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Power of one: The Journey of an Asian Undocumented Student

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ABSTRACT

POWER OF ONE: THE JOURNEY OF AN ASIAN UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT

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Northern Illinois University, 2024
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While little research has been conducted on Asian undocumented students in higher education, it was the powerful story of an Asian undocumented high school student, Tereza Lee, that inspired Senator Richard Durbin to co-author immigration legislation known as the 2001 DREAM Act. Tereza's story represents an important counter-story to what many perceive as the dominant narrative and a widely-held misconception that issues of undocumented immigrants and undocumented students only affect Latinos. The purpose of this study is to include Tereza's narrative as a solution to the problem of its exclusion in higher education. Asian critical race theory centers the voices and work of Asian Americans in research and is used as a theoretical framework. A qualitative research approach is used with Tereza's narrative embedded in a single case study, and in-depth interviews were conducted with seven individuals who know Tereza. Findings indicated that Tereza's story impacted federal and state legislation, changed educational policies, and raised national awareness about the experiences of undocumented students. This research also discusses unintended consequences, challenges, barriers, and harmful impacts with an overuse of the dreamer narrative and identifies harmful impacts that the DREAM Act language and eligibility requirements have on many undocumented students.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
DE KALB, ILLINOIS

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POWER OF ONE: THE JOURNEY OF AN ASIAN UNDOCUMENTED STUDENT

BY
F. MICHELLE BRINGAS

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Doctoral Director:
LaVerne Gyant

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“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Lao Tzu

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DEDICATION

With loving memories

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Chapter 2 tells the story of Tereza Lee, the undocumented student who was the catalyst for the DREAM Act. She would like to dedicate that chapter to Ann Monaco, an early supporter and mentor.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As of 2019, of the 44.9 million immigrants in the United States, approximately 11 million are undocumented immigrants (Bolter et al., 2021; Esterline & Batlova, 2022). While the majority (two-thirds) of undocumented immigrants came from Mexico and Central America, the next largest number of undocumented immigrants (14%) came from Asia (Bolter et al., 2021; Capps et al., 2020; Bolter et al., 2021; Esterline & Batlova, 2022). Of the undocumented immigrants, it is estimated that more than 427,000 undocumented students in the U.S. are enrolled in higher education in the U.S, including 181,000 DACA-eligible individuals (Higher Education Portal, 2023). Because most media and political attention regarding immigration reform is largely focused on the Latino community, the issues of undocumented students are often construed as strictly a Latino issue (Chan, 2008, 2010), and the stories of Asian undocumented students are rarely heard in the public or political arenas (Chan, 2008, 2010):

Asian undocumented immigrants have traditionally been less visible and vocal than their Hispanic counterparts. Most of the undocumented immigrants who have gone public in the media about their status are Hispanic. In contrast, one rarely sees Asians talking about the issue on television. (Lim, 2013, p. 1)

Therefore, to raise awareness about the narratives, issues, and challenges facing Asian undocumented students, this research focused on the story of Tereza Lee, an undocumented Korean student who inspired Senator Richard Durbin (Durbin, 2011) to write the DREAM Act and impacted the undocumented student movement:

Ten years ago, I was contacted by Ann Monaco, a teacher at the Merit School of Music in Chicago. One of her students – Tereza – was a musical prodigy who had played as a soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. She had been accepted into several of the country’s most prestigious music schools. But several schools rejected her due to her undocumented status. But Tereza had a problem. Her parents had brought her to the United States when she was two, and she was undocumented. We contacted the INS and they told us there was only one option: Tereza would have to leave the U.S. That’s when I began to work on the DREAM Act.

Tereza’s South Korean parents had first immigrated to Brazil, where she was born, fleeing the economic hardships they faced in the aftermath of the Korean War. Tereza started playing the piano when she was seven, and at age 16, she was awarded a full scholarship at the Merit School of Music to study privately at the conservatory. As the first prize winner of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) Youth Concerto Competition, she appeared as a soloist with the CSO, performing Tchaikovsky’s “Piano Concerto No.1.” In Fall 2000, the Director of Merit School, Duffie Adelson, and Tereza’s teacher, Ann Monaco, contacted Senator Richard Durbin about Tereza when they learned that Tereza was having trouble gaining acceptance to colleges because she was undocumented. Inspired by Tereza’s story, Durbin began working on legislation, which became known as the DREAM Act. Tereza was eventually accepted into the Manhattan School of Music, where she graduated and eventually earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree. Her musical achievements recognize her as the winner of the Koch Concerto Competition; winner of the Artists International Competition; and performances at Carnegie Hall, Steinway Hall, Lincoln Center, Barge Music, Harris Theater, and at the Chicago Ravinia Festival. In 2010, Tereza became a proud United States citizen, and now lives with her husband in New York City. She continues to be an outspoken advocate for the DREAM Act, volunteering and speaking at events in New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. Tereza vows to “keep fighting for the DREAM Act until it is the law of the land” (Lee, 2011).

Background Information

Thousands of immigrant students in the United States were brought to the United States as children. It was not their decision to come to this country, but they grew up here pledging allegiance to our flag and singing our national anthem. They are American in their hearts. (Durbin, 2011)

Even though thousands of undocumented students were brought to the U.S at an early age and grew up as Americans, they are “growing up in the shadows” of society due to their parents’ undocumented status (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011, p.1; see also Gonzalez, 2009; Passel, 2003). Of the 11 million undocumented immigrants of all ages living in the United States, approximately 5.5 million children under the age of 18 are living with at least one unauthorized parent (Esterline & Batlova, 2022). Of the children living with unauthorized parents, about 725,000 of them are also unauthorized (Capps et. al., 2020).

It is estimated that 125,000 undocumented students have lived in the U.S at least five years and reach high school graduation age, with 98,000 graduating annually (Zong & Batlova, 2019). However, many undocumented students who graduate from high school college will not go to college due to the to their undocumented status and the barriers they face, namely the high cost of tuition and lack of federal funding. Additionally, undocumented students who would go to college face several challenges, including fear of deportation (Dozier, 1993; Kim, 2012). Advocates for undocumented college-bound students argue that they were brought to the United States as children by their parents and should not be punished (i.e., deported) for their parents' choices. Tereza Lee had such an advocate who reached out to Senator Richard Durbin for help.

After hearing Tereza Lee’s story, Senator Richard Durbin, became an advocate for her as well and initially wrote a CARE Bill designed to support Tereza in her pursuit of college. After hearing more stories like Tereza’s, Durbin became one of the strongest proponents for all

undocumented students in the U.S. and eventually re-wrote the CARE Bill to include all undocumented college-bound students (Barron, 2011). On March 26, 2009, Durbin proposed the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2009, commonly known as the DREAM Act of 2009 (Barron, 2011). DREAM Act of 2009 proposed a pathway to citizenship for thousands of undocumented college-bound students (Gonzalez, 2009; Immigration Policy Center, 2012c). For example, undocumented students who fulfilled the DREAM Act requirements would be able to apply for a legal status within six years, which would allow them to work, join the military, or attend college (Gonzales, 2009). If undocumented college students completed two years toward a four-year degree, graduated from a two-year college, or served in the armed forces for at least two years within a six-year period, they could change their conditional status to a permanent status and be eligible to apply for U.S citizenship (Gonzales, 2009).

Since 2009, several iterations of the DREAM Act have been proposed with the most recent one, DREAM Act 2021, proposed February 4, 2021. However, to date, it has not passed the federal legislature. Although states cannot offer legal status to undocumented students, until the DREAM Act is passed in Congress, many states adopted the spirit of the DREAM Act and now provide various forms of support to undocumented college-bound students (Higher Education Immigration Portal, 2023). For example, the state of Illinois is one of the top beneficiaries of the DREAM Act in that approximately 95,000 students, or 4% of all potential DREAM beneficiaries in the country, live in Illinois (National Immigration Law Center, 2010). The Immigration Policy Center (2012a) indicates that the number of Asian immigrants who might benefit from the Illinois DREAM Act is potentially 3,958. Therefore, the State of Illinois has been progressive in its efforts to support undocumented college students and was one of the

first in the country to pass state legislation called the Illinois DREAM Act. The Illinois DREAM Act provides scholarship funds for undocumented students, and since 2003, Illinois law has allowed undocumented students to receive in-state tuition rates. Illinois has made great strides in adapting the college application process to better serve undocumented students (Northern Illinois University [NIU], 2013). Similarly, many other states also allow undocumented students to attend college and pay in-state tuition rather than pay the international rate for tuition (Immigration Policy Center, 2012c). Colleges and universities are also adopting undocumented student-friendly policies, procedures, manuals, guidebooks, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) training, campus resources, web pages, funding sources, and institutional statements to advocate for and support undocumented students (NIU, 2013).

DACA was enacted through the executive powers of President Obama. On June 15, 2012, President Obama announced that certain immigrants who arrived in the United States as children and who met various criteria could request temporary relief from deportation through a DACA application (Immigration Policy Center, 2012b). More specifically, according to U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services (2023), individuals who meet the following criteria can apply for DACA:

- are under 31 years of age as of June 15, 2012
- came to the U.S. while under the age of 16
- have continuously lived in the U.S. from June 15, 2007, to the present
- entered the U.S. without inspection before June 15, 2012, or whose lawful immigration status expired as of June 15, 2012

- were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making the request for consideration of deferred action with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
- are currently in school, have graduated from high school, have obtained a GED, or have been honorably discharged from the Coast Guard or armed forces
- have not been convicted of a felony offense, a significant misdemeanor, or more than three misdemeanors and do not pose a threat to national security or public safety

DACA is not a permanent solution and does not provide a pathway to citizenship or legal resident status. If granted, DACA is only valid for two years, but it may be renewed at the end of the two years. The cost to apply for DACA is \$465. Individuals who receive deferred action may also apply for and obtain employment authorization (Immigrants Rising, 2022).

Purpose of the Study

A plethora of literature and research focuses on the issues, concerns, and lived-experiences of Latino undocumented college students. Diaz-Strong and Meiners (2007) focused their study on the experiences of undocumented Latina/o students in Chicago's colleges and universities and their successes despite institutional policy barriers. Perez et al. (2009) studied the academic resilience of Latino undocumented students. Munsch (2011) studied why undocumented Latino students chose to pursue higher education and interviewed students at a large community college in the Northeast region of the United States. Noyola (2012) focused her study on the lived experiences of five undocumented Hispanic students at a two-year college in East Texas. Burman (2013) focused her study on eight Latino students and their experiences leading up to their enrollment in California state universities. Chen (2013) studied the role of

student activism of undocumented students at one California public research university. Of the 21 undocumented students, 15 were of Latino descent, and only six were of Asian descent. Chen (2013) even indicated that the undocumented Asian students she interviewed were “less involved with DREAMERS” at the time of the study (p. 58).

Gildersleeve et al. (2010) indicate that a majority of undocumented students receiving DACA are of Latino descent with 648,430 (94%) coming from Latin American countries, 18,940 (3%) from Asia, followed by the Caribbean (835), Europe (5190) and Africa (4240). After the Latino population, Asians are the second largest population of undocumented immigrants (12-13%), which totaled slightly more than 1.4 million – a 63% increase from 1990-2000 (Gonzalez, 2009). It is estimated that 8% of the potential undocumented student applicants are from Asian countries (Cheng, 2012; Immigration Policy Center, 2012a). The demographic profile of immigrants who might benefit from the Obama Administration’s Deferred Action Initiative indicates that 3,958 potential undocumented student beneficiaries in Illinois were Asian students (Immigration Policy Center, 2012a). Therefore, Chan (2008, 2010) argues that the issues, concerns, challenges, and barriers for undocumented students are not just a Latino issue.

While the Latino community has a number of high-profile, openly undocumented spokespeople, young Asian immigrants who call America home are struggling with few resources and fewer role models. (Lim, 2013)

Although minimal research has been conducted on the issues, concerns, and lived experiences of Asian undocumented students in higher education, it was the powerful story of an Asian undocumented high school student that inspired Senator Richard Durbin to author the immigration legislation known as the DREAM Act. However, few educators or activists know Tereza Lee and/or her contributions to the DREAM Act legislation, and as a result, her story has been excluded from higher education research and dialogue in regard to this significant piece of

legislation supporting undocumented college-bound students. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to

1. Focus on the experience of Tereza Lee, an undocumented Asian American student whose significant story introduced new immigration legislation that could impact thousands of undocumented students
2. Break the silence in higher education about Asian undocumented students by providing a significant story that, thus far, has been largely excluded from the educational dialogue about undocumented college students
3. Highlight the impact of Tereza's story on the undocumented student movement
4. Provide insight for higher education as an advocate for Asian undocumented students (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010)

Statement of the Problem

Museus and Chang (2009) note the lack of research and exclusion of Asian Americans in issues and discourse in higher education. They identify at least four barriers that contribute to this exclusion. First, the burden of the model minority myth suggests that all Asian have achieved universal success and therefore minimizes the importance of including Asian Americans in the research; second, justifying research on Asian Americans has been problematic in that the idea exists that "Asian Americans do not require attention" or that "research on Asian American is too narrow" (p. 97); third, many funding resources do not include Asian Americans as an "underrepresented racial/ethnic population" and thus monetary resources are not allocated for research (p. 99); and, fourth, a lack of knowledge base makes it difficult for researchers to build on existing research devoted to Asian Americans.

For example, much of the research in higher education concerning undocumented college students focuses on Latinos because the majority of undocumented students are of Latino descent (Chan 2008; Gonzalez, 2009; Mandell, 2009). Due to the media attention regarding the current immigration reform being largely focused on the Latino community, the stories of Asian undocumented students, or UndocuAsians, are rarely heard in the public/political arena (Chan, 2008, 2010). Therefore, in addition to experiencing the issues, concerns, and pressures common to undocumented students, Asian undocumented students also deal with an added layer of invisibility, “undocumented Asian Americans are an invisible population of students” (Mandell, 2009, p. 1; see also Chan 2008; Gonzalez, 2009;). Consequently, in higher education discourse and research, Asian undocumented students also remain hidden and are silenced as it relates to the immigration movement (Chan 2008, 2010).

Gonzalez (2009) and Chan (2010) suggest that one reason Asian undocumented students may be overlooked is, in part, due to the stereotype that Asians are perceived as the model minority. Chan (2010) and Cheng (2012) suggest the model minority myth contributes to the collective silence from the Asian population and keeps Asian undocumented students from freely voicing their concerns. The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (2012) suggests that the invisibility of Asian undocumented students is due to the cultural shame and stigma: “we don’t put our dirty laundry in the open...we love saving face, and don’t want to embarrass our families” (Cheng, 2012, p. 1). Further, Asian undocumented students feel their families place a great deal of pressure on them to both enforce and reinforce the secrecy about their undocumented status for fear of deportation (Chan 2010; Gonzalez, 2009). Thus, they feel marginalized within the immigration movement, so much so, that they refer to themselves as the “silent DREAMers” (Lim, 2013, p.1). Chang (1993) acknowledges that Asian Americans can

“either conform to the dominant objective mode of discourse or continue telling their stories” (Chang, 1999, p. 63). To create space for Asian Americans in the academy, Chang (1993) advocates using the very narratives of those who are excluded in majority discourse as a solution to the problem of exclusion. Thus, the story of Tereza Lee, a Korean undocumented college-bound student, must be told.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study drew from critical race theory, specifically Asian critical race theory.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory was born out of the critical legal studies movement in the 1970s fathered by Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman (Delgado, 1995). At the time, Bell and Freeman found that traditional civil rights strategies and processes were too slow and not as effective for racial reform as they once were in the 1960s (Delgado as cited in Ladson-Billings, 2010 p. xxii; see also Liu, 2009). As legal scholars, Bell and Freeman found that American law was primarily shaped by white dominant thought, ideology, and perspectives, leaving out the perspectives of people of color (Delgado, 1995). To address this issue, critical legal studies combatted racism in the law and legal proceedings by using the untold stories of people of color to counter majority narratives that had defined commonly held beliefs which shaped the law (Delgado, 1995). Thus, rather than privileging dominant white standards, perspectives, and narratives, critical race theory privileges the narratives and perspectives of people of color (Liu, 2009). Critical race theory utilizes counter-narratives to not only challenge the majority view, but also to oppose the

dominant views, stereotypes, and exclusionary perspectives (Liu, 2009). According to Matsuda (1991), to eliminate racism “and all forms of subordination” (p. 1331), critical race theory examines how racism plays a role in the practice and making of American law.

Limitations of Critical Legal Studies and Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory has limitations in that while critical race theory made the “powerful claim that race matters,” it did not show “how different races matter differently” (Chang, 1999, p. 46). For example, critical legal scholars recognized that traditional civil rights work was usually binary in nature – dealing primarily with black and white racial issues – and did not include other races and minorities (Chang, 1993). Chang (1993) maintained that “the exclusion of Asian Americans from the political and legal processes has led to an impoverished notion of politics and law that furthers the oppression of Asian Americans” (p. 1250). As a result, additional critical race theories have evolved to address other minoritized groups such as Latinas/os (LatCrit), Native American Indians (Tribal Crit), LGBT population (Queer Crit), and Asian Americans (AsianCrit) (Chang, 1993; Liu, 2009; Museus & Iftikar, 2013). Asian critical race theory served as the foundation for this research, as explained in the following section.

Need for an Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit)

Chang (1993) argued that traditional civil rights work neglected to include issues and voices of Asian Americans. Chang also contended that the exclusion of Asian American history and perspectives resulted in a lack of understanding of the racial discrimination among Asian Americans in the U.S. Chang’s seminal work, *Toward an Asian American Legal Scholarship: Critical Race Theory, Post-Structuralism, and Narrative Space*, points out the limits of the

binary racial paradigm and argues that an Asian Legal Studies, or AsianCrit is needed. Chang recognized how Asian Americans suffered discrimination as did other minoritized groups, but also noted how Asian Americans face discrimination both “quantitatively and qualitatively different from that suffered by other disempowered groups” (p. 1247). Chang argued that to eliminate oppression, Asian Americans must speak the oppression into existence. However, Chang also recognized that speaking oppression of Asian Americans into existence may be met with varying responses, including resistance. Chang offered three stages in which the responses can be understood, although the stages do not necessarily suggest a succession of order or progression. Stage one is defined as denial of difference. In this stage assimilation is the preferred solution to discrimination. For example, Sakamoto’s 1928 newspaper, the *Japanese American Courier*, discouraged Japanese from protesting as a way to fight discrimination (Marzano, 2013). Instead, he encouraged Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans) to Americanize as a way to win acceptance. Chang (1993) and Takaki (1998) also refer to the 1929 *Japanese American Courier* that encouraged Nisei to become “one hundred percent Americans.” Stage two is marked by affirmation of difference, acknowledging differences among Asian American and ways in which the dominant group or systems fail to account for these differences. This stage recognizes that “formal equality cannot give us what it promises” (Chang, 1993, p. 1318). An anti-assimilation attitude and stance is recognizable in stage two. Stage three is defined through liberation from difference, that is the freedom from categorical identities and the limits attached to it. In this stage, one finds the freedom to define and embrace one’s own identity rather than have identity “thrust upon us from the outside” (p. 1321).

In the face of opposition or institutional disapproval, marginalized individuals “can either conform to the dominant objective mode of discourse or continue telling their stories” (Chang,

1999, p. 63). Thus, Chang (1993) argues that “one of the tasks of an Asian American Legal Scholarship is to break the silence that surrounds our oppression” (p. 1267). To break this silence and create space, Chang (1993) advocated that using the very narratives of those who are excluded in majority discourse serves as a solution to the very problem of exclusion. Because Chang (1993) found that the legal discourse on race and law excluded the perspectives of Asian Americans, he advanced the framework and tenets for an AsianCrit Theory. Chang (1993) found issues of nativistic racism, violence, and the model minority myth absent from the legal scholarship.

Even though critical race theory emerged within the discipline of law, it has been adopted by and applied to other disciplines as well, including education and educational research (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Liu, 2009). In education, critical race theory is defined as

a framework or set of basic insights, perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom. (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 25)

In other words, when the framework of critical race theory is applied to education, scholars are able to dismantle how seemingly “neutral higher education policies and practices can lead to the oppression of people color” (Museus & Iftikar, 2013, p. 21).

Scholars apply critical race theory to higher education to “challenge color blindness and analyze the ways that race and racism function to oppress people of color in post-secondary education systems” (Museus & Iftikar, 2013, p. 20). Museus and Iftikar (2013) suggest that Asianization is the validity that racism is interwoven into the fabric of American psyche and U.S. society has racialized Asians differently than other minoritized groups (see also Chang, 1993). For example, Asians and Asian Americans have been subjected to unique forms of exclusion and

oppression and racialized as the favored immigrants, yellow peril, perpetual foreigner, or model minority (Chang 1993; Museus & Iftikar, 2013). Transnational contexts have historically shaped the laws, policies, and experiences of Asians in the U.S. Re-constructive history, similar to revisionist history, accentuates the significance of re-analyzing history to expose racism.

AsianCrit reconstructive history extends further to a) exemplify the historical and explicit exclusion of Asians in the U.S.; rise above the invisibility and silence surrounding Asian history and racism; construct a collective narrative that includes the voices and contributions of Asian American in the U.S. (Museus & Iftikar, 2013); and utilize learned insight regarding the present to inform the future for Asian Americans. It is important to note that although Asians are racialized differently throughout U.S. history, there can be commonalities in the struggle of oppression when understanding stories of other minoritized groups (Chang, 1993; Museus & Iftikar, 2013). Strategic (anti)essentialism, like CRT, acknowledges the ways dominant groups oppress, racialize, and categorize Asian Americans; however, AsianCrit also highlights the accomplishments, contributions, and resistive efforts of Asian Americans who impact oppressive hegemonic practices, policies, and law (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). Intersectionality in AsianCrit, similar to CRT's basic tenet, supports the view that various systems of oppression (racism, sexism, ableism, etc.) shape the lived experiences and conditions for of Asian Americans (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). It recognizes that all forms of oppression are harmful and reinforces that no single form of oppression is more harmful than another (Museus & Iftikar, 2013).

Counter stories are critical for analyzing Asian American experiences, advocating on behalf of Asian Americans; and informing theory and practice (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). In addition, AsianCrit recognizes the pervasiveness of imperialism in academia where voices of people of

color have been marginalized. Therefore, AsianCrit focuses its attention on the unique voice and experiences of Asian Americans.

The intersectionality tenet of AsianCrit is relevant, as this study explored the intersection of Tereza Lee's identities (female, Korean, immigrant, religious life, life as an American) and how they impacted her experiences as an undocumented student. Chang (1993) advocates that using the very narratives of those who are excluded in majority discourse serves as a solution to the very problem of exclusion. By examining Tereza's narrative, which has largely been untold and unheard of in higher education research, this study sought to embrace Chang's (1993) idea for an Asian American moment and to gain insight about her contributions to the undocumented student movement.

Researcher's Interest

Background with Student Activism and Working with Asian American College Students

This section details key aspects of my professional background that have led to my experiences working with Asian American students and nearly 24 years of service advocating on their behalf. I share this piece of my own story to convey how my professional trajectory and personal journey also ultimately led me to this research topic.

I joined the NIU community as a professional in 1992 and served as Program Coordinator for University Resources for Latinos (URL) until 1994. Through this position, I gained new knowledge and skills about navigating a university environment and witnessing student activism on a college campus. In this position, I coordinated cultural programming efforts for the department, implemented a peer mentor program, conducted outreach to Latino-centered student

organizations, supported Latino students, and provided advisory support to several Latino-interest student organizations such as Alpha Psi Lambda, El Pueblo Unido, Organization of Latin American Students, Sigma Lambda Beta, Sigma Lambda Gamma, and Zeta Sigma Chi. During this time, Latino student activism ran high, and Latino students began a movement to express their concerns for better services and resources, including a new facility. This was my first experience of being involved with student activists and witnessing student activism through a professional capacity on a college campus. Led by El Pueblo Unido, Latino students strategized and mobilized the campus regarding their concerns. They began conducting sit-ins and held campus protests to gain visibility. They amplified their collective voices through many avenues such as organizing with several student organizations; submitting stories in the campus newspaper; raising awareness with faculty, staff and administrators; and bringing their concerns to the student's governing body, which was the Student Association and Student Senate. Key student organizers became student senators at NIU, one of whom also became NIU's student trustee.

In 1994, I began a new role on campus as Program Coordinator for University Programming and Activities and served in this new role until 2005. The position with UP&A came with greater responsibilities that not only enhanced the existing relationships I had developed with students, student organizations, and colleagues through my previous role, it also introduced me to a wider and much more diverse circle of students, faculty, and staff that went well beyond my previous experience at NIU. One of my main responsibilities as Program Coordinator for UP&A included serving as one of two staff advisors to the Student Association and Senate, which introduced me to a close-up view of NIU's shared governance in action. My work with the student government encompassed working with 10 executive positions (president,

vice president, treasurer, deputy treasurer, election commissioner, senate speaker, deputy speaker of the senate, chief of staff, senate clerk, and NIU's student trustee) and 11 student directors overseeing areas of academic affairs, athletics, community affairs, cultural affairs, governmental affairs, Greek Affairs, organizational development, public affairs, recycling, student life, and transportation. Additionally, my work with the Senate included advising 30 senators who represented student body concerns as well as attending weekly attendance at Senate meetings. The Senate's main responsibilities were to review and verify all Executive Branch actions and confirm any new appointments to both the Senate and the Executive Branch. Senators also approved up to \$1.2 million dollars in student fees, provided NIU recognition for over 300 student organizations, held annual elections, and developed formal resolutions to address key student concerns needing additional institutional support, awareness, and/or change. I served as an advisory liaison across the Senate body, students, and student organizations requesting recognition, seeking funding, and/or advocating for students' issues and concerns.

Also, due to student fee funds that were allocated to specific administrative units, I also worked closely with Campus Recreation Services, Student Legal Assistance, and Campus Activities Board, among others. When needed, I also worked with NIU's student-run Supreme Court. Immediately following every Senate meeting, I was responsible for communicating a summary of the meeting to the Director of UP&A and the Vice President of Student Affairs. These reports included a summary of any funding decisions, student organizational recognitions, constituent presentations delivered to the Senate, and any other concerns or issues presented by the student body or senators. Since this position encompassed working with the entire student body and since key Latino student leaders were also senators and held leadership positions in the Student Association, I was able to continue my advisory support for their activism efforts toward

better resources and a new facility. The activism and efforts on behalf of the URL staff and Latino students for a new center continued until 1997 when it was decided to demolish the existing facility and build a new one in its place. At the same time, the student body elected a well-established Asian American student leader to the position of Student Association President, who was also the president of Alpha Phi Gamma, an Asian interest but not Asian exclusive, sorority.

Another significant and meaningful part of my job was to develop service opportunities for students and link them to volunteer needs in the DeKalb and Sycamore area. A special focus involved creating campus-wide service initiatives and mobilizing large-scale efforts for the entire campus to participate in Make a Difference Day. An outgrowth of these responsibilities led me to take a two-summer sabbatical that focused on developing service-learning programs campus activities offices. Upon completion of my sabbatical research and report, my hope was to take an active role in expanding and developing such services through my current position within UP&A.

In addition, to advising the student government and developing service opportunities, it was through the responsibilities at UP&A that I chaired the campus-wide Unity in Diversity Steering Committee (UIDSC). This committee met regularly and, among other things, was responsible for co-programming and promoting diverse events on campus and for communicating concerns relating to diversity equity and inclusion to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The UIDSC was comprised of 15 to 20 individuals representing a wide range of diverse student organizations and administrative units, including ethnic cultural centers such as the Center for Black Studies and Latino Resource Center. Absent a cultural center for Asian Americans, I began working directly with students, student organizations, faculty members, and

faculty advisors who were actively advocating for and providing programs and services for Asian American students at NIU. As a result, I became more involved with the Asian-interest student organizations such as Asian American Association and Philippine Student Association. Through this work, members of Alpha Phi Gamma Sorority also asked me to serve as their faculty advisor. Additionally, I began attending a faculty-led group that had been meeting informally for a number of years to discuss issues of inclusion for Asian American faculty and students at NIU. Concerns regarding the lack of resources, services, programs, and support for the fast-growing population of Asian American students at NIU began to emerge and was brought to the attention of upper administrators, particularly the person serving in the capacity of the Interim Associate Provost at the time.

In 2000, the Interim Associate Provost partnered with the Vice Provost for Student Affairs to convene a Presidential Task Force on Asian Americans (PTAA) to address the emerging student concerns and to gather student focus group data to further ascertain the needs of Asian American students. The task force was comprised of faculty, staff, and students. In my capacity as Program Coordinator of UP&A and due to the wide range of Asian American student leaders and Asian-interest student organizations with whom I was currently working, I was asked to serve as a member of the task force. In addition, students serving in leadership roles of AAPI student organizations were asked to assist with student focus groups as well.

In Fall 2000, as PTAA was gathering student input, student leaders were actively engaging in advocating for more resources on campus for Asian Americans. They held sit-ins, town hall meetings, and wrote letters to the campus newspaper. Some students even held a hunger strike. By Spring 2001, a compilation of the needs expressed during student focus groups was submitted in a report to the university president at the time. The report included

recommendations to diversify existing NIU staffing structures in service units to represent the AAPI student population, provide more diverse dining options relevant to Asian Americans, develop programs and resources designed to support Asian American student more fully. It was perceived by the president that “Asian American students found great support in their individual cultural organizations but lacked a unifying presence on campus” (Northern Illinois University, 2020). After reading the report and talking directly with many of Asian American students, faculty and staff, the president formally requested at his 2001 State of the University Address that the PTAA conduct a feasibility study for the possible establishment of an Asian American Cultural Center:

Just as we have seen the power of these support units for our African-American and Latino students, so should we expect to find a greatly-increased sense of satisfaction and well-being among our Asian student population with similar support and attention. (Peters, 2000)

Pursuant to the president’s request, PTAA re-convened and began a feasibility study for an Asian American Cultural Center. Two sub-committees were developed to attend to the recommendations and concerns from the first report. The first subcommittee was charged with focusing on the academic needs for Asian Americans (i.e., Asian American Studies Program) co-chaired by self-identified Asian American faculty who had brought the initial concerns forward. The second subcommittee was charged with focusing on the support resources and programmatic needs of Asian American students (i.e., Asian American Resource Program) co-chaired by the Vice Provost for Student Affairs. Because of my experience and background with the LRC and UP&A, I was invited to co-chair this committee as well. Based on the focus group feedback gained by students, members of PTAA also began developing programs and services designed to meet the needs of AAPI community at NIU. For example, a first-ever Asian American Welcome

Night was offered in the fall to welcome new and returning students to NIU, a reception for Asian American faculty and students was offered, and cultural programs during AAPI Heritage Month were developed.

For nearly a year, PTAA drafted the feasibility report describing a Concept Proposal for an Asian American Cultural Center. The committee conducted benchmark research, gained additional information from NIU's AAPI students, and invited area colleagues from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Chicago to NIU for consultation regarding the institutional processes they were addressing on their campuses to create more resources and programs for AAPI students, including Asian American Resource Centers. The concept proposal for an Asian American Cultural Center at NIU described a strategy to include four related units housed under one roof. These units would work synergistically and collaboratively while having separate reporting lines. Two of the four units were well-established at NIU and had already achieved national and international recognition: Center for Southeast Asian Studies and Center for Burma Studies. The two new units being proposed were an Asian American Studies Program and Support Services for Asian Americans. The report included recommendations for specific programs and services that would be offered by each respective unit, recommendations for office and square footage in the proposed units, and recommendations to identify and hire staff to coordinate the development of these proposed services. The Vice Provost for Student Affairs asked me to take a lead role in developing and writing much of the language for the sub-committee that he and I co-chaired.

By March 2002, the PTAA completed the feasibility study and submitted the Concept Proposal for an Asian American Cultural Center to NIU's president for his approval and response. In a tight budget year, members of PTAA awaited the next steps. A few weeks later,

the Vice Provost for Student Affairs called me and asked if I could meet him in his office on a Friday at 3:00 p.m. Of course I agreed, but since the Task Force work was completed and my term with the Task Force ended, I was uncertain why the Vice Provost would call me in for a meeting, especially since the meeting was scheduled for a Friday at 3:00 p.m. The only meetings I had ever heard of that were scheduled on Fridays at 3:00 p.m. were usually of a nature that made me nervous. The Vice Provost for Student Affairs started the meeting by thanking me for my efforts on the task force and work as Program Coordinator for UP&A. Then he proceeded to ask me two questions: 1) What are your future professional goals and aspirations and 2) Have you ever considered pursuing a Master's in Higher Education. In my mind I was thinking that he had read the Service-Learning report I had recently submitted to him at the completion of my two-summer sabbatical. Service-learning programs were on the rise at that time and were being established at several universities, so to answer the first question, I was excited to have the opportunity to share with him that my vision and dream were to help develop a service-learning program at NIU or elsewhere. He listened quietly without responding. To answer the second question, until then, I had not considered pursuing a Master's in Higher Education. I anticipated that the conversation to follow was going to be about establishing a service-learning program, and there was no way I could have anticipated what happened next. Below is a summary of our conversation:

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: Well, I have some good news and wanted to let you know that President Peters read the report and wants to move forward with some of the recommendations listed on the PTAA report for an Asian American Cultural Center.

Michelle: This is great news! (I was thinking this is just a prelude to discussing service-learning)

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: Even with the budget situation being as it is, we want to move forward with developing support resources and programs for Asian American students.

Michelle: That's wonderful news (next up, start-up funds for service learning)

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: Also, funds were approved to hire a part-time staff member right away, a 10-hour graduate assistant, and start-up costs to develop initial programs and services for Asian American students.

Michelle: That's a great start and sounds promising, especially in this budget crisis (If there are start-up funds for this, then maybe start-up funds for service learning were also approved).

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: Well Michelle, we would like to ask you to start up this initiative part-time and replace of some of your current duties to do so.

Michelle: What? (What about service-learning initiatives? Can you share what direction is the division heading?)

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: With the budget crisis we think we can implement some of the recommendations right away if we can incorporate this into an existing position and we would like to ask if you will consider taking on this new initiative.

Michelle: Well, I'm not quite comfortable telling you "no," but it was not what I had in mind and it was not where I saw myself progressing in higher education. Service-learning is my focus. Also, I think PTAA should do a national search to find the right person. Although part of my background is Filipino, I was not brought up in an Asian-focused household. An Asian identity was not incorporated into my upbringing, and I do not feel I have the lived experience like many of our Asian American students seem to have. I really think PTAA should do a national search and I would be happy to serve as a search committee member.

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: (kind and patient) Well, we've talked about it and we feel we have already conducted our search. We think you would be the best person for the job.

Michelle: (oh my gosh) Well, of course I am honored, but it's not what I had in mind.

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: What I'd like you to do is just think about it over the weekend and we can meet Monday to discuss it again.

Michelle: Ok, but respectfully, I don't want to disappoint you. I don't think I will change my mind.

Vice Provost for Student Affairs: Just think about it. We can meet on Monday first thing in the morning.

And just like that the meeting was over. It was definitely not what I had expected. I recall I did not give it a lot of thought over the weekend because I was certain of my intended trajectory towards service-learning at NIU or elsewhere. But Monday morning came, and I started my five-minute walk to the Vice Provost's office to let him know that I had not changed my mind. On my way, I ruminated how I was going to tell the Vice Provost "no" and settled on simply conveying what I envisioned for pursuing service-learning opportunities. As I walked closer to his office, I rehearsed what I was going to say about why I did not think the position he offered aligned with the direction I wanted to head:

I want to make a difference in student's lives, I want to fulfill a sense of purpose in my career, I want to develop student leaders, I would like to start a program (like service-learning) that is meaningful and lasting.....hmmm..... wait a minute...

As I heard myself enumerating the reasons I was interested in pursuing a career trajectory with service-learning, a huge light bulb flashed in my mind, and it dawned on me that all the reasons I was rehearsing to say "no" actually pointed to the exact reasons to say "yes." Everything about my sense of purpose, what I wanted in my profession, along with my previous experiences aligned perfectly with what the Vice Provost for Student Affairs was asking me to consider, it was just that it was presented in a package that I did not expect or recognize at first. In a defining moment, to my surprise and delight, I realized the answer was "yes."

The next conversation with Vice Provost for Student Affairs went very differently. Still stunned by the realization, I explained to him what had just taken place with my decision-making process and conveyed that I would be honored and pleased to carry out the vision and charge of the PTAA for developing resources and services for Asian American students at NIU. The vision

completely aligned with my professional and personal sense of purpose and values. The collective experiences I gained through my positions at the University Resources for Latinos and University Programming and Activities had prepared me for this next role, even though initially I had not been fully aware of it.

By July 2002, I stepped into my new role as the Program Coordinator for the Asian American Resource Program and Unity in Diversity and a faculty member from PTAA was asked to develop resources for the academic program. That summer, a location to house the Asian American Resource Program was identified, but I did not think the 1,400 square foot space was adequate for students' needs. The offices were small and there was no real gathering space large enough to accommodate the growing number of Asian American students and student organizations on campus. However, it was determined that in light of the tight budget constraints perhaps something was better than nothing and, at the time, the location would be treated as simply a temporary location. Due to budget constraints, renovations for the center did not begin until nearly two years later.

Between 2002 and 2004 under the auspices of UP&A, I carried out my new role and built upon the programs and services for Asian American students that had been initiated by PTAA. I focused much of my energy and time conducting outreach strategies designed to establish strong relationships with Asian American students and their respective student organizations, collaborated with key student leaders to implement program ideas, served as faculty advisor to AAPI student organizations, and built a brand for the Asian American Resource Program. At the same time, I continued my work with Unity in Diversity through a dual role as Program Coordinator for Asian American Resource Program. By 2004, the renovations at the temporary location were completed and the Asian American Resource Center was ready for move-in.

However, prior to moving into the center fulltime, there was a transition in UP&A staffing, and I was asked to serve part-time as Acting Director of UP&A and part-time as Director of Asian American Resource Center. Even though I did not hold the most senior title at UP&A at the time, I was one of the staff persons who had been there the longest. So, to manage the transition at UP&A, I agreed to serve as Interim Director and delayed the fulltime move to the Asian American Resource Center until July 2005. When I stepped into the role as Interim Director at UP&A, I made it clear that I did not intend to apply for the position but that my role was to manage the transition and pave the way for a new director there. Prior to the end of my interim position as Director of UP&A, I was asked to consider taking on that position permanently. However, I declined because I wanted to fulfill the vision and charge to build support resources and programs for an Asian American Resource Center, which had been entrusted to me by PTAA and Asian American students.

In July 2005, I moved my office to the Asian American Resource Center at the Jacob House (429 Garden Road) and the program increased from a parttime to a fulltime program. Committed to carrying out PTAA's original vision and concept for an Asian American Cultural Center, I began to further develop programs and services comparable to the ethnic cultural centers at NIU such as the Center for Black Studies and Latino Resource Center. Relying on previous experiences and guided by National Campus Advisory Standards, I developed the structure of an Asian American Resource Center based on a purpose driven mission, vision, core programs, learning outcomes, and assessment strategies. To grow the center, I developed new programs such as a peer mentor program, academic support workshops for incoming students, cultural education programming series, and student leadership development initiatives. I enhanced initiatives such as Asian American Welcome Night, collaborative efforts to provide

relevant programming during Asian American Heritage Month, and community building with Asian American student organizations and conducted community outreach to Chicagoland Asian affinity groups and not-for-profit organizations.

As the engagement of AAPI students with the centers began to grow exponentially, I aligned the core program elements to Patton's (2011) research on cultural centers in higher education. Based on Patton's (2011) research, I developed the Asian American Resource Center six core elements that focus on advocacy and academic success, cultural education, leadership development, cultural engagement, community building, and facility utilization to serve as a central place to access resources and services for NIU's Asian American students and 20 AAPI student organizations. Over time, AAPI student organizations asked me to serve as their faculty advisor. At one point I was faculty advisor to Alpha Phi Gamma, Asian American Association, Alpha Kappa Delta Phi, Chi Sigma Tau, Chinese Club, K-Pop, the Pan Asian Interest Student Alliance, the Philippine Student Association, Kappa Phi Lambda, and alpha Kappa Delta Phi.

The retention of AAPI students remained higher than NIU's rates for student overall, and departmental data showed retention rates for first to second year students who were involved in the Center's peer mentor program were even higher. At the same time, the Center encountered significant equity gaps in several areas that seemed invisible to the institution and could not be measured by the high retention rates. Despite regular annual reports, internal/external reviews, facility reviews, assessment reports, and benchmark data documenting the need to increase resources, staffing, and funding for Asian Americans, the Asian American Resource Center had remained under resourced and understaffed since its move to the temporary location in 2004. These growing equity gaps impacted financial resources, human resources, program and services, technology, and the facility. By 2015, these deficiencies had a visible and negative

impact on Asian American students who began to openly express feeling of invisibility, marginalization, and having been “forgotten” by the university. When I heard how students felt about the current center and saw how it impacted them, I began to feel that the Task Force’s charge assigned to me was not yet fully fulfilled.

