

***How Big We Are: Stories from Boston of Immigrant  
Activists in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

**An Original Play and Accompanying Classroom Guide  
Honors Thesis in American Studies**

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. Personal Statement**

The idea for this project came from a desire to unite activism, education and theatre, the three activities I have spent the most time exploring in my time at Tufts. I have wanted to be a teacher for many years, and so I decided coming into Senior Year that I wanted to create something which had value as a classroom tool. I didn't just want to think about education anymore, I wanted to create something that could be *used* to educate. I have also acted in theatre productions throughout high school and college, and I have always been interested in the potential for theatre to be used as a pedagogical tool. While I was studying abroad in Chile, I wrote my final paper on Chilean political theatre using Augusto Boal as the theoretical backbone, and I wanted it to be the theoretical background for this project as well, alongside Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, a work which was very influential in Boal's work. This thinking all happened in the summer of 2013.

But the concept for *How Big We Are* came from a conversation I had during the summer of 2013 with a family friend. I told her that for my Senior Honors Thesis I was hoping to study art, particularly theatre, as an activist tool, and as an educational tool. However, I had no idea what kinds of methodology, data or texts I wanted to use. And I wasn't sure how I was going to make a dense academic thesis useful for classroom teachers. The friend, who teaches at UC Berkeley Law School and is very interested in immigration policy, mentioned that there was a large amount of art being made by undocumented youth in support of their movement for legal status and immigration reform. I went home and did a little research and found that there is a vast amount of art to be found on-line made by undocumented activists. As I moved beyond looking at art and started reading newspaper articles, blog posts and the journal articles that had been written about the "Dreamers," I came to understand the fight for fair immigration policies as one of the most important and least acknowledged human rights issues of the current day. I started to think about how little I knew about immigration policy and undocumented immigrants, and especially about how little I had learned in my time spent in public schools about the experiences of immigrants in the US, despite the larger and larger percentage of public school students that immigrants represent. I saw the potential for a theatre piece about young immigrant activists, showing students the potential power of youth activism, and to fill in an important gap in the content they were learning in school.

From the beginning of this project, I put a great deal of thought into issues of representation and identity. As a white, upper middle-class playwright, I knew I wanted to privilege the voices of immigrant activists themselves over my own. I reached out to local immigrant activist organizations and started attending events and conducting interviews. The characters from *How Big We Are* are all based on activists whom I interviewed, and all of the dialogue comes *verbatim* from the

interviews I conducted (except for some found text, which comes *verbatim* from newspapers, journals and academic papers). Choosing the people to interview, which sections of our often very long interviews to include and the way to stage the piece put much of my own ideology (and much of myself) into this project. In fact, the character of Charlie is based on a troubling and illuminating interview I did with my grandfather. A piece of art cannot exist outside of the context of its creation and, therefore, I am deeply emotionally and personally invested in this piece. For this reason it is important to acknowledge my identity as a white playwright and its important effect on the way I think and talk about race, documentation and immigration. I say this both because it should be taken into account when reading *How Big We Are* and to model, for teachers who might wish to use this guide, the importance of acknowledging the way our identities and experiences shape us. It is important for all educators using this guide to think about their identities and the ways it will shape their relationship to this piece and to their students. More on this can be found in the “A Note to Teachers” section.

## **B. Methodology**

### **The Play**

For the creation of the play, I conducted a series of seven formal interviews with activists in Boston. All of these interviews were conducted in public spaces, primarily offices and cafes. I didn't create formal recruitment materials, but instead found interviewees *via* word-of-mouth and internet research. By researching immigrant activism in Boston, I found organizations that were involved in the kind of work I was interested in studying, and it was typically through these organizations that I was put in touch with organizers and activists. As part of this process I also attended rallies, conferences and social events, and I met several of the interviewees through these events. These experiences formulated a kind of informal ethnography which allowed me not only to hear about the work these activists were doing, but to witness them in action. I brought a notepad with me to these events, and my observations were important to shaping my understanding of the meaning and purpose of their activism. Before each interview, interviewees were presented with a consent form detailing their rights as a participant in my study, the procedure I would use to ensure anonymity, in what way I was planning on using their stories and, most importantly, the ways I thought participating in my study might be beneficial to them. I kept all these consent documents in a safe space in my home and never distributed any documents that connected the name of an interviewee to the name of a character. I also conducted two interviews *via* skype, one with an employee at an anti-immigrant lobbying group in Washington, DC and one with my grandfather, a first generation American who now lives in Florida and holds very anti-immigration views. For both of these interviews I sent electronic versions of the consent form *via* email. One of the interviewees scanned a signed

version of the form back to me, and the other read through the form with me *via* skype and then gave verbal consent to go ahead with the interview.

For each of the nine total interviews, I compiled a list of questions beforehand to guide conversation, but I encouraged interviewees to talk about their own experiences and to give personal narratives, because I was interested in hearing what they felt was important for me to know and share through my piece.

### **The Curriculum Guide**

In putting together the curriculum guide, I looked to several professional guides which pertained to sensitive topics like race, class and histories of oppression as models. I also used several bodies of work to compile information that I felt would be important for educators using this piece to have at their disposal. I read many articles and books which have been written on the topic of undocumented immigrants, particularly on the topic of undocumented youth activists. I also studied the body of work which pertains to creating activist curriculum and, particularly, incorporating theatre into an activist curriculum. Finally, I studied literature which has been written on the subject of teaching about race, class, documentation and other forms of salient identity to diverse classrooms of students who experience these topics in very different ways.

## **C. Literature Review**

### **Scholarship on Immigrant Youth Activism**

Because the undocumented youth movement is still so recent, scholarship and critical understanding about its significance are just beginning to emerge. That being said, a good deal *has* been written, considering how young the movement is. My piece joins in the conversation about the “DREAMer” movement that other scholars have begun, but its scope is larger than just the DREAMer movement. Lisa Patel in *Youth Held at the Border* (2013) explains the problematic nature of the DREAM Act’s mentality. “At its most basic level the DREAM act still perpetuates a view of immigration where individuals are acting autonomously, either legally or illegally...obscured is the fact that immigrants and native-born residents act within a larger set of internationally mediated forces of economics and politics...” (72). The youth immigrant activists interviewed for the creation of this piece support the DREAM Act as a form of temporary relief for a select group of immigrants, but also universally acknowledge the need for more comprehensive immigration reform.

One of the major limits to the body of scholarship I looked at was the almost constant presence of DREAM Act activism in the stories of immigrant youth activists, often ignoring the work they are doing for more comprehensive immigration reform

and the work they are doing for their communities everyday to ensure survival. Additionally, the ethnographies I studied tended to play into the same problematic tendency of the DREAM Act to highlight the most attractive and successful cases, creating an inaccurate understanding of the realities of being undocumented. Also, these works tended to focus on undocumented students as passive victims, ignoring the work many of them are doing as activists. To highlight this agency, I focus my project on the experiences of these youth *as activists*. Finally, very often scholars focused on Latino youth, ignoring the experiences of other immigrant youth, again failing to tell the whole story.

*We Are Americans* (2009) by William Perez presents a series of ethnographies describing the lives of undocumented high school students, community college students, university students and college graduates. Through these stories, Perez demonstrates how undocumented immigrants are not costly, job-stealing pariahs with foreign values but contributing, motivated and educated Americans being denied the chance to create lives for themselves. While the ethnographies do a good job of depicting the problems facing successful immigrant students, the failure to include stories of immigrants who have been unable to find academic success leaves out the important reality faced by the majority of undocumented youths. Many undocumented teenagers must find work in order to support their families and thus never get the chance to attend school. Many attend overcrowded, under resourced public schools where academic success is difficult, especially for those with language and cultural barriers to overcome. Additionally, as Perez acknowledges, only one in five undocumented high school seniors enroll in higher education, yet the vast majority of the book focuses on students who have beaten these odds. Although it allows him to come to the interesting conclusion that undocumented college graduates are actually the least optimistic about their futures, Perez's focus on model undocumented students plays into the perception that these are the only ones who deserve to become US citizens.

In highlighting students who are choosing to play within the dominant power systems, Perez ignores the many undocumented youth who are organizing in their communities, taking power over their immigration status and refusing to comply with expectations and demands. Finally, besides two students whose countries of birth are not mentioned, all of the students in Perez's book are Latinos, almost entirely of Mexican origin. While Mexicans make up just over half of the undocumented immigrants in the US today, forty-eight percent are not of Mexican origin. While this bias is somewhat understandable considering the high levels of Mexican immigrants around LA where Perez is based, here again, I believe we find that Perez is leaving out an important story. I will take advantage of the lack of the dominant Mexican narrative in Boston to present some of the stories Perez misses.

Vélez *et al's* article "Battling for Human Rights and Social Justice: A Latina/o Critical Race Media Analysis of Latina/o Student Youth Activism in the Wake of 2006 anti-immigrant Sentiment" from *Social Justice* (2008) analyzes the way that Latina/o youth activists were depicted by various news sources through a Latcrit lens, Vélez

*et al.* find that news sources typically portrayed *indirect* action in a positive light, while portraying students as “deviants” or “truants” when they participated in direct actions like walk-outs. Vélez *et al.*, connect these observations to the view of Latino youth in the US as a threat and as violent or dangerous, especially when acting in an organized manner. While they are choosing to tell empowering stories of undocumented youth activists, ultimately, Latcrit is too narrow a lens with which to view the activists who participated in the 2006 mobilizations, who represent the full spectrum of races. While Vélez *et al.* study the portrayal by mainstream media outlets of specifically Latino youth activists, I will understand youth activists in the pre and post-2006 mobilizations in a broader context, not just as Latinos advocating for Latino issues.

Like Perez’s work, *Youth Held at the Border* is an ethnography about Patel’s experience working closely as a support person and researcher at a school for recent immigrants in Boston. Patel focuses on students who she meets, presenting a wide range of experiences and levels of academic success, and thus her ethnography gives a more complete view of undocumented youth experiences (some have gone on to community college, one marries to gain legal residency, some get manual labor jobs). It also includes a larger variety of countries of origin than does Perez, again representing a wider range of experiences. Like Perez’s ethnography, through this wider range of experiences Patel is able to get at some of the more complex realities of being undocumented, like the intersectionality of documentation status and race (31), the connection between increased police involvement in immigration enforcement and the racially targeted profiling in low-income communities of color (42), and how the involvement of US government and industry in foreign nations implicates all American citizens in the global system of migration (97). In other words, using a combination of stories, scholarly work and history, Patel illustrates the workings of systems of oppression in the lives of a diverse range of undocumented youth. Although undocumented youth inform the stories, the core work of Patel’s piece is on the global and systemic level. This is something I hope to achieve with my piece as well, weaving together stories from many immigrant youth activist to create a larger metanarrative. I expand on Patel’s work by telling a story not only about oppression of immigrant communities, but of successful organizing and agency amongst immigrant youth.

“Coming Out of the Shadows: DREAM Act Activism in the Context of Global Anti-Deportation Activism” by Laura Corrunker, from the *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* (2012) goes beyond Vélez *et al.*’s work and connects the work of immigrant youth activists not only to the history of US-Mexican relations but to the increasingly punitive global immigration policies (Corrunker 144). Corrunker also casts a wider net by working with students of multiple racial locations and in connecting the theme of “coming out” in the youth immigrant movement to themes in the queer movement (160). Additionally, Corrunker notes a shift in the strategies of immigrant youth activists from more private and cautious actions in 2010 to public displays and an “unapologetic” and “unafraid” attitude in actions held in 2012 (161). Corrunker touches on the importance of new media for youth immigrant

activists, an idea explored by Jessica Durán Durán in her masters thesis *How Far Will a Dreamer Go?: Examining Dream Act advocacy via new media*. Durán Durán concludes that new forms of media have created an important method for immigrant youth to spread counter-hegemonic content without having to worry about decontextualization by traditional forms of media and have provided immigrant activists with an important outlet for self-definition and storytelling. Additionally, Durán Durán discusses how new media have enabled DREAMer activists to shape new understandings of citizenship and nationality (97). This is a theme discussed at longer length by Walter Nichols in [The DREAMers: How The Undocumented Youth Movement Transformed the Immigrant Rights Debate](#). Nichols argues that the immigrant youth movement has been successful because of the way it has created a new identity for immigrant youth, which stresses a strong connection to the US (49). My work seeks to add further nuance to Nichols' understanding of undocumented youth, showing how youth activists are both accepting, resisting and struggling to understand the identity they have created.

