its inhabitants and users. An important point here is that the material-physical places and social spaces are mutually produced so that the (re)production of racialized places and spaces is an iterative process.

Drawing on five years of school ethnography and in-depth interviews with 50 U.S. born and undocumented Latina/o high school students, I demonstrate that Latina/o students experience racialization in school through two key mechanisms: institutional practices and interpersonal interactions which are palpable and visible through the inhabited places and spaces of Hillcrest. Here, a differentiating feature between the institutional and interpersonal mechanisms is the power and status dynamics that often define school staff (administrators/counselors/teachers) and students' interactions. The school staff, as institutional agents/representatives, stand at the top of a school hierarchy in relation to students so that staff's actions, words, and personhood are imbued with a legitimacy and power that ought not to be questioned by students. Of course, school staff's status, legitimacy, and power stand on a continuum in relation to students' race,

class, gender so that all students do not experience the same degree/depth of an unequal position in relation to school staff. These distinctions in students' standing in relation to and interactions with school staff shape Latina/o students' racialization experiences. Further, Hillcrest's organization structure of six small learning communities (SLC)— "Business", "World Studies", "Medicine", "Media", "Arts", "Liberal Arts"—informs the institutional mechanisms as the status hierarchy of the small learning communities is already rooted in racial dynamics. Specifically, the presence of two magnet programs ("Arts Academy" and "Liberal Arts Magnet") and their differentiation as holding higher status from the other four, which comprise the neighborhood school, is critical to understanding the production of certain areas of the quad, specific classrooms, and buildings at the school as white spaces. The school's racialized landscape was evinced in the various names students used such as "new immigrants" reserved for the area surrounding the cafeteria, "crenshaw" for the basketball courts, "Disneyland" and "Six Flags" for quad areas. Within this racialized landscape, "Disneyland" and "Six Flags" featured as the most significant in Latina/o students' experiences of racialization. The racialized landscape is informed by racist ideological narratives that fuse whiteness and intelligence. This fusing constructs white students as intellectually superior imbuing whiteness with power that works to validate the intellectual and physical "othering" of Latina/o and African American students at Hillcrest.

The ideological fusing of whiteness and intelligence defines the interpersonal mechanism that shapes the contours of racialized interactions between white and Latina/o students at Hillcrest. The interpersonal mechanism manifests in student's naming of specific quad places so that as students use these names to reference where somebody is located in the physical places of campus, they are symbolically conjuring racialized spaces. By identifying a fusing of racist

ideologies and students' naming as well as inhabiting of campus places and spaces as physically and symbolically racial arenas, I show the interwoven character of institutional and interpersonal mechanisms that (re)produce Latina/o students' racialization. Thus, Latina/o students who participate in the top academic courses and programs (magnet schools) are still perceived and treated as intellectually inferior and interlopers into white spaces. I argue that the racialization Latina/o students confront in school illustrates the ways racist nativist anti-immigrant discourse is intertwined with historical racialized constructions of Latinas/os as inherently criminal, uncivilized read as inherently feeble-minded, and perpetual foreigners, thus legitimizing the racist ideological fusing of whiteness with intelligence. This ideological fusing constitutes Latina/o students, irrespective of immigration status, as not only intellectually inferior, but also intruders into academic and social arenas that are constructed as the rightful spaces for whites. Latina/o students' construction as intellectually inferior and intruders into white spaces informs their social exclusion despite their structural integration in the academic hierarchy of Hillcrest.

Critically, much like in the past, Latina/o students are not passive bystanders. Though students' challenges to their racialization took on numerous forms, here I highlight internal critical frames and the institutional format of students' contestations. I show that Latina/o students have developed critical frames through which they make sense of how broader racist nativist anti-immigrant narratives are embedded in the racializing school practices and social interactions they encounter. This awareness informs their production of counter-narratives to challenge their racialization by disputing the fusing of whiteness and intelligence through structural and nuanced frames that question the legitimacy of school practices and resist racist narratives. Though students participate across the academic programs, they still confront a social exclusion. I contend that the racialization Latina/o students face speaks to the long-standing

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Americanization process that educational institutions overtly or implicitly continue carrying out. The Americanization of immigrant youth and the children of immigrants influences whether they become incorporated in the structural ad social features of schools shaping their prospects for incorporation in other social institutions.

De-Segregation Plans of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD): Magnet Schools

The continued segregation of Latina/o and Black students in the Los Angeles Unified School District is linked to the long de-segregation fights in California courts during the 60s and 70s. During the mid-70s, LAUSD, the state Supreme Court sided with integrationists and ordered the Los Angeles school board to create and implement desegregation plans under supervision of the trial court. The plans devised by the district to voluntarily de-segregate its schools directly shape the structural ways in which segregation remains across and within schools. Specifically, a mandatory busing plan led to a rapid flight of white families with school-age children, this despite the fact that the mandatory busing did not include a significant number of schools or students (Clayton 2008). The significant decrease in white student enrollment in LAUSD schools led to the creation and implementation of magnet schools and magnet programs as a strategy to retain and potentially bring back some of the fleeing students (Schneider 2008).

Hillcrest high school, with its organization into four small-learning-communities and two magnet schools, reflects the result of a longstanding battle for de-segregating the Los Angeles school district. The school's history in battles for desegregation and present student demographics epitomize the longstanding fight in that the school began as mostly a white and Jewish student body then shifted to a minority-majority campus by the mid-70s. This shift began with LAUSD's open school transfer permits policy that allowed Black students from South LA schools to attend all white schools on the West Side. Though by the late 60s only 8% of the

3,000 students were Black, this slight increase in African American students quickly led to a 22% drop in white student enrollment so that by the early 70s the black-white enrollment reached a 50-50 split (Smith 1972). Quickly after, the Los Angeles Board of Education terminated transfers of minority students into Hillcrest to try and stave off white students' leaving the school. However, the termination of transfers did not produce the desired results.

To maintain some of the remaining white students and meet de-segregation court rulings, Hillcrest opened two magnet schools and redesigned the organization of the campus into small-learning-communities with themed programs. The magnet schools were opened to students from across Los Angeles county while the four themed programs were restricted to neighborhood students. The magnet schools established an application process composed of multiple requirements, GPA and test scores being at the top of the list, resulting in a predominant enrollment of white students, while the remaining four small learning communities enroll more than 70% Back and Latina/o students. It is this history of de-segregation and the broader demographic shifts in the surrounding community that developed between 1970s and 1990s that inform Latina/o students experiences of racialization at Hillcrest. To maintain the confidentiality and protect the anonymity of students who allowed me access into their families and lives, I cannot provide more concrete descriptions of street and neighborhood names aside from the school being located on the West Side of Los Angeles.

Incorporation Scholarship and Educational Attainment

Immigrants' incorporation has predominantly been examined through assimilation frameworks, which include immigrants achieving parity with a White, middle-class mainstream, downward incorporation into an underclass, and upward paths into middle-class through ethnic communities (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). These three models of

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assimilation seek to explain different incorporation patterns for varied ethnic/racial groups by examining the influence of participation in social institutions on increases in levels of incorporation. However, this scholarship failed to tackle head on the ways racism and racist ideologies are the pillars in structural barriers that limit immigrants and their children's incorporation. That is, full incorporation is limited by structural barriers that hinder participation. Race is generally considered as a contextual feature of society, yet there are minimal analyses of how constructs of race and racist ideologies inform structural inequalities in school. For instance, Portes and Rumbaut (2006) point to the difficulties Mexican descent student experience in school by addressing language as a barrier to their integration in high track courses. Further, a predominant emphasis on specifying the structural factors affecting incorporation has meant scholars center their analysis on particular participation outcomes to assess incorporation patterns across various social institution. For educational incorporation, test scores, GPAs, high school graduation rates, and post-secondary degree attainment are used to assess incorporation patterns (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Brown 2007; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Bachmeier and Bean 2011). Though scholars acknowledge the importance of race in Latian/o students' educational experiences, they fail to clarify the processes through which students are racialized in school or the impact of racialization processes on students' school incorporation and educational attainment. I argue that we need to examine the centrality of race within schools and its influence on incorporation processes for Latina/o youth. Particularly, identifying the distinctions and relationship between structural integration and social inclusion in school as central to incorporation allows us to determine how Latina/o students, regardless of immigration status, can be structurally integrated in top academic programs yet simultaneously socially excluded from school spaces.

Geography: Place, Space, and Race

Research on urban landscapes reveals how places are assigned multiple and contested meanings by different people (the police, the media, local residents, those living in neighboring areas, etc.) such that physical place and social space is in a process of continual negotiations. Here, some scholars address the role of time, relationality, and race in how a place becomes a racialized space, specifically the ways place and space become embodied with racial meanings and how bodies carry and inhabit racial signifiers (Sundstrom 2003; Pulido 2004; Winders 2005; Price 2010). For example, Harris' (1993) analysis of racial identity and property as interrelated concepts that gave birth to the construct of whiteness as property helps us understand the ways places and spaces are arenas wherein whites are afforded rights to exclude. The legal underpinnings of whiteness as property have given life to formal and informal processes for excluding non-whites from access to places and spaces such as housing (covenant laws and banking practices), education (*de jure* segregation and school integration), and daily social activities such as traversing parks, stores, and neighborhoods (Harris 1993; Massey 1995; Sibley 1995; Aitken 2001; Perry 2002; Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2004; Thomas 2011).

In the case of young people in schools, research on youth geographies explores the varied ways young people encounter and experience exclusionary practices within the varied places and spaces of schools. Some scholars examine symbolic exclusion--where the materiality of a place is connected to the imagined features of space--and the ways exclusionary practices are subtle and are often informally enacted (Matthews et al. 2000a). For example, ethnic minority youth experience forms of spatial and social exclusion that manifest through institutional actions such as assigning students to specific buildings and classrooms, but also by inaction from teachers, administrators and those in positions of power over students (Kumashiro 2000; Smith et al. 2002;

Cahill 2004). Here, it is the invisible ways in which exclusion evolves in schools that are often overlooked. For example, many spaces within schools are understood not only as places for control and surveillance, but also as places and spaces that embody specific values, beliefs, and attitudes that are communicated in and through the physical architectural structure of buildings, adorned wall surfaces, and marking of boundaries. In sum, most analyses of formal and informal racializing of place and space have been at the macro-level confining our understanding of individual's agency in resisting such practices.

Critical Race Theory in Education: Space, Whiteness, Racialization, and Students' Agency

The notion of space as a useful and powerful concept has been applied in other research (Feagin 1996; Lipsitz 1998; Barajas and Ronnkvist 2007; Nunn 2011). Feagin (1996) defined space in racial terms in that "…social relations are physically structured in material space and human beings often view space expressively and symbolically…those with greater power and resources ordinarily control the use and meaning of important spaces in society" (p. 49). Feagin argues that a study of space is critical since space is not race neutral. We know school spaces tend to be controlled by those with white, middle-class power who often perceive their power as neutral and thus limited. For example, Moore (2008, 2015) examines the experiences of people of color in "institutional white space" (elite U.S. law schools) to illuminate the institutional dynamics embedding mechanisms for the reproduction and reification of white institutional power and privilege. Though white space as a general concept has been discussed (Feagin, 1996; Lipsitz, 1998, 2011; Moore 2008; Evans and Feagin 2012), conceptualizing white space warrants analyses of the ways a physical, material place, such as school buildings, takes on an assigned racial dimension. A critical line of inquiry is documenting how racializing mechanisms continue to operate formally and informally in schools to produce racialized places and spaces that

structure marginalized students' educational experiences and (re)produce inequitable educational opportunities.

A number of scholars examine the practices through which whiteness is built into schools. One of these practices involves within school segregation that emerges through the creation of magnet programs and discourses on intelligence and whiteness which differentiate students enrolled in magnets programs from those students who are not (Staiger 2006; Ladson-Billings 2006; Tyson 2011; Ochoa 2013; Hughey 2015). Here, some scholars examine how smartness and whiteness operate as an intertwined system of oppression that become 'invisible' cultural tropes within US society. For example, Leonardo and Broderick (2011) frame smartness as 'property' and a noun, while Hatt (2012) argues smartness can also operate as a verb, as something that is "*done to* others as social positioning" and used to frame identity (14). That is, in order to be considered smart in certain school contexts, students must perform identities that meet whiteness and middle-class cultural capital expectations. Smartness as both noun and verb reveals the dynamic ways in which the constructs and fusing of smartness and whiteness reflect a legacy of racism and its embeddedness in the educational system.

In focusing on racialization processes, we are able to draw attention to how race constructs shape the organization of social structures (Barajas 2000; Barajas and Pierce 2001; Doane and Bonilla-Silva 2003). For example, Barajas and Ronnkvist (2007) demonstrate how successful Latina/o college students negotiated their educational success, contributing a racial frame that centers attention on the processes and ideology that produce racialized space in school. They find that the relationships within school organizational space often operated through an investment in whiteness which served to maintain racist ideologies and perspectives that rationalize white power and privilege. Barajas and Ronnkvist (2007) argue that racialized

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space serves as a mechanism by which the dominant group, whites, maintain privilege and power. Understanding the institutional and interpersonal ways school places and spaces become invested in whiteness and serve to maintain white privilege and power is critical, yet we also need to focus students' challenges to and disruption of such investment by schools by enacting their agency through resistance strategies.

Deploying a Critical Race Theory in Education lens enables an interrogation of the centrality of race in the (re)production of racialization processes in schools, particularly by identifying and analyzing the individual and institutional features of racialization that work to imbue school places and spaces with racial meanings. Simultaneously, this lens facilitates a recognition of avenues by which to challenge dominant ideologies such as meritocracy and colorblindness, which suggest educational institutions are neutral systems that function in the *same* ways for *all* students. This framework advances challenges to these beliefs by learning and building from the knowledge of Communities of Color whose educational experiences are marked by oppressive structures and practices. The efforts of revealing racism in education is a conscious move toward social and racial justice and empowerment among Communities of Color (Solorzano and Yosso, 2001; Yosso 206). The transformative feature of Critical Race Theory allows for centering students' agency in resisting practices that reproduce racist structural inequalities.

Methods

This article focuses on the ways schools as places and spaces (re)produce racializing processes and how Latina/o students experience and resist racializing ideologies and school practices. The data is drawn from five years of school ethnography and interviews with 50 Latina/o high school students throughout their junior and senior years of high school.

Sample. At the time of data collection, most students were between the ages of 17-18. I conducted snowball recruitment of students employing two strategies: 1) reaching out to students via personal contacts from relationships built through my previous work with students at the school, and 2) presenting a brief description of the study in classrooms and distributing flyers to interested students. The 50 Latina/o students interviewed either began or completed most of their high school education at Hillcrest. Students' academic experiences across their four years of high school are quite diverse: a few attended continuation programs, others were enrolled in special education tracks, many were enrolled in college track programs, and some were students in the magnet schools. The diversity in academic course participation is significant as the types of courses students enrolled in shaped the likelihood they would encounter opportunities to share a classroom space with white students. Further, though students are assigned to particular academic tracks and magnet programs, students have opportunities to take more or less advanced courses, with students in the magnet programs having the most freedom to choose the level of academic rigor of their courses. The majority (45/50) come from working-class and poor families with many living in the surrounding working-class communities near the school. Most of the students (46/50) are of Mexican descent, which reflects the city's broader demographics of the Latina/o population.

Data collection. I collected ethnographic data from 2012 through 2017 through participating in classrooms across multiple subjects and academic tracks, attending counselor monthly meetings, sitting in on department meetings, engaging in parent/teacher conferences, and attending school assemblies. This ethnographic data allowed me to document students' interactions with diverse groups of peers, in multiple places and spaces across time, and their interactions throughout the school day. In terms of interviews, I conducted interviews with

students in multiple areas of the school, in coffee shops, and their homes. Interviews were directed by a semi-structured guide to map each students' educational history, friendship circles, extra-curricular participation, interactions with teachers/school staff, and experiences with discrimination.

