CONSTRUCTING BELONGING: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE OREGON SANCTUARY MOVEMENT

by

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By conceptualizing Oregon's history of immigrants' rights activism as the Oregon sanctuary movement, this research project takes an interdisciplinary lens to analyze historic and modern expressions of sanctuary as a means of supporting undocumented immigrants in Oregon. By focusing on activism and public policy as enactments of sanctuary, I answered these research questions: How has the Oregon sanctuary movement evolved from its origins in faith-based activism? And how does Oregon's sanctuary policy and the work of sanctuary and immigrants' rights activists intersect to cultivate belonging for undocumented people? I engaged in a multi-method study by analyzing interviews with Oregon sanctuary activists, conducting interviews with immigrants' rights professionals, and analyzing the legislative process of the Sanctuary Promise Act. While the Oregon sanctuary movement remains consistent in its origins in faith-based and political activism, my research indicates the resiliency and adaptability of the Oregon sanctuary movement as a community-powered campaign that evolves and expands to respond to the needs of undocumented Oregonians and cultivate belonging for all Oregonians.

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Introduction

> "A sanctuarian operates out of a broad sense of moral obligation to anyone who needs help, not only members of his or her own family, clan, neighborhood, city, state, country, or religion." (Rabben, 2016, p. 275)

In her book, *Sanctuary and Asylum: A Social and Political History*, Dr. Linda Rabben, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Maryland, documents the extensive history of sanctuary as a concept and practice of providing refuge to a person in need. The above quote describes the core nature of sanctuary: welcoming, supporting, and advocating for another to acknowledge and uplift their humanity. As a means of supporting refugees and immigrants, practices of sanctuary have emerged around the world, from churches offering physical sanctuary to asylum seekers to cities enacting sanctuary legislation aimed at protecting undocumented immigrants. While they vary in method and impact, the various concepts and practices that are categorized under sanctuary are tied together by the moral obligation to support immigrants as part of recognizing their humanity. By studying the various means of sanctuary enacted as a form of protecting immigrants' rights in Oregon, this project sheds light on how statewide efforts to construct belonging for undocumented immigrants appear through the means of social activism and public policy.

Studying immigration policy and activism on the statewide scale is particularly important in understanding the means and workings of immigrant incorporation in the United States. Immigration policy is enacted within federal, state, and local levels of legislation in the United States. While the federal government enacts large-scale immigration policy such as admissions and border enforcement, state and local

municipalities enact legislation around local circumstances such as the access and use of public services by immigrants as well as supporting immigrant integration. Due to this multi-tiered system of immigration policies, state and local municipalities can pass legislation that resists federal immigration initiatives. These policies are known as sanctuary legislation, as by limiting cooperation with federal immigration authorities, municipalities enact such legislation in hopes of reducing detainment and deportation of undocumented residents (Davis et. al 2020). Additionally, immigrants' rights activists often work outside of the boundaries of immigration policy, choosing to support immigrant communities by their own means and beliefs. The interaction of local activism, state-wide policy, and sanctuary legislation as resistance to federal immigration policies is well-represented in the case study of sanctuary in Oregon. By studying the various expressions of sanctuary in Oregon, this project explores questions central to our shared humanity: who belongs and who decides who belongs?

In framing this research project, I pull from the work of several sanctuary scholars, including Dr. Serin Houston's conceptualization of sanctuary as a process rather than as a static state of being. Associate Professor of Geography and International Relations at Mount Holyoke College, Houston (2019) explains that much of the discourse surrounding sanctuary has a binary understanding of whether a place can be considered a sanctuary or not. She argues that given the wide understandings of sanctuary, analyzing sanctuary as a process brings attention to the multifaceted expressions of sanctuary and how it contributes to the possibility of belonging (Houston, 2019). Simply put, there is no "template" for sanctuary. Sanctuary activists, advocates, clergy, policymakers, immigrants themselves, and many others work within

the sanctuary process to resist exclusionary policies and cultivate belonging within their own communities. Similarly, Vannini et. al (2018) see sanctuary as a process and set of practices aimed at constructing safety and belonging. As interdisciplinary scholars, these researchers emphasize the importance of seeing sanctuary as a multidimensional phenomenon aimed at creating a safe place for everyone regardless of citizenship status. With this framing, I draw from various academic fields that have studied sanctuary: anthropology, geography, political science, legal studies, and sociology, to take an interdisciplinary approach to the process of sanctuary in Oregon. By conducting a multi-method study of interviews with sanctuary activists and immigrants' rights professionals along with analyzing the legislative process of Oregon's Sanctuary Promise Act, this project contributes to existing interdisciplinary understandings of sanctuary and sheds light on possibilities for state-level immigration incorporation. This project shows how and why the Oregon sanctuary movement has attempted to define and continually redefine who belongs in Oregon.

Roadmap

I begin my research project with a historical overview of the political contexts that have shaped expressions of sanctuary. This section explains the U.S. federal government's response to immigration which has and continues to prompt local municipalities and movement activists to enact sanctuary nationwide. This section also focuses on how sanctuary was enacted specifically in Oregon through the mobilization of activists and passage of sanctuary legislation. Then, I establish the purpose of my study and the delimitations that I have set to frame my study of sanctuary within the statewide context of Oregon. The following chapter consists of a literature review that

reviews the research scholars from various disciplines and bridges scholarship done on the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s and modern expressions of sanctuary. This literature review presents relevant points of analyses regarding sanctuary as a concept and practice of supporting undocumented immigrants which I use to inform the analyses of my various data sources. Then, I describe the various methods I use to answer my research questions: qualitative analysis of a corpus of secondary interviews with sanctuary activists, conducting and analysis of interviews with immigrants' rights professionals, and an analysis of the legislative process of the Sanctuary Promise Act using public testimonies and a Groups Theory approach to focus on the influence of community members on the passage of the bill. My following chapter dives into my findings regarding my first research question, how the Oregon sanctuary movement has evolved from its roots in faith-based activism. The next chapter answers my second research question, describing the various intersections of sanctuary activism and policy advocacy through analyzing the creation and passage of Oregon's Sanctuary Promise Act in 2021. Finally, my last chapter wraps up my findings and expresses their significance for future action and research in community-led and state-wide immigrant incorporation efforts.

A Brief History of Sanctuary

In the 1980s, nearly 2 million Central Americans fled their home countries to escape civil conflict and find safety in the United States (Rabben, 2016). These two million or so immigrants — primarily from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua — were fleeing political repression and violence caused by ongoing civil wars and repressive dictatorships. Despite the immense threat of violence and harm that these

immigrants faced in their home countries, many Central American immigrants were denied asylum status by the administration of President Ronald Reagan. In fact, Reagan's administration was complicit in these immigrants' persecution as they spent millions of dollars supporting the right-wing military dictatorships that enacted such violence on Central Americans (Stoltz Chinchilla et. al, 2009). For those who were able to reach the United States, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents and border patrol arrested, detained, and deported thousands of Central Americans before they could even begin the process of seeking asylum.

In response to the plight of Central American immigrants, some faith-based activists began offering what the U.S. federal government was not: sanctuary. By providing physical sanctuary through transporting, feeding, and sheltering Central American immigrants, these faith-based activists were driven by their religious traditions' of giving refuge to those who needed it. One of these activists, Jim Corbett, was a Quaker from southern Arizona who started transporting and sheltering refugees in his house in 1981 (Rabben, 2016). Corbett began collaborating with other faith-based activists at the border such as Catholic Father Ricardo Elford and Presbyterian Pastor John Fife, both of whom had been organizing regular vigils to protest United States' intervention in Central America (Rabben, 2016). This started the Sanctuary Movement, a religious and political campaign in the United States to provide safe haven to Central American immigrants escaping civil conflict. By tapping into their religious networks, these sanctuary activists inspired congregations around the United States to declare sanctuary, committing to housing and supporting Central American immigrants.

What started off as a humanitarian act of kindness grew immensely as by the middle of 1984, nearly 150 churches had declared sanctuary and the Sanctuary Movement was publicly endorsed by 18 national religious dominations (Stoltz Chinchilla et. al, 2009). According to Rabben (2016), at least 42,000 Americans were involved in this movement to resist United States' federal immigration policies and support immigrants, making this the biggest grassroots civil disobedience movement in the country since the 1960s. While the most prominent actors of the Sanctuary Movement were located in major immigrant hotspots such as Arizona and California, sanctuary work was also incredibly prominent in the state of Oregon. Through either social or religious networks, many Central American immigrants found their way up to Oregon, finding sanctuary in local congregations that welcomed and supported them.

The impact of the Sanctuary Movement eventually spread to the political sphere as local municipalities were pressured by activists to take legislative action. In 1985, the Berkeley City Council approved a resolution to provide sanctuary for undocumented immigrants, becoming the first city in the U.S. to do so. Berkeley's mayor at the time, Mayor Eugene Newport, declared the city's act of resistance to federal immigration policies saying, "Let the federal government do its own job" (Jerman, n.d.). Many local municipalities followed suit in passing sanctuary legislation, showing their resistance to exclusionary federal immigration policies and support for those seeking asylum.

Amidst these local instances of resistance, Oregon became the first state in the nation to pass a state-wide sanctuary policy in 1987. The origin of this policy, ORS § 181A.820, was inspired by the experiences of Latinx residents in Oregon who had been racially profiled by local law enforcement in Oregon. As the first elected Latino

legislator in Oregon, Representative Rocky Barilla had previously represented a Latino Oregonian who was wrongfully harassed by Polk County police who suspected he was undocumented due to his race (One Oregon, 2018). While pursuing this lawsuit, Barilla discovered that Polk County police would drive around primarily Latinx neighborhoods to detain people they thought were undocumented immigrants so that the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) could deport them. This clear cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities inspired Barilla and advocacy groups to pursue sanctuary legislation. Introduced as House Bill 2314, the proposed Oregon sanctuary legislation was developed by the largest Latinx union in Oregon, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), the American Civil Liberties Union, and other advocacy groups to prohibit Oregon's law enforcement from enforcing federal immigration laws (One Oregon, 2018).

As the sponsor of the policy, Representative Rocky Barilla was surprised to find little to no opposition to the bill from either side of the aisle. With help from members of the Hispanic Political Action Committee, Barilla framed this legislation as a means of reducing racial profiling of Latinx residents and to preserve local law enforcement resources. According to Barilla, "There was no opposition to the bill at the time...local law enforcement was excited to define and set their own priorities for law enforcement" (One Oregon, 2018). By framing this policy as a way to prevent racial profiling and protect local resources, House Bill 2314 passed with broad bipartisan support and was signed into law on July 7, 1987, eventually becoming ORS § 181A.820. Oregon's 1987 sanctuary policy prohibits the use of local law enforcement resources "for the purpose of detecting or apprehending persons whose only violation of law is that they

are persons of foreign citizenship present in the United States in violation of federal immigration laws" (Enforcement of federal immigration laws, 1987).

Despite its good intentions, Oregon's 1987 sanctuary policy leaves many loopholes for local law enforcement to cooperate with federal immigration authorities in detecting and apprehending undocumented residents. For example, Oregon jails would often send reports to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) of foreign-born inmates' release dates so that ICE could easily detain undocumented immigrants (Bernstein, 2018). Along with these loopholes, the sanctuary legislation lacked any provision for community members to seek recourse or call for accountability when the legislation was violated by law enforcement. Lacking strong sanctuary legislation, sanctuary activists in Oregon were left to bear the brunt of protecting and supporting undocumented immigrants.

After the public outrage of the Sanctuary Movement, the incoming President George H.W. Bush backed away from overt involvement in Central America and the Sanctuary Movement diminished from the public spotlight. While the official Sanctuary Movement had dissipated, sanctuary activists continued their work of housing and supporting immigrants. Sanctuary activism became especially pertinent in the 21st century as the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, became a turning point for the United States' federal immigration policy (Bussel and Tichenor, 2017; Chishti and Bolter 2021). These attacks prompted the federal government to prioritize national security, meaning large increases in immigration enforcement. In fact, the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) was disbanded, and immigration enforcement responsibilities were given to the Department of Homeland Security's newest agency,

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in 2003 (Chishti and Bolter 2021). As a product of America's new national security priority, ICE takes a militarized approach to increasingly criminalize undocumented immigrants through frequent ICE raids, detainment, and deportations among other tactics. This hardline immigration approach continued under President Obama's administration as nearly 2 million people were deported between 2009 and 2014 (Rabben, 2016). Despite constant efforts for immigration reform, the federal government has continuously failed to enact federal legislation to address increased immigration to the United States. As a result, state and local governments as well as activists continue to enact sanctuary for their immigrant community members.

Sanctuary once again reached the national spotlight after the election of President Donald Trump in 2016. The Trump administration took an overtly hardline approach to immigration enforcement and publicly attacked sanctuary cities, even threatening to rescind federal aid from municipalities with sanctuary legislation (Alvarez, 2020). Backlash from immigrants' rights activists across the nation reactivated sanctuary networks and activists expanded their reach to resist the administration's policies and cultivate belonging within their communities. For Oregon activists, this meant both increasing immigrant support and reviewing Oregon's existing sanctuary legislation.

In the fall of 2020, sanctuary advocates and activists in Oregon gathered to draft House Bill 3265, a bill that proposed to strengthen the state's sanctuary legislation. With the election of President Joe Biden, advocates for HB 3265 took advantage of the changing political tide to call for the strengthening of Oregon's sanctuary policy.

