MANUEVERING THE SYSTEM: HOW UNDOCUMENTED LATINO/A IMMIGRANTS SURVIVE AND ADAPT TO LIVING IN LANE COUNTY, OREGON

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Maneuvering the System: How Undocumented Latino/a Immigrants Survive and Adapt to Living in Lane County, Oregon

Out of all fifty states, Oregon has the ninth highest population of undocumented immigrants as a proportion of the state's total population. I conducted 20 formal and informal interviews with undocumented Latino/a immigrants living in Eugene and Springfield in order to find out how these immigrants maneuver the system in order to acquire housing, work, social resources, and other things that they need to survive. These interviews ultimately revealed that immigrants use social capital to circumvent these barriers and that the largest barriers that they face to survival and integration all ultimately revolve around a lack of access to a government issued photo ID/driver's license and language barriers. After conducting these interviews and researching how other jurisdictions have worked to integrate immigrants, I offer specific local planning and public policy recommendations for how to collaboratively integrate undocumented Latino/a immigrants into our community.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Undocumented Latino Immigration in the State of Oregon

Undocumented Latino/a migration to the United States is both spatially and geographically unique in the sense that the receiving communities in which these migrants settle have certain sets of common characteristics—such as the availability of labor and cheap housing, and the presence of a pre-existing Latino community--that attract undocumented Latino/a immigrants (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San 2007). Out of all fifty states, Oregon has the ninth highest share of undocumented Latino/a immigrants (as a proportion of the entire state's population) with unauthorized immigrants making up approximately 4.3% of the state's total population and 5.3% of the state's total workforce (Passell 2011). In 2004, there were estimated to be about six hundred thousand Mexican nationals in the state of Oregon, and according to the Mexican consulate in Portland, four hundred and forty thousand of them had undocumented immigration status (Mendoza and Berry 2010). While there are Latino immigrants, both documented and undocumented, from Mexico and all of Central American (especially Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador) living in Oregon, the majority of these immigrants are from Mexico (Passell 2011). This trend is not unique to Oregon. Mexicans make up the majority (58%) of the unauthorized immigrant population (Passell 2011). There are approximately 12 million undocumented Latino/a immigrants currently living in the United States and between 7 and 8 million of them are Mexican (Passell 2011). Other nations in Latin America account for 23% of the unauthorized immigrant population with approximately 4 million people (Passell 2011).

Prior to 2008 when the Oregon legislature revoked undocumented immigrant's access to driver's licenses by requiring immigrants to submit social security cards to obtain government issued ID's, Oregon was one of just three states (along with Washington state and New Mexico, both of which still provide driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants) that issued driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. When undocumented immigrants lose their right to a driver's license/United States government issued ID, they lose access to many other services and opportunities too. For example, without a valid government issued photo ID one cannot open a bank account, apply for social service assistance programs such as food stamps or welfare, apply to rent an apartment or house through formal property management companies or affiliated landlords, or even obtain a library card (library cards are free for residents who provide proof of ID in Eugene, Oregon, without an ID it's $150 per year). Most of all, without an ID, undocumented immigrants feel an increased sense of fear and an increased awareness of their criminalized status in this county. As a result of this fear, they keep themselves in 'las sombras', or 'in the shadows' and often feel very confined to their workspaces and homes.

History of Mexicano Migration to Oregon

The state of Oregon has been a hub for Latino/a migration since the creation of the Bracero program in 1942 which brought Mexican agricultural workers to the United States to work on the farms that were experiencing labor shortages during World War II. Oregon's fertile soils, aided by irrigation and rural electrification, had by the 1940s turned the state into a cornucopia of a wide variety of crops (Mendoza and Berry 2010).

These auspicious growing conditions resulted in the substantial production of commercially viable perishable goods that required the availability of 'a large pool of labor in order to rush crops to market at the optimum point of maturity and command the highest prices' (Mendoza and Berry 2010). In Oregon, braceros arrived to work on farms and in fields (and also on railroads, though that facet of the program was smaller) in the summer of 1943. Prior to their arrival, farmers reached out to women's clubs, labor unions, school children, civilian defense, and other community groups to fill the labor gap, but they were ultimately unsuccessful (Mendoza and Berry 2010). Other Western and Southwestern states with substantial agricultural industries and food producing regions experienced similar situations in terms of other U.S. citizen's unwillingness to take these difficult, low-paying jobs that had been vacated by soldiers that had left to fight in World War II (Mendoza and Berry 2011).

Given the historical presence of Mexicanos in Oregon, Oregon is not a 'new destination' for Latin American immigrants in the same sense that states like North Carolina, Nevada, and Georgia are (Mendoza and Berry 2011). In Oregon many cities, towns, and rural areas are experiencing the growing pains associated with the recent rival of Mexican immigrants (Mendoza and Berry 2011). Oregon can therefore be considered both a historic and a new destination. However, regardless of when these Mexicanos came to Oregon, there are two characteristics that bind them together, their 'clustering in a small set of low-wage labor markets and dead-end occupations' and a history of treatment as a the 'racialized other.' (Mendoza and Berry 2011).

Undocumented Latino Immigrants in Lane County, Oregon

The Latino immigrant population in Lane County (mainly including the cities of Eugene and Springfield) did not start to grow substantially until more recently as opposed to places like Woodburn and Salem that have been function as Latino/a immigrant enclaves for many more decades. The Latino population in the Eugene/Springfield area (Lane County) has grown 85 percent in the last decade between 2000 and 2010 (American Community Survey 2011). The undocumented Latino/a immigrant population in Lane County is very diverse. As aforementioned above, most immigrants come from Mexico while some come from Central America. Many of the people who come to (Lane County) Oregon from Mexico are from rural areas, and among those rural areas, diversity exists (Mendoza and Berry). For example, beginning in the eighties, indigenous people (whose first language is usually an indigenous language, not Spanish) primarily Mixtecs and Zapotecs from Oaxaca, headed north from California to Oregon for season work (Mendoza and Berry). By 1990 as many as nine thousand Mixtecos were picking crops, working in nurseries, or doing reforestation in Oregon (Dash 1996 via Mendoza). Mexican indigenous groups in Oregon have primarily settled in the Willamette Valley and Eugene and Springfield have thus become hubs for this segment of the undocumented Latino immigrant population (Mendoza and Berry 2010).

On a local level in terms of Lane County, Oregon, city governments in neither Springfield nor Eugene have yet to reach out and try to understand the needs of this diverse set of relatively newly settled Latino/a immigrants—many of whom are undocumented. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to begin to close that service and outreach gap between city governments and unauthorized immigrants by conducting a

qualitative study on how undocumented immigrants locally maneuver the system in order to acquire work, housing, transportation, and other forms of social capital by conducting informal, semi-structured interviews with undocumented Latino/a immigrants in Lane County. The city cannot try to engage a marginalized population that they essentially know nothing about; and this thesis will help them begin to understands the specific needs of the undocumented Latino/a immigrant community so that they can better try to integrate these immigrants into the larger society.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Purpose of Literature Review

This literature review has several concurrent purposes. The first purpose is to introduce the reader to Chavez's explanation of illegality as a social and politically constructed social and legal position for undocumented immigrants. The second purpose is to cite relevant literature on 'the three central dimensions of the opportunity structure of illegal residence—social capital, labor, and housing' in order to contextualize the usefulness of utilizing this framework in order to understand the socio-structural factors that influence how undocumented Latino immigrants negotiate their lives and adapt to living in Lane County, Oregon (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San 2007). The third purpose of this literature review is to highlight the resilience strategies of undocumented Latino/a immigrants and to discuss the notion of 'Latino Cultural Citizenship.' The fourth propose of this literature review is to review the barriers that undocumented immigrants face to becoming more integrated into their receiving communities. The final purpose of this literature review is to expose the current gaps in the planning literature on the topic of planning for/with undocumented immigrants (specifically Latinos), and then to make the case that planners should indeed be reaching out to undocumented individuals and families as they plan for and with immigrant communities.