Data Analysis. I employed deductive and inductive procedures with verbatim interview transcripts and field notes. Data-driven codes were applied from a grounded-theory approach (Corbin and Strauss 1998) while theory-driven codes emerge deductively. Field notes were reviewed and coded according to numerous categories: 1) peer-to-peer and group interactions, 2) classroom teacher/student verbal and behavioral communication 3) Classroom environment (i.e. classroom decor, seating arrangements, academic content presented, and student or teacher led classroom discussions), 4) student spaces/places of congregation, 5) student club meetings, 6) school staff meetings. From these categories, data driven codes were developed such as "Disneyland", "Six Flags", "intelligence," "whites as superior/better", "racist stereotypes," and "racial spaces" which reflect students' encounters with racializing language and ideologies as they navigated the various places and spaces of the campus. The patterns found in the 5-year ethnographic data were cross-checked in students' interview responses, specifically their readings of places and spaces, their framing of interactions in classrooms and open spaces, and their reactions/resistance to institutional practices that deploy racializing language and tropes.

Positionality. As an employee of non-profit organizations working one-on-one with students at the high school, I was part of the school staff for five years and met many of the student participants through this work. In addition, except for age and educational attainment, I demographically resemble many of the students. I am an immigrant Latina who was brought to the U.S. as a child. I also come from a working-class background and am fluently bilingual.

These characteristics enabled me to quickly establish rapport with students and their parents. In turn, given my status as UCLA doctoral student, students felt comfortable to request my opinion during class discussions, ask for clarification on assignments while walking through the hallways, or inquire into my own path to post-secondary degrees. In this sense, the information and support I offered represent a quasi-experiment that enabled me to track students' agency throughout their school experiences and the impact on their experiences.

Findings

In what follows, I first present the racialized school landscape at Hillcrest that students enter as freshmen and which they engage in (re)producing through a naming and inhabiting of particular spaces of the school. I then explore how the structural and social features of the school, the presence of two magnet schools and ideologies fusing whiteness with intelligence respectively, shape institutional and interpersonal mechanisms through which Latina/o students experience racialization at Hillcrest. Finally, I demonstrate how Latina/o students' experiences with racialization across the places and spaces of Hillcrest sow the seeds of their resistance that is revealed in two forms: 1) via students' internal critical frames that challenge ideologies fusing whiteness and intelligence, and 2) deploying counter-narratives in school assemblies which contest their construction as not only intellectually inferior, but also intruders into academic and social arenas that are constructed as the rightful spaces for whites. I find that despite Latina/o students' participation across the top academic programs at Hillcrest, they still experience a social exclusion. Their social exclusion suggests that participating in top academic programs in educational institutions does not produce incorporation in the structural and social features of institutions. I argue that the racialization Latina/o students confront as manifested across the places and spaces of Hillcrest high school reflects the long-standing Americanization process

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that educational institutions overtly or implicitly continue carrying out. The Americanization of immigrant youth and the children of immigrants influences whether they become incorporated in the structural ad social features of schools thereby shaping their prospects for incorporation in other social institutions.

(Re)producing Racialized Landscape: "Disneyland" and "Six Flags"

Every year close to 1,000 freshmen enter Hillcrest high school to begin the last four years of their K-12 education. Very quickly, most of these freshmen are socialized into the specific racialized landscape that defines Hillcrest high school, both through the institutional practices and interpersonal interactions. Of course, students also enter the school with a particular sense of the spatial geography that is a defining feature of Southern California's landscape from Disneyland in Orange county to the south to Six Flags in Valencia to the far north. The spread of these theme parks across the Southern California landscape reflects the broader forces of suburbanization that carried white residents out of the core of Los Angeles and away from the growing communities of color. The broader racial dynamics that shaped Southern California's spatial landscape, Disneyland's location in Orange county, influenced conceptions of Disneyland as a place and space for whites. This racialized conception of Los Angeles' geography play out in students' racialization at Hillcrest high school. Students deploy the names Disneyland and Six Flags, referencing LA theme parks, to signify the racial categories of white and Latina/o and are used to locate students' bodies in their respective spaces at the school. That is, the terms "Disneyland" and Six Flags" are the signifiers of racialized space that are demarcating boundaries in physical places. The theme parks as public places for people to enjoy is directly implicated in how students understand, read, and deploy "Disneyland" and Six Flags" as racial signifiers as they reflect the broader local context of Los Angeles that has informed students'

lived experience of racial dynamics in the city.

Below I present a description of the school's physical landscape and set the stage for

understanding the relationship between racialized spaces, the students who inhabit them, and the

racist ideologies that inform interactions amongst students.

> *As one walks towards Hillcrest's entrance, two features capture the eyes' attention: the patina of the bell tower that stands at the middle of a weathered white bedrock facade and its red brick wings on each side. This is one of two original red brick buildings from its opening in the mid 1930's. Horizontally and to the left stands a two-story red brick building which houses the "Liberal Arts" magnet. Flags depicting Da Vinci's Vitruvian man and the name "Liberal Arts" magnet hang from three poles that protrude from its second floor. No other building has flags or banners identifying them as a small learning community. Passed the main buildings, one comes out to the largest open area that is the quad where most of the school's students congregate, making it the central space where they enact and experience racialized interactions. The quad's area includes a small stage encircled by tall trees and in the middle of the short, green grass cement blocks that create a walkway to the stage. Students call this space "Six Flags" and DJ's play set to celebrate homecoming football games or fundraising events. It is the only grassy area of the quad. To the right of this space is the area known as "Disneyland," and is decorated with four cement squares whose center hold short, bush-like trees. Built into the cement squares are cement benches where students sit, stand, or lie down during nutrition and lunch. The majority of students who congregate in this space are white and belong to the two magnet programs of the campus.*

Visual Rendition of School Quad Description
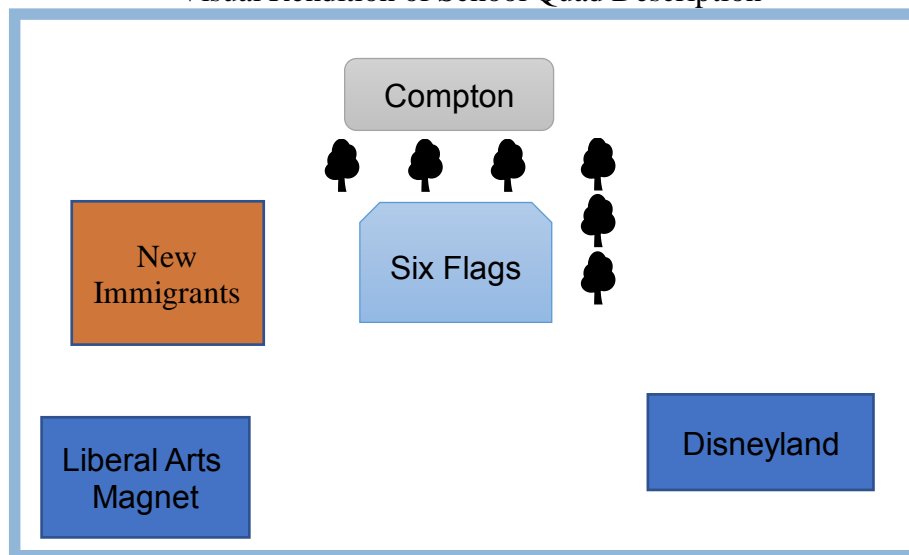
This quick portrait of Hillcrest's physical landscape is critical to understand the institutional and

interpersonal mechanisms through which a racialization of students operates and how Latina/o

students come to understand the racialized dynamics shaping their academic and social

experiences. That is, the division of the school into smaller learning communities directly

influenced the interpersonal mechanisms that re-produced students' racialization. The flags

decorating the "Liberal Arts" magnet building are visual, symbolic markers that communicate a

Western-European notion of academic knowledge and is a distinguishing feature establishing

this building as a space of rigorous intellectual activity. Critically, though the white and Latina/o

students enrolled in this magnet are comparable, the building has evolved into a hyper-white

space via the magnet's focus on Western-European academic pursuit which is coupled to broader

racial ideologies of intelligence being a defining characteristic of whiteness. The "Liberal Arts"

building itself took on a racialized identity as a white space while the white students in this

magnet imbued the specific quad area where they congregate with whiteness and is the principal

reason the space is identified by students as "Disneyland." The production of this physical area

of the quad as a white space is demonstrated through the construction of a racialized counter-

space of the stage area which students identify as "Six Flags." The stage area becomes a racial

signifier for the space where Latina/o and African American students hang-out. In this area, DJ's

play music, put on dance competitions, and hold rallies for events such as homecoming and

dances. Though these activities can be observed by students all around the quad, most of the

students who congregate, take part in dancing, and run for homecoming queen and king are

predominantly Latina/o and African-American.

Latina/o Students' Reading of Hillcrest's Racialized Landscape

The ethnographic observations and initial interpretations described above were validated

by students during our interviews. Latina/o students' readings of the racialized physical

landscape illustrate their deep awareness of the ways they are constructed as inhabiting inferior social positions on the campus that are in direct contrast to that of whites, but also their insights and challenges of the legitimacy of these racialized spaces.

Early in my interviews with students about their educational experiences, issues around interactions between white and Latina/o students became a recurrent topic of extended conversation. In speaking with Janet (U.S. born Latina and student in "Liberal Arts" magnet) about her experiences being part of the magnet, I asked her "did they [white students] interact with the rest of the campus during nutrition and lunch, like in the quad? Janet responds with a direct reference to white students' congregation spaces,

> "I feel like they were always just their little group or them and "liberal arts" [the other magnet program] but they wouldn't, at least not that I saw. They would just hang out in what they call 'Disneyland' so it's mostly white folks whether they're "Arts" or "Liberal Arts", that's their space."

Janet's response illustrates her observations of white students' unwillingness to interact with the non-magnet or Latina/o and African American students. In referencing Disneyland as the name for the space where white students of both magnet programs congregate, she expresses an understanding of the relationship between whiteness and white students' presence in a physical area as signaling its demarcation as a white space. Janet shows an awareness of the presence of an ideological fusing of power and whiteness in these social dynamics as the mere inhabiting of a place by white students is to be read by others as a rightful space of/for white students. Interestingly, by prefacing the reference to the name of the space with "…what they call…", Janet distances herself from others who engage in the construction of that specific place of the campus as a space only available to white students. She makes her refusal to engage in the racialization of the school's places and spaces clear in the response to my request for clarification. "But the way students use it ["Disneyland"] on campus…," to which she replied

candidly, "It's meaning like the white folks hang out there. But I never viewed 'Disneyland' like, I feel it's so much more diverse." It is in this follow up where Janet expresses her opposition to an ideological coupling of the theme park that is Disneyland with whiteness as she understands the actual place to be attended by a much more diverse population than just whites. She is critical about the discursive conflation of Disneyland being the privilege of only whites when she knows it is a place and space to be more open and accessible to all kinds of people.

Like Janet, most of the students I spoke with and those I followed throughout their senior year communicated similar understandings of the racialization of Hillcrest's places and spaces. All the students were keenly aware of the racial categories used to distinguish the spaces inhabited by white and Latina/o students at the school. Further, much like Janet, many of the students irrespective of their academic track position and small learning community assignment articulated similar critiques about the ways in which whiteness and white students were being touted as intellectually and socially superior than the rest of the students. Their critiques speak to the agentive conceptual work Latina/o students engage in to challenge their racialization by disputing the power whiteness is accorded and supposed intellectual superiority of whites. I suggest that through their awareness of and experiences with the racialized landscape of their school, Latina/o students learn they are not perceived, treated as, or expected to be the equals of white students. These lessons are reinforced and intensified by staff's (administrators/counselors/ teachers) practices and peer interactions revealing the institutional and interpersonal mechanisms through which Latina/o students' racialization maps onto physical places and symbolic spaces.

Institutional Mechanisms: Magnets, Staff Practices, Fusing Intelligence and whiteness

Aside from the visual cues students read from observing where peers congregate across the areas of the school, there are institutional mechanisms manifested in the practices of school

actors (administrators, teachers, counselors) that inform and re-produce the racialization of students and school spaces. My conversation with Jazmin is instructive as it captures one of the institutional practices that typifies their impact in the production of white spaces. The Director of the "Liberal Arts" magnet conducts presentations in the auditorium multiple times a year for only its magnet students. These presentations represent one form of institutional mechanisms through which the (re)production of racist ideological constructs that fuse whiteness with intelligence is enacted.

Jazmin (U.S. born Latina, member of "Liberal Arts" magnet) and I often talked about her experiences being classified as Gifted and Talented and her interactions with the white students in the magnet. During one of our conversations I asked Jazmin, "why do you think "Liberal Arts" magnet students feel they are better than students in other small learning communities?" Jazmin responds, "…Mr. Reese [Director] would always tell us in the assemblies all the statistics and stuff at least from 'Arts' he would, how we were number 1 from the whole school, we were the ones that had the highest grades according to what he would tell us and he would put up numbers...". She immediately points to the ideas on intelligence and academics the Director, a white man in a position of leadership, conveyed to them through official assemblies. The use of official statistics in the form of grades and test scores in conjunction with the status position of the Director operate to bestow legitimacy to claims that "Liberal Arts" students are superior to all other students at Hillcrest. Yet, in her description, Jazmin begins to signal her doubts about the validity of his claims. I probed this cue by asking, "So what were your thoughts when he was giving you statistics of "Arts" having the highest grades and test scores?" She replied,

> "I mean I think he definitely got to some people because a lot of them thought they were better than other students and, especially, there's always been that thing where 'Arts' thought that they were better. I don't know if you heard that but there was always that thing. I think that's kind of what, not what caused it, but I think what he would tell us

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kind of influenced it in a way. 'Liberal Arts' students were pretty sure of themselves, you know."

In her extended analysis, we can clearly identify her assessment of the impact that a display of numbers had on some of her peers as they reinforced their belief of being better than other students, "…definitely got to some people…". Jazmin goes on to instruct me on the status the "Liberal Arts" magnet claimed in relation to the other small learning communities, a status becomes supported by the message the Director communicates. Jazmin clarifies that the Director's use of statistics and message are not what cause "Liberal Arts" students to feel and think of themselves as superior but they definitely reinforce and validate their ideas. The position of authority that Mr. Reese holds as Director of the magnet program confer legitimacy and power to statistics and message of their being the most academically successful. Significantly, though, Jazmin distances herself from such ideas by referencing "some people" and "they". Though she is a student in the magnet program, she does not subscribe to nor align with the notion of hierarchies that legitimize claims to superiority over others. Yet, Jazmin is not naïve about the racial dynamics playing out in her magnet program and broader school areas through institutional practices.

Interpersonal Mechanisms: Racialized Messages, white Spaces, and Latina/o Racialization

Interpersonal mechanisms are defined as the racist messages and ideological racial constructs fusing whiteness and intelligence which position Latina/o students as intellectually inferior and interlopers. These interpersonal mechanisms frame Latina/o students' interactions with peers as well as (re)produce areas of the school as racialized spaces. Below, Amalia shares a classroom experience that clearly captures how racist ideologies informing the messages which racialize Latina/o students as intellectually inferior and interlopers. I asked Amalia, "Have you ever experienced or encountered comments about Latinas/os being in Advanced Placement (AP)

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classes?" and she replied,

> "Uhhm, I remember this year in AP lit. I sat in front of white kids and this one kid walked into our class second semester and he's Hispanic in black tee, black pants, his hat to the back. Later he figured it out 'oh I'm in the wrong class' and walked out. Then this kid behind me was like 'obviously, of course, no surprise' I was like he could be the smartest person in this class right now, and you wouldn't know. It doesn't matter what you're wearing or what race you are, you can be smart. I'm sitting right in front of you and we had a discussion in class like about stereotypes"

The interpersonal mechanisms emerged through my conversations with students and observations in classrooms across academic tracks, subjects, and small learning communities. Though Amalia is of Mexican descent, she often joked and laughed about how people took her for Asian. This background is important as the white students around her make racial comments about the Latino male who enters their class by mistake. But Amalia does not mince words in highlighting the racial undertones in the students' statement, specifically the bonding of race with intelligence. Further, she questions how this student continues to perpetuate such racialization after the class has engaged in discussions about the negative consequences of racial stereotypes. Amalia has a concrete understanding of the broader ideological narratives that bond whiteness with intelligence so that Latina/o students like herself are always suspect when inhabiting white spaces such as advanced placement classes.