I recognized that while establishing a temporary stand-alone center for Asian Americans was a significant step at NIU, continuing to provide resources and services in the current location was not enough. Three presidents had served at NIU since 2004 and the Center still remained in its temporary location. I remained the only consistent full-time employee with one 20-hour graduate assistant and 10-hour work-study students. Intermittently an office support staff was hired, but this position was not consistently sustained. Work-study employees and graduate assistants took on responsibilities filled by full-time employees in other ethnic cultural centers. To meet funding constraints, I employed extensive cost-saving techniques to stretch the center’s budget. I applied for external mini-grant funding and tried to apply for university funding, for which the university would pay for 50 % of the graduate assistantship if eligible. If granted, this would have allowed me to hire additional graduate assistant help, but due to the requirements of this particular scholarship, Asian American students were not eligible. Even though the Center was experiencing exponential increases with student participation, budget resources for programming and staffing remained the same until 2012 when the office received \$6,000 in additional funding to enhance cultural programming. Repeated requests for a new location and full-time positions were met with concerns regarding the institution’s lack of funding. At the same time, I noticed over time that other departments increased their staffing numbers and a number of buildings were either newly renovated or newly built, without much, if any, overt student protest. What could I do that I had not already tried? I began to wonder if the disparity

and perceived exclusion of resources to support the Asian American Resource Center was due, in part, to the application of the model minority stereotype and the ingrained societal perception that Asians and Asian Americans do not need any support or resources to succeed.

At the same time, through my previous positions at NIU, I was also keenly aware of how student activism and protest was historically an instrumental part of how ethnic centers, such as the Center for Black Studies and the Latino Resource Center, had been established at NIU. Asian American student activism had also been a key aspect for establishing the current space for the Asian American Resource Center, but it was now absent. I believed that in light of the expectation that the current space was deemed as temporary due to budget constraints, students expected that the institution would make the next move once the budget situation improved. As a result, while the Asian American Center's location had been deemed as a temporary location in 2002, the student voice and activism for a move out of the temporary location did not happen until 2015.

In 2015, the university underwent a Program Prioritization process in which every unit on campus completed a report indicating the role that department played in alignment with the university's mission. Each unit report was then reviewed, ranked, and recommended to be placed in one of five categories in terms of resource needs: 1) candidate for enhanced resources, 2) continue with no change in resources, 3) continue with reduced resources, 4) requires transformation, or 5) phase-out and subject for additional review. With previous assessment data that confirmed exponential increases in student engagement in all core program areas from 2011-2015, I saw this report as a critical opportunity to advocate for students' needs and ask that the Asian American Resource Center be placed in two categories: Enhanced Resources and Requires Transformation. At the same time, I realized the report alone might not be enough. Based on

what I had seen of how cultural centers historically received enhanced resources and/or new locations at the university, it seemed that at least four factors were involved: data documenting students' needs, administrative support from the highest level, student voice expressed through activism, and larger campus renovations that had been approved or were in the process of approval. Numerous reports documenting the needs for the Asian Americans at NIU had already been submitted over the years and administrators were well aware of the AARC's lack of resources. Administrators seemed to support the efforts for establishing support resources to serve Asian American students on campus, yet the AARC remained under resourced in significant area that hampered the full implementation of its mission. Although countless students would express the need for a new location and increased resources to me, which were included in the reports, what was missing was overt student activism that raised the issue campus wide. Students had to find a way to turn their perceived silent and internal protest into an overt public one in a way they would be both comfortable with and successful. They needed to better understand the history of how ethnic cultural centers had been established on campus and the role of student activism. It was not until 2015 that the students engaged in more overt student activism to express their needs when a small group of Asian American students began meeting as an AARC Renovation Committee to discuss a plan for addressing their needs. At the same time as the institutional process for Program Prioritization was taking place in Spring 2016, students developed a strategy for a student protest and created a visible protest around a theme: "Twelve Years too Long!" As the students gained momentum and campus visibility, this group of students also organized an overt campus protest to which campus administrators were invited to listen to their concerns at a rally called "Bark for the AARC." By Fall 2016, the Program Prioritization Committee submitted its public recommendations, and the Asian American

Resource Center was placed in two categories: Enhanced Resources and Requires

Transformation, including additional resources for programming, staffing, and space. The president at the time agreed with the recommendations:

In addition to being transformed, I believe this program should be enhanced. The space for the center was supposed to be temporary and is unacceptable as a permanent location. A plan to move the center to a more suitable location must be in place by 5/15/17. Additionally, the program is understaffed. The program's request to hire an assistant director and an administrative assistant should be sent to the EBC for review. (Baker, 2016)

Following the president's recommendation, the chief diversity officer at the time charged me with the responsibility of convening a task force for the Asian American Resource Center. This task force role was to identify the existing needs of the department and develop both short- and long-term plans that would enhance the resources to adequately meet the current needs and demands of Asian American students. To complete this charge, I convened a task force made up of students, faculty, and staff. To complete this task by Spring 2017, I led the task force in a process to 1) identify current deficiencies in staffing structures, financial resources, and physical space as well as identify resources needed to meet these needs; 2) re-visit the original 2002 concept proposal for an Asian American Resource and Cultural Center and determine its relevancy in light of the current deficiencies and current student needs/demands; and 3) develop long-term and short-term recommendations to enhance the resources of the Asian American Resource Center and the population it was missioned to serve. Utilizing numerous documents from previous years as well as current feedback from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members, I submitted a new report: "A Campaign for Institutional Transformation: Making the Invisible Visible." This report documented the chronic deficiencies and equity gaps in five major areas: financial resources, human resources, programs and services, technology,

and facility. Additionally, a complete list of recommendations to reverse the equity gaps and deficiencies was also detailed in the report. An automated voiceover video describing a three-dimensional model for an Asian American Cultural Center was created by a member of the AARC Renovation Committee and included in the report. In Fall 2017, the acting president of NIU acknowledged these concerns in her State of the University Address:

We also value our Asian-American students and recognize that they need a new space for their Resource Center. And I want to be honest here and tell you that we've not moved in this direction at the pace we should have. But we're working on it. And I'm committing to you that we will have a resolution during this academic year. (Freeman, 2017, p. 7)

True to her word, by Spring 2018 a new interim space was identified for the Asian American Resource Center. By Fall 2018, the Asian American Resource Center moved into its new interim location and was allocated additional resources to hire two full time staff positions: an associate director and an office administrator. The Asian American Resource Center operated from its new location for a year and a half before the pandemic hit. At that time, due to budget constraints, the administrative support staff position was cut as the staff moved to a remote working situation. After the pandemic in 2022, I advocated for the return of the administrative support position and enhanced resources for three full-time graduate assistants.

To date, the Asian American Resource Center has been allocated resources to re-instate a full-time office administrator and fill the position for a full-time Associate Director. For the first time since its inception in 2004, the Asian American Resource Center has two full-time staff positions in addition to the inaugural director to help fulfill its mission and vision. Also, continued efforts to advocate for graduate assistant resources resulted in an institutional change in the eligibility requirements for campus scholarships that now include graduate students who identify as Asian American. Currently, the Asian American Resource Center still resides at its

interim location and the staff members are committed to fulfilling the charge to establish a permanent location for an Asian American Cultural Center. This time the vision includes a strategy to raise \$3M toward establishing a sustainable and permanent Asian American Resource Center at NIU and to increase NIU's capacity to become an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPISI) serving institution.

Why Tell Tereza's Story?

I shared my own professional journey as the inaugural director of Asian American Resource Center to help readers better understand my experiences and background with student activism and my nearly 24-year history of advocating for Asian American students that began in 2000. Maya Angelou said it best: "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." My interest in Tereza's story and my commitment to amplify her story are directly related to a professional responsibility I hold to advocate on behalf of Asian Americans and to reverse patterns of inequity and exclusion against Asians and Asian American that have long been embedded in U.S. systems, including education. With background knowledge about how Asians and Asian Americans have been historically racialized through exclusion and being overlooked and, similar to how people in key positions advocated for Tereza Lee, I have felt a professional responsibility to harness the access, privilege, and resources I have as the Director of the Asian American Resource Center, and later as a doctoral student, to create more access to Tereza's story, to amplify her contribution to the undocumented student movement, and to alter the pattern of exclusion in higher education around Tereza's story. Although I had been well-involved with conversations, reading material, seminars, trainings,

workshops, and research focused on undocumented students, it was not until I met Tereza Lee in 2012 that I heard of her story or her contributions to the undocumented student movement.

After meeting Tereza, I learned more about the undocumented student movement and her role in it. I immediately wanted to do better as an advocate for Asian Americans and felt it was imperative to raise awareness of Tereza's story in my sphere of influence, higher education, and my dissertation became the vehicle to do this. In its simplest form, amplifying Tereza's story seemed the right thing to do.

When I first heard Tereza's story at a Benefit Dinner on October 12, 2012, it was so compelling that it struck a core part of me that transformed a deep sense of compassion into a call to action that could not be ignored. By the end of the night, I approached Tereza to share with her the impact that her story had on me and explained that Randy Kim had invited me to the benefit dinner in my professional role as the Director of the Asian American Resource Center at NIU. In that brief conversation, I asked if Tereza would be willing to share her contact information and if she would be open to a follow-up call to explore a possible visit to NIU as a guest speaker. Soon after the benefit dinner, I called Tereza to learn more about her and to invite her to come to NIU that spring as a featured speaker. Excited about this opportunity, Tereza (Lee, 2013) agreed to share her story at NIU's 2013 Asian American Heritage Month Kick-off Event sponsored by the Asian American Resource Center. When I heard Tereza's story a second time and experienced her impact on her listeners, it deepened my call to amplify the voices of Asian undocumented student experiences within my sphere of influence.

Tereza's visit to NIU further sparked dialogue about the lack of Asian Americans' voices regarding the issue of undocumented students. Not hearing much from Asian American students on my campus about this issue, I began to speculate that the silence must have meaning and must

be sending its own message. To better understand the issues of Asian undocumented students, I accepted an invitation from Randy Kim to attend a bus trip from Chicago, Illinois, to Washington, D.C., with the KRCC Chicago Chapter to engage in the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Rally. The rally in D.C. was sponsored by the Asian Americans Advancing Justice, the KRCC Los Angeles Chapter, and the KRCC Chicago Chapter. Representatives from the KRCC Chicago Chapter, the Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and several Asian undocumented students from Chicago discussed their perspectives of why the Asian voice surrounding immigration reform was not that strong. This bus trip and rally in D.C. raised my awareness of the collective sense of purpose to amplify the Asian undocumented students' experiences.

Shortly after the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Rally in D.C., I was asked to serve on a Presidential Task Force to Support Undocumented Students at NIU to guide institutional efforts to educate and train NIU's faculty and staff to effectively respond to the challenges and needs of undocumented students, position the university to influence relevant state and national legislation, provide support and guidance to those students seeking deferred action, and ensure that institutional policies and procedures are rooted in the spirit of access and inclusion as well as reflect best practices in higher education. Through my role as a committee member, I conducted additional research on the Asian undocumented students' experiences. I found that the Asian American community was speaking out via the internet (photo stories, poetry and prose, YouTube) and discussing the silence surrounding this issue. As a result, I deepened my professional resolve to continue to learn about this issue and to contribute to the collective purpose to amplify their voices. Over the next few years, I networked with numerous individuals

and collaboration partners to strengthen support for existing programs, bring speakers to campus, and create new program initiatives.

In one of my conversations with Tereza in 2015 I asked her if she had a bio she could share with me. She stated that she had once typed up her story and had offered it to a publisher who rejected the idea, noting that it was not worthy of readership, saying “No one would be interested in reading this.” I quickly respond by saying that whoever she spoke to was wrong and that her story is worth sharing and readership. Tereza asked if I wanted to read it. Having already heard Tereza share her story, I mentioned that I did not have to read it to know whether her story was worthy of readership. I already knew it was a valuable story and conveyed that I would be honored to read what she had written. Tereza emailed me her story and I read it that night. After reading Tereza’s story in print, I again felt the call to action; only this time, the call was fueled with a deeper commitment to amplify her story even further.

Originally, I wanted to share Tereza’s story at NIU, which I had done by inviting Tereza to NIU on three different occasions. NIU administrators and students were beginning to hear about her story, but I felt that was not enough. After hearing that someone told Tereza her story was not worthy of readership, several factors came together for me. First, from the research I had conducted as a committee member on the Presidential Task Force on Supporting Undocumented Students, I learned that most the research was focused on Latino undocumented college-bound students. Second, while I found media stories and interviews on the internet that focused on Tereza Lee, I did not find anything in the educational research mentioning her story. Third, Tereza’s story as an undocumented Korean student was still not widely known in higher education. Fourth, I found that few researchers focused on the experiences of Asian undocumented college-bound students. Fifth, the words of my supervisor kept ringing in the

background: “Where is the voice of Asians in the undocumented movement?” While I did not have a clear answer to this question, I did realize there was a voice, Tereza’s voice, that needed to be heard.

The alignment of these factors created a defining moment for me. Even though I was well into researching a different topic for my dissertation, hearing that someone had told Tereza her story was not worthy of readership changed the trajectory of my dissertation to focus on Tereza’s story and its impact. I wanted to contribute to amplifying her story in the hope it would shine a light on Tereza’s contribution to the undocumented student movement and Asian Americans and create a space for Asian undocumented students to share their stories. I thought that if my dissertation advisor would agree, and if Tereza were willing to partner with me in a dissertation project, I would be resolved to work with Tereza to amplify her story and get it published after all. Once published, Tereza’s story will be widely accessible in educational research. For example, when someone types in any one of the following keywords: DREAM Act, undocumented students, Asian undocumented students, Tereza’s story will be included.

Chang (1993) and Chang (1999) advocates that using the very narratives of those who are excluded in majority discourse serves as a solution to the very problem of exclusion. I utilized Tereza’s narrative in this study to provide a solution to the problem of its exclusion in higher education. I selected Tereza’s story as the focus of this study to explore how it impacted the immigration movement for undocumented college bound students. Ever since Tereza agreed to work with me, with the same sense of purpose, commitment, and resolve that I took up the PTAA’s charge to advocate for Asian American students by establishing an Asian American Resource Center, I considered it an honor and professional responsibility to complete this dissertation to amplify Tereza’s story and to further advocate for Asian American students.

CHAPTER 2

TEREZA'S STORY

As a legal scholar, Chang (1993) addressed the issue of silence incurred by many Asian Americans, including his own:

Of the different voices I speak, I have been most comfortable with the one called silence. Silence allowed me to escape notice when I was a child. I could be invisible hence safe. Yet now I find myself leaving the safety of my silence. I wonder if this is wise. (p. 1244)

Chang recounts the discrimination he experienced as an Asian American such as the time he was refused service at a gas station in the South and the time he was apprehended in a deserted parking lot by four large (white) police officers in New Jersey under the suspicion that he stole the vehicle he possessed. After the registration and license were verified, Chang (1993) recounts that a simple and appropriate apology offered for the mistake would have been enough for him to let the incident remain in the past as one of the mistakes and unpleasant things that can happen in life. However, absent any apology, Chang still carries the incident with him. Chang tries to push his thoughts aside and tries to silence them; however, the time came when he can no longer be silent: "I am tired of silence. And so I raise my voice" (p. 1245). Just as Jerome Culp's proclamation for an "African American moment," in the legal academy referred to a "time when different and blacker voices will speak new words and remake old legal doctrines" (p. 40), Chang raised his otherwise silent voice to define an "Asian American moment":

Nevertheless, the time has come to announce another such moment, an Asian American moment. This moment is marked by the increasing presence of Asian Americans in the legal academy who are beginning to raise their voices to "speak new words and remake

old legal doctrines.” This moment brings new responsibilities for Asian American legal scholars. This moment brings new challenges. This moment also brings us hope. (1246)

A “silence” exists in educational research regarding Tereza’s story. In fact, few individuals know of Tereza’s contribution as a Korean undocumented student. Her story is an example of an Asian American moment within the educational dialogue of undocumented students and her story must be told. Therefore, this research sought to amplify Tereza’s story.

Tereza’s Parents

In the aftermath of the Korean American War, Tereza’s father, Joon, was 17 years old and lived with his widowed mother in Seoul Korea. Destitute because of the Korean-American War and famine, Joon’s mother lost her land inheritance and fled to Paraguay with Joon and his sister, which was the first stop for tens of thousands of Koreans enroute to the Americas at that time (Lee, 2011). Soon after the move to Paraguay, Joon’s mother died, but prior to her death, she informed Joon of pre-arranged marriage plans she had made with Seong Ae, whose family also had fled to Paraguay from Seoul, Korea (Lee, 2011). Three years after his mother’s passing, Joon entered the pre-arranged marriage with Seong Ae and took his wife and his sister to Brazil to earn a living, start a family, and live closer to extended relatives in a large Korean immigrant community. Seong Ae took up tailoring, and the young couple opened a clothing business in Sao Paulo. Their first child, Tereza (named after Mother Theresa) was born in 1983. Within the next two years, Tereza’s family began to achieve some success with their business, which came with its blessings, responsibilities, and eventually heartache. With the success of their family business, Tereza (unpublished document) wrote that her parents became a source of income for immediate family members:

My family became immediate objects of financial supplication within the community, and they agreed to give certain close family members modest allowances to help them maintain subsistence. One desperate family member, spurning the offerings as meager, surreptitiously procured their checkbook and banking information, and proceeded to withdraw all of the family's savings.

Destitute again, Joon realized he could not trust his extended family members, yet he was unwilling to pursue the case within the law. Therefore, in 1985, Joon made an immediate decision to move his wife, Seong, and daughter, Tereza, to the United States and start over. He sold his wedding rings to purchase three plane tickets and visitor visas to the U.S.

Tereza's Life in the U.S.

Tereza's first memory is of the flight to America with her parents when she was two years old (Lee, 2011). She remembers that an American iconic hamburger and fries magically appeared in front of her on the tray table as if out of nowhere; her excitement for the "new place she was going was getting more exciting all the time" (p. 2). Upon arrival in the United States, Tereza and her family stayed with relatives in Stanton Island, New York. After three months, they re-located to Chicago. Tereza's family moved into an unfinished basement apartment on Drake Avenue in the north side of Chicago. Their tourist visas expired three months after they arrived in Chicago, (Lee, personal communication, 2012); however, without a home anywhere else and very little money, Tereza's family remained in Chicago out of sheer survival. Tereza was three years old when her brother, Nathan, was born.

Tereza remembers the Drake apartment as being very sparsely furnished and in disrepair (Lee, 2011). However, because of their undocumented status, her father had little recourse to ask the property owner made the appropriate repairs to the basement apartment. In addition, Joon, did not want to cause any trouble or draw any attention to their undocumented status. Therefore,

as a family they learned to adjust to the situation on their own as well as they could. For example, since the basement often flooded, Tereza's father purchased hammocks for her and her brother to sleep in rather than beds that would be ruined by the flooding. The apartment was in need of pest control to rid it of ants, mice, and roaches, but again the family dealt with these problems on their own. The heat went out regularly, and they had to heat water on the stove to bathe and wear winter jackets to keep warm throughout the bitter Chicago winters. Tereza's father did not take any legal action for fear of deportation. Tereza's mother started earning some income altering clothes for a local cleaner, and Tereza's father went to seminary school. However, with very few resources, they lived under these dilapidated conditions for years.

“With a Little Tea and Just Rice for All”

By 1989, Tereza was going to first grade in the public-school system. Like most American school children, Tereza began each day by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag: “I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America” (Lee, 2011, p. 1). However, speaking only Korean at home, Tereza's understanding of English was limited. As a six-year-old, Tereza thought that the Pledge of Allegiance ended “with a Little Tea and Just Rice for all” (p. 1). Tereza described her childhood as being a traditional Korean American family. “My father was a Presbyterian minister, my mother owned a dry-cleaners, and I play the piano, and yes, my parents were very, very strict,” writes Lee (p. 2). At first, Tereza felt she was able to adjust to the school environment and activities without knowing much English. However, by the time she was seven, it became more and more difficult to keep up with the assignments and she began falling behind (Lee, 2011). Tereza recalls the very first time her father ever hit her.

After a parent teacher conference, Tereza's father required her to write English words at home at his command. When she was simply unable to spell a word or if she made a mistake, he hit her as an incentive to learn. In spite of Tereza's tears and her mother's shocked protests, Tereza's father continued with strict discipline until she spelled the words correctly. He shouted that it was the only way that Tereza would learn. After that first time, strict discipline became her father's habitual form of punishment for both her and her brother.

Piano

Tereza started playing piano at the age of seven by using the piano at her father's Presbyterian church whenever she had the chance (Lee, 2011). However, one day a well-to-do member of her church noticed the meager conditions of the apartment and bought them thousands of dollars of furniture, including an upright piano for Tereza. According to Tereza, the gift of that upright piano "changed the trajectory of her life forever" (p. 6). Initially, Tereza began taking lessons with a church member and learned to sight read the hymnals she practiced at home. Her father also taught himself how to play church hymns and strict discipline followed whenever she made a mistake. Since playing piano was generally enjoyable to Tereza, she quickly learned to avoid mistakes. Soon it was apparent that Tereza needed a more accomplished teacher who could give her advanced lessons. Tereza's father found a new piano teacher, a Korean American woman who was working on her doctorate in music at the time. However, Tereza was aghast when her teacher boldly asked her father if it would be all right with him if she used strict discipline as a part of teaching her how to play piano correctly. Before her father answered, Tereza knew he would give his assent. Tereza was playing as the full-time church pianist at her father's church by the age of nine. In addition to learning church hymns, Tereza

was also earning how to play several Mozart sonatas. As a result, Tereza's teacher entered Tereza into several piano competitions, which she began winning. Eventually, Tereza's experience playing piano expanded beyond her church, and she became the piano accompanist for her grade school choir and for school assemblies.

Secret

Tereza learned she was undocumented when she was in seventh grade. Tereza was excelling in the seventh grade as a straight A student and her teachers recommended that she skip the eighth grade and enroll directly in high school. Excitedly, they gave Tereza several applications to various prestigious Chicago high schools and asked her to complete them at home (Lee, 2011). However, the applications required parental signatures that Tereza's father refused to sign:

I couldn't believe it. I tried to think of ways to beg him or argue with him, and he finally said "we can't sign any official papers or risk doing anything that will make us stand out too much. We could get in trouble. (p. 12)

Not comprehending why her father would not sign the papers, Tereza's father called a family meeting to let her know about their undocumented status. Tereza remembers it this way:

We gathered around him, and he said, in a strange and somber voice, 'I have to tell you kids something – this must never get out of the house – it is a big secret – and if you ever tell anyone, even your best friends, we could get separated: you (pointing to me) would have to go to Brazil, Mom and I to Korea, and Nathan would have to stay here...because we don't have papers.'

We were confused. He went on, 'We live in America without documents, and cannot function fully as legal residents.' I still wasn't sure what all this meant. I was "illegal". It was scary. I began to feel as if at any moment the government would knock down our door and separate our family. I would have to go to Brazil, where I had been born, but knew nobody and didn't speak the language at all. Dad came to school with me the next day and told the teachers that I would not be able to skip the eighth grade, because he wanted me to get the full experience of the American public school system.

The knowledge of this secret impacted Tereza in such a way that she became extremely shy, quiet, and closed off for fear someone would learn about this serious secret. The secret had to be protected at all costs.

Keeper of the Secret

The reality of Tereza's undocumented status began to sink in for her, and looking back on her life, certain situations began to make sense. For example, she began to understand why her father had always been so careful to avoid authorities, why her father never drove above the speed limit, why they had to be perfectly still and quiet when police were nearby, why he never took legal action against their landlord for unfair living conditions, why he never asked for police assistance living in a drug and gang infested neighborhood, and why he relied on God for healing rather than ever taking them to see a doctor for illness or regular medical checkups (Lee, 2011). He was afraid that if the authorities learned of their undocumented status they could be deported and separated as a family.

Tereza also learned why her father was always trying so hard to reach a congregational membership of 30 people (Lee, 2011). With a congregation of this size, he could apply for a visa status as a religious worker and he and his family would no longer live life in fear of deportation. All he needed was 30 signatures. Even though the congregation reached nearly 30 at one point, some members began leaving due to her father's harsh rebukes. One member approached Tereza's father and tried to tell him not to beat Tereza and her brother. But Tereza's father said something back to her, and the member left and never returned. Unfortunately, the church membership, small as it was, dwindled even further until the only members were Tereza's

family. Still, Tereza's family faithfully attended their father's church service every Sunday and Bible Study every Friday.

As the keeper of this family secret, Tereza described herself as the "Silent American" (Lee, 2011, p. 14). As early as eighth grade, she felt as if her life "was going downhill," and she started giving up hope (p. 19). She became rebellious in school and her grades suffered; she was no longer a straight A student. Even when Tereza received a college savings bond for perfect attendance, she threw it away: "I'll never be able to go to college anyway" (p. 19). Her family constantly lived in fear of deportation, and Tereza was not permitted to make close friends or receive phone calls. Tereza also learned to fear the outside world and, as a result, began to close herself off. Being so cut off from the outside world, Tereza's family was closely knitted together – bonded by fear, love, and a strong belief in their father and his religion. However, as a pre-teen, Tereza began to see that the manner in which her father was doing things was often very wrong. She thought her mother should do more to protect her and her brother, but she was engulfed at work so they could survive financially. On her mother's only day off (Sunday), she cooked all day. While Tereza entertained the idea of talking to a social worker or teacher at school, she could not bear the thought of being the one to split up her family. Even for all the problems her family faced, they were all they had.

Tereza started high school at Lane Tech in 1997. For Tereza, high school was better than grade school because she could spend much of her time with after school activities, which meant spending less time at home. She played percussion in the school marching band, joined community service clubs, volunteered at homeless shelters, played piano for the elderly at senior centers, raised funds for UNICEF, and volunteered to take phone calls for public television networks. With all of Tereza's community service, she earned 10 times the amount of required

high school service hours. As a result, the National Honors Society offered Tereza a scholarship to college, but not seeing how she could use it, she threw it away.

Accident

It was in December of 1997 when Tereza's father allowed the family to skip Bible Study to see Tereza play in Lane Tech's Christmas Concert. Tereza was 14 years old. Tereza played in every act: percussion in the concert band as well as violin and cello in the orchestra, and she sang in the choir. Tereza was so excited to see her family in the audience to support her and headed eagerly toward them afterwards as they complimented her performance. It was a happy occurrence. However, when Tereza's family headed toward their car after the concert, an oncoming car unexpectedly hit her brother, Nathan, who was crossing the street just in front of them. Tereza saw Nathan's body catapulted high into the air and then land lifeless in the middle of the road. Horrified, Tereza's family ran toward Nathan, but there was no movement and no sound. Police arrived quickly after a passerby called 911. Within minutes Nathan was rushed to the hospital in an ambulance, Tereza riding along with him. After arriving at hospital, the doctors eventually told Tereza's parents that Nathan needed a full leg cast and that he might sustain brain damage as a result of his injuries.

Tereza's father had to make a quick decision about what to tell the police. True, the driver had been speeding, lost control of the wheel while talking on the cell phone, and was not able to see Nathan crossing the road; however, in spite of Nathan's life-threatening injuries, Tereza's father needed to avoid any further contact with the police and any pending court proceedings. Therefore, he told the police that the accident was Nathan's fault and said he ran out in front of the car without looking. He assured the police that their family would be responsible

for all hospital bills. Tereza's parents did not file a complaint for fear of deportation and for fear of what that would mean for their family. Tereza's father quickly approached the driver who was in the waiting room, forgave her and prayed with her. The driver, "crying hysterically, thanked him profusely, and left" (Lee, 2011. p. 24). Nathan suffered great pain during his recovery; Tereza's family suffered under huge medical costs. After six months, when Nathan's cast was removed, Tereza's family could not afford any more hospital bills or painkillers. Fortunately, Nathan did not sustain any brain damage, but his leg remained crooked and never healed properly.

Although Tereza's family had opened a small dry-cleaning business, most of their income went to paying enormous medical and hospital bills incurred by her brother's accident. In addition, due to their undocumented status, Tereza's parents were not able to claim their children as dependents, and, thus they paid higher taxes. All expenses were extremely monitored and limited, including groceries. On Sundays when her mother cooked for them, it seemed like a luxury for Tereza to eat rice, fish, kimchi, and perhaps stew. The family was on the brink of bankruptcy. Tereza remembers during this time, she would often experience hunger and would take food left over from school kids' lunches, save it, and share it with her brother at home later.

Vow to "Save the Family"

Seeing the mounting hospital bills, her family's huge financial burden, and the conditions in which they were surviving, Tereza was motivated to save her family by becoming a famous pianist (Lee, 2011).

It was at this time that I made a serious, life-changing decision. I needed to save my family, and I made a vow to myself that I would practice as much as I could and become

a successful pianist. If people heard me playing beautiful music and I was a famous pianist, I thought, nobody would ever want to deport us.

Tereza knew she had the skill and the motivation for practicing piano, but she also knew she needed a good teacher. Due to her family's dire circumstances, paying for lessons at \$100 per hour was out of the question. Tereza's idea was to call the most prestigious pianist she knew, a pianist who played for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and leave her a message: "My name is Tereza Lee. I'm 15. I don't have any money, but I'd really like to study with you" (p. 26). To her surprise, this pianist and instructor called Tereza back, but her father answered the phone. He refused the pianist's offer to teach Tereza lessons for \$60 an hour per lesson and hung up. Angry with Tereza for calling the pianist "behind his back," Tereza was severely punished (p. 27).

Still Tereza did not give up her dream of saving her family by becoming a famous pianist. Without being able to afford a piano teacher, Tereza taught herself. Instead of getting formal lessons, Tereza decided she could practice on her own time, which she did relentlessly. She analyzed her skills by recording herself using a small tape recorder and playing it back. She also taped music from Chicago's music radio station, WFMT, and practiced emulating great musicians such as Martha Argerich, Arthur Rubinstein, and others. Tereza wholly devoted herself to practicing piano; she even withdrew her participation from some of the high school activities she enjoyed. Tereza practiced all summer of her freshman year. When her sophomore year started in the fall, she used the piano in the school's music room and practiced as much as possible. It was not long before the music director at Lane Tech heard Tereza playing and asked her to play a piece from Handel's Messiah for him. After the music director at Lane Tech heard Tereza perform this piece expertly and easily, he immediately made her the school choir's accompanist. Tereza's next big performance was the school's annual Christmas concert, and this

year she would be the sole pianist. Even as Tereza prepared for this concert, always in the back of her mind was the knowledge that if she was ever to save her family by becoming a great pianist, she knew she needed a great teacher. Tereza had an idea that if she let Music director at Lane Tech know that she did not have a piano teacher, perhaps he might be able to help her find one.

Therefore, after the Christmas concert, Tereza gave Music director at Lane Tech a simple thank you card for all he had done for her and indicated that she did not have a piano teacher. As a result, the music director at Lane Tech, knowing Tereza's talent, put her in touch with a former music student of his who had achieved success as a famous opera singer. Together, the music director at Lane Tech and his former student gave Tereza information for the Chicago Merit Music Program. Tereza was introduced to a few people who eventually helped her develop her own piano talent. Tereza met the Director of the Chicago Merit Music Program, Ms. Ann Monaco. Ms. Monaco offered Tereza an audition to determine if she was eligible for tuition-free piano lessons every Saturday at Merit's Conservatory. Ms. Monaco indicated that private lessons could be determined later.

Excited for a chance at an audition for free tuition, Tereza prepared a piece she had taught herself to play: Beethoven Sonata Opus 10 No. 1. In Tereza's mind, the opportunity to receive free lessons to save her family depended solely on this audition. However, much to Tereza's dismay, she did not perform as well as she had hoped and, more importantly, at the level she knew she was capable of performing. Not only that, she struggled with section after section of the piece until she finally stopped, unable to complete the audition. When asked "Is everything okay," everything that Tereza wanted to express at that moment shook her to tears. How could she explain everything in her life that was not okay? How could she explain that she

was undocumented? How could she explain that that her family was just barely making it financially? How could she explain that she was desperately trying to save her family and everything she hope for depended solely on this one audition? “Years of noxious memories churned inside and let loose a fit of tears and spasm that I half wanted to control but were too powerful to forbear indulging” (Lee, 2011, p. 34). Finally, through uncontrollable tears and hiccups, Tereza said: “I just want to be the best pianist I can possibly be, but I don’t have any money. I don’t know what to do” (p. 34).

Kindness and compassion prevailed, and despite Tereza’s inability to perform as she was capable of doing, she was offered another opportunity the following week for another free lesson. Tereza’s homework was to practice and learn as much of Chopin’s Scherzo number three as she could in one week. When she returned to Merit for another lesson the following week, she played as much as she could of this difficult piece during her lesson. Using the Chopin Scherzo, Tereza was taught new and different hand, finger and wrist techniques. These new techniques helped her break old habits she had developed from teaching herself. Tereza learned quickly and experienced a great teacher-student chemistry with hew new teacher. By the end of her lesson, Ms. Monaco had scholarship paperwork ready for Tereza that offered both free classes at Merit every Saturday and private lessons for only \$3 per hour. Seeing Tereza’s dedication to practicing piano, Merit offered Tereza two to three lessons per week.

Within only two months, Tereza could play Chopin Scherzo number three, plus more: Prokofiev and Bach’s Prelude and Fuge. Because of Tereza’s progress, she was encouraged to apply for the University of Indiana’s summer Piano Academy. University of Indiana’s School of Music is ranked in the top 20 music schools in the nation and is recognized as a premiere music school in the world. Tereza was accepted to the summer academy and a Merit scholarship funded

her tuition. During this summer academy, Tereza studied under one of her idols, world-renowned pianist Menahem Pressler. His work was one of the pieces Tereza had recorded on her cassette player many times while she was teaching herself to play piano. After camp at University of Indiana, Tereza spent the rest of her summer going to Merit School every day.

Arriving at 7:00 a.m., Tereza was at Merit before she had breakfast and without packing lunch, which meant she was often hungry. Noticing Tereza's hunger and fatigue, a few staff members took Tereza under their wing and provided what they could for her meals, encouraging Tereza to let them know if she was hungry. In Fall 1999 Tereza's piano teacher felt Tereza was ready to learn Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto Number One to compete in the Merit Concerto Competition. According to Tereza, she was now learning so much more than piano technique. She was learning about "subtle nuances of sound and musical expression" (Lee, 2011, p.43). Tereza won the Merit Competition and went on to prepare for the biggest competition of her life: the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Youth Concerto Competition. It was the first time Merit staff entered one of their students for this prestigious competition. The award for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Youth Concerto Competition was a solo performance in the Chicago Symphony. Tereza won the semi-finals and advanced to the finals, which she won. Tereza remembers it this way:

As I played, all I focused on was trying to get the audience to feel the music that way I felt it. When all the performers were finished, there was a reception while everyone waited for the judges' results. I was just standing there, exhausted, when the judges came and announced that I had won. I didn't even hear my name, but all my friends started clapping, and Ms. Koren said, "Tereza, you won!"

Tereza was the first student from a Chicago public school who had ever won that concerto competition, and her performance caught the attention of not only her school principal at Lane Tech, but she began receiving letters and requests from the Board of Chicago Public

Schools and other schools to perform. Tereza was glad to be paid for some of her performances. Tereza received congratulatory letters from government officials and was invited to perform on a segment of the *Oprah Winfrey Show* featuring the Merit School of Music. Merit School of Music proudly displayed a huge banner across its entrance: “Congratulations Tereza Lee for winning the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Youth Concerto Competition. She will be performing with the CSO on March 19, 2001, at Symphony Hall!” (pp. 46-47). During the summer of 2000, Tereza attended the prestigious music camp, the Aspen Summer Music Festival, through a Merit Music School scholarship. When Tereza returned at the end of the summer, Ms. Monaco had arranged for her to take piano lessons with a prestigious professor at the Bienen School of Music, Northwestern University.

Sharing the Secret

During the fall of Tereza’s junior year in high school in 2000, Ms. Monaco asked a question Tereza was afraid to answer: “Tereza, have you thought of which colleges you might apply for?” Tereza recalls how she felt:

College, for me, had always seemed like an utter impossibility. I had never told a soul that I wasn’t a legal resident- not my high school friends, not my teachers, nobody at Merit, not even Ms. Monaco. I wasn’t ready for this conversation now, but I started getting a feeling that this was going to come up again very soon.

Ms. Monaco pressed the issue and asked Tereza to give it some thought and submit a list of 10 colleges to her by the next day. Tereza submitted the schools in which she was interested (Manhattan School of Music, Julliard, Peabody, etc.), and Ms. Monaco moved right to the next step and gave Tereza college applications to complete. Staring blankly, but not being able to tell Ms. Monaco about her situation, Tereza took the applications and completed them as well as she

could. Ms. Monaco asked why several pieces of information were incomplete, such as Tereza's social security number and resident status. Ms. Monaco was also confused about what Tereza submitted as her place of residence: Sao Paulo, Brazil, and asked Tereza about it. Tereza was fearful of this moment and what it might mean for her family if she told Ms. Monaco about her situation:

This was the moment I had been fearing ever since my father had revealed our situation to me years ago. The paranoia I had grown up with fought for control of my thinking, and I imagined that Ms. Monaco might call the police and turn me in if I told her the truth. I was afraid she would be mad at me or turn her back on me, and I wanted to tell her "I'm not a criminal". She had done so much for me, though, and if I ever had the chance to tell someone who cared about me, someone I thought I could trust, this was it.

So, Tereza mustered up all the courage she had and took a risk to share the family secret she had held for so many years:

After taking a few slow breaths and trying to work up the courage to speak, I said, "I don't have a social security card, or a status, I can't go to college. Please don't tell anyone about this, otherwise something bad will happen to me and my family."

Taking in the information carefully, Ms. Monaco said, "That's okay; you keep practicing. I will be back in a few" (p. 49). Later that evening, Ms. Monaco let her know that they would go ahead and submit the applications. She also assured Tereza they would make some phone calls and write letters to figure out what else they could do about her situation.

True to her word, Ms. Monaco submitted Tereza's college applications and Tereza was accepted into some of the most prestigious music schools. In the meantime, Ms. Monaco looked into having Tereza apply for an artist visa, but upon investigating this idea, they learned that Tereza would end up in proceedings for deportation. Ms. Monaco was willing to adopt Tereza, but Tereza had already passed the legal age of adoption in the state of Illinois. It was at this point, with no other options, that Ms. Monaco called Senator Richard Durbin.

Senator Richard Durbin and the CARE Bill

Senator Durbin listened to Tereza's story with great concern and promised to look into her situation to see what he could do. When it became clear that, according to the INS, the only option for Tereza was deportation to Brazil, Durbin felt he was out of options. At that time Ann Monaco did not give up. She helped Tereza collect letters of support from Merit's faculty, donors, and supporters. With letters of support in hand, Monaco and Adelson re-approached Durbin with Tereza's case. Not having seen any cases like Tereza's addressed in the law at the time, Durbin assured Tereza he would write a bill and submit it to the U.S. Congress on her behalf., Durbin wrote a bill specifically for Tereza, in the summer of 2000, called the Children's Alien Relief for Education Act (C.A.R.E.) that would allow her to pursue college.

In the meantime, Tereza applied to several prestigious music colleges to keep her application process moving forward. At the time, there were no laws forbidding college admittance to undocumented students, but schools were reluctant to do so. Some schools denied Tereza admittance based on her status, while others, with urging on the part of Monaco, accepted Tereza based on her skills rather than her status. Fortunately, the Manhattan School of Music in New York accepted Tereza and offered her a scholarship. In Fall 2001, Tereza entered the Manhattan School of Music as a freshman. Putting Tereza in touch with a couple who had been long time supporters of Merit, Tereza found a second home in New York with this couple who welcomed her as family. As a freshman, Tereza won the Manhattan School of Music's concerto competition by performing the Prokofiev 1st piano concerto. Tereza also earned the distinction for being the first freshman in the history of Manhattan's School of Music to win this competition. Tereza remembers that while winning the competition helped her make some

friends among her freshman class, she found she did not fit in very well with her peers, many of whom were from South Korea:

The cliques of Korean girls that I would see walking through the school's halls and lobby all wore expensive clothes and fashionable hairstyles, makeup, and gossiped to each other in a high-pitched tone of voice that I had ever heard on {Korean] soap operas... I felt like an outcast among them.

The South Korea Tereza's family fled from was not the same South Korea from which her classmates came. In the 1970s, when Tereza's family fled in destitution from Korea to Brazil, Korea was a third world war-torn country, experiencing a severe famine. However, since then, South Korea had developed rapidly into a technologically and economically advanced country in a span of only a few decades.

While Tereza was in her first year at the Manhattan School of Music, Ms. Monaco called very excited to share some good news: Senator Durbin along with a few other senators scheduled a hearing for the bill they wrote that would eventually allow a pathway for undocumented students who met certain criteria to gain legal status. What Tereza learned was that other college-bound students like her found out Durbin had written a bill regarding her undocumented status and approached Durbin as well. Upon hearing their stories, Senator Durbin realized that, like Tereza, many more college-bound undocumented students were experiencing similar situations. Therefore, he re-drafted the original C.A.R.E Bill he had written specifically for Tereza. Instead he wrote another bill to include all undocumented students brought to the U.S at a young age who had dreams to go to college. Thus, Durbin authored what we now know as the DREAM Act, which stands for Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act. Durbin describes the DREAM Act as "a narrowly tailored, bipartisan bill that would provide immigration relief to a

select group of students who grew up in the United States but are prevented from pursuing their [college] dreams by current immigration law” (Orchowski, 2010, p. 1).

Durbin and Senator Orrin Hatch first introduced the DREAM Act bill, S. 1291, to the Senate floor on August 1, 2001, during the 107th Congress. The passage failed during the 107th Congress, but a follow-up a hearing regarding the DREAM Act was scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, 2001, at which time Tereza and several students like Tereza were invited to speak before the Senate to tell their story:

Ann Monaco called one day, very excitedly, to tell me that Senator Durbin and some other Senators had scheduled a hearing for the bill that would give me a legal status. She told me that I would get to go and perform some music for them and tell my story. By this time, other stories of undocumented students who had been brought to America as children were surfacing, and the bill had become about more than just me. Some of the students would be there to perform, display their artwork, or speak along with me.