### **Documentary Theatre**

*How Big We Are*, in its form, is part of a school of drama called “documentary theatre,” which uses the stage to recreate or re-imagine a historical event using interviews with people who experienced it. In particular, my piece uses the technique of “verbatim theatre,” which uses the exact words of those interviewed. It began to be used in the 1970’s in England (Paget 318). According to Chris Honer, one of the first practitioners of verbatim theatre, the idea was to create “a show that...was able to recreate some sort of community experience in the words of the people that had experienced it (319).” Oftentimes, as Honer goes on to say, this involved performing the play *in* the community as a way to start dialogue. This echoes an important idea held by Augusto Boal, whose theory guides much of this project, that theatre should be performed for the people, in the community to help them think critically about their own reality, rather than in an institutionalized theatre as entertainment (105).

I was introduced to documentary theatre through the work of playwright Anna Deavere Smith. In her plays *Twilight: Los Angeles* and *Fires in the Mirror*, Smith presents a multi-dimensional view of historical events as experienced through the lives of real people. In doing so, she gives voice to stories that are not heard in the mainstream representation of these events (in this case, the Rodney King beating and the Crown Heights race riots). In both of these plays, Smith tackles issues of identity, race and legality head on. I adopt Smith’s community-based approach to presenting, understanding and subverting race and immigration politics and I hope to expand on the work of documentary theatre practitioners by finding a role for documentary theater as an activist tool and as an educational tool.



## **Teaching about Race, Documentation, Immigration and Identity**

*How Big We Are* also situates itself in the extensive conversation about teaching about race and identity in diverse classrooms. It takes inspiration from the important work of Beverly Tatum, a psychologist, race educator and the current president of Spelman College. The curriculum guide is built around the notion Tatum discusses in *Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* (1997) and “Talking About Race, learning about Racism,” published in *The Harvard Educational Review* (1992) that the study of race is a process, which proceeds in different ways for students of different racial locations. My curriculum guide hopes to expand on Tatum’s work by considering the process of talking about documentation in classrooms, a topic that is, in multiple senses, even less visible.

### **D. CENTRAL THEORY**

#### **Activist Pedagogy**

The primary driving forces for this project are political and educational. The underlying question that motivated its creation was “how can a pedagogy be created that creates a political consciousness in students and gets them to engage with their own realities and take action?” For guidance in creating such an activist pedagogy, I referred to several sources, particularly to Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and its discussion of how education can reinscribe oppression and what educators can do to create an anti-oppressive form of schooling. I believe that education can often be used as a means of disseminating dominant ideologies. If we are not careful and intentional, the ideology we pass down to students will contain the same racism, sexism, classism and other forms of oppression, which are built into the structures of our society.

In fact, according to Paulo Freire, there is no neutral pedagogy. Education either reinforces the prevailing power structure, or it undermines it by creating a critical consciousness in students and the desire and knowledge necessary to shape their realities (34). Pedagogically, I believe this means getting students physically, intellectually and morally engaged in what they’re doing in the classroom, and ultimately grounding what they learn in things that matter to them.

From elementary school to college lecture halls, the dominant image of an education for many people is a teacher standing in front of a room full of students giving information to them that they are expected to take in and reproduce for examinations. Paulo Freire refers to this sort of education, which makes students passive vessels waiting to ingest information, as “banking education,” and he rejects the power dynamic it creates between students and teachers. According to Freire, banking education seeks to “annul the students’ creative power and to stimulate their credulity” (54). By making students into vessels to be filled with knowledge,

without questioning the truth or usefulness of that knowledge, students are trained to spend their lives as passive beings, accepting rather than creating the world around them.

As an alternative, Friere offers up his pedagogy of the oppressed, which relies on the “problem-posing” method of education. In this kind of pedagogy, “the problem-posing educator constantly re-forms his reflection in the reflection of the students. The students-no longer docile listeners- are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher” (62). As a remedy for banking education, Freire encourages dialogue between teachers and students, allowing students to question what they are taught. Students are also encouraged to study things that seem most relevant to their own lives. “It is to the reality which mediates men, and to the perception of that reality that is held by educators that we must go to find the program content of education” (77). According to Freire, students cannot be truly educated unless they can see their own realities reflected in what they learn. And equally important, for educators to be successful, they must confront their own prejudices, biases and ideologies, especially in relation to their own students, in order to understand what those students need to be successful. This project aims to have students guide their own exploration through *How Big We Are*, and ultimately reflect on their own experiences and their potential to be change agents.

### **The Role of Theatre**

In order to understand how to use theatre as a tool to create political consciousness, I turn to Augusto Boal’s *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Influenced strongly by Freire and Marxist theory, Boal explores the way that theatre has traditionally been, like education, a tool for the reproduction of oppression and dominant narratives (Boal 53). He explains how the conventions of theatre, by creating a separation between spectator and actor, allow audience members to avoid engaging with what they are seeing critically and makes them passive spectators, much like the students in Freire’s “banking education” system. However, using experiences with his own theatre company in Brazil and with “The People’s Theatre” in Peru, Boal outlines a “Poetics of the Oppressed” a system for rejecting theatre’s oppressive conventions and using it instead as a tool for empowerment and for creating action.

As Boal sees it, the revolutionary possibility for theatre lies in the fact that audiences do not need to be passive spectators. In Boal’s “Poetics,” the audience is part of the performance, interacting with the actors, changing, commenting and, in some cases, even becoming actors. On this point Boal says, “Maybe the theatre itself is not revolutionary, but those theatrical forms are without a doubt a rehearsal of revolution. The liberated spectator launches into action...no matter that the action is fictional; what matters is that it is action. (122).” Empowering spectators to move their bodies and mouths may not be a revolution in and of itself, but their bodies will remember having moved in that way and having spoken certain words, even in a fictionalized setting. Boal gives an example from his work in Peru. He asks a

laborer who is complaining about unfair treatment from the factory owner to act out different solutions to the problem, including holding a strike, quitting and even throwing a bomb to blow up the factory. In each case another set of actors play out what might be the results of those actions. But according to Boal, even the act of pretending to throw a bomb at the factory is revolutionary, because it requires one's mind and body to be actively engaged with the possibility of doing so. By having students engage physically and intellectually with a theatre piece about youth activists, I hope, in some ways, to have them realize their potential to be youth activists themselves.

### **Bringing it Together: Using Theatre to Create Activist Pedagogy**

There is a very natural parallel between Boal's "Poetics of the Oppressed" and Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The interaction between the two is the space this project aims to explore, a theatre piece modeled after Boal's *Poetics of the Oppressed* and this classroom guide meant to frame the piece as a tool in the creation of a pedagogy like Freire's. The lessons included are meant to provide a jumping off point for students to consider their own political ideology and to begin to develop a political consciousness. This process is meant to occur both through the experience of taking on the role of a youth activist (and thus in some regard *becoming* an activist) and through the subsequent lessons that ask students to think about using theatre as an activist tool in their own lives. The methods are a combination of reading newspapers and excerpts from key texts, acting out the monologues and discussing their application in students' lives. Additionally, on a more basic level, the play is meant to teach students about the experiences of undocumented immigrants in the US, and to familiarize them with the concept of undocumented immigrants and their struggle for rights. For students who have had no experience with the concept of being undocumented, studying this piece fills in an important hole in content knowledge. For students who are themselves undocumented, or have family members who are, handled in the right way, seeing strong, intelligent activist youth who look like them and have similar stories in a text they're studying in school has the potential to be a very empowering experience. More information for educators about how to present this information in an empowering way can be found in the curriculum guide section.

### **E. Limitations**

In many ways, this project has just scratched the surface of the work that can be done on this topic. Both the play itself and the curriculum I created around it contain major limitations, meaning there is ample room for future playwrights and educators to further explore.

## **The Play**

The scope of the play itself was limited by the time, resources and access I had as a full-time college student who was a new-comer to these activist circles. Much of the nine or so months I spent with this project were spent attending events, networking and earning the trust of my interviewees. As a result, there are many voices that were not included that should be. While the idea behind the project was to give a space to share the voices of immigrant activists who are very often silenced, it should be mentioned that by selecting interviewees for the piece, I naturally silenced some folks. In fact, no matter how much time and how much interviewing I did, I would still be leaving out some important voices. But there are some particular acute cases that bear mentioning.

The only story that I included in my piece that has to do with entering the US is about an immigrant who crossed the US Southern border from Mexico. While some undocumented immigrants do cross the Rio Grande in order to enter the country, many other immigrants enter *via* other means, particularly overstaying legal visas. This is an important limitation of the piece because the controlling image of immigrants sneaking across the border under cover of night is tied to narratives about them being conniving, potentially ill-intentioned, dangerous intruders. If I had had more time I would have included a larger variety of stories from immigrants coming to the US in other ways. This would be useful work for any future playwrights or scholars interested in immigration narratives to dispel this dominant narrative about border crossing. In the same vein, all of the activists in my piece except for one are Latino, and all of the undocumented activists are Latino. This is part of a damaging dominant narrative that connects Latino identity with undocumented status. While the majority of undocumented immigrants in the country are indeed Latino, there is a large and important population of undocumented immigrants and immigrant activists who are not. Future scholars interested in the stories of immigrant activists should work to capture narratives from activists who are not Latino to make sure that these voices are heard as well.

## **The Curriculum Guide**

The curriculum guide contains major limitations as well, which bear mentioning for future scholars and educators. Most importantly, in the creation of the guide, one of the most difficult questions that surfaced was how to make a resource for teachers that could be applicable in all classrooms, regardless of the identities of the students (and the teacher), their previous exposure to issues of race and documentation, and their own personal experiences with these issues. This is a vital question, because the process of engaging with *How Big We Are* will be very different for students, depending on the above factors, among others. Ultimately, I believe it is impossible for one curriculum guide to function in all classrooms without major adaptation by teachers. Therefore, a limitation of this guide is that, to work effectively, it assumes a certain level of knowledge about these issues. While I

have included a reading list for teachers, it is far from complete or adequate in covering what is really a life-long process. However, this is not a limitation of this project alone. Ultimately, all curriculum guides and classroom resources must accept as a fundamental limitation that they alone cannot prepare teachers to deliver the content in their classrooms. An important area for further scholarship is the process of teaching about immigration and documentation to a range of different classrooms

A last important limitation of the project is my lack of significant experience as a classroom teacher. I may not have a very realistic idea of what would and would not work to engage middle school students. A future educator, who has more experience, especially teaching about immigration and documentation, could and should revisit this guide and shape it according to what their experience has taught them.

## **II. THE SCRIPT**

### **How Big We Are: Voices of Immigrant Youth Activists in Boston**

**By: Dan Katz-Zeiger**

#### **Characters:**

JACKIE, Asian American organizer, early twenties.

JOSE, Guatemalan activist, early twenties

MANUEL, El Salvadorian activist, late twenties.

CHARLIE, White, works for an anti-immigrant lobbying group, sixties. Wearing a suit made of newspapers.

DANIEL, El Salvadorian activist and head of a non-profit, fifties.

PATRICIA, Chilean student activist, early twenties.

EDUARDO, Chilean activist, early twenties.

DIANA, Dominican activist, early twenties.

HERBERT, White, son of a Hungarian immigrant, late seventies.

*Stage Lights up. Actors file in with the audience and do not make themselves known to be actors until their first entrance. When they are done with their monologue, they return to their places in the audience. While delivering their monologues, characters are encouraged to move around the space, enter the audience, direct passages to particular audience members and generally attempt to break down the fourth wall convention. Actors and directors are encouraged to incorporate interaction, discussion, multi-media and generally adapt the script as they see fit. Monologues can be removed, moved around, repeated multiple times, or audience members can be asked to come on stage and read certain sections and discuss what the experience of reading the monologue was like for them. This in particular may be a good way to initiate discussion.*

### **NEWSPAPER THEATRE INTRODUCTION**

*This is meant to be a multimedia piece based on a style of theatre discussed by Augusto Boal in Theatre of the Oppressed called "newspaper theatre." The text comes directly from various news sources and government reports. While the actors are speaking, scrolling images should be shown on a projector or Television screen that depict the human reality of immigration, which juxtaposes with the seemingly objective nature of the newspaper text. When Jackie finishes reading her first newspaper text she will walk to a near corner of the stage and lay the paper on the floor. As each subsequent actor finishes reading, they will walk over and put their papers in a pile, creating a thick stack that will stay on stage throughout the play's duration. The sources of the quotes should be read aloud.*

**Jackie:** NY Times Nov. 7 1986- President Reagan today signed a landmark immigration bill that prohibits employers from hiring illegal aliens already in the United States. Mr. Reagan hailed the bill as the most comprehensive reform of our immigration laws since 1952, "Future generations of Americans will be thankful for our efforts to humanely regain control of our borders and thereby preserve the value of the sacred possessions of our people, American citizenship."