In the open areas of the school's quad, the racialized messages constructing Latina/o students as interlopers into academic white spaces within advanced courses and magnet programs mapped onto as white spaces in the open areas of the quad. This mapping of racialization was clear to Latina/o students. I asked Zandra if she had experiences of feeling uncomfortable in certain areas of the school, and she explained,

> "Uhhm, that was definitely in the Disneyland area because they are usually the "Arts" kids or the "Liberal Arts" kids and those kids think they are so much better than everyone else. If they see you walking by they would look at you like 'what are you

doing here?' Even if you were just walking by to get to the Medicine building, you would get stares, yeah you would get the stares"

Zandra directly signals Disneyland as a space where she was made to feel not only uncomfortable, but clearly excluded. She specifies that Disneyland is the area where students from the two magnet programs at Hillcrests hang out and, though not explicit, these are the white students, thus, making Disneyland a space reserved only for the white students. Zandra is made to feel and understand that she does not belong as merely walking by their space "they would look at you like 'what are you doing here?'" Her peers' stares both acknowledge Zandra's intrusion into their space while also challenging the legitimacy of her presence. Zandra's experience is significant because her complexion is light skin and when she dyes her hair blonde can easily pass for white. And yet, her skin color and potential for passing is insufficient to access Disneyland and accepted as an equal status member because "they think they are so much better than everyone else." Here, the racist ideologies fusing whiteness with intelligence are clearly mapped onto the construction of racialized space of Disneyland, a white space whose boundaries are defined by racist ideological narratives of white students being superior their non-white peers.

Though Amalia and Zandra attend a racially integrated school and have access to high tracked courses as well as magnet programs, they nevertheless experience social exclusion within classrooms, open areas in the quad, and buildings. Their social exclusion reflects Latina/o students' racialization which materializes via interpersonal interactions. Latina/o students' construction as intellectually inferior and intruders into white spaces informs their social exclusion despite their structural integration in the academic hierarchy of Hillcrest. I suggest that participation in top academic programs in schools does not produce Latina/o students' incorporation in the structural and social features of educational institutions.

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Challenges to Racialization: Internal Critical Frames and Counter-Narratives

Latina/o students' encounters with institutional practices and interpersonal interactions as mechanisms through which they are construct them as intellectually inferior to whites and interlopers inch white spaces did not go uncontested. Students challenged their racialization through critiques, primarily an internal critical lens, of racist ideological constructs that defined them as intellectually inferior to whites despite their comparable presence in the magnet programs and advanced placement courses. At the institutional level, through the annual Latina/o assembly, Latina/o students used it as platform to present critical counter-narratives that highlight the contributions and agency in fights for social justice by Latinas/os.

In talking with students about their educational and social experiences within the school, I often asked them about their ideas regarding the higher status that the "Liberal Arts" magnet and its students held within the school. Midway through Zandra's senior year, we began talking about her overall experiences at Hillcrest and I asked her, "so, what do you think about students in "Liberal Arts" being seen as smarter?" She responded,

> "Well, I want to say that it's everyone else at the school that holds "Liberal Arts" up high and the other part is because they're white like 'oh white people are sooooo smart' but it's more that 'oh yeah, white people don't have to worry about a lot of things that you have to worry about so they probably have more time to study' I don't think they're naturally smarter."

Zandra begins by distancing herself and clarifying that she does not subscribe to the belief that the "Liberal Arts" magnet is superior to all the other small learning communities. She then specifies the reasons for her disagreement pointing to a racist ideological fusing of whiteness and intelligence so that because "Liberal Arts" predominantly enrolls white students, then the magnet program, the physical building, and the white students are constructed as better, smarter than the rest of the programs and students. Zandra challenges this construction and instead offers a

different perspective than whites as naturally intelligent by addressing the impact of struggles that constrain the amount of time she can dedicate to her studies, which white students do not confront so more time is spent on studying and doing well academically. Here, Zandra's referencing her personal struggles with being undocumented and coming from a family that lives below the poverty line have influenced the frames she deploys to challenge the racialization of Latina/o students as less intelligent than white students. She makes sure I understood her point by ending her response with, "I don't think they're naturally smarter." Zandra's critical lens, shaped by her struggles with illegality and poverty, represents a nuanced frame through which she questions the legitimacy of racist ideologies fusing whiteness and intelligence as explanations for white students' purported smartness.

In addition to developing internal critical frames to challenge their racialization, Latina/o students deployed counter-narratives in school-wide public venues. These counter-narratives serve to contest their constructions as intellectually inferior to whites and interlopers in white spaces by asserting their legitimate place in schools and broader social institutions. For the past 20 years, since the late 90s, Hillcrest hosts an all-day annual Latino assembly in the auditorium. The event is organized and performed by mostly Latina/o students who are members of a Latina/o school club. Students from all six small learning communities, including the two magnets, attend the assembly, though mostly teachers from the four neighborhood small learning communities bring their classes. The presentation takes place during the 90 minutes of each class period, and includes a power-point of the social revolutions in Mexico, Central and South America, and ending with the US. This venue as a school-wide assembly is a community public space in that the assembly brings together students and teachers from different ethnic/racial groups and socioeconomic positions.

For the 2015-2016 school year, the theme centered on social justice and civil rights struggles for equality by different ethnic/racial groups (Latinos, African American, Native American, and Asian American) in contemporary American society. The assembly is taking place in March, close to the end of the year. This class period's presentation is almost done. The last performance is being prefaced by three Latina seniors as they address the contemporary Dreamers' social movement. As images of various protests flow through the central stage's screen, the students take turns giving background information of the images. The last image comes up and one of the girls begins,

> "Immigrants come to this country believing in the American Dream, and sometimes at the last minute find that the golden door has been shut in their face. Across the country, occupations, hunger strikes, demonstrations, and marches have pushed for the support of the DREAM Act that would allow undocumented young people the legal right to stay in the United States, work, and go to school. Facing high levels of anti-immigrant sentiment across the country, undocumented youth sought to change the terms of the debate by arguing for the unique position as culturally integrated, long-term residents, and most importantly, as American youth. Since 2010, undocumented youth activists have increasingly claimed their own spaces in the public sphere by asserting their right to have rights. Ultimately, through the story of the undocumented youth movement, the dreamers show a systematic route for immigrants and others to gain a powerful voice in the political debate." [auditorium erupts in cheers and claps]

In this segment of the assembly, the images and accompanying information offered by the three Latinas on stage are used to highlight the barriers Latina/o youth continue to confront. These struggles include blocked opportunities and a racist nativism throughout the country which does not differentiate between immigration status. The work Latina/o student organizers and performers engaged in to develop a unifying counter-narrative theme for the assembly was directly informed by repeated racialized social interactions with peers and broader institutional practices that (re)produce their racialization. Specifically, one of the three Latinas in this segment is an undocumented student who has grappled with the devastating constraints of illegality and poverty while all three were students in the "Liberal Arts" magnet who shared their numerous encounters with being treated as intellectually inferior by their peers/teachers and interlopers in white spaces. Through this segment, the students are presenting a metaphorical mirror to the school to point out its role in the maintenance and perpetuation of racist ideology

and practices. Simultaneously, the counter-narrative presented accentuates the agency of students and youth, more broadly, as they seek "…to change the terms of the debate…[and claiming] …their own spaces in the public sphere by asserting their rights to have rights." They end this segment by emphasizing the significance of organizing and becoming politically in creating powerful counter-narratives that not only challenge structural racism, but also empower communities to take an active role in "the political debate." The auditorium bursts into cheers and applause, a response that speaks to not only their support of their peers, but also the resonance of this counter-narrative.

Conclusion

The United States has a long history of racialization and racism being a driving force in schooling, as evinced in Native American boarding schools spanning the 19th and most of the 20th century and segregated schools for African Americans and Mexican Americans (Du Bois, 1935; Drake, 1927; Gould, 1932; Spring, 1994; Irons, 2002). Despite extensive research documenting racist educational practices and policies, there are limited contemporary analyses of schools as places and spaces that (re)produce racializing mechanism which determine students' opportunities to fully participate and be included within schools. Even fewer studies focus on Latina/o students experiences with and agency against racializing ideologies and practices in K-12 schools.

In this article, I show how despite the physical integration of some K-12 educational institutions, Latina/o students' irrespective of immigration status continue experiencing racialization in school. Their racialization materializes through institutional and interpersonal mechanisms that involve school actors' practices and students' interpersonal interactions. It is through these institutional and interpersonal mechanisms that both U.S. born and undocumented

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immigrant Latina/o students face exclusionary incorporation in school. The racist ideological

fusing of whiteness and intelligence represents the interpersonal mechanism shaping the contours

of racialized interactions between white and Latina/o students at Hillcrest. The racialized

interactions in their day-to-day at school are manifested in students naming certain quad places

as "Disneyland" and "Six Flags" so that as students use these names to reference where

somebody is located in the open spaces of campus, they are symbolically creating and

reproducing racialized space. Though Latina/o students have access to the structured academic

programs at Hillcrest, they nevertheless experience a social exclusion from the physical places

and symbolic spaces that are racialized as the true domain of white students. Critically, the

racialization Latina/o students confront illustrates the ways racist nativist anti-immigrant

discourse is intertwined with historical racist constructions of Latinas/os as inherently criminal,

uncivilized read as inherently feeble-minded, and perpetual foreigners (Pérez-Huber 2010). This

linking of contemporary racist nativist anti-immigrant discourse with historical constructions of

Latinas/os serves to legitimize a racist ideological fusing of whiteness with intelligence. This

ideological fusing constructs Latina/o students, irrespective of immigrant status, as not only

intellectually inferior, but also intruders into academic and social arenas that are constructed as

the rightful spaces for whites.

Despite the physical integration of some K-12 schools, there remain institutional and

interpersonal mechanisms within schools that reveal the persistence of structural racism and its

reproduction of inequitable, unjust education for marginalized student populations. These

mechanisms involve physical places and symbolic spaces in K-12 schools whose constructions

are informed by racist ideologies, and speak to a "constant and inescapable, racist, hegemonic,

fog in the air of schools" (Matrenec, 2011: 230). By centering U.S. born and undocumented

immigrant Latina/o students' contemporary experiences of racialization in school, I build on growing scholarship that presents a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of racial antagonism while urging for research agendas that are reflective of communities of colors' collective actions that sit at the intersections of race, class, gender, and immigration status. In documenting Latina/o students' experiences in magnet programs and Advanced Placement classes, I highlight the significance of tackling the entrenched relationship of racism in institutional and interpersonal school mechanisms that shape inequitable educational experiences and outcomes for students of color such that integrating students in schools and within tracks will not be sufficient to dismantle structural racist practices and their unjust, inequitable consequences.

Though extensive research has signaled the incorporation struggles that U.S. and undocumented immigrant Latina/o K-12 students confront in schools (Barajas and Ronnkvist 2007; Ochoa 2013; Enriquez 2017), I illustrate that the struggles with incorporation are produced by contradicting institutional and social mechanism that are the result of persisting racist ideologies and practices. Yet, I demonstrate that Latina/o students have not only developed critical frames through which they make sense of how broader racist nativist anti-immigrant narratives are embedded in their racialization, but also deploy counter-narratives in school-sponsored public venues to openly challenge institutional and interpersonal racializing mechanisms. Students' critical frames inform their formulation of counter-narratives to challenge their racialization by disputing the fusing of whiteness and intelligence through structural and nuanced frames that question the legitimacy of school practices and resist racist narratives. I identify the impact of barriers to school incorporation in the following articles and illustrate its significance to students' development and enacting of agency toward attaining full incorporation.

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Finally, the findings suggest the need for a re-conceptualization of incorporation that captures the centrality of racism and how it informs K-12 students' early experiences of incorporation in schools. Immigrant incorporation scholars have sought to define incorporation as participation in social institutions (Alba and Nee 1997; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou and Kim 2006). However, I suggest that there is a distinction between participating and being included in a social institution. I have shown that students' experiences of racialization reveal that structural integration does not ensure full incorporation as they face barriers in accessing opportunities to being socially included and being legitimate members of the school. Instead, I find that the benefits of structural integration are dampened by their social exclusion which limits their full membership in school. Identifying the distinctions and relationship between structural integration and social inclusion as central to conception of incorporation as it allows us to determine how Latina/o students, regardless of immigration status, can be structurally integrated in the top academic programs while simultaneously be socially excluded across school's spaces. A comparative analysis of Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' experiences of incorporation in high school sheds light on the influence of early barriers to incorporation in K-12 schools and its impact on their prospects for participation as well as inclusion in other social institutions. I turn to this in the remaining dissertation chapters.

ARTICLE 2

"Fractured Path: Undocumented Immigrant Latina/o Students' Journey to College"

Nationally, given the increased significance of a college education, high schools commit to preparing students for college. For some students, the path to college is laid out with few stumbling blocks. Yet, for working-class and students of color, the path is often full of pebbles and potholes in the form of limited guidance, under-funded schools, and low expectations (Stanton-Salazar, 2001; McNeil, 2005; Massey and Fischer, 2005). For undocumented immigrant students, the journey to college can be even more bleak, crowded with boulders, steep walls, dead ends or altogether non-existent. Some of these barriers and struggles are the result of educational institutions' failure to systematically support all students with access to information and guidance regarding policy changes like Assembly Bill 540 (Gonzales 2010; Enriquez 2011) This article explores Latina/o undocumented immigrant high school students' experiences of applying to college, specifically I draw particular attention to the ways the school's mechanisms of incorporating students influence the fracturing of paths to attaining a post-secondary degree.

Drawing on five years of school ethnography, interviews with 25 Latina/o undocumented high school students, and post-high school follow up conversation, I chronicle their journey through the process of applying to college. In the past 6 years, undocumented immigrant students and young adults have existed in a paradoxical socio-political environment defined by a national racist anti-immigrant discourse, pro-immigrant federal policy (Deferred Action), and immigrant friendly California legislation which creates unstable avenues for pursuing their goals. I bridge scholarship on college-going models and Critical Race Theory in Education to examine how undocumented immigration status, class position, and broader policy contexts (state aid and federal immigration) shape the process of pursuing a college education.

Education scholars, informed by status-attainment frameworks within Sociology, have developed college-going models to analyze college access and attainment gaps between white and minority students. These models explain students' college-going experiences as a process of three sequential and successive stages: 1) predisposition, 2) search, and 3) choice (Hossler-Gallagher, 1987; Hossler, Schmit, and Vesper, 1999; Gildersleeve, 2003). For white, middle-class students, the college-going models reflect their experiences as they not only are expected to attend college, but are also supported by a seamless flow of information from their parents—who are college educated—as well as from the schools they attend. However, in the case of undocumented immigrant students, contemporary college-going models are inadequate in helping us understand how undocumented immigration status shapes their experiences of applying to college. Further, we know little about how broader policy contexts—the California Dream Act and Dream Loan programs enacted 2011 and 2015 respectively—complicate the college-going process these students must navigate to successfully transition to college. These broader policies represent one of the most progressive and pro-immigrant context in the nation that entails enhanced possibilities for undocumented immigrant students to access not only a college education, but also greater opportunities for social mobility as adults. These state policies can either ease undocumented immigrant students' journey to college or complicate the process if access to the needed information and guidance is unavailable from parents or the schools they attend. The question of how such broader policy shifts impact undocumented immigrant students' experiences of pursuing a post-secondary education remains.

I turn to Critical Race Theory in Education scholarship as a lens to specify how students' undocumented immigration status influences their journey to college. Critical Race Theory in Education represents a paradigm shift in how we think about and examine educational

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inequalities. Critical in this expansive literature is an intersectional framework that allows for an analytical focus on individual's multiple social identities—race, class, gender, immigration status, sexuality—and identify the multiple structural inequalities that evolve from interlocking systems of oppression (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995; Solorzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001; Enriquez, 2016). By examining the ways in which language, immigration, ethnicity, identity, and phenotype become intersecting markers of identities and inequality (Solórzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001; Valdés, 1996; Villalpando, 2004), a Critical Race Theory in Education perspective enables an examination of how undocumented Latina/o students' multiple social locations influence the barriers in access and availability of college-going information they confront. In bridging ideas from Critical Race theory in Education and college-going models, I contribute to a growing scholarship on undocumented immigrant youth by identifying how class position, undocumented immigration status, and shifting state and federal policies impact undocumented students' pursuit of a post-secondary education.