Through community-based organizations that advocated for the bill such as Latino Network, Pueblo Unido PDX, and Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice, community members from all over Oregon showed their support for the Sanctuary Promise Act through community organizing and advocacy. After passing in the Oregon Senate and being signed by Governor Kate Brown, the Sanctuary Promise Act went into effect on July 19th, 2021. The Sanctuary Promise Act closed existing loopholes in local law enforcement cooperation with federal immigration authorities by prohibiting public agencies from sharing information about a person's citizenship with federal immigration authorities, prohibiting immigration authorities from detaining a person at a local courthouse, and prohibiting Oregon law enforcement agencies from detaining people on behalf of federal immigration authorities. Additionally, the act has several accountability mechanisms including the establishment of a hotline to report violations of sanctuary laws and allowing individuals to sue in order to block an agency from violating sanctuary legislation (Sanctuary Promise Act, 2021). Even with this policy win, sanctuary activists and advocates in Oregon continue to work to cultivate belonging Oregonians regardless of citizenship status.

Purpose of Study

Despite being an important case study in state-level immigrant incorporation, Oregon's sanctuary movement has received little attention from scholars. In fact, researchers have primarily focused on the original Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s or on the limitations of sanctuary policies enacted in cities such as Los Angeles and Chicago. My project brings the study of both sanctuary activism and sanctuary policy together to study how the state of Oregon has responded to the needs of undocumented

immigrants. The purpose of my research project is to document how community activists and advocates have defined and enacted sanctuary to resist exclusionary federal policies and cultivate belonging in their communities. My research project aims to expand understandings of Oregon's social landscape as a state known for its liberalism despite its xenophobic history as a state established solely for Euro-American settler colonialists (Bussel and Tichenor, 2017). In analyzing interviews with sanctuary activists and immigrants' rights professionals as well as the passage of Oregon's Sanctuary Promise Act, this project shows how and why the Oregon sanctuary movement has attempted to define and continually redefine who belongs. In researching the many dimensions of sanctuary, from social movement to policy, I take a multi-disciplinary approach to answer these research questions:

1. How has the contemporary Oregon sanctuary movement evolved from its origins in faith-based activism?
2. How does Oregon's sanctuary policy and the work of sanctuary and immigrants' rights activists intersect to cultivate belonging for undocumented people?

To answer these research questions, I reviewed existing literature on the various expressions of sanctuary as a means of supporting immigrants and engaged in a multi-method study to analyze the experiences and motivations of sanctuary activists and the legislative process of the Sanctuary Promise Act. I have three data sources: interviews with sanctuary activists, interviews with advocates for the Sanctuary Promise Act, and public testimonies submitted during the legislative process of the act. By understanding the work of activists and advocates as part of the same movement, my analysis of these

data sources provides a holistic understanding of the evolution of Oregon's sanctuary movement and the roles of activism and public policy within it. This project documents the long-lasting religious traditions and political resistance of the movement as well as the power of community organizing in supporting undocumented community members and creating political change.

Delimitations

To answer my research questions, I chose to frame the Oregon sanctuary movement as the various mechanisms which aim to support immigrant communities and achieve immigrants' rights in Oregon, specifically focusing on the work of sanctuary activists and the policy campaign to pass the Sanctuary Promise Act. I acknowledge that this may be confusing as the Sanctuary Movement (SM) of the 1980s is a well-documented and academically recognized movement (therefore, the capitalization of the movement's name), while the Oregon sanctuary movement is a conceptualization created for the sake of analyzing sanctuary within Oregon's contexts. However, my conceptualization of immigrants' rights work in Oregon as the Oregon sanctuary movement pays homage to the original Sanctuary Movement in the 1980s and allows for further analysis on the evolution of expressing and enacting sanctuary as a means of supporting immigrant communities in Oregon. As sanctuary refers to offering refuge to those in need, I frame any sort of collective action to cultivate safety and belonging for undocumented Oregonians as "sanctuary" and therefore, as part of the ongoing movement for immigrants' rights in Oregon. This framing follows the conceptualization of sanctuary as a process by Dr. Serin Houston, whose literature largely informed the structure of my project. Therefore, I categorize the participants

involved in my study as sanctuary activists and/or advocates as their work aims to defy anti-immigrant policies and cultivate belonging in their communities.

Additionally, I categorize the Oregon sanctuary movement as the loosely organized but sustained campaign in support of undocumented immigrants' rights and well-being in Oregon. For the purposes of analyzing sanctuary's evolution, I identify the Oregon sanctuary movement as beginning in the 1980s — when the original Sanctuary Movement started — to the present day. This may seem unusual given that social movements are often understood as publicly visible campaigns calling for political change such as the documented Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s. While the Oregon sanctuary movement is not a popularly recognized categorization of immigrants' rights work in Oregon, I argue that the Oregon sanctuary movement does in fact span this time period because sanctuary activists and advocates have and will continue to push for social change for their immigrant community members regardless of the movement's popularity. Since the 1980s, federal immigration policies continue to target and criminalize undocumented people, necessitating the response of sanctuary activists and advocates. Some sanctuary literature has documented two sanctuary movements: the original Sanctuary movement of the 1980s and the New Sanctuary Movement (NSM) which roughly originates in the 2000s. Given that there is sparse literature on both of these movements' involvement in Oregon, I argue that framing the Oregon case study as one movement assists with my analysis of the sustained and multifaceted effort to secure immigrants' rights and cultivate belonging in Oregon.

Lastly, I want to address why my thesis project is structured around the sense of belonging of undocumented Oregonians. Studying and documenting the experiences of

noncitizens is inherently difficult due to the issue of privacy. Therefore, in order to study sanctuary, I focused on activism and advocacy as means of supporting undocumented immigrants in Oregon. I acknowledge that this may not fully encompass the experiences of undocumented Oregonians and their sense of belonging. However, by studying Oregon community members' and the state governments' efforts to resist exclusionary policies, I shed light on how these practices of sanctuary aim to produce wider experiences of inclusion for those who have been socially and politically excluded. Also, given their political and social marginalization, many undocumented community members have been unable to take on prominent roles within the movement. Therefore, a significant portion my project focuses on activists and advocates who come from a variety of experiences, such as allies, those with an immigrant background, those with undocumented family members, and those who were previously undocumented among others. This diversity of experiences and backgrounds represents how the Oregon community came together to act against federal immigration policies and uplift the humanity of all Oregonians regardless of citizenship status.

Literature Review

Given the broad reach of my research project, my literature review aims to bridge the scholarship on the Sanctuary Movement (SM) of the 1980s and modern expressions of sanctuary in the 21st century. This scholarship comes from various disciplines, such as anthropology, geography, sociology, political science, and legal studies as scholars have emphasized the multi-faceted nature of sanctuary. Because my project aims to the study the evolution of sanctuary in Oregon, I review literature on the extensive history of sanctuary within the United States. In particular, I focus on the well-documented Sanctuary Movement (SM) of the 1980s which was an academically recognized political and religious campaign to welcome and shelter Central American refugees. I focus my analysis on this movement as it greatly informed current sanctuary networks and legislation aimed at supporting immigrant communities. Additionally, I review literature on modern expressions of sanctuary in the 21st century to understand the political and social contexts in which the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s lost its publicity and secular networks joined into support immigrant communities. I find that sanctuary as a concept and practice is still continuously expressed and analyzed within scholarship as an important yet limited means to resisting exclusionary federal policies and cultivating belonging in communities.

Sanctuary in the 1980s

Activists in the 1980s Sanctuary Movement (SM) were particularly motivated by the concept of sanctuary as derived from Christian tradition (Lenard and Madokoro, 2021; Wiltfang and McAdam, 1991). By transporting immigrants across the border and sheltering them, prominent activists like Jim Corbett and John Fife knew that their

actions could be seen as criminal in the federal governments' eyes. To justify their action, activists drew on Hebrew traditions of refugee cities and the practice of medieval Christian churches granting refuge to fugitives among other historic examples of sanctuary (Stoltz Chinchilla et. al 2009). Activists' religious connections and motivations greatly benefited the movement as religious organizations "gave the Sanctuary movement a moral and religious legitimacy in challenging US foreign and refugee policy that other movements lacked" (Stoltz Chinchilla et. al, 2009, p. 119). In declaring sanctuary and endorsing the movement, religious organizations and congregations utilized their credibility as cultural institutions to bring attention to the plight of Central American refugees. As Stoltz Chinchilla et. al writes, "religious groups have access to a rhetoric based on doctrine that calls for compassion and caring for others" (Stoltz Chinchilla et. al, 2009, p. 104). By declaring sanctuary and participating in acts of civil disobedience, congregations across America used this movement to spread their message of compassion and helping those in need. As exemplified by the collaboration and mobilization of many religious groups, the movement's mission was one that was so universal that it could be supported across many religious traditions. As exemplified by the SM, religious traditions play an important role in motivating activists and sustaining the movement through use of religious congregations' missions as humanitarian institutions.

Religious institutions also played an important role in supplying the movement with the necessary resources to shelter and resettle Central American immigrants. As Rabben (2016) and Stoltz Chinchilla et. al (2009) detail in their documentation of the Sanctuary Movement, congregation members had access to material resources that

helped with the resettlement of refugees such as the housing offered by congregation members and church buildings. For those who could not provide direct sanctuary, financial assistance became crucial to supporting the constant operations of transporting, resettling, and supporting refugees. Equally as important, religious institutions provided structural support for the movement through the form of religious and community networks (Boudou et. al, 2021; Stoltz Chinchilla et. al, 2009). This proved to be a valuable resource for the movement as activists could call on volunteers within these networks to support one another. This power in numbers greatly benefited the movement's mission of offering physical sanctuary. This network helped activists operate covertly as they relied on congregation and community members' assistance, with some activists even comparing their networks to that of the Underground Railroad of the 19th century (Rabben, 2016). These networks even expanded across national borders as Perla and Coutin (2010) note that the Sanctuary Movement allowed organizations from El Salvador and the United States to coordinate on their immigrants' rights work.

In addition to religious traditions, the narratives of refugees were an important factor in gaining support for the movement, but often at the cost of taking power away from immigrants themselves. Lenard & Madokoro (2021) explain that sanctuary practices inherently require a sanctuary "provider" and a "recipient," creating an uneven power dynamic. This was especially prevalent in the movements' use of stories to stimulate support, particularly by having immigrants share personal accounts of their experiences in their home countries (Houston and Morse, 2017). Because immigrants were subject to deportation, this also meant that activists shared migrants' stories on

their behalf to stimulate action from other congregation members. While sharing the stories on the behalf of immigrants was influential and important, Houston and Morse (2017) argue that such narratives turn immigrants into a symbol for the movement, rather than as people deserving of help and agents of their own circumstances. This meant that immigrants' whose stories did not fit the "script," especially those who did not have direct stories of civil conflict but nonetheless still had traumatic stories, were excluded from the movement (Houston and Morse, 2017). Even with the best of intentions, activists often played into savior dynamics, diminishing immigrants' own agency. For activists, sanctuary work was an important part of practicing their faith and political beliefs; for immigrants, sanctuary required them to show their powerlessness and trauma in order to be given refuge and safety. Houston and Morse's analysis of the Sanctuary Movement's use of narratives indicates that even efforts to create inclusion can create exclusion if not done with the excluded in mind.

In response to the Reagan administration's intervention in Central America and refusal to give Central Americans asylum, those involved in the Sanctuary Movement decided to take the rule of law into their own hands. In fact, the United States federal government arrested and charged eleven members of the Sanctuary Movement for violating national immigration law in the mid 1980s. In her documentation of the defendants' trials, Susan Bibbler Coutin (1995) writes that Sanctuary Movement activists believed that they were "morally and legally obliged to enforce the law when their government failed to do so" (Coutin, 1995, p. 553). Citing the 1951 Refugee Convention and the Nuremberg trials, activists claimed that their actions were "civil initiative" as they were enforcing the laws that their government was deliberately

disregarding (Coutin, 1995). Activists argued that this differed from civil disobedience as they were not disobeying laws, rather uplifting the rights of the refugees that the United States disregarded. This indicates that sanctuary at its core was a means of resistance that worked within the law, rather than acting completely outside of it.

Inspired by the Sanctuary Movement, local municipalities began to pass sanctuary policies to show solidarity with the plight of Central American refugees. These policies vary greatly as some were merely declaratory while others codified what exact cooperation between local public agencies and federal immigration authorities is prohibited. Literature on Oregon's sanctuary policy, ORS 181A.820, is sparse and primarily documents the origins and framing of the bill. However, the framing of the bill indicates the political context of Oregon at the time of its passage. In order to pass the bill, Representative Barilla and other advocates framed the bill as an anti-racial profiling bill that would preserve limited local law enforcement resources (OneOregon, 2018). While supporting undocumented immigrants may have been part of the intention of the bill, arguments for the bill did not focus on supporting undocumented Oregonians. The reasonings behind its creation and passage are showing of the nature of Oregon's sanctuary policy as one passed in order to benefit citizens and law enforcement more so than undocumented residents. Although Oregon was the first state to enact a sanctuary law, there was limited initiative from legislators to enact sanctuary in terms of supporting immigrants in Oregon.

Modern Expressions of Sanctuary

Literature on sanctuary within the 21st century documents how expressions of sanctuary have broadened as well as how certain aspects such as religious traditions and

community mobilization are consistent. In their study of sanctuary and sponsorship, Macklin (2021) describes sanctuary as a scarce resource as it "places extraordinary demands on the material, spiritual, and emotional resources of congregations" (Macklin, 2021). Additionally, the increased criminalization of undocumented immigrants and overall rise in nativist sentiments made it harder for congregations to provide physical sanctuary without the credibility and power of the Sanctuary Movement (Rabben, 2016). As a result, sanctuary activism entered more into the secular world as community organizations were mobilized to act.

That being said, sanctuary stayed true to its religious roots as scholars have documented the everlasting religious imperatives motivating sanctuary activists. Anh et. Al (2013) analyzed the modern theological response to the criminalization of the undocumented migrants, noting a particular verse in the Bible from Leviticus:

> When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God. (New International Version Bible, Lev. 19:33).

