

It's a Family Affair:
Inter-generational Mobilization in the Spring 2006 Protests¹

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From March 10 to May 1, 2006, between 3.5 and 5 million people across the United States participated in immigrant rights rallies (Fox, Selee & Bada 2006). Newspaper reports and early analyses of the marches suggest that a significant proportion of participants were under the age of 18 (e.g., Fox, Selee & Bada 2006; Flores-Gonzalez, et al. 2006; Wang & Winn 2006). One account of the May 1st rally in Oakland, California claims that a quarter of marchers were school-age children and teenagers (Rauh 2006). If this estimate is accurate and representative of other demonstrations, one million youth may have participated in the demonstrations, boycotts and other immigrant rights events of spring 2006.²

This impressive youth mobilization demands study and explanation. Yet methodological roadblocks and limited theoretical tools have hampered academics' ability to study young people's civic and political engagement. Institutional review boards and human subject protocols make it difficult to research those under the age of 18.³ Theoretically, youths' civic and political engagement is an underdeveloped area. Barrie Thorne's observation twenty years ago that academic knowledge and thinking "remain deeply and unreflectively centered around the experiences of adults" (1987:86) remains quite accurate today.

Unfortunately, models of adult participation map poorly onto the experience of children and teenagers and none would have predicted the high level of youth participation in the spring 2006 protests. Literatures that explicitly consider youths tend to flow either from research on school-based civic education and community service learning (Youniss, McLellan & Yates 1997; Yates & Youniss 1998; McNeal 1998; Youniss, et al. 2002; McDevitt & Chaffee 2000; McDevitt & Chaffee 2002), or from an

older political science literature on political socialization (Jennings & Niemi 1968, 1974, 1981; Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995). The former, while rich, focuses predominantly on schools and programmatic interventions, offering a relatively narrow slice of youth citizenship. The latter, of impressive pedigree, was marginalized by contemporary political scientists and sociologists until very recently.⁴ Social movement scholars, who document young people's participation in the protests of 1960s and 1970s, do not generally see youth participation within the context of family participation (McAdam 1988; Morris 1982). More generally, very little of this scholarship, old or new, examines immigrant families. Are processes of political engagement and socialization identified among the native-born population the same for immigrant families?

This article begins to build an account of youth engagement and family political socialization using the spring 2006 protests as a lens and case study. It draws on early findings from the Immigrant Families' Political Socialization project, which conducted in-depth multi-generational interviews of Mexican-origin families in Richmond and Oakland, California. We use these data to make three claims.

First, our data confirm that the protests of spring 2006 mobilized large segments of the Mexican-origin population, both adults and youths, and that among these individuals, a significant number had never before engaged in any political activity. We argue that such large-scale mobilization was, in part, due to the inter-generational sharing of information and opinions, as well as mobilizing efforts by some family members of others in the household. Put simply, the protests were a family affair, and accounts that fail to examine family and youth participation miss a critical part of the story of the 2006 immigrant rights demonstrations.

We also make the case for a model of bi-directional political socialization. Family participation was not because parents' encouraged or required their children to attend. Instead, we contend that youth played an active and independent role in these mass mobilizations. Youth engagement takes on particular salience within immigrant families because it opens the possibility that political socialization—the process of acquiring or developing attitudes, values, beliefs, skills and behaviors related to public affairs and politics—occurs in two directions: from parent to child, as conceived by the traditional literature on this topic, *and* from child to parent, as children with greater access to the English language and mainstream institutions provide political information to their parents and encourage them to participate.⁵ Such dual socialization is probably also evident in non-immigrant families (McDevitt & Chaffee 2002), but it is particularly relevant for immigrant families where adults face legal, linguistic and experiential barriers to political and civic participation.

Finally, we suggest that a focus on families and inter-generational influences also helps us to see and conceptualize the family as a particularly useful site for political mobilization. As different family members access and pool together different information sources, networks and institutional experiences, inter-generational communication and interaction can increase all members' knowledge and participation. In the context of the immigrant rights marches, adolescents drew on new technologies, peer networks and resources from schools and youth organizations, while parents drew on experiences in workplaces and churches and exposure to ethnic media. When information, opinions and experiences were shared, the possibilities for widespread participation increased.