Drawing on interviews with 25 Latina/o undocumented students, five years of school ethnography, and post-high school follow up conversation to reveal the mechanisms through which working-class position, undocumented immigration status, and shifting state financial aid and federal immigration policies alter students' journey to college. I show that students' path to college is one of compressed stages and compounded steps. I define compressed stages as the merging of distinct preparation activities into a compacted time period. This compression is linked to students' working-class position as access to information, guidance, and resources is not available or effectively disseminated throughout their four-years of high school. In turn, I define compounded steps as the required additional information and forms resulting from enacted legislation that exacerbate the anxieties of applying to college.

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As students work to simultaneously complete the multiple stages and steps, the path to college becomes increasingly fractured by a growing mountain of forms and ever more complicated and hazy information. I contend that students' educational paths cannot be understood by using a single framework, whether it be class, race, or immigration status. Rather, we must strive for a holistic analysis of students' multiple marginalities while not essentializing their experiences and reifying certain students as "the other." Given the current political climate, specifically Trump's order to phase out DACA, undocumented immigrant youth and young adults find themselves back in a precarious state amidst a context of fluctuating opportunities and restrictions with much more to lose as many have built families and have professional careers across diverse sectors of the economy.

Shifting State Financial Aid and Immigration Policies

In 2011, California legislators enacted two seminal pieces of legislation (Assembly Bill 130 and 131) that became known as the California Dream Act. For undocumented students in California, the Dream Act granted access to the same state aid as legal residents and US citizens enabling many to pursue a post-secondary education. During the 2015-2016 academic year, the California Dream Loan Program (SB 1210) was enacted allowing undocumented students access to state funded loans to cover college tuition. At the federal level, in 2012, President Obama's executive action of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) granted a select population of undocumented individuals access to a work permit and deferred deportation. These policy interventions can shape undocumented students' pursuit of a post-secondary education by altering the context under which students access and transition to college (Abrego, 2008). Specifically, state and federal policies may directly alter the process of acquiring information via implementation of programs aimed at decreasing barriers to gaining college knowledge (St. John,

2003; Bell et al., 2009). The table below serves as a summary of policy changes undocumented students must familiarize themselves with to effectively complete the college-going process.

	Year Passed	Required Documents	Eligibility	Benefits	Deadlines
California Dream Act for Financial Aid (AB 130, 131)	2011 In Effect 2012	• GPA verification form-signed • HS graduation verification • Dream Act App.	Grant A—3.0 GPA end of 11th grade Grant B— 2.0 GPA, meet family & income ceiling levels	Grant A— • CSU=$5,475 • UC: Private= $12,000 Grant B— $1, 650	On/ before March 2
California Dream Loan Program (SB 1210)	2015-2016 academic year	• Dream Act App. • Demonstrate Financial Need via Family Income • Are enrolled in College	• Undocumented AB 540 status • Pursuing a college education	$ 4,000 max per year	On/ before March 2
Federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)	2012	• School records • Vaccination records • Records of continuous residence • Identification	• under age 31 in 2012 • arrived before age 16 • in school, HS diploma, obtained GED	Work Permit Deferred Deportation CA ID/Drivers License	Ongoing

For undocumented students, every new piece of information they come across, new forms they must learn to complete, and one more person they must disclose their undocumented status to represents a potential stumbling block jeopardizing their admittance to a 4-year institution. The seeming endless stream of new pieces to the college-going process is tied to broader policy contexts. Undocumented students must simultaneously decipher two shifting processes: changes to immigration policy as well as state financial aid requirements. These broader changes in policy alter how they students experience the search for information and the decisions they will

make since students must find a reliable information source and the guidance to effectively apply the information. It is here where students' undocumented immigrant status looms over every aspect of college-going. They are continuously performing a balancing act of sorting new information and utilizing it effectively, illustrating how students' experiences of applying to college cannot be understood through the normative college-going model as the stages are not mutually exclusive nor do they follow in sequence. Rather, students' immigration status as a stigmatized category, working-class position via a dependence on schools as information sources, and a broader shifting policy context operate to compress and compound Latina/o undocumented students' experiences of the college-going process altogether.

Contemporary College-Going Models

Emerging out of Sociology and informed by status attainment frameworks, an extensive body of work examines college access and attainment between white and students of color.[4] Within this vast literature, scholars examine when and how students become interested in attending college, factors determining students' access to information and guidance, and how students decide what type of college to attend. Scholars seeking to clarify the college-going experience have developed a model that defines the process as sequence of three progressive stages—predisposition, search for information, and choice made to attend and type of post-secondary institution (Hossler-Gallagher, 1987; Hossler, Schmit, and Vesper, 1999; Gildersleeve, 2003).

Desire to Attend — Stage 1 (9th)

Search & Gather Information — Stage 2 (10th-11th)

Apply & Choose — Stage

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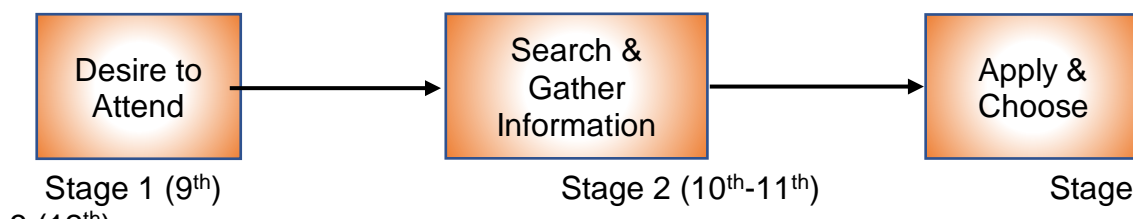
[4] Though I cite scholars of education, their research draws from status-attainment frameworks in Sociology.

Extensive literature already exists analyzing how students become predisposed to attend college (St. John, 1991, 2001; Perna, 2006), this article then focuses on the search and choice stages as these are what students must complete to successfully transition into college.

First, scholars have contested the model's proposition that students initiate the search for college information early in their high school education, calling into to question the applicability of both the proposed sequence of stages and their progression. A growing body of empirical research documents that grade level at which students initiate their search for information does not always coincide with that proposed in the college-going model (Orfield and Paul, 1994; Venezia, Kirst, and Antonio, 2003). For example, Bell et. al., (2009) compared the sources and type of information 9th and 11th graders possessed about college, finding that 9th graders depended primarily on family/friends for information and their knowledge is basic such as academic requirements and SAT tests. In turn, 11th graders shifted to school personnel as primary sources of information, had taken the SAT, and were aware of specific curricular requirements. These findings were most prevalent among working-class and minority students, demonstrating that type of information accessed and the source of information differs widely by students' race and class (Immerwahr, 2003; Vargas, 2004; Perna, 2006a). During the search stage, then, access to and acquisition of information takes on critical significance since a lack of reliable and timely information can often thwart students' goals of attaining a post-secondary education. Students who initiate their search for information once they begin applying to colleges will be at a disadvantage as can affect their likelihood of completing the process and successfully enrolling in college.

Second, research on working-class and minority students' school experiences demonstrates their inequitable access to information and support for college (Rosenbloom and Way 2004;

Freeman, 2005; Diaz-Strong, et. al., 2001; Martinez and Cervera 2012). Scholars contend that

the normative three stage model assumes a uniformity in students' college-going experiences,

specifically that working-class and racial/ethnic minorities experience the steps of the college-

going process much like white, middle-class students (McDonough, 1997; Freeman, 2005;

Perna, 2006; Gildersleeve, 2010). However, research on the schooling experiences of working-

class and minority students signals that these students may in fact not have such experiences of

college-going (Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch, 1995; Hill Hill, 2008). For white, middle-class

students, their parents perform much of the searching and gathering of resources and information

creating for their children a seamless transition process from high school to college. In addition,

the schools many of these students attend support and reinforce parents' guidance strategies by

offering substantial resources and aid in navigating the college-going process (Hil Hill, 2008). In

turn, scholars find that racial and ethnic minority students' ties to "institutional agents" in

schools—counselors, teachers, peers—often do not result in access to timely information or

extended guidance to ensure its correct use (Stanton-Salazar, 1997; Teranishi and Briscoe, 2006).

By 12th grade, according to the model, students move on to the last step—applying to the

colleges they've researched, taking ACT/SAT exams, and choosing a college to attend. As

seniors, then, students have little time to learn about and prepare academically for college.

Research investigating students' access to college-going information demonstrates that students

with less information about college-going, especially information focused on cost and aid, are

less likely to expect to attend college (Horn et al., 2003), apply for admission to college (Cabrera

and LaNasa, 2000), or enroll in college (Plank and Jordan, 2001). Further, minority students

(Tomás Rivera Policy Institute, 2004; Grodsky and Jones, 2007) and working-class families (De

La Rosa, 2006) tend to have the least knowledge about college-going. For those students who by

12th grade have not acquired the necessary relevant information, the stressors of having to maintain grades while seeking out this information and putting it to use results in overwhelming anxiety leading many to forgo applying to college altogether (Rosenbaum, Miller and Krei, 1996). In sum, scholars show that access to college information and guidance determines whether working-class and minority students successfully enroll in college (Cabrera and La Nasa, 2000a; Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Conchas, 2006; Martinez and Cervera, 2012). Though access to and acquisition of college information is critical, few studies have examined how relevance of information matches students' needs given their social locations across class, race, and undocumented immigration status.

Building on previous college-going models, Perna (2006) proposes a conceptual model that seeks to account for numerous dimensions influencing the college choice process. She indicates that college choice is embedded within four layers which incorporate individual and contextual factors. The first layer, habitus, accounts for demographic characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and resources. The second layer, school and community, illustrates how local contexts can facilitate or obstruct college access. The third layer, higher education, emphasizes the role college institutions in promoting college choice—location and recruitment. And the fourth layer, social, economic, and policy, accounts for the role of macro-level factors in directly and indirectly influencing students' college choice. Unlike most previous college-going models, Perna (2006) focuses on multiple layers of individual and social contexts that determine students' college choice and offers a way to assess how students' access to resources and support is shaped by numerous dimensions of the college-going process.

In sum, though contemporary college-going models have sought to account for minority and white students' college access, they have not attended to how marginalized students'

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multiple social location across race, class, immigration status intersect to shape their experiences of college going. I move away from individual-centered conceptualizations of college-going and focus on the intersection of students' multiple social locations—class and immigration status— with targeted in-state tuition and federal immigration policy to better understand how undocumented Latina/o students experience college-going. I conceptualize the college-going process as compressed and compounded where the time and sequence of stages—predisposition, search, choice—are experienced simultaneously rather than chronologically linear. My conceptual framework represents a process oriented approach accounting for barriers linked to students' marginalized social identities, which are represented by the broken arrows where working-class position influences the compressions of stages 2 and 3 while undocumented immigration status compounds the steps to be completed in each stage thus affecting students' desire to attend college throughout the year long process.

College-Going: Compressed Stages and Compounded Steps
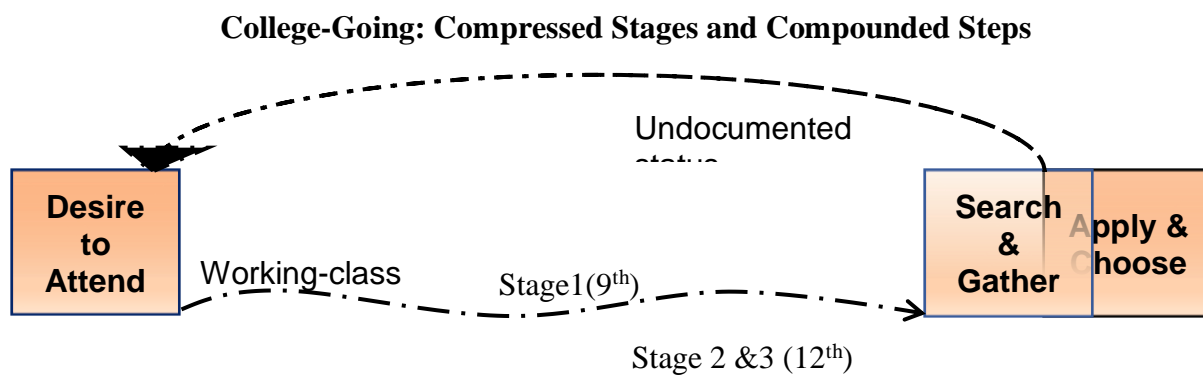
One way immigration status affects students is that undocumented immigrant youth must balance two shifting processes: one concerns changes in immigration policy and the second involves changes to state financial aid eligibility requirements. That is, undocumented students' multiple social locations--undocumented immigrant and working-class--interact with shifting state financial aid and federal immigration policy creating confusion and complicating further what is already a difficult process for working-class and minority students.

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Undocumented Immigrant Youth and Access to Higher Education.

Undocumented students are youth who enter and/or reside in the United States without legal documentation. These students tend to be predominantly from low-income families and the first generation to attend college (Jauregui, Slate, and Brown, 2008; Karunanayake and Nauta, 2004). Though research on their schooling experiences is a recent development, scholars have noted that undocumented students encounter serious challenges in their transitions to college. These difficulties include creating trusting relationships with school staff who can play a crucial role in undocumented students' access to post-secondary education (Perez Huber and Malagon, 2007; Perez et. al., 2009), financial barriers that disrupt their continuous enrollment (Abrego and Gonzales, 2010; Terriquez, 2015), and inequitable access to educational opportunities and resources (Perez Huber and Malagon, 2007; Perez et al., 2009). Even when marginalized students find and access supportive educational environments, institutionally structured resources are rare, impact only small numbers of students, and can have limited effects.

Scholars point to public schools' structuring of access to institutional and social support as a key source of the challenges undocumented students encounter. For example, Gonzales (2010) illustrates that schools' tracking practices structure undocumented students' access to information and resources with those high achieving undocumented students in college tracks benefitting the most from the relationships formed with their teachers and classmates who then share critical information on the college-going process. While the resources undocumented students can access at school are critical to their eventual success, Enriquez (2011) documents that gaining access to these structured forms of social capital may not be so simple. Instead, she argues that undocumented students often practice a form of "patchworking," piecing together limited resources from numerous spaces to meet their social and academic needs. However,

"patchworking" may not be the most effective or efficient strategy for addressing undocumented students' needs given their multiple social locations of first-generation college goers, class, race, and immigration status. Finally, in the context of continuously shifting in-state tuition policy contexts, as is the case in California, enactment of multiple legislations may be complicating the college-going steps so drastically that "patchworking" becomes obsolete as a strategy since the timeliness and reliability of the information undocumented students need to acquire is in constant flux.

Critically, even when undocumented students may face similar obstacles in seeking information and resources as their racial/ethnic minority and working-class peers in urban schools, the search for information and guidance is exacerbated by a dialectical relationship between student and school personnel. That is, the search for information and support requires that students disclose their undocumented immigration status to school personnel. The disclosure of their and, potentially, their family's immigration status represents a potential for being perceived or treated differently. This potential of differential treatment due to a stigmatized social status intensifies the anxieties students may feel magnifying the stress intrinsic to an important life transition. Such power imbalance in student and school personnel relationships can discourage Latina/o undocumented students from reaching out to teachers, counselors, and "stafuflty" throughout the process and reflects the layers of marginality—class, race, immigration status, these students confront (Ochoa, 2013). For Latina/o undocumented students, then, having access to information, guidance, and resources within the school is vital to their social mobility given the precarious social standing due to their undocumented immigrant status (Murillo, 2017). Though schools play an essential role in advising students of the resources available to them, many school staff are unaware of policies and resources that support

undocumented immigrant youth (Nienhuser, 2013). Further, recent scholarship points to the limits of policy in enhancing undocumented immigrant students' prospects for social mobility as many of the youth attend segregated, under-resourced, and underperforming schools (Terriquez, 2015; Gonzales et. al., 2015). Finally, little research exists that analyzes how undocumented students' intersecting social identities compound the barriers encountered as they strive to achieve their educational and life goals (an exception is Enriquez, 2016).