Tereza’s flight from LaGuardia airport to Washington D.C. was scheduled to leave the day before the hearing. Tereza’s travel plan to LaGuardia was to take the subway, which was within walking distance from the Manhattan School of Music. On September 11, Tereza was on her way to the subway and thinking about what she would say at the Senate hearing the following day. However, Tereza would never arrive at the airport and would not get the chance to speak at the Senate hearing the following day. On Tuesday September 11, 2001, at 8:45 a.m., terrorists attacked the U.S., destroying the Twin Towers of the New York Trade Center and the Pentagon, with Washington D.C. also targeted but not hit. Due to the terrorists’ attacks, all flights in the U.S were immediately grounded and the Senate hearing for the DREAM Act was postponed indefinitely.

Consequently, even though the DREAM Act was brought to the Senate floor a number of times between 2001 and 2011, it never passed. It would be a decade after the 9/11 terrorist

attacks before Tereza and several students would be invited back for a first-ever Senate hearing on the DREAM Act.

Discouragement and Despair

In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the country's sentiment toward immigrants was anything but positive (Chishti & Berveron, 2011; Lee, 2011; Woods & Arthur, 2014). In addition, immigration law and policy dramatically changed (Hesson, 2012). Because all 19 of the hijackers involved in the terrorist attacks of 9/11 were foreigners who had entered the U.S. through legal avenues (mostly temporary tourist visas), the focus of immigration turned to one of detecting and preventing would-be terrorists (Chishti & Bergeron, 2011; see also Middlestat et al., 2011). Further, tasks performed by the then Immigration Naturalization Services (INS) were transferred to and controlled by the newly created Department of Homeland Security. The re-organization of INS involved the creation of three new areas within the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, placing an even greater emphasis on deportations:

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) engages in immigration enforcement actions to prevent unlawful entry into the United States and to apprehend and repatriate noncitizens who have violated or failed to comply with U.S. immigration laws. (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2023)

As reported by Chishti and Bergeron (2001), "Any prospects of bipartisan support for comprehensive immigration reform, which had been gaining momentum in Congress prior to the attacks, have been dashed" (p. 1). Unfortunately, this also included the DREAM Act. Tereza's hope for relief from deportation turned to discouragement and despair:

I was completely demoralized. I began acting out in school, and my destructive behavior and neglect of my grades eventually resulted in me losing a reduction of my scholarship. I went back to Chicago that summer [2002], only I didn't stay with my family, I stayed with Ann Monaco. It was comforting staying with her and doing things we used to do together. She had taught me to play Scrabble and we would watch old movies together, but what she wanted most of all was to find a gentle but firm way of persuading me to focus on getting my life back on track.

During this time of deep disappointment, Tereza stayed with Ann Monaco in Chicago during the summer of 2002. Tereza's family also lived in Chicago, and on Sunday July 28, 2002, Tereza decided to visit her family for Sunday church. Since Ms. Monaco had gone out for an early morning jog, Tereza left Ann a note to let her know she would be visiting her family and returning the following day. Tereza spent Sunday with her family, and the next day, she called Ms. Monaco to see if she could come pick her up from her parents' home. However, instead of Ms. Monaco answering the phone, her friend Jim picked up the call. Tereza received the startling and tragic news that Ms. Monaco had been hit by a drunk driver on Sunday while jogging and did not survive the accident:

My mind went blank. My throat became dry and no words came out. After a long pause my voice cracked, "That's impossible." As soon as I hung up, I lost all control. I cried miserably for hours before calling my parents at the cleaners to tell them the news.

On top of the hopelessness Tereza felt from losing her scholarship and the indefinite postponement of the DREAM Act, she experienced a deeper depression from the tragic death of her mentor, friend, and support – Ms. Monaco. However, after Ms. Monaco's death, Merit sponsors kept their promise to sponsor Tereza's schooling when she returned to Manhattan in the fall. Tereza continued to struggle with depression and suicidal tendencies after she returned to Manhattan. However, Tereza wanted to do well and, if possible, regain the original Manhattan scholarship she had previously earned. This incentive, along with wanting to make her current sponsors proud, led Tereza to focus more carefully on her classes. Slowly, Tereza's life got back

on track. Tereza's sponsors introduced her to a new couple in New York who took her in and treated her as family. By her junior year in college, Tereza met jazz trombonist Danny Kirkhum and fell in love. She also earned better grades and was able to renew her original Manhattan scholarship.

Tereza graduated with a bachelor's degree from Manhattan School of Music in 2005 and within a short time married Kirkhum. The following spring, Tereza's father was showing advanced stages of diabetes. Without insurance or the financial means to pay for medication or doctor visits, Tereza's father lived with diabetes for several years without any medical attention. He knew he was dying, but he did not want to incur burdensome medical bills for his family, "There was no help available for someone who was poor and undocumented. His much-needed kidney transplant would be impossible" (Lee, 2011, p. 73). Within two years of Tereza's wedding, her father died at the age of 49 from an advanced stage of diabetes. Tereza writes:

Before he died the following year, he told me, through his tears, "I am sorry for all the pain I caused you, for beating you and cursing at you, for being painfully stubborn and merciless. I didn't know any better, I didn't know any other way to raise a child." He also told Danny, "Now you're part of our family. I'm sorry I misjudged you before. You're a good man."

Throughout her college years, Tereza kept close track of the DREAM Act legislative progress. Even though the bill was re-introduced several times in various forms, it failed to pass legislation every time.

"With Liberty and Justice for All"

The day finally came when Tereza experienced the formal process of swearing her oath of American citizenship before a judge. Tereza remembers it this way:

I had grown up reciting the Pledge nearly every day, but this was the first time it brought tears of joy to my eyes. After 26 years of living my life as an American, I had the privilege of swearing my oath of citizenship. My name was called, the judge handed me my Certificate of Citizenship, and I stared at it blankly. I couldn't believe that a single sheet of paper had such authority over my life – what it represented was what I had believed for as long as I could remember, that I was a rightful citizen of the country I had always called home.

Tereza's husband planned a surprise party with their friends and family to mark the momentous occasion: "Our apartment was decorated with red, white, and blue streamers, and we had an afternoon of hotdogs, apple pie, and all things Americana" (Lee, 2011, p. 74). Ironically, the same year Tereza became a citizen, the DREAM Act was re-introduced to Senate five times (Lee, personal communications).

Senate Hearing for the DREAM Act

In 2010, the DREAM Act passed in the House of Representatives and had a majority vote in the Senate, but it was blocked by a filibuster. The following year on May 11, 2011, Senator Harry Reid reintroduced the DREAM Act. Ten years after the very first introduction of the bill, Senator Richard Durbin held the long awaited first-ever hearing for the DREAM Act on June 28, 2011. Tereza and several others were re-invited to appear before the Senate to tell their stories with Durbin.

Since the DREAM Act had been postponed, Tereza and other Asian American undocumented students had to find their own way through college. The passage of the DREAM Act would have definitely helped Tereza, but she was very fortunate to have people who helped her surmount the challenges she faced as an undocumented student to complete college and move forward with her life (Lee, 2011). She married, became a citizen, completed her master's degree, and is currently pursuing a doctorate degree at the Manhattan School of Music. Tereza

also teaches at Manhattan's School of Music and is an inspiration to other young musicians.

Tereza feels that she and her family are also beginning to heal. When Tereza's brother turned 21, he was able to sponsor their mother legally, and she now has a green card (Lee, 2011).

Even though Tereza did not directly benefit from the proposed DREAM Act legislation or DACA (which was enacted two years after she gained citizenship), Tereza remains an active advocate for undocumented immigrant rights and vows to advocate for the DREAM Act until it becomes the law of the land (Lee, 2011).

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tereza's story cannot be fully understood without also understanding the contexts in which her story is situated, including the history of Asian immigration and emergence of undocumented immigrants, restrictive laws excluding Asians and the experiences of undocumented immigrants, the impact of a legacy of legal exclusion and self-advocacy efforts of Asian individuals, and the theoretical frameworks focused on Asian Crit. Tereza's story and her experience as an Asian undocumented student are situated within two contexts: the history of Asian immigration and the emergence of the U.S. immigration system that began to document immigrants. Tereza's story represents an important counter story to what many perceive as the dominant narrative and the widely held misconception that the issues of undocumented students only affect Latinos. Chang (1993) maintains that AsianCrit seeks to amplify the very stories of marginalized individuals who have been excluded. AsianCrit centers the voices and work of Asian Americans in research (Museus & Iftikar, 2013).

Tereza's courage in telling her story is also an example of self-advocacy. Tereza's telling of her own story helped her transcend the invisibility and silence that her undocumented status imposed on her. Paralleling Takaki (1998), this study sought to understand Tereza as an actor in the making of the undocumented student movement and adds to the collective history of Asian individuals (Museus & Iftikar, 2013) who raised their voices fighting for a place in U.S. society amid laws that created systematic barriers.

The literature review is organized to build on the history of exclusion against Asians that has led to current immigration laws governing undocumented immigrants in the U.S. To understand how these patterns of exclusion developed, the first section of the literature review includes a brief history of the three waves of Asian immigration, including Korean immigration to the U.S. Also included in this section is a specific focus on the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the series of immigration laws that sustained exclusion of all Asian immigrants from 1882 to 1965. In addition, a description of how these discriminatory laws ushered in an era of exclusion that applied not only externally to Asian immigrants wanting to enter the U.S. and how this exclusion extended internally to restrict Asian individuals already living in the U.S., but also how exclusionary practices embedded in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act have served as the foundation for current immigration practices in the U.S. (Lee 2002/2004/2007, Ngai 2004/2014) and created the concept of illegal immigration and undocumented immigrant status (Lee 2002/2004/2007, Ngai 2004/2014) are explored. Section two describes the experiences of current undocumented immigrant families, with a focus on undocumented students in higher education. In section three, the literature review presents landmark cases that demonstrate how Asian individuals fought against exclusion through legal efforts, including cases of Asian individuals who fought for educational rights. Finally, section four describes the theoretical frameworks that undergird this study. From an Asian Crit perspective, Museus (2014) suggests that even though Asian college students' experiences are rarely discussed within historical contexts, it is precisely these contexts that are critical for understanding Asian college students' backgrounds and lives. Therefore, critical race theory, AsianCrit, and how CRT and ACRT are applied in higher education are also presented.

Asian Immigration to the U.S.

Historically, Asians have immigrated to the U.S for a variety of reasons: employment, business opportunities, religious freedom, family re-unification, escape from war-torn countries, political asylum, and educational opportunities (Zong & Batlova, 2016). However, throughout the history of Asian immigration to the U.S., federally restrictive and racially biased immigration laws passed from the 1880s through 1924 have been aimed to exclude Asian immigrants from entering the U.S. (Abrams, 2005; Ngai, 2004/2014; Salyer, 1995).¹

Hing (2003) notes that the flow of Asian immigration to the U.S. is characterized by three main factors: 1) cycles of acceptance (when Asian immigrants were seen as a source of labor that is cheap and reliable) and rejection (when Asian immigrants were seen as targets of racial prejudice and competitors for jobs), 2) U.S. relations with Asian countries (WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War), and 3) the legislation that reflects these cycles of acceptance and rejection. One common way historians describe Asian immigration to the U.S. is in terms of pre-1965 and post-1965 (Hing, 2003). Another common way Asian immigration to the U.S is described is by major immigration waves (Danico, 2014; Daniels, 2002; Hune, 2002; Museus, 2014; Takaki, 1998; Zia, 2000). The first wave of Asian immigration took place between 1848 and 1924. It was during the first wave that anti-Chinese sentiment became so severe that historians point to a well-documented exclusionary period, also referred to as the “driving-out time,” when the Chinese were literally driven out of communities and jobs through intimidation and severe acts of violence (Zia, 2000, p. 27; see also Pfaelzer, 2007, 2008; Saxton, 1995; Schoennichsen, 2011).

¹ According to the Office of Management and Budget, a person who identifies as Asian is someone whose origins are from the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam (Hoeffel et al., 2012).

Post-1965 includes the second wave (1965-1980) and a third modern wave (1981/1990-today).

These three immigration waves are discussed in further detail.

First Wave: Pre-1965

Many of today's Asian Americans are descendants of the nearly one million Asian immigrants who came to the U.S during the first wave of Asian immigration that took place during nearly a century of migration between 1848 and 1924 (Chan, 1991; Daniels, 2002; Hune, 2002; Sowell, 1981; Takaki, 1998; Zia, 2000). The first wave of Asians was spurred by the 1848 California Gold Rush and the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad. The first Asian immigrants were predominantly Chinese male laborers and sojourners in search of monetary gain and mining jobs (Daniels, 2002; Lee, 2003, 2004, 2007b; Takaki, 1998). Asians who migrated to the U.S. during the first wave helped establish the western states (Chan, 1991; Museus, 2014). In the early stages of the first wave, Chinese immigrants were welcomed under the conditions set forth by the 1868 Burlingame Treaty between the U.S. and China to build both favorable relations between the two countries and to encourage immigration (Takaki, 1998). The U.S. granted China the high status of a most favored nation, and Chinese immigrants were granted the right to reside in the U.S. and move freely in and out of the country; reciprocal rights were granted to U.S citizens in China as well (Takaki, 1998).

However, when an influx of nearly 300,000 Chinese laborers immigrated to the U.S., mainly to California, whites saw the Chinese as rivals for jobs, which led to widespread discrimination and a strong anti-Chinese movement (Daniels, 2002; Pfaelzer, 2008; Takaki, 1998). In the late 1880s, even though the Chinese only comprised .002% of the U.S. population, strong anti-Chinese sentiment grew to unprecedented proportions due to the

economic crisis of the 1877 recession and competition for jobs at the time (Takaki, 1998). The Chinese were no longer favorable to the U.S.; instead, they were depicted as the yellow peril and stereotyped as a menace to society (Takaki, 1998). Chinese laborers soon became most unwelcomed in the U.S., and the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was enacted to prevent further Chinese laborers from entering the U.S. (Takaki, 1998). Severe anti-Chinese sentiment persuaded legislators to enact two additional anti-Chinese legislation commonly referred to as the Chinese Exclusion Acts. These three Chinese Exclusion Acts are discussed in further detail later on in this section.

From 1882 to 1943, Chinese immigrants, primarily laborers, were legally excluded from immigrating to the U.S., and severe restrictions were placed on Chinese already residing the U.S., including deportation if they were found to be in the U.S. without authorized documentation (Pfaelzer, 2008; Salyer, 1995; Takaki, 1998). Due to the widespread violence, discrimination, deportations, and voluntary departures, the overall U.S. population of Chinese dropped from 107,000 in 1890 to 90,000 in 1900, about a 16% drop (Pfaelzer, 2008).

As the Chinese labor population in the U.S. dwindled, subsequent Asian ethnic immigrants (Japanese, Filipinos, Asian Indians, and Koreans) replaced the Chinese immigrant laborers in the work force (Takaki, 1998). Similar to the push-pull of the initial acceptance and subsequent rejection of the Chinese, each Asian ethnic group immigrating to the U.S. was also first welcomed as cheap labor, but later excluded through U.S. legislation when they were viewed as economic threats (Hing, 2003). Subsequently, the anti-Chinese sentiment was eventually transferred to all Asian ethnic groups who also suffered extraordinary discrimination (Lee, 1998; Ong & Liu, 1994). As a result of this widespread anti-Asian sentiment, an additional series of restrictive immigration laws passed between 1907 and 1924 systematically excluded the

immigration of all Asians to the U.S. (Lee, 2003, 2004, 2007b; Ngai, 1999, 2004/2014; Ong & Liu, 1994; Salyer, 1995). These laws are commonly referred to as the Asian Exclusion Acts. The effect of the Asian Exclusion Acts is also discussed later on in this section.

The anti-Asian immigration laws culminated with the passage of the 1924 Johnson Reed Immigration Act, which essentially banned all Asians from immigrating to the U.S. (Lee, 2003, 2007b; Ngai, 1999, 2004/2014; Ong & Liu, 1994; Salyer, 1995) and thus ended the first wave of Asian immigration to the U.S. (Ong & Liu, 1994; Takaki, 1998). From 1921 to 1960, Asians constituted almost 4% of all immigrants to the U.S (Nakanishi & Lai, 2003, p. 48), but the effect of the 1924 Immigration Act further limited Asian immigration to the U.S. (Takaki, 1998). By 1965, the Asian population in the U.S. was only one half of one percent (Takaki, 1998).

Second Wave

Several war-time factors preceded the second large wave of Asian immigration (Daniels, 2002; Hing, 2003; Takaki, 1998). Just as the initial exclusion of Asians to the U.S. began with the Chinese, a slight reversal of this exclusion also began with the Chinese when the U.S. turned to China as an official ally against Japan during WWII. The passage of the 1943 Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act (Magnuson Act) allowed a small trickle of Chinese immigrants to the U.S. at a 105-immigrant quota per year (Danico, 2014; Hing, 2003). Secondly, in 1946, after 70 years of exclusion of Chinese women, the 1875 Page Law was also reversed that allowed wives of Chinese citizens to immigrate to the U.S. on a non-quota basis (Hing, 2003). Third, to improve relations with India and the Philippines who fought for the U.S. during WWII, the 1946 Luce-Cellar Act extended limited immigration quotas to Asian Indians and Filipino immigrants at 100 per year per country, including the immigration of their wives and children on a non-quota basis

(Hing, 2003). Fourth, the 1945 War Brides Act temporarily removed the ban on Asian immigration to allow spouses and adopted children of service men to immigrate to the U.S. (Danico, 2014; Hing, 2003). Fifth, the 1946 Fiancé Act allowed foreign-born fiancés of military personnel to enter the U.S. with non-immigrant status but required them to marry within a specified time frame (Danico, 2014; Hing, 2003). Despite these piecemeal wartime provisions of Asian immigration, the overall ban on Asian immigration from the 1924 Immigration Act remained in effect (Danico, 2014). The major influx of the second wave of Asian immigration to the U.S. did not take place in large numbers until post-1965 (Chan, 1991; Hing, 2003; Lee, 1998; Nakanishi & Lai, 2003; Ngai, 2004/2014; Takaki, 1998).

The major factors that transformed Asian immigration to the U.S. and ushered in the second large wave of Asian immigrants took place after the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act (Chan, 1991; Hing, 2003; Lee, 1999; Nakanishi & Lai, 2003; Ngai, 2004/2014; Takaki, 1998) and the end of the Vietnam War (Lee, 1998). The Immigration Act of 1965, enacted during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, is seen as the watershed act that resulted in the second wave of Asian immigrants to the U.S. (Nakanishi & Lai, 2003; Takaki, 1998). According to Museus (2014), the children of the second generation of Asians were mobilized to engage in the Civil Rights Movement and “fought to transform higher education” (p. 33). The Immigration Act of 1965 nullified racial quotas passed in the Immigration Act of 1924 and reversed decades of exclusionary laws prohibiting Asian immigration (Chan, 1991; Hing, 2003; Immigration and Nationality Act, 1965; Ngai, 2014; Takaki, 1998). Immigration quotas were set at 20,000 immigrants per country, with preference granted to immigrants who were professionals, artists, and family members of U.S citizens who could enter on a non-quota basis (Takaki, 1998). The 1965 Immigration Act was not expected to increase immigration to the

U.S. overall (Hing, 2003; Massey & Pren, 2012). In particular, it was also believed there would be very little change in the number of Asian immigrants joining their families in the U.S.

Because the exclusion laws during the first wave were so widespread, very few Asians were in the U.S. at the time (Hing, 2003; Takaki, 1998):

Our cities will not be flooded with a million immigrants annually...[and] the ethnic mix of this country will not be upset. . . . Contrary to the charges in some quarters, [the bill] will not inundate America with immigrants from any one country or area, or the most populated and economically deprived nations of Africa and Asia. (Hing, 2003, p. 95)

However, passage of the 1965 Immigration Act resulted in unintended consequences regarding Asian immigration and “took the United States by surprise” (Hing, 2003, p. 79; see also Lee, 1998). The 1965 Immigration Act allowed new Asian immigrants to bring their wives and children with them on a non-quota basis; thus, Asians in the second wave were able to arrive as “families rather than as single men, and as settlers rather than sojourners,” as was the case in the first wave (Takaki, 1998, p. 421). Furthermore, Reimers (1992) refers to a new immigration pattern among Asian families that also accounts for the influx of Asians during the second wave called “chain migration” (p. 96). For example, thousands of Asians who came to the U.S. post-1965 came as students, found employment, and changed their status from student to immigrant under the Department of Labor certification process (Takaki, 1998). Once husbands and wives became citizens, they could bring their parents to the U.S. and also sponsor their siblings’ arrival in the U.S (Reimers, 1992; Takaki, 1998). Once in the U.S., the siblings could then arrange for the arrival of their spouses and children, become citizens, and continue the chain of immigration to the U.S. (Reimers, 1992; Takaki, 1998). Thus, new immigration patterns – particularly from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, Philippines, and Korea – emerged after 1965 (Nakanishi & Lai, 2003). The 1965 Immigration Act had the most profound impact on Korean immigration to

America, and more than 95% of Korean Americans today are the result of post-1965 Korean immigration (Kim & Min, 1992; Min, 2011).

Lee (1998) indicates that the Vietnam War also had a profound effect on Southeast Asian immigration after the U.S. pulled out of the war in 1973. Fearing persecution and retaliation, Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, and Hmong who supported the U.S. in the war were forced out of their homes and came to the U.S. as involuntary refugee immigrants (Lee, 1998). The first flow of refugees, approximately 25,000, came from South Vietnam between 1961 and 1976 (Lee, 1998). These refugees were predominantly educated middle- and upper-class professionals who worked in the South Vietnamese Army or supported U.S. concerns (Lee, 1998). The Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 spurred a second flow of Southeast Asian refugees who re-settled in the U.S between 1975 and 1994, consisting of large numbers of Vietnamese (700,000), Cambodians and Laotians (500,000) (Lee, 1998). Because of Hmong support of the U.S during the secret war against Laos, approximately 90% Hmong refugees (180,000) were also re-settled in the U.S. during the second flow of Southeast Asians. The second flow of refugees came from rural areas, were poorer and less educated; they and possessed fewer professional skills than the refugees in the first flow (Lee, 1998). Typically, refugee status was changed to immigrant status after one year of their arrival to the U.S. (Lee, 1999).

According to Lee (1998) and Takaki (1998), Asian immigration to the U.S. during the second wave was characterized by immigrants seeking professional employment, family unification, refuge from political conflict, educational opportunities, and religious freedom. Further, the second wave Asians represented increased ethnic diversity among Asians due to the large influx of Southeast Asians (Chan, 1991; Hune, 2002; Museus, 2014). In general, most

Asians post-1965 were distinct from the first wave in that they represented sizeable numbers of highly skilled professionals rather than laborers, they emigrated from cities rather than rural areas, and they tended to be more educated (Takaki, 1998). However, it is important to note that not all post-1965 Asian immigrants fit these characteristics (Hune 2000; Lee, 1998). For example, while a percentage of Southeast Asian refugees could be characterized as middle and upper class, thousands of others were poor, less educated, and possessed few professional skills (Hune, 2002; Lee, 1998).

Between 1970 and 1980, the number of Asian immigrants grew from 825,000 to 2.5 million, a 308% increase (Zong & Batlova, 2016). In the 20 years from 1970 to 1990 close to four million Asians immigrated to the U.S., which is four times the number of Asians who immigrated to the U.S. during the first 100 years (Daniels, 2002; Hune, 2002; Nakanishi & Lai, 2003; Ong & Liu, 1994; Takaki, 1998). Between 1971 and 1980, Asians represented 35% of all U.S immigrants (Nakanishi & Lai, 2003, p. 48).

Third Wave

The third wave of Asian immigration wave began with a surge in the 1980s and is still taking place today (Zong & Batlova, 2016). The Asian immigrant population grew from 35% of the total U.S. immigration in the 1970s to 42% in the 1980s (Nakanishi & Lai, 2003, p. 48). The U.S. Census reported a 70% increase in the Asian population from 1981 to 1991, which was fueled largely by a sustained wave of immigrants from East and Southeast Asia (Barringer, 1993). This third wave was also impacted by several legislative and transnational factors (Danico, 2014; Takaki, 1998). For example, the 1980 Refugee Act increased the number of entries of Southeast Asian refugees (Vietnamese, Laotian, and Hmong) to 50,000 and established

a re-settlement program (Danico, 2014; Lee, 1998). This act made it possible for nearly 3 million refugees to immigrate to the U.S (Danico, 2014). Also, as a result of the Vietnam War, the Amerasian Immigrant Acts of 1982/1987 – in conjunction with the Orderly Departure Program – facilitated immigration specifically from Vietnam (Chuong & Van, 1994). Children fathered by U.S. service men during the Vietnam War and their relatives immigrated to the United States as a result of these acts (Chuong & Van, 1994; Danico, 2014). The majority of Amerasians from Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand immigrated under these acts (Danico, 2014: Chuong & Van, 1994). By 1990, Asian immigration grew to 4.9 million, which was a 196% increase from 1980 (Zong & Batlova, 2016). During the 1990s, even though the overall number of Asian immigrants increased, the growth rate slowed to 65% in 1990, to 37% in the 2000s, and to 12% from 2010 to 2014 (Zong & Batlova, 2016). However, from 2012 to 2013, 61% of the Asian population growth was due to immigration (Brown, 2014). As mentioned, the 1965 Immigration Act had the most profound impact on Korean immigration to America, and more than 95% of Korean Americans today are the result of post-1965 Korean immigration (Kim & Min, 1992; Min, 2011). Korean immigration to the U.S. is discussed next.

Korean Immigration to the U.S.

According to Min (2011), a small number of Korean students and politicians immigrated to the U.S after diplomatic relations between the U.S and Korea were established in 1884. In his seminal work regarding Korean emigration, Patterson (1988/1994) reported that between 1896 and 1902, only 20 Koreans immigrated to the mainland U.S via Hawaii, and they were mainly merchants. However, the majority of Korean immigration to the U.S occurred in three major periods defined as the old immigration period, 1903-1949; the intermediate immigration period,

1950-1964; and contemporary immigration, 1965-present (Min, 2011). The three periods of Korean immigration were influenced by several factors: poverty in Korea, domination of Japan over Korea, the need for cheap labor in America, the Korean American War (Fawcett & Arnold, 1987), and the Immigration Act of 1965.

The first period of Korean immigration to the U.S, which took place between 1903 and 1949, was mainly motivated by elements that both pushed and pulled Koreans to the U.S. (Min, 2011). The push had to do with the famine in Korea and the colonialization of Korea by Japan (Chan; 1990; Patterson, 1994; Min, 2011); the pull was America's need for recruiting cheap labor (Chan, 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994; Min 2011) and Korean Christians' hope for a better life (Chan, 1990; Choy 1979; Patterson, 1988/1994). Thus, the systematic immigration of 7,000 Koreans to Hawaii and the U.S mainland took place primarily from 1903 to 1905 (Chan, 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994; Min, 2011).

By the early 1900s, Japanese workers had staged labor strikes on Hawaii's sugar plantations and left plantations in search of better working conditions (Chan 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994). In 1902, nearly 1,000 Japanese (followed by 6,000 in 1904 and 10,000 in 1905) left for California, which meant a shortage of laborers for sugar plantation supervisors in Hawaii (Chan 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994). To rectify the shortage of labor, Hawaii's Sugar Planters Association influenced the U.S minister to Korea, George Nash, to establish a partnership with Korea to recruit Korean laborers as replacements for the Japanese strikers (Chan, 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994; Min, 2011). The emperor of Korea agreed to the partnership, believing that Korean emigration would help ease the effects of the famine (Chan, 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994).

Thus, George Nash persuaded Reverend George Heber Jones and Homer Hubert, prominent Christian missionaries in Korea, to convince members of their congregation that it would be easier for Koreans to practice Christianity in Hawaii (Chan, 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994). As a result, nearly 40% of the first 7,000 Korean immigrants to Hawaii were Protestant Christians (Chan, 1990; Patterson, 1988/1994). This initial emigration from Korea to the U.S. also included over 600 women and 500 children (Chan, 1990). While nearly 1,000 Koreans returned to Korea, another 1,000 re-located to the U.S. mainland to join Korean communities of mainly merchants and students who had emigrated directly to the U.S. (Chan, 1990).

Emigration of Koreans to the U.S was curbed in 1905 when, in the middle of the Russo-Japanese war, Japan gained control over the Korean peninsula (Chan, 1990). Additionally, in an effort to protect the Japanese sugar plantation strikers from Korean workers breaking picket lines, Japanese representatives in Korea banned emigration of Koreans to the U.S. (Chan, 1990). Further, since Korea was colonized by Japan, the 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement between the U.S. and Japan (Expatriation Act, 1907) also meant Koreans were further barred from immigrating to the U.S. (Chan, 1990). Political activists or students involved in the fight for Korea's independence from Japan managed to escape to the U.S. (Chan, 1990; Min, 2011). Even though the Immigration Act of 1924 essentially barred all Asians from immigrating to the U.S. (Min, 2011), the War Bride Act of 1946 allowed American servicemen in Korea to bring their Korean wives and children to the United States (Min, 2011). Therefore, Koreans who did immigrate to the U.S. between 1905 and 1924 were primarily brides of Korean immigrant bachelors already in Hawaii and California (Hurh, 1998; Min, 2011) and political activists (Chan 1990; Min, 2011).

The second period of Korean immigrants to the U.S took place from 1950 to 1964 when nearly 15,000 Koreans immigrated to the U.S. (Min, 2011). The second period was influenced by political and military elements fostered by the Korean War from 1950 to 1953 (Fawcett & Arnold, 1987; Min, 2011) and the McCarran-Walter Act (Min, 2011). The McCarran-Walter Act allowed a small annual quota of Asians to immigrate to the U.S. and allowed citizenship for Asians already in the U.S. (Min, 2011). Although most Korean immigrants who entered the U.S during the old immigration period were men (Min, 2011), the overwhelming majority of Korean immigrants during the second immigration period were either women (primarily wives of U.S. servicemen) or Korean adoptees (Fawcett & Arnold, 1987; Min, 2011). Also, nearly 6,000 Korean students, mostly male, enrolled in graduate study entered the U.S. between 1950 and 1964 (Kim, 1971; Min, 2011). The majority of these graduates found jobs as professionals in the U.S., such as professors at universities (Min, 2011).

The third period of Korean immigration to the U.S., referred to as the contemporary period, took place post-1965. The overall number of Koreans who applied for permission from their government to emigrate grew from less than 3,000 in 1963 to more than 30,000 in 1983 (Fawcett & Arnold, 1987). For the U.S., the enactment of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act reversed decades of Asian exclusion and had the most profound impact on Korean immigration to America (Kim & Min, 1992; Min, 2011). More than 95% of Korean Americans today are the result of post-1965 Korean immigration (Min, 2011). The contemporary period is divided into two periods: the accelerating period, 1965-1990, and the declining/leveling-off period, 1990-present (Min, 2011).

The influx of Koreans during the accelerating period took place with the passing of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act that abolished the racial barriers that had previously

limited Asian immigration, including Koreans (Kim & Min, 1992; Min, 1990, 2011). From 1965 to 1990, nearly 600,000 Koreans immigrated to the U.S. (Kim & Min, 1992; Min, 2011). Korean immigrants were the second largest Asian immigrant group to the U.S between 1976 and 1990, surpassed only by Filipinos as the largest Asian immigrant group (Min, 2011). A large majority of the newer Korean immigrants settled in Los Angeles, which made the Korean community in Los Angeles both the largest Korean center in the United States and also the largest overseas Korean center (Min, 1990).

According to Min (2011), the three push factors that accelerated Korean immigration to the U.S. included Korea's low standard of living and minimal job opportunities, Korea's political instability and lack of political freedom due to the conflict with North Korea, and Korea's high competition for college admission and high tuition costs (Min, 2011). The factors contributing to the pull for Korean immigration to the U.S. during this acceleration period included better economic (Hurh & Kim, 1979), educational and job opportunities and sustained military relations between Korea and the U.S., including the migration of Korean wives of U.S. servicemen (Min, 2006, 2011). Finally, Min (2011) suggests that American culture popularized in Korea by the continued presence of American forces in Korea, migration of Korean wives to the U.S., the number of post graduate Korean students in the U.S, and television media established for American servicemen served as positive pull factors for Korean immigration through the 1980s (Min, 2011). The number of Korean immigrants began to drastically decline in 1991 (Min, 2011). Compared to 1990 when 32,301 Koreans immigrated to the U.S., the number in 1991 dropped to 26,518 (Min, 2011). In 1999, the Korean immigration numbers reached a low of 12,000 (Min, 2011), and the number leveled off somewhat between 2000 and 2009.

Throughout the history of Asian immigration to the U.S., federally restrictive and racially biased immigration laws passed from the 1880s through 1924 were aimed to exclude Asian immigrants from entering the U.S. (Abrams, 2005; Ngai, 2004/2014; Salyer, 1995). The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was the first federal law whose language explicitly targeted an ethnic group – specifically to prevent Chinese laborers from immigrating to the U.S. (Abrams, 2005). Next, I explain the series of Chinese Exclusion Acts and the subsequent Asian Exclusion Acts.

1882 Chinese Exclusion Act(s)

The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act is arguably the most significant and racially motivated federal legislation explicit in intention and language to restrict immigration of an entire ethnic group (Daniels, 1997; Lee 2004; Neuman, 1996; Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995). Among other restrictions, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act specifically banned Chinese laborers from immigrating to the U.S. for an initial period of 10 years (Daniels, 1997; Lee, 2004; Ngai, 2004/2014; Salyer, 1995). The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act is the pivotal law that set a precedence to enact additional legislation that eventually excluded all Asian immigrants from coming the U.S., set up an exclusionary system of immigration policies as we know them today, and legalized a practice of exclusion that racialized Asians who were already living in the U.S. and prevented them from fully participating in U.S. society.

The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act is the first act in a set of three exclusionary laws known as the Chinese Exclusion Acts. After the first Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was passed, Chinese individuals continued to be excluded from immigration due to intense anti-Chinese sentiments which spurred a series of anti-Chinese immigration laws which extended the duration and intensity of exclusion (Salyer, 1995). The second of the Chinese Exclusion Acts, referred to

as the 1888 Scott Act, was considered the most stringent exclusionary law of its time (Salyer, 2006). The 1888 Scott Act and its amendment gave unrestricted power to Congress to prohibit entry and re-entry to immigrants regardless of previously established treaties, empowered immigration officials to determine eligibility for admission, and limited immigrant's ability to take cases to court (Salyer, 1995). The Scott Act gave "sweeping power to Congress to deny entry to any "aliens it chose" in war time or peace (Salyer, 2006, p. 7). In 1892, when the first Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was about to expire, the third Chinese Exclusion Act, known as the Geary Act of 1892, was enacted and extended the Chinese exclusion in the U.S. for an additional 10 years. The 1892 Geary Act also enforced the deportation of Chinese immigrants living in the U.S. if they failed to register and obtain authorized documentation (Salyer, 1995). In 1902, the Geary Act was renewed indefinitely (Salyer, 1995). The McCreary Amendment allowed any U.S. citizen to report a Chinese person who was illegally present in the U.S., which resulted in an arrest and subsequent deportation (Schoennichsen, 2011). The Chinese were the only immigrant group required to show documentation to prove authorized residency until the 1920s (Lee, 2003, 2004, 2007b). The 1892 Geary Act established the government's plenary power to deport unauthorized immigrants in time of war or peace (Salyer, 1995).

The culminating enforcement of these three Chinese Exclusion Acts, not only prevented Chinese immigrants from entering the U.S., but they also created an era of exclusion that targeted Chinese individuals already living in the U.S. (Takaki, 1998). During this exclusionary period, severe anti-Chinese sentiment turned into mob violence by driving thousands of Chinese out of their homes, jobs, and communities (Chan, 1991; Karlin, 1948, 1954; Pfaelzer, 2008; Takaki, 1998). Examples of mob violence against the Chinese included arson (Chan 1991; Chang, 2003); lynchings (Chang, 2003; Dorland, 1894; Locklear, 1960); assaults (Chang, 2003);

murders (Chang, 2003; Dorland, 1894; Locklear, 1960); mutilations (Chan, 1991; Chang, 2003); robberies (Nokes, 2006); vandalism and looting (Chang, 2003; Dodd, 1907; Dorland, 1894; Locklear, 1960; Nokes, 2006); whippings (Chang, 2003); riots (Dorland, 1894; Karlin 1954; Lee, 2007a; Nokes, 2006; Saxton, 1995; Wortman, 1965); massacres (Chan, 1991; Dorland, 1894; Nokes, 2006; Stratton, 1983); and expulsion (Stratton, 1983).

Collectively, these three Chinese Exclusion Acts also set the stage for U.S. lawmakers to enact an additional set of restrictive laws that continued to exclude Chinese immigrants and also extended further to exclude all Asian immigrants. In other words, these subsequent acts progressively forbade entry to the U.S. for all Asian immigrants and ushered in the Asian Exclusion Acts (Lee, 2002; Ngai, 1999, 2004/2014). The Asian Exclusion Acts will be discussed next.

As the Chinese immigrant labor force dwindled due to the collective impact of the Chinese Exclusion Acts, the U.S began to look elsewhere for labor. Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Indian immigrant laborers were at first welcomed as cheap labor. However, the anti-sentiment that was first targeted at the Chinese was systematically transferred to each of these Asian ethnic groups as well when they were perceived to threaten labor opportunities (Lee, 2003, 2004, 2007b, Takaki, 1998). As a result, additional exclusionary laws were passed that resulted in eventually banning of all Asian ethnic groups' arrival to the U.S. (Lee, 2003; Takaki, 1998). This series of laws acts are referred to as the Asian Exclusion Acts. These exclusionary acts include the 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement, the Asiatic Barred Zone, the Tyding's Mc Duffie Act, and finally the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act. The 1924 Johnson-Reed Act is commonly referred to as the ultimate Asian Exclusion Act because it effectively banned all Asians from entering the U.S. (Ngai, 2004/2014). It reinforced all previous restrictive U.S. immigration

policies and the procedures set in motion with the Chinese Exclusion Acts (Ngai, 2004/2014); plus, it included a clause that specifically prohibited all Asians from entering into the U.S. on the grounds that they were aliens ineligible for citizenship, (Ngai, 2004; Takaki, 1998).

In addition to the 1924 immigration ban on all Asian immigrants, internal federal and state laws also restricted the participation of Asian individuals already living in the U.S. (Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995). Bai (1991) argues that for over 150 years, discriminatory U.S. federal and state laws effectively excluded Asian immigrants from gaining “any kind of foothold in American society” (p. 750) because they were seen as the yellow peril threat to white laborers and as the unassimilable alien. An era of exclusion prevented Asians from fully participating in U.S. society: “as racial minorities, Asian Americans have been systematically excluded from full participation in American society in general and have been victims of the racist barriers” (p. 734). This era of exclusion is discussed next.

Federal and state laws excluded Asians who were already living in the U.S. from naturalization (Naturalization Act, 1790, 1870), citizenship (Chan, 1991; Takaki, 1998; Volpp, 2005), employment, (Chan, 1991; Chew 1994; Daniels, 2008; Saxton, 1995; Yamato, 1994), equal wages, (Chan, 1991; Yamato, 1994), family life (Daniels, 2008; Moran, 2003; Peffer, 1986), voting (Salyer, 1995;), owning/ leasing land (Aoki, 1998; Cott, 1998; Daniels, 2008), testifying in court (Chin, 2013; *People v. Hall, 1852*), intermarrying (Daniels, 2008; Pascoe, 1991, 1996; Sohoni, 2007; Volpp, 2005), economic gain (Daniels, 2008; Takaki, 1998), communities (Chan, 1991; Saxton, 1995; Wortman, 1965; Zesch, 2012), veteran benefits (Odo, 2002), elementary education (Chan, 1991; Kuo 1998; Takaki, 1998; Wollenburg, 1978), and higher education (Astin, 2006; Museus, 2009). The following discussion demonstrates that exclusion of Asians in the U.S. is not a matter of isolated incidences; instead, these examples

demonstrate a “legacy of exclusion” and patterns of institutional marginalization (Salyer 2006, p. 8; see also Chang, 1993). For the purposes of this research, a closer review of exclusions applied to Asians living in the U.S. related to citizenship, family life, and education are discussed in more detail.

Asians Excluded from Citizenship

From the Naturalization Law of 1790, naturalized citizenship was limited to only “free-white persons,” thereby implicitly excluding Blacks, Native American Indians, and Chinese. Later, the Naturalization Law of 1870 allowed “aliens of African nativity and of African descent” to naturalize, but this law still did not include Chinese (U.S. Congress 1870, p. 256; see also Chan, 1991). By law, Asians were the only ethnic immigrant group explicitly denied naturalized U.S. citizenship (Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995). Exclusion of Chinese from citizenship was further underscored in 1878, in *re Ah Yup*, when the U.S Circuit Court in California declared Chinese ineligible for citizenship (Chan, 1991, p. 47). This ruling, in conjunction with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and subsequent exclusionary laws, explicitly banned Chinese from becoming naturalized U.S. citizens for a period of nearly 61 years (Zia, 2000). “Aliens ineligible for U.S. citizenship” eventually became a common euphemism referring to all Asian immigrants (Oda, 2015, p. 174; see also Ngai, 2004). Additional laws systematically prevented Japanese, Asians Indians, Filipinos, and Koreans from obtaining naturalized citizenship because they were also deemed as “non-white” and as “aliens ineligible for U.S. citizenship” (Ngai, 2004/2014, p. 9; see also Chan, 1991; Takaki, 1998). Asians and other non-whites were not permitted to become U.S. citizens until 1952 with the McCarran-Walter Act (Ngai, 2004/2014; Takaki, 1998).