For progressive faith-based activists, this Bible verse is a direct call to support immigrants as means showing others compassion regardless of where they come from. This verse became particularly relevant as United States' federal immigration policies increasingly became less compassionate to immigrants. Faith-based activists saw the criminalization, deportation, detainment, and denial of human rights of immigrants as directly opposing their beliefs, calling believers to action. As Kotin and Irazabal (2011) find in their study of sanctuary work in Los Angeles, "religious and political activism are joined as two sides of the same coin centered in justice and a deep desire to treat

right all of God's people" (p. 270). In fact, religious congregations across America have become more mobilized especially in regards to pro-immigrant initiatives. In their study of congregations' political activities, Beyerlein and Chaves (2020) found that four times more congregations lobbied or marched for pro-immigration issues in 2018-2019 than in comparison to 2012. While there are a diverse number of religious traditions represented in this study, the primary faiths represented in this sample were Catholicism, predominantly white mainline Protestant congregations such as Methodists, and non-Christian congregations such as Jewish congregations. The mobilization of congregations in regard to supporting immigrants is an important contextual factor for the analysis of my data and understanding the role of religious traditions in ongoing sanctuary work, especially the Christian tradition.

Scholars have also documented the revival of the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s, the New Sanctuary Movement (NSM). The NSM reached the public radar in the late 2000s as congregations across the United States joined a loosely organized network of faith-based organizations to support immigration reform (Stoltz Chinchilla et. al 2009). Like the movement of the 1980s, the NSM focuses on providing hospitality and protection to immigrant families who have been neglected by the United States federal government. At its peak in 2016, the NSM consisted of over 300 faith communities in 12 cities in the United States (Houston and Morse 2021). Unlike the SM of the 1980s which was concerned with the plight of Central American refugees, the NSM focused on supporting undocumented immigrants "whose legal cases clearly reveal the contradictions and moral injustice of our current immigration system" (Freeland, 2010, pg. 491). Given the political context, the NSM decided to focus on the most vulnerable

immigrants who were stuck in the complexities of immigration policies in the United States.

Using a similar model to the SM, NSM focused on sheltering and supporting immigrants by using their networks of congregations and faith-based activists. As Rabben (2016) documents, NSM activists followed in the footsteps of the 1980s activists, "[arguing] that they were not breaking the law; instead, the law itself was broken" (p. 244). Unfortunately, the NSM has lost traction in terms of public visibility and social and political influence. In Rabben's interview with John Fife, Fife explains that advocates and activists were being strung along by promises of immigration reform, weakening the connections and power of the NSM as a whole (Rabben, 2016, p. 256). Even with the decrease in publicity, sanctuary activists hold steadfast to their work in offering sanctuary to those who need it. In fact, the congregation that Reverend John Fife led continues supporting and sheltering immigrants to this day. The current reverend of the congregation, Reverend Alison Harrington, emphasizes that her congregation "[doesn't] call it the New Sanctuary Movement; it's the Sanctuary Movement." Southside Presbyterian Church and other congregations indicate the long-lasting movement to welcome and support immigrants, regardless of how it may be identified by the public.

In the 21st century of pro-immigrant activism, scholars have also turned their research towards community mobilization and the external political factors that have influenced policy and social change. Focusing on a case study based in Chicago, Illinois, Betancur and Garcia (2011) analyzed pro-immigrant mobilizations during 2006 and 2007 in response to the Border Protection, Anti-terrorism and Illegal Immigration

Control Act proposed in congress in 2005. If passed, this bill would have greatly increased border enforcement and detainment of undocumented immigrants by requiring the federal government to take custody of unauthorized residents detained by local authorities among other provisions. This bill prompted immigration reform protests all across the United States and protests in Chicago were particularly strong as Latino organizations, social service nonprofits, coalitions, churches, and other community networks became essential actors in mobilizing individuals (Betancur and Garcia, 2011). The symbiosis between community members and their organizations and institutions helped develop networks that facilitated communication and action that resisted this bill and let community members' voices be heard in the political process. This case study of immigrant mobilization in Chicago emphasizes the importance of community mobilization, especially through the facilitation of community organizations, in responding to exclusionary federal immigration policies.

Researchers have also investigated overall trends of social movements' impact on policy consequences within the realm of immigration. In a study conducted on data from 1,301 cities, Steil and Vasi (2014) found that several factors influenced the likeliness of a city adopting pro-immigrant ordinances: presence of pro-immigrant organizations, presence of favorable local political context, and municipalities with Latino elected officials. These factors are important to note within my analysis of the Sanctuary Promise Act as immigrants' rights organizations were at the forefront of advocating for the bill and the Oregon legislature leans liberal and the bill itself was sponsored by several Latinx representatives (VanderHart, 2021). The researchers ultimately argue "that associations and political context matter for the pro-immigrant

movement because the proactive policies they seek to pass require sustained effort to craft, to win support, and to successfully enact" (Steil and Vasi, 2014, pg. 1143). Therefore, pro-immigrant organizations involved in the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act are important factors to study in understanding the impact of social movements on creating policies for undocumented people. Along with analyzing the political context of Oregon, I focus on the sustained efforts of community advocates and activists to construct belonging through the means of policy.

This analysis of community demands and action are particularly important as many researchers have critiqued sanctuary policy for its limited ability to protect undocumented immigrants. In her analysis of Seattle and Boston's sanctuary legislation, Davis (2020) finds that while stronger sanctuary policies may create more feelings of safety and trust within communities, exclusionary federal policies and social nativist sentiments will still influence undocumented people's sense of belonging. Therefore, Davis argues for not only the adoption of comprehensive local sanctuary policies but also more community-based action to truly meet the needs of undocumented community members and construct belonging. Similarly, Paik (2017) argues that while sanctuary legislation is important in opposing anti-immigrant initiatives, pro-immigrant movements should adopt more radical frameworks. In particular, Paik points to a crucial paradox: sanctuary policy strategies look to the state to address the problems the state itself creates (Paik, 2017). While my project looks at sanctuary policy as a means of constructing belonging, policy is only one part of the picture in studying sanctuary work.

By interviewing activists and advocates, I learn from them the importance of day-to-day work in supporting immigrant community members as well as the benefits, albeit limited, that sanctuary policy can bring to immigrants' rights as a means of constructing belonging within the state of Oregon.

Methods

To answer my research questions, I engaged in a multi-method study including analysis of a secondary corpus of qualitative interviews, conducting and analysis of primary source interviews, and analysis of public testimony and sanctuary legislation. Each of these approaches contributes to my framing of the Oregon sanctuary movement as the sustained effort from activists, advocates, and community members alike to advance immigrants' rights in Oregon. The secondary corpus of interviews was conducted with sanctuary activists in Oregon which details their motivations for sanctuary work and how these motivations feed into the evolution of the movement as a means of immigrants' rights advancement. The primary source interviews were conducted with immigrants' rights professionals in Oregon who were directly involved in the creation and passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act. Since these professionals work directly with and for immigrants, their interviews provide insight onto how activism and the policy-making process intersect in order to enact sanctuary legislation and cultivate belonging. My third source of data focuses on the written public testimonies submitted by Oregonians during the 2021 legislative session on House Bill 3265. In analyzing the pertinent qualitative themes in these testimonies, I connected these patterns to the provisions codified in the Sanctuary Promise Act to understand how community members mobilized for their demands and how legislators ultimately enacted these demands to strengthen sanctuary legislation in Oregon.

I used the Dedoose software platform to conduct a qualitative content analysis on the secondary corpus of interviews with local sanctuary activists. These interviews are a part of an ongoing study of immigrant rights activism in Oregon led by my

advisor, Dr. Kristin Yarris. The interviews were conducted and transcribed by her research assistant, Milena Wuerth, an Anthropology student at the University College, London, who conducted the interviews during her fieldwork in Eugene, Oregon during the summer of 2019. After my thesis project received Institutional Review Board approval from the University of Oregon (Protocol Number: 07052017.004), I integrated these interviews into my data set. There are a total of 12 pre-recorded and pre-transcribed interviews from the 2019 study that I am analyzing as part of my thesis project. For the sake of clarity, I will refer to this data corpus as the data collected from the "2019 study" while the data that I collected for the purposes of my research project will be referred to as "2021-2022 addendum."

Additionally, I used the interview guide from the 2019 study to create my own interview guide to conduct interviews with immigrants' rights professionals involved in the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act (HB 3265). I categorize these participants as professionals as they are experienced immigrants' rights activists who are employed to further immigrants' rights through their respective organizations. Along with asking participants about their personal motivations for sanctuary activism, this revised interview guide focuses on the legislative process of the Sanctuary Promise Act in order to learn about each professional's role in the legislative process and their perspectives on the impact of this bill. After connecting with these professionals over email, I remotely interviewed three professionals involved in the bill's passage with this interview guide over separate Zoom meetings.

First, I interviewed Cam Coval, the executive director of a Pueblo Unido PDX, a Portland-based nonprofit that supports immigrants facing detention and deportation in

Oregon. In his experience working directly with vulnerable immigrants, Cam represented the experiences of undocumented immigrants who would greatly benefit from the strengthening of sanctuary through HB 3265. Then, I interviewed Alaide, executive director of Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice (IMIrJ), a non-profit made up of various faith communities that collaborate to advance immigrants' rights in Oregon. As a leader in community organizing, Alaide played an important role in representing the demands from the community within the legislative process. Finally, I interviewed Leland, the director of advocacy at Latino Network, an Oregon non-profit focused on supporting Latinx families. Working with other immigrants' rights advocates, Leland helped draft House Bill 3265 and was one of the lead advocates for the bill during the 2021 legislative session. Throughout this process, Leland worked as the bridge between community members and legislators as he helped codify community demands into law through the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act. After conducting these interviews, I transcribed these interviews and used these transcriptions to inform my understanding of the Sanctuary Promise Act as a means of constructing belonging. After asking explicit permission from these professionals, I refer to them by first name and by position title throughout my project.

These three interviews are one part of the data that I collected within the 2021-2022 addendum to Dr. Yarris's ongoing research on sanctuary. With the 12 interviews from the 2019 study, I had a total of 15 interviews to analyze and track how activism and the policy-making process intersect to support and integrate undocumented Oregonians. These interviews provide a diverse range of narratives from immigrants'

rights activists and professionals to understand how they make meaning of and enact sanctuary in Oregon.

In addition to the interviews, I also analyzed the written public testimonies submitted in March of 2021 during the public hearing session for Oregon House Bill 3265. Public hearings are a formalized part of the democratic legislative process where any interested party can provide their opinion on a proposed bill. Therefore, submitting testimonies is an important avenue for community members to have their voices heard in the deliberations of House Bill 3265. On the Oregon State Legislature's website on HB 3265, there are a total 161 testimonies which come from a variety of individuals, including law enforcement representatives, undocumented immigrants, public officials, pastors, immigrants' rights activists, and many other community members. Unlike the unrehearsed and unedited responses by participants in their interviews, public testimonies are community members' and others' written call to legislators to make certain policy decisions. They usually range from one paragraph to one page of written testimony submitted voluntarily by Oregonians to weigh in on the pending legislative bill. Therefore, these public testimonies are persuasive statements that are much more direct and performed.

With the narratives represented in the written public testimonies and the descriptions of the policy-making process of HB 3265 as detailed in the interviews with immigrants' rights professionals, I mapped out how community members became an essential force in the creation and passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act. Utilizing a Groups Theory approach to public policy analysis, I will incorporate my analysis of the Sanctuary Promise Act's text with these interviews and testimonies to understand how

and why community members were so influential in the strengthening of Oregon sanctuary legislation. Ultimately, the triangulation of my data sources — sanctuary activist interviews, interviews with advocates for the Sanctuary Promise Act, and public testimonies — provides a holistic understanding of the evolution of sanctuary in Oregon and its efforts to construct belonging for undocumented people.

Participant Demographics

In total, 16 participants were interviewed about their experiences with the Oregon sanctuary movement, 3 of whom I categorize as professionals as they work professionally for immigrants' rights and were directly involved in the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act of 2021. The 13 other participants were activists and volunteers in the Eugene/Springfield area and their interviews were collected in 2019. Two of these volunteers were interviewed together. The participants' involvement with sanctuary work varies widely and this section is dedicated to describing their organization affiliation, religious congregation membership if any, time period involved with sanctuary work, and self-reported demographic information to provide context.

Demographic information for the 2019 study participants is sparse since reporting demographic information was optional for participants. My thesis project is not dependent on such factors so self-reported demographic information is mainly for context and further analysis if need be. Five participants self-reported their ages and four participants self-reported their racial background as represented in the figure below.

Age	Number of Participants
60 - 69	1
70 - 79	3
80+	1

Table 1: Self-Reported Ages of 2019 Study Participants

Race	Number of Participants
White/Caucasian	2
Latinx/o/a	1
Multiracial	1

Table 2: Self-Reported Racial Backgrounds of 2019 Study Participants

Of my research project's participants, four participants volunteer with the Oregon Community Asylum Network, a grassroots network of community members based in Eugene who help host asylum seekers and legally sponsor them. Two participants are involved with Friends of Sanctuary, a political interest group from Eugene which focused on raising awareness about sanctuary and immigrants' rights in response to the Trump administration. One participant works for Grupo Latino de Acción Directa of Lane County, a non-profit that seeks to support Latinxs and other marginalized groups in Lane County. Another participant volunteers with the Refugee Resettlement Coalition of Lane County which is a coalition with Catholic Community Services and community members working to welcome and support refugees and asylum seekers.