The Social, Political, and Cultural Construction of Illegality

According to Chavez, 'Illegality is socially, culturally, and politically constructed. As people move across ever more porous national boundaries, their status is determined

by those nation-states, not some essential quality inherent in the migrants' genetic code or personal philosophies on life' (Chavez 2007). He states that 'what marks the illegal is the receiving state's unwillingness to recognize the conditions that create a demand for labor, most notably falling fertility rates, aging populations, and values that imbue certain jobs as 'immigrant jobs' (2007). That having been said, the undocumented negotiate their lives by finding ways to circumvent the social, political, and cultural institutions and forces that attempt to prevent, exploit, or negate their presence and the legitimacy of their livelihoods. 'Members of receiving societies often denigrate undocumented immigrants and legal systems are increasingly making their lives more difficult. Yet the very same 'illegals' are given jobs, some medical care, and housing, and are integrated into racialized hierarchies of status and prestige.

These simultaneous processes of inclusion and exclusion underscore the schizophrenic context within which illegality exists and which undermines imagining undocumented immigrants as part of the larger society' (Chavez 1991). It is imperative that city and regional planners understand the numerous contradictory social and political arenas and forces that undocumented immigrant's lives are (substantially) shaped by. If planners want to plan with, or on behalf of undocumented immigrants, then they need to be aware of the other social, political, and cultural institutions that their planning efforts will interact, affect, or possibly clash with. Chavez indirectly affirms this notion in a policy context when he suggests that, 'Public policy regarding undocumented immigrants should consider the hardships, abuses, structural violence, and yearning to belong and live with dignity so prevalent among those existing under a condition of illegality' (Chavez 2007). Planners and policy makers also need to understand that migration and

settlement are complex social processes that are on-going and non-random (Browning and Rodriguez 1985). Currently no academic qualitative studies have been conducted on how undocumented Latino/a immigrants in Lane County negotiate their lives, maneuver the system, and acquire housing, labor, and social capital. If planners and public policy officials here in Lane County want to embrace Chavez's notion that '(Plans) and public policy should consider the hardships, abuses, structural violence, and yearning to belong to belong' that the undocumented face, then they need to understand both how and why these populations settle in Lane County (Chavez 2007).

The Opportunity Structure for Undocumented Residence

Since my thesis is an attempt to begin to understand the 'why' and the 'how' of undocumented Latino/a immigrants within a specific spatial context, explaining the structure and the rationale behind Leerkes' 'opportunity structure for illegal residence' will contextualize the usefulness of their methodology in understanding the settlement patterns and characteristics of undocumented Latino/a immigrants (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San 2007). In their article on 'Shadow Places,' Dutch scholars Leerkes, Engbersen, and van San combined qualitative and quantitative research methods to explain irregular immigrants' pattern of spatial concentration and incorporation in the Netherlands (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San 2007). The article shows that illegal residence is selectively embedded in the (urban) social structure in various ways (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San). The authors state the central dimensions of the opportunity structure for illegal residence—housing, labor, and social capital—are often connected (2007). In terms of housing, the Dutch study found that the presence of cheap and accessible accommodation

is a major factor that determines where irregular, or undocumented immigrants settle (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San 2007). ‘In some city districts there is a favorable local housing market for irregular immigrants, because there are many private landlords who are willing to rent out flats, rooms, or beds to irregular immigrants’ (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San 2007). There is sizable literature on the importance of family networks among Latino immigrants. Research emphasizes that family networks play an important role in settling and living arrangements (finding a place to live) (Blank and Torrecilha 2011). Blank and Torrecilha found that co-habitation is one of the most pervasive strategies that immigrants use to negotiate their living space because…Labor and the availability of work and jobs for irregular immigrants is the second crucial factor that dictates where the undocumented settle. Opportunities for illegal residence are limited to certain urban environments and irregular immigrants tend to settle in places where work is not only available to them, but also is spatially proximate to where they live (Leerkes, Engbersen, van San 2007).

Social Capital

The third and most dynamic factor that Leerkes, Engbersen, and van San identify use as an indicator of the spatial settlement patterns and characteristics of undocumented immigrants is social capital. Two of the original sociologists to operationalize the concept of social capital were Alejando Portes and Pierre Bourdieu. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu initially defined the concept of social capital as ‘the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to a possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition’ (Bourdieu 1985).

Portes points out that ‘social networks are not a natural given and must be constructed (Portes 1998). ‘Both Bourdieu and Coleman emphasize the intangible character of social capital relative to other forms (of capital). Whereas economic capital is in people’s banks and human capital is inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of their relationships’ (Portes 1998). People gain access to social capital through membership in networks and institutions and then convert it into other forms of capital to improve or maintain their positions in society (Aguilera & Massey 2003). For undocumented immigrants, interpersonal networks are an established source of social capital (Espinosa & Massey 1997).

In Aguilera and Massey’s study on social capital and the wages of Mexican migrants in the formal service sector in Los Angeles, the ‘networks and institutions’ that were identified as sources of social capital for these migrants were both kin and friends that had access to formal labor market employers. They found that the effects of social capital on earning wages at their jobs are greater for undocumented than documented migrants. Their study found that the direct effects of social capital are generally stronger, more consistent, and more manifold for undocumented migrants than their legal counterparts (Aguilera & Massey 2003). Because of their precarious legal status, undocumented migrants are limited in their ability to market themselves. They are blocked from actively gathering labor market information and freely seeking jobs (Aguilera & Massey 2003). In other words, labor market information cannot and does not flow freely between potential employers and employees, as undocumented migrants cannot effectively relay their information to all potential employers without jeopardizing themselves (Aguilera & Massy 2003). It should also be noted that for undocumented

immigrants interpersonal networks also function as a form of social capital that immigrants draw upon to migrate (Massey & Espinosa 1997).

Barriers to Immigrant Integration

While undocumented Latino/a immigrants are able to maneuver the system in order to acquire housing, work, and other resources through social networks, they still face significant barriers to integrating themselves into the greater communities in which they reside in. One of the most sizable barriers that unauthorized immigrants face to becoming better integrated into their receiving communities is the lack of opportunity to learn and practice English. In order acquire speaking proficiency in a foreign language, one must have the opportunity to engage native speakers of that language (Mendoza and Berry). Because immigrants in Oregon tend to congregate as a cohort in segmented labor structures, in a variety of agricultural and service industries they have few opportunities to interact with native speakers of English. This 'ethnic closure' (Bean and Stevens 2003) diminishes their opportunities, not only for learning English, but for social integration into the host culture (Mendoza and Berry).