<H1> Theorizing Youths' Engagement and Political Socialization

Research on adults' civic and political participation emphasizes the influence of education, work force participation, occupation, income and marital status in explaining differences in individuals' civic or political engagement (Putnam 2000; Rosenstone & Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995). Given their age and stage in the life course, none of these measures work very well for children and teenagers. Most have not yet reached the end of their educational trajectory; few work full-time; personal incomes are modest if not nonexistent; and few are married or have children.

We can, of course, use parents' socio-economic characteristics as proxies for youth attributes. Indeed, an important component of indirect inter-generational political socialization occurs when adult family members' shape children's opportunities to acquire education, jobs and income, all of which subsequently affect political engagement. Among the U.S.-born there is a strong, though imperfect, relationship between parents' socio-economic status and children's eventual education and occupation (e.g., Solon 1992). However, among immigrants, this relationship becomes weaker, especially in the context of inter-generational mobility. For example, while just under 50 percent of Mexican-born immigrants have only eight years of schooling or less, in the second generation this percentage plummets to 15 percent for women and 11 percent for men; conversely the proportion of four year college degrees triples from about 4 percent of all Mexican-born immigrants to about 12 percent of the second generation (Bean & Stevens 2003:134-35). Not surprisingly, wage differentials between those of Mexican origin and the native-born, non-Hispanic white population are cut in half or more as we

move from the first to the second generation (Bean & Stevens 2003:139). For the children of immigrants, relative to the native-born, parents' education and occupation are poorer predictors of their future.

Empirically, we know that young people can be political actors. Indeed, college students are often singled out for their consequential participation in contentious political action, ranging from the U.S. civil rights and feminist movements (Freeman 1975; Morris 1984; McAdam 1988), to democratization movements in Eastern Europe and China (Calhoun 1997; Zhao 1998). Less has been written about high school students, but particularly within the history of the Chicano movement, they played an important role. Carlos Muñoz argues that the walk outs by Mexican American high school students in East Los Angeles in 1968 signaled “the entry of youth of Mexican descent into the history of the turbulent sixties” (1989: xi).

According to social movement scholars, youth are particularly apt to get involved due to biographical availability, “the absence of personal constraints that may increase the cost and risks of movement participants such as full-time employment, marriage and family responsibilities” (McAdam 1986: 70). Put simply, youth participate because little is stopping them, costs are modest and they have time on their hands.

Although the idea of biographical availability has appeal, comparisons of social movement joiners with those who sit out find little support for this proposition. Beyerlein and Hipp's review of existing studies suggests that “In many cases... personal constraints appear to *facilitate* involvement in social movement participation” (2006: 220). In line with research on mainstream, institutionalized politics, the middle aged are more likely to participate than those in their teens and early twenties, and those with

school-aged children participate more than others (Beyerlein & Hipp 2006; Rosenstone & Hansen 1993; Verba, Scholzman & Brady 1995).⁶

The familial nature of the spring 2006 protests—when youth came out *with* their parents to marches and rallies—suggests an alternative account of youth mobilization within the context of family politicization.⁷ Prior research on political socialization contends that parents transmit both general orientations about politics (e.g., political efficacy and trust) and more specific attitudes (e.g., political ideology and partisan identification), as well as the propensity to be politically active (Verba, Scholzman & Brady 1995; Beck & Jennings 1975, 1991; Jennings & Niemi 1981). According to García Bedolla (2005), parents can also help their children develop a strong, positive group identity as Latino, which furthers political engagement. Such effects might vary by urban location (Sanchez-Jankowski 1986). Adolescents are viewed as especially ripe for political socialization since they are becoming increasingly aware of the political world around them as they develop their sense of self and identity, yet their attitudes are more unformed and open to change than at later stages in life (Chaffee, McLeod & Wackman 1973; Jennings & Niemi 1974; Tedin 1974, 1980).

Even though inter-generational transmission of attitudes and behaviors from parent to child is far from perfect, studies show that the influence of family and, especially, parents is a strong predictor of later political attitudes and behavior. Beyond the indirect effects of family socio-economic conditions, family members provide direct political stimulation through family discussion and they model political behaviors, such as when they go to vote. Children with politically active parents are more likely to become politically engaged (Jennings & Niemi 1974; Verba, Scholzman & Brady 1995),

whereas “those whose socialization in childhood is weak [...] exhibit a delayed pattern of political development” (Jennings, Stoker & Bowers 2001: 22). Transmission of political values, attitudes and behaviors is strongest when parents participate actively in politics, when both parents share the same political views, and when parents provide clear and consistent cues (Jennings & Niemi 1974; Jennings, Stoker & Bowers 2001).