Undocumented Students' College-Going via a Critical Race Theory in Education Lens

Critical Race Theory represents an effort to incorporate analyses of race and racism within legal doctrine and discourse, a framework that now is widespread within education. As an offshoot, Critical Race Theory in Education represents a paradigm shift in discourse about race and racism in education and seeks to identify, analyze, and transform the structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom (Lawrence, Matsuda Delgado, and Crenshaw, 1993; Tierney, 1993). This perspective enables us to specify how students' social identities—immigration status, class, race, gender— become salient and intersect to reveal the influence of multiple structural inequalities in shaping undocumented students' journey to college. In employing a Critical Race Theory in Education lens, I focus analytical attention on students' social identities as layers of marginalization that reflect the multiple structural inequalities shaping their inequitable access to and availability of college-going information that addresses their needs.

Scholars seeking to address the intersectional oppressions marginalized youth experience in educational institutions draw our attention to the structural ways in which inequitable schooling persists (Lopez, 2003; Yosso, 2005; Ochoa, 2013). For example, research demonstrates that being a racial minority, low-income, and first-generation college student leads

to lower curriculum tracking making it difficult to access the structural support and institutional knowledge necessary to attend college (Stanton-Salazar, 1997; Conchas, 2006; Ochoa, 2013). This research specifies that inequalities in opportunities and resources within schools reflect institutionalized hierarchies that work to establish inequitable structures which predominantly limit marginalized students' educational and life opportunities (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995; Solorzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001; Jain, Bernal, and Solorzano, 2011). For Latina/o students, researchers demonstrate that access to equitable educational opportunities has been limited by race-based educational inequities such as banning Spanish-language use, school segregation policies, and culturally deficient epistemologies (Solorzano and Yosso, 2000; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Ochoa, 2013). Extensive empirical studies document that Latina/o, male, working-class, and immigrant students often encounter negative educational stereotypes that decrease opportunities for building positive relationships with teachers preventing students from reaching out for support or advice (Kao and Rutherford, 2007; Lopez, 2003). In sum, the types of relationships students have with peers and school personnel determine which students gain knowledge and receive guidance to fulfill their life goals (Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Yamamura, 2010; Perez, 2010; Myers and Myers, 2012).

In the case of undocumented immigrant youth and young adults, scholars have attended to how immigration status and low socioeconomic position operate to increase these youths' financial barriers to higher education (Diaz-Strong et al., 2011; Terriquez, 2015). Studies on the broader experiences of undocumented immigrants demonstrate that immigrant generation and gender mark how undocumented individuals bear the limitations linked to their immigration status (Schmalzbauer, 2009; Abrego, 2014; Gleeson and Gonzales, 2012; Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). This scholarship indicates that undocumented students' journey to

college is likely shaped by the multiple marginalities of students' social locations. I employ a Critical Race Theory in Education lens to assist in clarifying how undocumented immigration status and class intersect with a broader context of shifting state financial aid and immigration policies to impact undocumented students' journey to college.

Methods

This article focuses on undocumented Latina/o high school students' experiences of applying to college within the broader shifting terrain in California financial aid and federal immigration policy. The data is drawn from a larger study that includes five years of school ethnography and interviews with 50 Latina/o high school students, a sample subdivided into equal numbers of U.S. born (25) and undocumented (25) students. Specifically, this article is based on interviews with the subsample of 25 undocumented Latina/o students and five years of school ethnography.

Site and Participants' Demographics. The study takes place at Hill Crest High School (pseudonym), a public urban school in Los Angeles located in a mostly middle to upper income neighborhood. In the 2014-2015 academic year, 56% of Latina/o graduates completed UC/CSU required coursework compared to 76.9% for Asians and 85.3% for Whites (California Department of Education). These percentages illustrate the stark differences in coursework preparation among students, statistics that are more striking as for the same year Latina/o students made up 50% of the campus population while Asian students were 3.4% and Whites composed 16% respectively.

Approximately half of the undocumented immigrant students arrived before the age of six, while 40% arrived between ages 6-8, and 10% arrived between ages 10-13. At the time of data collection, most students were between the ages of 17-18. The undocumented students

interviewed represent 3 cohorts of seniors (academic years 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016) and most either began or completed most of their education in the U.S.

Table 1: Number of undocumented immigrant student by gender, years in the U.S., and national origin.

	Mexican	Central American	Total
Sex			
Male	8	1	9
Female	15	1	16
Years in U.S.			
6-10	7	1	8
10-16	16	1	**17**
Total	23	2	25

Further, the 25 students are quite diverse in their academic experiences across their four years of high school: a few attended continuation programs, others were enrolled in a special education track, and many were enrolled in college track programs. The majority (23/25) come from working-class families. All students expected to pursue a post-secondary education with most preparing to attend a 4-year college institution.

Data Collection. Given the difficulties of recruiting undocumented immigrant students, I conducted snowball sampling employing two strategies: 1) reaching out to students via personal contacts from relationships built through my previous work with students at the school, and 2) presenting a brief description of the study in classrooms and distributing flyers to interested students. Interviews were completed across 4-5 sessions throughout students' senior year of high school for a total of seven hours with each student. Interviews were directed by a semi-structured guide to map each students' educational history, knowledge of college-going requirements, and awareness of immigration legislations that allowed for identifying obstacles and assistive

mechanisms throughout the year-long process of applying to college.

In turn, over a five-year period, I participated in numerous classrooms across the academic subjects (English, science, math, social science, arts) and track levels documenting academic content presented, students/teacher academic discussions, and students/teacher and peer-to-peer verbal/behavioral interactions. I also attended counselor and teacher staff meetings where issues concerning a variety of school problems and achievements were part of the agenda. I was also present during parent/teacher conferences and school assemblies where information on graduation and A-G requirements was discussed These meetings offer insights into the relationships that exist among school personnel which can facilitate or hinder students' access to resources and information. For example, friendships between counselors and teachers can lead to referrals for follow-up conversations with students which can impact students' trust in these individuals, influencing whether they return to staff when in need of guidance concerning educational and personal struggles. School ethnography enabled the documentation of school practices that influenced students' interactions with diverse groups of peers and staff and was used to cross-check the information students provided via interviews.

Data Analysis. I employed deductive and inductive procedures with verbatim interview transcripts that were aided by Dedoose (qualitative data analysis software). Data-driven codes were applied from a grounded-theory approach (Corbin and Strauss 2008) while theory-driven codes emerge deductively. For instance, "knowledge," "confusion," and "frustration" are data-driven codes developed from interviews and daily interactions with students as they navigated through the college-application cycle (August-December) and capture the deep uncertainty and emotional stress/angst students experienced. This revealed two main deviations in students' experiences of college-going that I coded for: the time when stages were initiated and an increase

in the number of steps necessary to successfully complete the process. The patterns in students' interview responses were cross-checked with ethnographic data of interactions in classrooms, college-workshops, assemblies, and with numerous school personnel. Field notes were reviewed and coded according to numerous themes: 1) peer-to-peer interactions, 2) classroom teacher/student verbal and behavioral communication 3) Classroom environment (i.e. classroom decor, seating arrangements, academic content presented, and student or teacher led classroom discussions). I then conducted an analysis of each deviation by noting how students' multiple social locations and changes in policies were influencing when students began engaging in each of the stages as well as the number of steps needed to complete the overall process. Finally, I generated a process-based analysis by going over each case to note patterns in how and when each deviation manifested across the college application timeline—from the point when applications open to when course registration for college courses begins.

    Positionality. As an employee of non-profit organizations working one-on-one with students at the high school, I was part of the school staff for five years and met many of the student participants through this work. In addition, except for age and educational attainment, I demographically resemble many of the students. I am an immigrant Latina who was brought to the U.S. as a child. I also come from a working-class background and am fluently bilingual. These characteristics enabled me to quickly establish rapport with students and their parents. Further, my role as site coordinator and college advisor entailed guiding students in their course choices, referring students to resources like tutoring when needed, and assisting students in the college application process. Given these responsibilities, and my knowledge regarding immigration policies, I was often asked by teachers and counseling staff to conduct presentations in classrooms or workshops after school. Through these presentations, I provided student

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participants with information on the college-going process as well as immigration policies that could affect them. I also referred many of them to immigrant oriented organizations. I took notes on the types and depth of information shared with student participants during workshops and presentations as well as whether and how they made use of information offered. Thus, I actively intervened in the experiences I was documenting. In this sense, the information and referrals I offered represent a quasi-experiment that enabled me to track students' agency throughout the college-going process and the impact of information and support on students' successful completion of the college-going process. A few of the students applied the information and guidance I provided to successfully complete the stages and steps of applying to college and enrolled in post-secondary institutions. Though these students were aided by my support, most students were unable to overcome the multiplicity of structural barriers even with my information and guidance.

Fractured Path to College: A Compressed and Compounded Journey

Nationally, though undocumented immigrant youth are guaranteed access to K-12 education, these students are also aware that their immigration status will entail some challenges in moving on to a post-secondary education (Mangual Figueroa, 2017). Because most undocumented students have few to no resources to support their transition to college (Perez Huber and Malagon, 2007; Gonzales, 2010; Enriquez, 2011; Nelson et al., 2014), it is essential that we examine the role undocumented immigration status plays in these students' experiences of applying to college.

Most of students experienced the journey to college as a process defined by compressed stages and compounded steps rather than laid out across their four years of high school. Students' simultaneously experience the search for information and choice about what college to attend in

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a 10-month period comprising their senior year. The barriers and stressors of applying to college are compounded by having to navigate the added steps and information linked to passage of state financial aid and federal immigration policies. One of the critical ways students' undocumented immigration status looms over their journey to college is having to simultaneously perform a balancing act of two shifting processes: one concerns the complexities of applying to college and the second navigating changes to state financial aid requirements and federal immigration policy. I chronicle, across three cohorts of seniors, how students learn about, make sense of, and use information gathered throughout their journey to college to fulfill their goal of attaining a post-secondary education.

Nothing and Just the Basics: College-Going Knowledge.

All student participants were aware of their undocumented immigration status and had a sense that it would impact their pursuit of a college education, but their anxieties centered on how they would pay for college costs. Thus, the information that most concerned them was finding financial aid sources. As students began creating online college application accounts, in August at the start of senior year, I began asking what specifically they knew about the process—the information needed for applications, documents to submit for in-state tuition, or parents' tax information for financial aid. Most students answered with long pauses followed by "not much" or "the basics of A-G." Evelyn and Zandra's responses capture most students' degree of knowledge regarding the college-going process.

When I asked Evelyn what she knew about applying to college, she shared, "Well I just knew the basics A-G requirements and…I really wanted to go somewhere that's when I kind of started you know having the urge to like do something…I just knew the general information that you know you can't have D's and stuff …" (No HS Diploma/No PSE). Similarly, when I asked

Zandra when she learned about the specifics of applying to college, she explained,

> Well, second semester of 11th grade I was still like 'I have to get my stuff ready cause I saw Maria [older sister] struggle to do the scholarships, the college apps or whatever. I don't want to do it late so I'll start now.' Either way I started earlier but I couldn't quite make it but whatever.

Evelyn and Zandra's experiences que us into the two critical features of undocumented students' college-going knowledge: timing and content. Most students began learning about information for college at end of 11th grade or beginning of 12th grade, with many just aware of basic course requirements and SAT/ACT test yet little to no specifics about how their undocumented immigration status would require they use additional documents and complete added steps in the college-going process. Thus, time at which students sought information and the relevance of information acquired emerged as critical in their experiencing a compressed college-going process.

Most participants were interested in pursuing a college education after high school. Evelyn reflects this by sharing how her desire to "go somewhere" was the impetus for taking the initiative to begin seeking out information for applying to college. Yet, as Evelyn describes, because students only acquired basic information of A-G requirement and this was gathered once college applications opened, students quickly began to feel stressed and anxious about their ability to achieve their educational goals. Their stress and anxiety led to a wavering about pursuing a college education immediately after high school. For many of the students, their desire to attend college became inextricably linked to the confusion of simultaneously searching for information and filling out forms. At times students expressed confident determination despite any obstacles they would encounter, yet a month or two later such determination had wavered to probably or maybe.

Moreover, the intersection of students' working-class positon and their undocumented

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immigration status became salient as they initiated the search for and gathering of information. Because most of the students' parents were immigrant and working-class without any post-secondary education experience, the students I followed depended on the school to provide information about college requirements and guidance throughout the application process. Yet, for these students, the basic information of A-G course requirements and SAT/ACT tests offered by the school was insufficient to support their successful completion of the college-going process as they also had to contend with meeting added requirements associated with their undocumented immigration status. The broader state financial aid and federal immigration policies brought to the forefront students' undocumented immigration status. To access the intended benefits of state aid for college tuition, students not only needed to be aware that such benefits were available, but also had to complete a newly instituted state financial aid application along with an affidavit to confirm their eligibility for in-state tuition. For many of the students, then, their search for information became a nebulous activity as they were unaware of what to look for or what types of questions to ask school staff or peers. Their lack of awareness of the multiple stages and steps of college-going produced an emotionally fraught and volatile journey to college.

Making Sense of Policies: Deciphering Information and Navigating Compounded Steps.

Once students began filling out college applications, they were immediately confronted with needing to make sense of how their undocumented immigration status required their awareness and mastery of state and federal policy changes. Undocumented students now found themselves needing to be informed about the enactment of such shifting policies as well as the process by which to access the intended benefits.

As students worked on completing college applications, I asked them what they knew

about the legislations. Most students' responses were either vague, reflected their confusion, or demonstrated inaccurate understanding of each legislation. For example, Ana, (HS Diploma/Community College), struggles to define the differences between AB 540, the California Dream Act, and Deferred Action, "Uhm, the Dream Act isn't that just money for undocumented students and the AB 540 would be the work permit? I don't know I think it is the same thing as DACA." Most of the students experienced similar difficulties in trying to parcel out the intended benefits associated with each of the legislations, with many confusing either the California Dream Act with Deferred Action or AB 540 with the California Dream Act.

Similarly, Jimena (HS Diploma/ Community College) wavers in her explanation, grappling with how to decipher the differences,

> "It's…okay I get confused between Dreamers…the Dream Act and AB 540 but if I'm not mistaken AB 540 is financial aid for undocumented students…and the Dream Act is uhm... (silence)…okay no it's the other way around, now I remember the Dream Act is financial aid for undocumented students and AB540 is being able to apply to universities as a resident."

Both Ana and Jimena struggle to explain not the benefits of each legislation and the differences between them—Assembly Bill 540, California Dream Act, and Deferred Action. Ana's response in the form of a question seeks a confirmation that the knowledge she's acquired is correct but immediately concedes that she is unsure. Her response demonstrates such insecurity as she equates AB 540 with Deferred Action (DACA) by referencing the benefit of a work permit. Ana's response shows her awareness of the legislations and some of the benefits they afford her (financial aid and a work permit), but is unclear about what benefit is tied to which legislation.

Most students not only struggled to make sense of the policies but, more critically, experienced difficulties connecting information about the legislations to specific steps in the college-going process. Students not only needed to learn that these policies were enacted and

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carried benefits for them, but they also had to understand how the policies directly affected the information required to complete applications and the forms to be submitted. The interactions presented below capture students' attempts at navigating the complications of accessing the benefits of state financial aid policies.

It is close to the end of the school year, mid-April-early May. Students receive emails and letters from colleges notifying them of their admission status and financial aid awards. Today I am facilitating the weekly college and financial aid workshop after school. Today Kenia, Zandra, Rebeca, and Jimena have come. Rebeca and Jimena sit together talking and smiling, notebooks and backpacks on desks. I notice Kenia and Zandra are sitting across the room each with their friends. I walk over to Rebeca and Jimena, they both have their UC campus portals open so I ask, "how are you both doing? Have you submitted the documents on your "To Do List?" Both smile and Jimena responds, "No, not yet. We aren't sure what the AB 540 affidavit is or what to do with it. We were hoping you could help us." I sit next to them, look for the forms on each of their respective university sites, and print the forms out. I hand them the forms and wait for them to begin filling out the form but after a few of minutes they turn to me, sheepishly smiling and say, "uhm Karina, we don't really understand what they're asking here about immigration status. What are we? What do we check?" They are especially confused on how to answer #3 (in sample below) as the statement is written in legal language. I realize that Kenia and Zandra may have the same concerns so I ask them to come over. I ask, "Are you both here to go over the AB 540 affidavit?" They smile and simultaneously respond, "Uhm, yeah we're not sure what that is or how to fill it out." I have them pull some chairs over and we review the information being requested.