**Jose:** Office of Policy and Planning U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: 1990 to 2000 - In 1994, the INS developed the first detailed national estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population residing in the United States. Those estimates indicated that the unauthorized resident population was 3.4 million as of October 1992, and that the population was growing at an average annual rate of 300,000.

Updated figures for October 1996, released in February 1997, estimated the total population to be 5 million and growing at an average annual rate of 275,000.

**Manuel:** CNN.com Thursday March 19, 1998- A U.S. District Court judge has declared most of California's Proposition 187 unconstitutional. Approved by voters in 1994, the proposition would have denied health care, education and welfare benefits to illegal immigrants. Almost immediately, Judge Mariana Pfaelzer granted its opponents' request for a restraining order, which prevented it from taking effect. In her final ruling, Pfaelzer rejected California's attempt to regulate immigration, which she said is the federal government's responsibility.

**Charlie:** CRS Report for Congress- Border Security and Military Support: Legal Authorizations and Restrictions May 23, 2006- On May 15, 2006, President Bush announced that up to 6,000 National Guard troops would be sent to the border to support the Border Patrol. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, military support was expanded to include counterterrorism activities. Although the Department of Defense does not have the 'assigned responsibility to stop terrorists from coming across our borders,' its support role in counterdrug and counterterrorism efforts appears to have increased the Department's profile in border security.

**Daniel:** Democracynow.org Tuesday April 5, 2005- In Arizona, a group calling itself the Minuteman Project has stationed scores of men and women along the Mexican border in a controversial effort to track down undocumented immigrants. The project since Oct. 1, 2004 has attracted some 450 volunteers from around the country. The Minutemen have staked out across a twenty-three mile stretch of border northeast of Nogales for the month-long action. Said Mike McGarry, media liaison for the Minuteman Project:

**Patricia:** *As Mike McGarry* This could not be a more democratically inspired project. It is people from all over the country, United States citizens, naturalized citizens and legal immigrants who have assembled here to peaceably petition the government for a redress of their grievances. The principal grievance here is that the Congress and the President will not adequately enforce the border.

**Daniel:** According to Jennifer Allen, executive director of the Border Action Network, a group organizing lawsuits against the Minutemen,

**Eduardo:** The Minuteman Project is not the first time that we've had people out patrolling, looking for immigrants, detaining them at gunpoint. Folks are getting shot at. Folks have been kicked. Folks have been dragged around. Folks have been yelled at. Folks have been bitten by dogs, thrown on the front of ATVs and dragged through the desert scrub. You want to talk about criminal activities, that's first and foremost.



**Diana:** US Dept. of Homeland Security: Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2008- In summary, the number of unauthorized immigrants living in the United States declined from 11.8 million in January 2007 to 11.6 million in January 2008. The 2008 estimate marks the first time since 2005 when DHS began producing annual estimates that there was not a year-to-year increase in unauthorized residents. During the 2000-2008 period, the unauthorized immigrant population increased by 37 percent.

**Herbert:** Washington Post April 24, 2010-Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer signed into law Friday April 23 the most restrictive immigration bill in the country. Under Arizona's new law, to take effect in ninety days, it will be a state crime to be in the country illegally, and legal immigrants will be required to carry paperwork proving their status. Arizona police will generally be required to question anyone they 'reasonably suspect' of being undocumented -- a provision that critics argue will lead to widespread racial profiling, but that supporters insist will give authorities the flexibility to enforce existing immigration laws.

**Jose:** Wall Street Journal July 29, 2010-A federal judge Wednesday temporarily blocked key parts of Arizona's new immigration law on the eve of implementation. U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton granted the Obama administration's request for a preliminary injunction on the grounds that immigration enforcement is the responsibility of the federal government, not states...[Judge Bolton] blocked a requirement that police check the immigration status of people stopped for such routine infractions as traffic violations, if police suspect they are in the U.S. illegally... [and] a section that required law enforcement to detain individuals until their legal status was clarified...She also blocked a section that required foreigners to carry documents proving they had permission to be in the U.S., and another provision that banned illegal immigrants from seeking work in Arizona.

## **PART I: THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE**

### **Tell me Your Story**

**Jackie:** Tell me your story. Tell me about your life at school and your life at work and tell me the things that mean the most to you. And y'know if you could change things, what would you change? And how would telling your story change things? Think about what can make you a better person. Like, if you're around people who want to creatively change and effect the way the world is, who would be in that community with you and what would you be doing?

## **Crossing Over**

**Jose:** I was born in Guatemala in 1990, and I grew up with my grandmother. And my parents were already in the US. So, most of the time as I was growing up with my grandmother, she was pretty much the person who taught me all of my values, to be truthful and trust and be a kind person. And so my parents, specifically my mom, she was just a phone call. She'd call like every week, and I thought that was normal at the time because that's just what my life consisted of. And then one day she said "do you want to come to the US to see me?" And I thought it was just going to like the next town over. I didn't, I didn't really know what all of this meant until I was older. I didn't know that my life was in danger and all of these things. I came with my 16-year-old cousin. We crossed from Guatemala to Mexico and then from Mexico to the US. And I guess the most hardship that I faced back then was crossing the river, the Rio Grande, or Rio Bravo. I remember the night before, I just thought we were going to be in yachts or some cruise. I didn't have a clue that we were just going to be swimming in the middle of the night, going from one place to the other.

And so, it was very scary. I remember you couldn't really see what's in the water, and I remember there were birds on top of the water, and it was just creepy. Like, what is this place? As we were getting to the shore, I remember that somebody saw us that was on the shoreline and screamed out "Immigrants!" and we all rushed to the shore and hid in the bushes, and then minutes after that we started seeing spot lights shining. I'm pretty sure it was a vehicle patrolling around saying, "we know you're there, come out," and we still didn't move until they left, and even after they left. Right there, there was a spot where there were a lot of clothes from other people who had crossed before. We were just like standing on a sea of clothes from other people. And so we used those and dried ourselves and then continued. I flew over to Oregon, that's where my mom was, Portland, Oregon. When I first arrived, there were so many lights, I'd never seen so many lights before, like it was crazy. And there I met my mom for the first time. It was sort of a unique feeling like I-I knew what she looked like, how she acted, it was a very special moment for me.

## **She Was American**

**Daniel:** This happened to my daughter: In the school she always says that she's El Salvadorian. My daughter, her skin is a little bit dark because she has the skin of her mother. The teacher, in a very discriminatory way, said, "Ok I want against that wall, all the immigrants, I want everyone else on the other wall." My daughter went to the American wall. The teacher said, not you, you're an immigrant, go there.

My daughter started crying and she said to her "I'm an American and don't do that, my father said that you can't discriminate against immigrants!" And she was crying so deep. And I went to talk to the director of the school to tell the teacher not to do that stupid thing, because it's discriminating! But my daughter, it doesn't matter what color she is, she was American. She didn't know what else to be. No, she did the

right thing. And that exists in this society, ok? When that experience happened to my daughter, it made me realize that its better to keep telling them who they really are. Before, in the school, they always said they were El Salvadorian. But when that happened I said, you're never again gonna say that, because it's gonna be used against you. I don't want that to happen to you. So through that experience she learned that it was true what her father was telling her.

## **There's Nothing to Do Here**

**Manuel:** For me it's been like, not that hard to be living here because I haven't been in trouble. But the day something happens to me, I'm afraid that they're gonna keep me in jail and send me back to my country. And sometimes I get like happy that I'm gonna get sent back to my country. And sometimes I have this conversation with my mom cuz she's always saying that living in my country is like, really really hard. She's still in El Salvador and the price of everything is really high. And there was a couple times when I was saying that I want to go back to my country cuz I don't know what I'm doing here. Life was getting harder and harder. But she would say, "don't try to do that cuz living *here* is getting like harder and harder. There's no jobs, there's nothing to do here, prices are really high." In El Salvador, they decided to get rid of the *colón* and they brought the dollar and that's how the prices started rising up. I remember in my country I used to buy a gas canister and the price was like 5 dollars. And like, probably seven years since I'm here, it's costing 15 dollars. Like ten dollars more. If I used to get four tomatoes for one quarter, today I'm going to probably get only one, so that's a big difference. Like it doesn't make sense sending money now because our countries are getting hard to live in. So that's why people are coming here. And no matter what people will still be, like, coming here.

## **I've Lived in Mexico**

*Enter Charlie, Jackie and Diana. Charlie wears a suit made of newspapers and stands on the opposite side of the stage from the three activists.*

**Jackie:** This is Charlie. He works for one of the largest anti-immigrant lobbying groups in Washington, DC. He's going to share with us some of his views on immigration. These are things that we hear every day, so let's talk about them.

**Charlie:** Well as background, I mean, I understand basically the societies from which illegal immigrants

**All:** Undocumented Immigrants! People can't be illegal!

**Diana:** *To audience* We hear people tell us we are “illegal” every day. How do you think it feels to be told your existence is illegal, illegitimate? Will you all please help us out by politely correcting anyone who calls us “illegal?”

**Charlie:** Uhh I understand the societies from which *undocumented* immigrants come. And you’ll find legal immigrants who are very much on our side, who resent illegal immigrants

**All:** Undocumented!

**Charlie:** *Undocumented* Immigrants coming and bypassing the legal procedures that they had to follow.

But I was in the Foreign Service. I’ve lived in Mexico, I lived for 2 years in Mexico, I’ve lived for 3 years in Nicaragua, I lived for 3 years in Paraguay, I lived for 2 years in Morocco, I’ve lived for 2 years in the Sudan. I understand the societies that people come from seeking greater economic opportunity. I don’t buy the fact that people *had* to come illegally to the US. I can understand they *wanted* to come to the US. We do have a refugee policy for people who really *do* have to come to the US that admits more people as refugees for permanent resettlement than the rest of the world combined. And that basically is our commitment to taking people who really do need to escape persecution or the fear of persecution.

**Manuel:** To put that commitment in perspective, a 2012 UN High Commission of Refugees report estimated that annually 800,000 refugees are in need of permanent resettlement. In 2012, the US resettled about 58,000 refugees.

## Cops

**Jose:** I didn’t really know what it meant to be undocumented. I kind of had a hint of it when we went to the mall or to stores and my mom or dad they would be driving and they would see a cop and they would tell me to just hide and lie down and not act crazy because if I did then something bad was going to happen. So that was just something that I knew. That if we were to be pulled over, something bad was going to happen. They’re going to take me away and they’re going to separate us. And, that’s pretty much how I grew up. When I saw a police officer or any kind of authority, I believed that they were able to do that.

## High School

**Diana:** *Imitates her friends and the younger versions of herself as she’s talking.* Sophomore Diana was hopeful that by her senior year she would have a social.

Junior Diana was like, "I hate my life, nothing is happening." I talk to my friends about being undocumented and they look at me as though I have five heads. They don't get it. And they say to me, "Hey Diana, I just got a scholarship, did you get it too?" "I'm going to get a job. Come work with me, be my work buddy." "Hey Diana, I want to go look at colleges in the area, we should go to one together, that'd be awesome." So all of these things that they were trying to include me in, but I knew were not possible for me. And that's annoying, y'know, because like it got to a point where I felt alone. Like, am I the only person here who's undocumented? Who's going through this? And I started making up lies to them, like, "No, I can't really go to work right now, I want to focus on my studies." "No I didn't get that scholarship, I didn't apply." Like, "oh no I'm lazy, I think I'm going to take a year off from school to just work and just save some money, college is expensive." Those lies to cover up the truth. And senior year Diana was, y'know, downright hopeless. Because when I was a junior, when I was a sophomore, I was like "yeah I'm gonna have a social by then." And here it was, 2010, and I still don't have a social, what am I gonna do? I can't go to college.

## **I'm a Depression Baby**

**Manuel:** *Enter Manuel and Herbert* This is Herbert. He's proud to be a first generation American and the son of Hungarian Jewish immigrants. We're going to hear some of his thoughts about immigration today, because we encounter opinions like his every day. So we're going to listen and think about them.