Significantly, these findings are almost entirely based on research with native-born America citizens. Parents are assumed to have much greater knowledge about and experience with the political system and public debate than children or adolescents. Left unquestioned is the assumption that parents hold relatively developed views of American politics, have access to political information and have the legal status to engage in acts such as voting.

These assumptions become much more tenuous in the case of immigrant families. U.S.-born children often have more direct access to the mainstream’s dominant language and culture than immigrant parents. Numerous studies document how the children of immigrants find themselves in the position of translator for their parents during medical exams, in interactions with public officials (including school employees and police), or during disputes with others, such as landlords (e.g., Bloemraad 2006; Kibria 1993; Orellana 2001; Portes & Rumbaut 2001). During such interactions, children must often make decisions or actively manage the encounter, not just translate two (or more) adults’ conversation. We have some evidence that 1.5 generation immigrant children—those children who move to the United States very early in their childhood—are particularly apt to become leaders of community-based organizations because of the advocacy work they do for their families at a very young age (Bloemraad 2006: 192-194). In a pilot

study of child-to-parent political socialization in immigrant families, Wong and Tseng (2008) found that college students with immigrant parents report acting as translators of political materials, as teachers of political concepts and institutions, and as opinion-shapers, discussing political stances with their parents. We consequently have solid ground to believe that processes of political socialization from parents to children might be attenuated in immigrant families, and that the reverse process—child to parent political socialization—might also occur.

Beyond the context of the family, the existing political socialization literature also identifies other agents of socialization, such as schools, peers, the media and social and civic activities (Jennings & Niemi 1974; Serbert, Jennings & Niemi 1974; Tedin 1980; Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995). Jennings and Stoker (2004) find that adolescent participation in church and community service develops civic skills, fosters political trust, and contributes to higher levels of civic engagement later in life. Yates and Youniss (1998) argue that youth participation in school-based community service activities increases awareness of the problems of society and provides a basis from which to develop a political identity.⁸ In the same way that adults are influenced by their workplaces, neighborhoods and organizational affiliations, youth are similarly enmeshed in a web of potential political and civic influences.

Building on these findings, we suggest that different family members may draw on different institutions when sharing information, viewpoints and opportunities for participation. Clearly schools play an important part in the lives of children, and research shows that school-based political learning activities can also augment parents' political socialization (McDevitt & Chaffee 2002; McDevitt & Chaffee 2000). Both parents and

children gain skills and information from participation in community associations and religious institutions, but their patterns of membership may well differ. Media also affect both parents and children, but the types of media older and young family members access likely differ, particularly as youth adopt new communication tools, such as social networking sites like MySpace.com and Facebook.com. In immigrant families, in particular, adults may rely on non-English media, while children are more likely to access mainstream, American media sources. Parents and children also draw on different networks of friends and acquaintances, depending on social ties, organizational affiliations, employment and school attendance. In immigrant families, adults' social ties may be more firmly rooted in co-ethnic networks while children may have greater inter-ethnic friendships, widening their networks of information and mobilization. In cases where parents and children have strong, positive and frequent interactions, family members can "pool" sources of political mobilization and socialization. The possibility of such pooling underlines the need to shift our conceptualization of political socialization and engagement away from the individual and towards the family as a unit.

<H1> Data and Methods: Multi-generational In-depth Interviews

The arguments in this article draw on in-depth interviews with youth and parents undertaken as part of the Immigrant Families' Political Socialization project. While most researchers agree that parents assert great influence over children's political development, attempts to measure the direct effect of parents' influence often produce modest findings, perhaps due to the methodological individualism inherent in many past studies. As McDevitt and Chaffee note, "Experiments and surveys on political behavior

are routinely conducted on individuals as the unit of analysis. But... [m]uch of what stimulates a person toward political involvement occurs as shared experiences within the home, not privately within the mind of a single person” (2002: 285). Ideally, we would want ethnographic observation of people in their homes, but given the difficulties of such research, in-depth interviewing is a second-best option for probing the dynamics behind standard responses to survey questions about partisanship, political ideology and the like.