Asians Excluded from Forming Families

Prior to the Chinese Exclusion Act, the 1875 Page Act is considered one of the first federally restrictive and racially biased immigration laws (Abrams, 2005). Even though the Page Act was meant to curb transportation of Chinese contract laborers to the U.S., it also prohibited immigration of Chinese prostitutes (Abrams, 2005). Since most Chinese women were presumed to be prostitutes, essentially all single Chinese women were prohibited from immigrating to the U.S. (Daniels, 2008; Pascoe, 1991, 1996). Thus, Chinese men were also prohibited from bringing their wives (Takaki, 1998). While the Page Law was passed primarily to prohibit prostitutes from immigrating to the U.S., the intent and enforcement of the law targeted Chinese women overall, including wives of Chinese laborers already in the U.S. (Abrams, 2005). By excluding women from immigrating to the U.S., the Page Law “prevented the birth of Chinese Americans and stunted the growth of Chinese American communities (Abrams, 2005, p. 641.) Further it was illegal for a white woman to intermarry with a Chinese man, further preventing family life for laborers in the U.S. (Daniels, 2008; Pascoe, 1991, 1996; Sohoni, 2007; Volpp, 2005)

Asians Excluded from Education

Historically, the American public educational system has served as a significant arena that has excluded minority children from full participation in public schools and promoted school segregation (Beasley, 1919/2007; Wollenburg, 1978). Kuo (1998) argues that “*Brown v. Board of Education* is commonly considered to be one of the most critical decisions handed down by the United States Supreme Court” that affected primarily African Americans (p. 182). However, while there is a body of literature that highlights African Americans’ exclusionary treatment in

schools, what is not widely known is that Asians were also excluded in public schools and there are important nuances that make the Asian American experience unique (Chang, 2003; Kuo, 1998). For instance, Chang (2003) notes that between 1871 and 1885 Asians were the only racial group excluded from state-funded education. Wollenburg (1978) also examined the exclusion of Asian children in K-12. As it relates to higher education, Astin (2006) highlighted the exclusion of Japanese college students during WWII, and Museus and Chang (2009) point to the discriminatory practices that exclude Asians in higher education.

Asians Excluded from K-12

“Despite the fact that Chinese Americans have both the longest presence in this country and the longest history of discrimination of any Asian group, the history of discrimination against Chinese Americans in the public schools is often forgotten” (Kuo, 1998, p. 182). In 1870, California revised its laws to allow separate schools for Negroes and Native American Indians, but Asians were excluded from these laws (Wollenburg, 1978). Chinese American children were excluded from participating in both white public schools and separate public schools from 1871 to 1885 (Kuo, 1998). Eventually, the California ordinance called for the establishment of “separate schools for children of Mongolian or Chinese descent” and ordered that when these schools were established “Chinese or Mongolian children must not be admitted into any other schools” (Assembly Bill 14, 1909; see also Wollenburg, 1978;). Among Asians, the Chinese were the first to be excluded from all white schools and segregated into Oriental Schools (Wollenberg, 1978). However, Oriental Schools had not been established in every district and were not easily accessible for Chinese children to attend.

The Japanese incarceration from 1942 to 1945 is yet another significant example of the exclusion of Asian children from mainstream education in the U.S, K-12. In 1942, in response to Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 forced relocation of all Japanese families living in designated militarized zones to ten U.S. incarceration camps on the basis that they were a threat to national security (Wollenberg, 1978). Of the 120,000 Japanese who were forcibly interned, 25,000 school children were also removed from American schools and subjected to sub-standard, under-resourced, understaffed, and segregated schools within the incarceration camps (Wollenberg, 1978).

Asians Excluded from Higher Education

Epenshade and Radford (2009) maintain that elite schools play a significant role in shaping and maintaining social inequality in the U.S. and the payoff for attending an elite school is increasing. Epenshade and Radford (2009) agree that college admission practices are the "grounds for the greatest contestation," especially when an applicant may have an advantage based upon criteria other than academic performance (p. 339). For example, several Ivy League schools are currently being accused of discriminating against Asian applicants by denying them admission when they meet the elite academic qualifications (Economist, 2015; Guillermo, 2015; Epenshade & Radford, 2009; and Jackson, 2015). Museus and Chang (2009) report that when it comes to college access and admissions, Asian Americans are misrepresented or used by "opposing forces" to further agendas for either "maintaining or dismantling affirmative action" (p. 60). Practices that support legacy admits and racial quotas limit the number of openings for Asian Americans (Museus & Chang, 2009). Kang (1996) notes that the term "negative action" (p. 3) has been used in college admissions practices that negatively impact Asian Americans and

their college applications: “Negative action against Asian Americans is in force if a university denies admission to an Asian American who would have been admitted had that person been White” (Kang, 1996, p. 3).

Kang (1996) explains negative action with a hypothetical example using the “Look like America” ideology presented during Clinton’s administration (p. 14). If the “Look like America” ideology were implemented, universities could adopt diversity admission practices that only allow the minimum percentage of minorities in the student body (including Asians) to reflect the national population, regardless of academic achievement. In this way, if the national population of Asians reflects 5%, Asians could be denied admission even though their academic qualifications would permit admission if they were White.

The previous sections discussed how the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 led to a history of systemic exclusion and discriminatory laws that essentially prevented all Asians from participating as viable members in U.S. society, including both Asian individuals wanting to enter the U.S. and Asian individuals already living in the U.S. The next section explains how the concept of illegality of immigration was rooted in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and how the restrictive laws led to Chinese immigrants being racialized as the first “illegal immigrants.” Also discussed is how current U.S. immigration policy and practices used to scrutinize, document, detain, and deport immigrants are all rooted in the exclusionary practices from the Chinese Exclusion Acts.

Illegality of Immigration Rooted in Exclusionary Practices

Although much of the current dialogue about illegal immigration in the U.S. focuses on the Latino population (primarily Mexicans crossing the Mexico-U.S. border), what may not be

commonly known is that from the mid-1800s to 1924, the dominant anti-immigrant dialogue regarding “illegal aliens” applied to Asian immigrants, beginning with the Chinese (Lee, 2003; Ngai, 2004/2014; Salyer, 1995; Schoennichsen, 2011; Takaki, 1998). The racialization of ethnic immigrants as the illegal immigrant is rooted in the restrictive laws that first legalized the exclusion of Chinese laborers, and eventually all Asian immigrants, from the U.S. (Abrams, 2005; Daniels, 1997; Lee, 2007; Lee, 2004; Neuman, 1996; Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995). The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act is referred to as the pivotal piece of federal legislation that overtly legalized exclusion of immigration by race, giving the Chinese “the dubious distinction of being the only group to be excluded from immigration into the United States explicitly by name” (Ngai, 2004, p. 202; see also Daniels, 1997; Lee, 2004; Salyer, 1995). Abrams, (2004), Lee (2004), Ngai (2004), and Salyer (1995) argue that the onset of exclusionary immigration practices, restrictive immigration laws, and the enforcement of deportation policies against the Chinese also ushered in the concept of illegality of immigration and set up the dynamics of the overarching systems for scrutinizing immigrants’ documents, immigrant surveillance, and deportation procedures (Abrams, 2005, Lee, 2004, Ngai, 2004). Lee (2004) contends that the modern U.S. immigration policies and procedures all find their roots in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Johnson (2021) notes that over time, references to the Chinese as the ‘undesirable immigrants’ were eventually replaced with terms such as “alien” and “illegal alien” in subsequent immigration laws.

Open immigration occurred during the 18th and early 19th centuries immigration was open and encouraged, very little was done to regulate or restrict it (USCIS, 2020). Ten years after the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, and the same year of the Geary Act, regulatory immigration began with the opening of Ellis Island as the east coast port of entry in 1892.

However, because of the strong anti-Asian sentiments that fueled lawmakers to introduce the restrictive Chinese Exclusion Acts, Angel Island was established as the west coast port of entry, mainly for Chinese immigrants (Lee, 2004). Unlike Ellis Island, Angel Island was established mainly as a detaining facility where individuals were processed to determine deportation rather than entry (Lee, 2004).

Also, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act introduced surveillance by an appointed officer (U.S. Naturalization and Immigration Services), required certificates for proof of residency (U.S. passports and green cards), scrutinized lawful and unlawful Chinese immigrants (surveillance), checked for fraudulent papers (inspection for authorized documentation), detained Chinese at Angel Island under harsh conditions (detention centers), and expelled undesirable/excludable Chinese immigrants (deportation) (Daniels, 1997, 2004; Lee, 2004; Neuman, 1996). The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act also outlined legal consequences for persons aiding illegal immigrants (Lee, 2004). Ngai (2004) argues that these exclusionary immigration practices “generated the nation’s first illegal immigrants” (p. 202). For example, it is estimated that half of the Chinese immigrant population present in the U.S. during the exclusion period entered the U.S. without papers by crossing the Mexican or Canadian borders, being smuggled onto ships, remaining unregistered once in the U.S., or posing as a paper son, which was the most common form of entry for the Chinese at that time (Ngai, 2004; Saylor, 1995).

The Chinese practice for posing as a paper son was primarily due to two historical situations: 1) the ruling of 1898 *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* that granted birthright citizenship to American-born Chinese and 2) the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire that destroyed the City’s Hall of Records. Because all records were destroyed by the fire, it was possible for many Chinese to claim they were born in the U.S. and that their birthright citizenship papers had been

destroyed in the fire (Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995). Absent contradictory evidence, once these cases were heard in court, the courts were obliged to accept the testimony of the Chinese that they were rightful citizens by being born on U.S. soil (Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995). Even though no paper documentation had existed prior to these court cases, the court's own discharge papers created the paper trail sufficient to prove U.S. citizenship – thus the term paper sons (Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995). Tens of thousands of Chinese who entered the U.S. in the first half of the twentieth century posed as paper sons (Ngai, 2004). Once U.S. birthright citizenship was documented via official discharge papers, paper sons also brought other Chinese individuals to the U.S. claiming they were their sons, and by law, U.S. derivative citizenship was conferred to these individuals as well (Ngai, 2004).

Further, based on the outcome of *Chew Heong v. United States*, federal courts allowed re-entry for many Chinese based on oral and written evidence rather than the required authenticated certificate. According to the federal judiciary, collectors claimed that one third of the Chinese who were allowed to re-enter through court rulings did so without proper documentation. Because anti-Chinese legislators believed much of the evidence submitted to the courts by Chinese immigrants was fraudulent, they renamed the Chinese Exclusion Act the Chinese Evasion Act (*Daily Alta California*, 1883, p. 1; see also Salyer, 2006). If legislators were frustrated that the Chinese Exclusion Acts did not seem to curb Chinese immigration to the extent they had hoped, the Chinese felt justified in their actions in that they felt the laws were discriminatory in the first place (Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995, 2006).

Further immigration acts introduced during the 1920s are seen as watershed legislation that restricted immigration on a global scale (Ngai, 2004). Ngai (2014) asserts that the 1924

Johnson-Reed Immigration Act ushered in the most restrictive era in American immigration law, including additional restrictions against Asians:

The 1924 Johnson-Reed Act also excluded from immigration Chinese, Japanese, Indians, and other Asians on grounds that they were racially ineligible for naturalized citizenship, a condition that was declared by the Supreme Court in the early 1920s...the legal racialization of these ethnic groups' national origin cast them as permanently foreign and unassimilable to the nation. (p. 7-8)

While the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act reinforced all previous restrictive U.S. immigration policies and procedures set in motion with the Chinese Exclusion Acts, it also established precedence for new immigration policies and procedures (Ngai, 2004). For example, the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act, established numerical quotas based on a global racial hierarchy, created the Border Patrol, enforced strict surveillance and deportation at U.S. contiguous borders, removed the statute of limitation for deportation, replaced body inspections with inspection of valid documentation (visas and passports), and introduced “permanent banishment under the threat of felony prosecution” as the legal consequence for unlawful entry (Ngai, 2004, p. 60; see also Lee, 2007b; Salyer, 1995; Neuman, 1996).

More specifically, the enforcement of the 1924 Immigration Act, essentially banned all Asians from immigrating to the U.S. and shifted the nation's focus from imagined U.S. borders to the contiguous borders of Canada and Mexico (Ngai, 2004, 2014). The 1924 regulations created a heightened sense of control over the nation's physical borders where such strict surveillance had not previously existed (Ngai, 2004). Ngai (2004) noted that “restriction meant more rather than fewer people entering the country; it also invariably generated illegal immigration and introduced that problem into the internal spaces of the nation” (p. 4). The additional numerical restrictions of the 1924 Immigration Act, the stricter surveillance at the borders, and a greater emphasis on deportation policies ushered in a new era of unprecedented

mass illegal entries in which deportation became a central aspect of enforcing immigration policy.

A sharp increase in deportations gave rise to oppositional views in the national discourse. Opponents argued that deportation that resulted in family separation or imposed hardships disproportionate to the offense were unjust (Ngai, 2014). Distinguishing between who the “deserving and undeserving” immigrants were and what “just and unjust” deportations were gave rise to determinations for social desirability (p. 57). Categories for determining social desirability and inclusion had unequal effects on race in which European and Canadian immigrants, perceived as assimilable, were favored over Mexican immigrants who were perceived as unassimilable (Ngai, 2014). As a result, “Mexicans emerged as the iconic illegal alien” (p. 58).

In 1925, it was estimated that 1.4 million immigrants entered legally, but since there was no record of their admission, they were considered unlawful (Ngai, 2004). Coupled with this lack of documentation, a 1929 Immigration Service Report focused attention on the issue that the estimates of the undocumented population in the U.S. were indeterminable:

It is quite possible that there was an even a greater number of aliens in the country whose legal presence here could not be established “since the quota restrictions...are worthy of very serious thought, especially when it is considered such a great percentage of our population. (Ngai, 2004, p. 61)

The report also described the undocumented population as lawbreakers “whose first act upon reaching our shores was to break our laws by entering in a clandestine manner – all of which serves to emphasize the potential source of trouble, not to say menace, that such a situation suggest(s)” (p. 61). The “source of trouble” refers to the fact that since the 1924 Immigration law placed immigration restrictions on all racial categories, not just Asians, it was less possible to visibly distinguish U.S. citizens and legal residents from illegal immigrants. As a result, nativist

thinking re-defined illegal immigrants as the nation's unidentifiable interior enemy that must be dispelled. With a nativist desire to preserve the interior of the nation by expelling illegal immigrants from inside the borders, immigration restrictions focused on strict inspection of visas and deportation policies.

In 1929, Congress also enacted a law that limited the number of immigrants to the U.S. to 150,000 (Ngai, 2004; Keller, 2012). The Immigration Act of 1929 differentiated legal punishments between first-time unlawful entry versus second unlawful re-entries. The first unlawful entry into the nation was classified as a misdemeanor, punishable by a \$1,000 fine and/or a one-year imprisonment; the second unlawful re-entry was classified as a felony, punishable by a \$2,000 fine and a two-year imprisonment (Ngai, 2004; Keller, 2012). The 1924 Asian Exclusion Act remained in effect until 1965 Immigration Act (Lee, 2004; Ngai, 2004; Salyer, 1995; Takaki, 1998).

The 1965 Immigration Law is described as the next major immigration act that affected immigration on a global scale because it lifted the numerical restrictions put in place by the Immigration Act of 1924 and replaced them with a new quota system (Ngai, 2004). The annual number of immigrants allowed in the U.S. increased, and the new numerical limits upheld by the Immigration Act of 1965 reinforced a quota system based on family reunification. However, the number of immigrants allowed by the new quota system did not meet the demand for low wage labor, which was primarily filled by undocumented workers (Huber, 2010). As a result, the number of undocumented immigrants entering the U.S., mainly Mexicans, continued to rise (Ngai, 2004).

In 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) was passed to curb what Massey and Pren (2012) describe as an unintended consequence of the 1965 Immigration Act: a

sharp increase of Asian and Mexican immigrants. The IRCA granted amnesty to 2.7 million undocumented immigrants working in the U.S. but placed prohibitions and sanctions on U.S. employers who knowingly hired undocumented workers (Daniels, 2004; Huber, 2010). The IRCA also militarized the Mexican-U.S. border and targeted Mexican undocumented workers through increased border enforcement (Ngai, 2004). The perceived threat that Mexican undocumented workers were taking jobs away from Americans fueled anti-immigrant legislation in the mid-1990s (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1995). For example, On August 2, 1996, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) was instituted as a national welfare reform act that prohibited undocumented individuals from receiving any federal public benefits (Blume, 2011; Fix & Passel, 2002; Levinson, 2002; Ruge & Iza, 2005). Undocumented immigrants were restricted from receiving supplemental security income, food stamps, Medicaid, temporary assistance for needy families, financial aid, and/or work study (Blume, 2011; Ruge & Iza, 2005). Also on September 30, 1996, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 further restricted undocumented individuals from receiving both state and local welfare benefits except in cases of emergency medical conditions (Olivas, 2004). Anti-immigrant legislation was further fueled by the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, that framed immigrants as a national threat, which is exemplified through the Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act introduced in December 2005 (Chishti, & Bergeron, 2011; Hesson, 2012; Huber, 2010; Woods & Arthur, 2014). The criminalization of unlawful entry coupled with the strict enforcement procedures resulted in a large increase of deportations (Ngai, 2004). Ngai (2004) noted that “aliens without proper visas rapidly became the largest single class of deportees” (p. 60). This inability to

produce proper documentation gave rise to what is now referred to as the “undocumented immigrant” (p. 61).

This section described how exclusionary immigration practices against the Chinese created a system of documenting and regulating entry for all immigrants to the U.S.

Additionally, this section described how global restrictive immigration policies, attention to the nation’s contiguous borders, visa inspections, and criminal consequences for unlawful entry gave rise to today’s undocumented immigrant (Ngai, 2004). Section three highlights the impact that the exclusionary immigration laws have on undocumented immigrant families, with a focus on undocumented students in higher education.

Experiences of Undocumented Immigrant Families

De Genova (2002) suggests that for the most part undocumented families live in close proximity to documented families and their immigration status is indistinguishable from those around them. “On a day-to-day basis, their illegality may be irrelevant to most of their activities, only becoming an issue in certain contexts” (Coutin, 2000, p. 40). The communities in which many undocumented families live may be susceptible to violence, hunger, unfair housing conditions, unemployment, underachieving schools (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Due to the make-up of the family situation, multiple family units may live in one household and share all of the expenses (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Nuclear family members, extended families, and in-laws may all contribute in different ways to the family’s economy (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Some may serve as primary breadwinners, while others care for the children, cook meals, or repair household items. The following contexts shape the family experiences of

undocumented students: mixed immigration status among family members, work, poverty, and health care.

Mixed immigration status: Many undocumented students' families are comprised of members who hold varying immigrant statuses. According to Fix and Zimmerman (2001) "mixed-status families are themselves complex: they may be made up of any combination of legal immigrants, undocumented immigrants, and naturalized citizens" (p. 1). There are multiple patterns of mixed authorization among children and parents (Fix & Zimmerman, 2001). 41% have one documented parent with the other parent undocumented; 39% have two undocumented parents; and 20% live in households headed by a single undocumented parent (Fix & Zimmerman, 2001). Other adults living with the family may also vary in immigration status; for example, an aunt or uncle may have permanent resident status, while the parents may be waiting for the completion of their paperwork (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Within these mixed-status households, siblings also can hold a range of documentation patterns. For example, some siblings are born in the United States with birthright citizenship, while at the same time other siblings are in the process of attempting to obtain documentation, and still other siblings may be fully undocumented (Fix & Zimmerman, 2001).

Due to mixed immigration status within one family, equitability of access and participation in U.S. society varies greatly among family members. When accessing legal benefits, each family member's immigration status is considered separately, which affects the extent to which members can legally pursue employment, health care, and education (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010; Portes & Rumbaut, 2024). Also, depending on a family member's immigration status, the extent to which the law is enforced also varies, particularly in regard to deportation procedures (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). For example, in mixed-status families

even though American-born children are eligible to remain in the U.S. by law, undocumented parents and siblings can be deported, in which case, families can be suddenly separated (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010).

Work. The nation's labor force of 154 million people includes an estimated 8.3 million unauthorized immigrants (Passel & Cohn, 2009). Most members of undocumented families hold jobs in manual labor, skilled labor, service industries (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Even though immigration status is practically irrelevant for undocumented students in primary and secondary educational institutions due to the ruling of *Plyler vs. Doe*, Gleeson and Gonzales (2012) noted the relevancy of immigration status when it comes to the institution of employment:

Immigration status is central to the experience of undocumented workers, who develop a particular set of survival skills that help them live and work successfully in the United States without being detected while also erecting a barrier between themselves and any additional rights they may be afforded. (p. 2)

Also complicating the environment for undocumented workers, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 is a significant piece of federal legislation that made it a criminal offense for employers to knowingly hire or recruit undocumented workers and employers faced heavy sanctions and fines if they violated this law (Public Law 99-603). If eligible, some undocumented immigrants could adjust their status and gain legal authorization to work in the U.S. by applying for legal permanent status, temporary protected status, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, commonly known as DACA (Lopez et al., 2015). However, only about 10% of undocumented immigrants fall into this category (Passel et al., 2014). Because of many legal restrictions, many undocumented immigrants who do obtain work authorization could also revert back to an unauthorized status and run the risk of deportation (Passel et. al., 2014). At the same time, despite their inability to legally reside or work in the U.S., in practice undocumented

workers have certain workplace protections, such as protection from abusive employer practices.

Ngai (2004) aptly describes the marginalization of undocumented workers:

Marginalized by their position in the lower strata of the workforce and even more so by their exclusion from the polity, illegal aliens might be understood as a caste, unambiguously situated outside the boundaries of formal membership and social legitimacy. (p. 2)

Most members of undocumented families hold jobs in low wage jobs such as manual labor, skilled labor, and service industries, and many of their incomes fall within poverty levels (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). According to Passel and Cohn (2009), one-fifth of adult unauthorized immigrants and one third of the children of unauthorized immigrants live in poverty, which is nearly double for U.S.-born adults and for children of U.S.-born parents. In 2007, the median household income of unauthorized immigrants was \$36,000, which was \$14,000 below the median household income for American-born residents (Passel & Cohn, 2009). Additionally, regardless of how long undocumented immigrants live in the U.S., they do not achieve significantly higher incomes when compared to U.S. residents. Federal and state benefits, such as food stamps, unemployment benefits, and low-income government housing could assist many low-income and poverty level undocumented immigrants; however, their undocumented status serves as a significant barrier for accessing these benefits.

According to Capps et al., (2004), health reports of immigrant children show they are 7% more likely than their parents to be in fair or poor health, which is twice the rate of U.S. native children. It is common for undocumented immigrants to live without the ability to adequately meet their health care needs (Gusmano, 2012b). Except for medical emergencies, undocumented immigrants are ineligible to receive federally funded public health insurance, such as Medicaid and the Child Health Insurance Program (Gusmano, 2012b). As a result, more than half of adult

unauthorized immigrants (59%) have no health insurance, which makes up the majority of the uninsured population in the U.S. (Gusmano, 2012a). According to Gusmano (2012b), undocumented adults and children are less likely than U.S citizens to access emergency care, visit an outpatient physician or nurse, or utilize mental health practitioners or dentists.

Undocumented immigrants are less likely to engage in routine health checks for blood pressure and cholesterol (Gusmano, 2012b). When undocumented immigrants do utilize healthcare, they are more likely than U.S. citizens to pay the medical expenses on their own (Gusmano, 2012b). Gusmano (2012b) notes additional barriers such as language, lack of transportation, fear of deportation, and inability to leave work also serve as barriers that keep undocumented immigrants from attending to their health care needs. Undocumented immigrant youth eligible for Obama's DACA program (dreamers) are still ineligible for health care (Berlinger & Gusmano, 2012).

Ellis (2010) argues that undocumented status also affects mental health. The long-standing stigmatization that undocumented immigrants unfairly take jobs and educational opportunities away from Americans erodes their self-worth and, in many cases, leads to depression (Sullivan & Rehm, 2005). Furthermore, for undocumented immigrants living secret lives for a prolonged periods creates a pervasive experience of feeling trapped, terrorized, and fearful. These ongoing emotions cause a sense of shame and a devaluation of self and others. Young undocumented immigrants (the dreamers) eligible for work permits under the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program are currently excluded from Medicaid and CHIP and from ACA insurance benefits.

Adult undocumented immigrants are disproportionately likely to be poorly educated (Passel & Cohn, 2009). Among unauthorized immigrants ages 25-64, 47% of undocumented

immigrant adults have less than a high school education (Passel & Cohn, 2009). But undocumented children K-12 are protected under law to attend school. In the landmark case *Plyler v. Doe* (1982), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against a Texas statute that had denied free public education for K-12 students based on their undocumented status (Frum, 2007; Olivas, 2012). In a 5-4 decision, the court ruled that undocumented children have a constitutional right to free K-12 public education (Frum, 2007; *Plyler v. Doe*, 1982; Ruge & Iza, 2005). Thus, *Plyler v. Doe* ensures that “no undocumented student is left behind” for a K-12 public education (Olivas, 2012, p. iii).

Because of *Plyler v. Doe*, undocumented children are allowed to attend public school K-12 school regardless of immigration status, with 50,000 to 65,000 undocumented students graduating from U.S. high schools each year (Fix & Passel, 2003; Gonzales, 2009; Olivérez, 2006). However, Abrego (2006) indicates that undocumented students drop out of high school at higher rates than their legal immigrant counterparts. Limited opportunities for work and post-secondary education lead many undocumented students to disengage from educational pursuits prematurely (Abrego, 2006; Gonzales, 2011).

Experiences of Undocumented Students in Higher Education

While “Plyler makes clear, the undocumented or non-citizen status of a student (or his or her parent or guardian) is irrelevant to that student’s entitlement to an elementary and secondary public education” (Ali et al., 2011, p. 1), the ruling of *Plyler v. Doe* does not address enrollment of undocumented students wishing to pursue post-secondary education (Drachman, 2006; Olivas, 2004). Three pieces of federal legislation impact undocumented students’ access to higher education: the 1965 Higher Education Act, the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work

Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), and the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and the Immigrant Responsibility Act (IRIRA), Section 505 (Blume, 2011; Frum, 2007; Ruge & Iza, 2005). For example, the Title IV of the Higher Education Act, which governs the post-secondary distribution of federal student financial such as loans, grants, and federal work- study, also limits eligibility of federal financial aid to include only citizens and permanent residents of the U.S. (Blume, 2011; Drachman 2006; Olivas, 2004). The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) and the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and the Immigrant Responsibility Act (IRIRA), Section 505, also restrict undocumented students' access to higher education (Frum, 2007; Olivas, 2004; Ruge & Iza, 2005). The PRWORA prohibits undocumented individuals from receiving any federal public benefit, which makes undocumented students ineligible for government sponsored financial aid in the U.S. (Ruge & Iza, 2005).

Access to college for undocumented students remains a hotly debated issue (Blume 2011; Drachman, 2006). Opponents argue that granting undocumented students access to college rewards individuals for “violating federal immigration law” and unduly burdens the educational system (Kobach, 2006a, p. 1; see also Blume, 2001; Kobach, 2006b). Proponents contend that undocumented students brought to the United States by their parents at a young age should not be punished for their parents' choices (Gonzalez, 2009; Durbin, 2011; Romero, 2002). Romero also argues that undocumented students attending college would create a pool of potentially educated workers and should not be barred from post-secondary education. In spite of this disagreement, scholars agree about two aspects of the PRWORA and IRRIRA as they relate to undocumented students in higher education: 1) under PRWORA and IRRIRA, undocumented students are not eligible for federal benefits such as financial aid, student loans, or work- study

programs (Frum, 2007; Ruge & Iza, 2005) and 2) neither the PRWORA nor the IIRIRA prohibit public postsecondary institutions from admitting or enrolling undocumented students (Frum, 2007; Ruge & Iza, 2005). Therefore, Ruge and Iza (2005) maintain that the question of providing in-state tuition based on residency is left to the discretion of the states.

State DREAM Acts and State Policies

Since the proposed DREAM Act has not passed federal legislation, disagreement over whether states may offer in-state tuition at colleges and universities has resulted in states adopting “a wide variety of policies regarding undocumented students’ eligibility for in-state tuition” at colleges and universities (Drachman, 2006, p. 95). Several states have passed legislation that bases eligibility for in-state tuition on criteria other than state residency (Feder, 2006; National Conference of State Legislature, 2015; Romero, 2002). As a result, many states have now adopted alternative versions of the DREAM Act that allow in-state tuition, state-aid, and enrollment for undocumented students at colleges and universities.

For example, California enacted Assembly Bill 540, commonly referred to as AB 540 or the California Dream Act, that allows in-state tuition for undocumented students based on criteria such as K-12 school attendance, accumulation of credits, and registration in a California university (Abrego, 2008). In-state tuition policies like AB 540 improve levels of hope among undocumented students for obtaining a college degree they once thought was beyond their means (Abrego, 2008). However, not all states offer in-state tuition for undocumented students. The Higher Education Immigration Portal offers an analysis of the in-state tuition policies for all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico to determine access and inclusion of their policies across the nation in the following seven categories that vary in degree of accessibility for in-state

tuition, state financial aid, and college enrollment for undocumented students: comprehensive (17 states plus D.C.), accessible (6 states), limited (4 states), limited to DACA students (7 states), no state policy (8 states and Puerto Rico), restrictive (5 states), and prohibitive enrollment (3 states). Appendix A provides more comprehensive information). Now that educational policies affecting undocumented students have been discussed, I will focus on the experiences of undocumented students.

Often researchers refer to undocumented students as the 1.5 generation because “in a sense, they straddle two worlds” (Gonzales, 2009, p. 7). They did not choose to immigrate to the U.S. on their own like their first-generation parents, but because they were not born in the U.S., they are technically not considered second generation either (Gonzales, 2009). Like their parents, undocumented students are born abroad, but since they are usually brought to the U.S. at such an early age, they grow up attending U.S. schools K-12 and know little about their native country (Gonzales, 2009). Because of the acculturation that takes place in U.S. schools, the lives of many undocumented students are indistinguishable from American students (Abrego, 2006/2008; Gonzales, 2009/2011; Olivas, 2012; Williams, 2016). In fact, a majority of undocumented students grow up believing they are Americans: “After having been educated in our schools, they speak English (often with more ease than Spanish), envision their futures here, and powerfully internalize U.S. values and expectations of merit” (Abrego, 2006, p. 227). However, many immigrant parents do not disclose to their children that they are undocumented because they are hoping to obtain a green card for them before they come of age, but many undocumented children age out while in the process of obtaining legal residency (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). As a result, the students often find out about their undocumented status on their own (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). This section focuses on the issues facing undocumented

students, including the challenges and successes they face in pursuit of a post-secondary education.

Issues

The lives of undocumented students change abruptly when they come face-to-face with the reality of their status for the first time (Gonzales, 2011). This period of discovery usually occurs between the ages of 16 to 18, when they are suddenly unable to participate in the traditional coming of age activities – obtaining a driver’s license, finding a part-time job, and applying for college – in the same manner as their high school peers (Gonzales, 2011; Williams, 2016). Undocumented students are systematically blocked because they do not possess a Social Security number or the legal documents required to move through these high school rites of passage (Gonzales, 2011). This common, and abrupt, experience of social exclusion results in confusion, anger, frustration, and despair (Gonzales, 2011). Dealing with the shift from the de facto legal status afforded to them through *Plyler v. Doe* to the reality of an illegal status post high school means undocumented students also face the stigma of being criminalized and the media’s portrayal of undocumented immigrants as immoral, illegal, and social threats (Perez et al., 2009). When undocumented students do find out about their status, there is a great deal of pressure on them to keep their status a secret for fear of deportation (Gonzales, 2009, 2011). During the period of discovery, undocumented students also face salient issues regarding their future: exclusion from the work force and possible exclusion from college (Gonzales, 2009, 2011).

Undocumented students recognize the need for and value of a college degree to obtain a better job than their parents, but because many immigrant families live in poverty,

undocumented students face additional financial barriers due to the legal restrictions that keep them from obtaining employment, financial aid, and scholarships to offset college expenses (Flores, 2007; Gonzalez, 2009; Perez et al., 2009; Rincon, 2005). As a result, even though thousands of undocumented high school students are talented and academically equipped to pursue post-secondary education, they are forced to turn down college offers due to their status or because they cannot afford the high costs of college (Gonzales, 2009; Rincon, 2005; Ruge & Iza, 2012). The college dreams of undocumented student are often deferred, and the lives of thousands of undocumented students are put “on hold” (Gonzales, 2009, p. 1; see also Huber, 2010; Perez et al., 2010).

According to the Higher Education Immigration Portal (2023), approximately 98,000 undocumented students graduate from high school annually and approximately 427,345 undocumented students are enrolled in colleges and universities. However, while a number of undocumented students who do enroll in college may feel some sense of inclusion upon their acceptance, the significant barriers and hurdles they face in pursuing college prevent them from fully participating in the experience (Flores, 2007; Gonzales, 2009, 2011; Olivas 2008; Perez et al., 2009; Rincon, 2008). Of the undocumented students enrolled in colleges and universities, nearly 181,624 are eligible for DACA, but a vast majority of undocumented students, approximately 245,721, are not eligible. Without the continued protection of *Plyler v. Doe* in place during K-12 grades, thousands of undocumented students are forced to assume responsibility for their undocumented status upon graduation from high school (Gonzales, 2011, p. 602; see also Gonzales, 2009; Rincon, 2005).

Challenges and Barriers for College

While many of the barriers undocumented college students face are similar to the challenges of most college-bound students (e.g., finances, college preparation, and admission restrictions), undocumented students face additional barriers imposed by institutional policy, federal regulations, and state laws designed specifically to exclude them from higher education because they do not possess authorized papers for legal residency (Abrego, 2006; Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010).

Available financial resources and college costs are the two primary factors in determining if undocumented students apply for college and where they can attend (Abrego, 2006; Chen 2013; Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007; Flores, 2007; Noyola; 2012; Olivérez, 2006). Unlike their native-born peers who can apply for financial aid/scholarships, undocumented students cannot access these benefits due to the federal and state prohibitions aimed at excluding them (Abrego, 2006; Chen, 2013; Flores, 2007; Gonzales, 2009; Noyola, 2012; Olivérez, 2006). Compounding the financial expense for undocumented students, prior to 2001, many states required undocumented students to pay out-of-state college tuition or the international rate for college tuition although they may have lived in the state for a number of years or, in some cases, their entire lives (Abrego, 2008). Therefore, many undocumented students who met the academic requirements for college could not attend because the cost was prohibitive (Abrego, 2008; Gonzales, 2009; Olivérez, 2006). While many of the financial barriers undocumented college students face regarding in-state tuition are the result of state and federal policies, the poverty level at which many undocumented students live compound this financial issue (Blume, 2011; Frum, 2007). According to Passel (2003), 39% of undocumented children live below the federal

poverty level compared to 17% of native-born children. Undocumented students come from families with an average household income that is 40% lower than that of native-born families or legal residents (Frum, 2007; Passel, 2003). Since undocumented students do not have the papers to confirm in-state residency, depending on the state, some undocumented students still face paying a higher out-of-state tuition rate. Nienhusser et al. (2016) found that restrictive financial regulations and policies are only one of several microaggressions undocumented students face during the college choice process.

Nienhusser et al. (2016) found that encounters with various levels of microaggressions (microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations) also negatively affect undocumented students' decision to apply to the colleges for which they are eligible. For example, limited information and knowledge about their college choices from administrators keeps undocumented students from being able to make informed decisions about their options, the inability to work or hold an internship prior to college experiences weakens their college application, the realization that college will not change their immigration status combined with limited work options post-college presents barriers for undocumented students considering the value of a college degree, administrators discourage undocumented students from applying to college, insensitive behaviors made undocumented students feel as though they are foreigners, counselors steer undocumented students to only one or two predesignated options that reveal their narrow college expectations, fear of disclosure about their status and the impact it could have on the college choice process, and a general lack of awareness about how to appropriately respond to undocumented students' immigration status (Nienhusser et al., 2016, p. 12). Nienhusser et al. (2016) found that cumulative episodes of microaggressions, microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations not only impede undocumented students' college choice process and the overall access to

college, they also take a toll on the mental health and psychological well-being of undocumented students (Nienhusser et al., 2016).

Additionally, college access is a challenge for undocumented students due to the lack of a “college-going culture at home and at school” and lack of academic readiness (Olivérez, 2006, p. 206). Consistent with Olivérez, Burman (2013) found that important stakeholders who impact college access for undocumented students (college administrators, counselors, and K-12 teachers) demonstrate a general lack of knowledge about the policies referring to undocumented students, which in turn prevents administrators from being able to offer proper guidance and pre-college advisement (Burman, 2013). These factors often deter undocumented students from accessing college (Burman, 2013).

In addition to the barriers that impede undocumented students’ access to college, Albrecht (2007) reports several challenges undocumented students navigate once enrolled in college, including struggling to succeed, experiencing pressure to be a role model, coping with frustration and uncertainty, managing life as a hidden member of society, missing out on opportunities, perceptions of self as compared to other students, and complications in utilizing campus services. Burman (2013) notes there appears to be a general lack of knowledge on the part of college administrators regarding undocumented students and their existence on campus. This lack of awareness further marginalizes undocumented students, serves to make undocumented students’ presence invisible in the campus community, and creates barriers for undocumented students to participate as full members throughout their college experience (Albrecht, 2007; Burman, 2013; Williams, 2016). Further, many campuses lack accessible information to assist undocumented students, designated personnel to whom they can turn for help, and information regarding legal services to help navigate immigration issues, which poses

additional barriers for undocumented college students (Albrecht, 2007). Albrecht (2007) indicates that this lack of information and resources prevents campus administrators from being able to properly assist undocumented college students throughout their college experience.

The socioemotional and physiological challenges undocumented students face are significant: fear of deportation, loneliness, depression, social exclusion, rejection, isolation, shame, discrimination, and marginalization (Chen 2013; Cortes, 2008; Dozier, 1993). In particular, fear of deportation permeates nearly every aspect of undocumented college students' lives (Dozier, 1993). Students worry that they and/or their family members may be deported at any time (Dozier, 1993). In the case of mixed family immigration status, undocumented students may even be separated from their family members if they are deported to a country they never knew (Gonzales, 2009; Perez et al., 2009). Fear of deportation also elicits fear of being unfairly judged, fear of betrayal, and fear of rejection. Undocumented students express feelings of shame for living in the "shadows of society" and for always guarding their status from others (Perez et al., 2009, p. 39). At the same time, undocumented students experience a high level of anxiety when determining if they can trust others with the secret of their undocumented status (Munsch, 2011). Loneliness results from not being able to leave the U.S. to see family members they may know in their native country and from the inability to develop close peer relationships for fear that they may be betrayed if their undocumented immigration status is discovered (Cortes, 2008; Dozier, 1993; Pérez & Cortés, 2011; Williams, 2016).

Undocumented students may carry feelings of resentment that their parents brought them to the U.S. illegally, compounded by anger that they were not told of their status sooner (Cortes, 2008). Some undocumented students also experience anger toward their American-born peers who choose not to attend college because they perceive them as taking this privilege for granted

(Cortes, 2008). Due to the strong level of stigma attached to each of the following three factors: ethnic background, immigration status, and economic disadvantages, Perez et al. (2009) note that undocumented Latino/a college students encounter a heightened sense of discrimination as a “triple minority” (p. 39). Chen (2013) addresses the concept of “model myth for undocumented students” and the additional burden of stress that this places on them while in college (p. 121). Experiences of marginalization, social exclusion, economic oppression, and criminalization create feelings of shame, anger, resentment, and rejection (Cortes, 2008; Perez et al., 2009). According to Williams (2016), applying for DACA can help mitigate feelings of social exclusion.

The socioemotional and psychological challenges are but a few of the significant barriers that impact the academic and physical well-being of undocumented students while in college (Cortes, 2008; Dozier, 1993; Williams, 2016). In some cases, without the support necessary to complete college, undocumented students are forced to suspend college and join their undocumented peers in the low labor workforce (Gonzales, 2011). For others, their family’s financial burdens become so great, they are asked to help out with the family bills and leave college and to obtain a job (Gonzales, 2011).

Further, undocumented students recognize they face uncertain futures even after obtaining a college degree (Diaz-Strong & Meiners; 2007; Munsch, 2011). The lack of authorized immigration papers, legal restrictions, and anti-immigration sentiment creates barriers post-college that impact undocumented students’ ability to gain social capital, such as obtaining a professional job and marrying (Diaz-Strong & Meiners; 2007; Munsch, 2011; Ton, 2013). As a result, undocumented students who obtain a college degree are more likely to experience higher levels of emotional distress than their peers who do not pursue a college degree (Perez et al.,

2009). This higher level of distress is because undocumented students face the harsh reality that even with their hard-earned college degree, their undocumented status may prevent them from obtaining their desired position in their field of study post-college graduation (Perez et al., 2009; Perez et al., 2010). Eventually, undocumented college graduates experience a coping phase where original aspirations are lowered due to limitations placed on them due to their undocumented status and they adjust to coping with the longer-term realities of being undocumented (Gonzales, 2011).

For undocumented students, these everyday barriers are constant reminders that they are not full members of the American society (Munsch, 2011). However, many undocumented students develop effective coping strategies for persisting through college despite the overwhelming challenges and barriers they face (Abrego, 2008; Burman, 2013; Ton, 2013). Surprisingly however, Cortes (2008) finds that many undocumented students are “quite stable in spite of all of the barriers that are designed to oppress them” (p. 104; see also Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). Cortes (2008) attributes this stability to positive coping mechanisms that enable undocumented students to develop resiliency and persistence in the face of adversity (p. 104; see also Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007).