Resilience Strategies & Latino Cultural Citizenship

Planners, policy makers, and social workers alike need not only look at undocumented immigrants solely as victims of oppression; they also need to pay attention to the immigrants' sources of strength and resilience (Campbell 2008). The following quote from Campbell's article on how undocumented Mexican women in South Carolina overcome barriers due to their immigration status iterates this point:

> 'Resilience emerged as a central theme in this study. Before I started the research, I assumed that the women would speak of the barriers and circumstances of discrimination that they had encountered in their journey in the United States. As it turned out, however, the message the women wanted to convey was consistently not one of struggle and hardships but, rather, of a strong sense of pride in their accomplishments, despite numerous challenges.' (Campbell 2008).

Planners and public policy officials should consider Campbell's experiences and advice in terms of how they approach undocumented persons and try to both understand and help undocumented individuals and communities. Planners should practice what Douglas Uzzell calls generative planning, and focus on capitalizing on existing strengths within individuals and communities when planning with/for them (Uzzell 1990). Planners also need to understand the concept of cultural citizenship. The concept of cultural citizenship looks at citizenship from the perspective of citizens as social actors struggling not only to gain full membership in society but also to reshape it (Flores 2003). Cultural citizenship refers to the various processes by which groups define themselves, form a community, and claim space and social rights (Rosaldo & Flores 1993). Cultural citizenship encompasses a broad range of everyday activities as well as the more visible political and social movements. A key aspect of the concept is the struggle for a distinct social space in which members of the marginalized groups are free to express themselves and feel at home (Flores 2003).

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The methods that I employed for this thesis included creating the interview questions (see Appendix for a transcript of the questions in both English and Spanish), recruiting and interviewing the participants, and then analyzing the data from the interviews in order to address the findings and create recommendations. In addition to these ten more formal, semi-structured interviews that were arranged beforehand with the participants, I also collected data informally (meaning that no actual formal interview took place) from undocumented Latino/a immigrant friends and acquaintances that I encountered and developed in the community while conducting my research. All of the persons whom I collected data informally from were aware that I was doing research on undocumented Latino immigrants in Lane County.

Interview Procedures

Interview participants took place in individual, semi-structured, informal interviews in which they were asked about their experiences living their lives in the Eugene/Springfield area as undocumented immigrants. I conducted 10 interviews and each participant was only interviewed once. Interviews generally lasted for an hour to an hour and a half. It took 6 months to complete these 10 interviews. I interviewed undocumented Latino/a immigrants who were 18 and over, that had been living in the United States for at least one year. No audio, video, or digital/electronic devices of any kind were used to record the data. The sole method for recording the data was writing/typing the participants answers as they give them during the interview. Interviews

were conducted in Spanish and a translator (my key informant acted as the translator; their native language is Spanish but they are also fluent in English) was present during the interviews to help conduct the interview and take notes, too. Additionally, for some of the interviews my thesis chair Dr. Gerardo Sandoval (of the Planning, Public Policy, and Management department) was also present to help take notes and translate. Dr. Sandoval is bilingual and fluent in both English and Spanish and he has had many years of experience conducting semi-structured interviews with Latino immigrants about social networks.

I used a qualitative descriptive approach for my study. Since this research utilized qualitative descriptive methods as the basis for data collection, interpreting the data (the participants answers, in their own words) meant going through each individual interview's transcribed notes and identifying similar phrases, patterns, themes, sequences, and other important features of the data. The data was reported anonymously meaning that none of the participant's real names were used when referencing the data; instead, I assigned pseudonyms.

Research Population & Recruitment Methods

My target population for studying and interviewing is undocumented Latino/a immigrants. The interviews took place at whatever location the interviewee desired. My key informant is a Latino/a immigrant that lives in Lane County and is part of the immigrant community. The source of participants was the local community of undocumented Latino/a immigrants in Lane County that my key informant knows through informal social and community networks. Snowball sampling was utilized as a

recruitment method once the interview process began. Snowball sampling is when research participants tell friends/acquaintances from the same research population (undocumented immigrants) about the study, and then the participant's friend or acquaintance and I meet for another interview, and so on and so forth this process continues. Since I was focusing on social networks that immigrants use to create social capital and to adapt to living in the United States, this was an appropriate method for me to use. Interview participants were not compensated for their involvement in this study. They key informant was the initial recruiter of participants. However, after the interview process began I started to use the snowball sampling method for participant recruitment, and at that point the research participants became recruiting agents too by connecting me with friends or acquaintances that they had so that I could conduct more interviews.

Challenges

The process of meeting undocumented immigrants and attempting to earn their trust (not just prior to and during the interviews--both formal and informal—but during the time following the interviews as well) was extremely time consuming and difficult, albeit completely rewarding and worth the time and effort put forth at the same time. The undocumented immigrants that I met on my own had essentially no reason to trust me upon first meeting me. Some even told me later on after getting to know me and gaining my trust that they had originally thought I was either an undercover cop or working for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). When I first began going out into the community and trying to meet immigrants, my Spanish was sub-par. I could get by, but my skills were limited. Still, despite my own language barrier when dealing with this

population, I prevailed and developed personal, trusting relationships with undocumented immigrants (that I ended up interviewing). I developed a certain cultural competency as well as I continued to meet more undocumented immigrants that helped me with this thesis by speaking with me and opening up. I learned over time that there is a certain way to approach these issues, and that one cannot just immediately dive into deep, personal, political topics like immigration and undocumented status with an individual that a.) one does not do know well and b.) one cannot communicate with in their native tongue.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Who Did I Interview?

I interviewed ten Latino/a immigrant adults that currently live in Lane County in the cities of Eugene and Springfield. Eight of the ten interview participants were undocumented while two were resident aliens with legal permission to live and work in the United States. All of the formal interview participants were from states throughout Mexico including el estado de Mexico (the State of Mexico), Veracruz, Jalisco, and Oaxaca. In addition to the ten formal interviews that I conducted, I also informally encountered many undocumented immigrants in the community whom I spoke with about the issues that are covered in the interviews that were from other states in Mexico (Guerrero, Tijuana, and Michoacan) and Central America (Honduras and Guatemala).

Several of the immigrants whom I formally interviewed were of indigenous heritage and their first language was often times an indigenous one, not Spanish. Four of the interviewees' first languages were indigenous ones. Three immigrants from Oaxaca, Mexico identified Zapotec as their first language while another immigrant from Veracruz, Mexico identified Nahuatl as their first language. Another immigrant from Oaxaca said that she is Mixteco (though she grew up in Oaxaca primarily speaking Spanish) and that her parents who live in Oaxaca grew up speak Mixteco. I interviewed immigrants that have children and immigrants that do not have children. Some of the parents that I spoke with had children who were born here (and are therefore citizens) while others had children that were born in Mexico. I spoke with five men and four women intentionally in order to keep a relatively equal sex and gender balance.

Originally I was going to interview ten people, but after interviewing nine people the data had clearly satiated itself as participants were consistently giving the same or very similar answers to all of my interview questions. Out of the four women that I interviewed, two are married (one with children, one without) and two are single mothers. Out of the five men that I interviewed, one is married with children, three are single without children, and one is single with children but he was previously married. Some of the immigrants that I interviewed are 'newer immigrants' that have been in the United States for less than five years while others have been living (or seasonally migrating and then eventually settling) in the United States for between ten and fifteen years. The immigrants who I interviewed that have been living in the United States for longer periods of time have spent the majority of their time in the States living in Lane County, Oregon. The mix of newer and less recently settled immigrants that I interviewed for my thesis exemplifies the way in which Oregon is both a new and historic destination for Latino/a immigrants.