**Herbert:** I'm a Depression baby, may you never be. And my father was an immigrant. I'll tell you a story, this one's free of charge. With me in hand, my mother walked down to this school which was a pretty good walk, and in the basement of this school building, which was no longer a school, was the dole. And she walked along this long counter that was stocked with foodstuffs. And these were government foodstuffs. And they pushed a block of hard cheese across the counter and they pushed some rice and some flour and potatoes I think, and they pushed some meat and she pushed it back because we kept a kosher household. We carried the food home and that served us in part for a couple of weeks. And she cried all the way home because it was not acceptable to receive charity if you were up and walking around and capable of doing something, and pop did his best. He was a peddler you know, ice in the summer time, coal in the winter time, fruit and vegetables during the summer. And Uncle Bernie, may he rest in peace, taught pop how to drive and prior to that he had a horse and wagon in Bridgeport and every Sunday we had to feed the horse. And so he'd take Molly out and let her graze in the neighboring lot, and then take her back. This is a whole different life, a whole different lifestyle, how am I gonna explain it to you when we have so much today?

## Quote Unquote White

**Patricia:** I came here in the year 2000 when I was only twelve years old. My dad was already here, he's been here for ten years. And in the year 2000 my mom, my sister and I came to join him because things in Chile economically were not very good. And since I came I knew I was undocumented, but I didn't know what that really meant. So I tried to fit in as well as I could. Y'know, being quote unquote white, cuz I wanted to fit in. But then I went to high school and my dad had a good job, he was a permanent resident actually. He never became a citizen. But I went to high school, a good high school, and around my senior year when people were applying for college I knew I couldn't because of, y'know, like a social security number. So since that day I always felt, y'know, kinda rejected from society. Like just because you don't have this, you don't belong here. So I felt like I had that stamp on my forehead.

## My Father

**Jose:** My father, I wouldn't really see him that often because he would always be working. Every day I would see him for like ten to fifteen minutes because he would just come back, take a shower and then go to the next job. He would leave really early before school, and then he would come home at three, three fifteen. And then come back at midnight and then sleep for five hours. And so we weren't really able to build that special father to son bond. I always wanted to understand that, but I wasn't able to. We were always fighting because I was able to bond more with my mom and I didn't really like my dad. I knew that what he was doing he was doing for us. But he was always working, he was never there. But I know something that he always told me was: anything I learned from school, nobody could ever take that away from me. Like he really taught me those core values of going to school, getting an education.

I remember hearing people talking in my living room, and it was six o'clock in the morning. And I go out to see who is talking at this time in the morning, and I remember seeing ICE. ICE was in my house. There was around six or seven agents and they were all looking for my dad because he had an expired work permit, and so they were looking for him pretty much to deport him. He fought his case as much as he could. The case lasted for about a year, and my dad had very limited English so he didn't know all this time what the lawyer was doing. Because it was going so long he thought he actually had a chance, but what the lawyer was actually doing was just delaying the case every three months, saying that he needs more time. And my dad thought this meant his case was going good, so he got his hopes up, until one time they changed from three months to two months. My graduation was in June. And in July, he had his hearing. And there they told him that he gets no more extensions, so he was detained right then and there. And he was sent to a detention center where he was for a month. I remember that my little

brother and sister could visit him because they were US born, and then my mom could visit him and my aunt, but I couldn't see him. I would just get a phone call, that was it. And when he went to his court date I didn't see him either, so I never really had that goodbye with him, give him a hug or something. It was just a call, and he said that "y'know I'm going to be here for a while and now you're like the head of the family" and that was it. That was basically my goodbye to my dad. And it was really tough in the sense that I didn't really feel that sadness that my mom or aunt felt towards him because I never really had that connection to my dad, even though we lived together for six years. He still felt like a stranger in a strange way. Because like, I knew he was my dad, I acknowledged he was my dad, but I never really had that bond with him. So, it was just sad that at that time we were like not fighting as much anymore and we kind of understood each other a little more, in a way

## **You have to do Something for the Youth!**

**Daniel:** This lady came here who works for the city of Somerville. "Daniel, you have to do something for the youth!" If I had the resources I would do what she's recommending to me, like a club for them to be creative, instead of hanging out on the street. To do something positive. It's a good idea, I said, but I don't have no resources to do it. I feel *searching for the word* not ashamed, but I feel that I don't have what I need. That's a reality. So that's why we are disadvantaged in many parts of life until we get legally recognized. We are a very productive part of society, we want to make the society strong. We want to be part of this society, we want to be part of something where we can count y'know? I think we want to be part of something in a very positive way.

## **The Golden Streets**

**Herbert:** My father had a sister who was already here, who vouched for him and said he would be a good working citizen. In fact, he pushed a pushcart in Yonkers, New York, that was his first job. So he came here not to wander the streets but he came here to make a living and he did. What's the difference with immigrants today? I think the difference is the streets were paved with gold then, according to some. And perhaps for a lot of the people who come today it's also for economic reasons. But the difference is the people who come in illicitly have no conception of what citizenship is. They're just enticed by others, and they're allowed to pay their way to come to the golden streets and that leaves them with no yard stick of what's expected. They're just illegal

**All:** Undocumented!

**Herbert:** *undocumented* entries. If you go to school and the teacher doesn't tell you what's expected, you don't perform according to what's desired.

## **PART II: ON GAINING POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

### **Nice Old White Church People**

**Jackie:** It's hard to come out as undocumented. I remember this one student from Rhode Island, she was fine speaking to the media, she was fine speaking at rallies, but she was like "I've never told my friends." I remember that I took my friend Layla to a meet the animals day at a church, and there were all these cats meowing, and we went down to the basement, and I was like "Layla, sit with these people, they're nice." And I whispered in her ear "They're nice old white church people, it's ok tell your story." And it was the first time she told her story, right? And the next time she told it in front of the congregation. And the next time she told it at the in-state tuition hearing at the state house, right? And so y'know, every day people grow. And like that's a moment of liberation. It's not your secret anymore. I heard this quote that's like "we're as sick as our secrets are." So if that's something you feel ashamed about for years, for decades, that like makes you sick. But can telling it make you better?

### **I was Feeling Really Desperate**

**Diana:** For this monologue, it's important to know that SEIU, or Service Employees International Union is a labor union that works with workers all over the country. They also have been very active in the immigrant justice movement in Boston and across the nation.

**Manuel:** It was a new place for me when I came in 2006. I was working just for two months at the beginning and I got laid off and I was getting really desperate and kind of trying to, like, get back to my country cuz I wasn't working. I was all the time inside my house, I didn't know what to do, I didn't have friends, anything like that. But, there was a girl who was spending time with me. And she was taking me everywhere, like "c'mon let's go downtown shopping," "let's go eat" and "come to the place where I'm working" She was like a stylist. She kind of like helped a lot cuz I was trying to get back to my country after like three months. I was like feeling really desperate and after a while, my brother, my older brother, met that woman who was working at **SEIU** and she became like a good friend. So I was feeling like better cuz I was like getting protection, even if I was illegal

**All:** Undocumented

**Manuel:** Undocumented. There is like all these kinds of stuff they can do to help you and protect you and that's like how she started telling me to go to meetings at **SEIU**.



And they have rallies and all these things and they started giving me like free English classes and I spent like a lot of time in there, like two times a week. They were telling me to volunteer to make phone calls to people and stuff like that. And I started to like it, cuz like, I was meeting all these cool people who were really strong and always fight for others and all this stuff like that. And I started to get really interested when I heard they were starting to fight for immigration reform. Because if we get immigration reform we can stop being illegal. Undocuemented. I mean you wouldn't be undocumented anymore and so you can have a better life. That's how everything started.

## **The Illegals**

**Herbert:** An individual who wishes to come to the country and goes through the proper procedure for doing so and then passes the required physical, which was a must and still is a must, and has the feeling that he wants to become a part of this great nation, I think that person is a good candidate. This implies that they want to learn the language and obey the laws and all the other miscellaneous things. I would even add to that having a respect for the flag and the customs. So some of these are characteristics that we haven't found with the illegals

**All:** Undocumented Immigrants!

**Herbert:** *Undocumented immigrants*, who come in for different reasons. I think most of them see an opportunity to get away. Some of them have illicit reasons for sure and some of them have a bad record in their home countries.

## **The Student Immigrant Movement**

**Jose:** **The Student Immigrant Movement (SIM)** was founded in Massachusetts in 2005 with the goal to train, engage, and mobilize young leaders across the state to advocate and fight for higher education rights for all immigrant students.

**Diana:** SIM was a founding member of the national United We Dream (UWD) Network, the largest undocumented youth-led organization. Currently UWD has over fifty0three affiliates in twenty-six states.

**Jackie:** *Mission Statement-* The Student Immigrant Movement is a statewide immigrant youth-led organization based in Massachusetts.

**Patricia:** We identify, recruit and develop leaders in local cities and towns who are invested in improving their communities through relational building, leadership development, electoral organizing and using both strategic and motivational campaigns that build movement.

## **First Rally**

**Diana:** I went to a rally for the DREAM Act, and I grabbed my friend, I was like I'm not going to this alone. So we went to the Boston Common. Note that I'd never been in Boston a lot, it was like my first time coming to Boston. And seeing all these undocumented people around me chanting and yelling, and at that rally I met a lot of the **Student Immigration Movement** leaders that like stayed with me for the following 2 years. I was like, this is great, look at all these support groups, I feel like I am actually finally here, like I could possibly be on TV right now. This is what I saw on the news and I was like I want to be there. This is the place I need to be.

## **Act on a Dream**

**Eduardo:** **Act on a Dream** is a student-led, student-run organization. It engages young people in ensuring equality for all immigrants. Our focus is on providing immigrant youth with equal access to educational opportunities. We raise awareness about the unique challenges faced by our undocumented peers and provide resources to college campuses to better serve these students. Act on a Dream serves as advocate for immigrant youth, provides a channel for student views, and empowers the increasingly diverse millennial generation to take action.

## **These Kinds of Things Find their Way into your Life**

**Eduardo:** When I came to college, I wasn't interested in being involved in any immigration work for a couple of reasons. I think a lot of people get to this point where you're already made it here. It's nice to have this little sanctuary where you can focus on your life and not have to, y'know, basically have to deal with this issue that has been pervading every aspect of your life. So I didn't intend to, but what tends to happen with these kinds of things is that they find their way into my life. Freshman year, one of my friends who lived in the same dorm I did, who was from Santa Ana, 3 towns over from where I am in Southern California, started getting involved in this thing called **Act on the Dream**, which was, as she explained it, this student group that was interested in the DREAM Act here. So I wasn't really interested, but after a few times, she told me it was basically a huge disaster and she said she'd be interested in pulling me in just to see what I thought about it. So I started going to a few meetings, and it was in fact a huge disaster. There was no sense of what the organization should do. There was no sense of what problems needed to be fixed for undocumented students. And it's interesting, because all of the students who ran the organization, none of them were actually undocumented, even though there are, y'know, I think anywhere from about seven to fifteen undocumented student per class here. So I started going to the meetings. And my friend Melissa and I were the only underclassmen in the group, everyone else was a

senior. So what ended up happening at the end of the year was that we were the only 2 people who were left, everyone else had graduated so this student group had two members in it, but also like a really interesting and timely mission and tons of things that could be done and that it could do. At the beginning, one of the most poignant stories I remember is one of the people that I had to work with was telling me that she had gotten into some kind of trouble, it was maybe a financial issue. And she went and talked to the dean of her house. And the dean of her house said "I'm just gonna pretend that you didn't tell me any of this, and if you could just leave my office that would be great." So that was just, y'know, that was just where things were at at the university when I first got here.

## **The Student Immigrant Movement**

**Patricia:** In 2006 my dad passed away. So we had a really good economic situation and then all of a sudden we ended up having nothing. It was really hard. But then in 2009, I said, I kinda just said I had enough, I don't know what to do. And I remember talking to a social worker, because I was really emotionally unstable. She said, why don't you join the **Student Immigrant Movement**, and I checked it out and I was like "wow this is really great." Because for the first time I felt like I found a place where I fit in, where I belonged and I was not only doing that for me but I was doing it for a greater purpose. So that's kind of how all of this started. And I joined SIM, and y'know I was going to rallies, I was being part of like planning and events and fundraising, and I saw that I can really make a difference. Like with a group of people we can have an impact on this country, we can have our voices heard.