Successful Strategies Accessing and Navigating College

Overcoming financial barriers is critical to gaining college access and persisting in college once accepted (Abrego, 2008; Gonzales, 2009). Abrego (2008) found that in-state tuition policies, such as AB 540, had a positive effect on undocumented students’ sense of social legitimacy when applying to college because it established a sense of belonging and value at colleges and universities. This in-state tuition policy also improved levels of hope among

undocumented students for obtaining a college degree they once thought was beyond their means. In-state tuition policies reduced the stigma of embarrassment, shame, and inferiority because undocumented students could re-claim a legal identity as an “AB 540 student” rather than identify as an illegal alien or an undocumented student (p. 726). Abrego (2008) found that the AB 540 policy resulted in positive unintended consequences in that students who self-identified as an AB 540 student also experienced a greater sense of empowerment when requesting the legal rights afforded to them by this policy.

Noyola (2012) finds that an early decision to go to college and access to educational services have contributed to the successful completion of college for undocumented Latino college students. Parental support and counselor/teacher relationships are two significant sources of support to encourage undocumented students through the “college going process” (Burman, 2013, p. 109). Also, when undocumented students place a high value on education and view college as a way to avoid low-end jobs, they are more apt to be persistent in the college enrollment process (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007).

A growing body of research focuses on the significant factors that encourage the academic persistence and success of Latina/o college students (Huber, 2010). These factors include strong family support, supportive mentorship, positive campus climate, access to other sources of financial aid, and obtaining a job while in college (Abrego, 2006; Albrecht, 2007; Cortes, 2008; Diaz-Strong & Meiners 2007; Huber 2010; Munoz, 2008; Perez et al., 2009). To overcome the overwhelming financial barriers, Latino students cope better if they received in-state tuition and scholarships, attend two-year colleges, and work full or part-time jobs while in college (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007; Gonzales, 2009). Tuition payment plans, student

discounts, and access to stipends help undocumented students cope with the serious financial burdens (Rangel, 2001).

To cope with discrimination, resilient undocumented students learn how to negotiate racial identity, address white privilege, and overcome microaggressions (Munoz, 2008). Resilient undocumented Latino students learn how to manage their fear of betrayal and discrimination as a result of disclosing their undocumented status (Diaz & Meiners, 2007; Munoz, 2008). Consistent with Diaz and Meiners (2007), Munsch, (2011) found that some Latino students disclose their undocumented status to access social capital for scholarship opportunities, support networks, and information regarding the requirements for their intended major. Undocumented Latino students who persisted in college found that becoming engaged in student organizations encouraged feelings of social inclusion and peer support (Albrecht, 2007; Williams, 2016). Munoz, (2008) identified how some undocumented students overcame a sense of inadequacy of English language acquisition by taking ESL classes to improve their language skills. Ton (2013) found that despite the barriers regarding their uncertain futures, undocumented students forged ahead against the odds to pursue their career aspirations. Their drive for providing a better life for their families gave them meaning and hope in the struggle toward completion (Ton, 2013).

Activism also serves as a coping mechanism for some undocumented Latino students (Anguiano, 2011; Cabaniss, 2014; Chen, 2013; Gonzales, 2008; Ortiz, 2013). Gonzales (2008) found undocumented student activists recognize that given legal barriers that restrict them, their options beyond a high school education are extremely limited. As a result, “with their backs against the wall and too much to lose, they push forward” in activism (p. 239). Despite the risks of deportation that undocumented student activists face by becoming visible, “it is the sons and

daughters of the most recent waves of disenfranchised immigrants who have reinvigorated the spirit of student political involvement” (p. 239).

Seif (2011) identified how undocumented Latino students gain the motivation and empowerment to resist discrimination and oppression through political activism. Anguiano (2011) found undocumented students employed three strategic phases of resistance to construct their own identity and capacity to act independently in making demands in support of the DREAM Act passage. During the first phase, 2001-2007, undocumented students developed strategies to form a collective identity and narrative as exceptional students to counter “the previous negative dehumanizing typecast of ‘illegal aliens’” (p. xi). In the second phase, 2007-2008, student activists employed strategies to gain unification and public visibility. To reclaim power and openly resist the laws, activists formed national coalitions, held public rallies, shared coming out stories, and self-identified as “undocumented and unafraid” (Seif, 2011, p. xi; see also Madera, 2008). In the third phase, May 2010 to December 2010, student activists employed self-reliant strategies utilizing tactics for civil disobedience to urge the passage of the DREAM Act and self-identified as “unapologetic DREAMers” (p. xi).

Ortiz (2013) examined the strategies of resistance that undocumented Latino student activists utilized in their advocacy efforts for the passage of the DREAM Act and identified how communicating resistance opened opportunities for their participation in the legislative arena. Through activism, undocumented students re-defined their own immigrant space by negotiating their identities, defining moments that transformed them, acknowledging the relationships that impacted their lives, and claiming their cultural family values of sacrifice, hard work, and community engagement. Undocumented student activists utilized various resistive strategies for communicating with the general public as an educative tool through storytelling, communicating

with activist community organizations to further build the movement (i.e. United We Dream Network, which is the largest national organization of undocumented youth), and communicating with a wide online network of activists primarily via Facebook. Further, Ortiz (2013) found that for undocumented student activists, communicating resistance was a way of life and a means of survival. Undocumented student activists openly identified the structural constraints and governmental restrictions that prohibited undocumented students from obtaining a driver's license, finding gainful employment, and accessing college (Ortiz, 2013). Ortiz (2013) found undocumented students utilized various strategies to resist structural constraints and governmental restrictions that prevented access to economic stability and federal identification. Undocumented student activists resist these constraints and work without papers, drive without a license, enroll and persist in college, form supportive organizations, and rely on allies to help navigate these barriers (Ortiz, 2013).

Cabaniss (2014) demonstrates how undocumented student activists strategically craft their own stories to reframe the majority narrative; they raise their own voices to shift power rather than rely on the voices of citizen-advocates to shape policy; they diminish citizen-advocates' influence by recasting them as illegitimate authorities in debates on immigration reform; they position undocumented youth as accomplished legitimate leaders; and they control ally participation. Cabaniss notes:

By leveraging their cultural capital and adopting a storytelling strategy, undocumented youth activists have constituted "DREAMers" as political actors with an important stake in the immigration reform movement. They have also used their personal stories to build solidarity with other undocumented youth and their allies. In the process, they have developed a new shared understanding of the injustice of their marginalization in the country in which they were raised and to which they have already contributed in significant ways (e.g., through paying taxes and volunteering). Through collective

storytelling, they have also found a way of exerting influence (if limited) over the political debates that concern them. (pp. 163-164)

Chen (2013) found that the challenges undocumented students encountered on a daily basis serve as the primary motivating factors for them to organize and collaborate with institutional allies. Partnering with institutional allies creates a greater level of accountability, enhances an environment of inclusion, and reduces marginalization of undocumented students. Institutional allies become motivated to serve in important advocacy roles primarily as a result of student activism and the growth of an undocumented ally network.

In summary, due to the significant systemic social, legal, and financial barriers, undocumented students feel both “cursed and blessed” at the same time (Perez et.al., 2010):

Cursed, in that you are marginalized by society, and you have to live in fear almost every day. Blessed, in the fact that you use that experience, and you become a much better person because of everything that you have struggled with. You work ten times as hard as, maybe, somebody who takes it for granted because they were born in this country, or somebody who is a legal resident and doesn't know exactly what that means and what power they have. (p. 35)

For undocumented students, everyday barriers are constant reminders to them that they are not full members of the American society (Munsch, 2011). However, in order for them to persist through college, undocumented students develop effective coping strategies despite the overwhelming challenges and barriers they face (Abrego, 2008; Burman, 2013; Ton, 2013). Positive coping mechanisms help undocumented students forge ahead and establish resiliency through meaning and hope (Ton, 2013).

Zong and Batlova's (2016) found that undocumented Asian immigrants from India, China, Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Korea are on the rise, and Chan's (2010) research showed that Asian undocumented students are less likely to seek out helpful campus resources

for fear and shame of exposing their status, which only adds to their experiences of isolation. Due to their invisibility, Asian undocumented students feel marginalized within the immigration movement – so much so that they refer to themselves as the “silent DREAMers” (Lim, 2013, p. 7). Even though in the past decade there has been more quantitative and qualitative research on DREAMers and the DREAM Act (Flores, 2010; Lopez, 2015; Perez et al., 2009; Rincón, 2008), no studies could be found that solely examine undocumented Asian college students.

Asians and Legal Efforts to Fight Exclusion

Just because the series of Chinese Exclusion Acts banned Chinese immigrants, this did not mean that Chinese immigrants accepted this exclusion easily (Salyer, 1995). On the contrary, several court cases, historically known as the Chinese Exclusion Cases, are evidence that the Chinese “mounted up sophisticated and often-successful legal challenges to the enforcement of exclusionary laws” (Salyer, 1995, p. back cover). The three cases below, referred to as the Chinese Exclusion Cases, describe how the Chinese advocated for themselves against harsh and racist immigration laws utilizing the U.S. legal system (Salyer, 1995).

Chew Heong v. United States is the first of the Chinese Exclusion cases that challenged the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and its 1884 Amendment (Salyer, 2006). Together these laws established that Chinese laborers legally residing in the U.S. had to obtain an authenticated certificate of identification to prove their legal residency. This certificate also served as the only authorized documentation that allowed Chinese re-entry into the U.S. In the case of Chew Heong, he had departed from the U.S. on an extended visit prior to the passage of these laws and did not possess the required documentation (Salyer 2006). Upon his return, he was denied

re-entry (Salyer, 2006). Chew Heong contested the decision and the Supreme Court decided in his favor (Salyer, 2006).

The second Chinese exclusion case, *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* (1889), challenged the 1888 Scott Act. The Scott Act prohibited any re-entry of Chinese laborers who left the U.S., regardless of documentation of an authorized re-entry certificate (Lee, 2004; Salyer, 1995; Scott Act, 1888). Chae Chan Ping left the U.S. prior to the passage of the Scott Act and was denied re-entry even though he possessed an authorized re-entry certificate. Chae Chan Ping contested the decision, arguing that he had a right to travel as he pleased to and from the U.S. based on earlier treaties established between the U.S. and China (Salyer, 1995). The Supreme Court upheld the government's right to deny re-entry to "protect itself against 'vast hordes of [a foreign] people crowding in'" (Aleinikoff, 1989, p. 863). This case established the plenary power of Congress to prohibit and prevent admittance, regardless of any existing treaties with other countries.

The third of the Chinese Exclusion cases, *Fong Yue Ting v. United States*, challenged the 1893 Geary Act regarding deportation. A clause of the Geary Act mandated Chinese living legally in the U.S. to register with the customs office within one year and carry a residency certificate with them at all times. Chinese found to be without the certificate were subject to immediate arrest and deportation. The Chinese found the Geary Act demeaning and resisted what they considered a cruel and unjust law (Salyer, 1995). When Fong Yue Ting and two other Chinese residents were found without the required residency certificates, they were ordered to be deported. The Supreme Court upheld the deportations and recognized that the government's power to deport foreigners was "as absolute and unqualified as the right to prohibit and prevent their entrance into the country." (*Fong Yue Ting v. United States*, 1893, p. 149).

Asians Fighting for Citizenship

United States v. Wong Kim Ark is a landmark case that set a legal precedent for how the U.S. determines citizenship (Salyer, 1995). Wong Kim Ark was a Chinese laborer born in California to parents of Chinese descent who resided legally in the U.S. In 1895, Wong Kim Ark, upon a return trip to the U.S. from China, was denied re-entry based on the belief he was an alien ineligible for citizenship (Lee, 2004). However, the Supreme Court ruled in Wong Kim Ark's favor, maintaining that any person born on U.S. soil was deemed a citizen regardless of the parent's immigration status (Epps, 2010).

Rodriguez (2009) notes the ruling of birthright citizenship upheld in the Wong Kim Ark case is currently relevant to children of undocumented parents because the ruling rejects "the idea that one's status depends on his parent's status" (p. 1367). However, a debate over the Wong Kim Ark case was renewed in the late 1990s when California proposed to end birthright citizenship granted to children of undocumented parents (Van Hook & Fix, 2010). Opponents argue that undocumented immigrants abuse the 14th Amendment and come to the U.S. deliberately just to give birth to ensure their child has American citizenship and who, when grown, could petition for their parents' admission/citizenship (Van Hook & Fix, 2010). The Birthright Citizenship Act to end "automatic citizenship" was introduced on a federal level in 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015 (Lewis, 1995, p. 1; see also Feere, 2010; Shulman, 1995). The repeal of birthright citizenship also became a central focus of the 2016 GOP presidential candidate debate (Farley, 2015, 2016). With an estimated 4.5 million U.S.-born children of undocumented parents who live in the U.S., the ruling of Wong Kim Ark also gives rise to the complexity of the mixed immigration status of an entire family (Van Hook & Fix, 2010). A

family of mixed immigration status may be comprised of one or more undocumented parents born in one native country, a child who is born in yet a different country, and a third child who is born in the U.S. In these situations, if the family's undocumented members are to be deported to their native countries, families would be separated. Through the case of *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, Asians shaped the law regarding birthright citizenship and set the stage for undocumented families who have mixed immigration status.

Asians Fighting for Education

Tape v Hurley and K-12

In 1884, Joseph and Mary Tape were denied enrollment of their eight-year-old American-born daughter in San Francisco's Spring Valley Public School based solely on their daughter's racial status as Chinese (Kuo, 1998; Wollenberg, 1978). In this landmark case, the California Supreme Court ruled it was unlawful for a school to exclude the Tape's daughter based on race and upheld the lower court's order for the superintendent to enroll Tape's daughter child at Spring Valley (Wollenberg, 1978). However, because California law also allowed for districts to establish separate but equal schools, the superintendent and School Board maneuvered policies and procedures to open an Oriental School before the Tapes could enroll their daughter at Spring Valley (Wollenberg, 1978). Thus, Maimie was legally excluded from Spring Valley School and the Tapes were forced to enroll their daughter at the Oriental School (Wollenberg, 1978). Shortly thereafter, all Asian families were ordered to send their children to Oriental Schools established for the Chinese (Wollenberg, 1978).

Hirabayashi v United States

In 1942, Gordon Hirabayashi, son of Japanese immigrants, was a senior enrolled at the University of Washington when he and all Japanese Americans who lived in the military zone were ordered to follow a rigid curfew between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. and report for evacuation for incarceration (Bannai, 2012; Irons, 2006). As an American, Hirabayashi, felt the military orders were unjust and he defied the Executive Order 9066 by violating curfew and by failing to report to an incarceration camp as required (Bannai, 2012; Irons, 2006). As a conscientious objector, Hirabayashi turned himself in to the FBI and he was arrested for these violations and placed in jail. After a five-month jail term awaiting trial, Hirabayashi was convicted on both accounts and imprisoned (Bannai, 2012; Irons, 2006). In *Hirabayashi v United States*, Hirabayashi argued that the imposed curfew and incarceration were discriminatory and violated his rights as an American citizen under the 5th and 14th Amendments. However, the Supreme Court upheld that Executive Order 9066 was not discriminatory because it was a military order. However, in 1986/1987, the Hirabayashi's case was revisited and the federal appeals court overturned Hirabayashi's war-time convictions (Bannai, 2012; Irons, 2006). In 1988 the U.S. enacted the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, a redress bill where President Reagan signed an official government apology, formally acknowledging that the Japanese incarceration was "motivated by "racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership." In 2012, Hirabayashi was recognized for his lasting "contribution to the life of our Nation" and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Freedom, the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a civilian during peace time (Bannai, 2012, p. 39).

Students for Fair Admissions v Harvard

This case was launched by Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) against Harvard University by more than a dozen Asian American students who argued that Harvard “systematically and unconstitutionally discriminates against Asians American applicants by penalizing their high achievement as a group, while giving preference to other racial and ethnic minorities” (Hartocollis, 2018-2019, p. 552). SFFA argue that Harvard favors a quota system that discriminates against Asian Americans (Hartocollis, 2018-2019).

For example, when Michael Wang began applying for college, he had already achieved a perfect ACT score, scored 2230 on the SAT (99th percentile), successfully completed 13 Advance Placement courses, ranked second in his high school class of 1,002 students, and received several national awards (Jackson, 2015). However, despite Wang’s academic accomplishments, he was denied college admission from six out of seven Ivy League schools (Economist, 2015; Jackson, 2015). When Wang saw less qualified students receive admission to the Ivy League schools from which he was denied, he felt he was unfairly denied admission and suspected reverse discrimination (Economist, 2015; Jackson, 2015). Another student noted that if Asian Americans could not get into Ivy League Schools due to reverse discrimination, other prestigious jobs would be elusive to them (Economist, 2015). In 2006, Wang was one of three students who complained to the Department of Education that Ivy League universities, namely Harvard and University of North Carolina, followed discriminatory admission practices that negatively affected the admission of eligible Asian American students by following quotas (Economist, 2015; Guillermo, 2015; Jackson, 2015). Also, in 2015, a coalition of 60 Asian American organizations, called Students for Fair Admissions, filed federal lawsuits against

Harvard and North Carolina to challenge their admission practices (Economist, 2015; Guillermo, 2015; Jackson, 2015). Since 2015, this coalition of Asian American organizations has grown from 60 to 160 and has filed racial discrimination complaints against several Ivy League Schools in the U.S. (Economist, 2015; Fuchs, 2016; Guillermo, 2015). The courts ruled in favor of Harvard (Hartocollis, 2018-2019). However, as an Ivy League school, Harvard is not the only university that faces pressure to admit more Asian Americans: “Princeton, Cornell and others also have high numbers of Asian American applicants. Yet their share of Asian American students is comparable with Harvard’s” (Hartocollis, 2018-2019, p. 556).

Section three described the legal efforts that Asian individuals launched to fight against exclusion. Finally, the fourth section presents the theoretical framework undergirding this study.

Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical frameworks that inform this study include critical race theory and Asian critical race theory.

Critical Race Theory

Several key writings have shaped the body of literature and movement on critical race theory (Crenshaw et al., 1995). Critical race theory was born out of the critical legal studies movement fathered by Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman in the 1970s (Delgado, 1995). At the time, Bell and Freeman found that traditional civil rights strategies and processes were too slow and not as effective for racial reform as they once were in the 1960s (Delgado, 1995; Liu, 2009). As legal scholars, Bell and Freeman found that American law was primarily shaped by white dominant thought, ideology, and perspectives, which leaves out the perspectives of people of

color (Crenshaw et al., 1995). To address this issue, critical legal studies combatted racism in the law and legal proceedings by using the untold stories of people of color to counter majority narratives that had defined commonly held beliefs and shaped the law (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado, 1995). Thus, rather than privileging dominant white standards, perspectives, and narratives, critical race theory utilizes counter-narratives to not only challenge the majority view but also to oppose dominant views, stereotypes, and exclusionary perspectives (Liu, 2009). Critical race theory examines how racism plays a role in the practice of, and making of, American law to eliminate racism “and all forms of subordination” (Matsuda, 1991, p. 1331).

Museus and Iftikar (2013) offer a basic understanding of critical race theory and by highlighting Delgado and Stefanic’s (2006) core tenets of this framework: race as a social construction, racism as normal, revisionist history, differential racialization, interest convergence, anti-essentialism, intersectionality, and storytelling and counter-narratives. However, Chang (1999) demonstrates the limitations of critical race theory and argues that while critical race theory made the “powerful claim that race matters,” it did not show “how different races matter differently” (p. 46). Because Chang found that the legal discourse on race and law excluded the perspectives of Asian Americans, he advanced the framework and tenets for an AsianCrit Theory.

Asian Critical Race Theory

Critical legal scholars recognized that traditional civil rights work was usually binary in nature – dealing primarily with black and white racial issues – and did not include other races and minorities (Chang, 1993). In his seminal work, *Toward an Asian American Legal Scholarship: Critical Race Theory, Post-Structuralism, and Narrative Space*, Chang (1993)

points out the limits of the binary racial paradigm and argues that Asian Legal Studies, or AsianCrit, are needed. For example, Chang (1993) found issues of nativistic racism, violence, and the model minority myth absent from the legal scholarship. Chang (1993) maintains that “the exclusion of Asian Americans from the political and legal processes has led to an impoverished notion of politics and law that furthers the oppression of Asian Americans” (p. 1250). Chang (1993) also found that the exclusion of Asian American history and perspectives resulted in a lack of understanding of the racial discrimination among Asian Americans in the U.S. In addition, Chang (1993) described how Asian Americans face discrimination both “quantitatively and qualitatively different from that suffered by other disempowered groups” (p. 1247). To address the way Asian Americans experience oppression differently from other minoritized groups, Chang (1993) suggests that one may respond to this perspective in three different stages: denial of these differences, affirmation of the differences, and liberation from these differences.

Chang (1993) argues that to eliminate oppression, Asian Americans must “speak the oppression into existence” (p. 1314). Even in the face of opposition or institutional disapproval, marginalized individuals “can either conform to the dominant objective mode of discourse or continue telling their stories” (Chang, 1993, p. 1270). Chang contends that “one of the tasks of Asian American Legal Scholarship is to break the silence that surrounds our oppression” (p. 1267). To break this silence and create space, Chang advocates that using the very narratives of those who are excluded in majority discourse serves as a solution to the very problem of exclusion. Utilizing Tereza’s narrative in this study sought to provide a solution to the problem of exclusion.

Asianization, is the validity that racism is interwoven onto the fabric of American psyche, and U.S. society has racialized Asians differently than other minoritized groups (Chang, 1993;

Museus & Iftikar, 2013). Asians have been lumped together as one monolithic group subjected to unique forms of exclusion and oppression. Depending on society's interests, Asians are racialized as the favored immigrants, yellow peril, perpetual foreigner, and model minority (Chang, 1993; Museus & Iftikar, 2013; Takaki, 1998). For example, prior to WWII, Japanese Americans were once welcomed as laborers replacing the Chinese; during WWII, Japanese were considered enemies and forced into U.S. incarceration camps; and after WWII, Japanese were considered the model minority. The second theme shows how transnational contexts describe how the laws and policies have historically shaped the experiences and treatment of Asians in the U.S. For example, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which forced 120,000 Japanese Americans into incarceration camps. The American Filipino War shaped the colonialist relationship the U.S. established with Filipinos, which impacted their citizenship and immigration to the U.S. The U.S. Korean War was a factor in South Korean's famine, which displaced many Koreans to other countries such as Brazil, Paraguay, and eventually the U.S. Finally, The U.S. military's involvement in Southeast Asian countries was a contributing factor for many Southeast Asians refugees gaining entry to the U.S.

The third theme, similar to revisionist history, re-constructive history accentuates the significance of re-analyzing history to expose racism. AsianCrit reconstructive history extends further to a) exemplify the historical and explicit exclusion of Asians in the U.S., b) rise above the invisibility and silence surrounding Asian history and racism, c) construct a collective narrative which include the voices and contributions of Asian American in the U.S (Museus & Iftikar, 2013), and d) utilize learned insight regarding the present to inform the future for Asian Americans. The fourth theme, strategic (anti) essentialism, acknowledges the ways dominant groups oppress, racialize, and categorize Asian Americans. AsianCrit also highlights the

accomplishments, contributions, and resistive efforts of Asian Americans that impact oppressive hegemonic practices, policies, and law (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). The fifth theme, intersectionality in AsianCrit supports the view that various systems of oppression (racism, sexism, ableism, etc.) shape the lived experiences and conditions for of Asian Americans (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). Intersectionality recognizes that all forms of oppression are harmful and reinforces that no single form of oppression is more harmful than another (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). The sixth theme, counter stories, is a critical component to analyze Asian American experiences, to advocate on behalf of Asian Americans, and to inform theory and practice (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). In addition, AsianCrit recognizes the pervasiveness of imperialism that also marginalizes the voices/stories of people of color. As a result, AsianCrit resists imperial scholarship in academia and focuses its attention on the unique voice and experiences of Asian Americans. AsianCrit recognizes “that minority status, in other words, brings with it a presumed competence to speak about race and racism” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006, p. 4). The seventh theme, commitment to social justice, demonstrates one’s commitment to the ongoing efforts to eliminate racism and oppression in all forms (Matsuda, 1991; Museus & Iftikar, 2013).

AsianCrit was used in this study to show how in a similar way that previous Asian self-advocates transcended their invisibility and silence (Museus & Iftikar, 2013), Tereza’s telling her own story helped her transcend the invisibility and silence that her undocumented status imposed on her. In support of Takaki (2012) this study sought to understand Tereza as an actor in the making of the undocumented student movement. This study also seeks to add Tereza’s story to the collective history of Asian individuals (Museus & Iftikar, 2013) who rose their voices fighting for a place in U.S. society amidst the laws that created systematic barriers.

(Re)constructive history is the tenet of AsianCrit that highlights the significance of two elements:

1) re-analyzes history to expose racism and 2) “emphasizes the exclusion of Asian Americans from American history and advocates for transcending the invisibility and silence to construct a collective Asian American historical narrative that includes the voices and contributions of Asian Americans in the United States” (Museus & Iftikar, 2013, p. 25). The historical review of Asian immigration and the emergence of undocumented immigration provided in the literature review shows how Asians have been racialized in American society through exclusion, which addresses the first part of re-constructive history.

The second part of re-constructive history is addressed by Chang (1999), who argues that Asian Americans can “either conform to the dominant objective mode of discourse or continue telling their stories” (p. 63). Chang (1993) argues that to shatter myths and mistaken beliefs about Asians, their stories must be told over and over again. Takaki (2012) supports this view and suggests that stories of Asians “can enable us to understand Asians as actors in the making of history” and can give us the perspective of immigrants’ experiences (p. 8). Even though Asians have historically been excluded from U.S. citizenship, immigration, and education, they continued to use their voices and made significant contributions to shaping U.S. law and practices. The impact of these voices is still felt today. Just like Courtenay’s (1989) novel, *The Power of One*, the landmark self-advocacy stories described in the literature review demonstrate the power that one person, one voice, can have. In a similar way, this study explored the “power of one” undocumented Asian student’s voice, Tereza Lee’s, and how it impacted the undocumented student movement.

CRT and ACRT Applied to Higher Education

Museus (2009) notes the lack of research, to the point of exclusion, of Asian Americans in the literature on and discourse in higher education. Museus and Chang (2009) identify at least four barriers that contribute to this exclusion: 1) the burden of the model minority myth suggests that all Asian have achieved universal success and therefore minimizes the importance of including Asian Americans in the research (Museus & Chang, 2009), 2) justifying research on Asian Americans has been problematic in that the idea exists that “Asian Americans do not require attention” or that “research on Asian American is too narrow” (Museus & Chang, 2009, p. 97), 3) many funding resources do not include Asian Americans and an “underrepresented racial/ethnic population” and thus monetary resources are not allocated to conduct research in the same way as for other underrepresented groups (Museus & Chang, 2009, p. 99), and 4) a lack of knowledge base makes it difficult for researchers to draw from, and build on, existing research devoted to Asian Americans (Museus & Chang, 2009). Centralizing Tereza’s story in this study sought to add to the academic research.

Museus and Iftikar (2013) analyzed the utilization of critical race theory in higher education and emphasized the need to “challenge color blindness and analyze the ways that race and racism function to oppress people of color in post-secondary education systems” (p. 20). Museus and Iftikar (2013) suggest that the tailored AsianCrit themes they provide can be utilized to understand the experiences of other minoritized groups and people of color and offer these themes as a conceptual framework upon which scholarly discussion can be based.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This research was designed to highlight Tereza Lee's narrative and understand its impact on the undocumented movement. This research also identified the contextual conditions surrounding Tereza's story. Additionally, seven individuals who knew Tereza and her situation as an undocumented student were interviewed. The research questions that guided this study are

1. What impact did Tereza's story have on the undocumented student movement and where is the Asian voice in the undocumented student movement?
2. What factors caused Tereza's story to be excluded from educational research?
3. What factors caused Tereza's story to catch the attention of advocates?

This chapter is organized into three sections. First, the design methods used in this research are described. Second, the data collection methods are described as well as the methods for selecting participants, and participant criteria. Third, the data analysis is explained, including a description of participants' relationship to Tereza and how rapport was built with the participants.

Design Methods

As described by Stake (1995), qualitative case study is used to "seek a greater understanding of the case" to "appreciate its uniqueness and complexity" and to recognize its "embeddedness and interactions with its contexts" (p. 16). The method used for this research is qualitative research with Tereza's personal narrative embedded in a single case study.

Qualitative research method is used when a researcher wishes to understand “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). Qualitative research takes place in a natural setting rather than in a laboratory to help researchers understand the “complex interrelationships ... that exist” (Stake, 1995, p. 37). Case studies focus on revealing significant factors particular to the case and include as many variables as possible to illustrate their interplay “over a period of time” (Merriam, 1988, p. 12). A case study approach involves the in-depth study of a real-life situation that also incorporates the understanding of highly significant “contextual conditions” surrounding the case (Yin, 2009, p. 18.) Stake (1995) suggests that understanding them “requires looking at a wide sweep of context, temporal and spatial, historical, political, economic, cultural, social, and personal” (p. 43). Yin (1984) maintains that case study is particularly useful when it is impossible to separate the phenomenon’s variables from the context. Another defining factor in case study is that it is used when a case is bounded by time or place (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). People or programs serve as clear case study examples that involve “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). Stake (1995) describes a case as unique and, at the same time, common. Merriam (1988) asserts that qualitative case study research is a research design in its own right, distinguishable from other research designs.

Tereza Lee was selected as a single case study because her story contains challenges, hardships, and aspects that many undocumented students in the U.S. experience. At the same time, Tereza’s narrative is unique in that she was also a musical prodigy; her situation was supported by administrators who advocated for her in unprecedented ways; and her story caught the attention of Senator Durbin who proposed legislation that, if passed, would help pave a

pathway not only to college but possibly citizenship for thousands of undocumented students. In this study, Tereza's narrative is also embedded in the case study as a reference to understanding the impact her story had on the undocumented student movement.

Data Collection Methods

According to Merriam (1988), case study approach does not claim any one method for data collection. Instead, any and all data-gathering methods can be used. Yin (1984) describes that the uniqueness and strength of case study lies in "its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence- documents, artifacts, interviews, and observation" (pp. 19-20). This approach is supported by Creswell (2013), who encourages the researcher to gather "extensive materials from multiple sources of information to provide an in-depth picture of the case" (Creswell, 2013, p. 125).

Creswell (2013) suggests narratives "examine the life experiences of a single individual when material is available and accessible and when the individual is willing to share stories" (p. 124). Chang (1993) contends that "one of the tasks of Asian American Legal Scholarship is to break the silence that surrounds our oppression" (p. 1267). To break this silence and create space, Chang (1993) advocates that using the very narratives of those who are excluded in majority discourse serves as a solution to the very problem of exclusion. Therefore, a narrative approach was used to encourage Tereza to tell her story (Manning & Cullum, 1994; Merriam, 2002, 2014) as an Asian undocumented college-bound student. Utilizing Asian Crit, Tereza's story is included to serve as a solution to a problem of exclusion in higher education research (Chang, 1999; Chang, 1993).

This study also presents a wide variety of contextual evidence surrounding Tereza's case, including historical reviews, overview of laws relevant to the case, in-depth interviews with individuals who personally knew Tereza and her story as an undocumented student, media sources, and documents pertaining to the DREAM Act. Asian immigration to the U.S. and the emergence of laws that affected undocumented students provide the historical context in which Tereza's story as an Asian undocumented student is situated. Utilizing legislative history as it affects Asians in the U.S. provides the contextual background for how Asians have been racialized through exclusion. Senate and media records also preserve the context, as excerpts from legislative documents regarding the DREAM Act provided additional context for Tereza's story. By definition, case studies allow researchers to get as close as possible to the subject of interest (Bromely, 1986, as cited by Merriam, 1988, p. 29), so this study also focused on interviews with people who knew Tereza personally and were well-acquainted with her story as an undocumented student. These interviews were used to explore Tereza's story and how her story impacted the undocumented student movement. Seven interviews were conducted and varied in length from 40 to 90 minutes. All seven interviewees had personally met Terza at some point in her life. Three interviewees selected in-person interviews in locations they chose. Two selected phone interviews at times of their choosing. Two were conducted during the pandemic via virtually platforms at a time the participants chose.

Participant Selection

In the previous section of selecting the case, I described why Tereza's was selected as a case study. This section focuses on the seven other individuals who were selected to participate in this study. The participants needed to be at least 18 years of age and were required to

personally know Tereza Lee and her story as an undocumented student. To assist with this process, I began by asking Tereza Lee to suggest individuals for the interviews. Tereza suggested six participants: however, two were unavailable for an interview. Over the course of time, I suggested three additional participants for Tereza's approval, and she agreed.

Procedure for Contacting Participants

Once identified, each of the seven participants were informed both verbally and in writing of their roles in and the expectations for the study. Prior to selecting Tereza's story as the focus of this study, I knew or had met four of the participants through my professional work. I contacted them with an introductory email letter and follow-up phone calls. For the participants with whom I did not have a previous connection, Tereza first reached out to them via email or phone to introduce me and to let them know I would be contacting them regarding this study. After Tereza's initial contact, I followed up with an introductory email prior to contacting the participants for an interview. All interviews – whether conducted in-person, by phone, or online – were recorded for later transcription. When requested, the participants received a list of the guiding questions in advance. The guiding questions for this interview were as follows:

1. How do you know Tereza and what is/was your relationship to her?
2. What do you think gave Tereza the courage to disclose her story to Ann Monaco?
3. What impact did Tereza's story have on you?
4. What impact did Tereza's story have on others?
5. What impact did Tereza's story have on the undocumented student movement?

6. What impact did Tereza's story have on undocumented Asian Americans and how did Tereza's story amplify the voices of Asian undocumented students?
7. Is there anything else you would like to add, or is there something I may have missed that you think is important for me to know?

Northern Illinois University's Institutional Review Board did not require consent forms.

The participants were informed their participation was voluntary and they could refuse participation as well as video and/or audio recording at their own will at any time. Each interviewee was asked twice if they wished to use their real name or a pseudonym. Each interviewee asked that their real names be used for this study.

Eligible Participants

Tereza provided a list of participants she felt were most closely involved with her situation: Duffie Adelson, former Executive Director Merit School of Music; Clarisol Duque, State Director, Office of U.S. Senator Richard Durbin; Senator Richard Durbin, co-author of the 2001 DREAM Act; and Tania Unzueta Carrasco, former Merit classmate and activist in the undocumented student movement. Over the course of time, I also suggested Randy Kim, as he was the person who introduced me to Tereza. Through my work I met Ju Hong, an undocumented student of Korean descent and activist in the undocumented student movement, who mentioned he knew Tereza. Also, I had originally hoped to interview student members of DREAM Action NIU who had met Tereza during her visits to NIU, but many of the members had graduated and, due to the barriers the pandemic presented in contacting individuals, I chose to interview Sandy Lopez, the faculty advisor of DREAM Action NIU instead. In addition to Tereza, persons eligible for this study, are listed in the Table 1.

Table 1

Interviewees

Name of Participant	Relationship to Tereza	Interview Format
Ms. Duffie Adelson	Executive Director of Merit School of Music	in-person
Clarisol Duque	Executive Administrator for Senator Durbin	in-person
Senator Richard Durbin	Co-author of the 2001 DREAM Act	virtual
Tania Unzueta Carrasco	Merit School of Music Classmate and fellow activist in the undocumented student movement	phone
Ju Hong	Fellow activist in the undocumented student movement	phone
Randy Kim	Former staff member of Korean Cultural & Resource Center, Chicago	in-person
Sandy Lopez	Faculty Advisor of DREAM Action NIU; inaugural Director Supporting Undocumented Student Office NIU	virtual

Data Analysis

Interviews

The three in-person and two phone interviews were recorded and downloaded as audio files (MP3) and then converted to video files (MP4). These six video interview files (MP4) were then individually uploaded to a private YouTube channel. Once uploaded to YouTube, I listened to the video interviews in their entirety while also reading along with the closed captioning tool. Using the YouTube transcription tool, each YouTube video interview was automatically transcribed online and time stamped. Then I cut and pasted each online transcribed interviews from YouTube to their own Microsoft Word document. Each Microsoft Word transcription was then read line by line and reviewed for accuracy while I listened to its corresponding YouTube video interview and play back several times. Where there were discrepancies, the YouTube interview was stopped and the corrections were typed directly onto the Microsoft document. This

process continued until Microsoft transcription and YouTube video interviews were exactly aligned. After each of the transcriptions was corrected, I read the Microsoft Word interview with the YouTube interview playing in the background to ensure final accuracy. Once fully corrected I read the six Microsoft Word transcripts out loud.

The two virtual interviews were recorded on a private NIU Blackboard platform and downloaded automatically as video files (MP4) to Kaltura, an embedded online system in Blackboard. As with the previous six interviews, I listened to these interviews in their entirety while using the Kaltura closed captioning tool. Then, using the Kaltura transcription tool, these two video interviews were automatically transcribed and time-stamped online. Each of these two online transcripts were cut and copied to Microsoft documents and reviewed exactly as described above using the Kaltura video interviews instead of You Tube. The process for correcting and editing the transcriptions was exactly the same as described above. Once fully corrected, I read these two Microsoft Word transcripts out loud. After all eight transcripts were edited and corrected, they were individually transferred to one Microsoft Excel document, each with its own tab. Each tab was labeled with the name of the participant and a copy of the Microsoft Word transcript was cut and pasted into the far-left hand column of its assigned tab. Each line of the interviews was time-stamped. Across the top of each of the eight tabs, I created columns for each interview question and color coded the interview questions.

Coding

Each interview was coded twice. The first coding involved organizing the participant's responses by color according to the guiding interview questions: how the interviewees knew Tereza (red); what the participants felt gave Tereza the courage to disclose her story (black);

what impact did Tereza have on the interviewee (green); what impact Tereza's story had on Tereza's family and other people (purple); what impact did Tereza's story have on undocumented students who identified as Asian American (brown); what impact did Tereza's story have on immigration and undocumented students (yellow; Appendix B). The above categories were reviewed to identify micro-themes. As micro-themes began to emerge, categories were created and coded to represent the data.

These categories were analyzed again and refined into larger thematic categories. A third thematic analysis revealed the following categories: impact on federal, state, and university policy; impact on undocumented student movement; impact on undocumented students who identify as Asian Americans; and the challenges that emerged with the DREAM Act (see Appendix B). These themes became my findings.

Reliability was established through accuracy in transcription and transparency regarding the collection of data, coding of themes, and findings (Merriam, 2002, 2014). In addition, reliability was maintained by utilizing participant checks through sending the transcripts to participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I also had discussions with colleagues, including committee members and my chair, about the research process and findings (Merriam, 2002, 2014). Finally, notes (Merriam, 2002) were kept to document questions, reflections, ideas, and decisions about the research and research process.

In summary, I generated categories of themes by reviewing and examining transcript data, developed themes and categories, refined themes and categories, compared new data with emerging categories, and listed examples from the transcript data. The findings were used to develop a more complete understanding of Tereza's story and its impact on the undocumented student movement as well as how it amplified the voices of undocumented individuals of Asian

descent. Based on the interviews, challenges regarding the DREAM Act were also explored and analyzed.

Participants' Relationship to Tereza and How I Built Rapport with Participants

This next section describes the participants' relationship to Tereza and how I built rapport as I met and interacted with them. The descriptions begin with the four participants I knew or had met prior to selecting Tereza's story as the case study for this research. Then I describe how I built rapport with three participants I met after selecting Tereza story as a case study.

Randy Kim

In August 2012, Randy Kim joined the Korean Resource and Cultural Center (KRCC) staff in Chicago as an Immigrant Rights Organizer. Randy worked with undocumented individuals who were eligible for the DACA program instituted by former President Obama on June 15, 2012. In this role, Randy was involved with promoting immigrant rights, voter education and outreach, and other social issues affecting the Korean and immigrant communities in the Chicagoland area. During this time, Tereza also visited the KRCC team to develop a strategy through which they could raise funds for undocumented students through a benefit concert in October 2012. It was through this work that Randy met Tereza and became acquainted with her story as an undocumented student primarily through her own testimony. Randy worked hard to expand KRCC's network, and scores of people came to the benefit dinner in October to support Tereza and undocumented students, several of whom were Asian undocumented students.

As previously mentioned, I met Randy Kim because he reached out to NIU's Asian American Resource Center in his professional role as former staff member of the Korean Resource & Cultural Center in Chicago. As a valued community member, I developed rapport with Randy by conducting a site visit to the KRCC prior to Tereza's Benefit Dinner. In 2013, I invited Randy, and students with whom he worked to NIU when the Asian American Resource Center sponsored Tereza Lee as a guest speaker at Asian American Heritage Month Kick-off event. Just prior to Tereza's visit to NIU, Randy (Kim, 2013) interviewed her and sent me his write-up article "Documenting the American Dream." I offered to have it published in NIU's weekly newsletter as a preview to Tereza's visit. After Tereza's visit to NIU and upon Randy's invitation, I joined KRCC's bus trip to Washington D.C. for the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Rally in June. I continued to network with Randy through social media, and after I selected Tereza as a focus of study, I contacted Randy by phone to request an interview. His preference was an in-person interview, and I sent a follow-up email to confirm the place time and location of his choosing. I still keep in touch with Randy, support his recent podcast series the Bahn Mi Chronicles, and update him on milestone progress.

Ju Hong

Ju Hong works with the California Social Services Department in the Immigration and Refugee Branch as a program analyst. His main responsibilities include providing programs and funding initiatives for legal services for immigration integration efforts, outreach, and community education. This department also helps immigrants with DACA applications, the naturalization process, and immigration protection for unaccompanied undocumented minors. Ju Hong came to the United States from South Korea at the age of 11 and grew up in the San

Francisco Bay Area. He attended Laney College in Oakland, where he was elected as the first and youngest Asian American student body president. Ju Hong graduated from Laney College and transferred to the University of California, Berkeley, where he became the first undocumented student government Senator in UC Berkeley history. Ju Hong is known for his student activism both at Laney College and Berkeley.