Migrating to the United States & Settling in Oregon

While the immigrants that I interviewed cited various interconnected reasons for their migrating north across 'la frontera' (the border), the main reason that these undocumented Latino/a immigrants from Mexico and Central America cited for journeying to the United States was the poor economy/lack of work opportunities in their home countries. Many of the interviewees expressed a strong desire to help their parents and families financially and they believed that they would be better able to do so in the United States. One interview participant of indigenous descent from Veracruz echoed this

sentiment in perhaps the simplest, most concise manner when they said, (as part of their response to the question: Why did you come to the United States?) 'In Mexico there are pesos, in the United States there are dollars.'

The majority of the immigrants that I interviewed already had other family members (cousins, siblings) living in the United States when they decided to migrate north and leave their home countries. Two different interview participants, one Zapotec speaking immigrant from Oaxaca and one Spanish speaking immigrant from Guerrero, both said that one of the many reasons that they decided to migrate north was to help their sick parents (the assumption being that they will make more money here that they can then send home to their sick parents to help pay for their support and/or medical care). Another interview participant said they left their home of Oaxaca due to familial problems (tensions and poor relationships with others in their immediate family) that they wanted to escape. One woman from Oaxaca's answer iterates many of the themes that participants cited for coming to United States, 'I had many reasons to come but the main reasons that I came is because of how difficult it is in Mexico to get clothes, work, money, and to go to school…it's difficult to explain all of the obstacles but everything is hard in Mexico. I came to look for a better life and to move ahead (*mas adelante*).'

One man that I spoke with came to the United States because he was offered a seasonal job here while still living in Mexico. This indigenous Zapotec interview participant from Oaxaca came to the United States for the first time in 1988 after a white farmer from Albany, Oregon came to his small, primarily indigenous pueblo, Santiago al Postal, to recruit the townspeople to come work on his farm back in Oregon. After migrating back and forth between Oregon and Oaxaca for many years doing seasonal

work in various types of farms in Oregon (and eventually California) and getting his paperwork together to secure legal resident alien immigrant status, he brought his wife and two children This interview participant was one of nearly four hundred Zapotec people from Santiago al Postal that were recruited during the farmer's initial visit in 1988. He subsequently returned to the pueblo to continue recruiting people over the next several years. This interview participant estimated that today at least 60% of the people from Santiago al Postal now reside and work in Lane County. He also said that the majority of them are undocumented.

All of the immigrants that I interviewed have spent the majority of their time in the United States living throughout the Willamette Valley (in Eugene/Springfield, Salem, Albany, Jasper, Roseburg) in Oregon. Some immigrants that I interviewed came to Oregon after initially crossing the border while others spent time in other states (primarily California, Arizona, and Washington) before arriving and settling in Oregon. Eight of the nine immigrants that I interviewed said that came to Oregon either for work or because they already had family here. One person, however, migrated to Oregon from Washington State after she heard an advertisement on the radio in Spanish for the University of Oregon's high school equivalency program, or HEP. HEP is a federally funded program under the US Department of Education that has been in existence since 1967. HEP is designed to provide assistance to individuals from migrant and/or seasonal farm worker backgrounds in obtaining the General Educational Development (GED) certificate (University of Oregon). HEP provides on campus housing to participants that are not from the area. The interview participant that completed their GED under HEP lived in the university dorms while completing her classes. She was able to participate in

the program because she had been working on an apple farm in Washington for several months before hearing about the program.

Labor

The questions that I asked the interview participants surrounding their work and job experience (particular to Oregon) were: What kinds of work/jobs have you had? What has your experience been like with those jobs? How have you found work? What barriers have you faced to finding work? Have your employers or bosses been White (Caucasian) or Latino? Essentially all of the immigrants that I spoke with, both male and female, have worked many different jobs, predominantly in low-wage labor markets and industries that are notorious for relying on undocumented immigrants as one of their main sources (if not their main source, depending on the job and market/industry) of labor. The main types of work that the male immigrants I spoke with have had include various types of farm work, construction and roofing, landscaping and gardening, manual labor service jobs (e.g. dishwashers and prep cooks in restaurants, cleaning hotels or offices), and working in meat packing plants. The main types of work that the female immigrants I interviewed have had include various types of farm and nursery work, care-giving for the elderly, child care, food service, and cleaning houses and motels. One woman also informally sells tamales out of her home to her friends and family but she does not consider this a source of work or employment, instead she said that it just helps her feel 'less bored' in her home where she spends most of her time taking care of her three children while her husband works at a local lumber mill.

Most immigrants said that they have found their various jobs through social networks of friends and family that either directly refer or connect them to employers and employment opportunities. The majority of the social networks that the immigrants I interviewed utilized to find employment consisted of other undocumented Latino/a immigrants that already had employment at a particular place. Many male interview participants who have worked in construction, landscaping, nurseries, and meat packing plants (los rastros) said that they obtained employment at those place through other undocumented friends of theirs that were already working at those particular jobs. One female interview participant who works taking care of some of her friend's children finds her work through neighborhood social circles of other undocumented women. Some social networks that immigrants utilize consist of American citizens, though. One woman said that she obtained employment as a caregiver through a white friend of hers that was an American citizen from Oregon that was already working as a caregiver for a local agency. Several interview participants said that simply putting in 'blind applications'—meaning that the employer has no idea who the applicant is-- for jobs is difficult for many reasons. For example, participants cited their inability to understand the specific questions that the application is asking (one particular participant from Orizaba, Veracruz, whose first language is Nahuatl, is illiterate in Spanish because she only began to learn to speak Spanish after immigrating to the United States) and their lack of a non-expired photo government issued ID, social security number or visa number indicating legal permission to work in the United States for resident aliens--which most job applications ask for, as barriers to finding employment.

Several common themes that underscore this diverse group of undocumented immigrants' experiences at their various jobs and work environments surfaced both during the interviews and the more informal interactions that I had in the community with undocumented Latino/a immigrants. The first common theme that arose was that the majority of the interview participants primarily worked alongside other undocumented Latino/a immigrants at their jobs. This was particularly true for immigrants working in agriculture, construction, landscaping/gardening, and service industry jobs. The second theme that came to light regarding work experiences for immigrants working in agriculture, construction, and landscaping/gardening was a lack of consistent, year-round work from a single employer. Agricultural and farm work is inevitably dominated by seasons as different crops are cultivated during different times of the year and if one works at a farm that only produces berries, then the farmworker that is employed by that particular farm is only going to be able to work there during that crop's growing season(s). Seasons and weather have a similar effect on the availability of consistent, year-round work from a single employer for immigrants working in construction, roofing, landscaping, gardening, and essentially any other type of manual labor that takes place outside.

Another main theme regarding undocumented Latino/a immigrants' experiences in the workplaces concerns the wages that they are paid and the benefits (or the general lack thereof) that they receive from their employers. The majority of the interview participants said that they receive minimum wage at their various jobs—no less, no more. Essentially all of the interview participants, with the exception of one man from Jalisco who has worked at various higher end ethnic restaurants as a dishwasher and a prep cook,

said that their employers did not provide them with health insurance. Interview participants reported having had a mix of white and Latino employers/bosses, with the majority being white. One man from Mexico City iterated a common theme among many interviewees that do not speak English about his relationship with his current (white) boss at a construction company when he said that, 'my boss speaks a little Spanish but not really and I don't speak a lot of English so we don't communicate a lot.'