Several of the participants were involved in sanctuary work through their religious organizations. One participant was the pastor of the First United Methodist Church which is highly involved in community and faith-based organizing in the Eugene community. Another is a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Cottage

Grove which is known for their progressive values and social justice work. Three participants, two of whom were interviewed together, are members of the Eugene Friends Meeting, the local chapter for Quakers which is highly involved with social justice work in the community.

Given that the Oregon sanctuary movement spans such a large period of time, I also tracked when activists were involved in sanctuary work in order to understand how their work and how the movement itself has evolved over time. Six participants noted that they got involved with sanctuary and immigrants' rights activism in the late 2010s, mostly prompted by the turmoil of America's immigration system caused by the Trump administration. The other seven participants were involved in the late 2010s as well as previous eras as they first got involved in sanctuary work in the 20th century. Six of these participants started in the 1980s and one became involved in the 1990s.

Affiliated Organization/Congregation	Number of Participants	Percentage of Total Participants
Oregon Community Asylum Network (OCAN)	4	30%
Friends of Sanctuary	2	15.3%
Grupo Latino de Acción Directa of Lane County (GLAD)	1	7.6%
Refugee Resettlement Coalition of Lane County	1	7.6%
First United Methodist Church	1	7.6%
First Presbyterian Church of Cottage Grove	1	7.6%
Eugene Friends Meeting	3	23%

Table 3: Organization Affiliation of 2019 Study Participants

When did participants get involved in sanctuary work?	Number of Participants	Percentage of Total Participants
1980s	6	46.2%
Early 2000s	1	7.6%
2016-2021	6	46.2%

Table 4: Time Period of Involvement of 2019 Study Participants

Qualitative Content Analysis of 2019 Study Interviews

The participants interviewed in this data set have a diverse range of experiences and involvement with the Oregon sanctuary movement. Many of the activists are involved in community organizations aimed at assisting asylum seekers resettle in Oregon, such as the Oregon Community Asylum Network and the Refugee Resettlement Coalition of Lane County. Some are employed by community organizations while others volunteer to assist refugees and immigrants through their religious organization. Given the diverse involvements of these participants, I thematically coded these interviews to track patterns that arise in why and how these different activists assist immigrant and refugee populations. This analysis will help me understand how activists have constructed belonging for undocumented immigrants in Oregon communities and even influenced policy change.

To develop my thematic codes, I looked through the interviews conducted within the interview corpus of the 2019 study and recorded the primary themes found in respondents' answers. Using these themes, I created guiding questions for my analysis of the interviews:

1) What were the historical contexts shaping sanctuary in Oregon?

2) What were/are the motivators/motives of activists?

3) What were the actors' goals? How did they achieve those goals?

4) What type of conflicts arose in implementation of sanctuary activism? How did those conflicts impact the movement?

These questions guided the development of my five main-level thematic codes known as the "parent codes" in Dedoose (as seen in Figure 1). Each parent code has several sub-themes or "child codes" to categorize respondents' answers and the themes that arose in the interviews. Given that I did not conduct these interviews, the process of creating a coding scheme was difficult and required me to aggregate the many themes in respondents' answers to respond to my research questions and the goals for my larger thesis project. For example, under the parent code of "meanings of sanctuary expressed by activists," there are several child codes that denote how activists define sanctuary and see their work in relation to the sanctuary movement. One of these child codes is "local resistance to federal immigration policies" which refers to when activists' see their work as part of resisting federal exclusionary policies and creating more belonging in their local communities. Another child code is "symbolic message of community support for undocumented immigrants" which refers to activists seeing sanctuary as primarily declaratory and symbolic rather than action based. To organize this coding scheme, I created a codebook that includes all the parent and child codes with a brief description of each and an excerpt of interview text as an example. By coding each of these narrative interviews, I tracked patterns and common themes to understand the underlying motivations for the sanctuary movement and how the movement has evolved due to changing contexts.

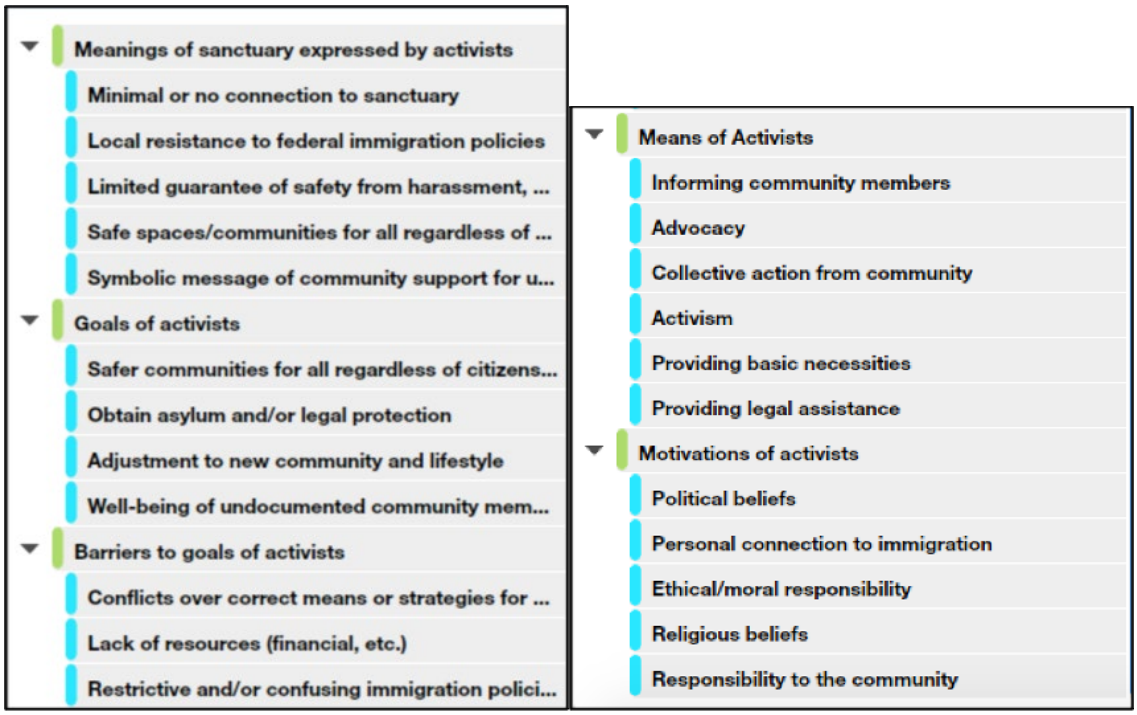

Figure 1: List of Parent Codes with Children Codes in Dedoose

Using Dedoose, I was the primary coder for ten of these interviews and Dr. Yarris was the primary coder for the other two. By using the same codebook and reviewing each other's coding process, we were able to maintain the inter-rater reliability of our analysis, meaning that our separate analyses were consistent with the established guidelines of my project's codebook. Once all of the interviews were coded, I analyzed the most relevant codes to source pertinent empirical themes that appeared in participants' interviews. After identifying the pertinent qualitative themes, I used Dedoose to collect relevant quotes that spoke to these themes to elaborate on the significance of this data. By documenting these sanctuary activists' varied experiences with the movement, I was able to analyze how the movement has evolved as a matter of responding to the political and social context of immigrants' rights. To protect participants' privacy, I use pseudonyms to address participants from the 2019 study.

Group Theory Analysis of Sanctuary Promise Act

To analyze the Sanctuary Promise Act, I used the Group Theory model to analyze how community members successfully pushed for the strengthening of sanctuary through the public policy process. Developed by political scientists and social science researchers, this model sees public policy as the result of an equilibrium reached through group struggle. This theory therefore "attempts to analyze how each of the various groups in a society tries to influence public policy to its advantage at the policy formulation level" (Anyebe, 2018, p. 11). This model focuses on the actors involved in the creation and passage of public policy, focusing on how the group that makes the policy decision has the power to make said decision. This ability to make a policy decision may be dependent on a variety of aspects such as leadership quality, organizational skill, resources, bargaining skill, access to decision-makers, etc. The Group Theory model is a helpful framework for understanding the Oregon sanctuary movement as a constantly evolving process that is highly dependent on its actors to create change with the resources they have.

Dr. Earl Latham, author of *The Group Basis of Politics*, is one of many scholars known for his articulation of the Group Theory approach to analyzing public policy. Latham argues that in the public policy making process, the legislature acts as the "referee" who monitors the different groups' struggle and ratifies the victorious group through the passage of bills and policy statutes (Latham, 390). Therefore, my analysis centers on which groups were able to most effectively persuade and influence legislators to pass HB 3265. This leads to the consideration of what "groups" were involved in the passage of this policy. Given the variability of what could define a

group, I decided to identify the groups involved in the policy-making process of the Sanctuary Promise Act by analyzing the public testimonies given during the bill's legislative hearing. After initial analysis, the groups I was able to identify were: community members for the Sanctuary Promise Act, non-profits, public officials within Oregon localities, law enforcement, and community members against the bill. Given that my research project aims to understand the role of activism in progressing immigrants' rights, I focused my analysis primarily on the community organizers and activists who advocated for its passage and convinced legislators to ultimately make it into law.

Incorporating the Groups Theory approach to the actual text of the Sanctuary Promise Act, I used the public testimonies and interviews with immigrants' rights professionals to illustrate how community and movement organizers effectively advocated for the strengthening of sanctuary in Oregon. During the legislative hearing for the Sanctuary Promise Act, there were 3 testimonies out of a total of 161 that were in opposition to the bill. Meanwhile, 156 testimonies in support of the bill were given from undocumented Oregonians, community members, nonprofit organizations, and public officials among others. This simple fact indicates the importance of analyzing this policy with a focus on community power as fuel for the passage of this bill. By engaging directly with their lawmakers, those who submitted public hearings were providing their input into the legislative process. Along with the public testimonies, the interviews with the advocates for the Sanctuary Promise Act or Oregon House Bill 3265 give me the context I need to understand the community coalitions who were directly involved with representing and negotiating the community's demands with the

legislature. These two data sources contextualize the power of community activism in the passage of this act and how mechanisms of activism, community organizing, and advocacy led to the strengthening of Oregon's sanctuary policy.

By triangulating my data sources, I situated these various analyses within the broader historical context of contested meanings of sanctuary and belonging across the decades as represented in my literature review. Along with my framing of the Oregon sanctuary movement as the ongoing process for immigrants' rights, these various methodologies contribute to my project's analysis of how the various dimensions of sanctuary, primarily activism and public policy, continually attempt to define and redefine who belongs in Oregon.

Limitations

Given that this project was an undergraduate thesis, I was limited in terms of the resources and capacity I had to complete this project. As mentioned in my delimitations section, research on the experiences of undocumented immigrants is inherently difficult due to many barriers to conducting an ethical and private study. That being said, my analysis of the Oregon sanctuary movement as a constantly evolving and growing campaign indicates that the experiences of undocumented people were not always uplifted in the movement until recently. Additionally, my interviews with sanctuary activists were pulled from sanctuary networks in Lane County. This sample may not perfectly represent the entirety of Oregon's sanctuary networks. Additionally, my analysis of the legislative process of the Sanctuary Promise Act was limited in terms of data collection. Due to the inaccessibility of congress members, I opted to interview immigrants' rights professionals instead of focusing on legislators. Because the

experiences of legislators involved in the passage of House Bill 3265 is not represented, I cannot fully represent the detailed process of creating and passing the Sanctuary Promise Act. However, through my interviews with immigrants' rights professionals, especially my interview with lead advocate for HB 3265, Leland, and my analysis of written public testimonies, I was able to understand the role and influence of community activism in the legislative process. Although I do not have the perspective of legislators on the Sanctuary Promise Act, my existing data sources and my Groups Theory approach to such data allow me to document how community demands were ultimately codified into law through the strengthening of Oregon's sanctuary legislation.

Positionality

As a native Oregonian and daughter of Vietnamese immigrants, I approached this project with curiosity and some precarity given my knowledge of Oregon's xenophobic history and the way it manifests in modern contexts. While I have a personal connection to immigration, I myself am privileged to be a citizen in the United States. In studying this topic, I acknowledge both my privilege and positionality as an Oregonian passionate about making my home state better for everyone. Given my identities and personal experiences, this project is one I conducted out of passion for understanding how we can make communities more inclusive for everyone, regardless of citizenship status or background. In addition, I approached this topic using my understanding of immigration as a Global Studies student to understand the various levels of inclusion that were enacted through policy and social activism.

My personal connections to this topic along with my academic approach to studying immigrant incorporation contributes a critical yet passionate lens to understanding the Oregon sanctuary movement.

Chapter 1: Evolution of the Sanctuary Movement

In this chapter, I explain how Oregon's sanctuary movement evolved from its origins in faith-based activism to respond to national changes in political and social contexts regarding immigration. I answer my first research question through a qualitative content analysis of interviews with activists and volunteers whose involvement with the sanctuary movement spans the various eras of the movement. Through analysis of the 2019 study interviews, I documented and analyzed activists' motivations and methods to understand what has sustained the movement for so long and how the movement changes to adapt to the community's needs. As acknowledged in the introduction of my thesis, my analysis focuses on the experiences of sanctuary activists rather than undocumented people due to the data I have available to me and the private nature of studying the experiences of undocumented people. These activists' experiences and insights allow me to map out the goals of the movement and the ways in which the movement has evolved. As this section will elaborate upon, activists are a crucial part of the movement as allies were able to use their privilege and practice their values and beliefs in constructing belonging for undocumented people. Conflicts with national and state policies, as well as with activists themselves, were important catalysts of change for the movement to center on the experiences and needs of undocumented Oregonians.