## **The Model Story**

**Diana:** The power of a story is big. A lot of my coworkers here at **SIM** had a family member being deported. And for some time I felt like every story I was hearing was because a loved one was being deported. And there was this time where I was like "oh is that the model story? I have to be an amazing student and I have to have a loved one being deported? Is that what I'm supposed to say or to hear?" And so it got to like "am I even wanted here? Do I have a powerful story?" And like I moved on from that. I have friends telling me their parents are being deported and that's fucked up. So I changed my mind, and I was like, you know what, I cannot be mad that my story is not the ideal story. I need to suck it up, whatever I feel, and understand that I need to help my community. My family has gone through a lot of stress in the last two years because of the immigration stuff that has made me really angry, but I made that anger into strength. And I'm determined to educate my peers and make them feel good, and make them feel like they're not alone

## **PART III: WHAT DOES THIS ACTIVISM LOOK LIKE?**

### **Thanksgiving**

**Jose:** Last week we went to Boehner's house in DC and set up a turkey dinner table there. And the reason was that this Thanksgiving he's the one that's stopping our dreams. He's the one that's stopping immigration reform because the votes are there. He's the one who's stopping it. So this Thanksgiving he's gonna be with his family but we're not. We're gonna be missing a lot of family members who aren't gonna be celebrating with us because either they've been deported or they're somewhere else. So that was kind of the messaging. And right after that he came out and said that immigration reform is definitely not dead even though a week before that he'd said that immigration reform *was* dead. So it's working, and definitely we're not gonna stop there. We're gonna keep escalating

### **Solving Those Problems**

**Eduardo:** So the thing that I quickly figured out was that there were all these needs that arose from a variety of different, y'know, different stakeholders at The University. And so what Act on the Dream got really good at doing was figuring out how to solve those problems and then codifying that knowledge into best practices that could be easily disseminated in case it happened again. So like a really common problem might be something as simple as like what documentation should you present at TSA. And like a lot of people while I was here didn't know they could present like state IDs, foreign passports in order to travel back and forth. And so I'd talk to students who would be like "I've been taking a bus back and forth from California to Cambridge." And it's like, why the fuck are you doing that? Because if you just take a second to ask, like you'd know that you don't actually have to do that. So the group got like really good at like solving those problems for people.

### **We Showed Them**

**Manuel:** I remember, we were protesting against Bank of America. It was 2012. And we went to that building in Boston, that big building, and there were people who already knew they were going to get arrested so they went inside and the people came and they took them. And I really liked the protest because there was tons of people, and not just immigrants. People from different countries and ethnicities and people who were born here, cuz we were fighting against the foreclosure. And people were losing their houses. And we all got together and we really showed them that we were against them. And this was like really a huge thing that happened. People from everywhere, no matter who you were, we got together that time!

## Birth Tourism

**Charlie:** Birth Tourism refers to a growing practice of pregnant women coming to the US, all expenses paid in advance, simply to have their child born in the US to take advantage of our citizenship laws based upon the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment which says that any child born in the US is a natural, native-born US citizen. And that seems to be motivated largely by the fact that this is seen as an advantage, particularly in Asian societies. To allow the child, after gaining US citizenship and growing up back in the home country, to come back to the US as a citizen for purposes of education and for purposes of working. The birth tourism is a little bit different from the other term that is used in terms of birthright citizenship, anchor babies, which uhh is a term that was developed because of a prevalent practice of women along the border, the US southern border, coming across into the US to deliver children, basically for the same reasons. But in those cases it was largely because of the fact that those births were paid for by Medicaid. Those are deliveries that are performed across the border to Mexican women, at US taxpayer expense.

**Patricia:** Princeton Sociologist Douglas Massey studies immigration patterns of Latin American Immigrants. He has been surveying immigrants for the past 30 years.

**Eduardo:** *As Professor Massey* When asked about motivations for coming to the US, no one ever mentioned having kids in the US. What our work shows is that migrants come in response to labor demand and are motivated by economic problems at home.

## Youth Movements

**Diana:** I've come across a lot of people who looked down on youth movements because they feel like we're all over the place, we're too disobedient, we're doing things wrong, we don't have an adult leading us, what we're doing is not legitimate. For me, a young fundraiser, trying to get money for my organization, I feel like I'm looked down upon, like *Imitates critics* "you don't know how to do your job." "Where's the real person?" "Can I talk to your board member who's older?" I feel like we get belittled and underestimated because we're young. And that in a way makes us more willing to lash back and be like, no look, we do all this stuff. But then sometimes we're also like oh shit, they're probably right, look at us we're a hot mess.

## One of Many Levers

**Eduardo:** The Latino group at the Law School is filled with idiots, and one year they invited Mark Krikorian, who is the director of the Center for Immigration Studies, which is like the most racist, nativist think tank on immigration. So he's kind of like

everything that's wrong with the people who are fighting against immigration reform. One of the policies that they've pushed for is deportation through attrition, which is like making immigrants' lives so miserable in the country that they'll leave. And the kind of analogy or the metaphor is like draining the sea so the fish will die. So we delivered a piece of rotten fish during this panel to this racist guy. So there have been some things that have been way more action oriented. At least once a year there's a coming out day so people stand in front of the statue and tell their stories or the stories of other undocumented students. So there's been a fair amount. But it's just like that's one of many levers. It's stupid when the work becomes just about that.

### **Very Traditional Immigrant**

**Patricia:** My mom has always been very scared because she feels like if something happens to me, we can all get deported. So even though I talk to her and I've tried to explain, we have rights, we have rights! She's still very hesitant. I don't know why. But she's kind of like, she's a very traditional immigrant, in the sense that she'll say *imitates mom* "don't say that to anybody, don't share that, don't tell that to anybody, that's private." And I'm kind of the complete opposite. But it's interesting because I come from a family of activists. In Chile when the Pinochet dictatorship was going on, my family was very against it and they were very vocal about it, so maybe there's something I inherited from my family, I don't know.

### **You're Not a Leader!**

**Daniel:** My daughter is a leader in the movement with the youth but doesn't communicate with me whatsoever. It makes no sense! See what I'm talking about? If you want to be a leader, you have to communicate better with your family first! If you speak out, but you don't speak with your parents, you're not a leader! It's a fact! This is the important thing, ok? I see that some of the youth have a beautiful relationship with their parents and that's why they do what they do, because they feel proud. But not all of them. That's the good ones. But there are many others who are reluctant to relate to their parents. That's why for me they're not leaders. The leader is the one who feels proud of his family. His values. I see they made a huge contribution, that is great. But in reality they feel isolated because they don't connect with us and I think that that's something that's between many youth groups around the country. They need to get help from the parents who have been active for many more years in this country. But it takes time. It takes time because they live the American life, the parents live their own life that is not American, so when they try to connect, they collide.

### **An Issue of Forest and Trees**

**Charlie:** I see the issue basically as an issue of forest and trees. The trees actually are analogous to the immigrants themselves. Individuals. They have all kinds of fascinating stories and they may be valedictorians, they may be possible terrorists, it could be amazing or it could be awful. But that's one side of the coin. The forest side, basically, is the societal impact of immigration. And that largely depends on the size of immigration, how large it is, how well it assimilates into society, the fiscal impact of illegal immigration,

**All:** Undocumented!

Undocumented. And also there you tend to look at a difference between legal immigration and *pause* undocumented immigration. And as long as our society continues to focus on the fact that there are more persons who would like to come to the United States for permanent residence than the society can accommodate, then we have to have a restrictive policy in terms of who may come and who may not. We are very influenced by studies, which say that the United States right now are living beyond the ecological, environmental and natural resource levels of the country. It focuses very much on growing problems with regard to water shortages, it gets into the area of sustainable food resources, it gets in to the dependence upon non-renewable energy resources, things of that nature.

**Daniel:** From *Defending Immigrant Rights: An activist Toolkit* published by The Political Resource Associates.

**Jose:** Immigrants are not the cause of the environmental problems we experience. In fact, many newly-arrived immigrants live in areas of the United States where they suffer disproportionately from environmental injustice. Blaming immigrants for our environmental problems is scapegoating and shifts the responsibility away from all of us to improve how we address environmental challenges. In fact, immigrants who are poor actually consume fewer resources in the United States than those of us who are not poor. These arguments distort the cases that feminists, scientists and social scientists construct into a simple cause and effect formula that serves their purpose of blaming immigrants for complex, global phenomena.

## **How Big We Are**

**Manuel:** Sometimes, I feel bad for immigrants who are scared. Like I wish they could think the way that I think. But I used to tell them that if we don't show up and show them that we're people and that we want to fight, so that they can see how big we are, we're not gonna get nothing. Like, if they just see a couple people out there, they'll just say "Oh, I don't care about that." But if we all get together, we're going to

get more and they will see that there are people who are really trying to get something better.

## **Start at the Bottom**

**Patricia:** I think you have to start with like helping your community first before you can make that like policy change. You can't just enact change in the policy level before you change your community. What are their needs? What can we do about it? Giving them the tools, taking them to workshops, learning about how the laws work because, y'know, one woman in my women's group didn't even know who the mayor of our city was. So, y'know, in order to cause a policy change, you need to start at the bottom and build up. Because I can't say, "oh yeah let's advocate for policy change" if they don't even know how the laws work. So I think if we start from the bottom building up, it gives us more community.

## **New York Times Oct. 13, 2008**

**Eduardo:** *New York Times Oct. 13, 2008-* Orrin G. Hatch, the Utah Republican who is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee is pondering a bill that would grant legal status to tens of thousands of high school students or graduates who are undocumented immigrants. His bill- The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors or DREAM Act has thirty-six sponsors, one third of them Republicans.

**Patricia:** Mr. Hatch's Bill would grant legal status to teenagers who would have been in the United States at least five years, have graduated from high school and have no criminal records.

**Daniel:** *As Tancredo* "It's never time to reward people for breaking the law," Representative Tom Tancredo, Colorado, Republican.

**Diana:** "We've gone to high school at taxpayer expense and now we can't give back to the community because we face deportation. The DREAM Act is not only for our benefit but for everybody. We would be able to start giving back to the community" Yuliana Huicochea, college Sophomore, immigrant activist, facing deportation.

## **DREAM Act Requirements**

**Jose:** *Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2011.*  
Sec 3.B. Requirements:

**Jackie:** (A) the alien has been continuously physically present in the United States since the date that is five years before the date of the enactment of this Act;



**Manuel:** (B) the alien was fifteen years of age or younger on the date the alien initially entered the United States;

**All:** (C) the alien has been a person of good moral character since the date the alien initially entered the United States;

**All:** (D) subject to paragraph (2), the alien--

**All:** The Alien, The Alien, The Alien

### **At the Office Until Midnight**

**Jackie:** *Enter Jackie and Jose* So I started volunteering with SIM in like two thousand nine when I moved back to Boston, and the volunteering just sort of became full time. Y'know, recruiting youth to speak up about the DREAM Act, to share their story about being undocumented and in school and wanting to go to college.

**Jose:** During the DREAM Act phase, that's when the term DREAMer came out. And it was kind of like we have a story and it's very easy for politicians to support this because we didn't have a choice and all these things.

**Jackie:** I started doing trainings to bridge access to college, giving workshops and finding people to give workshops. Or like taking them to look at colleges that were undocumented friendly. We were at the office until like midnight like every night just getting ready for the DREAM Act, but it didn't even seem like work.

### **When the DREAM Act Failed**

**Diana:** The DREAM Act movement was big. I was very in love with everything, And when the DREAM act failed, I was like what's going to happen now? And I worked. I worked at this restaurant I really didn't like. I was like ok I love y'all but we failed, just leave me alone, I have to figure out my life now, see if I can go back to school. So like I got distant from then. It was a very bad time for SIM, and for the national movement of course.

### **New York Times August 13, 2012**

**Daniel:** *New York Times August 13, 2012-* With their expectations soaring, young illegal immigrants across the country are preparing to apply for a temporary reprieve from deportation that the Obama administration is offering.

**Patricia:** For the first time, as many as 1.7 million of them could be allowed to work legally and live openly in this country without fear of being expelled.

**Diana:** The program is President Obama's most ambitious immigration initiative by far, a sweeping exercise of executive authority after Congress failed to pass the Dream Act, legislation he supported that would have given legal status to the young immigrants.

**Eduardo:** It is a major bid by Mr. Obama to win back Latino voters who were souring on him after his administration deported nearly 1.2 million immigrants, most of them Latinos, in the last three years.