[Sample University of California AB 540 Affidavit]

APPLICATION

I, the undersigned, am applying for a University of California Nonresident Tuition Exemption for Eligible California High School Graduates and declare that ALL of the following apply to me (**check only one box for each number 1-3**):

1. ☐ ✡ ☐ ♐ I have attended high school in California for three or more years **-OR-** I have attained the equivalent of three or more years of full-time high school course work in fewer than three years **AND** I have attended a combination of elementary, middle and/or high schools in California for a total of three or more years **AND**

2. ☐ ✡ ☐ ♐ I have graduated from a California high school or have attained the equivalent thereof, such as High School Equivalency Certificate issued by the California State GED Office or Certificate of Proficiency, resulting from the California High School Proficiency Examination **AND**

3. ☐ ✡ ☐ ♐ I am **NOT** a non-immigrant alien. [Non-immigrants, as defined by federal law, have been admitted to the United States temporarily and may have been granted one of the following visas: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, TN, TD, U, V, TROV, and NATO].

Though the AB 540 affidavit only comprises three questions, the consequences of incorrectly filling out the form or failing to submit the affidavit by stipulated deadlines jeopardize students' ability to register for classes and transition to college. It is here that students' working-class position and undocumented immigration status intersect with enacted policy to directly impact their successful transition to college. Because the AB 540 affidavit is used to grant in-state tuition rates, without its timely submission undocumented students are charged double or triple the tuition costs which no state financial aid awards can fully cover. Given their working-class position, such tuition rates meant they would be unable to cover the additional costs and the outstanding fees would prohibit students from registering for courses and realizing their educational goals. The lack of precise, timely information and guidance pertinent to undocumented students' needs created additional burdens which compounded students' journey to college. These students were left to fend for themselves in gathering, making sense of, and using the information of the benefits of newly enacted policies. Finally, the school's hesitation to openly speak about and systematically address the specific college-going needs of undocumented students in effect reproduced the stigma associated with an undocumented immigration status. The unintended consequence of not directly addressing undocumented students' needs meant students remained in the shadows, an ever present but unspoken of population.

We witness students' abandonment in the level of confusion they share regarding the different policies. The confusion expressed by *Kenia, Zandra, Rebeca, and Jimena* exemplify most of the students' experiences in trying to decipher the intended benefits of policies as well as navigate the complications of forms and steps to successfully complete the process. This parallel process of making sense of college-going information as well as policy changes exacerbated

undocumented students' anxieties about pursuing a college education. It is in the process of

learning about and deciphering the information and steps in connecting policy changes to their

journey of applying to college that students encounter potholes, boulders, and dead ends that can

derail their path toward transitioning to college.

Impact of Policies: Identifying Benefits and Completing the Journey

As students were nearing the end of completing the many stages and steps of college-

going, around mid-May of senior year, I began inquiring about how the Dream Act and Deferred

Action (known as DACA) mattered to them, for their educational goals and future life plans. By

the end of their senior year, all students had heard of the California Dream Act and Deferred

Action (DACA). Most (22/25) learned about these policies through Spanish news media or their

mothers relaying bits of information, after having watched Spanish news, of enacted legislations

granting support to undocumented students. All students shared similar responses of feeling a

degree of pressure had been lifted off their shoulders, reactions that exemplify the intersection of

their working-class position with undocumented immigration status.

By this time in the college-going process, mid-May, students had received from their

respective campuses estimates of college costs for their first year of college. Because of their

working-class position, the cost of college attendance was now understood as a truly

insurmountable obstacle if they could not access or be awarded financial aid. Below, Daniela and

Amalia share how learning about the policies, making sense of the intended benefits, and

applying the information mattered as they journeyed through the college-going process. I asked

Daniela (HS Diploma/Community College) about how DACA, AB 540, and DREAM Act

mattered to her and she explained,

> "Uhhhm, they kind of take the weight off I can say cause at least with the DACA I know
> that I'd be able to do more than others who have the same legal status as me and then AB

540 again, me quita otro peso de encima [takes another weight off] because I know that I can pay the same tuition as other college students. uhhhm and the Dream Act another help. So, it's all pretty much financially help and getting the wait off me."

Daniela specifically points to the mental toil of worrying about whether she'd be able to realize her goal of a college education. Daniela's mental stress is palpable in her repetition of the phrase 'take the wait off'. She clearly identifies the benefits from each policy, DACA opens more doors, AB 540 grants her in-state tuition, and the Dream Act provides financial aid. Each represents one less source of stress and anxiety as she completes the final steps of her journey to college. Her response is most notable in that, during our informal conversations throughout her senior year, Daniela spoke about how as the oldest of 4 siblings and the only one undocumented, she considered finding work in the informal labor market and giving up her goal of attaining a college education. She often commented that maybe it would be best is she just got a job and helped her parents with bills so that her younger siblings could focus on school and pursue college, which reveals the deep angst Daniela carried throughout the process of applying to college. Further, she clearly understands the differences between herself and her peers who may not have received DACA in that she now has access to perhaps better paying jobs in the formal labor market. Daniela recognizes the financial obstacle that her undocumented immigration status creates in comparison to "other college students" who do not require a special criterion to qualify for in-state tuition rates. Her explanation of how the policies became significant clearly demonstrate the intersection of Daniela's working-class position with her undocumented immigration status as one policy alone would not have addressed the layers of obstacles undocumented students must overcome. As revealed by numerous empirical studies, neither a work-permit or the Dream Act alone would be sufficient to assist Daniela in covering college tuition even with in-state tuition rates (Diaz-Strong et al., 2011; Martinez, 2014; Enriquez, 2016).

Below, Amalia (HS Diploma/ University of California) identifies concretely the impact of the policies on her ability to pursue a college education. How do you understand AB 540, Dream Act, and Deferred Action and what they would mean for your goals?

"…right now, seeing that it's 59,000 if I was out of state tuition just makes you think 'I'm not going to college cause my parents in no way can afford to pay that'. So, it's definitely affected me in that's the reason I'm going to college. It's just a step closer and it's affecting my life course."

Both Daniela and Amalia speak of the policy benefits in terms of financial support, which has allowed them to breathe a sigh of relief and continue to the steps of enrolling in college. In Amalia's case, her tenacity in researching as much information as she had time for allowed her to decipher the specifics of each policy. Like Daniela, Amalia emphasizes the immediate impact of the Dream Act by pointing to the tuition cost she would be forced to cover if no aid was available. Amalia does not mince words as she points out that pursuing a college education at a four-year institution would have been impossible without the Dream Act. She is also clear about the influence on her "life-course" in that she understands that financial aid allows her to accomplish each of the stages on her way toward becoming a lawyer on par with students who do not have to contend with the anxieties and obstacles that an undocumented immigration status creates. Daniela and Amalia's responses demonstrate how they identify the most significant way the policies impacted their journey to college, their working-class position would not be an impediment to accessing a post-secondary education nor would their undocumented immigration status hinder access to state financial aid support.

Table 1 below illustrates the impact that navigating compressed stages and compounded steps within a 10-month period had on the students. 21 of the 25 students completed college applications, reflecting the broader school's messages that all students should pursue a college education. Though students completed college applications, the complexities of continuous

changes in required documents and a constant state of confusion linked to changing in state

financial aid policies meant many students did not transition on to college or enrolled in

community college. Thus, on closer examination only 8 of the 21 students enrolled in a four-year

post-secondary institution in the Fall. Critically, of the students who completed applications to

four-year schools and enrolled at a campus only 6 persisted after the first year. The barriers

students confront given their immigration status & working-class position render an ever more

fractured path to college.

Table 2: Undocumented immigrant student postsecondary enrollment by gender.

	Female	Male	Total
Total	15	10	25
Completed Admissions Apps.	15	6	21
Completed Financial Aid Forms	13	6	19

	Female	Male	Total
Attend Community College	7	0	7
Attend 4-year University (CSU/UC)	5	3	8

	Female	Male	Total
Persisted in CC	5	0	5
Persisted in 4-year Univ. (CSU/UC)	4	2	6

Conclusion

Previous research on undocumented students' experiences of pursuing a college

education focuses on the barriers they encounter due to lack of knowledge and guidance,

financial difficulties, and challenges of their undocumented immigration status (Abrego, 2006;

Abrego and Gonzales, 2010; Diaz-Strong et al., 2011; Greenman and Hall, 2013). For the most

part, however, these findings draw on recollections of undocumented young adults' struggles

transitioning into and persisting in college. Further, most of the research was conducted before

enactment of state and federal legislations that offer undocumented immigrant youth access to

state financial aid and employment in formal labor market. Using the case of undocumented Latina/o high school students, I contend that contemporary college-going models do not capture the ways students' multiple social locations shape their experience of pursuing a college education. I show how class and undocumented immigration status intersect with shifting state financial aid and federal immigration policies to compress and compound the steps and stages in the college-going process. The findings suggest that conceptualizing students' multiple social locations as factors limits our ability to apprehend how marginalities linked to each social location build on one another to create complex layers of barriers that limit marginalized students' opportunities to achieve their educational and life goals.

My broad findings begin to address Gonzales's (2015) urgings to expand our understanding of undocumented immigrant youth's middle and high school experiences. Over a three-year period, I chronicle undocumented Latina/o high school students' journey to college— what they learn of college-going, how they make sense of information, and how they use information regarding state and federal policies to pursue their educational and life goals. In line with previous scholarship (Enriquez, 2011; Gonzales, 2011; Lauby, 2015), I find that undocumented immigrant Latina/o students encounter multiple barriers in accessing timely and relevant information about college-going and the necessary steps of the process. Drawing on three cohorts of 12th grade undocumented immigrant Latin/o students and five years of school ethnography, I demonstrate that rather than a streamlined and chronological process, undocumented immigrant Latina/o students undergo a compressed and compounded journey to college. This journey is defined by an intense 10-month period wherein students simultaneously navigate various stages and steps of college applications. The struggles and anxieties experienced during these months are compounded by having to decipher information and

additional forms linked to shifting state financial aid and federal immigration policies. Despite enactment of state and federal policies intended to facilitate undocumented immigrant youth's access to a post-secondary education, the barriers confronted due to their undocumented immigration status and working-class position render an ever more fractured path to college.

Heeding calls to examine the ways class status intersects with race or gender to influence college-going choices and actions (Perna, 2006; Enriquez, 2016), I deploy a Critical Race Theory in Education lens and show that the intersection of students' working-class position and undocumented immigration status manifests in their attempt to navigate parallel processes of college-going and shifting state and federal policies. As students' struggle to navigate these parallel processes, the stages of applying to college are compressed while the steps of completing forms are compounded. The compression and compounding of the stages and steps the define the college-going process warp students' experience of time. As other scholars have argued, immigration status affects how individuals experience time such that an uncertain immigration status can suspend time creating a state of permanent transition (Menjivar, 2006) or foreground struggles and limitations linked to undocumented status at different stages in the life course (Enriquez, 2016). I contend that an undocumented immigration status compresses students' experience of time as they attempt to realize their educational goals amidst an important point in the life course, the transition from youth to young adults. This suggests that we need to account for the ways variations in immigrant immigration status alters individual's and community's experience of time. Finally, we must consider time as a central feature of experience that informs our understanding of when and how undocumented immigration status interacts with other social locations to magnify limitations associated with social positions across class, gender, race, and immigrant status.

Given that most undocumented students have few to no resources in transitioning to college, it's essential that we examine the role of high schools in shaping these students' college-going experiences (Nelson et. al., 2004). Scholars note that undocumented students encounter serious challenges in their transitions to college (Perez Huber and Malagon, 2007; Diaz-Strong et. al., 2011; Silver, 2012). Among these challenges are public schools that structure access to institutional and social support as well as academic opportunities so that few undocumented students find the necessary resources to graduate from high school and pursue a post-secondary education (Gonzales, 2010; Enriquez, 2011). In line with these findings, the school's practices of disseminating information assume not only that all students can access outside of school other sources of information and guidance, but also that the information offered is relevant and meets all students' needs. Further, because the school has not been proactive in training its staff to meet undocumented students' needs, many students could not locate the required forms and/or did not know how to decipher what information was being requested. As a result, these students missed deadlines for submitting documents that would ensure access to in-state tuition and state grants and, thus were unable to pursue a college education despite wanting to and being eligible to attend 4-year institutions. Even when states adopt accommodating policies, undocumented immigrant youth are not always able to take advantage of such opportunities (University of California Office of the President, 2008). Currently, the onus of reaping the legislated benefits of state aid and immigration policies has been placed on these students' shoulders.

Though this article features an analysis of students' working-class position and undocumented immigration status, future work should incorporate analysis of intersections across class positions, Latina/o and non-Latina/o undocumented immigrant students, and gender to specify how these intersections unfold and develop over time. Qualitative studies can do this

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by incorporating within-group comparisons into the sampling design to disentangle how other social positions are working. As this article focuses on Latina/o students, future studies should examine non-Latina/o and Latina/o undocumented immigrant youth's experiences across schools to shed light on how school practices intersect with racialized stereotypes and undocumented immigration status to impact their college-going experiences. Further, comparisons to U.S. born and legal residents who share similar socioeconomic, race, and first-generation college student status would aid in clarifying the extent to which immigration status, other social positions, and their intersection transform the process of college-going and impact their life-course.

In all, this article extends our understanding of undocumented immigrant youth's educational trajectories by shedding light on students' experiences of applying to college. By centering students' perspectives on and experiences with newly enacted policies, my findings suggest that state changes in financial aid policies and federal immigration policy in isolation are insufficient to address inequalities linked to immigration status, race, and first-generation status. Policies must also tackle inequalities in school funding, professional training of K-16 educators, and bureaucratic practices that structure inequalities of opportunity. Though previous research has shown that undocumented immigrant youth encounter barriers in accessing a post-secondary education, the findings begin to fill gaps in scholarship by identifying how undocumented immigration status and working-class position complicate students' journey to college. I suggest that conceptualizing students' multiple social locations as factors limits our ability to apprehend how marginalities linked to— class, undocumented immigration status— build on one another to create complex layers of barriers that limit students' opportunities to realize their educational and life goals. I contend that if large numbers of undocumented immigrant youth continue to face barriers in accessing higher education, society will be confronted with a growing number of

marginalized second-class citizens who are unable to support their families or contribute to their communities and country.

ARTICLE 3

"Developing Transformative Space for Student Resistance: Latina/o Students' Interruption of Subtractive Schooling Practices"

Deficit-thinking models like subtractive schooling practices are defined by inequitable school structures that lead to uncaring school environments, inequitable opportunities, and repressive practices (Moll and Ruiz, 2002; Quiroz, 2001; Valenzuela 1999). Scholars demonstrate that Latina/o students' experiences with subtractive schooling practices detrimentally affect their educational attainment (Conchas, 2001; Conchas and Vigil, 2010; Gibson et. al., 2004). Students, though, are not passive beings. Research investigating students' resistance to subtractive schooling practices reveals that their responses comprise negative and positive forms of oppositional behavior (Fine, 1991; Robinson and Ward, 1991; Valenzuela, 1999). Yet, few have examined student resistance that carries the potential for social change.

In the case of Chicana/o students, Solorzano and Bernal (2001) theorize transformational resistance as student behavior that demonstrates not just a critique of social oppression, but also carries a desire for social justice. Thus, transformational resistance presents the greatest possibility for social change. I offer new contributions to this notion of transformational resistance by examining, empirically, how Latina/o students develop and enact transformational resistance to subtractive schooling practices. Specifically, I bridge the idea of claiming rights via difference—from cultural citizenship scholarship—with perspectives that students are possessors of experiential knowledge—central to funds of knowledge frameworks—as a tool for documenting how Latina/o students and teachers co-construct the classroom as a transformative space for resistance. I define transformative space as intellectual and physical arenas that situate students' social backgrounds (race/ethnicity, class, and gender) as essential features of the learning process. Via participant observations in classrooms over a two-year period, I capture the

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contextualized interactions that inform how teachers and Latina/o students co-construct transformative space for student resistance. I document three stages in this process: 1) co-constructing transformative space, 2) cultivating a sense of belonging to the classroom, 3) carving out a legitimate membership to school community. I argue that students' sense of belonging to an academic classroom community composed of Latina/o peers leads to a conception of themselves as legitimate members of their school. Students attend school but they may not necessarily feel as legitimate members of that community. I contend that when students are invested as legitimate members, they build internal resilience that supports their confidence to transform feelings of belonging into actions. Students then take on leadership roles in the larger community of the school through participation in school-wide assemblies where they openly address social injustices. I conclude with a discussion of the significance that transformative spaces can play in schools towards fostering students' awareness of systems of oppression and enacting strategies to affect social change.