"It's the actions that accompany the words that we speak": Sanctuary's long-standing religious tradition

While the sanctuary movement has certainly shifted and evolved over the past forty or so years, religious and spiritual beliefs are still a primary motivator for many

sanctuary activists supporting immigrant and refugee communities in Oregon. From my interviews, there was a clear trend of religious participants seeing sanctuary activism as a means of practicing one's faith. As Rabben (2016) and Wiltfang and McAdam (1991) find in their research, the strong religious tradition of sanctuary activism continues to sustain sanctuary work as a means of practicing one's faith. For many participants, their religious congregations are hubs for activism and volunteer work supporting immigrants and refugees in their communities. The participants who were part of religious congregations in my study were all affiliated with Christian denominations, particularly those of progressive religious traditions. However, sanctuary work has expanded to other faith communities as well as in the secular sphere. For five of the participants, their faith informed them of the issues facing undocumented immigrants and compelled them to take action against xenophobic and exclusionary policies and practices. For sanctuary activists motivated by their faith, they see their work as way of uplifting the humanity of undocumented community members and creating a sacred place for all.

Interview participants who were members of faith groups specifically mentioned the importance of their faith in influencing their sanctuary activism. These participants emphasized how helping immigrant communities is part of putting their faith into action. This mentality was present for participants who were involved in the original sanctuary movement in the 1980s as well as in the present day. Faith is a particularly important motivator for participants who are a part of progressive/liberal Christian congregations which is characterized by their strong emphasis on social justice and care for the poor and the oppressed (Rabben 2016; Anh et. al 2013). For participants

motivated by their progressive religion, welcoming and supporting these new community members were part of practicing their faith.

One participant referenced a Bible verse from Leviticus 19:33-34 that many activists and scholars such as Anh et. Al 2013 refer to when considering the connection of Christian theology to sanctuary activism. This verse calls believers to give refuge to foreigners in need as, "The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (New International Version Bible, Leviticus 19:33-34). This verse is particularly powerful as it pulls from the history of oppressed Israelites in Egypt and calls Christians to uplift the humanity of the oppressed regardless of ethnic origin. For this participant, this verse was important in explaining her opinions of the Trump administration, as she was "sickened" that the country "moved in this anti-immigrant, hateful, divisive direction." This participant saw the increased criminalization and dehumanization of undocumented immigrants during this administration as an impetus to act upon her beliefs. Enacting a theological response to the oppression of undocumented people (Anh et. al, 2013), this participant participated in sanctuary work as a means of loving the foreigner as God called her to.

Along with overarching religious traditions, local congregations played a big role in the activation of religious participants. One of the interview participants is a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Cottage Grove, which according to the participant, leans more on the liberal side of faith. She describes what her congregation taught her as:

> We were taught... to think, as a church we were to be, not think the church way. We were to use our brain and you know, listen to a sermon

> or a hymn or whatever. And let your heart lead you where you need to go. [smiles] Our pastor at that time would say, we are not a "check-your-brain-at-the-door church."

This quote exemplifies the importance of local congregations in informing and encouraging congregation members to activate. Participants were not told what to do by their congregations, but rather to reflect on the experiences of others and consider what they are being called to do to practice their faith. She continues saying, "We're not told how to vote, how to think. We are asked to truly look inward. Walk in the other person's shoes and think about what you're really supposed to do." For these participants, their faith helps them understand and empathize with the experiences of the oppressed and calls them to take action. As noted by Rabben (2016) and Boudou et. al (2021), religious congregations are important hubs for informing sanctuary activists of the experiences of undocumented immigrants and motivating them to take action. As this participant expresses, these calls to action are not always direct rather they are an inherent part of participants' religious traditions and motivations to uplift the humanity of the oppressed.

For one participant, activism was so important that he sought a congregation that would share his same values for enacting change. This participant was first a member of the Unitarian church but eventually joined the local Quaker congregation, Eugene Friends Meeting, because the congregation was one of the first to declare sanctuary in the 1980s. In fact, the Quaker tradition has a plentiful history of sanctuary activism as the faith is known for its social justice work for the sake of spreading compassion and uplifting the dignity of every person. The Quaker organization, the American Friends Service Committee, currently has the "Sanctuary Everywhere" campaign which aims to bring the community together "to protect targeted communities from state violence —

including immigrants, people of color, Muslims and other targeted religious groups, or LGBTQ people" (American Friends Service Committee). The participant explains that by declaring sanctuary, Eugene Friends Meeting "were being reflective and they were trying to change their personal and political behavior. It was real." In the 1980s, a church declaring sanctuary was a radical political action to declare its opposition to exclusionary immigration policies. Religious congregations were and still are an important part of the sanctuary movement as they are important institutions within the community that help connect individuals with larger movements where they can practice their faith. For some, it may be the church's values of activism that calls to them and for others, it may be the church calling them to practice their values.

As the sanctuary movement itself has evolved, it seems as if religious congregations involved in sanctuary work are evolving with it. One of the participants was the pastor of the First United Methodist Church at the time of the interview, Reverend Josephine. This congregation is highly involved in community-organizing as social justice is an important part of their mission as a congregation (FUMC of Eugene). According to the pastor, the church acts as a hub for sanctuary activists to provide resources, organize, and even house immigrants. For Reverend Josephine, she was assigned to a congregation that was already heavily involved in community organizing around sanctuary when she first arrived. Through her congregation, she found sacredness and divineness in community organizing as "God created the world and it evolved in incredible ways, and humans have evolved in incredible ways to truly respond to what is best for our community." Her congregation responded by physically

enacting sanctuary, as at the time of the interview, the church was helping house an immigrant for the past two years. She emotionally explains:

> Two years now, and the fact that... that space can't just be a church, it's become a home. And also it's become a representation probably of all of the people that circle around this one person and tries to hold her within dignity and kindness and acknowledgement of her divineness. Like that is huge. It wouldn't- it wouldn't work [voice heavy with emotion, eyes glazed], she probably has a very hard time living there. But also what makes it bearable is humans seeing one another in that.

Reflecting the work of activists in the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s, FUMC gathers all their resources — financial, physical, and human — to come together and provide physical sanctuary (Rabben 2016; Stoltz Chinchilla et. al 2009). Even with this immense effort from the congregation, Reverend Josephine acknowledges that the work of her congregation to welcome and support this woman can only go so far. However, the church and its congregation adapt to their circumstances and utilize their resources to the best of their ability to respond to the needs of this fellow community member. The religious traditions that motivated the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s continue to motivate and structure the work of many sanctuary activists in the present day. As described by Reverend Josephine, for religious congregations involved in sanctuary work, "it's [about] the actions that accompany the words that we speak."

"Trying to right so many wrongs": Activists' political and moral pull to the movement

Along with the consistent religious motivations, participants also showed strong political and ethical motivations within sanctuary work. Oftentimes, these motivations were intertwined with their own religious beliefs as seen in the participants' interviews and noted by Kotin and Irazabal (2011). For participants who were involved in the

1980s, they commonly mentioned the United States' intervention in Central America as an impetus for political activism and welcoming immigrants. One of the participants volunteered with the Eugene Committee in Solidarity with the Central American People (CISCAP), which is a volunteer-based grassroots organization founded in 1982 to push for more just policies in the United States' relationship with Latin America. As a volunteer, he was involved in political demonstrations and volunteered to go down to El Salvador for the organization and even helped house immigrants. In fact, several of my participants were deeply involved in the sanctuary movement, having been motivated by the rebellious energy of social movements in 1970s and into the early 1980s.

For one participant, she became involved in sanctuary activism through her congregation, First Presbyterian Church of Cottage Grove. However, when asked why she decided to get involved, she says, "It was a part of...what you're supposed to do! [laughs] How you live life. It's just, it's just [quickly] what you're supposed to do. I mean my history way back was, you know, anti-war movement against Vietnam…that's how my beliefs worked." For these participants, the national political context was a large motivator for their activism. In response to national crises such as the Vietnam war and the influx of Central Americans migrating to the United States, these participants got involved within their congregations or other community organizations in order to respond and resist anti-immigrant sentiment and policies. For many activists in the sanctuary movement, their ethical obligations and political beliefs of progressive immigration policies are what motivates them and therefore, sustains the movement.

Whether it was the 1980s or 2019, the sanctuary movement is fueled by concern for those who are oppressed politically in order to welcome them into the community

and recognize their humanity. This was especially prevalent for my participants, six of whom got involved with the movement during the Trump administration. While the criminalization and oppression of undocumented immigrants by the federal government has been apparent long before President Trump's election in 2016, Trump administration's overtly anti-immigrant approach changed the social and cultural context surrounding immigration. Out of my participants, five of them mentioned the Trump administration's anti-immigrant agenda as their specific impetus for their action. As one participant puts it, "I think we felt after the election there was a greater call to act because it became overt to be prejudiced. To look at somebody's skin and make a judgment about that person, to um, listen to their language and make a judgment about that person, and so it became more action-oriented now." This participant describes the community reaction after Trump was elected to office, noting that it is no longer just Presbyterian churches enacting sanctuary but individuals within the community that were emboldened by the political context. As Rabben (2016) and Betancur and Garcia (2011) note in their research, immigrants' rights activists are emboldened by national immigration policies that call them to take action on behalf of their beliefs and sense of ethical obligation to undocumented community members. This sense of moral obligation enacted through political activism is a continuous and crucial factor to the work of the Oregon sanctuary movement.

One participant, Tim, a volunteer with the Oregon Community Asylum Network, was sponsoring an immigrant at the time of the interview. When describing all the legal barriers standing in the way of the woman he was sponsoring, he says: "We have no delusions that the government has anything other than hostile intent towards

refugees at this point, they've made that so clear. And occasionally they try to say something that sanitizes that, but they've got no credibility with those of us who are doing the work." As a sponsor, this participant was able to see first-hand the difficulties of integrating into the United States as an undocumented person. As a deeply involved activist, Tim was able to look past federal officials' rhetoric and understand the impact of exclusionary policies on the lives of undocumented community members. For him and many others like him, the federal government created such an awful circumstance for undocumented immigrants that necessitated their action.

For some activists, becoming involved with the sanctuary movement required them to engage in reflection and personal change in order to fight for political change. Many of the activists involved in the early sanctuary movement are white, middle-class Americans who got involved after learning about the impact of U.S. intervention in Central America. Due to their socioeconomic position and American citizenship, activists joined the movement after learning about the oppression of Central American refugees in order to use their privilege for the better. Two participants, a couple who was interviewed together and worked as photojournalists in Central America during the 1980s, mentioned this reckoning with the policies and practices of the federal government. One partner said in their interview,

> Changing our personal lives will not make an iota of difference but we still need to do it, but we have to change policy. We have to change policy and we change our personal life. But just changing our personal life, if that's all we can do, it's good to do that, but it has to be policy to make a big enough difference.

For these participants, the work they did to learn about U.S. foreign policy and to be better allies to undocumented community members was a good start, but they were

fueled by the need for larger change. As Freeland (2010) documents in his research of the New Sanctuary Movement, social movements require activists to also participate in personal reflection and transformation in order to fight for social and political change. Such reflection enables activists to learn of the injustices caused by their own federal government and activates them to use their privilege to heal these injustices through enacting sanctuary. One activist explained this need for larger change as "trying to right so many wrongs." This is representative of sanctuary itself, people who may not have much political power taking the steps to see the change they want to see in our community, whether that is through sponsoring undocumented immigrants or advocating for policy change.

"This is not the sanctuary of the 1980s": The resurgence and evolution of the Oregon sanctuary movement

For many activists, the federal immigration policies enacted during the Trump administration reactivated preexisting sanctuary networks and prompted community mobilization. This time around, however, sanctuary was much more expansive as it had to respond to a completely different context. In Oregon, Measure 105, pushed by a local anti-immigrant group, threatened Oregon's 30-year-old sanctuary law (Murguia, 2018). While it was ultimately defeated, Measure 105 was one of the many visual manifestations of xenophobia and racism brewing underneath Oregon's surface for decades. As participants noted themselves, the past few decades brought the increased militarizing of immigration enforcement, more outright prejudice and aggression from politicians and community members, and a decrease in religious congregations proclaiming sanctuary. However, this change in time also brought advantages to the

movement as through technology and mass communication, more community members were encouraged to act in order to construct belonging and enact sanctuary in different ways that better uplifted the needs of undocumented community members.

As a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Cottage Grove, one member, Jacky, detailed the change she saw in sanctuary activism through the past four decades. In the 1980s, her congregation voted to declare sanctuary as part of the movement to house and provide protection to undocumented immigrants from Central America. Her congregation set out to prepare for the immigrant family that they would support, such as preparing the church's kitchen for the family to use and finding translators to communicate with the family. This required all hands-on deck for the congregation as different members had different roles to welcome and integrate the family. One member was a physician who helped the family with medical care. Meanwhile, the principal of the high school, who was also a member of the congregation, oversaw the children to see if they were feeling safe in their new environment. This system reflects the religious and community networks that sanctuary activists have and continue to use in order to welcome in and support undocumented immigrants with their resettlement (Boudou et. al, 2021; Stoltz Chinchilla et. al, 2009). However, as new technology was created, activists learned to use them to their advantage. Jacky explained, "We have better communication. I mean, you have to think about, there were no cell phones. There were no, you know, you didn't, you had landlines, so when people were driving them up, you would connect with, you know, it's just the systems were different." For volunteers helping immigrants resettle, these changes made it much easier for them to utilize the

person-to-person network through increased communication and collaboration among community members.

However, technological changes were not the only changes that impacted the work of sanctuary activists. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, U.S. immigration policy took a hard turn towards national security. This meant dramatic increases in the securitization of the border and increased detainments and deportations of undocumented immigrants (Chisti and Bolter, 2021). This pushed sanctuary work underground and the physical sanctuary of the 1980s became less feasible in the presence of increased enforcement. Along with these political changes, the social environment became more hostile for undocumented people who now have to constantly fear being reported to ICE. As this participant explains,

> I think Oregon's still a sanctuary place. I think because the situation with the government has changed, we can't- *sanctuary has morphed into something else because we can't house them*. You can't openly house them or that will call attention to what the situation is. So you have to, not keep them in the shadows, but be cautious about the publicity or, um, announcements... gatherings you have about the situation or what you're doing…So it's not 'sanctuary' in the sense we had before.