**Jackie:** The new program, formally called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, suspends deportations but does not confer any legal status or open any future path to citizenship.

## **When I saw the Announcement**

**Jose:** When I saw the announcement I was shocked. I was like, what, work permit?! It was one of those special moments. The feeling you can relate it to is like, if you win a million dollars, you don't believe it, right? But then it starts sinking in. A million dollars, like all the things you can do with a million dollars. And it was pretty much like that when we started seeing the things about DACA saying "Oh you're gonna get a work permit which means that you're gonna get a Social Security Number, which means that you can get a license, which means that you can do this which means that you can do this which means that you can work legally which means that you can, like, buy a car, which means that you can do all these things, which means you don't have to be scared any more. It was a sense of freedom which I'd never felt before because after I graduated high school it was just "no. no. no. no." And so now it felt like, *yes*, if I work hard enough for something I can get it.

## **Privileged and Not**

**Patricia:** I'll tell you a little story. I woke up the next day when DACA became the news and I got a call from my friend from SIM. And he was like "We did it, we did it, like we got this passed!" And I was like, I started crying, because I was like I can't believe it. But then I called my mom and my mom asked me, well what about parents? I was like, oh wait parents are not included. And I remember I went to work and I saw my friend and I was like oh my god I'm so happy blah blah blah. And I asked her, "how old were you when you came here?" And she told me she was twenty-two, so she was too old. And I felt terrible sharing my happiness with her. Even though she was like oh I'm happy for you, I still felt the sadness in her voice.

So, I guess I have mixed feelings cuz it creates that divide right there. Like you're privileged but that person is not.

## **Nothing But a Band-Aid**

**Diana:** What worries me is that DACA is nothing but a band-aid. A band-aid put on this big cut that needs stitches to be healed. And the people who we lost after the DACA sessions, who left like, "we're all set now, I got my DACA," we're worried for them. Because their parents are still undocumented and all of their siblings that don't qualify are in danger of being deported. So people think that DACA is a solution when it's not. It's just a tool to move us along. We get something big, we can use it to get something bigger

## **PART IV: THE FUTURE**

*During this final sequence each character should stand up and deliver their lines from their position in the audience. The speed at which characters speak their lines should increase increasing the momentum of the dialogue until the last moment. The voice-over part, which comes directly from a speech by President Barack Obama in 2013, should be read by someone looking at a script off stage. Each line should directly follow the line preceding it, even perhaps interrupting the last few words as the sequence reaches its end.*

**Voice-Over:** President Barack Obama at American University, Oct. 24, 2013. *The bottom line is this: The southern border is more secure today than at any time in the past 20 years. That doesn't mean we don't have more work to do, but it's important that we acknowledge the facts.*

**Diana:** Immigration is going to continue being a problem until people have a major culture shift, to understand that this country is kept alive and new because of immigrants that are coming in, and we need to adapt to the new faces, the new ethnicities so we can become a country of opportunities, of dreams.

**Voice-Over:** *But our borders are just too vast for us to be able to solve the problem only with fences and border patrols. It won't work. Our borders will not be secure as long as our limited resources are devoted to not only stopping gangs and potential terrorists, but also the hundreds of thousands who attempt to cross each year simply to find work.*

**Diana:** I don't know man, it doesn't look good. And it's worrisome.

**Eduardo:** Who you need to convince is like every single college student in America, right? And how do you do that? Like it's gonna take a lot of people talking about this in a way it hasn't been talked about before

**Voice-Over:** *That's why businesses must be held accountable if they break the law by deliberately hiring and exploiting undocumented workers. We've already begun to step up enforcement against the worst workplace offenders.*

**Daniel:** I don't know, man. I've been here for too many years. Because for me, this year, it was the worst. When I came here, the life was easy. Less expensive, everything was cheap. A quarter to go the bus, thirty-five cents to go to the train. Easy life, you need to work only one job and you made little money, but you survived better. Now, no matter how much you make you still pass by to survive, y'know?

**Jose:** Y'know, five, seven years ago, going out and saying "my name is Jose and I don't have my papers, I'm undocumented" was like, yeah you're committing suicide. And now people just say it like nothing. Undocumented, so what? And so we're making it something that you shouldn't be sacred of.

**Voice-Over:** *But we need to do more.*

**Jose:** At the same time it's something that you shouldn't accept and something has to be done about it, y'know? Our families are being separated and that's something that's real.

**Herbert:** Give them a road to citizenship but don't make it easy. X number of years. Give them a Social Security Number and let them do gainful work.

**Voice-Over:** *We cannot continue just to look the other way as a significant portion of our economy operates outside the law.*

**Manuel:** I mean we just want to work and that's all that matters, we can continue moving on, y'know? I want a better place, a better place for immigrants.

**Voice-Over:** *We have to demand responsibility from people living here illegally.*

**Eduardo:** There are undocumented people in tech, I'm working in education. And my friend is the first undocumented person to make it to medical school. So there's a couple of people like who have made it to these places and they haven't spoken about it. So the message isn't like "oh, these people really deserve a chance," the message is like, "actually these people are already here."

**Voice-Over:** *They must be required to admit that they broke the law. They should be required to register, pay their taxes, pay a fine, and learn English. They must get right with the law before they can get in line and earn their citizenship*

**Jackie:** I hope that in five to ten years, a lot more people of color and immigrant youth will be in leadership positions. I think it's hard for folks if they don't see similar faces or similar stories in the media to speak out, like to be the first, right?

**Voice-Over:** *Not just because it is fair, not just because it will make clear to those who might wish to come to America they must do so inside the bounds of the law, but because this is how we demonstrate what being an American means.*

**Charlie:** Y'know basically if you look at the array of interest groups that are behind the administration backed comprehensive immigration reform movement, and you're talking about the AFL-CIO, you're talking about the chamber of commerce and ethnic advocacy groups, you're talking about faith-based organizations, it's very difficult to imagine policy makers resisting all that pressure because there's also a lot of money behind that, particularly high tech money.

**Voice-Over:** *Now, stopping illegal immigration must go hand in hand with reforming our creaky system of legal immigration. We should make it easier for the best and the brightest to come to start businesses and develop products and create jobs.*

**Daniel:** The leaders for the past ten years have made really bad decisions for the life of us here in this country.

**Charlie:** And the only reason basically that they weren't able to achieve the adoption of Comprehensive Immigration Reform last year was because of the fact that there is a counterbalancing force. And that is public opinion. And that is basically what the policy makers pay attention to.

**Daniel:** I don't know, maybe I'm too pessimistic or negative, but I live through reality. I can't really say to you beautiful things about something that I don't see.

**Voice-Over:** *The question now is whether we will have the courage and the political will to pass a bill through Congress, to finally get it done.*

**Patricia:** What would fair immigration policy look like? Not penalizing, not criminalizing immigrants for being here, just creating a faster path with not so many restrictions. It has to be something that realizes what is the true meaning of being an immigrant in the US.

**Voice-Over:** *Our laws should respect families following the rules -- instead of splitting them apart.*

**Patricia:** New York Times, April 6, 2014- In 2013, a record high of more than 409,000 immigrants were deported. With the Obama administration deporting illegal immigrants at a record pace, the president has said the government is going after "criminals, gang bangers, people who are hurting the community, not after

students, not after folks who are here just because they're trying to figure out how to feed their families.”

**Herbert:** Build the fence that some do-gooders are decrying in Texas and stop the boats. Send the people back where they come from.

**Patricia:** But a New York Times analysis of internal government records shows that since President Obama took office, two-thirds of the nearly two million deportation cases involve people who had committed minor infractions, including traffic violations, or had no criminal record at all.

**Voice-Over:** *We need to provide farms a legal way to hire the workers they rely on, and a path for those workers to earn legal status.*

**Herbert:** Allow them to study and learn the citizenship rules that my people learned and everybody else learned who came legitimately.

**Voice-Over:** *And we should stop punishing innocent young people for the actions of their parents by denying them the chance to stay here and earn an education and contribute their talents to build the country where they've grown up.*

**Herbert:** And then we have a country of new citizens and enthusiastic citizens rather than wetbacks

**All:** UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS!!

**Herbert:** *undocumented immigrants.*

**Voice-Over:** *So we've made progress. I'm ready to move forward; the majority of Democrats are ready to move forward; and I believe the majority of Americans are ready to move forward.*

**Jackie:** We need to work as an immigrant community more with African-American communities

**Voice-Over:** *And, yes, this is an emotional question. Time and again, this issue has been used to divide and inflame -- and to demonize people.*

**Jackie:** The same folks like that are creating **SB1070** in Arizona are also creating **Stand Your Ground** in Florida. What does that mean for black people and people of color when these same corporations or same politicians are attacking the collective us and how do we work together to fight back?

**Voice-Over:** *And so the understandable, the natural impulse among those who run for office is to turn away and defer this question for another day, or another year, or another administration.*

**Charlie:** And I would say that it's still an open question. It's an unclear future. At the beginning of last year, there were an awful lot of people who thought that immigration legislation was going to pass congress and it didn't.

**Daniel:** What do you really want? That they pass over you running, or that you can walk with them? It's much easier that way! The stampede, it doesn't wanna stop. And I've been here for thirty years, I've seen that coming. My children, that's the first generation, but when they start having children, they're gonna pump it up and they're not gonna stop.

**Voice-Over:** *Despite the courageous leadership in the past shown by many Democrats and some Republicans, this has been the custom. That is why a broken and dangerous system that offends our most basic American values is still in place.*

**Daniel:** So the population is gonna go up, and when those generations like my kids realize that they need to have a place in this country, to not be disadvantaged anymore, they're gonna have 2 choices: they give it or we take it. It's not gonna be any other way

**Voice Over:** *One of the largest waves of immigration in our history took place little more than a century ago. It was at this time that a young woman named Emma Lazarus, whose own family fled persecution from Europe generations earlier, took up the cause of these new immigrants. Although she was a poet, she spent much of her time advocating for better health care and housing for the newcomers. And inspired by what she saw and heard, she wrote down her thoughts and donated a piece of work to help pay for the construction of a new statue -- the Statue of Liberty -- which actually was funded in part by small donations from people across America.*

**Daniel:** The majority of people who came in the eighties and nineties have been exposed in some way or another to Civil War, violence, political violence, so they have lost relatives, ok? They don't see that kind of violence here, but the moment when things come to say enough, that's enough, that's how these people are gonna put their own anger out. That's a possibility that that might happen.

**Voice Over:** *She wrote: "Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch...  
From her beacon-hand  
Glows world-wide welcome...  
Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" ...  
Give me your tired, and your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to be free...  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

**All:** Let us remember these words. For it falls on each generation to ensure that that

lamp -- that beacon -- continues to shine as a source of hope around the world, and a source of our prosperity here at home.



### **III. THE CLASSROOM GUIDE**

#### **A. Goals of The Curriculum**

1. To empower students to think critically about their own realities and how they might be able to change them
2. To learn about US Immigration policy and its human realities.
3. To learn about a successful youth-powered social movement
4. To model a style of education that makes students active participants and asks them to think critically about their past experiences as students

#### **An Important Note to Teachers**

Like, I believe, all curriculum, this guide is not one-size-fits-all. The different personalities, identities and emotional states of the students in the classrooms where it is being used all will necessitate adaptation, substitution and quick thinking upon the part of the educator. In particular, because it deals with issues of race and documentation, students will read and react to the piece very differently depending upon their racial location and documentation status. Some of the monologues contain the kinds of demeaning, racist language and denial of experiences that students of color must deal with on a daily basis. Additionally, the piece deals very directly with issues of documentation and citizenship, and students who are themselves undocumented, or have parents or friends who are undocumented will react in very different ways than students who never have had to think about this issue on a personal level. Some educators will not know the documentation status of their students and no assumptions should be made.

The experience of hearing these attacks, even in the form of stories told by activists, may, therefore, be very different for students of color and undocumented students. Educators should not, as a result, shy away from these kinds of passages, but should highlight them, problematize, and dissect language that might be traumatic for students to experience. Educators should use the texts provided in the guide to familiarize themselves with the issues surrounding immigration and immigration policy in order to understand the kinds of trauma undocumented students and students of color experience. The guide highlights many of these passages, but it is possible that a few problematic passages were overlooked, so educators must be very aware of the students in their class and their comfort levels. Educators should be very clear in setting out guidelines for the discussions precipitated by the piece and the lessons accompanying it. All discussion should remain confidential and within the classroom, and students should have a way to demonstrate discomfort at anything that is said in class, so that it can be marked and discussed rather than passed over and silenced.