Latinas/os and Subtractive Schooling

Valenzuela (1999), in her seminal piece on Mexican origin students' school experiences, identifies how subtractive schooling practices—the de-Mexicanization that promotes a de-identification from the Spanish language, Mexico, and Mexican culture—have a deleterious impact on students' educational outcomes. Teachers perceive and treat students' cultural and linguistic characteristics as deficits thereby hampering these students' academic success. Hence, Valenzuela (1999) challenges cultural deficiency models that blame families and students for their underachievement, demonstrating instead that the historical racialization of those of Mexican descent is inextricably embedded in schooling practices. She demonstrates that the clash between schooling practices and Mexican origin students' upbringing is especially harmful

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to these students who lose their connection to those cultural beliefs and folk world-views that promote emotional and psychological investment in educational success.

Scholars examining students' resistance to subtractive schooling draw our attention to how contradictions and struggles inherent in schools often give rise to opportunities for enacting resistance and social change (Solorzano and Bernal, 2001; Weis, 1990; Willis, 1977). Some students develop resistance strategies—including disengaging from academic instruction, leaving school altogether, or conforming—that often (re)produce the oppressive conditions experienced (Conchas and Vigil, 2010; Yosso and Solorzano, 2006). But, for students who resist subtractive schooling by staying in school, the literature suggests that "transformational mentors" play a critical role in socializing and guiding students to enact their agency via more transformational forms of resistance (Ochoa and Ochoa, 2004; Solorzano, 1998). Yet, Solorzano and Bernal (2001) argue that contemporary literature on student resistance has not provided a model that accurately explains Chicana/o school resistance. They build on student resistance literature through their theoretical construct of *transformational resistance,* which they define as, "...student behavior that illustrates both a critique of her or his oppression and desire for social justice" (Solorzano and Bernal, 2001, p.319). Their construct allows us to examine how students' resistant behavior is political, conscious, collective, and activated by a sense that individual and social change are attainable.

I build from Solorzano and Bernal's (2001) notion of "transformational resistance" by drawing from conceptual frames in c*ultural citizenship* and *funds of knowledge* scholarship to document the day-to- day process by which Latina/o students and their teacher(s) engage in transformational forms of resistance. First, cultural citizenship is conceived of as the right to retain difference, while also maintaining one's right to participate in society (Flores and

Benmayor, 1997). This focus on claims making to social membership via maintaining cultural identity allows for exploring the agency enacted by marginalized communities and the ways communities that have been denied access to dominant forms of power create new rights and practice citizenship. For example, literature on Chicana/o students' post- secondary experiences illustrates that marginality, for students of color, is more than just dealing with domination. Rather, these students reformulate marginality as a space of resistance and source of empowerment (Flores, 2003; Solorzano and Villalpando, 1998). I employ the idea of claims making via a racial/ethnic identity as a means to document how Latina/o students redefine claims to legitimate membership in their school community, thereby establishing the terms under which they become active participants. Second, the funds of knowledge framework is conceptualized as the competence and knowledge students develop through lived experience (Moll et. al., 1992; Gonzalez and Moll, 2002). Scholars contend that working-class students and students of color accumulate experiential knowledge through the cultural values and daily experiences of survival (Andrew and Yee, 2006; Thomson and Hall, 2008). This experiential knowledge matters because it enables students to maintain high aspirations in the face of structural obstacles (Gandara, 1995) and to use essential kinship ties for emotional, moral, and educational lessons (Gutiérrez, 2002).

Scholars propose that teachers who draw on students' experiences and priorities in schooling validate the knowledge and life values students bring to the classroom allowing students to scaffold learning from the familiar (de los Rios and Ochoa 2012; Moll et al., 1992). The affirmation of students' knowledge and life values as critical to the learning process assists students in cultivating a sense of belonging to the classroom that goes beyond feeling engaged with the academic content, identifying with peers/teacher, or being active participants in the classroom (Esteban-Gutart and Moll, 2014; Fredericks et. al., 2004). This article, then,

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contributes to literature on students' resistance to subtractive schooling by presenting the day-to-day work Latina/o students engage in to gain critical reflection, cultivate a sense of belonging to the classroom, and carve out a legitimate membership to school community.

I contend that the work these students perform, in collaboration with their teacher, represents empirical evidence in support of "transformational resistance" strategies (Bernal and Solorzano, 2001). To specify how classroom daily interactions inform Latina/o students' use of strategies for transformational resistance, which represent positive interventions to subtractive schooling practices, I employ cultural citizenship and funds of knowledge frames. Cultural citizenship is manifested as Latina/o students' racial/ethnic identity, which informs their claims making strategies to a legitimate membership to school community. This process is grounded in students' experiences with being racially "othered" within and outside of schools. That is, students' racial identity becomes a filter for making sense of and responding to the classroom curriculum as well as their interactions with school staff/peers. In turn, from funds of knowledge I borrow the notion that students hold school competencies and experiential knowledge as a tool to identify how students cultivate a sense of belonging to their classroom. This article addresses calls to capture and better understand students' engagement in resistance strategies that seek to counteract ineffective educational practices (López, 2003; Solorzano and Bernal, 2001; Solorzano and Solorzano, 1995).

Methods

I use a qualitative research design, participant observations of classrooms and school sponsored events (club meetings, assemblies), along with informal conversations with students over a two-year period (2012-2013 and 2013-2014) to explore how Latina/o students and their teacher(s) enact transformational resistance to subtractive schooling. To ensure the anonymity of

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participants, the school's name and those of all individuals who were observed and are quoted have been changed.

Classroom

The data in this article are based on participant observations in a Mexican American literature course and school events. The course was established in the mid-90s by the now principal of the school while he was one of the few Latina/o teachers at the campus. Following his promotion to principal, the course was taken up by one of the Latina teachers. In the subsequent years, she and the principal collaborated in developing the course syllabus and the content covered throughout the year. Although titled Mexican American literature, the course is more encompassing of the broader Latina/o experience given increasing numbers of Central American students who are part of the school student body. Each year, if enough students enroll, the teacher is offered two periods of the course with each class composed of between 35-45 students. The majority of students in both class periods are Latinas/os with 5-10 students who are African American, White, Asian, or other race/ethnicity. Many of the students choose to take the course as their alternative to the traditional senior English class. I became an active participant observer in both class periods, which over the two years totaled 160-170 students.

Data Analysis

The analysis stage began with the use of open coding techniques, applying conceptual labels on interactions and events that reflected the pattern of interactions between students and the teacher. These labels were then refined into themes that included "establishing trust", "caring and bonding interactions", and "addressing social inequalities." For example, "establishing trust" involved the kind and quality of interactions with peers and teacher that influenced whether students shared in discussions over discrimination and social inequalities. Further, I employed

analytic memos to track emerging thoughts on how students made sense of the course content

and class discussions. I paid particular attention to students' conversations in and outside of the

classroom to assess the evolution of students' perceptions of themselves and their social location

within school. I sought to grasp the process in how sense of belonging to classroom and

legitimate membership to school community shaped the co-construction of the classroom as a

transformative space.

After combining my reflective memos from the field with the analytic codes, I re-

evaluated students' behavioral and verbal responses in the classroom as well as wider school

activities to conceptualize the sequential relationship from co-constructing transformative space,

cultivating a sense of belonging, and carving out membership. It is important to note that the

process I document is not rigid or linear. Rather, the nature of interactions amongst students and

between students and teacher over time involves more flexibility, a feature that is central to the

process I chronicle.

Findings

In the sections below I describe the process by which Latina/o students engage in

transformational resistance to subtractive schooling. First, I present the classroom as the

foundation of relationship building and find that the teacher's modeling of emotional

vulnerability initiates the co-construction of their classroom into transformative space. Then I

detail how students' sense of belonging to the classroom as a community of racial/ethnic

academic peers is cultivated from their experiential knowledge with prejudice. Next, I depict

how students carve out membership to school by redefining legitimate forms of being active

participants. I conclude with a discussion of the significance of developing transformative spaces

in schools for fostering students' awareness of systems of oppression and setting the foundations

for teacher/student collaborations toward enacting strategies for social change.

Co-constructing Transformative Space—Bonding via Vulnerability and Honesty

Co-constructing the classroom as a transformative space is a process defined by the mutual academic and personal risk taking of teacher and students, risk taking that is validated through respecting one another's vulnerabilities when the curriculum content produces emotionally charged responses. Ms. Gonzalez, a Latina in her early 40s, teaches her classes from a Chicana feminist perspective fostering students' critiques of inequalities in the school, the city, and society. At this point in the class (second month of academic year), students have been introduced to events in the Civil Rights and Chicano Movements. Ms. Gonzalez is showing clips of a documentary, "Precious Knowledge," to help students connect youths' past struggles for rights with those of contemporary Latina/o youths' fights for educational freedom. The documentary presents the struggles of Latina/o teachers and students in Tucson, Arizona in their attempts to save ethnic studies classes from being banned.

As we all watch the video, I notice Ms. Gonzalez's expression begin to change, furrowed eyebrows and glossy eyes as though tears are waiting to burst out. The video ends and she reminds students of her origins in Arizona and that her brother actually graduated from the high school featured in the documentary. As she speaks, her voice quivers and breaks. Tears streaming down her face, students instantly respond, "Ms. don't cry" and "Ms. you're making us cry." I look around, some girls are dabbing the corners of their eyes while some of the boys bow their heads. Ms. Gonzalez continues, "I'm getting so emotional because I have friends there who are going through this [fight for ethnic studies] and I can't help them. I just want you guys to understand why I get so emotional because what you will see right now is not history, it is happening now."

The classroom scene above contains a number of features that show Ms. Gonzalez modeling for students that emotional responses are legitimate forms of engaging with academic content. Through her emotional responses, Ms. Gonzalez guides students to be co-creators of the classroom as a transformative space. That is, as a space where students' intellectual and social backgrounds (race/ethnicity, class, and gender) are essential features of the learning process. Her emotional response is transformative on two aspects. First, by emotionally engaging with the visual images of Tucson students' campaigns to defend their Ethnic Studies classes, Ms. Gonzalez is countering the expected objective—often interpreted as unbiased, emotionless— position desired from both teachers and students within a Eurocentric dominant pedagogy. Second, her emotional response also communicates to students an honesty about her investment in the class's academic content and her willingness to openly address the educational inequalities that Latina/o students face. In this space, students are assured that they are in a safe space because Ms. Gonzalez is taking the risk of potential embarrassment. She is demonstrating a trust in her students that they will respect and be supportive of one another in times of vulnerability.

By revealing an emotionally vulnerable state, Ms. Gonzalez establishes her classroom as a place where students can share their personal experiences with each other and her as a type of family bonding. For example, the females' pleading, "Ms. don't cry" while dabbing their eyes reflects an empathy for her pain and their attempts at providing Ms. Gonzalez some comfort. The students begin to create emotional bonds with Ms. Gonzalez, bonds that are built on the trust entailed in honestly sharing personal experiences that may give rise to vulnerable emotional states. The trust and bonds established are the grounds upon which students and teacher co-construct their classroom as a transformative space. In addition to engaging in the construction of a transformative classroom space by bonding emotionally through emotional

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risk-taking and trust, students were willing to openly discuss their own struggles with discrimination and exclusion that led to conversations about belonging.

Cultivating Sense of Belonging—Commonalities in Experiencing Prejudice.

Sense of belonging is mostly understood as an emotional attachment, as an individual's feelings of being "at home" and "safe" (Flores and Benmayor, 1997; Yuval-Davis, 2006). For students, in addition to feeling safe at school and their classrooms, sense of belonging also involves being part of an intellectual community of academically engaged Latina/o peers who share experiences with discrimination.

Ms. Gonzalez designed the course as a combination of literature and history to introduce students to the Mexican American experience and struggles of people of color in the U.S., including African American and indigenous. Students have learned through readings, documentaries, and field-trips about the social and legal struggles Latinos have faced. Today Principal Gomez is lecturing on the evolution of ethnic labels and their significance to developing a notion of a Latino community. Principal Gomez stands at the front of the class, dressed in black slacks, white button-up dress shirt, and tie. He has asked students a number of questions in Socratic method trying to help students make sense of why not all who are of Mexican descent would define themselves as Mexican American. He asks, "Do you feel that the U.S. has accepted you as full-blooded American? What would make you feel that you are not accepted?" 5 to 7 hands quickly shoot up. The principal first calls on a light skinned Latino male student. The student responds, "I was born here but that does not mean that I am accepted. I don't look American, I'm dark skin." I look around the room and see many students nodding their heads. Some students comment with, "Yeah, at the fancy stores, the workers follow us around" and, "People assume because you're dark, you're not from here."

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Questions and comments as those above are key sources of discussions and analysis during class. The students' responses to Mr. Gomez's question draw our attention to two distinct aspects of belonging— physical presence and social acceptance. In terms of physical belonging, the term "US" refers to the territorially bounded nation-state and to this idea the students respond by stating that they belong since they were "born here," referencing the physical boundaries of the nation. Yet, the label "American" is understood by students to reference the White social community. It is to this community that students' personal experiences with prejudice tell them they are not accepted and, thus, they do not define themselves as accepted. The young man's response reflects a keen analysis of the relationship between phenotype and racial categorization that is central to notions about race in the US. Although he is a light skin Mexican American, the young man is clear on the fact that he is not light enough to be treated or accepted as part of the White racial category. We reach this conclusion from his claim, "I don't look American, I'm dark skin," even though phenotypically his skin is light with a pinkish hue.

Further, their comments integrate the idea that belonging to an ethnic/racial community does not necessarily translate into acceptance by or belonging to White or upper-class sectors of society. Yet, it is in this struggle over feelings of belonging to the larger American community, understood as White, that students are learning the skills and tools by which to redefine their own claims to membership. The classroom discussions and schooling experiences initiate students in the practices implicated in establishing their legitimacy to claim membership in and rights to participate in America's social institutions. That is, they come to recognize that being White is not a necessary condition for belonging to American society. The schooling and social experiences, evidenced above, include both learning and becoming active rather passive learners in the classroom. Students learn and practice the skills to claim membership from within a place

where they belong and are invested—their Mexican American literature class.

Carving Out Membership—Re-defining Legitimate Participation in School

The scene below illustrates how students integrate their personal experiences with prejudice and their newly acquired knowledge of Latinas/os' legal and civil rights struggles as a means to redefine being legitimate members of their school. The critical discussions of Mexican Americans' historical and contemporary battles for equality are opportunities for students to apply the lessons from these struggles to their own schooling experiences, shaping how students define themselves as legitimate members of their school community. That is, their connection to Latinas/os' struggles for rights influence students' investment in claiming membership to their school community. These students' claims to legitimate membership to school take a variety of forms, from taking ownership of knowledge production in the classroom to being leaders in school-wide events.

The scene described next illustrates one of the forms that students enact their notion of legitimate membership to school. Today, the annual Latino assembly is being held in the auditorium. It is an all-day event for students taking part in the performances. The Latino assembly has been part of this school's yearly event for more than 15 years now. But, this is the first year that the content of the information, if not the dance performances, has centered on social and civil rights struggles for equality by different ethnic/racial groups (Latinos, African American, Native American, and Asian American) in contemporary American society. Approximately 100 students perform during the assembly. Although most are of Latina/o descent, there are a few African American and Asian American student participants. All the student participants are volunteers, spending months practicing the dances to be performed, writing and rehearsing poetry, and working on the content for the power-point. Students from all

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the small learning communities including the two magnets are attending the assembly: Whites, African Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, and Central Americans. Teachers sign up to take some or all of their classes to see the performances.

The majority of students are attentive, taking pictures or recording on their phones, with a few sleeping or talking with their friends. The theme of this year's assembly is cultural and social revolutions. The presentation includes a power-point of the social revolutions in Mexico, Central and South America, and ending with the U.S. This yearly assembly is an opportunity for students to learn about and celebrate their cultural backgrounds as well as observe their friends participating as members of the racial/ethnic communities they belong to. This venue of a school-wide assembly is a community public space in that the assembly brings together students and teachers from different ethnic/racial groups and social classes.