This participant's answer reveals an important aspect of the sanctuary movement. When the national approach to immigration changed, the sanctuary movement had to change as well. While offering housing and protection were important through congregations were crucial aspects during the 1980s, this sanctuary model could not be perfectly replicated in modern contexts. As this participant explains, publicity was a big fear for activists as they wanted to ensure undocumented immigrant felt safe during a precarious political environment. Additionally, Oregon's 1987 sanctuary law offered little guarantee of safety and belonging for undocumented immigrants. Left without national

or local support, sanctuary activists had to find different means to advocate for more inclusive communities and support undocumented community members. As a result, sanctuary work spread more into the secular sphere.

This is where the work of community-based networks such as the Oregon Community Asylum Network (OCAN) comes in. For OCAN, sanctuary work became more modernized and secretive to avoid conflicts and potentially endangering undocumented immigrants. Since the 1980s, it became more difficult for institutions, such as religious organizations, to sponsor or house undocumented people due to legalities and privacy concerns. Therefore, OCAN relies on its network of community members, assigning specific tasks to specific members so that supporting undocumented community members remains a covert collaboration. By shifting towards legal sponsorship, OCAN has one individual takes on the responsibility of financially supporting the immigrant while they go through the process of becoming a permanent legal resident. Sponsorship is no easy task for one person to take on; therefore, OCAN gathers its members to assist with the various financial expenses that come with navigating the immigration system. As one participant put it, "you have to be able to mobilize resources around you if you are going to be a sponsor." One participant, Tim, and his wife agreed to sponsor a young woman who immigrated to the United States. The young woman, Isabella, was the first immigrant that OCAN was able to support and, as Tim explains, this form of sanctuary activism "was a learning curve for all of us, and it continues to be." Due to the tremendous increase in barriers to immigration admissions, obtaining legal status for Isabella was an expensive and confusing process.

These difficulties were present from the very beginning when OCAN was helping Isabella out of detainment, as Tim explains:

> So, one of the tricky parts that OCAN is taking care of is unpredictable expenses. So the first one that hit us out of the blue was they're letting her out and they want $5,000 bail, and we were all shocked. Bail? She's getting out on parole, why does she have to give bail? But, uh, so we spread the word through our circle of people and a few people stepped up, two people stepped up and covered the bail. We then had to figure out how to get her here, so someone kicked in their frequent-flyer miles and took care of that.

Like churches in the 1980s, OCAN members banded together to help Isabella resettle to Eugene. Through the organizational structure of OCAN, activists tap into this community network in order to get the different means necessary to provide sanctuary in this modern context. Differing from the housing system of the original SM, OCAN activists had to navigate a difficult legal terrain that was inconsistent and incredibly costly as sponsorship requires working within difficult government systems (Macklin, 2021). Through OCAN, sanctuary activists like Tim were able to mobilize their resources through their community networks and overcome the various legal and financial barriers, making providing sanctuary for Isabella possible.

For activists currently involved in sanctuary work, keeping undocumented community members safe from detainment has become one of their highest priorities. During the Trump administration, increases in ICE raids and detainments instilled constant fear amongst undocumented immigrants about their safety (Rabben, 2017). Even in the sanctuary state of Oregon, many undocumented immigrants were tracked and eventually detained by ICE through cases that seemed to have to do with cooperating with local law enforcement. Jacky recalled a specific event that left the community confused and fearful:

> It's like when [name omitted] got picked up and it just snowballed. They called me, my daughter works at the high school. She called me, she said, 'what can you do?' And I said, 'I'll go into town right now. And I came down and talked to Grace and Grace talked to ROP [Rural Organising Program] and we had a meeting and we started a network of people trying to help him and his family. Make sure he had legal representation and then try and find out what happened, how did ICE find out? I mean it was just a drunk-driving situation. We have Americans who have multiple drunk-driving situations and they don't get picked up. So how can this be?

As Jacky explains, this ICE detainment happened so fast that community members barely had a chance to respond. At the time of the interview, Jacky was still unaware of where ICE took this community member. This sudden detainment cemented a real fear for sanctuary activists that required them to adapt. As Davis (2021) and Paik (2017) emphasize in their criticisms of sanctuary, sanctuary work is limited in its ability to provide safety given the federal government's overarching power to subvert local sanctuary through means of militarization and enforcement. Unfortunately, even with the best of efforts, the sanctuary movement falls short due to the complex web of anti-immigrant practices standing in its way.

"It's what we can do": Pushing back despite limitations

In both its policy and activist dimensions, sanctuary is a means of resistance to larger exclusionary forces, whether its federal immigration enforcement policy or prejudice social beliefs. For activists working day-to-day to construct belonging, sanctuary is not just a title that is given to a church or a policy but also the ways in which communities integrate immigrants and advocate for their safety. For many participants, they noted that sanctuary work is limited in the impacts but that it still makes a difference in the community. Even if it is limited, as one activist says, "it's what we can do." Within my analysis of interviews with sanctuary activists, I found that

sanctuary for these participants was heavily reliant on community networks and grassroots operation, as exemplified by the work of First Presbyterian Church of Cottage Grove and the Oregon Community Asylum Network. As a highly involved congregation member, Jacky describes the role she plays in her sanctuary network and the importance of collective action in supporting undocumented people:

> You know, and when someone said 'I have an extra baby crib' and I said, 'I'll take it.' And then I fix 'em up and yeah. You know, I call Lily and Anna and say 'you need a crib, I'll drop it by.' It's like my family [laughs]. So, I just need to know what the need is so I can go out there and try to connect with all of my connections and then they can connect with their connections and nobody knows who everybody is. So you can't ever get in trouble, like not everybody will get in trouble at the same time.

As she describes, her community network is like her "family" in the way supplying material goods and other support came naturally to her. The experience she describes reflects the original notions of sanctuary activism as collective action to reach the same goal, creating a more responsive and inclusive community for undocumented immigrants. This community network is also incredibly helpful for keeping the work of activists undercover to avoid undue attention and a sense of fear for the immigrants being supported. The work of these activists is so important, especially during political climates of uncertainty for undocumented immigrants.

Additionally, the limited safety guaranteed by Oregon's existing sanctuary policy required community members to activate and respond, primarily through grassroots operations. The significance of grassroots operations in the sanctuary movement is well-explained by OCAN volunteer, Tim:

> I think that's one of the great strengths of grassroots operations, is that 'when you ain't got nothing, you've got nothing to lose', as the song goes, and we're highly adaptable- we don't have to worry about covering our

> overhead...So, it's been very egalitarian, which has been really empowering to anyone who shows up- to see that if they put in some energy, they aren't low on the totem pole, they're just like the rest of us trying to figure things out.

As Tim describes, enacting sanctuary is a constant process of trial and error to figure out how to best resist federal immigration initiatives and support undocumented community members. It requires those involved with the movement to be adaptable and willing to change in order to meet their goals. It requires activists to problem solve and work covertly to avoid unwanted publicity and jeopardizing the safety of community members. As a community network, OCAN represents an important part of the conceptualization of sanctuary as a process (Houston, 2019) that responds and changes their operations based on what is needed. For example, OCAN members eventually created a bond fund to support the expensive financial costs of sponsorship. This bond fund is a rather unique invention as OCAN relies on its covert community network to sustainably fund this invaluable resource for undocumented community members. Even though it is limited and requires intense commitment and adaptability, sanctuary activism has and continues to be an effective mechanism for cultivating belonging.

"That's not what *we* need": Centering the voices of immigrants in the sanctuary movement

Along with the change in social and political contexts, conflicts amongst activists and undocumented immigrants were both a source of impediment and growth for the movement. For many sanctuary activists who actively housed and supported immigrants, navigating relationships with the immigrants they sponsored was emotionally and socially complex. Given the financial responsibility of sponsorship, most sponsors came from privileged socioeconomic statuses that allowed them to

finance and support those they were sponsoring, who mostly came from impoverished backgrounds. This circumstance unintentionally created a dynamic in which well-intentioned mostly white allies overstepped boundaries and perpetuated a savior dynamic in supporting undocumented folks. With his relationship with Isabella, Tim describes:

> My wife was very concerned that I not infantilize her and felt that it would be insulting to her to treat her as anything other than an independent adult. I think Ally was upset about wording that suggested we were 'rescuing' people- she felt that was somehow disempowering. My perspective is we actually are rescuing these people, and there's nothing to be ashamed of about that or apologetic about that.

Many activists from older generations hold onto traditional views and methods of sanctuary work that are outdated and even seem problematic. This was especially prevalent during the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s as documented by Houston and Morse (2017) and still shows up in modern contexts as activists often play into power dynamics as the "providers" of sanctuary (Lenard and Madokoro, 2021). This tension between allies and the undocumented community can create conflicts and struggles over what the correct means of sanctuary activism is, often times leaving undocumented immigrants with less agency over their circumstances. However, these conflicts and social dynamics have also created an avenue for change in the movement itself.

One participant, Gabriella, documents these conflicts and subsequent changes as an immigrant herself and activist who has been involved with the movement since the 1980s. Gabriella is a Mexican immigrant who originally got involved with sanctuary activism through the Community Alliance of Lane County and now works for Grupo Latino de Acción Directa of Lane County which acts as a base for many undocumented Latinx people in Lane County. She has seen the changes that the political landscape has

brought and therefore has helped others recognize the need for change within sanctuary work, especially among allies. The sanctuary movement of the 1980s is notorious for its acts of civil disobedience and housing of immigrants and many activists wanted a similar community reaction in response to President Trump's election. As someone deeply involved and connected with the immigrant community in Lane County, Gabriella was fearful that this intense and immediate approach to federal immigration policy, without the consult of undocumented community members, would only cause more fear and confusion. Gabriella discussed in the interview a conversation that she had with allies about overstepping boundaries in responding:

> So that's what we told them. "Give us a chance to interact with our community enough to get a sense of how are they feeling with now that they know this person is there and they're hearing it's coming down on them." I said, um, I said, "we need to find out from the families what is it that they need, what would be the most helpful thing for us to do?...We need to find out, even in our own community, we need to find out what is it that they need and what is it that, what would be the most helpful? So you all need to back off. Don't take it personal. We appreciate you being there. Allies, we're going need you big time. Right now, we need to move forward with 105, you've got all this other stuff you can do. But please don't think that just because you decided that you can house people that- that's just not going to happen. Or that you're willing to take people somewhere." Cause you know, that's really scary.

In this quote, Gabriella describes how she helped other sanctuary activists understand how the sanctuary work of the 1980s could not be exactly replicated in this current context. This time around, sanctuary work should center around the needs of undocumented people and their families, who were often unintentionally left out of these conversations. This one conversation in Oregon parallels a larger ongoing change in the national sanctuary movement, the push for the voices of undocumented immigrants to be amplified in order for their needs to better met.

In a time of increased immigration enforcement and criminalization, the sanctuary movement's old tactics had to change to consider the political barriers at hand. Gabriella specifically mentions the difficulties of civil disobedience in preventing immigration enforcement action. She explained, “and in today's time, whether you're a sanctuary city or state, we have no guarantee ICE can't come in. You can't interfere with ICE.” As Gabriella says, there was no guarantee of safety even under Oregon’s sanctuary policy. Because the government’s tactics changed, sanctuary as they knew it had to change as well. She continues, saying: “It's not, it's not, that's not what we need. We do not need a physical building to protect families. What we need is individuals who are willing to put themselves out there, who can risk, um, or, or to push whatever we need.” As important as providing physical sanctuary was, the movement needed to evolve in order to center the voices of immigrants. This required activists to be able to relearn their previous understandings of sanctuary and act upon the direct needs of undocumented community members. As conflicts continue to appear within sanctuary networks, conversations such as the one Gabriella explains are crucial in creating non-reductive frameworks that build solidarity with immigrants rather than speaking and acting for them (Houston and Morse, 2017). This has and will continue to expand the meaning and manifestations of sanctuary as it relies on activists to learn from those they were helping, creating a stronger sense of belonging for everyone.

Oregon’s “New” Sanctuary Movement

Ultimately, the Oregon sanctuary movement has shifted and evolved in ways that improved community response to federal immigration initiatives. The Oregon community has and continues to show incredible agility and resilience in responding to

anti-immigrant policies and constructing belonging for undocumented Oregonians. From personal, collective, social, political, and legal changes, the sanctuary movement is used to adapting and shifting with the times. In many ways, the movement has not grown far from its roots in religious tradition and empowerment through political resistance and ethical obligation of activists. However, through the resiliency of Oregon communities, the movement has and continues to adapt its tactics to better support undocumented people. Instead of only churches housing people, community networks made up of folks from all different backgrounds come together to support the movement's mission. Now, immigrants' voices are more centered in the work of sanctuary activists as communities begin to re-learn outdated narratives and uplift the humanity of those they are helping. There is no doubt that sanctuary activism has evolved immensely, and its interactions with the policy process is another area where the movement has evolved and created valuable impacts for the lives of undocumented immigrants in Oregon.

Chapter 2: The Intersections of Sanctuary Activism and Sanctuary Policy

In this section, I will be answering my second research question through analyzing my two other sources of data, interviews with sanctuary policy advocates and written public testimonies submitted during the public hearing session for the Sanctuary Promise Act or House Bill 3265. By analyzing these sources, I documented how sanctuary activism and the legislative process intersected to pass the Sanctuary Promise Act as a means of creating a safer Oregon for undocumented immigrants. This chapter shows how the primary dimensions of sanctuary — activism and public policy — interweaved and mutually reinforced each other. When Oregon's 1987 sanctuary policy was not protecting undocumented immigrants enough, community activists stepped in. When community activists stepped in and advocated for change, they influenced the creation and passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act. These two dimensions of sanctuary intersect in order to respond to the needs of the community by strengthening the state of Oregon's commitment and Oregonians' commitment to constructing belonging for undocumented people.