## **B. Historical Context**

### **Undocumented Immigrants in the US**

The Pew Hispanic Center estimated that there were 11.7 million undocumented people living in the US in 2012, almost as high as the peak of 12.2 million in 2007 before worsening economic conditions and a rise in deportation brought a decline in the undocumented population (Pew Hispanic Center). This is almost 4% of the country's total population of 300 million. With these numbers in mind, it is clear that the issues that affect the lives of undocumented immigrants also have a large effect on the life and future of our nation economically, politically and socially.

### **Undocumented Youth**

*How Big We Are* focuses specifically on the reality facing young, undocumented immigrants living in the US today. Many of these youths were brought to the US as young children and cannot remember a life outside of this country. In fact, the "liminal" (in-between) state forced upon undocumented youth, especially through schooling, encourages them to develop an American identity without providing a path to citizenship (Nichols 2). Under the decision in *Plyer v. Doe* (1982), undocumented immigrants must be provided access to compulsory state education through high school (Brennan, 1982).

However, until June 2012, once these students graduated high school they were left without a path to legal citizenship, without access to government grants for higher education and were unable to work legally. They were, in other words, caught in a trap, unable to live a normal life in the country they considered home. Every year, an estimated sixty-five thousand undocumented students graduate the nation's high schools, many high-achieving and talented, and are left with slim prospects for the future. Only ten percent of undocumented males and 16% of undocumented females aged 18-24 enrolled in colleges, and the majority of those who did enrolled in community colleges (Perez xxv). An estimated 3.4 million undocumented young adults between the ages of 18-29 are caught in just this state of limbo today (Perez xxv). Despite their legal status and the risk they incurred, despite the evidence that growing nationalism allows less room for immigrants to make claims for political protections (Berezin 2009; Raissiguier 2010), and despite the popular view of immigrants as posing a threat to the national community (Arendt 1973; Benhabib 2004), many of these undocumented youth in the early 2000's began to organize politically across legal, geographic and racial boundaries under the new unifying term "DREAMers" (Nichols 8).

## **IRCA and IIRCAA**

In 1986, President Reagan signed a landmark immigration bill called the Immigration Reform Control Act (IRCA), which was the first bill to address comprehensively the presence of undocumented immigrants in the United States. The bill offered amnesty to a large number of undocumented immigrants who had been living in the US since January 1982 and created penalties for employers who hired undocumented immigrants (Pears, 1986). However, enforcing these sanctions against employers and halting the flow of immigrants proved difficult in spite of the new legislation. In 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), which increased border security by expanding the personnel, technology and militarization of the Border Patrol. Additionally, the act raised penalties for assisting undocumented immigrants in crossing the border and for document fraud (*Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act*, 1996).

## **The DREAM Act**

In 2001, Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) introduced into the senate Bill S. 1291, the earliest version of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, aimed at reforming the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996. The DREAM Act would grant young undocumented immigrants a chance to work legally, attend college and eventually gain citizenship given the following requirements: 1) Under 15 upon entering the country 2) Good Moral Character 3) In High School or have graduated or earned a GED 4) Under 35 years old at time of passage 5) Must enroll in an institution of higher education or join the military for a minimum of 2 years (library of congress.org). Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA) and Chris Cannon (R-UT) introduced it simultaneously in the House. The bill was introduced again in both houses in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2010. In 2007, the DREAM Act won a 52-44 majority in the Senate but failed to receive the 60 votes necessary for cloture and in 2010 it won by majority again, but fell 5 votes short of cloture (immigrationpolicy.org). Although it came close to becoming legislation several times, the DREAM Act has still not passed today.

## **DACA**

In June 2012, President Obama issued an executive order, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), overriding the jurisdiction of Congress, which halted the deportation process for immigrant youth who meet requirements very similar to those outlined in the DREAM Act. However, this is a temporary measure and while it has allowed many immigrant youth access to educational and working opportunities it does not offer a path to citizenship and lasts only two years from the time of filing. A study by the National UnDACAmented Research Project (NURP)

found that 61% of DACA beneficiaries have gotten a new job, 54% have opened a bank account and 61% have received a drivers' license. However, while DACA has been important for those who are eligible, the same study shows that 68% of DACA recipients personally know someone who has been deported (Immigrationpolicy.org). And while President Obama has talked at length about his support for undocumented immigrants, his administration has seen record high levels of deportations for both criminals and non-criminals (pewresearch.org).

### **The DREAMers**

Thus far, I have described only the external realities and policies affecting the population of undocumented immigrants in the US. But they have not accepted this reality passively. Disenfranchised youth have been engaging with and leading social movements since the 1960's, and scholarship has been quick to point out how the DREAMers are taking cues and seeing themselves as an extension of those Civil Rights Mobilizations (Durán Durán 2013; Nichols 2013).

In the mid 2000's advocacy groups from across the country, including the National Immigration Law Center (NILC), created a coalition to advocate for a policy which would provide educational opportunity for immigrant youth. These activists were particularly interested in lobbying for the DREAM Act, which was being hotly debated in both houses of Congress at the time. Thus the term DREAMers was born, and soon many states across the country had formed their own immigrant youth activist DREAMer organizations, using the creativity and voices of immigrant youth, documented and undocumented, to advocate for immigration reform. From these disparate groups across the country, in 2009, emerged United We Dream, the largest network of immigrant youth activists in the country with 52 affiliates in 25 states (United we Dream.org). Organizations like UWD and their partners across the nation are a testament to the organizing power of immigrant youth across the country and the presence that the DREAMer movement has created.

In Boston, where this project focuses, a broad coalition of community groups, non-profits and individuals have been working together in support of immigrants' rights for decades. In 1987, in response to Reagan's Immigration Reform and Control Act (1986), which legalized the status of millions of new immigrants, the Massachusetts Immigrants Rights Association was founded in Boston. MIRA both advocated in Washington and organized broad popular support across the state for immigrants and the problems they faced (MIRACoalition.org). In 2005, youth within MIRA founded the Student Immigration Movement (SIM) to organize the power of immigrant students in support of a bill to legalize in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants (Simforum.org). The bill has been considered several times since but as of the end of 2013 it had still failed to pass. The majority of activists interviewed for this project currently work with or have worked with SIM, but activist groups exist all over the state.

### **C. Putting on a Production of *How Big We Are***

The most useful way for many school communities to take advantage of *How Big We Are* will be to put on a production of it. The series of lessons that follow in this guide will function better if the students have already seen the production and have some familiarity with its themes. Putting on a production of *How Big We Are* will be an excellent way for the cast and crew to engage physically, mentally, and emotionally with its material over an extended period of time, and should be seen as an important classroom learning experience. The show is designed in such a way that students who participate only as audience members should still engage critically with the show's material. Any production of *How Big We Are* will have to struggle with issues of identity and representation. Directors will have to confront these questions throughout all steps of the process and should engage the students involved in these discussions as well.

#### **Casting**

Directors of a production of *How Big We Are* should strive to include as many students of color and immigrant students in their productions as they can. Just as the play itself privileges the voices of undocumented youth who are often ignored the production should privilege the voices of students whose experiences are most often silenced. Directors should reach out specifically to students of color in order to achieve the desired diversity in the cast and crew. The best method to achieve greater diversity in the cast will vary from school to school, but some important things to keep in mind are having advertising material available in multiple languages and holding at least some rehearsals during the school day or on weekends so students who work after school can still come.

If there are students in the cast who are playing parts outside of their own race, gender, documentation status and class, this should be seen as an important learning experience. Important questions should be asked: "Can we understand characters with different experiences from ourselves?" "Can we become characters who experience important aspects of identity in different ways from ourselves?" Ultimately, students should be asked to examine their own biases and prejudices towards the characters they are playing.

#### **Directing and Staging**

Directors of *How Big We Are* should take creative license to imagine, stage and perform the play in whatever way they want to. It is highly recommended that actors sit amongst the audience members to break down the audience-performer power dynamic and that directors look for ways to involve audience members in the

production, during the performance or afterwards in a discussion. Monologues can be taken away to shorten the piece if there is a time constraint and profanity can be removed or changed to accommodate younger audiences.

### **D. Useful Material for Educators**

- “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (1989) – Peggy McIntosh
- The DREAMers: How the Undocumented Youth Movement Transformed the Immigration Rights Debate* (2013) – Walter Nichols
- “Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life” (2007)- Sue *et al.*
- “Talking About Race, Learning about Racism” (1992)- Beverly Tatum

### **E. Lesson Plans**

*Lesson One (DREAMer Art) is an additional lesson, which can be taught to students regardless of whether they have seen a production of How Big We Are. Lessons two-five are a series designed to follow one another in order. It is recommended that these lessons be taught in series after students have seen or participated in a production of How Big We Are.*

#### **Lesson 1: DREAMer Art (55 minutes)**

**Concept:** Students will take a look at some of the art that has been created by undocumented artists in the US and think about what it says about the life of an undocumented person and they ways that art can be used to inspire action.

**Goals:** Students will analyze critically the art they are presented and will think about what the artist is trying to say and how successful they’ve been in conveying it. They will think about how art can be used as an activist tool, and what makes successful activist art.

**Material:** Enough copies of each of the following for each student to have one to look at

- A computer cued up to play “Ride with Ya” by Beats, Krsna, E.S.L and Xtimo (available on [dreamersadrift.com](http://dreamersadrift.com))
- “Parks and Representation” by Ramiro Gomez (available on [culturestrike.net](http://culturestrike.net))
- Excerpt from “No One is Illegal” by Antoine Cassar (available on [Dreamersadrift.com](http://Dreamersadrift.com))
- “A Day in the Life of a DREAMer” by Alberto Ledesma (available on [culturestrike.net](http://culturestrike.net))

**Procedure:** 1. Arrange copies of each article in stations around the classroom and set up one station with the computer. (2 minutes)

2. Break students up into 4 even groups and send one group to each station. (3 minutes)

3. Instruct students to read, look at or watch the piece in front of them and to make a list, as a group, of the things that stood out the most about the piece. (5 minutes)

4. Next, instruct students to talk as a group about what they liked and didn't like about the piece. Have them write down a sentence or two explaining their answer and then have them discuss for the remaining time as a group. They should also discuss what was the message they took away from the piece. Was the artist successful in making this message clear? (5 minutes)

5. Students move through the stations in timed intervals of 10 minutes until they arrive back at the station where they started. (40 minutes)

6. To finish, students will share what they thought about the pieces they viewed, read and saw. Ask what they liked and didn't and why and what they connected with and what they didn't. (10 minutes)

**Assessment:** This lesson will be considered a success if students engage with the material critically and come out with a basic understanding of the issues surrounding the immigration reform movement. Additionally, success will be based on whether or not students are able to draw parallels between the pieces they read and the play. The final assessment will be the quality of the letters each group writes and how convincing their arguments are.

**Adaptation:** Students who are not engaging with the material can instead be asked to think about a problem that affects them and how they might go about using some of the techniques used by the DREAMers to bring attention and work towards a solution of that problem.

**Follow-up:** Provide students with art supplies and ask them to create their own piece of activist art. Eventually, you can hang these pieces of artwork up and have an activist art gallery tour.

## **Lesson 2: Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed (60 minutes)**

**Concept:** Students will be introduced to some of the major ideas from both *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Theatre of the Oppressed*. They will evaluate their

own experience in school using these new ideas and will experience some of the exercises Boal created to train actors and non-actors to be active, physically-engaged change agents.

**Goals:** Students will gain an understanding of some of Freire and Boal's ideas, using discussion, reading and theatre exercises. Students should begin to think about their own experiences in school more critically and should be encouraged to think of themselves as active agents rather than passive consumers.

**Materials:** A computer cued up to play a part of Hamlet on Youtube (Can be any theatre production, as long as it invites no audience participation).