We interviewed members of 40 Mexican-origin families living in the cities east of the San Francisco Bay, largely in Richmond and Oakland, California. We asked general questions about the respondent’s current and past civic and political engagement, and we asked specific questions about participation in and attitudes towards the spring 2006 events. Interviewers were encouraged to follow-up on respondents’ answers to learn about the process by which people became involved in the marches, rallies and boycotts, as well as the conversations respondents had with others about these events.

To better understand the family dynamics of political socialization, we interviewed, within each family, a U.S.-born youth between the ages of 14 and 18,⁹ and at least one Mexican-born parent.¹⁰ We recruited roughly equal numbers of parents with one of three legal statuses: undocumented, non-citizen legal permanent resident or naturalized citizen. Legal status is a critical variable in thinking about political socialization. Not only does legal status determine who may participate in the formal electoral system through voting, but lack of status can make individuals hesitant to engage in any public activity that could draw the attention of local authorities or immigration officials. At the same time, the experience of becoming a naturalized citizen might result in greater political awareness and involvement. We also recruited four

families with U.S.-born citizen parents as a control group, for a total of 79 individual interviews. All but four interviews were conducted between March 21, 2006 and August 10, 2006, with 97 percent occurring after the large wave of May 1st rallies.¹¹

Prior research overwhelmingly demonstrates that socio-economic status, and especially education, correlates strongly with civic and political engagement (Miller & Shanks 1996; Rosenstone & Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995). To understand how immigrants of modest economic backgrounds and limited schooling learn to participate in the associational and political life of their new homes, we restricted participation in the study to families where the interviewed immigrant parent has less than a high school education.¹² While such a restriction prevents us from comparing inter-generational political socialization across families with different socio-economic statuses, it helps us better examine the possible effects of parental legal status by controlling for other known influences on participation. It also helps us understand political socialization in a group little studied by students of politics, and one that faces significant obstacles to civic and political engagement.¹³

Families were recruited through four public high schools with large Latino populations in Oakland and Richmond, California, and through snowball sampling to include a few families with students at private (often religious) schools.¹⁴ As Table 1 shows, Oakland and Richmond are both ethnically and racially diverse “majority-minority” cities with large percentages of foreign-born migrants. Latinos—the bulk of whom are Mexican-origin—make up a quarter of the population in Oakland and a third of Richmond’s residents. Minorities and immigrants are even more heavily represented in the public school systems. Thirty-five percent of all students in the Oakland Unified

school district are Latino, while that proportion increases to 40 percent in the West Contra Costa school district, of which Richmond is a part.¹⁵

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

In the four schools we targeted (Richmond High, Kennedy High, Castlemont Business and Information Technology and Castlemont Leadership), Latino students comprised at least a third of the student body in each school. As Table 2 shows, in Richmond High, Latino students are the clear majority, making up almost three quarters of all students. All four schools cater to a large population of low income students, as seen in the significant number of students qualifying for free or reduced fee lunches, and all four are considered “under-performing,” with less than half of students passing the California High School Exit Exam. Table 3 summarizes the interviews completed, distinguishing families based on the interviewed parent’s legal status.

TABLES 2 & 3 ABOUT HERE

<H1> Participation in the Immigrant Rights Protests in the East Bay

Compared to other metropolitan areas in the United States, mobilization against H.R. 4437, the “Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005,” and in favor of legalization and immigrant rights was slower and less concentrated in the San Francisco Bay Area. As early as March 10, 2006, between 100,000 and 300,000 people marched in Chicago, while on March 25 anywhere from 200,000 to one million people rallied in Los Angeles.¹⁶ In the Bay Area, the first sizeable mobilization for immigrant rights only occurred on April 10, the “National Day of Action,” bringing together an estimated 25,000 people in San Jose.