An hour in length, the first period performance is halfway. Many of Ms. Gonzalez's students participate. Jamie, one of her students, has taken center stage. He is of Mexican descent but is very light skin in complexion. He is performing a poem he has written titled "Colors." The poem speaks to the role that race and racism has played in U.S. society and still plays in students' lives. He addresses the various contexts in which color is still used to judge others. He speaks to how during lunch students segregate themselves by color, how teachers sometimes "only see students' color," and ends with an exhortation "color is just a color." Students, almost in unison, stand from their seats clapping and exclaiming, "Yeah, that's right" and "Preach." Jamie's poem recitation reflects the bonding that has taken place in Ms. Gonzalez's class through honest discussions about racism and systems of oppression like class and patriarchy, as detailed in the sections above. Through his poem, Jamie is illustrating to the rest of his school peers a tool for channeling their personal experiences with discrimination and school inequalities and how

these experiences fit into their broader social location. By addressing racism through the repetition of the word "color," Jamie draws attention to the visibility and constancy of race that is part of some students' school experiences through their encounters with being stereotyped and discriminated. Jamie's participation in this school-wide assembly enables him to engage his peers and school staff in a public conversation about students' schooling experiences. He is publicly redefining legitimate forms of claiming membership to his school community, a membership that does not entail the relinquishing of his racial/ethnic identity in order to be perceived and treated as American.

Further, he is not only engaging in claims making to equal membership in school community, but also attempts to urge the whole school community to reflect on the impact of judging others based on phenotypical markers. The assembly also demonstrates how students, through the bonding relationships with school leaders (teachers/principal) and school peers, forge connections amongst other peers of color to form a broader community. Students' interactions during the preparation process for and participation in this school-wide assembly represent potentialities wherein students are empowered to employ their cultural and working-class experiential knowledge as sources of pride and agency. In taking part in this assembly and seeing their experiences defined as driving forces in contemporary social movements, students can begin to reframe their experiential knowledge as legitimate grounds by which to participate as equal members and citizens of the larger American society.

Conclusion

We have extensive evidence that subtractive schooling practices have been detrimental to Latina/o students' academic experiences and educational outcomes (Conchas, 2001; Conchas and Vigil, 2010; Covarrubias, 2011). Yet, as individuals with agency, students have resisted

subtractive schooling practices in self-defeating or self-protective ways (Valenzuela, 1999; Solorzano and Bernal, 2001; Fine et al., 2004; Taines, 2011). Expanding the body of literature on student resistance, Solorzano and Bernal (2001) present a theoretical framework of Chicana and Chicano school resistance to capture a broader array of students' resistance that carries the potential for social change.

This article presents empirical evidence in support of the conceptual frame of Chicana/o transformational resistance (Solorzano and Bernal, 2001). Based on two-years of participant observations, the researcher documents the process by which Latina/o students' interactions with peers and teachers are the foundation upon which transformative school space is co-constructed. In the day-to-day co-constructions of such transformative spaces, Latina/o students acquire critical reflection that assists in reframing their relationship to schooling. It is the re-framing of their role in the schooling process that presents the potential for interrupting the devastating effects of subtractive schooling practices and often uncaring interactions with school leaders (Valenzuela, 1999). Instead of responding through what have been termed self-defeating or conformist forms of resistance (Fine, 1991; Solorzano and Bernal, 2001), I illustrate that Latina/o students can engage in forms of transformational resistance that are oriented toward social change which is informed by social justice.

The findings corroborate prior research that transformative spaces within schools are critical to fostering positive student resistance (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Robinson and Ward, 1991; Yosso, 2000; Cabrera et. al., 2014). Yet, students' sense of belonging to the classroom and their claims making to membership within the school community represent a new contribution. Within the Mexican American literature class, Latina/o students cultivated a sense of belonging to the classroom through sharing of common experiences with discrimination and poverty. These

experiences represent a different approach to belonging in the classroom, which I contend goes beyond feeling safe and academically engaged (Cooper, 2013; Wigfield and Eccles, 2000). That is, students employ their funds of knowledge (Gonzalez and Moll, 2002; Moll et al., 1992) in the form of experiences with discrimination and profiling in stores to form bonds with one another and with their teacher. This bonding fosters the establishment of solidarities across class, gender, and race/ethnicity (Stepick and Stepick, 2002). Further, students' identities as Latinas and Latinos connects them to a long legacy of activism in social movements informing a conception of themselves as legitimate members of their school. Specifically, they have rights to make claims for more transformational forms of schooling practices. I found that students re-define their legitimate membership to school community by taking on leadership roles via activist-inspired presentations in school-wide assemblies.

Finally, this article details the sustained interactive dialogue through which students engage in strategies for transformational resistance. The transformational feature of the classroom is found in the practice of an engaged pedagogy that includes a critical analysis of power, domination, and knowledge (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1983; Solorzano, 1997). This engaged pedagogy surfaces in the process of *co-constructing transformative space,* which represents an alternative discourse and practice to traditional forms of engaging in learning where teachers and students are socialized to be objective thinkers by maintaining an emotional distance from academic material. This emotional distance often centers on an unwillingness to hold honest conversations about racism, poverty, injustice and the continuum of student reactions to such conversations such as anger, tension, sadness, and hopelessness.

Overall, this study suggests that when co-constructed as a transformative space—an intellectual and physical arena that situates students' social backgrounds (race/ethnicity, class,

and gender) as essential to the learning process—the classroom can be crucial to fostering students' deployment of transformational resistance strategies. Further, this article contributes to our understanding of the potential of schools to be sites of transformational student resistance that can intervene in the damaging effects of subtractive schooling, which reproduce racial inequalities in education. Future work should continue exploring the relationship of sense of belonging and claims making to legitimate membership in students' resistance strategies as well as the difficulties and feasibility of engaging in processes of establishing classrooms as transformative spaces.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this dissertation, I have sought to unpack the relationships between racialization, immigration status, and working-class position in how Latina/o undocumented and U.S. born students' experience incorporation and pursue post-high school paths. Students' experiences reveal the barriers confronted in K-12 schools that produce conflicting

Previous scholarship on undocumented youth and young adults focuses on the limitations that their immigration status puts on their educational experiences (Abrego 2006, 2008; Huber and Malagon 2007; Perez et al. 2009; Abrego and Gonzales 2010; Diaz-Strong et al. 2011; Enriquez 2011, 2014; Flores 2010; Gonzales 2010; Gleeson and Gonzales 2012; Perez 2012; Murillo 2017). Further, much like their documented and citizen peers, undocumented immigrant youth have confronted racialized and classed experiences in high school such as stigmatized identities, minimal support from educators and staff, and lack of safe spaces (Contreras, 2009; Gonzales, 2010; Nienhusser, 2013; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). These early experiences begin to show undocumented immigrant students that working hard and doing well academically are not enough to ensure their full incorporation in school. The preceding articles build on this knowledge by exploring how Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students experience incorporation while in high school and the ways these early struggles within K-12 schools become a training ground for how they learn to navigate and challenge barriers to full incorporation in other social institutions. This critically advances scholarship as the population of U.S. born and undocumented immigrant youth ages and the paradoxical evolution of federal and state immigration policies intensifies.

In the sections to follow, I provide a summary of the answers to my research questions:

1. How does race and immigration status impact Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented

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immigrant students' participation and inclusion in school?

2. How do levels of participation and inclusion affect Latina/o undocumented immigrant working-class students' experiences of applying to college?

3. How does a schooling model that values marginalized youth's social identities shape Latina/o U.S. born students' prospects for full school incorporation?

Ultimately, I argue that racialization in K-12 educational institutions limits Latina/o students', irrespective of immigration status, full incorporation as it contributes to a social exclusion despite their participation in the academic structures. Fundamentally, this exclusionary incorporation sets the foundation for their prospective incorporation in other social institutions.

"STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION: RE-CONCEPTUALIZING INCORPORATION THROUGH LATINA/O STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF RACIALIZATION"

The first research question examines determines how race and immigration status impact Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' participation and inclusion in school. I argue that students' experiences of racialization reveal how structural integration does not ensure full incorporation as they face barriers to social inclusion and being legitimate members of the school. Specifically, their racialization manifests through institutional and interpersonal mechanisms that are interwoven by a racist ideological fusing of whiteness and intelligence. It is through these formal and informal mechanisms that both U.S. born and undocumented immigrant Latina/o students face exclusionary incorporation in school. I show that the benefits of structural integration are dampened by their social exclusion which limits their full membership in school. At the same time, I demonstrate that these experiences represent opportunities for Latina/o students to develop critical frames and deploy counter-narratives to openly challenge

the mechanisms through which they are socially excluded.

Though extensive research has signaled the incorporation struggles that U.S. and undocumented immigrant Latina/o K-12 students confront in schools (Barajas and Ronnkvist 2007; Ochoa 2013; Enriquez 2017), I illustrate that the barrier to full incorporation are produced by contradicting institutional and social mechanism that are the result of persisting racist ideologies and practices. The findings suggest the need for a re-conceptualization of incorporation that captures the centrality of racism and how it informs K-12 students' early experiences of incorporation in schools. I suggest that we think of incorporation as composed of both structural integration and social inclusion. This focus on both structural and social realms allows us to identify the distinctions and relationships between top-down restrictions to participation and inter-personal obstructions to inclusion.

Finally, by centering U.S. born and undocumented immigrant Latina/o students' contemporary experiences of racialization in school, I build on growing scholarship that presents a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of racial antagonism while urging for research agendas that are reflective of communities of colors' collective actions that sit at the intersections of race, class, gender, and immigration status. In documenting Latina/o students' experiences in top academic programs and classes, I highlight the significance of tackling the entrenched relationship of racism in formal and informal school mechanisms that shape inequitable educational experiences and outcomes for students of color such that integrating students in schools and within tracks will not be sufficient to dismantle structural racist practices and their unjust, inequitable consequences.

"FRACTURED PATH: UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT LATINA/O STUDNETS' JOURNEY TO COLLEGE"

The second research question addresses how do levels of participation and inclusion affect Latina/o undocumented immigrant working-class students' experiences of applying to college. I contend that the social exclusion Latina/o undocumented students face influences the fragmentation of paths towards a post-secondary education. Specifically, students experience compression of stages and compounding of steps in college and financial aid application processes. Their social exclusion, due to the racialization Latina/o students faced at Hillcrest, meant that undocumented immigrant students confronted an institutional silence which exacerbated the challenges of a compressed and compounded college-going process. Despite most students being incorporated in the academic structure of the school, the majority of students were unable to reap the benefits of their structural integration.

In line with previous scholarship (Enriquez, 2011; Gonzales, 2011; Lauby, 2015), I find that undocumented Latina/o students encounter multiple barriers in accessing timely and relevant information about college-going and the necessary steps of the process. Further, I demonstrate that rather than a streamlined and chronological process, undocumented Latina/o students undergo a compressed and compounded journey to college. This journey is defined by an intense 10-month period wherein students simultaneously navigate various stages and steps of college applications. The struggles and anxieties experienced during these months are compounded by an institutional silence of the school linked to the racialization Latina/o students confront, forcing them to decipher information and additional forms linked to shifting state financial aid and federal immigration policies on their own. Thus, even when states adopt accommodating policies, I show how undocumented immigrant youth are not always able to take advantage of such opportunities (University of California Office of the President, 2008). Currently, the onus of reaping the legislated benefits of state aid and immigration policies has been placed on these

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students' shoulders.

Scholars note that undocumented immigrant students encounter serious challenges in their transitions to college (Perez Huber and Malagon, 2007; Diaz-Strong et. al., 2011; Silver, 2012). Among these challenges are public schools that structure access to institutional and social support as well as academic opportunities so that few undocumented students find the necessary resources to graduate from high school and pursue a post-secondary education (Gonzales, 2010; Enriquez, 2011). In line with these findings, the school's practices of disseminating information assume not only that all students can access outside of school other sources of information and guidance, but also that the information offered is relevant and meets all students' needs. As a result, these students missed deadlines for submitting documents that would ensure access to in-state tuition and state grants and, thus were unable to pursue a college education despite wanting to and being eligible to attend 4-year institutions.

I extend our understanding of undocumented immigrant youth's educational trajectories by shedding light on students' experiences of applying to college and highlighting their post-high school paths. By centering students' perspectives on and experiences with newly enacted policies, my findings suggest that state changes in financial aid policies and federal immigration policy in isolation are insufficient to address inequalities linked to race, gender, and first-generation college status. Policies also need to improve inequalities in school funding, professional training of K-16 educators, and bureaucratic practices that structure inequalities of opportunity. Though previous research has shown that undocumented immigrant youth encounter barriers in accessing a post-secondary education, the findings begin to fill gaps in scholarship by identifying how immigration status and working-class position complicate students' journey to college and suggest that conceptualizing students' multiple social locations

as factors limits our ability to apprehend how marginalities linked to— class, undocumented immigration status— build on one another to create complex layers of barriers that limit marginalized students' opportunities to realize their educational and life goals. I contend that if large numbers of undocumented immigrant youth continue to find it impossible to gain access to equitable opportunities for pursuing higher education, society will be confronted with a growing number of marginalized second-class citizens who are unable to support their families or contribute to their communities and country.

"DEVELOPING TRANSFORMATIVE SPACE FOR STUDENT RESISTANCE: LATINA/O STUDENTS' INTERRUPTION OF SUBTRACTIVE SCHOOLING"

The final research question examines how a schooling model that values marginalized youth's social identities shape Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' prospects for full school incorporation. I argue that schools have embedded potentialities for enacting practices and establishing mechanisms that can ensure marginalized students full incorporation in school, both structural integration across the academic hierarchies as well as social inclusion within the varied spaces. These potentialities in schools can serve to tackle inequities in school and support students in working to address social injustices that limit marginalized communities' full incorporation in society.

Structural analyses of immigrants' incorporation have predominantly focused on the constraints to or fostering of participation by contexts of reception--societal reception, State policies, and co-ethnic communities (Portes and Zhou 1993). The structural frame leads scholars to focus on participation outcomes such as educational attainment, voting patterns, and employment status to assess incorporation in social institutions (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Bloemraad 2006; Kasinitz et al. 2008; Telles and Ortiz 2008; Feliciano et al. 2011). For U.S.

born and undocumented immigrant youth, the participation patterns do not help us understand the processes that shape their experiences of exclusion nor mechanisms for positive resistance. I find that Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented high school students engage in forms of transformational resistance that challenges their social exclusion and is oriented toward social change. I find Latina/o students and teachers co-construct transformative spaces for inclusion and student resistance. That is, when classrooms are co-constructed as a transformative space—an intellectual and physical arena that situates students' social identities as essential to the learning process—they can be crucial to fostering students' deployment of transformational resistance strategies. These findings corroborate prior research that transformative spaces within schools are critical to fostering positive student resistance (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Robinson and Ward, 1991; Yosso, 2000; Cabrera et. al., 2014). I argue that, through co-constructing transformative spaces in schools, marginalized students can establish legitimate inclusion as members of the school community and affect social change in educational institutions.

Overall, a comparative analysis of Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' experiences of incorporation in high school sheds light on the influence of early barriers to full incorporation in K-12 schools in explaining obstacles to participation and inclusion in other social institutions. Specifically, tackling the centrality of race in Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented immigrant students' school incorporation contributes to developing more comprehensive models for understanding the life chances and processes of integration among immigrants and their children. By identifying the distinctions and relationship between structural integration and social inclusion as central to incorporation, we can determine how Latina/o students, regardless of immigration status, experience exclusionary incorporation in K-12 schools. This dissertation enhances our understanding of how Latina/o U.S. born and

undocumented immigrant students' high school experiences influence their incorporation into other social institutions. Given the current political climate, specifically Trump's order to phase out Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), undocumented immigrant youth and young adults find themselves back in a precarious state amidst a context of fluctuating opportunities and restrictions with much more to lose as many have built families and have professional careers across diverse sectors of the economy. Understanding the role of K-12 schools in defending or exacerbating racist and exclusionary discourse and practices will be critical to addressing marginalized youth's inequalities in accessing opportunities for full incorporation in society.

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