**Procedure:**

1. As students enter the class, explain that the lesson of the day is about dogs (This is an example; any topic can work. The important thing is just to follow the procedure laid out.) Tell the class that you are going to teach the same lesson twice and you will discuss which of the two ways they like better. (2 minutes)

2. Teach a very brief lesson to the class about dogs. The lesson should be all teacher talking with no room for student participation. Silence students when they want to contribute something. Instruct them to take notes. Periodically check to see if they can regurgitate the information you've given them. (4 minutes)

3. Teach the same lesson again, but this time do not lecture. Instead pose a question to the class to start, like "Who can tell me something about dogs?" Write what gets mentioned on the board and follow where student interest seems to be leading. For example, if multiple people mention having a pet dog, talk about pets. Ask students what the experience of having a pet is like. Ask them whether it's ethical for humans to have animals as pets. Would it be ethical to have a human as a pet? Guide the conversation with questions, but allow student responses to dictate the direction. (8 minutes)

4. Discuss with the class what the differences were between the first and second lessons. Ask them which they liked more and create a chart which gives features of the two styles of teaching. Towards the end of the discussion, tell students they have just been introduced to the idea by Paolo Freire of "banking" and "problem-posing" education. Ask students if they can think of times in school when they have been exposed to "banking" education or "problem-posing" education. (12 minutes)

5. Instruct students that they will now participate in two different kinds of theatre. Again they will see both and then discuss the differences at the end. (2 minutes)

6. Show students a minute or two from a stage version of Hamlet on youtube (Kenneth Branagh, Laurence Olivier or otherwise). (2 minutes)



7. Now have students participate in one of Boal's image theatre games called "Complete The Image," which proceeds as follows:

"a) Pick two volunteers, others watch for first round

b) Pair of actors shakes hands, freezes the image. Ask the watching group what the possible meanings the image might carry (business meeting, lovers parting, a drug deal); various possible meanings of a single image.

c) Everyone get into pairs and start with a frozen image of a handshake. One partner removes himself from the image, leaving the other with his hand extended. Now what is the story? Instead of *saying* what he thinks this new image means, the partner who has removed himself returns to the image and completes the image, thus *showing* what he sees as a possible meaning for it; he puts himself in a different position, with a different relationship to the partner with the outstretched hand, changing the meaning of the image, but conveying an idea, emotion, feeling – this is a dialogue of images.

d) First partner comes out, looks. The image has changed now, it has a new meaning, first partner decides what that is, steps in and completes it.

e) Repeat back and forth." (Boal, 139) (18 minutes)

8. Ask for a few different volunteers to talk about which type of theatre they liked better and why. (2 minutes)

**Assessment:** Have students shown through discussion that they understand the difference between being a passive spectator and an engaged agent? Have students been able to adapt the idea of banking education and problem-posing education to their own educational experiences? Have students thought about their own happiness and the way they can be happier or less happy with the help of other people? Finally, do students see the connection between the two styles of theatre and the two styles of learning?

**Adaptation:** Students who are having trouble understanding the concepts of banking education and problem-posing education can instead be instructed to think about the most negative and positive experiences they've had in the classroom and what made those experiences negative and positive.

Students who are resistant to be part of the image theatre exercise can instead be sculptors who can move one or both people in a partner image around to change the image.

**Follow-Up:** Students can be exposed to more about Freire and Boal if they are interested and able through some quotes listed below and more exercises from *Games For Actors and Non-Actors* (1992) can be introduced.

### Quotes for “Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed”

“In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence. The *raison d’être* of libertarian education, on the other hand, lies in its drive towards reconciliation. Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students” (Freire 72).

“Problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality...Students, as they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge. Because they apprehend the challenge as interrelated to other problems within a total context, not as theoretical questions, the resulting comprehension tends to be increasingly critical and thus constantly less alienated” (81)

“Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with student teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the one who teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow” (80).

“In order to understand this poetics of the oppressed one must keep in mind its main objective: to change people- ‘spectators,’ passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon-into subjects, into actors, transformers of the dramatic action...The poetics of the Oppressed focuses on the action itself: The spectator delegates no power to the character (or actor) either to act or to think in his place; on the contrary he himself assumes the protagonic role, changes the dramatic action, tries out solutions, discusses plans for change-The liberated spectator, as a whole person launches into action. No Matter that the action is fictional; what matters is that it is action!” (Boal 122)

### Lesson 3: Immigrant Experiences (50 minutes)

**Concept:** Students will be assigned a monologue from *How Big We Are* and will be split up into groups to read and then perform their monologues to each other and

discuss what the problems are facing the activists in the play and what their strategies seem to be for overcoming these problems. The monologues chosen all have to do with immigrant experience and should be used in conjunction with texts regarding the experience of immigrants in the US.

**Goals:** Students will work on reading comprehension and the ability to point to specific passages in order to back up what they think the speaker is saying about the experience of being an immigrant. They will learn about the experiences of immigrants in the US today, and they will start to gain an understanding of the systems of power that play a part in the lives of immigrants.

**Material:** Printed copies of a monologue for each student, pens, paper

**Procedure:** 1. Lead a quick discussion with the class that introduces *How Big We Are* and the concept of being undocumented. Resources for teachers in preparation for this discussion and important reminders about handling this topic effectively can be found in the introduction to this guide. (10 minutes)

2. Break students up into groups of 4 (2 minutes)

3. Assign each student a monologue from Section I of *How Big We Are*. Suggested monologues can be found at the end of this lesson along with some recommendations of texts for students to look at alongside them. Inform students that they will read over their monologues, perform them to each other and then discuss them. (3 minutes)

4. Students read over their monologue and circle any place they see a problem faced by the speaker. They should think a little bit about whether that problem has to do with the fact that the speaker is an immigrant. Students should also at this time plan how they will deliver the monologue and practice. (8 minutes)

5. Students perform their monologues to each other. (7 minutes)

6. Students should discuss both the process of reading and performing the monologues and the content of the monologues. Were there parts that resonated for them? Were they surprised to hear some of the problems facing immigrants? Were they unsurprised? Are any of these problems that they've faced in their own lives? (10 minutes)

7. Each group picks one student to report back on the content of their group's discussion. (5 minutes)

**Assessment:** The activity will be considered successful if students show in the class discussion that they have thought about some of the obstacles facing immigrants in the US and if students have engaged with their monologues and seem comfortable

performing them with their group as an audience. Teachers should circulate through the classroom to make these assessments.

**Adaptation:** For groups who finish early: Write your own monologue discussing an influential moment or problem in your own life and practice giving a reading of it. Try switching with someone in the group and reading their monologue (if they're comfortable doing so).

**Follow-Up:** Get a few student volunteers to perform the same monologues in front of the whole class. Challenge the students to read sections in different ways and to think as a class about whether the meaning of the piece changes.

### **Monologues for “Immigrant Experiences”**

1. “She Was American”-Daniel
2. “Cops”-Jose
3. “High School”-Diana
4. “My Father”- Jose

## **Lesson 4: Becoming an Activist (50 minutes)**

**Concept:** In this lesson, students think more about the conditions under which youth gain a political consciousness. Beginning with a quick review of what has already been discussed, students will move on to read about how and why the characters they've met became political activists. At the end of the lesson, they will think about issues in their own home or school community and ways in which they might be able to confront them. The hope is that, in reading about youth of similar ages becoming political activists fighting to change their lives, students will feel empowered to change aspects of their own lives.

**Goals:** Students will practice reading and presenting a monologue to the class, gaining comfort with speaking in front of the class and comprehending the emotional and narrative content of what they're reading. Students will also be influenced by the activists they read about to think more critically about the problems in their own lives and their communities.

**Material:** Enough copies of the monologues listed below for each student to have one

**Procedure:** 1. Break students up into groups of 4, try to make them different groups from the previous lessons. (2 minutes)

2. Assign each student a monologue from Section II of *How Big We Are*. Suggested monologues can be found at the end of this lesson along with some recommendations of texts for students to look at alongside them. Inform students that they will read over their monologues, perform them to each other and then discuss them. Introduce the idea that something is changing in the characters in these monologues. Ask students to find moments where something is changing and write down what they think that change is. (4 minutes)

3. Students read over their monologue and note changes. Remind students to think about this process of change in the context of the problems discussed in the last lesson (“Is their attitude towards those problems the same or different?”). Students should also at this time plan and practice how they will deliver the monologue. (8 minutes)

4. Volunteers perform their monologues for the class. (7 minutes)

5. If it hasn’t come up in the discussion, point to the way the characters, in these monologues, are starting to do something about the problems in their lives. Instruct students now to think about their own school or home community. Tell them to think about problems they or other members of those communities might face and what it might take to inspire their classmates to do something about those problems. They should think about the process of becoming an activist undergone by each of the characters in the monologues they read. As a group they should create a chart they will present to the class. A useful format for this chart follows (15 minutes)

<b>Problem</b>	<b>How to engage peers to take action?</b>	<b>What kind of action?</b>
1. Fighting in School	Show peers the negative impact that fighting has on the school community	Wear signs that say “suspended” and fake Bruises for a day to Start dialogue
2. Garbage in Public parks	Demonstrate how garbage affects the animals who live in the park	Put up signs/paintings showing sick animals eating garbage

6. Each group picks a representative to present their chart to the class, followed by a brief class discussion (10 minutes)

**Assessment:** The lesson will be considered a success if students engage with the parts of the script they are given and are able to identify some of the things that were helpful in turning the speakers into activists. This can be assessed by walking around and listening to different groups’ conversations. Additionally, the lesson will be considered a success if students are able to carry-over what they’ve discussed in

the context of the play to their own communities, which can be judged by the quality of the charts they share with the class.

**Adaptation:** Students who are having trouble engaging with their sections of the script or finish their chart early can be asked to create their own monologue (see the adaptation section from the preceding lesson) or to pick an item from their group's list of actions and to write an action plan for how to make it a reality (that is, a step by step plan for how to organize, run and follow-up on one of the actions selected).

**Follow-Up:** Where time allows, pick one or a few actions from the group charts and work as a class to put that action together. Try to start going through the activist process together as a class.

### **Monologues for "Becoming an Activist"**

"I was Feeling Really Desperate"-Manuel

"First Rally"-Diana

"The Student Immigrant Movement"-Patricia

"These Kinds of Things Find a Way into Your Life"- Eduardo

## **Lesson 5: Creating a Documentary Style Play (Multi-Day Project)**

This final activity will tie everything students have discussed together in order to create their own documentary style play that will address an issue relevant to their school community. This will take more than one class period, and the process can be fit into whatever timeframe makes sense for a particular class. Students can work on one piece as a class, or can be split up into separate groups, each one working on their own piece. Students will become invested in a project that revolves around an issue in their own school and will demonstrate that they have thought and learned something about the ways that art can be used as an activist tool and the ways that political consciousness can be created in their peers and in their schools.

**Materials:** A digital tape recorder that can be synched with a computer, access to computers to type up a script, rehearsal space, pens, notepads.

**Procedure for introductory Class:** 1. Explain to the class that now that they have thought about activism and art and studied *How Big We Are*, they are going to create their own documentary style theatre piece. A brief discussion of what documentary style theatre is and how to make it should follow, including how to conduct interviews. (10 minutes)

**Some key points for this discussion are:**

- Students will conduct and tape interviews with students, teachers, or other members of their school community
- Questions must be prepared and practiced ahead of time → Students will think of *open* questions which are more likely to yield interesting answers (Discuss what makes a question an open question)
- Students should not ask questions which are likely to make interviewees feel uncomfortable and should always accept “I don’t want to answer that” as a legitimate answer.
- Students should tell interviewees that what they say is confidential and will not be connected with their name in the script.
- Students will then listen to recordings from their interviews and identify short clips which are the most interesting and useful. Students will listen closely to these clips and type *verbatim* what the speaker is saying (This may require teacher assistance).
- Students as a class will put together these typed up responses into a script and will practice and perform the piece, hopefully for the school community.

2. Write the problems in their school community which students identified in lesson II. Vote as a class on which problem they are most interested in addressing. (8 minutes)

3. Divide up into groups of 3 or 4 and instruct students to come up with 3 different people they could interview and a list of questions for each one. Encourage students to think outside the box and talk to people who are likely to have different points of view. Circulate through the classroom and help students to think about when they could conduct these interviews, taking into account that students are in class and teachers will be teaching. Interviews will largely have to occur during free time, after and before school. (22 minutes)

**Continuing On From There:** As much as possible, students should be left in control of this project. Teachers will have to have some familiarity with how to download audio files from the recorder and how to listen back to them, and will have to have access to a computer or computers for groups of students to listen back to their interviews and decide what’s important. Encourage students to think about the story they want to tell and how they can best organize the text from their interviews in order to tell this story. Class time can be spent preparing interview questions, conducting interviews if the interviewees are in the class, listening back to interviews and transcribing (this will be the most challenging step for students), creating the script, revising and rehearsing. Each of these steps should offer opportunities to work on basic literacy, writing and comprehension skills, as well as social studies and history.

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