In addition to the more formal jobs that these immigrants tend to fill, there are also many informal things that these immigrants (especially the women) do to make extra money that do indeed require work and yield some income but are not official jobs. For example, one undocumented woman collects bottles and cans from the streets and then turns them in and collects a deposit for them. Another younger woman from Oaxaca who is a single mom that works 50 hours at a week at a fast food restaurant sells lotions and beauty products to her friends to supplement her main source of income at Taco Bell. Another slightly older woman from Mexico City collects items that are either discarded from other people's homes and left on the side of the street or left in recently vacated homes and re-sells them for a profit.

Housing

The questions that I asked the interview participants concerning housing were: How have you found places to live? What was the process of looking for housing like? What have your experiences in your living spaces been like? Have you faced any problems or barriers to finding housing? My interview data indicates that undocumented

Latino/a immigrants living in Lane County, Oregon both find housing and negotiate their living situations primarily through social networks of friends and family.

Some of the single males that I interviewed lived with other undocumented male friends renting apartments and trailers that either they or their other roommates acquired through other undocumented friends and family members. One single male from Mexico City lives with two other family members and two children in a two room trailer. The adults are all undocumented but the children are citizens. Two single mothers of indigenous heritage that I spoke with said that they had lived alongside other families (referred to in the literature review as 'co-habitation') in their homes because they faced many barriers to finding their own living spaces. Essentially all of the people that I interviewed rented their living spaces with the exception of one single father who owns his trailer but still pays $400 a month in rent to the trailer park's landlord to park his home.

In terms of housing structures and types, most interview participants live in cheap, motel-style apartment complexes (densely concentrated all throughout Spingfield's neighborhoods and in Eugene's Westside Jefferson, Whiteaker, and West Eugene neighborhoods) and in trailers. The two men I spoke with who lived in separate trailer parks both estimated that at least 50% of the other people living in their trailer parks were also undocumented Latino/a immigrants. The single mothers that I spoke with iterated similar feelings about their living situations. Rosalia from Oaxaca who has one child and is a co-inhabitant began to tear up as she talked about her living situation and her relationship with her five year old son, 'My son is a little difficult with me…he is incarcerated in the house like a prisoner with no where to play.'

Overcrowding in the home and a lack of room/space to live was also an issue for another single mother of two girls that I spoke with from Veracruz named Itzael. She and her two girls live in a tiny one bedroom apartment that faces a dangerous alley. They do not have much furniture so they use a disproportionate amount of their living spaces to merely pile up things that they don't have the room or the means to properly store. Itzael and her 2 daughters share the same bed. The three are essentially on top of one another all the time as the living space is incredibly small and the girls are often too scared of the homeless people that populate the alleys night and day to want to go outside and play.

There are many interconnected barriers that the undocumented immigrants that I interviewed faced to obtaining housing, many of which surround their lack of access to non-expired U.S. government issued photo IDs. Many undocumented immigrants that I interviewed (many of whom were of indigenous heritage and much more dark skinned) talked about being asked for ID's from landlords immediately upon meeting them. One woman said that 'some landlords will ask you for ID before they will even show you the place.' Another man said that he doesn't like to turn in formal applications to property management companies because they 'always ask you for ID.'

Another common barrier that was cited by interview participants was their inability to provide a bank statement (because they do not have bank accounts) to landlords and property management companies. Landlords ask for bank statements to verify that potential tenants make enough money at work to comfortably pay the rent. While many of the immigrants that apply to live in various places do indeed make enough money to cover the rent, it is harder to prove that that's true without a bank statement. Several of the immigrants that I interviewed who had been living in Oregon

prior to 2008 opened bank accounts with their State of Oregon government issued IDs and driver's licenses either a.) before the law changed in 2008 or b.) before their Oregon ID expired.

One woman who did exactly that had to close her bank account after her ID expired because the bank began asking her for a new valid ID when she began to deposit and withdraw larger amounts of money more regularly. Another woman had to close her bank account after the bank (that she'd had an account with for several years) told her that if she did not provide a new ID and social security number that they would contact the IRS. Despite these barriers the undocumented immigrants that I interviewed still manage to find ways to obtain housing through their various social networks (described above) by finding more 'lax' landlords (or slumlords) or by having their boss or a business reference call the landlord and vouch for them as a reference.

Social Capital & Applying Theory

The undocumented immigrants that I interviewed use social capital, or social resources such as family and friends that ultimately provide them with resources that they cannot directly access themselves that they acquire in a reciprocal exchange. Social capital (friends or kin) was used by interview participants to access work, housing, transportation, childcare, and countless other resources and sources of capital. Essentially all of the interview participants used social capital so prevalently in their lives that I seldom needed to even ask the 'social capital' question (Who has helped you acquire the resources that you need to live—work, housing, etc.—and how have they helped you?) that was on my question transcript. The information that the interview participants

provided about the various ways that their friends and kin help them circumvent legal and social barriers to access resources and capital reifies Leerkes, Engbersen, and van San's theory about the opportunity structure for illegal residence (2007).

According to Leerkes, Engbersen, and van San, the essential elements that ultimately provide the 'opportunity structure' for undocumented immigrants to settle in a particular community are housing, work, and social capital. My interview data reifies Leerkes, Engbersen, and van San's theory as essentially all of the undocumented immigrants that I interviewed and spoke with, both formally and informally, indicated that they have settled here because they had friends and family (social capital) in this area that helped access labor opportunities in markets that notoriously hire and exploit undocumented immigrants. Additionally, participants said that there are indeed plenty of landlords (slumlords) who rent to them and provide them with housing. While the housing is available, the rents are generally felt to be unreasonably high and undocumented immigrants seem to be disproportionately exploited by these landlords because of their vulnerable immigration status that prevents them from reporting the landlord's abuses or from moving and going though the stressful and tenuous process of looking for housing.

Barriers to Immigrant Integration & Undocumented Immigrants' Use of Government Services at the City and County Level

The many barriers that the undocumented immigrants that I interviewed face to adapting to living in Lane County and to becoming more integrated into the greater community are all ultimately interconnected and concern the issues of access and valid

government issued photo IDs. In addition to the questions that I asked the interview participants about the specific barriers that they have faced to acquiring work and housing, I asked participants what the top three most important/severe issues were that face the local undocumented Latino/a immigrant community. I also asked participants what city or county services they have used (or currently use), if they have ever participated in a public meeting, and what the conditions for a public meeting would need to be like for them to consider participating.

The primary and most commonly cited issue that the interview participants said faces the undocumented Latino/a immigrant community and prevents immigrant integration is the lack of access to government issued driver's licenses and photo IDs in the State of Oregon. As one interview participant put it, 'we don't have the right paperwork to work and then all the barriers develop around that…we used to have IDs and access (in Oregon) but now we don't have IDs and we don't have access. Without an ID you can't get housing, a bank account, start a phone, cable, or internet account.' Several interview participants stressed the feelings of de-humanization that not having an valid, government issued photo ID also brings. As one participant put it very bluntly, 'I don't exist without an ID.'

Another very commonly barrier to access and integration that the interview participants mentioned was the language barrier. The language barrier creates many barriers to integration in terms of finding work, accessing information and services, and communicating and connecting with members of the larger mixed society. As one woman said, 'When I first got here I didn't know the language and it took me over eight months to find a job because I couldn't communicate.' Many participants (especially the single

mothers that I spoke with) talked about how their inability to communicate in English hindered their ability to access vital services (health and hunger related especially) for both themselves and for their children. The language barrier hinders undocumented immigrant's abilities to merely find out that certain resources even exist at all. During the interviews several participants mentioned having suffered a physical injury at work but never seeking medical attention for it at reduced rate community health clinics because they simply didn't know that such places existed.