On May 1st, tens of thousands of Bay Area residents participated in marches and boycotts, but events were dispersed throughout the region. The largest rally occurred in San Jose, where an estimated 100,000-125,000 people participated. Numbers were lower in San Francisco, where the crowd was put at about 30,000. These figures, representing the two largest cities in the Bay Area, understate participation, however, since dozens of rallies occurred in smaller cities and towns. In Oakland, police estimated that 15,000 to 17,000 people congregated in the downtown area, although organizers put the figure much higher, at 50,000, noting that not all participants in the 100 block march were able to get to the final destination in front of City Hall and the Ronald V. Dellums Federal Building (Bender & MacDonald 2006). In Richmond, between 2,000 and 8,000 people marched from three Catholic churches to converge on the city's Civic Center (Simerman 2006). These figures suggest that perhaps 35 and 15 percent of the Latino population in Oakland and Richmond, respectively, participated in local May 1st rallies.¹⁷ Others participated through boycotts. Throughout the region, schools reported dramatic reductions in attendance and employers with significant numbers of Latino workers closed their businesses or opened with significantly reduced staff.

<H2> A Family Affair: Unprecedented Cross-Generation Mobilization

The first striking finding from our research is respondents' unprecedented degree of participation in the spring 2006 events and its cross-generational nature. At the outset, we sought to recruit families with modest economic and educational resources for civic and political engagement, and some families that might face particular barriers due to non-citizen or undocumented status. Of those we interviewed, fully 61 percent attended a

march, participated in a boycott or engaged in some other direct action activity around immigration rights between March and May 2006.¹⁸ Among parents, 62 percent participated in some way, and among teens, the proportion was 61 percent.¹⁹ Despite the potential risk associated with participating in public demonstrations, almost all the undocumented parents interviewed participated in some manner (8 out of 9), compared to 6 of 13 naturalized citizens and 7 of 13 legal permanent residents. Of course, those lacking legal status had the most to fear in H.R. 4437, but supporting the idea that the protests were not just a manifestation of self-interest, 3 of the 4 U.S.-born parents interviewed also participated. Among the teens, all of whom are U.S. citizens, about two-thirds of the children of undocumented parents or of non-citizen permanent residents participated (6 of 9, and 8 of 12, respectively), compared to about half of the teens whose parents are naturalized citizens (7 of 13) or U.S. born (2 of 4). These findings suggest that undocumented parents do become involved in political activity, albeit within the context of an arguably unique moment of mobilization, and they may consequently play a role in helping their U.S.-born children become engaged citizens despite their legal status. At the same time, the data can also support the proposition that some youth encourage their parents' participation.

The widespread participation in spring 2006 protest activities stands in contrast to more modest engagement in other political activities. We asked the respondents a series of questions about their prior political participation, inquiring whether they had ever worked on a candidate campaign; worked on a ballot proposition or ballot initiative campaign; signed a petition; sent a letter or email to a public official; attended a political meeting; attended a neighborhood meeting; participated in any protest or march *other*

than the spring 2006 immigration rallies and (only for parents) whether they had ever made a financial contribution to a political campaign. Among parents, the median number of political activities was only one out of eight possible activities; 16 of the parent respondents had never engaged in any of these activities prior to the spring 2006.²⁰ Among the teens, the mean number of political activities was also one, as was the median. Nine of the 38 teen respondents reported never having engaged in any sort of political activity.²¹ Of those parents and teens who had never engaged in any prior political activity, over half (56%) participated in an immigrant rights activity in the spring of 2006. Put another way, of all those who did participate, almost a third (30%) told us that this was the first political activity in which they had ever participated in the United States.

A recurring theme in our interviews was the essential role played by social networks of friends, family and acquaintances in mobilizing respondents to participate in the spring 2006 events. This highlights the importance of studying political socialization and participation as an interactive process, rather than an atomized one (Bloemraad 2006: 79-101). In a number of cases, parents and teens were hesitant, even scared, of their first-time participation. Señora Sanchez,²² a legal permanent resident who participated in an April 10 march, explained:

There were a lot of people and they invited me. I took my daughter, the older one, and she told me, “Mami, I do not like to be doing this.” I think because there were a lot of people. And I am not like that either [someone who participates], not at all. ...I did not think there would be so many people and my older daughter could not believe what she was doing. I

told her that there is nothing bad and we are just supporting people. To tell you the truth, I am very scared of the kids that do bad things [attending the rally]. I feel like I will end up in prison for being there [giggling].

The personal encouragement of others helped overcome initial fears—in Señora Sanchez's case, her child's babysitter urged her to go—as did the desire to be part of what quite a few described as a movement of solidarity. Critically, from the perspective of familial political socialization, Señora Sanchez did not attend the march alone, but convinced her eldest daughter to attend, too.