During President Obama's speech at the Betty Ong Center in San Francisco, California, in 2013, Ju Hong challenged the President on the record number of deportations of undocumented individuals that took place during his administration and called for a halt in deportations. Ju Hong's courageous action appeared on national and international media, including on CNN, MSNBC, NPR, BBC News, and in the *New York Times*. Ju Hong is currently a member of the Leadership Council of Immigrants Rising and serves as a board member of the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC).

Ju Hong was born and raised in South Korea, but due to financial hardship, his mother sought a better life and moved the family to the San Francisco Bay area in 2001. Ju Hong recalls growing up in the U.S. as a "normal kid" until his senior year in college. It was when he began to complete mock college applications that he learned of his undocumented status and that he did not have the social security number required to complete the college applications. His dreams to go to college, get a job, and help his family were suddenly shattered. It was this time in his life that started Ju Hong on a journey of seeking out non-profit organizations that assisted immigrants, in particular undocumented immigrants. Ju Hong learned about the not-for-profit organization Korean Resource Center (KRCC), an affiliate of National Korean American Service & Education Consortium, that helped Korean immigrants through pro-bono services. It was through this non-profit organization that Ju Hong learned how he could navigate the challenges

of going to college. Through his connection with the KRCC and the NAKASEC, Ju Hong also learned of the proposed DREAM Act legislation that, if passed, would allow students like himself to attend college and avoid deportation. That was the first time Ju Hong began hearing about Tereza Lee, a young undocumented Korean student and the inspiration for the DREAM Act.

As mentioned previously, through the programming efforts of DREAM Action NIU, I became acquainted with Ju Hong's documentary "*Halmoni*." Immediately following the event, I approached DREAM Action NIU and asked if they would be interested in partnering to bring Ju Hong to campus as a follow-up to the film screening. They agreed, which led me to reach out to and eventually meet Ju Hong. I conducted online research to learn more about Ju Hong and his role as a Korean activist in the undocumented student movement. Ju Hong was the featured speaker at NIU's Dialogue on Diversity Series in November 2017, where he shared the personal account of his story and screened his documentary. While socializing with Ju Hong after the event, he mentioned that he knew Tereza Lee and had been inspired by her story. It was shortly afterward that I asked Tereza what she thought about me interviewing Ju Hong, to which she agreed. I reached out to Ju Hong by email. Since he lives out of state, he preferred a phone interview. Since meeting him, we have kept in touch through emails and periodic updates on this project.

Sandy Lopez

Sandy Lopez has over 30 years of experience serving students, staff, and faculty at Northern Illinois University (NIU). Sandy has served as an academic advisor, teaching consultant, administrator, and, most importantly, as a mentor and student advocate. Most

recently, Sandy is the inaugural Director for the Office of Undocumented Student Support at NIU, which was founded in 2018. Sandy also serves as one of the advisors for DREAM Action NIU. DREAM Action NIU, founded in Spring 2009, is a student-run organization that advocates on behalf of undocumented students.

Sandy had met Tereza at two events sponsored by the Asian American Resource Center at NIU. Sandy's first encounter with Tereza occurred on April 4, 2012, when Tereza shared her story as an undocumented student as a part of the Asian American Resource Center's Kick-Off event for Asian American Heritage Month at NIU. After the kick-off event, DREAM Action NIU requested a private meeting with Tereza. A year later, DREAM Action NIU presented *Coming Out of the Shadows* at their 2014 event where they outlined their demands for the creation of an Office of Undocumented Student Support office and a full-time position devoted to serving undocumented students. Sandy's second encounter with Tereza was on March 3, 2015, when Tereza was invited to perform a piano concert at NIU's Boutell Music Hall. Sandy acknowledges that the Office of Undocumented Student Support and her position were a direct result of the student advocacy efforts of DREAM Action NIU and their allies.

Of all the participants, I have known Sandy the longest as a colleague at NIU through her work as faculty advisor with DREAM Action NIU and as the recent inaugural director of Undocumented Student Support. In her role as faculty advisor to DREAM Action NIU, I have had opportunities to work with Sandy in various collaborative initiatives: invited DREAM Action NIU to Tereza Lee's first visit to campus, developed joint programming opportunities during Tereza's second visit, supported DREAM Action NIU's strategic conversations with Tereza during her visits to NIU, attended DREAM Action NIU's "Coming out of the Shadows," joined an important conversation with Senator Durbin and DREAM Action NIU in support of

undocumented students, and initiated co-collaborations to bring guest speaker Ju Hong to NIU. Additionally, we worked together to provide a year-long program series “Supporting Undocumented Students.” I participated in training sessions for Undocumented Students that were led by Sandy, and Sandy and I served as committee members for the Presidential Task Force on Undocumented Students and for Undocumented Student Scholarships. Currently, in her recent role as inaugural director of Undocumented Student Support, Sandy and I serve as directors in the Division of Academic Diversity Equity & Inclusion. In the process of getting to know Tereza, the collaborative partnerships and rapport across the Asian American Resource Center, DREAM Action NIU and Sandy Lopez were strengthened. Because of Sandy’s close connection as faculty advisor to DREAM Action NIU, her knowledge about the DREAM Act and undocumented student movement, and she had personally met Tereza several times during her NIU visits, I asked Tereza if I could add Sandy Lopez’s name as a participant. Tereza agreed. I contacted Sandy by email to request an interview. I followed up by a phone call to further discuss the project. Due to the pandemic, Sandy’s interview was conducted online. We continue to work together due to the nature of our positions, and I keep Sandy updated on progress.

Duffie A. Adelson

For 33 years, Duffie Adelson served as a faculty member and/or leader of the Merit School of Music in Chicago, Illinois. She first served as an instructor (starting in 1982), Associate Director (1986-1993) and the Executive Director starting in 1993. During this time, Duffie became known for helping build Merit into a nationally accredited music school in the West Loop, reaching roughly 3,500 promising student musicians annually (Bianchi, 2019). In a 2019 interview, Duffie explained her inspiration for working at Merit:

I was a child of the '60s who grew up in Glencoe surrounded by music and very aware of the civil rights movement. I studied flute and strings in college, and I desperately wanted to help our world achieve social justice. Merit was the perfect place to marry music education and civil rights. (Bianchi, 2019)

Duffie was a recipient of the Alice S. Pfaelzer Distinguished Service to the Arts Award for her decades of unparalleled service to Merit and her commitment to inspiring thousands of Chicagoland youth. (Dagenhart, 2019). She also served on the Board of Directors for the Merit School of Music and currently serves as a retired member of the Board of Trustees for the Merit School of Music, with the distinct status as an Honoring Merit Life Trustee.

Duffie also served as Executive Director of the Merit School of Music (then called Merit Music Program) when Tereza was just beginning to take piano lessons at the school. Duffie worked side-by-side with one of Tereza's teachers, Anne Monaco, to help Tereza. Duffie and Ann Monaco worked together to contact Senator Durbin's office: "I think I was the one who called Senator Durbin's office and Anne worked hand-in glove with Clarisol Duque." Duffie worked behind the scenes to secure scholarships to help pay for Tereza's college since Tereza was not eligible for Pell grants, government loans, or federal money. Duffie recalls that at that time the Manhattan School of Music had a very small endowment offered in the form of a scholarship to help pay for Tereza' college, while the rest of the college costs such as tuition and room and board would have to be paid by her family who did not have sufficient financial resources. Duffie recalled how she, Monaco, and private donors worked as a team to provide the emotional and financial support needed to help Tereza go to college to realize her potential. To this day, Duffie keeps in touch with Tereza.

I had no previous connection with Duffie Adelson, until I reached out to her via email requesting an interview. Prior to contacting her, I conducted extensive online research to learn

more about her work and role as Executive Director for Merit School of Music. Duffie readily agreed to an interview with a preference for meeting in-person at a location of her choice.

Senator Durbin

Senator Richard Durbin, the 47th Senator to represent Illinois, was a co-sponsor, along with Senator Orrin Hatch, of the original DREAM Act. Durbin served in the U.S House of Representatives from 1983 to 1997 and has been an Illinois Senator since 1997. Durbin holds the second highest ranking position among Senate Democrats as the Assistant Democratic Leader. Additionally, Durbin serves as a ranking member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution and on the Appropriations Committee's Defense subcommittee. Durbin was recently elected as Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and his first goal in this capacity is the passage of the DREAM Act 2021.

Durbin came to know Tereza Lee and her situation as an undocumented student through contact from the long-serving Executive Director of Merit Music School, Duffie Adelson, who reached out asking for his help with Tereza's situation. Upon receiving the call, Durbin decided to look up the law to see how he could help. He thought he would be able to help change Tereza's situation with a simple phone call to Immigration Naturalization Services, but this was not the case. Instead Durbin learned that Tereza would have to leave the country for 10 years and petition to return to the U.S. with no guarantee the petition would be granted. Durbin recalled his initial perception of the law:

And I thought to myself, well, that's outrageous. This young woman is just at the earliest stages of a career in education. And where is she going to go? Her family is here. They were not wealthy. She had been born in South America, Brazil. And she had no connection whatsoever to Korea. So, it really was clear that we needed to create a new

option for her under the law. And that's why the DREAM Act was written. (Durbin, personal conversation)

Because of Senator Durbin's public role, I had been familiar with his work as a for a number of years. Although I had never met him personally, I chanced to meet him through my work role prior to selecting Tereza as a case study for my dissertation. He attended an on-campus meeting with student members of DREAM Action NIU, NIU President, Chief Diversity Officer, Faculty Advisor of DREAM Action NIU, Director of Latino Resource Center and Director of Asian American Resource Center (NIU Today, 2018). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss current issues regarding the DREAM Act and more specifically the tenuous status of DACA at the time. At the meeting, as Senator Durbin spoke of his involvement with the DREAM Act; he also spoke of Tereza Lee. After I had selected Tereza as a focus for this study, Senator Durbin was an individual Tereza suggested I interview, and she reached out to his office to introduce me. Afterward I emailed his office to request an interview. He agreed via email and suggested I first meet with Clarisol Duque who Tereza had also identified as someone I should interview.

Clarisol Duque

Clarisol Duque is a native-born Chicagoan, raised in Humboldt Park. Clarisol graduated from the University of Illinois-Chicago in 1999. Clarisol currently serves as Chief of Staff in the office of Senator Durbin where she advises the Senator on all matters involving the State of Illinois. In 2015, Clarisol was recognized by *Negocios Now* as one of 40 outstanding Latinos in the Chicagoland area under the age of 40. Described as being "an original DREAM Act Champion," Clarisol supported efforts to pass the DREAM Act years before it was introduced to Congress in 2010. Clarisol joined Durbin's staff as an immigration case worker in 1999. Clarisol

explained that Durbin's office helps people with several situations, including federal matters, immigration concerns, Social Security and Internal Revenue Service issues, student loans, and more. Clarisol describes herself as a first-generation American and the daughter of Mexican immigrants whose parents at one time had been undocumented.

Clarisol vividly remembers how she became familiar with Tereza in November of 2000 when the Merit School of Music contacted Senator Durbin's office shortly after Ann Monaco became aware of Tereza's immigration status. Clarisol received this case as she would any other case: "There was a letter with attachments, including supporting documents, a press release naming Tereza Lee as the Bessie Feinberg Chicago Youth Orchestra winner describing Tereza's long list of accolades, honors, first place competitions, and awards." Tereza was referred to Senator Durbin's office as a musical prodigy who was being recruited to world-renowned music conservatories such as the Julliard, School, the Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Curtis Institute of Music, Eastman School of Music, and Manhattan Conservatory of Music. However, Tereza could not enroll in any of these institutions due to her immigration status and other financial reasons. Clarisol was moved by Tereza's situation and the group of people at the Merit School of Music supporting Tereza. Clarisol, like Tereza's support team, recognized Tereza's incredible talent and the potential future that lay just out of reach for reasons out of Tereza's control. The first time Clarisol actually met Tereza in person was when Tereza was invited to the Senate hearing for the first time on September 12, 2001: "I had to be there...I couldn't miss it [the hearing]. There was nothing that was going to get in my way to be there at that hearing." (Duque, personal conversation)

Prior to emailing Clarisol, I conducted extensive online research to learn more about her work and role in Senator Durbin's office. She readily agreed to an interview with a preference for meeting in her office in downtown Chicago.

Tania Unzueta Carrasco

Tania Unzueta Carrasco began living in the U.S. at the age of 10 and became undocumented when her parents' family tourist visa expired (Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). Tania was in high school when she enrolled at the Merit Music Program (now Merit School of Music) as a beginning piano student. She remembers that she met Tereza Lee for the first time long before she actually knew who Tereza was. Tania's teacher at the time, Mr. Norris, took her class to see a recital performed by another Merit Music student. Unzueta Carrasco remembers it this way:

Tereza was performing a concert like somewhere in Chicago downtown I just remember seeing how good she was at her piano playing ...and so, I didn't, I had no idea then that we were both undocumented... I just knew we were both in the Merit Music Program. We didn't know each other... like I said I just knew of her as one of the really good, piano players at the school.

It was not until years later that Tania "connected the dots" and realized that the student she saw at the concert was Tereza Lee. When Tania first heard of Tereza, Tania had not yet applied for college, nor faced the challenges many undocumented students face through the college application process. However, unbeknownst to Tania and Tereza, their lives would intersect a second and third time before they actually met.

When Tania graduated from high school, she went to her high school counselor to apply for college. It was then Tania was told she had to obtain an international student visa to apply, which meant Tania had to travel outside of the country, apply for and obtain a visa from the U.S.

Embassy in Mexico, and then come back to the U.S. enrolled as an international student. As an undocumented student at age 17, without a guarantee she would be able to return, Unzueta Carrasco traveled to Mexico to obtain an international student visa so she could attend and fund her college education (Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). However, when Tania went to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico to obtain the necessary visa to re-enter the U.S., she was told she could not return to the United States.

When I went to the US Embassy, I was informed that I did not qualify because I had been living in the United States with undocumented status, and, furthermore, that my parents owed thousands of dollars in taxes for my pre-college public education. The U.S. embassy staff took away my Mexican passport and informed me that I could not go back to the United States (Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014).

This situation caused Unzueta Carrasco's parents, who were still living in Chicago, to organize a campaign to facilitate Tania's return to the United States. They gathered all of Tania's accomplishments (diplomas, test scores, newspaper articles and other documentation) to provide justification for her right to return to the U.S. To help them in the return of their daughter, Unzueta Carrasco's parents also reached out to various advocates and elected officials, including Illinois Senator Richard Durbin. In the summer of 2001, Durbin was able to re-unite Unzueta Carrasco with her family through a humanitarian parole, which is a discretionary option that gives eligible individuals temporary entry into the United States for urgent humanitarian reasons or for significant public benefit. Re-unification of adults and children is one of the criteria (USCIS, 2023). The same time Tania re-entered the U.S., Durbin was preparing to introduce his first version of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minor's (DREAM) Act. Tania's and Tereza's lives were about to intersect for a second time, but again neither of them knew each other or saw each other. Throughout the summer of Tania's return, she kept hearing about Tereza's story and how her efforts inspired Durbin to propose the DREAM Act in support

of undocumented students. Durbin had also invited Tania, along with Tereza, to testify before Congress on September 12, 2001. However, just one day before the DREAM Act hearing, the tragic events of 9/11 took place, and the hearing was cancelled. Tania recalls it this way:

As Senator Durbin started pushing for the DREAM Act in the United States, he was actually able to bring me back through humanitarian parole because he connected my story back to the DREAM Act as well... When I came back, I started advocating for the DREAM Act and I was hearing about Tereza before I knew her name too. You know, on September 12, 2001, we were supposed to go testify in front of Congress, in favor of the DREAM Act. And, again, I didn't know [it] at the time, but it was me and Tereza who were both going to testify in front of Congress. But, of course, we didn't end up going because I remember hearing about September 11th and the planes crashing in New York. Clarisol from Senator Durbin's office called me and said, "I don't think we're going. Everything is cancelled."

It was not until Tania learned that Ms. Monaco, Director of the Merit Music Program, also planned to accompany Tereza to the Congressional hearing did she even realize the other person testifying also went to the Merit Music Program. However, since they never got to meet at the hearing, Tania still did not realize Tereza was the same person she had seen playing piano at the concert her teacher had brought her to years earlier.

After 9/11, nothing about the DREAM Act passed. Tania continued to advocate for the DREAM Act, and in 2010 when she received the Freedom of Fear Award, her life intersected with Tereza's a third time. The Freedom of Fear Award honored ordinary people who were committed to extraordinary acts of courage on behalf of immigrants and refugees. Out of 380 nominations, Tania was one of 15 awardees for her courageous work as a leader and co-founder of the Immigrant Youth Justice League and National Coming Out of the Shadows Day. During Tania's acceptance speech, she shared parts of her story as an undocumented student, including the missed opportunity to testify in front of the U.S. Senate in 2001:

I was on my way to testify in front of the U.S. Senate as I watched two planes crash into the Twin Towers in New York City. I had my plane ticket for September 11th, 2001. And

the government's response was to turn everything around immigration into a conversation of national security and terrorism. And, so, I decided to advocate more quietly. Go to school and try to live my life.

Tereza heard Tania's speech online, and for a third time, their lives intersected. This time, Tereza reached out to Tania through Facebook: "I heard your story and that's actually my story too. I was the other person who was supposed testify in front of Congress. It would be great to meet each other and talk." And that's how Tania and Tereza finally met. Tania explained how they had a history and had lived parallel lives since the Merit Music Program, but they were never able to meet and talk to each other until 2010.

I had no previous connection with Tania Unzueta Carrasco until I reached out to her via messenger requesting an interview. Prior to contacting Tania, I conducted extensive online research to learn more about her work and role in the undocumented student movement. Tania readily agreed to an interview with a preference for meeting by phone since she was out of town. Table 2 presents the timeline of the events that helped build rapport with Tereza and the interviewees leading up to, and including, the date Tereza agreed to work with me on this project.

Table 2

Building Rapport through a Progression of Involvement:

Year	Date	Involvement
2012	Summer, 2012	Randy Kim, KRCC Chicago Chapter reaches out to NIU's Asian American Resource Center
	Friday, September 28, 2012	Randy Kim invites Director of Asian American Resource Center to Benefit Dinner and Concert featuring Tereza Lee and student representatives from Chicago-based universities
	Monday, October 1, 2012	Director of Asian American Resource Center confirms attendance at the benefit concert and requests site visit to KRCC.
	Tuesday October 9, 2012	Site Visit to KRCC (Randy Kim, Sik Son is an NIU Alumni and former classmate of mine)
	June 15, 2012	President Obama announces DACA
	Friday, October 12, 2012	KRCC's Benefit Dinner: Meet Tereza Lee for the first time
2013	Tuesday, April 4, 2013	Tereza Lee invited as Guest Speaker at Asian American Heritage Month Kick-off Event at NIU https://niutoday.info/2013/03/28/taste-of-asia-speaker-tereza-lee-will-kick-off-aprils-asian-american-heritage-month-events/
	June 2013	D.C. Rally on Comprehensive Immigration Reform
	June, 2013	Bringas was invited to serve on Presidential Task Force
2015	Tuesday March 3, 2015:	Students, Faculty staff meet Tereza Lee, NIU Luncheon
	Tuesday March 3, 2015	DREAM Benefit Concert, NIU Capitol Room, (Women's Heritage Month) Series to support UDS
	Wednesday, March 4, 2015	Tereza Lee, International Women's Day Luncheon, Series to support undocumented students https://niutoday.info/2017/11/01/celebrating-international-education-week/
	Fall 2015	Bringas asked Tereza if she would be willing to work with me on the dissertation project
	Fall 2015	Tereza Lee mentioned about the mini-book she wrote and hoped to publish
2016	Tuesday, April 6, 2016:	Stephanie Camba & DREAM Action NIU https://niutoday.info/2016/04/22/spoken-word-artist-activist-stephanie-camba-to-speak-april-26/
2017	May 3, 2017	DREAM Action NIU screens Ju Hong's documentary: <i>Halmoni</i> . https://www.facebook.com/dreamactioniu/photos/a.570889002970468/1409202149139145/?type=3 ; MB attends and invites DREAM Action to collaborate in bringing Ju Hong to NIU in Fall, 2017.
	Fall 2017	Bringas interviews Tereza Lee Tereza Lee provides list of interviewees and shares her story

Table 2 continued on following page

Table 2 (continued)

Year	Date	Involvement
	November 7, 2017	Screening of <i>Halmoni</i> & Panel discussion. Sponsored by Asian American Resource Center & DREAM Action NIU.
	November 14, 2017	Ju Hong visits NIU: Diversity Dialogue Fall Series.
2018	March 28, 2018	Bringas joins meeting when Durbin visits NIU to talk with NIU Dreamers https://niutoday.info/2018/03/28/durbin-visits-niu-talk-dreamers/

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

This section provides insight into Research Question 1: What impact did Tereza’s story have on the undocumented student movement and where is the Asian voice in the undocumented student movement?

Impact on Federal Legislation

Before submitting the original DREAM Act in 2001, Durbin introduced a private bill to the Senate written specifically for Tereza in the hope of resolving her specific situation. This bill was called the Children's Adjustment, Relief, and Education Act (CARE Act). It was at this time that Durbin began to recognize that Tereza Lee’s situation was also the plight of thousands of others and that the laws needed to be changed for more than just Tereza.

Well, I would go around Chicago. Clarisol Duque was with me many times and we would address audiences who were interested in immigration. I would tell Tereza Lee’s story and tell them that I introduced a bill to try to solve her problem under the law. And usually the audience would listen politely and not raise any questions or make any statements. But then I started noticing that as I left ... where I was speaking and headed out to my car, there would usually be one or two people from the audience standing by my car, looking over their shoulder in both directions. And when it was clear, they would say and whisper to me, “I’ve got the same situation and I hope the bill passes.

When it became clear that the CARE Act would not be passed, Durbin took greater measures and involved his judiciary team in exploring the possibility of introducing a larger piece of legislation that would not only help Tereza but also thousands of undocumented students experiencing similar situations. That bill is now known as the DREAM Act. The original 2001 DREAM Act

included many of the same elements as the CARE Act; however, the day before the hearing was scheduled, the tragic events of September 11, 2001, took place and the hearing was canceled indefinitely. The tragic events of 9/11 also set in motion anti-immigrant legislation for years to come. However, even amid the anti-immigration sentiment, Durbin continued to keep the issues of undocumented students in the forefront of the Senate and introduced numerous iterations of the original DREAM Act between 2001 and 2010, but none were passed.

The ripple effect of Tereza's story has impacted legislation at the federal and state levels as well as influenced institutional policies nationwide. According to Clarisol Duque and Senator Durbin, the DREAM Act has been submitted at least 20 times at nearly every Congress since 2001 until the present. At least 11 versions of the DREAM Act have been sponsored or co-sponsored by Durbin. Each version of the DREAM Act, while they vary, provides a pathway to legal status for undocumented individuals who came to the U.S. as children. Over the years, the DREAM Act has secured 48 co-sponsors in the Senate and 152 in the House of Representatives. However, to date and despite bipartisan support, the DREAM Act has not passed the total required votes needed in the Senate (filibuster proof count requires 60 votes) and the House of Representatives (218). The closest the DREAM Act came to becoming the law was in 2010 when it passed the House but fell a mere five votes short of the required 60 in the Senate (American Immigration Council, 2012a, b, c).

When DREAM Act 2010 did not pass, Durbin immediately began discussions with then President Obama about how to grant relief to undocumented students who were finding themselves in deportation proceedings. Durbin submitted a formal public letter to Obama and coordinated letter writing efforts of 40 colleagues urging Obama to formulate a system to protect undocumented students who would otherwise benefit from the DREAM Act. Effective June 15,

2012, Obama issued an Executive Order for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) that temporarily deferred deportation for undocumented students for a period of two years. Between 2012 and 2016, DACA changed the lives of over 800,000 undocumented students by providing temporary reprieves from deportation, opportunities to pursue college, access to driver's licenses, and for those with degrees already in hand, the ability to work. However, in 2016, DACA became the focus of concern for thousands of its recipients and advocates when Trump vowed to terminate DACA and the future of the DACA program was uncertain (Bier, 2017; Ishiwata & Muñoz, 2018; Nienhusser & Oshio, 2019; Roman & Sagas, 2021, Suárez 2018; Trump, 2015).

With Trump's election in November 2016, it became clear that the future of the DACA program was uncertain (Bier, 2017; Ishiwata, & Muñoz, 2018. Nienhusser & Oshio, 2019; Roman & Sagas, 2021, Suárez 2018). To protect DACA eligible applicants and DACA recipients, Durbin worked with both republican and democratic senators and proposed new legislation called the *Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy*, or the BRIDGE Act. Similar to DACA, the BRIDGE Act would have provided temporary relief from deportation and work authorization for current DACA recipients and DACA eligible individuals; however, it was not passed.

In 2017, with the future of DACA still uncertain, Durbin re-introduced the 2017 DREAM Act in the hope of passing permanent legislation prior to the effective rescission date of DACA. However less than two months after DREAM Act 2017 was introduced, Attorney Jeff Sessions announced that DACA would be rescinded in September 2017. Durbin doubled his efforts to meet with every Republican he could to gain the bipartisan support he needed to pass the DREAM Act. Durbin re-introduced the 2019 DREAM Act on March 26, 2019.

Currently there are two federal legislative proposals of the DREAM Act before Congress. The first proposal, DREAM Act of 2021, was introduced in the Senate on February 4, 2021, by Senators Durbin and Graham. The second proposal currently before Congress is part of a larger bill called the American Dream and Promise Act of 2021. Both bills provide a path to citizenship for Dreamers, including DACA recipients. The DREAM and Promise Act of 2021 was introduced by Representative Roybal-Allard on March 3, 2021, and passed with 237 votes on March 18, 2021. The next step is for this bill to pass with at least 60 votes in the Senate.

Ju Hong pointed out that with every introduction of the DREAM Act bill, there was a sense of urgency and hope among undocumented students and allies.

We are hoping that this time around we pass the bill. But when it doesn't happen, you get disappointed. And sometimes it's a repetitive cycle that sometimes we have to also understand how difficult the fight may be on such a national bill like that.

With Senator Durbin serving as senior senator and Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, supporters are cautiously hopeful for the passage of the DREAM Act in the Senate and support from President Biden is expected (American Immigration Council, 2021). Although the DREAM Act has not yet been passed at the federal level, modified versions of the DREAM Act have been adopted by numerous states, which serve to remove barriers for undocumented students to attend college (see Appendix A for a description of state support for undocumented students).

Impact on State Level and Educational Policy

The ripple effect of Tereza's story not only had an impact on national legislation but also on state legislation access for undocumented students, particularly in the area of paying in-state tuition for colleges and universities. In 2001, Texas was the first state to offer in-state tuition to

undocumented students through SB 1403 (Ali et al., 2017). Since then, several states have followed suit, and, to date, 34 states plus the District of Columbia provide support, in varying degrees, to undocumented students which includes in-state tuition, access to state financial aid, and college enrollment (Higher Education Immigration Portal, 2023). Of the 34 states providing support to undocumented students, 17 states, plus the District of Columbia, offer the most comprehensive statewide access to in-state tuition and some state financial aid for undocumented students and DACA recipients: California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. Six states make college accessible by offering statewide in-state tuition (but not financial aid) to undocumented student and DACA recipients: Arizona, Florida, Kansas, Nebraska, Kentucky, and Oklahoma. Four states offer limited in-state tuition or reduced tuition in some public schools but not statewide: Delaware, Iowa, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. Seven states provide in-state tuition and access to DACA recipients only in some public schools: Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, and Ohio. Of the 16 states that offer neither in-state tuition nor state financial aid, eight states plus Puerto Rico- have no known state policy: Alaska, Louisiana, Montana, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Five states explicitly ban in-state tuition and state aid to undocumented students, including DACA recipients: Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. Finally, three states – Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina – enacted policies that prohibit undocumented students from enrolling but may allow DACA recipients to enroll (Higher Education Immigration Portal, 2023).

Additionally, since the passage of DACA, several states have also implemented policies for DACA recipients that affect their access to driver's licenses, professional licenses, and health

benefits (Higher Education Immigration Portal, 2023; Morse et al., 2020). For example, all states issue driver's licenses to DACA recipients, with 17 of all states offering driver's licenses to undocumented students regardless of status (Higher Education Immigration Portal, 2023). These states include California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington.

State policy regarding access to professional licensure was also impacted and at least 18 states have implemented legislation to improve professional and occupational licensure for undocumented students. Of the 18, five states are categorized as offering comprehensive access that allows individuals to access licensure in all professions regardless of immigration status, given that all other requirements are met: California, Colorado, Illinois Nevada, and New Jersey. Two states, New Mexico and Oregon, allow licensure in one or more professions regardless of status. Fifteen states allow licensure only to DACA recipients in one or more professions: Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, and West Virginia. Thirty-one states (plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) have no known policy regarding professional licensure for undocumented students: Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Only one state, Alabama, is restrictive and actively prohibits undocumented students from obtaining professional licensure.

While DACA recipients are ineligible for most federally funded health care, there are some states (California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, Washington, and Washington, D.C.) that provide funding for health insurance to all children regardless of immigration status (Morse et al., 2020).

In addition to state policies, there is evidence that educational and institutional policies nationwide have changed as a result of Tereza's story. Shortly after Tereza's disclosure to Ann Monaco, Duffie Adelson initiated changes in the policies for the Merit School of Music in support of undocumented students. She also created a new handbook and utilized it to implement training for the staff at Merit. Since then, other educational institutions have also adopted undocumented student-friendly policies. For example, social security numbers are no longer required on university applications (Rubenstone, 2011). Some private colleges now post public policies of their acceptance of undocumented students as domestic students, and at least 30 colleges meet 100% of undocumented students' demonstrated financial need through state funds, grants, student employment, scholarships, and, in some cases, student loans (Appily, 2021; Secaira, 2024). In addition, numerous colleges and universities also provide resources and services devoted to supporting undocumented students' academic success: offices and full-time staff, ally training, non-government funded scholarships, workshops, handbooks, reference guides, manuals, and websites.

For example, after hearing Tereza's story at a university event, undocumented student activists influenced university policy on their campus. Sandy Lopez recalled that after hearing Tereza's story at a campus event in 2013, student activists requested a private meeting with Tereza to discuss a strategy to mobilize the undocumented students on their campus. They began their public advocacy efforts for undocumented students and held their first-ever Coming Out of

the Shadows event, which was modeled after the original National Coming Out of the Shadows co-founded by Tania Unzueta Carrasco. During this event, undocumented student activists publicly told their own stories for the first time and presented a list of demands to the administration. The impact of these undocumented students' efforts led to the formation of the Task Force for Undocumented Students in June 2013. In December 2016, the student activists submitted a request for sanctuary campus status, and in January 2017, the university issued its response to support students with undocumented citizenship. In the fall of 2017, three years after Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) was announced, this student organization also intersected with Ju Hong's life when they and another campus office co-sponsored Ju Hong as an on-campus speaker featuring his film *Halmoni*. In March 2018, student activists invited Durbin to campus to discuss their concerns about protecting DACA. By 2018, a permanent office supporting undocumented students was established at this university. Sandy Lopez clearly credited the critical role student activists had in obtaining institutional resources and services now offered to support undocumented students, including an office, full-time staff, graduate assistants, and other resources. This student-led organization, DREAM Action NIU, along with the University of California Berkeley, and the Washington State University Coalition for HB 1079 Students was acknowledged in a curriculum presentation for UndocuPeers: Liberating Campus Climate hosted by United We Dream Network (Bohorquez et al., 2015). These student activists and their mobilizing efforts were also recognized in *Humanity's Last Stand: Confronting Global Catastrophe* (Schuller, 2021).

Impact and Raised Awareness

Tereza's disclosure clearly had an impact on legislation and policymaking. The ripple effect of the Senate's legislative efforts and the state-level policies also raised awareness within the undocumented student movement, which ultimately impacted the climate for undocumented students nationwide. The next section details the ripple effect of Tereza's story on raising awareness and the impact on undocumented students, including Asian undocumented students.

Raised Awareness and Impact on Undocumented Students

With each legislative iteration of the DREAM Act, Durbin raised awareness about undocumented students through presentations of their personal testimonies and life-sized color photos (Appendix C). Durbin's introduction of Tereza as the inspiration for the DREAM Act sparked media interest in Tereza and her story, so Tereza was contacted by numerous media outlets to conduct live interviews and write articles about her experiences as an undocumented student. The media amplified Tereza's story as the original dreamer, which helped raise awareness about her situation and about issues many undocumented students face in the U.S. (Appendix D).

Tania Unzueta Carrasco recalls that prior to Durbin's proposal for the DREAM Act in 2001, discussions about undocumented youth had already begun and the issue was beginning to gain public attention through the media. "The issue was starting to come up and Tereza's story was, a good face for what was happening at the time." Looking back, Duffie Adelson sees that Tereza's disclosure of her personal story catapulted the issues of undocumented students into the

forefront for many people and her legacy served as an inspiration to others locally and nationally:

I think her legacy, in my mind, certainly has played out at Merit School of Music, but it certainly played out across the country. And every time I see her, I like reminding her, “You know, the legacy you have left our country is amazing. And I know, we still haven’t passed that DREAM Act, but look at the conversation going around on around the country, and the level of awareness that people now have compared to 20 years ago about this situation. It is, I mean, there’s no comparison. And she’s the person that inspired all of this.

Given the complexity of each person’s story, Clarisol Duque, and Tania Unzueta Carrasco referred to Tereza’s story as the one that framed the experiences, challenges, and fight for survival that many undocumented students encounter. However, Tanai Unzueta Carrasco noted that Durbin did not end with Tereza’s story. He also understood the “bigger connections to all of the thousands of people who were going through the same thing,” and in a short time, Tereza’s disclosure enlarged the circle of undocumented students that Clarisol Duque and Durbin came to know:

It wasn’t just Tereza. You know, it was so many others [we knew] the way we knew Tereza, right? it was Carlos’ story, and Karen’s story, and Javez’s story, and, you know, Brenda story... and I can think of you know, I can continue naming on and on and on all the people that then came [to us] - that we came to know- because of the DREAM Act. And we got to know their stories the way we got to know Tereza

In a significant way, Clarisol Duque believes that Tereza’s story gave voice to so many stories and gave many undocumented students the courage to tell their stories as well. Similarly, Ju Hong and Tania Unzueta Carrasco also reflected on the risk that Teresa took to disclose her story and the significance that her disclosure had on other undocumented students. The interviewees agreed that because of Tereza’s connection to Durbin, many undocumented students felt empowered to come out of the shadows of fear and isolation because Tereza’s story

reflected the elements, challenges, hopes, and dreams that well-represent many undocumented students:

There could have been any number of young people who could have been the case that really sort of inspired and make the movement. But Tereza Lee's case was so important. It was so unique. Because she brought together so many elements of what our dreamers have to face. They face great adversity, poverty, fear, and yet – and yet they thrive despite adversity.

More significantly Duffie Adelson, Randy Kim, Sandy Lopez, and Tanzia Unzueta Carrasco emphasized the power in Tereza's story and how it dismantled stereotypes, changed perspectives, and re-shaped the larger narrative regarding undocumented students. For example, prior to Tereza's disclosure, the media narrative portrayed undocumented students primarily as a Latino issue. Randy Kim describes Tereza's story as having changed the narrative to show that the undocumented movement is "not just as a Latino-exclusive movement, but that that affected Asian Americans and other ethnicities." Durbin pointed out that awareness of Tereza's story led to the creation of many immigration advocacy groups. Similarly, Senator Richard Durbin, Clarisol Duque, and Randy Kimi commented about increased involvement among advocacy groups such as the Asian Americans Advancing Justice and the Illinois Coalition of Immigrant Refugee Rights:

Since 2007 we've seen a lot of movements, DREAM ACT movements, youth dreamers.. dreamers organizing their own groups in Chicago, and LA, in Florida, and New York, all over in Georgia, North Carolina, Raleigh. There are dozens of DREAM Act dream teams. A lot of college campuses have dream teams. In New York, City College has one, NYU has one. And like the Immigrant Justice Center, they didn't come out until after 2007. The surveys, the research on undocumented immigrants, didn't happen until after 2007, around that time.

For example, Randy Kim, heard of Tereza's story through his position at a Korean advocacy group, and ever since he heard Tereza's story, he has worked hard to raise awareness about Tereza and undocumented students.

I felt like the story was vital and I felt like we need to, you know, have her story be shared and told and to recognize Tereza as one of the pioneers behind this important work, this important movement.

Tereza's story brought to light the privileged status Randy Kim recognizes he has as an American citizen, and for the first time, Randy Kim began to understand the struggles, heartache and challenges undocumented individuals face in the U.S. What was important to him now was to learn how to use this privilege to advocate for others to be heard as well.

Learning about Teresa's story, she made me understand what that meant and why we have such a problem on our hands. And, for a person who was born in America, I did not have to worry about, you know, being undocumented. I did not have to worry about being under the shadows. So, I was really moved by her story and felt we have to do more for her.

Randy Kim noted that due to the increased public awareness of undocumented immigrants, the movement has grown. More students are coming out about their undocumented status, and there are more services, more legal clinics, more people protesting deportations, and more organizations advocating on behalf of undocumented students than there were in 2001.

[Tereza's] disclosure brought forth undocumented individuals out of the shadows to tell their stories; it brought communities together working towards a common cause; it brought conversation to communities- the Korean community, the Asian community; it started a ripple effect that ignited a movement which pushed for legislation in support of undocumented immigrants. Tereza's story is not the sole reason for all of this but certainly her story was the catalyst that inspired Senator Durbin to bring legislation to the fore.

Tania Unzueta Carrasco saw a connection between the impact Tereza's disclosure had on the movement and the history of undocumented youth mobilizing. She believes that the history of

undocumented student-organizing hinges on a single decision as to whether a person will take a risk.

In the youth immigrants' movement, we always kind of started the pinpoint in the direction of the introduction of the DREAM Act. And when we dig deep down into history, we all know that that DREAM Act was the inspiration of Tereza Lee's story. So I think that whenever we draw back to the DREAM Act people always talk about or are aware of Tereza Lee. I absolutely think that Tereza and I testifying in front of Congress, and her family mobilizing to get Senator Durbin, is such an important part [of the movement]. If not the beginning, definitely toward the beginning of the organizing.

The interviewees recognized that Tereza's risk to disclose her undocumented status empowers many undocumented students to advocate on their own behalf and on behalf of thousands of undocumented students:

These young people grew up [in the U.S.] and even though they still may not be voting citizens, they are activists, and they don't wait in the shadows to talk to members of Congress. They're there in full daylight, lobbying them and begging them for help. And I think that really has been a major part of the immigration conversation.

For example, Tania Unzueta Carrasco noted that many undocumented students who were involved with legislative conversations early on also became active self-advocates, which led to public appearances in their own home states. In a similar way, Tania Unzueta Carrasco points out that Tereza remains an active advocate for undocumented immigrants in New York where she has worked very hard to pass the New York DREAM Act and remains active in presidential campaigns. Tereza's story also advanced awareness among educators who reached out to Tereza and advocated for undocumented students at their institutions. For example, Tereza began presenting in educational settings through keynote speeches, conferences, musical performances, luncheons, podcasts, social justice camps, tailored curriculum, and children's stories (Appendix E). As a result of greater national awareness regarding Tereza's story and undocumented students, Duffie Adelson has seen positive strides in the treatment of undocumented students on

a national scale as well as increased resources to assist undocumented students, increased number of allies for undocumented students, and increased empathy for students in these situations. At the same time, as awareness of Tereza's story and issues involving undocumented students increased, conceptual frameworks and perceptions associated with undocumented students also began to emerge, some of which became problematic.

Common Associations with the Word Dreamer

Sandy Lopez reflected on the fact that Tereza Lee is often referred to as the first dreamer and dreamer has become a well-known term to describe undocumented students eligible for the DREAM Act. Consequently, student activist groups and initiatives supporting undocumented students incorporate dream language into the name of their organization and services. Durbin contrasted the former association of the word dreamer 20 years ago with the British rock group with what we now associate with a cause for justice in the national immigration conversation:

Now when you say dreamers, I don't care where you are in America, people know exactly what you're talking about. They know about the bill; they know about these young people. So, it's become a cause for justice in immigration. But it really, it really has moved the national conversation in the right direction. (Durbin, personal interview)

However, challenges and unintended consequences also emerged from the use and overuse of the term dreamer. For example, in the early stages of the movement, neither Tereza nor Tania Unzueta Carrasco could foresee how talking publicly about their talents, accomplishments, ambitions, and dreams as undocumented students would create unintended consequences that would later shape immigration policy. Tania Unzueta Carrasco carefully reflected on how hers and Tereza's stories (and others like them) told over and over in public created narrative

perceptions that all dreamers are “good immigrants” and thus deserving of the DREAM Act benefits.

As undocumented youth we all have like an awkward relationship too with how good we are painted by politicians. We [Tereza and I] have also both seen how just talking about the good immigrants has been harmful to immigration policy, for example.

In a similar way, Sandy Lopez recognized that many undocumented students have pushed back against the dreamer narrative. Sandy Lopez suggested that although Tereza was an exceptionally high achieving student who excelled as a musical prodigy, many undocumented students do not fit that description. Sandy Lopez noted that the language in the DREAM Act paints a narrative that “eligible dreamers” and “eligible undocumented students” should be “good,” “high-achieving,” and “college bound” students. The language also suggests that only good students are worthy of a pathway to citizenship and bad students are not.