As mentioned earlier, the Eugene and Springfield area is an area with an exceptionally high proportion of indigenous Mexicans whose first language is often times an indigenous one (such as Mixteco, Zapotec, or Nahuatl) and not Spanish. Almost half of the undocumented immigrants that I interviewed for this thesis were of indigenous heritage from either Oaxaca or Veracruz. Several of the indigenous people that I interviewed cited an indigenous language as their first one but still spoke Spanish well. One of the interview participants, however, only spoke her native language in Mexico and never learned Spanish. When speaking about her experiences she said, 'When I came here from Mexico I only knew a few words in Spanish.' Now, twelve years later after arriving in the United States she speaks Spanish well but still does not feel completely comfortable with the language because although she can now speak it, she cannot read it. The language barrier even makes communication between her and her two daughters an issue as their first language is Spanish (not the indigenous one that their mother grew up speaking) and they are both rapidly learning English while their mother is still struggling to improve her Spanish.

One of the main reasons that the language barrier is so pervasive among the undocumented community is due to the homogenization and the racialization of the labor markets and jobs that these immigrants tend to fill. While many of the interview participants talked about having enrolled in and completing various levels of English classes--primarily at Lane Community College and at Downtown Languages—many said that they never had a chance to become proficient in the language because of a lack of opportunities to practice speaking it with either native speakers or with other immigrants who were also in the process of learning the language. As one man who works for a construction company put it, 'there are no opportunities to practice English at work because almost everyone I work with is Latino and is always speaking Spanish.' He continued that, 'it's hard to get them to practice English because it's easier to just speak Spanish.'

The third most commonly cited severe issue/barrier towards integration that the undocumented immigrants that I interviewed said negatively affects their community is, in two words, *fear* and *isolation*. The feelings of fear and isolation that these undocumented immigrants carry on their backs day and night are ultimately the results of the substantial lack of access to social, cultural, economic/financial, and legal services that these immigrants have because of their criminalized immigration status. Many of the undocumented immigrants that I spoke with drive without a license and have a constant fear of being pulled over and either losing their vehicles or having their immigration status investigated (which could lead to deportation). One interview participant from Oaxaca, when speaking about his experiences driving without a license, offered a metaphor that referenced the constant stress and fear that essentially underlines a large

part of his existence when said that, 'I live my life on the line.' He continued to explain that when you are undocumented all it takes is one small abrupt jerk of the steering wheel to 'cross over that line' and if he does cross that line, his vulnerability and marginality will be truly exposed because, as he continually reminded me though the interview, 'I don't have a voice or a vote or an ID.' Both the feelings and the realities of dehumanization are incredibly ripe for these undocumented immigrants because without an ID these immigrants have no way to prove that they actually are who they claim to be. This perpetual fear of being caught and apprehender by the authorities, or Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), reinforces social, spatial, and cultural isolation for these immigrants and as a result they are confined to their homes and workspaces and are less likely to integrate themselves into the larger, more mixed society. Some of the single undocumented immigrants that I interviewed said that they don't like to go out at night to the bars downtown because few people talk to them and they feel 'othered' and lonely.

Feelings of fear and isolation are also reinforced for undocumented immigrants as a result of the homogenization of their daily routines. Since the undocumented individuals that I interviewed only make minimum wage (regardless of the type of job(s) that they have) and face myriad barriers to accessing basic services such as adequate transportation and financial services (e.g. bank accounts), many things they must do on a daily basis in order to survive literally take more time and energy to do. This is the case because undocumented immigrants have to maneuver the system in order to circumvent the barriers that accompany the criminal status that the United States government has subsequently assigned to them. For example, one woman from Oaxaca whom I spoke with recently had to terminate her bank account because the bank told her that they would

contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) unless she presented them with a new valid photo ID and a social security card. The bank that she had an account with was close to her home, and that is why she chose to open an account there. Also, she chooses not to risk driving without a license, and no one that she lives with—all of whom are American citizens—has a car. Now that she doesn't have an account there she can no longer cash her check close to her home. Instead, she must go to complete other side of town to a Cash King Liquidator store to cash her check. She goes to Cash King Liquidators because they are one of the only places in Lane County that will cash a check for someone with either an expired ID (which she has, issued by the State of Oregon) or no ID at all. However, as a consequence for not providing a valid photo ID, Cash King charges her 5-15% of the check to cash it.

Another woman that I interviewed, a single mother of indigenous heritage from Oaxaca, said that she used to have many friends but that she has become very isolated from them since she had her son. During the interview she said, 'I work at least 50 hours a week now in a fast food restaurant and I only sleep a few hours a night…and I'm taking care of my son by myself, no one is helping me.' Many interview participants--particularly women and parents--talked about how easy it is get 'stuck in a routine' when you are living to survive, barely making end's meet, spending all your time in just one or two places (at work and in the home), and you're being constantly reminded of your marginalized status.

When I asked the undocumented immigrants that participated in this study if they used any city or county services or resources such as the library, community centers, public transportation/transportation infrastructure (e.g. the bike path that runs along the

Willamette in Eugene), community health clinics, or other social services like welfare or food/nutrition assistance programs, I received a great variety of responses. In terms of public transportation, several said that they ride both Lane Transportation District (LTD) buses and the EMX on a semi-regular basis. However, the people that I spoke with that do not drive seem to rely more on their bicycles than on LTD for their transportation.

The people that primarily rely on their bikes for transportation prefer riding on the bike path than on the streets because they say it distances them more from law enforcement and it's also pretty and the nature makes them feel 'tranquilo' as it brings them a sense of calm. Three males that I interviewed said that they had been pulled over on their bicycles by police officers in West Eugene for, as for as they could tell, both legitimate and superfluous reasons. As one man said, 'Once I got pulled over for not having a light on my bike during dusk and the other time I have no idea why they pulled over.' After this man was pulled over the second time on his bike without an ID he stopped riding his bike because he fears that he will be deported if he gets pulled over again.

In terms of going to community health clinics, some undocumented immigrants go and some don't. Those that do not go to health clinics refrain from doing so mainly because they said it's just too expensive. As one man said, 'the clinics are too much money so I prefer to just drink a lot of water and take the medicine that they sell at the grocery store.' None of the participants that I interviewed reported using or ever having used any community centers throughout Eugene and Springfield. One of the most interesting city services that many undocumented immigrants that I interviewed used to use, but no longer use, is the Eugene Public Library. One woman, Carmelita, presented

an exceptionally clear explanation of how her access to a library changed after her Oregon ID expired. 'I got a library card when my Oregon driver's license was valid but now I don't have one because I don't have a valid ID anymore since the law changed,' said Carmelita, 'and they told me that it would cost me a $150 dollars a year for me to keep my library card without a valid ID even though they know I live in Eugene because I had to give them mail to prove that I live here when I first got the card.' Carmelita mentioned earlier on in the interview that she can barely afford to pay for her son's diapers working fifty hours a week at a fast food restaurant. I spoke to two undocumented immigrants that have library cards. One man obtained his card by using his actual Mexican passport (not a copy) and another man obtained his card using his Oregon driver's license that will expire next year in 2013.