Teens were also mobilized into political participation for the first time in spring 2006, most often through friends at school. The teenage daughter of a legal permanent resident, who had previously never participated in any political activity, attended two demonstrations, one on April 10 and another on May 1st. Abril explained:

At first I had no clue what was going on, but then all my friends were like, “Yeah, the immigrants... They're trying to kick everybody out. Like, if they find someone that is an immigrant, they're going to kick them out.” I was like, “Oh, that's not fair,” so they told us what days [the protests would be] through text messages on the phone and stuff.

Like Señora Sanchez, Abril was mobilized through personal networks, though in her case this was not only through face-to-face contact, but also through the medium of text messaging, something the teenage respondents reported doing frequently.

As with Abril, various respondents reported becoming much more exposed to political information because of the marches and in some cases, participation changed their attitude and behaviors toward politics. One single mother, an undocumented

migrant, had never before engaged in political activities, but she now watches the news and follows current events regularly, activities that she did not do before her participation in two Oakland marches. To the extent that mobilization is easier once people have participated at least once in an event or activity, the broad participation in the events of 2006 holds out the possibility of greater future engagement among this population of Mexican-origin residents.

Another common theme from the interviews was the familial nature of participation in the marches and boycotts. Señora Sanchez went to the April 10 march with her daughter, and Abril attended the May 1st march with her family. Abril's participation with her parents is especially noteworthy since she told us that her interactions with her parents are quite limited. Abril does not know how to read or write in Spanish, and she does not speak the language fluently, creating communication problems. Both parents also work long hours. When we asked Abril whether she talks to her parents about politics or current events, she told us no, the same answer her mother gave when asked the same question. This lack of communication even extends to talking about school. As Abril explained, "I really don't talk to them. When I get home, I go to my room. Usually they're never around, they're always working." Abril's mother said that she was unsure whether her daughter and she share similar political views, but "The only thing we agree on is the protests that have taken place, because the people need papers and we agree on that, totally." Reinforcing the notion that the protests were strong expression of collective solidarity and identity, as well as an important personal issue for participants, we found cases where the rallies brought parents and children together who often seem to live lives quite apart from each other.

The rallies also carried a strong emotional importance for families with close parent-child interaction, uniting family members of different generations and legal statuses within a generalized “Latino” community and reinforcing family bonds. The youth we interviewed, all whom had U.S. citizenship, overwhelmingly expressed solidarity with the plight of undocumented immigrants. In some cases the concern was personal, because of their parents’ status or that of family members. Yet not all teens knew their parents’ legal status. These teens and others not directly motivated by family circumstances felt solidarity with other Latinos and other immigrants.²³

Parents similarly participated for personal and collective reasons. Señora Pacheco is an undocumented immigrant whose only previous political activity was signing a petition to extend her children’s elementary school through to the eighth grade rather than stopping at the sixth. She participated in one of the local marches after her 11 year old U.S.-born son convinced her to attend. She found the experience a powerful one “because I felt a great emotion when the mass of people met. ...in that corner, there were three masses of people and when they all met, they clapped and I felt a great emotion, very nice, because as they were coming over, we were all united. And then we went together and left, all united.” She talked to her children about the marches and protests, including her older son, who participated in demonstrations with friends at school on May 1st. Discussion of and attendance at the protests occurred across generations.

<H2> Dual Political Socialization

A major strength of doing interviews with multiple members of the same family lies in a researcher’s ability to compare accounts of events, political attitudes and patterns

of engagement across generations. To analyze the degree of continuity or discontinuity between the political engagement of teens and parents in the same family, we divided our interviews into first or second generation (parents and teens, respectively), and we assigned people to three categories: average participation for those in their generation, low participation (as compared to the median score on the political participation index discuss above), or high participation.²⁴ The ranking of each parent-teen pair were compared, and families were labeled as having continuity or discontinuity in engagement across generations.²⁵ Using this system we found that 31 families had similar or continuous patterns of political engagement, while 6 (16%) showed discontinuity.

The high level of continuity is not surprising given parents and teens' shared living conditions, such as shared economic resources and residence in a particular neighborhood. Teen-parent continuity is also consistent with a traditional political socialization narrative where parents directly socialize their children into behaviors of (dis)engagement similar to their own. However, we contend that the strong patterns of continuity we found also arise from the socializing work of children and adolescents.