You know, when they were pushing the DREAM Act, they were pushing this narrative of this high-achieving upper echelon undocumented student, right? But that was a very, harmful narrative that happened, because it pitted these good students versus bad students are unworthy students and were seen as undeserving students. And, and so I think this isn't her (Tereza's) fault there was nothing that she did. But I think because she was such an exceptional student, they painted her as this upper echelon, high achieving. That's how all undocumented students who deserve some type of relief should be, right?

Tania Unzueta Carrasco sees these challenges regarding the dreamer narrative as having significant implications when it comes to policy development, or lack thereof. Tania Unzueta Carrasco expressed concern that as political climates change, it is somewhat harmful to keep the same narrative that portrays undocumented students as high achieving:

I think it just has real, like implications in policy work, also, where we end up with programs like DACA and nothing else. Or the DREAM Act being just us [good undocumented youth] and nothing else. I think like we have also both seen how just talking about the good immigrants has been harmful to immigration policy, for example.

For example, Tania Unzueta Carrasco remembered when the political climate regarding immigration enforcement and deportations began to shift under the Obama Administration. She recalled how phrases and policies began focusing on the deportation of “felons not families.” In other words, deport criminals not dreamers. As a professional who works extensively with people in deportation proceedings, Tania Unzueta Carrasco found this shift problematic:

What we see is that most people [in deportation proceedings] are both our families and our felons. And people’s criminal history is actually more complicated than thinking that someone [fits in] this dichotomous idea of the ‘good immigrant’ ‘bad immigrant.’

A lot of times undocumented youth and undocumented youth stories like mine and Tereza’s get used as the example of what immigrants should be aiming for and which immigrants deserve to be deported and not deported. Or [deserve to] have a work permit.

Tania Unzueta Carrasco suggested that using phrases over and over when referring to the status of undocumented students may have unintended consequences; in particular “they [undocumented youth] came to the U.S. through no fault of their own. It’s hard because we actually have conversations with Senator Durbin asking him not to say things like ‘undocumented youth came through no fault of their own’ because they feel like that actually makes a clear point towards our parents as if it’s their fault.”

Sandy Lopez also suggested that the way the DREAM Act is written, it may unintentionally pit college or military bound students against students who may be neither college nor military bound. Many undocumented students are not comfortable with the dream narrative or the images of dreamers with graduation caps and gowns because they do not feel it represents or includes them. For example, not everyone wants to go to college and not everyone joins the military, which leaves a large number of undocumented students ineligible for the DREAM Act if passed. As a result, many undocumented students feel their experiences are

erased by this narrative. *We Are Not Dreamers* explains the nuances of the dream narrative in more detail (Abrego & Negrón-Gonzales, 2020). The next section details the impact of Tereza's story and the impact on Asian undocumented students.

Raised Awareness and Impact on Asian Undocumented Students

Breaking the Silence

Kim and Yellow Horse (2018) noted that Asian undocumented immigrants represent the second largest population of undocumented individuals in the U.S., with a six-fold increase since 1990. However, even with the sizeable increase in Asian undocumented immigrants in the U.S., Asian undocumented students often referred to themselves the silent DREAMers (Lim, 2013).

A factor that contributes to the silence of Asian undocumented students was highlighted when Tereza shared her constant fear of deportation as well as the burden of keeping her family's secret. She poignantly remembered the day her father let her know they were undocumented and the strict instructions not to tell a soul: not friends, not teachers, not anyone. She recalled her father telling them that if anyone found out, the family would be separated – her parents would go to Korea, Tereza to Brazil (where she knew no one), and her brother would remain in the U.S. without relatives.

Randy Kim, Duffie Adelson, Tanai Unzueta Carrasco, and Ju Hong, discussed how Asian undocumented students incur pressure due to family dynamics that prevent them from revealing their status. This debilitating fear, reinforced by family pressure, means Asian undocumented students and their families have a constant sense of remaining hidden. Chan (2010) points to the Filipino term used to describe undocumented persons *tago ng tago*, or hiding and hiding. This

term means that while living in the U.S. as an undocumented person, one is in a state of perpetual hiding – constantly hiding not only from authorities but also from any other ill-wishers, including family, relatives, and so-called friends who threaten to report undocumented persons. These views support research that Asian undocumented students do not want to embarrass their families (Cheng, 2012).

Gonzales (2009), Chan (2008), and Chan (2013) suggest another reason Asian undocumented students may be overlooked is, in part, due to the stereotype that Asians are perceived as the model minority. Tania Unzueta Carrasco, Ju Hong, Duffie Adelson, and Randy Kim discussed the harmful impact the model minority stereotype has had on Asian Americans and the silencing effect it has on Asian undocumented students, paralleling the work of Chan (2008) and Chan (2013) that suggests the model minority myth contributes to the collective silence from the Asian population and keeps Asian undocumented students from freely voicing their concerns. The model minority stereotype may be unintentionally reinforced among Asian undocumented students who are under a great amount of pressure to be good, be silent, and not be noticed – as in Tereza’s case. Ju Hong described the harm as a continuation and misconception of the model minority stereotype in which Asian undocumented voices are not acknowledged or valued. At the same time, Ju Hong offered the perspective that the model minority myth may afford Asian undocumented students the sense of being protected when encountering law enforcement. If Asians are not considered to be undocumented, they may not be at risk for deportation. However, advocates dissuade people of that belief, asserting that it provides a false sense of security. Any non-citizen is vulnerable to policies that target undocumented immigrants (Hayoun, 2017). Tereza’s story breaks this silence and dismantles this stereotype.

Amplification Asian Undocumented Student Voices and Experiences

Tereza's story and stories of other Asian undocumented students helped Asian students see they are not alone, they no longer have to be silent, and there is place for them in the undocumented student movement. Such a place in the movement has inspired many more to fight for the passage of the DREAM Act legislation. Recognizing the courage it took to break the silence about Tereza's undocumented status, Randy Kim noted that there is nothing silent about disclosing one's status to apply for DACA and there is nothing silent about going to college. Instead, he saw applying for DACA and going to college as very powerful acts that necessitate a brave disclosure on the part of students who are undocumented. Durbin recognized the impact Tereza's story had on Korean undocumented students and noted the rate of DACA applications among Korean undocumented students was the highest among all the Asians undocumented student ethnic groups overall.

When DACA opened up, the biggest move, I believe the first group that really poured on applications were the Asian Americans, Asians, I should say, I think primarily Koreans. Of course, they didn't have the big total numbers of the Latino population. But boy, were they ever ready to apply for DACA protection. So it really has been a movement that has embraced so many people from around the world. It isn't, it isn't exclusive in any way. This predicament that these young people face is universal. (Durbin, personal interview)

Ju Hong acknowledged that while undocumented students share many commonalities, there are also nuanced differences, indicating that one's ethnic background has a big impact. As a Korean undocumented student, Ju Hong believed Tereza's story helped him and other Asian undocumented students see others like them represented in the movement. More specifically, Ju Hong recalled having a hard time feeling like he belonged whenever there was conversation about immigration issues because of the widely held perception that issues relating to undocumented students only revolved around a particular ethnic group. For Ju Hong, this created

a sense of exclusion within the movement. However, when Ju Hong heard of Tereza's story and learned she was a Korean undocumented student like himself, he immediately felt a sense of belonging and a deeper understanding of his own story as an undocumented student in a way he had not experienced before. He realized he no longer had to suffer in silence. Ju Hong saw Tereza's disclosure as a Korean undocumented student a story with which he could identify: "And obviously it's really great to see someone who is Korean and understands the culture, who has a similar background and experiences, really speaking up." While silencing among Asian undocumented students still exists, Randy Kim was heartened to see Asian communities engaging in conversations regarding undocumented students and Duffie Adelson perceived Asian communities have become more engaged in the national conversation.

Amplification of Asian-Based Advocacy Groups

Another way in which the interviewees reported that Tereza's story amplified the voices of Asian undocumented student was through the development of not-for-profit groups advocating on behalf of Asian undocumented students. Clarisol Duque connected Tereza's brave disclosure to the powerful impact it had on the development of Korean coalition and advocacy groups:

She was of Korean parents and Asian descent. And that has inspired a whole generation- not only of Korean youth, Korean activists, and advocates- I think, it's also inspired a broader reach of the Asian community. We've seen it here in Chicago with groups like KRCC (Korean Resource & Cultural Center), the HANA Center, and Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

From Clarisol Duque's perspective, Koreans are the most galvanized and, as a result, have organized other Asian ethnic groups in Chicago to advocate on behalf of undocumented immigrants.

So, I believe they'll continue to be the forefront leaders. That's the case here in the Chicagoland area. I mean, I would say of all the group Asian groups- we work really closely with [Asian Americans] Advancing Justice and they're like a broader Asian organization. But the Korean groups here locally are the ones that have been the most active on this issue, in recent years.

Clarisol Duque believes that Tereza's story helped pave the way for Korean advocacy groups to have a key role in supporting undocumented students:

I have to tell you, earlier this year, the groups that were in Washington that spent a month in front of the White House were not the Latino groups. It was the Asian groups. There was a National Asian group our local affiliate was the HANA Center that spent a whole month in front of the White House in, on Capitol Hill. They were the ones that were out there doing, you know, all the range of activist actions. From the one-on-one meetings to the rallies, to the sit-ins, to the protests. It was the national Asian groups that were really on the forefront.

Randy Kim suggested that now many coalition groups are advocating on behalf of undocumented Asian American immigrants and actively working with immigrants facing deportations, such as Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Eye to Eye, and the Illinois Coalition of Immigrant Refugee Rights. Clarisol Duque, Ju Hong, and Randy Kim perceived that activist groups like these are in the forefront of supporting Asian undocumented students, several with a specific service focus for supporting and amplifying the voices and experiences of Korean undocumented immigrants. For example, to amplify Tereza's story, Randy Kim organized benefit dinners that raised funds to support undocumented students, published articles in the *Chicago Tribune* (Kim, 2013) that highlight Tereza's story, and held a podcast highlighting Tereza's story as a Korean undocumented student.

The National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC) is another Korean-based not-for-profit group advocating on behalf of undocumented students and the group through which Ju Hong first learned of Tereza and the DREAM oct. Knowing there

was a potential remedy to his situation through federal legislation, Ju Hong was spurred into activism to support the movement:

I was very inspired to see how our Senator Richard Durbin was inspired by Tereza Lee and how her story was highlighted nationally. That is something that I was really inspired by and fortunate to see. That was something that I also wanted to do and contribute best way I can.

He started out slowly at first, but as he gained confidence, he took bolder steps to speak out and act publicly in support of the DREAM Act. Every time the DREAM Act was presented to Congress, Ju Hong felt a new sense of urgency to fight for immigration reform and to engage in bold acts, including civil disobedience at a San Bernardino immigration rally, hunger strikes, letter writing, lobbying efforts, and eventually, a significant exchange with the highest political leader in this country. Perhaps Ju Hong's boldest step was his public interruption of then-President Obama's immigration speech on November 25, 2013. Ju Hong was concerned, along with many undocumented immigrants, about two things: 1) the failure of Congress to pass the DREAM Act and 2) a record number of nearly two million deportations that took place under the Obama Administration, including 205,000 undocumented parents of U.S. children born in the U.S. (Hong, personal conversation). As an activist, Ju Hong's purpose for interruption was to implore Obama to stop deportations and end the separation of families. Ju Hong knew all too well the pain of separation from family and the great risk of deportation for traveling outside the country. In Ju Hong's interruption and shout for help, he told Obama he and his family would be separated at Thanksgiving, referring to an ailing grandmother in Korea he had not been able to see in 13 years.

Ju Hong's interruption shifted the national debate from focusing only on the failure of Congress to pass immigration reform to also highlighting the record number of deportations that

took place under Obama's presidency (Hong, personal interview; Chishti et al., 2017; Epstein & Guliani, 2014; Gonzalez-Barrera & Krogstad, 2016; O'Brien, 2011). It added pressure to the White House to take responsibility for immigration reform and focused attention on whether the president has the executive power to end deportations (O'Brien, 2011). Even though Obama replied at the time that ending deportations was not in his executive power, Ju Hong felt vindicated for taking such a bold step when Obama made an executive announcement nearly a year later on November 20, 2014, to offer temporary relief from deportation to millions of undocumented immigrants who had lived in the United States five years and had children who were either American citizens or lawful permanent residents (Obama, 2014). In this announcement, President Obama stated that the separation of families or the oppression of low-wage immigrant workers is "not who we are" (p. 1). This executive order is called Deferred Action for Parental Accountability or DAPA (USCIS, 2014). Two years after DAPA was issued, Ju Hong received special permission from the U.S. government to travel to Korea for 20 days so he could finally be reunited with his grandmother who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. To portray the painful restrictions of living in the U.S. as an undocumented student, including the inability to freely travel abroad to visit family due to the risk of deportation, Ju Hong created a short documentary of his visit to Korea. The film, called *Halmoni* – meaning grandmother – received international recognition and has been shown at universities nationwide. The introduction of the DREAM Act raised awareness nationwide, it also presented challenges and barriers, which will be discussed next.

Challenges/ Barriers

DREAM Act Language and Eligibility Requirements

Clearly the stories of Tereza Lee, student activists, and undocumented students have influenced the national conversation regarding undocumented youth, immigration reform, and in particular, the DREAM Act. While there may be no single reason this legislation has not passed, there has been much debate about the language and requirements of the DREAM Act, and even though various versions of the DREAM Act have been proposed since its inception, much of the core language and criteria have remained the same. Whether beneficiaries pursue conditional or permanent status, they must meet criteria to achieve eligibility. This section addresses the problematic challenges and barriers regarding the actual criteria and language in the DREAM Act.

Educational Requirements

One educational requirement is that eligible undocumented students must “have graduated from a United States high school or obtained a GED in the US.” Abrego (2006) and Horweldel (2006) argue this criterion presents a challenge for many undocumented students because when they find out about their status and the barriers that limit their opportunities for college, namely the high cost of tuition, many drop out of high school. Others, even though they may have been earning good grades prior to learning about their status, become so discouraged their grades drop. The 2021 DREAM Act retains this requirement.

Another educational requirement is that undocumented students “must be admitted to an institution of higher learning [and] complete at least two years of college or military service.”

This presents a challenge because many undocumented students who do graduate from high school do not enroll in college because they cannot afford the high costs of college tuition, fees, transportation, living expenses, childcare (if needed), and other expenses (Abrego, 2006; Batlova & McHugh, 2010). Batlova and McHugh (2010) also describe four barriers that can diminish undocumented students' ability to pursue college: the negative impact of poverty, the presence of dependent children, a lack of English proficiency, and high participation in the labor force. Batlova and McHugh (2010) also point out that “many prospective beneficiaries will face a hard choice between pursuing the additional education they need to obtain conditional and/or permanent legal status or needing to work to provide for their families and themselves” (p. 10).

The third criterion is complete two years “of military service.” Proponents of this criterion suggest that non-citizens have served in the military since the Revolutionary War (Hattiangadi et al., 2005). In fact, more than 760,000 noncitizens have enlisted in the military and obtained U.S. citizenship over the past century, with numbers peaking during the World Wars and a slight increase since September 11, 2001 (Chishti et al., 2019). Hattiangadi et al. (2005) report that noncitizens demonstrate higher success and retention rates than citizen recruits; are more diverse racially, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally; and are more likely to fulfill their enlistment obligations. The military has been a way to expedite the naturalization of non-citizens and their families (Dragomir, 2018; Stock, 2021; U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services, 2021). Mazdumer (2017) contends that immigrant participation in the military assists in the acculturation of immigrants and is a way to reduce “feelings of animosity between immigrants and native-born individuals through intense intergroup contact and socialization” (pp. 1-2).

To further bolster military recruits in 2008, the Secretary of Defense initiated Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MANVNI) which allowed the military to recruit eligible non-citizens whose skills were considered vital to the national interest. (Chishti et al., 2019; U.S. Department of Defense, 2016). MANVNI gave qualified immigrants an opportunity to gain U.S. citizenship after enlisting in the military for eight years. Since 2008, more than 10,000 non-citizens with specialized skills have entered the military through MAVNI, including eligible DACA recipients (Chishti et al., 2019). On June 18, 2020, the Supreme Court ruled to protect DACA service members, which meant that hundreds of dreamers who entered the military through MANVI received a conditional guarantee they could continue their military service without fear of deportation (Sisk, 2020). Offering the military as a part of the DREAM Act is seen by proponents as an incentive for undocumented students to serve in the military and “ease some of the military’s burden that results from recruitment shortcomings” (Lee, 2006, p. 249). Proponents of the DREAM Act see enrollment in the military as a win-win solution that will benefit undocumented students and strengthen the military at the same time (Stock, 2021).

Opponents argue that non-citizens in the military pose a security risk; proponents, like Margaret Stock, a lawyer and former a retired Army officer who founded the MANVI Program, argue that immigrant recruits, especially DREAMers, are among the least likely to pose a threat to national security due to their vulnerability and risk of deportation if caught (Bergengruen, 2017). Opponents also argue that encouraging undocumented students to meet their residency requirement by joining the military may seem like hiring mercenaries (Lee, 2006) or a way to get “brown people into the military.” From a critical race perspective, Buenavista (2012) studied the perceptions of Asian youth and the militarization of immigration. Buenavista notes that,

military participation is not without material consequence, including one's vulnerability to premature death. Yet, in the absence of any viable institutional mechanisms for undocumented immigrants to live humanely in the United States, MAVNI, the DREAM Act, and enlistment represented future possibilities for these youth. The very people who have been disadvantaged by these structures can only acquire rights and opportunities if and when their interests "converge" with the interests of the society that created the inequalities in the first place (Bell, 1980). The participants suggested that Derrick Bell and many subsequent scholars associated with CRT were right: they have argued persuasively that white majorities give People of Color what they want only when it serves the interests of those majorities. That is how white supremacy has long functioned. (pp. 117-118)

Lee (2006) points out that the DREAM Act "would not force any applicants to join the military" (p. 250); eligible students simply have the option of either attending college or serving in the military for two years and "the students themselves have the final say" (p. 250). The current 2021 DREAM Act retains the educational requirements mentioned above.

Must Demonstrate Good Moral Character

The next two criteria, "must demonstrate good moral character" and "pass criminal background checks," although differently nuanced are discussed in this section. While these two criteria have emerged as part of the USCIS requirements for naturalization at different times, both requirements apply to DREAM Act beneficiaries.

The criterion that DREAM Act beneficiaries must demonstrate good moral character dates back to the original Naturalization Act of 1790 and is defined as conduct that "measures up to the standards of average citizens of the community in which the applicant resides" (USCIS, 2021). Good moral conduct is expected to be sustained throughout the statutory application period prior to and up to the time of naturalization (USCIS, 2021). However, any conduct prior to the statutory application period may also be considered, and the following factors may be used to determine good moral character:

family ties and background; absence or presence of other criminal history; education; employment history; other law-abiding behavior (for example, meeting financial obligations, paying taxes); community involvement; credibility of the applicant; compliance with probation; and length of time in United States. (USCIS, 2021)

While much of good moral character is judged by the presence or absence of a criminal record, USCIS (2021) also states that good moral character “should be considered without regard to whether the applicant has been arrested or convicted of an offense.” In addition, USCIS provides extensive descriptions of what constitutes criminal activity, referred to as crimes of moral turpitude, that permanently bar an applicant from establishing good moral character and thus render them inadmissible. The USCIS also describes criminal activity that would conditionally bar an applicant from establishing good moral character.

Due to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the War on Terrorism was launched as a concern for national security, and a climate of anti-terrorism, scrutinization, and deportation enforcement was not only heightened but re-woven into immigration law post-2001 (Abrego & Negro-Gonzales, 2020; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). For example, advanced measures for biometric identification for any visitor to the U.S. were implemented, including a complex process for background-checks and validation to the process of applying for naturalization (Abrego & Negro-Gonzales, 2020; National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2002; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). This convergence of criminal and immigration law, referred to as crimmigration, impacted the DREAM Act as well (Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). For example, while all versions of the DREAM Act refer to the USCIS codes as requirements that DREAM Act beneficiaries must meet, additional language regarding criminal activity and processes for background checks were also added to versions of the DREAM Act post-9/11/2001. Several versions of the DREAM Act were incorporated into more complex

immigration reform acts that addressed issues such as anti-terrorism, border control, and deportation enforcement (Appendix F).

Friorito (2019) argues that this convergence of the DREAM Act with border patrol, securitization, and anti-terrorist measures positioned undocumented youth as criminals and dehumanized immigrants. Menjívar and Abrego (2012) describe the criminalization of immigrants as a form of legal violence.

Abrego et al. (2017) trace the criminalization of immigration from the late 1980' up through the Obama administration. In particular, they highlight both the immediate and long-lasting harmful impacts that the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) have on immigrants and their families. The analysis of Abrego et al. (2017) show how collectively these policies negatively impact the lives of immigrants and their families outside the home, as well as inside the home. For example, outside the home, many individuals face surmounting difficulties such as pursuing educational opportunities beyond high school; they endure harsh working conditions; and they struggle navigating daily bureaucratic systems. Inside the home, negative impacts are also experienced due to inequities and unequal opportunities amongst siblings with mixed immigration status (i.e., access to travel and college); U.S. citizenship children in mixed families also experience the fears and anxieties of separation that their undocumented family members experience; and deportation practices separate members and disrupt family life (Abrego et al., 2017).

To shield DREAMERS from the hostile political climate fueled by 9/11 and to portray their blamelessness for being in the U.S. without documentation, undocumented youth were described as being in the U.S. through no fault of their own. However, this view targets the

actions of their parents and fails to address the larger more complex issues that need to be addressed by immigration reform (Abrego & Negron-Gonzales, 2020; Ironside, 2011; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014).

Additionally, proponents of the DREAM Act tend to equate good moral character with deserving students who are high achieving “honor roll students, star athletes, talented artists, homecoming queens, and aspiring teachers, doctors, and U.S. soldiers” (Fisseha, 2010, pp. 1). However, critics find the portrayal of DREAM Act beneficiaries, or dreamers, as model citizens to be divisive, exclusive, and narrowly defined (Abrego & Negron-Gonzales, 2020; Fiorito, 2019; Ironside, 2011). As previously discussed, this terminology creates a divide and further categorizes immigrants as good or bad, with only good immigrants deserving of citizenship and bad immigrants unworthy of it (Abrego & Negron-Gonzales, 2020; Fiorito, 2019; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). Perez (2014), co-founder of the Immigrant Youth Coalition, argues that DREAMers “became exactly what legislators wanted it to be – an exclusive term for those who are model residents and future ‘Americans’” (p. 1). Perez’s view coincides with Ironside’s (2011), who argued that this portrayal of model citizens only serves to reinforce hegemonic practices of exclusionary nationalism defined by white American policy makers (see also Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). Fiorito (2019) suggests that undocumented youth were portrayed as the proverbial “poster children” (p. 352), largely because professional immigrant rights organizations felt that view appealed more to the general public than their undocumented parents (p. 357). While at first, many undocumented youth adopted this narrative, many were unwilling to “throw their parents and criminals under the bus” by claiming their worthiness (Fiorito, 2019, p. 253; see also Abrego & Negron-Gonzales, 2020; Keyes, 2013; Perez, 2010; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). While current proposals of immigration reform may be

comprehensive, they are not expansive or inclusive enough, leaving many undocumented individuals unable to obtain citizenship even if they do not have criminal records (Keys, 2014; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014).

While they [dreamers] have also done something radical and laudable by expanding the idea of citizenship itself, an over-emphasis on worthiness has the danger of using the inspiring efforts of this exceptional movement to justify exclusion, and even vilification, of those who fall short of the ideal. (Keyes, 2014, p. 155)

Alien as a Term in the DREAM Act

Another area of concern centers around the word *alien*, which is used in the title of Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act and throughout the proposed bill when referring to undocumented students. The term alien has been used to define anyone who is not a citizen or national of the United States ever since the National Act of 1790. Proponents of this term argue that its prevalence in US code justifies its use (Kopan, 2018). The director of regulatory affairs and policy at the Center for Immigration Studies, supports this view and argues in a blog that “immigration is a complex issue, but the statutory definition of alien is as benign as any word in our laws could possibly be: the term ‘alien’ is precise, accurate, and in no way offensive. To suggest otherwise is to suspend reality and is not a serious or reasonable position” (Law, 2021, p.1).

Law’s view coincides with the view that encourages the public use of the term “illegal immigrants” as a strategic term way to push for tighter border security (Luntz et al., 2005, p. 3). Also, this view is expressed in a 2018 internal memo by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that directed the Executive Office for United States Attorneys public information officers to describe alien status in press releases as an “illegal alien” (p. 1). The U.S. DHS (2018)

further instructed not to use the word “undocumented” to describe one’s “illegal presence in the country,” as it is not based on U.S. code (p. 1). Proponents of the term alien, also use language such as illegal aliens, illegals, and illegal immigrants interchangeably when discussing illegal immigration (U.S. DHS, 2018; Johnson, 2021; Kopan, 2018 Luntz et al., 2005).

However, opponents find the use of these terms offensive, derogatory, criminalizing, and dehumanizing, (Johnson, 2021; Nevins, 2002/2010; Ngai, 2004; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014). Bickel (1977) argues that utilization of dehumanizing terms helps justify the denial of rights for individuals when they are seen as non-persons: “It has always been easier, it always will be easier, to think of someone as a noncitizen than to decide that he is a nonperson” (p. 53). Consistent with Bickel (1977), Johnson (1997) and Ngai (2004) trace the origins of the term alien in the U.S. and show how it became associated with the other, the undesirable, the enemy, the deportable:

In forging immigration law and policy, it is far easier to deny the humanity of an “alien” than to do so for a “noncitizen.” The use of the word “alien” helps rationalize the severe treatment of noncitizens of color, from detention in cages, family separation and more. (Johnson, 2021, p. 1).

The term alien has been associated with negative connotations and opponents of the term argue that the term illegal alien has unnecessarily become synonymous with crime, disease, and a host of social and economic problems (Bacon, 2008; Nevins, 2002; Ngai, 2004). Johnson (2021) and Ngai (2004) show how the term illegal alien has been systematically used to equate race with illegality in the U.S. and how it is used to justify severe treatment, discrimination, and removal by deportation. The term illegal alien wrongly renders individuals, as opposed to actions, as illegal and categorizes them as perpetual criminals (Bacon, 2008; Abrego, 2014). Friorito (2019) shows the negative impact this terminology has on undocumented individuals:

In the public debate and in everyday discourse, undocumented people are offensively positioned as criminals (“illegals”) and as unfamiliar, disturbing, and dehumanized “others” (“aliens”). Encountering these everyday forms of discrimination and stigmatization is often experienced by undocumented youths as humiliating, degrading, and painful. (p. 357)

Individuals who oppose using words like alien and illegals have begun making changes to eradicate these terms from both state and federal laws. For example, on the state level, in August 2015, California Governor Brown signed a bill introduced by Senator Mendoza that removed the term alien from California’s state labor codes (McGreevy, 2015). Also, in 2021, California’s Assemblywoman Rivas introduced a bill to remove the derogatory term alien from all California state laws where Rivas’s bill was approved by the Assembly on May 20, 2021, and awaits Senate approval (Lauredo, 2021). In 2020, New York City was the first major U.S. city to remove the terms alien, illegal migrant, and illegal immigrant from all local laws in 2019 (NBC New York, 2020). Also in 2020, Colorado lawmakers introduced a bill to use undocumented immigrant instead of illegal alien (Replace Illegal Alien with Undocumented Immigrant, 2020; Kim & Shoichet, 2020).

On a federal level, the U.S. Library of Congress in 2016, ceased utilizing the word alien in headings acknowledging that “the phrase illegal aliens has become pejorative” (Library of Congress, 2016, p. 1). To remove the terms alien and illegal alien from federal U.S. code, Representative Castro introduced bill H.R. 457. Correcting Hurtful and Alienating Names in Government Expression, the CHANGE Act, in 2019. On January 22, 2021, newly elected President Biden announced his intention to remove the words alien and illegal alien from U.S. statutes and replace them with noncitizen or undocumented citizen (Durkee, 2021; Johnson 2021). Less than a month after Biden’s announcement, acting director of USCIS instructed

Immigration Customs Enforcement and US Customs and Border Protection officials to revamp the language in all official documents, outreach efforts, and other communication (Durkee, 2021). In February 2021, Representative Sanchez introduced the U.S. Citizen Act (2021) where the word alien was deleted and the word noncitizen was inserted in its place.

Individuals who oppose using the term alien to describe non-citizens see these changes as a profound move and applauded these more recent efforts: “Although a seemingly minor and technical change, the elimination of ‘alien’ from the U.S. immigration laws might transform the entire discussion of immigrants” (Johnson, 2021, p. 1). Johnson contended that terminology matters and the “U.S. Citizenship Act will take a small but important step toward treating immigrants with humanity” (p. 1). The next section provides insight into Research Question 2: What factors caused Tereza’s story to be excluded from educational research?

Findings for Research Question 2

What factors caused Tereza’s story to be excluded from educational research?

One cannot say for sure why Tereza’s story has been omitted from educational research in higher education; however, the literature review provides a clear historical perspective that documents the racialization of Asians through exclusion. As a re-cap, the literature review findings reveal that the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 set in motion long-lasting legal precedents for excluding Asians from participating in and contributing to U.S. society. The U.S. law system supported a legacy of Asian exclusion that systematically excluded Asians from immigration (Ngai, 2014), naturalization (Naturalization Act of 1790, 1870), citizenship (Chan, 1991; Takaki, 1998; Volpp, 2005) and employment, (Chan, 1991; Chew 1994; Daniels, 2008; Saxton, 1995; Yamato, 1994), equal wages, (Chan, 1991; Yamato, 1994), family life (Daniels,

2008; Moran, 2003; Pepper, 1986), voting (Gonzalez, 2008; Salyer, 1995;), owning/leasing land (Aoki, 1998; Cott, 1998; Daniels, 2008), testifying in court (Chin, 2013; *People v. Hall, 1852*), intermarrying (Daniels, 2008; Pascoe, 1991/1996; Sohoni, 2007; Volpp, 2005), economic gain (Daniels, 2008; Takaki, 1998), communities (Chan, 1991; Saxton, 1995; Wortman, 1965; Zesch, 2012), veteran benefits (Odo, 2002), elementary education (Chan, 1991; Kuo 1998; Takaki, 1998; Wollenburg, 1978), and higher education (Austin, 2006; Museus, 2009; Museus and Chang (2009). The literature demonstrated that the exclusion of Asians in the U.S. is not a matter of isolated incidences; rather, these examples demonstrate a “legacy of exclusion” and patterns of institutional marginalization (Salyer 2006, p. 8; see also Chang, 1993).

From an AsianCrit perspective, Chang (1993) found that the exclusion of Asian American history and perspectives resulted in a lack of understanding of the racial discrimination among Asian Americans in the U.S. Additionally, Chang (1993) acknowledged that “the exclusion of Asian Americans from the political and legal processes...led to an impoverished notion of politics and law that furthers the oppression of Asian Americans” (p. 1250). Chang (1993) also described how Asian Americans face discrimination that is both “quantitatively and qualitatively different from that suffered by other disempowered groups” (p. 1247). Similarly, Museus (2009) noted a lack of research on Asian Americans, to the point of exclusion, in the literature and discourse in higher education.

Museus and Chang (2009) identified four barriers that have contributed to the exclusion of Asian Americans in higher education: 1) the burden of the model minority myth suggests that all Asian have achieved universal success and therefore minimizes the importance of including Asian Americans in the research; 2) justifying research on Asian Americans has been problematic because of the idea that “Asian Americans do not require attention” or that “research

on Asian American is too narrow” (p. 97); 3) many funding resources do not include Asian Americans as an “underrepresented racial/ethnic population” and thus monetary resources are not allocated to conduct research in the same way as for other underrepresented groups (p. 99); and 4) a lack of knowledge base makes it difficult for researchers to draw from, and build on, existing research devoted to Asian Americans (Museus & Chang, 2009). Acknowledging the collective factors contributing to the historical and institutional racialization of Asian American through exclusion provides insight as to why Tereza’s story may have been excluded from higher educational research to date. The next section provides insight into Research Question 3: What factors caused Tereza’s story to catch the attention of administrators, including Senator Durbin?

Findings for Research Question 3

What factors caused Tereza’s story to catch the attention of administrators, including Senator Durbin?

Several factors seem to have contributed to Tereza’s story catching the attention of the Merit School administrators and Senator Durbin, with one factor leading to the next. After Tereza’s brother was hit by a car and her family became steeped in medical bills without insurance to offset costs, Tereza’s own resolve to help her family deepened. As a young teenager, Tereza made a vow to “save her family.” Tereza felt that if she practiced piano hard enough and long enough that perhaps she could perfect her skills to the level at which her efforts would be noticed. Indeed, this is exactly what happened, and through a series of events, Tereza’s skills as a young pianist were noticed. Initially, her skills were noticed at her high school, which led to an opportunity to enhance her skills through group and private lessons at the Merit School of Music. Administrators at the Merit School of Music took a keen interest in Tereza and her

abilities as a young musical prodigy. In Duffie Adelson's interview, she acknowledged Tereza's dedication and determination as a young pianist who practiced well into the evenings and recalled that as the Director of the Merit School of Music, she had not seen the kind of dedication and talent before.

Without yet knowing the specifics of Tereza's immigration status, she was eventually awarded a full scholarship at the Merit School of Music where additional lessons enhanced her piano techniques. As a result, Tereza also began winning competitions. She was the first student from the Merit School of Music to enter and win the prestigious Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) Youth Concerto Competition. As the first prize winner, she appeared as a soloist with the CSO by performing Tchaikovsky's "Piano Concerto No.1."

Recognition of Tereza's talent led to the conversation Ann Monaco had with her about applying to college, which led to Tereza's pivotal decision to disclose her undocumented status to Ann. Tereza's disclosure with Ann, led Ann to talk with Duffie, who called Senator Durbin's office for help. In turn this phone call also led to Merit donors writing letters to Durbin's office in support of Tereza, which led to Durbin drafting a personal bill to help Tereza that eventually led to Durbin's proposed DREAM ACT.

The interview findings show how Tereza's courage to disclose her status began a series of conversations, actions, and advocacy efforts among individuals who utilized their privileged positions and access to influential resources, like Senator Durbin, on Tereza's behalf. Duffie, Tania, and Randy acknowledged that had it not been for any one of these factors (recognition of Tereza's talent as a musical prodigy, Tereza's disclosure, and key individuals advocating for Tereza) her story may never have reached the level of attention that it did.

Another factor that may have caused Teresa's story to catch the attention of Senator Durbin is related to Tereza's performance unrelated to her musical talent. Tereza noted that as an undocumented student there was great pressure to behave appropriately and not to attract undue attention to herself and family. As a result, Tereza paid strict attention to following the rules, worked hard to be a straight A student, and had never missed a day of school. Tereza's track record provided a rationale for Durbin to advocate that Tereza and students like Tereza who exhibited good moral character deserved a chance at citizenship. Durbin also acknowledged that Tereza's story reminded him of his mother's story and her immigrant journey to the U. S., fostering a personal connection.

Interviewee, Tania Unzueta Carrasco pointed out that conversations about undocumented students had been taking place prior to Tereza's disclosure to Ann Monaco and that a previous bill had been introduced to Senate. Tania Unzueta Carrasco mentioned that Tereza was a good face for undocumented students at the time. However, as previously discussed, unintended consequences also emerged from telling and retelling Tereza's story as well as stories like Tereza's, including that some undocumented students experience societal pressure to uphold a standard for the new model minority to be eligible for the DREAM Act (Abrego & Negrón-Gonzales, 2020; Unzueta Carrasco & Seif, 2014).

CHAPTER 6

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This study focused on the lived experience and story of Tereza Lee as a Korean undocumented student who was brought to the U.S. by her parents at the age of two. Affected by the hardship and famine of the Korean War, Tereza's family migrated to the U.S. on visiting visas to seek a better life. When these visas expired, Tereza and her family lived in the shadows and secrecy due to their undocumented immigration status. In addition to the many hardships, challenges, obstacles, and financial struggles Tereza and her family faced, Tereza also faced the reality that her situation prevented her from full access to a college degree. The findings show how the disclosure of Tereza's undocumented status, through the safe support of key individuals in her life, had a far-reaching ripple effect nationwide. The findings show that the ripple effect of Tereza's story impacted federal legislation as well as state and educational policy and raised awareness of undocumented students on a national level. With the DREAM Act legislation still pending, it did not help Tereza directly attend college or obtain citizenship; however, breaking the silence about her undocumented situation ultimately provided a pathway for her to attend college. Tereza also inspired undocumented college students to activism, including Asian undocumented students who also had a profound effect on the undocumented movement as well. The findings also shed light on the unintended consequences that emerged from the DREAM Act movement, many of which are seen as harmful and exclusionary.

This qualitative case study focused on the experience of Tereza Lee, an undocumented student of Asian descent whose significant story introduced new immigration legislation that could impact thousands of undocumented students. It also breaks the silence in higher education about Asian undocumented students by providing a significant story that, thus far, has been largely excluded from the educational dialogue about undocumented college students. Furthermore, it highlights the impact of Tereza's story on the undocumented student movement and provides insight for higher education professionals to serve as advocates for Asian undocumented students.

This chapter is organized into five sections. Section one is a summary of the findings based on the research questions that discuss the impacts of Tereza's story, why Tereza's story may have been excluded from educational research in higher education, and what factors caused Tereza's story to catch the attention of the Merit School administrators and Senator Durbin. Section two includes a discussion of how AsianCrit themes apply to this study and the harmful impact of the model minority stereotype. Section three describes recommendations, including research areas for further study. Section four describes the lessons learned, and section five highlights the conclusions.

Summary of the Findings

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What impact did Tereza's story have on the undocumented student movement and where is the Asian voice in the undocumented student movement?
2. What factors caused Tereza's story to be excluded from educational research?
3. What factors caused Tereza's story to catch the attention of advocates?

Even though Asians have historically been excluded from U.S. citizenship, immigration, and education, they have continued to use their voices and have made significant contributions to shaping U.S. law and practices. The impact of these voices is still felt today. Just like Courtenay's novel (1989) *The Power of One*, the landmark self-advocacy stories described in the literature review demonstrate the power that one person, one voice, can have. In a similar way, this study explored the power of one undocumented Asian student's voice, Tereza Lee's, and how it impacted the undocumented student movement.

A summary of the findings demonstrates the ripple effect of Tereza's story that impacted the undocumented student movement in the following ways: the proposed federal DREAM Act legislation and policies created on a state and educational level. Tereza's story raised awareness about the experiences of undocumented students on a national, state, and educational level; it raised awareness about Asian undocumented students by breaking the silence about the undocumented status among Asian students; it amplified the stories of Asian undocumented individuals and helped mobilize Asian-based advocacy groups. It also led to the awareness of unintended consequences that represent challenges and barriers with an overuse of the dreamer narrative and the harmful impact the DREAM Act language and eligibility requirements have on many undocumented students.

A summary of the factors that may have caused Tereza's story to be excluded from research in higher education includes an 83-year history from 1882-1965 of Asian exclusion in U.S. society as a result of U.S. laws imposed on them, beginning with the exclusion of Chinese immigrants that eventually applied to all Asians – both to individuals wanting to immigrate to the U.S. and to Asians already living in the U.S. This research recognized the work of Chang (1993) who maintains “the exclusion of Asian Americans from the political and legal processes

has led to an impoverished notion of politics and law that furthers the oppression of Asian Americans” (p. 1250). This study also recognized the work of Museus and Chang (2009) who note the lack of research and exclusion of Asian Americans in issues and discourse in higher education and four barriers that contribute to the exclusion: 1) the harmful impact of the model minority stereotype; 2) the idea that “Asian Americans do not require attention” or that “research on Asian American is too narrow,” which has limited research conducted on Asian Americans (p. 97); 3) the lack of funding for research on Asian Americans as an “underrepresented racial/ethnic population” (p. 99); and 4) the lack of a solid knowledge base, which makes it difficult for researchers to build on existing research devoted to Asian Americans.

The findings highlight several factors that caused Tereza’s story to catch the attention of advocates. Beginning with Tereza’s personal vow to save her family, she dedicated herself to perfecting her piano skills in the hopes that they would rise to the level to be noticed and utilized to help her family somehow. Also, the teachers, administrators, and donors at the Merit School of Music took a keen interest in Tereza and her abilities as a young musical prodigy and began entering Tereza into competitions. Tereza was the first Merit School of Music student to enter and win the prestigious Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) Youth Concerto Competition. As the first prize winner, she appeared as a soloist with the CSO by performing Tchaikovsky’s “Piano Concerto No.1.” When Tereza’s undocumented status stood as a barrier to applying to college, Tereza took a great risk to share her status as an undocumented student with a safe mentor, Ann Monaco, when asked. Ann Monaco shared the situation with Duffie Adelson, who brought it to the attention of Merit donors and Senator Durbin’s office. Advocacy efforts were made on Tereza’s behalf by people who utilized their privileged positions and access to influential resources like Senator Durbin. In addition, strong familial pressure on Tereza to

behave appropriately due to the family's undocumented status resulted in Tereza exhibiting straight A's and never missing a day of school. Tereza's track record provided a rationale for Durbin to advocate that Tereza, and students like Tereza, who exhibited good moral character deserved a chance at citizenship.

Application of AsianCrit

This research highlighted AsianCrit theory and its related themes to frame this study: Asianization, transnational contextualization; use of reconstructive history; use of counter narratives, including Asian and Asian American contributions and accomplishments; and the importance of a commitment to social justice to eliminate racism and oppression (Chang, 1993; Museus & Iftikar, 2013). For example, this study demonstrated how Asianization was embedded in patterns of discrimination and stereotyping that originated with the Chinese, but eventually applied to all Asians, including common stereotypes ascribed to Asians such as favored immigrant, yellow peril, perpetual foreigner, and model minority (Chang, 1993; Museus & Iftikar, 2013; Takaki, 1998). This study also documented the ever-changing transnational contexts that were historically used to exclude Asian participation in U.S. society as a matter of convenience around issues of immigration, naturalization, citizenship, employment, equal wages, family life, voting, owning/leasing land, testifying in court, intermarrying, economic gain, forming communities, veteran benefits, and elementary education, including higher education.