The final set of questions that I asked the interview participants concerns issues of immigrant integration by examining undocumented immigrant's level of comfort using city facilities and participating in public meetings. The first question that I asked the interview participants was, 'Would you participate in a public meeting that was being organized by the city if the issue that the meeting was addressing directly related to or affected you?' After being prompted with this first question, a few of the interview participants said that they would go and participate, but the majority said that they would not go. The most common reason that the interview participants who said that they would not go to a public meeting cited for not willing to go was fear. If the interview participant said that they would not go, I would follow up by asking them what the conditions of the public meeting would need to be like for them to at least consider attending. The interview participants that initially said no tended to respond to this question very

similarly. One woman's response was very comprehensive and she essentially summarized all of the various things that the other participants echoed in bits and pieces in their individual interviews when she said that, 'if the city is involved and it really has a purpose I will go but it has to be safe and it has to be of the language that I speak so I can understand and so that they can understand how I feel and what I have to say. We need to feel safe as individuals in that meeting.'

Many interview participants also said that they would be more inclined to go to a public meeting or forum being held by the City if a.) they already knew and had formed trusting relationships with city staff or community leaders that were organizing the meeting and b.) if the meeting was held in a safe space that they already were familiar like (e.g. a local church with a large Latino membership).

Local Governments and Immigrant Integration: Emerging Trends in Other Jurisdictions

There are a select few jurisdictions across the United States that have local governments that actively worked with immigrant communities—both documented and undocumented—to develop plans and initiatives to better integrate immigrants into their communities, both socially and economically. Cities like Oakland, California and Richmond, Virginia have developed municipal photograph ID's (different from a driver's license) that can be issued to undocumented immigrants that they can then use to access city services. Many other various cities throughout the United States that have growing immigrant populations have developed language access plans which focus on making sure that more city services are accessible to residents whose first language is not

English. The most prominent example of a local government trying to engage and integrate immigrants comes from the Midwestern city of Dayton, Ohio.

Welcome Dayton Plan

The Welcome Dayton Plan for an Immigrant Friendly City is an action plan that provides a roadmap for Dayton to become a nationally recognized immigrant friendly city. Not only does Dayton want to better accommodate the immigrants that currently live there, they want also want become a place that specifically attracts immigrants. A decrease in population has caused a demographic shift in the city, and there are many immigrants and refugees from all over the world who live in Dayton and consider it home. While the 2010 Census puts Dayton's foreign-born population at around 4 or 5%, which might seem small (though it's probably higher than that since there are also many undocumented immigrants who do not fill out Census forms), the city's immigrant population grew by 57% in the last decade. The City of Dayton recognizes the positive economic and social contributions that immigrants have made to their community. For example, many of downtown Dayton's previously vacant storefronts have been occupied in the last several years more so by small immigrant businesses than by smaller (or larger) domestic businesses. At the same time, the City acknowledges that immigrants face unique barriers to pursing their dreams and investing in their communities. The plan seeks to accommodate immigrants by reducing barriers to business development, participation in government and community organizations, easing access to social services, promoting social integration, and generating an overall climate of trust, respect, and welcome.

The Welcome Dayton Plan is comprised of four categories, and each category has different action items and recommendations. The categories are: Economic development, local government and justice system, social and health services, and Community Culture/Arts & Education. In addition to these main categories, there are also direct city initiatives, or recommendations and action items that the city has prioritized for implementation. Some of the direct city initiatives include:

- 'Create an inclusive community wide campaign around immigrant entrepreneurship that facilitates start up businesses, opens global markets, and restores life to Dayton neighborhoods'
- 'Implement a municipal identification card program for community residents who are not eligible for any other accepted identifying document'
- 'Increase involvement of immigrants in policy making and community programs by removing barriers to participating and encouraging civic activities'

Between 2009 and 2010 the Board of the Human Relations Council initiated a racial equity assessment of the problem of 'discrimination in housing within the city of Dayton against immigrants' with a particular focus on the undocumented. This assessment revealed that there were serious rent discrimination problems which documented and undocumented immigrant populations from Africa, Europe, and Latin America that were living in Dayton were exposed to. This assessment spurred the initial idea for the immigrant friendly city initiative and by early February 2011 the IFC core team was created and the citizen engagement process to develop the plan began in late February.

Over 130 community members, many of whom are immigrants, participated in

numerous city wide meetings and workshops which focused on developing recommendations to promote immigrant access and integration according to the plan's topic area (business and economic development, local government, etc.). Both city planners from various departments (everything from planning and development to police depending in the topic area of the meeting) and members of the City's Human Relations Council were present at these meetings, too.

CHAPTER V

PLANNING AND PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTEGRATING UNDOCUMENTED LATINO/A IMMIGRANTS INTO THE GREATER COMMUNITY IN LANE COUNTY, OREGON

The recommendations that I have drafted for integrating undocumented Latino/a immigrants into the greater community in Eugene, Springfield, and throughout the rest of Lane County are a product of considering and merging many key pieces of information regarding both barriers to, and opportunities for, immigrant integration that were presented by various groups of people. The main source of information that influenced my creation of these recommendations was of course the great breadth of keen insights that the interview participants, both formal and informal, bravely provided. Another main source of information that influenced my drafting of these recommendations was Dayton, Ohio's Welcome Dayton Plan: Immigrant Friendly City Initiative. In particular, the public participation and citizen engagement/outreach methods that the City of Dayton's Human Right Council employed in order to draft their immigrant friendly plan, influenced these recommendations.

The recommendations that I have drafted are not targeted towards one particular party or group of people; instead, they are recommendations that require a great deal of communication and collaboration to take place between different individuals, institutions, organizations, and governments. Immigrant integration is not a one-way street or a single sided process. Rather, immigrant integration should be thought of as a reciprocal understanding and exchange of different experiences, perspectives, and beliefs—all of

which are ultimately underlined by culture. I strived to make these recommendations as pragmatic as possible by considering the local political and social attitudes and actions (or the lack there of, at times) of local governments, institutions, and non-profits in terms of immigrant integration and undocumented Latino/a immigrants and immigration in general. I have drafted five specific recommendations and methods for implementing these recommendations as well. They are presented below. The recommendations at the beginning of each paragraph are italicized and then the implementation strategies along with my reasons for creating each recommendation are described directly afterwards in the non-italicized text.

Recommendation # 1: Educate local governments (City of Eugene, City of Springfield, and Lane County) and citizens about the size, composition, and contributions of the undocumented Latino/a immigrant population that resides in Lane County. Both quantitative and qualitative information shows that the majority of the Latino/a immigrant population in Lane County is undocumented. However, the fact that this population's growth Lane County has only begun to occur over the past decade, coupled with the fact that this population is spatially confined, and shadowed due to fear and segregated/isolated work environments, has caused this population's presence to go largely unnoticed. Neither the City of Eugene nor the City of Springfield have employed any strategies to engage and get to know these new Latino immigrants' and to assess their needs because they are not aware of the size of the undocumented Latino immigrant community, of the diversity that exists within the undocumented immigrant community, and of the social, economic, and cultural contributions that these undocumented immigrants are making to the community. We cannot expect city governments to take an

active role in immigrant integration efforts if they don't know that a.) undocumented Latino/a immigrants comprise the majority of the Latino population in Lane County and b.) undocumented immigrants make substantial economic, social, and cultural contributions to the greater community that we all benefit from. It would be ideal to present the Cities of Eugene and Springfield with a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative profile of the undocumented Latino immigrant population in Lane County in order to enhance their understanding of this population's size and the unique challenges that they face. We cannot at all rely on Census and American Community Survey data to inform city leaders about what the actual compositions of their constituencies looks like.