In order to understand the interweaving of activism and public policy, I used a Groups Theory approach to understand the policy-making process of the Sanctuary Promise Act and how this bill has expanded sanctuary in Oregon. To understand the significance of House Bill 3265, I used the public testimonies and interviews with the bill's advocates to illustrate the influence that community members had in strengthening legal sanctuary in Oregon. While there were many groups involved in this bill's legislative process, I focused my analysis specifically on the group that mobilized

effectively in order to advocate for this bill: community members. Admittedly, community members refer to a broad category of Oregonians, but this broad categorization is important in understanding the diverse voices and experiences of those who influenced their representatives to pass this bill. Oregonians from all different areas of life — pediatricians, clergy members, volunteers, undocumented immigrants and many others — came together to advocate for a bill that would help create an Oregon that they wanted to see. Through my interviews with the bill's advocates and analysis of public testimonies, I analyzed how the Sanctuary Promise Act was fruit of community activists' labor who utilized both activism and the policy-making process to constructing belonging for undocumented people.

A policy with "no teeth:" The need to strengthen Oregon's original sanctuary policy

Despite being the first state to establish a sanctuary policy, Oregon's 1987 sanctuary policy was lacking in the protections that it should have guaranteed. Cam, the executive director of Pueblo Unido PDX, explained this lack of sanctuary protection during our interview. Cam sees first-hand the needs of the undocumented community in Oregon and as he explained that before the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act, "to us, sanctuary laws were political cover, were nice rhetoric for a legislator or any elected official to espouse but it didn't have any teeth, didn't mean much in practice." For Cam and others like him who work directly with immigrants impacted by federal immigration policies, Oregon's original sanctuary policy had no significance to the work they did. If anything, Pueblo Unido's work to provide legal services and financial assistance to undocumented immigrants was only necessary because Oregon's existing

sanctuary policy did little to protect immigrants and actually enact sanctuary. In our interview, Cam explained that violations of sanctuary would occur frequently as local law enforcement would cooperate with either United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement or their private contractor, GEO Group, to release an individual at a certain time or area to allow ICE to apprehend them the moment they stepped foot off the facility. Cam explains one specific example of a violation that he personally witnessed:

> Before the Sanctuary Promise for All Act went into place, GEO Group drove inside the prison, parked inside the garage, went in the facility and transferred custody inside the prison which is totally a violation of all the laws we've had on our books for decades. When we sought recourse alongside the family for violation of the sanctuary laws, there was no accountability mechanism in place for the family or the individual to hold [the Department of Corrections] responsible for that violation.

As Cam depicts in this unfortunate incident, Oregon's law enforcement would often cooperate with federal immigration authorities to detect and apprehend noncitizens. These clear violations of Oregon's 1987 sanctuary law were allowed to happen for so long because ORS § 181A.820 has no provisions for accountability and does not allow community members to seek recourse for violations. For a state that prides itself in its progressive values, Oregon, the nation's first sanctuary state, was failing to protect its most vulnerable residents.

This lack of government protections and accountability prompted immigrants' rights activists to call for the strengthening of sanctuary. As the Director of Advocacy at Latino Network, Leland was one of the lead advocates for the legislative bill that eventually became the Sanctuary Promise Act. Before he came to Latino Network in Fall 2020, Leland was deeply involved in community activism and organizing around

immigrants' rights in Oregon. He explained that activists had been fighting for strengthening sanctuary for so long that "by the time it came to advocating for this policy, the language already existed, the talking points, the communication already existed because so many folks had put in time developing it and thinking it through." By translating these talking points into public policy language, Leland and others started drafting House Bill 3265 or the Sanctuary Promise Act. His team was especially motivated by the increase of courthouse arrests during the Trump administration in which ICE agents would regularly stake out court facilities to apprehend unknowing undocumented immigrants. This was an enormous barrier to justice for undocumented people who were attending mandated court hearings or other meetings in order to comply with immigration policies and request legal protections. During this tumultuous time for undocumented people, Leland and others went to Governor Kate Brown in fall of 2020 to request her to issue an executive order that would strengthen existing sanctuary protections. Ultimately, the governor's team encouraged Leland to take the legislative route to increase sanctuary protections. With a new administration and the needs of the community that had yet to be met, Leland and his team took advantage of the new political climate and set House Bill 3265 on its path to become a law.

Interweaving the work of activists and advocates: the legislative process of the Sanctuary Promise Act

Even with a new presidential administration and the liberal-leaning Oregon legislature, the path to strengthening sanctuary in Oregon was not easy. In our interview, Leland explained the many local wins regarding immigration that paved the way for the community to advocate for the Sanctuary Promise Act. In 2018, Ballot

Measure 105 proposed to repeal Oregon's original sanctuary policy. Leland explains that immigrants' rights organizations in Oregon ran successful campaigns that eventually led to the rejection of the ballot measure. After that, through the efforts of community organizers, the Oregon court system eventually instituted a rule prohibiting civil arrests on court facilities. Community organizers did not stop there as Leland says that they played a huge role in managing contracts between ICE and Oregonian prisons as "community activists one-by-one had shut down every single one of those contracts" through protests and advocacy. Leland explains that every single one of these wins was crucial as coming into the 2020 legislative session, advocates like him could show that Oregonians wanted less local law enforcement cooperation with federal immigration authorities and that Oregonians cared about their immigrant community members. As Leland explained, "so many pieces of the bill were the next step to sort of solidifying all of these wins and battles being fought by community-based organizers." The constant mobilization of communities plays an essential role in the immigrants' rights space as documented by Betancur and Garcia (2011) and Steil and Vasi (2014). Through organizations like Latino Network, community members can create demands of their government and show immense public support with their demands. In working with the legislature on House Bill 3265, Leland was the spokesperson for what the larger community demanded, the promise and guarantee of sanctuary.

Without genuine protection from the state government, community organizers and activists had been filling in where the government was missing for years. In our interview, Alaide, the executive director of Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice (IMIrJ) explained how IMIrJ activists enacted sanctuary by accompanying immigrant

community members to immigration offices and court hearings as well as through sacred organizing, where members of different faith communities come together to take collective action against dehumanizing policies. Nonprofit groups like IMIrJ connect community members to the larger system of the legislature and vice versa. Specifically, IMIrJ was part of a coalition of community partners that came together to discuss and negotiate what they wanted to see in House Bill 3265 as well as helping campaign for the bill. During the 2021 legislative session, policy advocates, such as Leland, would consult community partners like IMIrJ to understand the community's needs and problem-solve certain provisions of the bill. As Alaide explained it, there was "the grassroots campaign that went alongside kind of the policy process and it was continuously coordinating and interweaving." The coordinating and interweaving of these two aspects turned out to be crucial as community members were able to advocate for what they really wanted even if it would have made it harder for the bill to pass. As Alaide said:

> I do think that is just the value of trust between people who are doing policy work and people like us who are doing the organizing work. Cause we're like, "No, let's go for it. You know, we have the support, like let's do it. People will support this. And you know it's OK if we don't make it an easier pathway, like it's OK if we go the harder pathway, because we have the community power to hope, to make it happen, to raise a stink if they don't wanna do it."

With community voices represented in the policy process, Alaide and other members of the coalition were able to advocate directly for the strengthening of sanctuary through specific provisions that would've been difficult to pass logistically, such as the sanctuary hotline which requires an approved budget. While this path is more difficult, community representation and negotiation were crucial in ensuring the legislation

would properly represent the community's needs. In my interview with Leland, he explained the importance of Alaide and other community member's input in this process: "she was a voice throughout this process that helped sort of center things, helped us who were doing the advocacy in the building say 'no,' when the politically easy thing would be to say 'yes.'" As Alaide argued, when there is large support for undocumented immigrants within the community, there is increased capacity for the community to mobilize and influence the passage of such legislation.

As articulated by sanctuary activists, there was a lack of accountability surrounding the many violations of Oregon's original sanctuary policy. Therefore, the advocacy team for HB 3265 created a provision that would require the Oregon Department of Justice to establish a sanctuary violation reporting mechanism for community members. This provision was highly-contested as it would require the legislature to agree to fund such a mechanism. Rather than conceding and taking the "easier path," Alaide pushed for this provision knowing that undocumented community members would benefit from it. Leland recalled this in his interview:

> And Alaide and — I can remember the conversation like it was yesterday — it was like, "Look, when we go out and talk to people in the community, when we tell them that this bill includes a hotline where they can call and includes these pieces, like people are really excited for that. So those are really important pieces, please don't give those up if you don't have to."

Ultimately, Alaide's ask prevailed as the sanctuary reporting mechanism was accepted in the final version of the bill under section 4. This mechanism includes a staffed telephone hotline and an online system that allows community members to report instances of sanctuary policy violations. Through the advocacy of community members like Alaide, protections like such become codified in law even if it's a difficult process

to get there. This process represents how community members leveraged their leadership quality and bargaining skill to influence the creation of public policy. In their research of pro-immigrant ordinances in cities all over the United States, Steil and Vasi (2014) found that the presence of community organizations greatly increased the odds of pro-immigrant legislative adoption because such policies require sustained effort to create and successfully enact. As the researchers explained, "laws do not write themselves" (Steil and Vasi, 2014, p. 1143) and this why community organizations that help draft and fight for legislation such as the Sanctuary Promise Act are so crucial to moving the gears of the legislature in codifying community demands. With community voices represented through organizations like IMIrJ, the government is better able to respond to community needs in order to strengthen sanctuary and constructing belonging for undocumented folks.

Loving your neighbor and telling unheard stories: Public testimonies as a means of influencing policy

Along with acting as a community consultant during the policy making process, IMIrJ and other community organizations played an essential role in telling the stories of community members to influence the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act. Alaide explained during our interview that IMIrJ ran a grassroots strategy to inform community members about House Bill 3265, including making hundreds of calls and tapping into their community network to submit public testimonies. Their strategy was certainly effective as out of 161 total public testimonies given during the bill's legislative session, at least 50 or 32% of these testimonies were given by IMIrJ leaders and members. Public testimonies are an important avenue for community members to engage directly

with their representatives and advocate for their wants and needs. For IMIrJ members who submitted testimony, they called for their representatives to pass the Sanctuary Promise Act as their faith has motivated them to fight for more inclusive and protective policies for undocumented people.

After analyzing written public testimonies, I found an incredible number of testimonies in support of the bill with only three testimonies of 161 being in opposition to the bill and two testimonies that were neutral. That means 97% of public testimonies given to the Oregon legislature called for the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act. While these numbers do not necessarily represent Oregonian's opinions on the bill as a whole, they do showcase the power of community in showing up and activating for the protection of immigrants' rights. The patterns in these testimonies showcase the diverse set of Oregonians in support of this bill and how their motivations, personal experiences, values, religious traditions among other aspects compelled them to call their legislators to action. Here, sanctuary activists utilized the policy process to their advantage to advocate for the protections they believe would cultivate belonging for undocumented people. This intersection of sanctuary activism and the policy process allowed community members to share the religious traditions, values, personal experiences, and the stories that were so influential in their support of this bill and their call for the legislature to strengthen sanctuary.

Pulling from the long-standing religious tradition of the sanctuary movement, many activists and community members expressed the importance of their faith and values in advocating for this bill. A total of 68 of 161 or 38% of testimonies included community members' religious motivations in advocating for this bill. There were also

a wide variety of faith communities represented in these testimonies: Quakers, Unitarians, Methodists, Mennonites, Jewish, Catholic, and Buddhist among others. Many of these testimonies were part of IMIrJ's campaign as they followed a similar format where community members shared what religious value of theirs compels them to sanctuary activism and notes that as a part of IMIrJ, "I am part of a network of people of faith and fierce love who have accompanied community members as they have navigated an immigration system that separates families and tears communities apart." As emphasized in my analysis of the Sanctuary Movement, community networks such as IMIrJ are crucial in showing solidarity with undocumented immigrants and mobilizing community members to take action (Rabben, 2016; Betancur and Garcia, 2011). In doing so, community members showed legislatures that the Sanctuary Promise Act has broad support from Oregonians and that this policy would help enact their beliefs of a shared humanity and safter Oregon for all.

In one testimony, a congregation member of the Cedar Hills United Church of Christ directly quotes the bible verse that was referred to in one of the 2019 study participants' interview mentioned in the previous chapter, Leviticus 19:33-34. This verse calls on Christians to "love [foreigners] as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt..." in order to theologically respond to the oppression of other human beings (Anh et. Al, 2013). This testimony was written on behalf of the congregation's Immigrant Welcoming Team, showcasing the congregation's commitment to using their network and resources to construct belonging for undocumented people. As the testimony says, "as a church community we believe 'Love your Neighbor' applies to all of our neighbors" and advocating for the Sanctuary Promise Act is a radical act of

loving your neighbor. Another testimony by a religious community member similarly emphasizes how their faith compels them to advocate for undocumented immigrants:

> As a Christian who loves my neighbor and believes that all people are created in the image of God, I reject the disingenuous rhetoric that seeks to demonize my neighbors who came here from different countries, and that distracts from the root evils of systemic racism and economic and environmental injustice that require our full attention.