Reconstructing the history of Asian immigration to the U.S. through the extensive literature review was used as to document the historical and explicit racialization of Asians through exclusion from an Asian Crit perspective. This reconstructive history of Asian

immigration was also used to reveal the invisibility and silence surrounding Asian history and the racism embedded in exclusionary practices.

Another component of AsianCrit also highlights the accomplishments, contributions, and resistive efforts of Asian Americans that have impacted the oppressive hegemonic practices, policies, and law (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). In addition, Asian Crit underscores the importance of using counter narratives as a critical component to analyze Asian American experiences, to advocate on behalf of Asian Americans, and to inform theory and practice (Museus & Iftikar, 2013). Tereza's story serves as a counter narrative to what is perceived as the dominant narrative, often reinforced by the media, that the situation of undocumented students is predominantly a Latino issue. By breaking the silence around her own undocumented status, Tereza's counter narrative is a story Asian undocumented students can refer to and relate to. In line with Museus & Iftikar, (2013) and Chang (1993), Tereza's story adds to the collective narrative that includes the voices and contributions of Asian American in the U.S. Further, this study highlights key individuals whose social justice perspectives have led them to advocate on behalf of Tereza and brought her concerns to Senator Durbin's attention and inspired him to propose the 2001 DREAM Act. Finally, Chang (1993) asserts that using the very narratives of those who are excluded in majority discourse serves as a solution to the problem of exclusion. Including Tereza's story in this study serves as an example for reversing the exclusion of her story in higher educational research.

From an AsianCrit perspective, one of the barriers that has led to the exclusion of Asians and Asian Americans in higher education is the application of the model minority stereotype that suggests all Asians have achieved universal success and, therefore, suggests that "Asian Americans do not require attention" (Museus and Chang, 2009, p. 97). The model minority

stereotype ascribed to Asians and Asian Americans runs throughout this study but warrants additional discussion in this section, particularly as it relates to Asian undocumented students.

To address this issue, a brief overview of the model minority stereotype is discussed here along with documentation for how this stereotype has evolved and progressed over time. The model minority stereotype perpetuates the unfounded myth that all Asian Americans have achieved the American Dream, have established socioeconomic and educational success in the U.S., and the achievement of their success should serve as a model for other minorities and even whites (Chin, 2001; Petterson, 1966; Suzuki, 1997/2002). For example, Asian Americans are often portrayed as having achieved financial wealth, moving up the career ladder, and possessing genius capabilities, especially in math and science (Lee, 2009; Suzuki, 2002; Wong & Halgroin, 2006). The model minority myth suggests that Asian Americans inherently possess exaggerated positive characteristics that contribute to their success: 1) they are hardworking – even driven – more than any other ethnic group; 2) they not only value education, but they are naturally smarter; 3) they have overcome racial prejudice through sheer determination; 4) they have assimilated into mainstream culture; 5) they are non-complaining; 6) they are self-reliant without a need for governmental assistance; 7) they are apolitical; 8) they possess good character; and 9) they have a strong family structure and strict parenting to keep the family together (Chin, 2001; McGowen & Lindgren, 2006; Petterson, 1966; *U.S News & World Report*, 1966).

The concept of Asians as a model minority can be traced to the mid-1960s during the Civil Rights Movement (Suzuki, 2000; Wong & Halgin, 2006). At the height of racial tensions and unrest, the *New York Times* and *U.S. News and World Report* published two articles: “Success Story, Japanese-American Style” (Petterson, 1966) and “Success Story of One

Minority Group in U.S.” (*U.S. News and World Report*, 1966) that focused on the successes of Asian Americans and at the same time undermined the issues of the Civil Rights Movement (Suzuki, 1989). For example, in 1966 the *New York Times* article that introduced the idea of Japanese Americans as a model minority, Petterson highlighted the discrimination and hardship the Japanese unjustly endured as a result of the internment camps and referred to the Japanese as the American minority who had experienced the most discrimination and injustice. However, there was a clear negative undertone as he used the success of the Japanese to undermine the efforts of the Civil Rights Movement (Chin, 2001). “Like the Negro,” Pettersen (1966) unfairly asserted that the Japanese had also endured “color prejudice” but did not become “problem minorities” (p.180). Further, by enumerating the real and valid discrimination and hardships the Japanese experienced in the U.S. internment camps during WWII and beyond, Pettersen (1996) suggested the Japanese, through sheer determination and without any additional aid, rose above every challenge they faced. Drawing a comparison between the success story of the Japanese and the rags to riches story of Horatio Alger, Petterson (1966) indicated that no other U.S citizen has paralleled the success of the Japanese:

By any criterion, of good citizenship that we choose, Japanese Americans are better than any other group in our society, including native-born whites. They have established this remarkable record, moreover, by their own almost totally unaided effort. (p. 11)

Pettersen (1966) contended that Japanese Americans were able to overcome racial prejudice and barriers because of their “meaningful links to an alien culture” (p. 43).

Soon after Pettersen’s (1966) article, a similar article appeared in *U.S. News and World Report* – this time highlighting the achievements of Chinese Americans. Chinese Americans were described as “an important racial minority pulling itself up from hardship and discrimination to become a model of self- respect and achievement today in America” (p. 6).

This article credited the achievement and success of Chinese Americans to strong family ties, strict parental discipline, and “hard work, thrift and morality” (p. 7). Even as the Chinese were praised for their low crime rate, willingness to work any type of job without complaint, long hours with low pay, self-reliance without the assistance of public welfare, and strong focus on education, divisive statements were made throughout the article in reference to “Negroes and other minorities” (p. 6):

At a time it is proposed hundreds of billions be spent to uplift Negroes, and other minorities, the nation’s 300,000 Chinese-Americans are moving ahead on their own—with no help from anyone else. (p. 6)

What you find, back of this remarkable group of Americans, is a story of adversity and prejudice that would shock those now complaining about the hardships endured by today’s Negroes. (p. 6)

It must be recognized that the Chinese and other Orientals in California were faced with even more prejudice than faces the Negro today. We haven’t stuck Negroes on concentration camps, for instance like we did the Japanese in WWII. (p. 9)

Even though the journalists in the 1960s acknowledged the racial discrimination and hardships the Japanese and Chinese Americans experienced, early scholars Uyematsu (1971) and Wake (1970) were among the early critics of the model minority stereotype and how it unfairly minimized the fight for equal rights during the Civil Rights Movement (Suzuki, 2002). Clearly, the introduction of the model minority stereotype in the 1960s was used as a tool to create divisiveness and add to the existing racial tensions in the U.S. at the time (Chin, 2001, Chun, 1980).

By the 1970s, the stereotype of Asian Americans as the model minority was taking root and was further used as a tool to cause resentment among whites (Chin, 2001, Chun, 1980). For example, *Newsweek* (1971) published an article about Asian Americans named “Success Story: Outwhiting the Whites” that focused attention on the academic and economic success of Asian

Americans, specifically Japanese Americans (Chin, 2001; Chun, 1980). The article cast criticism on whites for being “soft in the face of economic competition with Asia” (Chin, 2001, p. 2). According to Chin, a backdrop to this resentment was due in part to the resistive American attitude to accept wartime allies and the 710,000 Southeast Asian refugees to the U.S. after the Vietnam War. In the 1970s three magazines published additional articles emphasizing the success of Asian Americans. A resurgence of news articles and media bytes in the 1980s furthered the model minority stereotype of Asian Americans by singling out their socioeconomic and educational achievements (Chin, 2001; Nakayama, 1988; Takaki, 1989). The media’s portrayal of Asian Americans outdoing whites also continued and deepened the perception of Asian Americans as ethnic competitors and rivals (Stokes, 1987). The model minority stereotype was exaggerated even further and Asian Americans were eventually assigned a new status of America’s super minority (Ramirez & Loos, 1986; Schwartz, 1987). Ramirez & Loos (1986) suggested that Asian Americans achieved the ultimate American dream because they are “smarter and better educated and make more money than everyone else...they are vaulting the last obstacles that stand between them and this country's corner offices” (p. 148). This volume of articles along with the Reagan administration reinforced the model minority stereotype in the media and politics, suggesting that Asian Americans had successfully overcome not only all racial, ethnic, barriers but the economic and educational barriers as well (Chin, 2001; Hune, 2002; Suzuki, 2002;). By the 1990s, researchers began to treat the model minority as an empirical fact (Chin, 2001) that was described in articles such as “Why they Excel” (Butterfield, 1990) and “The Bell Curve” (Chin, 2001). In the 1980s, 19 articles were written that continued to perpetuate the myth of the model minority. From 1965 to 1987, at least 24 magazine articles

and/or news publications demonstrate the progression and evolution of the myth portraying Asians as American's model minority (Appendix G).

Harmful Impact of Model Minority Stereotype on Asian Undocumented Students

Suzuki, (2002) and Hune (2002) outlined the resulting harmful impacts of the model minority stereotype on Asian American college students: Asian Americans tend to be invisible (Suzuki, 2002); Asians tend to show a low utilization of services, particularly counseling (Suzuki, 2002); and Asians who are educationally at risk go unnoticed due to the expectation that they should be exceling (Yeh, 2002). Suzuki (2002) points out that disaggregated data show that the educational attainment for Hmong and Cambodians are still underrepresented. The media's introduction of Asian American as the "model minority" not only created stereotypes suggesting that Asian Americans have successfully overcome all racial, ethnic, economic, and educational barriers (Hune, 2002), Gonzales (2009) and Chan (2008/2010) suggested that the reason Asian undocumented students may be overlooked is, in part, due related to the stereotype that Asians are perceived as the model minority. Chan (2010) and Cheng (2012) suggests the stereotype contributes to the collective silence from the Asian population and keeps Asian undocumented students from freely voicing their concerns. The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, (2012) suggests that the invisibility of Asian undocumented students is due to cultural shame and stigma: "We don't put our dirty laundry in the open...we love saving face, and don't want to embarrass our families" (Cheng, 2012, p. 1). Further, Asian undocumented students feel their families place a great deal of pressure on them to both enforce and reinforce secrecy about their undocumented status for fear of deportation (Chan, 2008; Gonzalez, 2009). Thus, undocumented Asian students feel marginalized within the immigration movement so much so

that they refer to themselves as the “silent DREAMers” (Lim, 2013, p.1). Chang (1993) acknowledges that Asian Americans can “either conform to the dominant objective mode of discourse or continue telling their stories” (Chang, 1999, p. 63). Tania discussed unintended consequences that emerged from telling and retelling Tereza’s story as well as stories like Tereza’s, which impact some undocumented students’ experiences as the new model minority.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are necessary to continue to support undocumented students in higher education.

Legislation

Twenty-one years have passed since the first DREAM Act was proposed in 2001 and there have been at least 10 successive failures for the passage of this act. Thousands of undocumented students who would have been eligible for the original DREAM Act are close to 40 years old and face deportation at any time. Thousands of undocumented students eligible for DACA find (or will find) themselves in a precarious immigration status situation once they graduate, when they age out, or when the protection DACA affords no longer applies. According to Durbin, the Senate vote is only a handful of votes away from achieving meeting the 60-person vote required for the DREAM Act to pass. Therefore, if Congress is to help create a pathway of citizenship for undocumented students utilizing education as tool to help them succeed, then it is imperative for the Senate to either pass the DREAM Act or create a new bipartisan proposal that Congress can support.

While many states have provided state DREAM Acts to help remove barriers for undocumented students to attend college, this is not the case for all states. Until all states adopt some form of the DREAM Act, undocumented students in some states will struggle with barriers to enroll in college, including admission eligibility, high tuition costs, and access to resources and financial support. Therefore, the remaining states should adopt the DREAM Act or some form of the DREAM Act. Universities that have admission restrictions that bar undocumented students from attending college should remove them, offer in-state tuition to undocumented students, create scholarships that apply to all students regardless of citizenship, and provide support resources for undocumented students.

Education

Recognizing and understanding Tereza's contribution to the undocumented student movement as an Asian undocumented student challenges the stereotype that undocumented students is a Latino-only issue. It raises awareness about the significant nuances, experiences, and challenges of undocumented students who identify as Asian. This understanding can guide university offices to dismantle the model minority stereotype and amplify the stories, needs, and concerns of Asian undocumented students. For example, translation of materials into Asian languages can help remove barriers for Asian undocumented students and their families. Additionally, creating scholarships for Asian undocumented students can go a long way to help offset the high cost of tuition, books, and living expenses. Offices such as Supporting Undocumented Students and Asian American Resource Centers can strengthen collaborative efforts to support and guide Asian undocumented students attending college, including providing

supportive programs, creating a sense of belonging and support, posting campus and community resources on websites and social media, and advocating for the students.

Reconsidering Terminology

Abrego and Negrón-Gonzalez (2020); Unzueta Carrasco and Seif (2014); Ngai (2004/2014), Johnson (2021); Lee (2004), and Daniels (1997/2002) discuss the harmful consequences the current language, requirements, and dreamer narrative have on many undocumented students. Every individual's story is unique, and practitioners need to be aware of the contexts of undocumented students such as family, schooling, and educational achievement (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). A re-write of the DREAM Act language and requirements, including the removal of term alien in the title of the act, would help to dismantle harmful attitudes, stereotypes, and criminalization of undocumented students.

Future Study

The following are recommendations for future study to expand the current study on Tereza Lee's impact on the DREAM Act legislation:

1. The research can focus on undocumented students who identify as Asian and the impact of hiding in hiding within one's own ethnic group (i.e., Hmong, Cambodian, Filipino, Korean, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese, Japanese, Burmese, Thai, Vietnamese, etc.)
2. The research can present the narratives of the undocumented students and activists who testified before Senate in 2010 and their contribution to the movement.

3. The research can present the stories of undocumented students who have aged-out since 2001 while waiting for the DREAM Act to pass. This research may include the impact on relationships between students who were once undocumented and are now citizens.
4. The research can focus on the emergence of the concept of undocumented students as the new model minority and its impact.
5. The research can explore the impact that race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religion have on undocumented students.

Lessons Learned

As a practitioner in higher education, many lessons have been learned that can be implemented into my work to communicate support and accessibility of resources for undocumented students who identify as Asian. As the Director of the Asian American Resource Center at NIU. A brief website benchmark of Asian American Resource Centers in the northern Illinois region shows that there may be limited resources, programs, services offered through these centers for undocumented students of Asian descent. As the director of NIU's Asian American Resource Center, my aim is to consider what resources, programs, and services should be provided for this population, such as:

- Enhance the environment so undocumented students who identify as Asian can safely access the support resources and information they may need.
- Provide webpage links for general information and resource links about undocumented students.

- Raise awareness by hosting workshops and educational speakers that address issues/ experiences relevant to undocumented students who identify as Asian American.
- Post scholarship information for undocumented students on the departmental website.
- Collaborate with relevant offices to promote programming for undocumented students who identify as Asian American.
- Highlight stories of Asian undocumented students/individuals through online platforms.
- Provide relevant reading material for staff and students.
- Connect with community-based organizations like the HANA Center to enhance services and resources.
- Continue research to understand and identify the nuances and challenges of undocumented students with Asian ethnicities.

Conclusion

Over 21 years ago in a teacher's office in a downtown Chicago music building, a shy, quiet, scared, Korean student chose to tell her story to one person, not knowing how she would impact the fight for the DREAM Act and/or how the movement for undocumented students would gain momentum. She trusted her story to a teacher, who told an administrator, who told a senator, who told Congress, who told the nation. Tereza's brave and unprecedented act of telling her story created what Chang (1993) referred to as a historical Asian American moment. Tereza's story shed light on the nuanced challenges unique to Asian undocumented students that are often kept in the shadows. In a short period of time, hundreds of undocumented students and their allies began fighting for the DREAM Act and for undocumented students. Eventually, the

ripple effect of Tereza's story ignited a movement in which today thousands of undocumented students are fighting for the DREAM Act and for their American Promise to come true.

Just as Asians, and their stories, have historically been excluded from U.S. history, Tereza's story has largely been overlooked in the academic dialogue regarding undocumented students and as the person responsible for inspiring Senator Richard Durbin to author the DREAM Act. Although the DREAM Act has yet to be passed as law, Tereza's story created a defining moment – an Asian American moment – for undocumented students. As a teenager, Tereza set out to save her family from deportation. However, because of her courage, Tereza's story created a ripple effect that did much more than that. For example, her action led to

- National research on undocumented students that began shortly after the DREAM Act was proposed (Passel, 2003)
- DACA which was initiated as a result of the DREAM Act, allows thousands of students a chance at deferred deportation
- Several states adopting their own version of the DREAM Act
- The issues of undocumented students that came before the College Board
- The first-ever conference for undocumented students being held
- Educational research about undocumented students that has resulted in articles, studies, and books to raise the public's consciousness/awareness of the challenges, success, issues, and barriers students face.
- Community and college organizations advocating for undocumented students.
- Colleges and universities implementing policies and procedures to support undocumented students.

- University scholarships are being established to support undocumented students.
- Undocumented students, and their advocates, lobbying for the political attention of administrators and legislators.

In essence, Tereza's courage in revealing her own story helped mobilize a movement for undocumented students that contributed to thousands of individuals advocating for undocumented students. The omission of Tereza's story in educational journals may contribute to the fact that undocumented students who identify as Asian have not historically been a part of the academic dialogue. Therefore, it is my hope that the focus on Tereza Lee's story in this study expands the academic dialogue to include the stories, experiences, and challenges of Asian undocumented students, as well as dispels the model minority stereotype and the silence that undocumented students who identify as Asian American face. It is my hope that this study encourages further public dialogue and academic discourse in higher education that includes Tereza Lee's contribution to the undocumented student movement.

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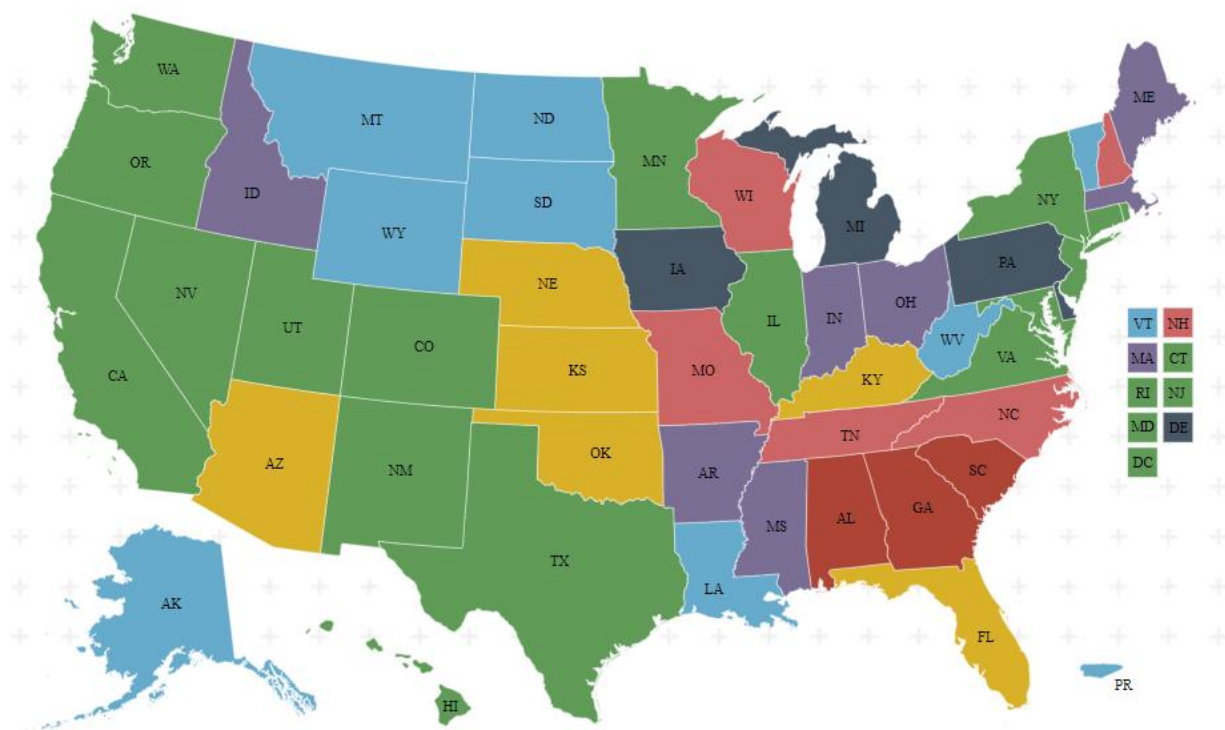
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APPENDIX A

TUITION AND FINANCIAL AID EQUITY FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

Tuition & Financial Aid Equity for Undocumented Students



- Comprehensive Access
- Accessible
- Limited
- Limited to DACA
- No State Policy
- Restrictive
- Prohibitive Enrollment

(Higher Education Immigration Portal, 2023)

Tuition & Financial Aid Equity for Undocumented Students

The U.S. is home to more than 427,000 undocumented students, including DACA recipients, in higher education. Each state implements its own policies in terms of providing access to in-state tuition and state financial aid to the state's undocumented residents.

The Portal analyzes in-state tuition and state financial aid policies across all 50 states and D.C. to measure and compare the inclusivity and effectiveness of the policies. Policies that provide tuition and state financial aid equity generally expand access to higher education and help fuel the state's economy.

Comprehensive Access	Accessible	Limited	Limited to DACA	No State Policy	Restrictive	Prohibitive Enrollment
California	Arizona	Delaware	Arkansas	Alaska	Missouri	Alabama
Colorado	Florida	Iowa	Idaho	Louisiana	New	Georgia
Connecticut	Kansas	Michigan	Indiana	Montana	Hampshire	South
District of Columbia	Kentucky	Pennsylvania	Maine	North Dakota	North	Carolina
Hawaii	Nebraska		Massachusetts	Puerto Rico	Carolina	
Illinois	Oklahoma		Mississippi	South	Tennessee	
Maryland			Ohio	Dakota	Wisconsin	
Minnesota				Vermont		
Nevada				West Virginia		
New Jersey				Wyoming		
New Mexico						
New York						
Oregon						
Rhode Island						
Texas						
Utah						
Virginia						
Washington						
17 states and D.C.	6 states	4 states	7 states	8 states and P.R.	5 states	3 states

The Portal analyzes and measures a state's in-state tuition and state financial aid policies for undocumented students to assign each state to one of the following seven classifications.

- **Comprehensive Access:** Policies provide statewide access to in-state tuition and some state financial aid or scholarships for the state's resident DACA recipients and undocumented students.
- **Accessible:** Policies provide statewide access to in-state tuition for the state's undocumented students, including DACA recipients.
- **Limited:** Policies provide the state's undocumented students, including DACA recipients, with access to in-state or reduced tuition in at least some public institutions.
- **Limited to DACA:** Policies provide the state's DACA recipients with access to in-state tuition in at least some public institutions.
- **No State Policy:** No known policies on access to in-state tuition or state financial aid for the state's DACA recipients and undocumented students.
- **Restrictive:** Policies actively bar access to in-state tuition or state financial aid for the state's undocumented students, including DACA recipients.
- **Prohibitive Enrollment:** Policies actively bar enrollment in all or certain public institutions for the state's undocumented students, but may still allow DACA recipients to enroll.

Key Point: Most undocumented students in the U.S. live in Comprehensive Access or Accessible states, but a significant percentage still face immigration-related barriers to higher education.

APPENDIX B

CODING

First Coding

B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Timed Transcript_#2	How do you Know Tereza Q#1	Courage to Disclose	Impact on Tereza	Impact on you	Impact on others/family	Impact on Immigration	Impact on Asian Americans	Anything else
[REDACTED]								
[REDACTED]								
[REDACTED]								
And the issue was starting to come up. Uhm.. and I think Tereza's story was, like, a good face for what was happening at the time						And the issue was starting to come up. Uhm.. and I think Tereza's story was, like, a good face for what was happening at the time		
Uhm.. and I think, like Senator Durbin was like both touched by her story and the bigger connections to all of the thousands of people who were going through the same thing					Senator Durbin was like both touched by her story and the bigger connections to all of the thousands of people who were going through the same thing			
Uhm.. and so I mean to me, like it's.. you know it's weird because in some ways, like I was telling you, I heard her story hundreds of times before I even met her. I had been at events hundreds of times where Senator Durbin tells her story				So I mean to me, like it's.. you know it's weird because in some ways, like I was telling you, I heard her story hundreds of times before I even met her. I had been at events hundreds of times where Senator Durbin tells her story				

Second Coding

C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
How do you Know Tereza	Courage to Disclose	Impact on Tereza	Impact on you	Impact on others/family	Impact on Immigration	Impact on Asian Americans	Anything else	2nd coding
					the legacy you (Tereza) have left our country is amazing. Look at the conversation going around around the country and the eyes of awareness people have now that 20 years ago about this situation mean there is no comparison			national awareness
					And the issue was starting to come up. Uhm.. and I think Tereza's story was, like, a good face for what was happening at the time			impact on undocumented students
				Senator Durbin was like both touched by her story and the bigger connections to all of the thousands				impact on undocumented students
					Judiciary Team started to explore the possibility of introducing legislation			Impact on federal legislation
				harmful to remain sort of in the same, with the				Challenges

APPENDIX C

RAISED AWARENESS IN THE SENATE

Raised Awareness in the Senate

- September 12, 2001 Original hearing scheduled where Tereza Lee and another undocumented student were prepared to testify about their undocumented status and its impact. Canceled due to terrorist acts of September 11, 2001.
- September 14, 2010: Senator Richard Durbin on Dream Act 2010. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4707187/user-clip-sen-dick-durbin-dream-act-2010>
- June 28, 2011 First-ever Senate hearing on the DREAM Act. Opening remarks by Senator Richard Durbin. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQweOv-IIfg> <https://www.durbin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/opening-remarks-at-the-first-ever-senate-hearing-on-the-dream-act>
- June 10, 2013 Telling the story of the DREAM Act (2013) <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=seante+hearign+Dick+durbin+dream+act&docid=608046946879931633&mid=607DD5E109A780F4A46A607DD5E109A780F4A46A&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>
- November 14, 2014 Tereza and her family's story. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x0ps4YpnC8>
- October 3, 2017 Durbin pushes for quick action on bipartisan dream act during Senate Judiciary Committee hearing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKjGYRU1AWU>
- October 3, 2017 Rescission of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program <https://www.c-span.org/video/?435059-1/trump-administration-officials-testify-decision-rescind-daca>
- January 22, 2018 Dick Durbin tells Dreamers "Don't give up." <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=seante+hearign+Dick+durbin+dream+act&&view=detail&mid=90901C7DACE7A9EE88C090901C7DACE7A9EE88C0&&FORM=VDRVSR>
- March 27, 2019 Durbin continues to fight for the passage of the DREAM Act, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_FsuO7yC5N0
- January 21, 2021 Dreamers have waited long enough. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=coIKRpjPKog>
- February 4, 2021 Twenty years since it was first introduced, Durbin calls on the Senate to finally pass the DREAM Act. <https://www.durbin.senate.gov/newsroom/audio/listen/twenty-years-since-it-was-first-introduced-durbin-calls-on-the-senate-to-finally-pass-the-dream-act>

APPENDIX D

SELECT INTERVIEWS AND/OR ARTICLES ABOUT TEREZA LEE

BETWEEN 2012 AND 2021

- June 28, 2011 Tereza Lee and Dick Durbin in 2001.
<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/tereza-lee-and-dick-durbin-in-2011-pete-marovich/wAHoEZPdu0amCg?hl=en> (Pete Marovich)
- July 3, 2011 Durbin's proposed DREAM Act would offer citizenship to some undocumented youths.
<https://www.tricountyindependent.com/x1672979224/Durbins-proposed-DREAM-Act-would-offer-citizenship-to-some-undocumented-youths> (Bernard Schoenburg)
- March 7, 2012 *Latina Lista*: American Dream, The girl who inspired a US congressman to turn a DREAM into law.
<http://latinalista.com/columns/americandreams/american-dream-the-girl-who-inspired-a-us-congressman-to-turn-a-dream-into-law> (Marsissa Trevino)
- July 27, 2012 ABC7 Eyewitness News Exclusive: Chicago woman inspired DREAM Act <https://abc7chicago.com/archive/8752154/>
- September 12, 2012 Hyphen: Asian American Unabridged. Tereza Lee, an original DREAMER <https://hyphenmagazine.com/blog/2012/9/17/tereza-lee-original-dreamer> (this is the night I met Tereza Lee)
- May 31, 2012 *The Christian Science Monitor*. The Brazilian inspiration behind the US immigration DREAM Act.
https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Americas/Latin-America-Monitor/2012/0531/The-Brazilian-inspiration-behind-the-US-immigration-DREAM-Act?fbclid=IwAR1sEeqUpBDYdSdgRq0zukeMzGZSX-Je_4AjxJhDOOxOmDXzLr-bThm8xyI (Rachel Glickhouse)
- April 2, 2013 *Chicago Tribune*. Documenting the American dream.
<https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/chi-ugc-article-documenting-the-american-dream-2013-04-02-story.html>
- September 30, 2016 Sekai story: The story of Tereza Lee: The pianist who emerged from America's shadow. <http://sekaistory.com/2465/>
- March 30, 2017 NBC News: 'Original Dreamer' still fights for undocumented immigrants 16 years after first Dream Act: Tereza Lee inspired Durbin to introduce the development, relief, and education for alien minors (DREAM) Act with Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) in 2001. NBC News, Asian American.
<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/original-dreamer-still-fights-undocumented-immigrants-16-years-after-first-n740491>

- June 22, 2017 *Asian American Policy Review*: At the crossroads of change: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Undocumented Korean Americans' political participation, and upcoming challenges. <https://aapr.hkspublications.org/2017/06/22/daca/> (includes Ju Hong, Junsoo Lee, a nineteen-year-old undocumented Korean American from Virginia)
- July 20, 2017 *Latino USA*: Durbin and Graham introduce the DREAM Act [Press Conference]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7E4U1I7Ligg>
- January 17, 2018 *Boston Globe*: One of the original DREAMERS fights for DACA. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/01/17/original-dreamer-fights-for-daca-extension/UncIJrBaBJpzTgMSU2ordO/story.html> BrianMacQuarrie
- September 5, 2018 *No IDC NY*: Original DREAMer Tereza Lee speaks about DREAM Act & plays Chopin's Fantaisie-Impromptu <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjmjGgXhiXo>
- September 11, 2017 *Bloomberg Politics*: Senator Durbin confident Congress can pass the DREAM Act <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=seante+hearign+Dick+durbin+dream+act&&view=detail&mid=AE1FEF15ACBC20184F60AE1FEF15ACBC20184F60&&FORM=VDRVSR>
- September 20, 2017 *Brian Leher Show*. Original DREAMer Tereza Lee talks immigration rights and plays Chopin, The Dreamer who helped inspire the DREAM Act, WQXR. <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Briuan+Leher+Show%2c+Tereza+Lee&docid=608039971859546344&mid=C3C2C2E2059B75751B44C3C2C2E2059B75751B44&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>
- September 29, 2017 *SPLINTER*. Meet Tereza Lee, the undocumented immigrant who inspired the DREAM Act <https://splinternews.com/meet-tereza-lee-the-undocumented-immigrant-who-inspire-1818976426>
- November 16, 2017 Korean American Story.org: Profile of Tereza Lee <https://koreanamericanstory.org/written/profile-of-tereza-lee/> (Julie Young, 2017)
- December 25, 2017 *Vice Voices*. How it feels to be a once-undocumented immigrant fighting for the DACA Bill <https://www.vice.com/en/article/8xvvggb/how-it-feels-to-be-a-once-undocumented-immigrant-fighting-for-the-daca-bill>

- January 18, 2018 *WBUR News*. Why the “original DREAMer” remains hopeful amid DACA’s uncertain future.
<https://www.wbur.org/news/2018/01/18/original-dreamer>
- January 25, 2018 *USA Today*. Sen. Dick Durbin is still fighting to fulfill his promise to the “original DREAMer.”
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/01/25/sen-dick-durbin-and-dreamers/1064615001/>
- February 3, 2018 *Economist*. Tereza Lee, the original Dreamer.
<https://www.economist.com/united-states/2018/02/01/tereza-lee-the-original-dreamer>
- May 4, 2018 *Spectrum News, NY 1*. Person who inspired DREAM Act has been New Yorker for several years <https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2018/05/05/teresa-lee-person-who-inspired-dream-act-new-yorker>
- May 15, 2018 Asia Society: First ‘DREAMer’ Tereza Lee on the importance of listening to the next generation <https://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/first-dreamer-tereza-lee-importance-listening-next-generation> Ami Li
- May 29, 2018 Asian American Life: The DREAM Act and its original dreamer.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMfKqHb4xto> (Sam Shakya) (good photos)
- June 20, 2018 Allegro: Immigrant musicians convene panel on American Dreamers
<https://www.local802afm.org/allegro/articles/immigrant-musicians-convene-panel-on-american-dreamers/> Marlana Fitzpatrick-Garcia
- June 20, 2018 National Public Radio: The original DREAMER recalls ‘all pervasive’ fear as an undocumented child. All Things Considered
<https://www.npr.org/2018/06/20/622002025/the-original-dreamer-recalls-all-pervasive-fear-as-an-undocumented-child> Kelly, M.L.
- April 4, 2019 Daily Hampshire Gazette: A musical story of immigrants: UMass composer debuts extended jazz-flavored piece inspired by “Dreamers.”
<https://www.gazettenet.com/UMass-composer-Felipe-Salles-debuts-The-New-Immigrant-Experience--a-piece-for-jazz-orchestra-inspired-by-Dreamers--the-children-protected-by-DACA-24571129> Steve Pfarrer
- November 7, 2019 Twitter. Tereza Lee I know where I came from.
https://twitter.com/Tereza_Lee/status/1192514903556476930 (T. Lee)

- March 20, 2020 World Channel, Stories From the stage. Tereza Lee's DREAMers Act: Tereza Lee speaks up about her undocumented status - and changes the world. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vafGmsSJYKo>
- April 21, 2020 Public Broadcasting Station: Tereza Lee Was the Inspiration for the Dream Act, Asian Americans, <https://www.pbs.org/video/tereza-lee-was-inspiration-dream-act-x6vww5/>
- May 12, 2020 WQRX Editorial: From piano to Dreamer: The inspiring story Tereza Lee <https://www.wqxr.org/story/piano-dreamer-tereza-lee/> (Lever, J., 2020)
- October 6, 2020 W Challenge: Tereza Lee, 100 years, 100 women. Learn from the past and shape the future Tereza Lee 1983- Present <https://wchallenge.org/tereza-lee/> (C. Chusf)
- April 24, 2021 Academy of Music: The New Immigrant Experience, Academy of Music, Panel Discussion: 2021 <https://www.aomtheatre.com/event/panel-discussion-the-new-immigrant-experience/>

APPENDIX E

RAISED AWARENESS IN EDUCATIONAL ARENAS

- July 26, 2012 NAKASEC. Building youth power: Access to education and beyond.
<http://nakasec.org/3094>
- March 28, 2013 NIU Today. Taste of Asia, speaker Tereza Lee will kick off April's Asian American Heritage Month events.
<https://www.niutoday.info/2013/03/28/taste-of-asia-speaker-tereza-lee-will-kick-off-aprils-asian-american-heritage-month-events/>
- February 27, 2015 NIU Today: DREAM Act inspiration to perform, interact March 3 at NIU.
<https://www.niutoday.info/2015/02/27/dream-act-inspiration-to-perform-interact-march-3-at-niu/>
- March 4, 2015 NIU Events Calendar. International Women's Day Luncheon
https://calendar.niu.edu/event/international_womens_day_luncheon_5084#.YE1sqTqSIPY
- March 6, 2016 NIU Today: Tuesday at OHANA: Being (an undocumented) American
<https://www.niutoday.info/2016/03/06/tuesday-at-ohana-being-an-undocumented-american/>
- October 27, 2017 Long Island Weekly. Second annual DREAMER's conference comes to NCC. <https://longislandweekly.com/second-annual-dreamers-conference-comes-ncc/> Dave Gil de Rubio
- June 20, 2018 National Public Radio, All Things Considered: The Original dreamer recalls "all pervasive" fear as an undocumented child.
<https://www.npr.org/2018/06/20/622002025/the-original-dreamer-recalls-all-pervasive-fear-as-an-undocumented-child>
- November 8, 2018 The Benedictine: Lead DREAMer Tells Story
<https://www.benedictnewsonline.org/4520/uncategorized/lead-dreamer-tells-story/>
- April 22, 2019 University of Massachusetts, Amherst: Music and justice.
<https://www.umass.edu/gateway/feature/music-and-justice>
- September 5, 2020 Bahn Mi chronicles podcast documenting my dream with Dr. Tereza Lee. Season 3 Episode 5.
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6OYGRfVz8S5CWdWSslfPoP>
- September 11, 2020 Poddtoppen: Good night stories for rebel girls
<https://poddtoppen.se/podcast/1350594046/good-night-stories-for-rebel-girls/tereza-lee-read-by-laurene-powell->

March 19, 2022

Asians advancing justice, Asian Americans K-12 education curriculum:
Tereza Lee and undocumented Asian America. Asian American Education
Project. Episode 5, Lesson 5. <https://asianamericanedu.org/tereza-lee-and-undocumented-asian-america.html>

APPENDIX F

VERSIONS OF THE DREAM ACT

The following are DREAM Act versions that incorporated complex immigration reform acts that address issues such as anti-terrorism, border control, and deportation enforcement and language describing prohibitive criminal behavior.

DREAM Act 2006	Proposed as part of Comprehensive Immigration Reform Acts of 2006 (S. 2611)
DREAM Act 2007	Incorporated into an act “To Provide for Comprehensive Immigration Reform and For Other Purposes” (S.1639)
DREAM Act 2010	Proposed as a part of National Defense Authorization Act for the Fiscal Year 2011 Incorporated into the Comprehensive Reform Act of 2010 (S.3932)
DACA 2012	Similar requirements and language for background checks were adopted in this executive order. To date, language describing prohibitive criminal behavior and extensive background checks remains a part of the DREAM Act (DREAM Act 2021).
DREAM Act 2013	Border, Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act (S.744)

APPENDIX G

PROGRESSION AND EVOLUTION OF THE MODEL MINORITY STEREOTYPE

1960-1980

SELECTED ARTICLES AND NEWS STORIES

Progression and Evolution of the Model Minority Stereotype 1960-1980
Selected Articles and News Stories

Model Minority Stereotype in the 1960s

Petterson, W. (1966, January 9). Success story, Japanese-American style. *The New York Times*, 180. file:///C:/Users/public_user/Downloads/Petersen%20(1).pdf

U.S. News and World Report. (1966, December 26). Success story of one minority group in U.S. December 26, 73.
<https://www.dartmouth.edu/~hist32/Hist33/US%20News%20%26%20World%20Report.pdf>

Model Minority Stereotype in the 1970s

Boodman, S. G. (1978, July 13). Korean Americans: In pursuit of economic Success, *Washington Post*.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1978/07/13/korean-americans-in-pursuit-of-economic-success/7d9810ef-674e-4667-8013-66355b7298d2/>

Los Angeles Times. (October 17, 1977). Japanese in US outdo Horatio Alger, I-1.

Niiya, B. (1971, June 21). Success story, outwhiting the Whites. *Newsweek*, 24.

Time. (1975, October 25). *Americans* of Japanese ancestry: Fast Rising Sons, 26.

Model Minority Stereotype in the 1980s

Bell, D. A. (1985). The triumph of Asian Americans: America's greatest success story. *The New Republic*, (15), 24-31.

Brand, D. (1987, August 31). Those Asian-American whiz kids: Why Asian Americans are doing so well, and what it costs them. *Time Magazine*.

Butterfield, F. (1986, August 3). Why Asians are going to the head of the class. *The New York Times*.

Friedrich, O. (1985, July 8). The changing face of America: Just look down Broadway. *Time Magazine*.

- Graubard, S.R. (1984, January 29). Why do those Asian pupils win those prizes? *New York Times*. Section A, Page 35. <https://www.nytimes.com/1988/01/29/opinion/why-do-asian-pupils-win-those-prizes.html>
- Takaki, R. (1989). *Strangers from a different shore: A history of Asian Americans*. Penguin.
- Kasindorf, M. (1982, December 6). Asian-Americans: A “model minority.” *Newsweek*, 39, 41, 42, 51.
- Newsweek on Campus*. (1984). Asian Americans: The drive to excel: Strong families and hard work propel Asian Americans to the top of the class, 4.
- Newsweek*. (1984, April 23). A formula for success: Asian American students win academic honors – and cope with mixed blessing of achievement.
- Quindlen, A. (1987, February 22). The Drive to Excel. *New York Times Magazine*, 32-40.
- Ramirez, A., & Loos, B. C. (1986, November 24). America’s super minority. *Fortune*, 148.
- Ramirez, A. (1986). America’s super minority. *Fortune*, 114(12), 148–161.
- Schwartz, J., Wang, D., & Matsumoto, N. (1987, May 11). A “superminority” tops out. *Newsweek*, 48–49.
- Stokes, B. (1987, May 9). New rivals in Asia. *National Journal*, 1116.
- The Washington Post*. (1985, October 10). Asian Americans outperform others at school and work.
- U.S. News and World Report*. (1984, April 2). Asian Americans: Are they making the Grade?

Model Minority Stereotype in the 1990s

- Butterfield, F. (1990, January 21). “Why They Excel.” *Parade Magazine*, 21: 4–6.