Recommendation # 2: The Lane County Network for Immigrant Integration should identify and engage local leaders from within the undocumented Latino/a immigrant population in order to build trust with the undocumented community and to bolster more opportunities for public participation from within the undocumented Latino/a immigrant community. The Lane County Network for Immigrant Integration is a group of professionals from local institutions, governments, and community organizations that is advocating for the equitable integration of all immigrants into the greater community regardless of immigration status. This network, while admirable, is currently mainly comprised of advocates who are citizens, not undocumented immigrants. This network will only be able to produce positive change for immigrants in this community if they partner with the immigrants and integrate them into their network, thereby setting an example of what immigrant integration actually looks like while advocating on behalf of that integration at the same time. In order for the network to directly work and partner with the undocumented Latino/a community, they must do so by first forming

relationships with the leaders that exist in these marginalized communities. The leaders have leverage in the undocumented Latino/a community and they will be able to involve and recruit more undocumented Latino immigrants that want to be involved in the network and to have a voice more effectively than anyone else who is currently part of the network will be able to.

Recommendation # 3: Develop more resources and support for undocumented Latino/a immigrants that are of Indigenous heritage and do not speak Spanish as a first language. As stated many times throughout this research paper, many of the undocumented immigrants that live in Lane County (and also that participated in this study) are of Indigenous heritage, meaning that Spanish is often times not their first language. Many undocumented immigrants of indigenous heritage such as Zapatecos from Oaxaca, Mexico that currently live in Lane County only began to learn Spanish after coming to the United States. For this reason, many indigenous people do not feel especially helped by having resources available in Spanish because it is not their first language. Even for the indigenous people that are here that have learned to speak Spanish they still face language barriers as some of them only learned to speak, but not read or write, in Spanish. As developing this resource (what this resource would like exactly is not yet clear) will be especially difficult, I recommend individuals and community organizations that work with undocumented populations collaborate with one another to address this issue and to begin to develop resources to improve this issue. One basic measure that organizations could take to begin to address this problem would be to inquire about what an individual's first language is upon initially meeting them.

Recommendation # 4: Conduct a study on housing and rent discrimination in Lane

County among Latino immigrants, with a particular focus on the undocumented. The creation of Dayton, Ohio's immigrant friendly city plan was ultimately the by-product of a housing discrimination study on immigrants, with a particular focus on the undocumented, that the City of Dayton completed after hearing numerous complaints from immigrants in their community about rent exploitation. One of the key themes that also emerged in my interviews was rent discrimination. This rent discrimination seems especially pervasive among motel style apartment complexes and trailer parks. I recommend that some party or group of parties (the City, the County, a research institute at the University of Oregon, or an outside consultant) utilize Dayton's methods and replicate their study in order to tangibly quantify how undocumented immigrants are exploited by landlords and slumlords in order to call attention to the concrete reality of this issue in Lane County.

Recommendation # 5: Start dialogues throughout the undocumented immigrant community, the documented community (Latinos, whites, & members of all races and ethnicities), and local governments and institutions about creating municipal identification (ID) cards in jurisdictions throughout Lane County. The most pervasive issue/barrier to integration that the undocumented immigrants that I interviewed for this thesis cited was a lack of access to an ID. There is an increasing trend in the United States of municipalities with larger immigrant/undocumented immigrant populations issuing Municipal ID cards. Municipal ID cards are not driver's licenses, but they do provide residents of jurisdictions the opportunity to open a bank account, get a library card, apply for a job or a place to live through a formal institution or agency, and acquire food stamps, welfare, and other social services. Cities such as Dayton, Ohio and

Richmond, Virginia have municipal ID cards. While Lane County (the individual Cities of Eugene and Springfield and their respective municipal governments) is far from being ready to create municipal ID cards, starting a dialogue about the concept of municipal ID cards (and their subsequent benefits) would at least be a start as most people have never heard of these cards.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

In order for collective, collaborative immigration integration efforts to successfully occur—thereby easing undocumented Latino/a immigrant's access to myriad opportunities, resources, and services while simultaneously fostering a safe, welcoming community for this population—professionals with the power of institutions vested within them need to form relationships with leaders from the undocumented Latino immigrant community and then leverage those relationships to create more public participation and civic engagement opportunities for the undocumented population. While creating opportunities for public participation (e.g. giving undocumented immigrants a voice in a safe space) for undocumented immigrants has generally been looked at as a daunting topic (because people often assume that undocumented individual's are too scared to participate at all in a public meeting), we have already had some local success engaging this population.

On May 25 and May 26, 2012, The University of Oregon hosted two-community building workshops (for the 'marginal Latino community') in public places (local schools in Eugene and Springfield) alongside two local non-profits that work with immigrant populations (Downtown Languages and Huerto de la Familia). Many of the individuals that attended these community building workshops (public officials from the City of Eugene were present at one of them) were undocumented and they ultimately ended up attending the meeting because of the 'generative planning' style recruitment that was used. As one of the few people that was responsible for getting Latino immigrants to these events, I (we) essentially did exactly what the interview participant told me (us) to

do in terms of how to get them to a public meeting. The majority of the interview participants that I spoke with said that would attend a public meeting if it was in safe place, if the activities were taking place in their native language, if the issues being discussed directly affected them, and if they knew at least one of the people running the meeting. As a result of following all of these steps the workshops were very well attended and during them the participants felt comfortable enough to open up and talk amongst their peers and university and public officials about the daily fear that they endure as undocumented immigrants, and ways to alleviate that fear and build a more welcoming community.

In conclusion, making immigrant integration a reality in Lane County, Oregon and cultivating a more welcoming community for undocumented immigrants is possible and there are many interested local parties that want to make this integration happen. However, in order to make this reality happen, we need to invest a great amount of time and energy into getting to know Lane County's very diverse undocumented Latino/a immigrant population and listening to precisely what they have to say about their experiences in this community and ways to make this environment more welcoming for, and accepting of, immigrants.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

Preguntas par las citas

Historia de Migracion

¿Por qué viniste a los Estados Unidos?
¿Por qué viniste a condado de Lane?

Viviendas

¿Cómo encontraste vivienda?
¿Cómo fue el proceso de búsqueda de vivienda?
¿Por qué eligió vivir en su apartamento o casa?
¿Has tenido problemas o retos para encontrar una vivienda?

Trabajo

¿Cómo encontraste un trabajo?
¿Qué tipo de trabajos has tenido?
¿Tienes amigos o familia que te ayudó a encontrar un empleo?
¿Has trabajado para los negocios latinos o etnicos?
¿Qué barreras para encontrar un trabajo has tenido?

Recursos Sociales

¿Cuales recursos has usado para consequir un trabajo, tu vivienda, y otras cosas de necesitas para adaptar para vivir en el condado de Lane?

Immigration Story

Why did you immigrate to the United States?
How and why did you end up in Lane County?

Housing

How did you find housing? What was the housing/apartment searching process like?
Why did you choose to live in the house/apartment and neighborhood that you currently reside in?
What barriers to finding housing did you experience?

Have you had any problems with your housing situation?

Labor

How did you find a job/jobs? What kinds of jobs have been offered or made available to you? Have you had any Latino or ethnic employers? Have you found or been given any jobs through friends or family members? What barriers to finding a job did you experience? Have you had any issues or challenges at your job?

Social Capital

What resources have you used to help you find a job, housing, and other things that you need to adapt to living in Lane County/the states?

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