This testimony is a direct call-out to the systems that the U.S. government perpetuates which creates harm to undocumented people. By showcasing their religious values, this community member showcases how their government is not representing their values well and that strengthening sanctuary is necessary to fighting injustice. Similarly, another community member who is an IMIrJ organizer explains why community members' religious traditions play such an important role in advocating for sanctuary:

> I care about this bill because my faith teaches me about the importance of sanctuary, true safety, and love. I feel that our policies should reflect the importance of connection, safety, dignity, and compassion – as I need this, and I think we all do. In creating this safety, this welcoming, this dignity, we create community with one another, and I believe that we all do better when we are not scared.

Through their testimony, this community member is showing the impact that this policy could have on creating safer and more loving communities for the residents that need it the most. As Beyerlein and Chaves (2020) found in their research, political mobilization by progressive congregations has increased tremendously during the 21st century, especially for pro-immigrant issues. These community members are a part of this mobilization of faith-based activism that uses religious traditions and values to call out the dehumanization of undocumented immigrants. The diverse religious traditions represented in such testimonies represent the strong coalition of interfaith activists who believe in a shared humanity for all regardless of religious beliefs or citizenship status.

Community members also used these public testimonies to tell legislators the stories of those who have been impacted by local law enforcement's cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This is significant because public testimonies allow undocumented immigrants — through the support of community organizations and peers — to tell their stories directly to the legislature about the fear and harm they have faced as a result of Oregon's weak sanctuary protections. In fact, the lack of sanctuary protections has also caused harm to those with legal status through racial profiling. Isaiah is a United States citizen who submitted a public testimony describing his painful experience being wrongfully detained by ICE. In his testimony, he explains that in 2017, he was accompanying his wife to the courthouse when he was racially profiled and then illegally detained by ICE agents. Explaining the trauma that experience left on him, he writes, "I will never forget that day and the painful mark it has left on my life. I feel like I am living it every day and can't get away from it. It hit me really hard and it was obviously wrong. No one should have to go through this." By sharing his story, Isaiah is pleading with his representatives to enact this policy to take a stand against federal immigration authorities and to prevent instances like his own.

Additionally, undocumented community members shared their stories with representatives through testimonies submitted on their behalf by fellow community members. Lucy is a Washington County resident who told her story of being detained by ICE:

> Many years ago, I came to this country of opportunities. I was stopped for a traffic violation and I was detained without the right to respond. ICE picked me up and took me to a detention center. My family did not know where I was, and I was not given the right to make a phone call. This experience caused various mental and emotional traumas and it resulted in depression. I still feel pain just by remembering that difficult

> experience. That is why I ask you to please vote in favor of HB 3265 to prevent more suffering and family separation.

In her testimony, Lucy described this awful violation of sanctuary that separated her from her family and left her fearful and traumatized. These stories are so important within the policy-making process as they present examples of real humans that are impacted by the lack of government protection. Through these testimonies, Isaiah, Lucy, and others with similar experiences are using the avenues available to them as community members to call their representatives to action. By telling their stories and explaining the impact of a weak sanctuary policy on their and their families' lives, community members used their organizational skills and life experiences to construct belonging through influencing the policy process.

Calling for accountability and negotiating protections: How community members advocated for the promise of sanctuary

By engaging with the legislative process of House Bill 2365, community members were able to negotiate with opposing groups to ultimately achieve their goals for the community. During my interview with Alaide, she explained that during IMIrJ's campaign for the bill, the organization connected with faith leaders or community members in areas that needed more of a push to support the bill. They worked closely with the bill's advocates in Salem to strategize meetings between IMIrJ leaders and representatives or their constituents. By utilizing their faith network, IMIrJ focused on the communities in Oregon that were less supportive of the bill to have their community members inform and advocate for them. The use of these networks is so important in both the actions of activists and the policy-making process. Not only do networks play a

role in supporting immigrants as exemplified by the work of OCAN, networks are important in the policy process as they allow community members to communicate, collaborate, and to connect to reach shared goals even across geographical and political boundaries.

In addition to IMIrJ's strategizing, community members used their written public testimonies to directly address those who opposed HB 2365 and to call their representatives to take action. Ally is a congregation member of the First United Methodist Church of Portland and is a resident in House District 34 of Oregon, Washington County. Ally directly speaks to her representative saying, "Rep. Helm, I particularly call on you to support HB 3265 because you know how vital immigrants are to the health and prosperity of our communities here in House District 34." This represents the power of community voices in the policy process as policies are the most beneficial when the legislature knows the impact that they have on communities. Another community member, Ginny, writes about her district and acknowledges that not everyone may support this policy.

> As a constituent, living in Rep. Lily Morgan's district, I am aware that a few of my neighbors do not support this legislation. However, I am writing to share that I am part of an active network of people of faith who are committed to working with immigrants in our community as they navigate a complex immigration system that all too often separates families and tears communities apart. This law is really about respecting people and communities. By working together we can ensure that all Oregonians feel safer. I urge you to pass HB 3265.

Ginny is a resident of House District 3, the Grants Pass area, which is generally more politically conservative. She acknowledges that this may be a politically contentious bill but she frames her call to action as a way to improve the lives of *all* Oregonians. As

Ginny explains, when undocumented community members do not have to fear local law enforcement cooperation, there is more trust rooted in the community. When community members have more avenues to call for accountability and seek recourse, the sense of belonging is strengthened for every person regardless of legal status. By negotiating with their representatives and presenting their arguments, community members used their access to the decision makers to organize and showcase how this policy would improve the lives of those in their communities. By participating in the democratic process, community members like Ginny showcase how important community mobilization is to push pro-immigrant initiatives (Betancur and Garcia, 2021; Kotin et. al 2011). Using the political opportunities available to them, community members utilized their organizational skills and narratives to influence the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act.

The Sanctuary Promise Act: A community-written bill

Through the community's influence, the Oregon legislature voted to pass the Sanctuary Promise Act on June 3rd, 2021, and it was put into effect on July 19, 2021. The Sanctuary Promise Act has five major provisions: disentanglement of local public bodies cooperating with federal agents for immigration enforcement, access to justice by prohibiting warrantless civil arrests around Oregon courthouses, accountability by allowing community members to seek private action when the law is violated, prohibition of detention contracts between local correctional facilities and the federal government, and prohibition of private detention centers in Oregon (Sanctuary Promise Act, 2021). The passage of this policy was a major win for sanctuary activists who had

been fighting for these protections for decades. Through these provisions, activists took one step closer to ensuring that every Oregonian is able to find sanctuary.

For the purposes of my thesis project, I focused on the first three provisions of the Sanctuary Promise Act as those clearly tie the connection between sanctuary activism and sanctuary policy. During my interview with Leland, he explained that one of the most crucial pieces of this policy is the mechanisms it provides to enforce sanctuary policy as for long, "the government wasn't enforcing it, the community was enforcing it through political, public pressure." With mechanisms such as the hotline and requiring public bodies to document violations, the government now must enforce sanctuary and be held accountable for its violations. Additionally, the Sanctuary Promise Act allows community members to file a lawsuit when the government violates its commitments to sanctuary. This is an important mechanism for helping community members access justice when necessary. For undocumented people who are often marginalized from our legal and political systems, such provisions are so important in guaranteeing their rights and allowing them to seek justice when the government fails to protect them. None of these provisions would have been possible if community members did not take action to influence the policy process to advocate for such protections for the sake of the safety and belonging of undocumented Oregonians.

After analyzing the labor that went into creating and passing the Sanctuary Promise Act, it became evident to me that community members in support of sanctuary were one if not the most influential groups in the crafting and passage of this bill. Through leaders like Cam, Leland, and Alaide, local activists had a clear vision of what they wanted to see in Oregon and what they needed to do in order to ensure that vision

would be implemented. Community organizations are important hubs for community power as they provide individuals with the ability to make connections with those who share the same values, strengthening their ability to organize and take collective action (Steil and Vasi, 2014). During our interview, Alaide explained that IMIrJ's work is "to close the gaps between the systems that make our communities very unsafe and the principles that we want to live, which is that everybody should be able to live in sanctuary." IMIrJ's organizational skills allowed them to reach across the state to call members of all different faith communities to action to fight for a shared goal. This is an incredibly rare occurrence in the world of immigration policy. Quite possibly, the biggest asset that community members had in this policy process was their shared vision of constructing belonging for undocumented community members. This shared mission of a true sanctuary state motivated community members from all different parts of Oregon with all different experiences to testify to their representatives about the importance of this bill. Most importantly, community members uplifted the voices and experiences of those harmed by the lack of sanctuary protections. For undocumented Oregonians, the community activism and the passage of this policy reaffirmed their identities and rights to safety and sense of belonging as Oregonians. As Leland said, this "was the fruit of community organizing."

Chapter 3: "It's just kind of part of the DNA of Oregon": The Future of Immigrants' Rights in Oregon

The Oregon sanctuary movement was and still is an inspiring process of personal and collective action and growth motivated by love and care for the community. From its beginning in the 1980s, the Oregon sanctuary movement took risks in order to respond to those in need, as churches offered Central American immigrants protection and shelter. This original model of sanctuary is still present in many ways, specifically in the use of religious and community networks and the religious, political, and ethical motivations of activists. However, this model has had to adapt and evolve in order to properly respond to exclusionary federal policies and the needs of undocumented community members. This meant activists had to strategize and work more covertly to support undocumented community members without risking their safety. By centering the voices of the immigrant community in the movement, activists and advocates have helped the movement evolve by uplifting the humanity of undocumented immigrants, thereby helping them have more agency within sanctuary activism. In addition to these personal and social changes, the political context of the movement has changed drastically over the past 40 years. Increased immigration enforcement, especially during 2016 to 2020, forced community members to fill in where Oregon's original sanctuary policy was lacking in protection. This necessitated the movement to gear its efforts towards policy change.

The Oregon sanctuary movement proved itself to be a resilient and adaptable campaign especially through the creation and passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act. The provisions codified in this bill are protections that activists have been fighting for

long before the House Bill even made it to the legislature. Through the work of community organizations' leaders, these demands were presented to the legislature and the stories of undocumented community members were shared and uplifted. The leadership, organizational skill, bargaining skill, and passion of community members strengthened their campaign to create a more inclusive Oregon for all. As an essential 'group' in this policy process, community members effectively wrote, advocated for, and helped pass the Sanctuary Promise Act to construct belonging in their communities. By seeing the fight for immigrants' rights in Oregon as a process, my research project understands that policy wins like the Sanctuary Promise Act are just one manifestation of the continuous toil of sanctuary activists to enact and express their demands for more inclusive communities.

Leading in terms of statewide sanctuary policies, Oregon's future of immigrants' rights is on an uncertain yet hopeful path. In our interview, Cam from Pueblo Unido PDX explained that sanctuary is only a temporary solution: "sanctuary is a concept within this over-criminalized, over-militarized immigration force which is the reality in this country. So, I think it's still a band aid until we get to that larger, more transformative change in society." As Cam said, sanctuary as a concept and practice is meant to resist larger systems that fail to support immigrants in the first place. The historic and current approach to federal immigration policy in the United States often sees undocumented immigrants as undeserving of citizenship due to their position in society. As Davis (2020) and Paik (2017) note in their research, sanctuary is a limited form of resistance that activists and legislators can enact in a political context that oppresses undocumented people. While sanctuary can cultivate belonging, it is only a

"band aid" solution within a federal immigration system that fails to acknowledge and uplift the humanity of undocumented immigrants.

At the time of our interview in early 2021, Cam said that one hope he has for the future of Oregon is the guarantee of legal representation for undocumented immigrants going through immigration court proceedings. Mere months after our interview, the Oregon House Legislature passed Senate Bill 1543, Universal Legal Representation, which "will guarantee that immigrant Oregonians in deportation proceedings have access to a free immigration attorney through the creation of a statewide system for immigrant defense" (Mensing, 2022). On top of the passage of the Sanctuary Promise Act, this victory for the immigrants' rights movement once again gets Oregon one step closer to becoming a sanctuary for all through the means of legal representation and a fair chance at justice through the legal system. Even if the path forward for immigrants' rights is unclear, my research suggests that the sanctuary movement will continue its fight regardless of what direction it goes.

When I set out on this project, I did not expect to be encouraged by the hopefulness enshrined in the sanctuary movement. However, as I collected and analyzed my data, I was presented with hopeful stories of activists taking action and trying their best to create a better Oregon. I interviewed amazing, hard-working advocates who are motivated by their shared goal of a sanctuary for all. I read the testimonies of undocumented immigrants and their allies and I was stunned at the sheer power represented in the need for community healing and support. Supported by my advisors and inspired by the stories of those a part of this project, I found myself believing what one of the participants said in her interview: "I think it's just kind of part

of the DNA of Oregon to, you know, a thirty-year Sanctuary law, to respect and support immigrants." Although sanctuary is a limited form of resistance and enacting inclusion, the Oregon sanctuary movement shows that sanctuary is a necessary mechanism for constructing belonging in our current political context. As Dr. Linda Rabben writes about her research on sanctuary, "My research has taught me that desperate people will always find ways under, over, or around barriers, and strangers will welcome them" (2017). I could not agree with Dr. Rabben more as I found myself recharged and more hopeful after the arduous yet rewarding process of writing this thesis. This feeling of hope and motivation is rare for a student studying immigration policy and I am incredibly grateful to be sharing it with others. This project not only expanded my understanding of sanctuary and the power of community, but also convinced me that the promise of sanctuary in Oregon is in fact possible.

Areas for Further Research

Research on sanctuary generally focuses primarily on sanctuary as a theoretical concept in certain disciplines or on city-wide case studies. However, this project suggests that much can be learned from studying state-wide case studies of sanctuary. My research also indicates that religion and spirituality are aspects of immigrants' rights activism that are still incredibly relevant for scholars as meanings of sanctuary continue to evolve. Additionally, research on the interweaving of activism and the public policy process is another potential avenue for understanding the impacts of community activism on policy and vice versa.

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