<H3> Parents Influence Teens

The earlier example of Señora Sanchez, who encouraged her daughter to participate in the protests, shows a traditional example of political socialization where the parent directly influences her child's participation and tries to influence her views on the issue of immigrant rights and legalization. We see the same dynamics in the case of Isabel, the 18 year old daughter of a naturalized U.S. citizen. Isabel attended the May 1st protest in Richmond with her father and sister. Asked whose idea it was to participate, Isabel responded:

Well, I guess my dad you can say. ...he went through that, he didn't have papers so he wanted me to go and be part of that. 'Cause he came from Mexico like that, and he wants a better life for the immigrants. He already had the chance. He came and he's already a citizen, and he wants that to be given to the immigrants. ...Sunday, we started talking about it. My dad was the one who said, "I want to go," and my sister and me, were like, "Oh well, we'll go with you."

In line with existing political socialization literature, Isabel's father shared his views and experiences, likely affecting those of his daughters, and he modeled a particular political behavior, which encouraged his daughters' participation.

Yet, as McDevitt and Chaffee (2002: 283) argue, parent to teen socialization should not be understood merely as direct inculcation, without an active role for the child. In Isabel's case, she did not merely go because her father attended the rally, she is also developing her own understanding of immigrant rights and policy. She explained that her participation was important because, "I wanted to help the Latinos try to get their green card so they can work, 'cause over there in Home Depot, there's a lot of immigrants there trying to get a job. I would think they have kids to support and I think they don't even have food, and that's bad." Isabel's sentiments are simple and direct. They are also, in the context of American immigration debates, inherently political.

<H3> Teens Influence Parents

We also heard repeated instances of teens influencing their parents or becoming active participants on their behalf. One single mother who is a naturalized U.S. citizen, Señora Huerta, explained that her daughters often provide translation and interpretation

help. Señora Huerta provided an example from the week before, when one of her daughters came to the doctor's office to assist her, and then also helped another person facing language barriers. This sort of help naturally spills over into political "translation": Señora Huerta's daughters not only translate election ballots and state propositions from English to Spanish, they also provide substantive interpretations and their political viewpoints. As she explains, "My daughter helps me: 'Mom, check this, this proposal this, and this proposal that. Mom, this one is good for you!' [laughs] She helps me out, both of them help me..." In this role, her daughters provide her with a type of political socialization, a role that the teen confirmed in our interview with her. As with the college students interviewed by Wong and Tseng (2008), the high school students in our study at times translate, teach and try to shape their parents' opinions.

Teen to parent socialization can occur because of teens' better English skills, but also because of their legal status. U.S.-born children, unlike their undocumented or non-citizen legal resident parents, hold citizenship. This provides them with protection and more tools for political participation than those of their parents. These children might even feel a greater need and responsibility to participate for their parents' sake. For example, Maria's mother is unauthorized while her father only received his permanent residency papers three years earlier, after many years in the United States without documents. Both parents did not attend the marches, wary of mass protest and violence. Maria's mother explicitly told her daughter and son not to go—"I was afraid that they [marchers] could cause a riot instead of marching and there was going to be violence"—while Maria's father, who also worried about the dangers of massive crowds, was less categorical and more open to having his children attend.

From Maria's perspective, there was little question about the need to participate. She explained, "At my school, there are a lot of Hispanic students... I guess their parents are immigrants and some of them are immigrants, too. And so since my parents are immigrants, I was like, well, I needed to do something about it." She participated in the April march in Richmond, and noted that while it was fun and the thing to do, "I also believed that it was something that I needed to do."

Beyond the immigrant rights marches, Maria feels that she is a bit more interested in politics and current events than her father, and quite a bit more than her mother. The family does not regularly talk about politics, though they will have conversations about issues like proposed immigration legislation or the war in Iraq. Maria noted that her father and she each try to shape the other's views. When her father—with whom she frequently disagrees—gives his opinion, Maria says that she is "attentive," since he is her father, but "I do not always agree with them so it is okay to have a different point of view." At times she tries to change her parents' opinion on political issues, with mixed success, "If I tell them something, they are going to listen, but they are stubborn. What they believe is what they will keep believing." In this case, we do not find clear evidence of effective teen to parent socialization, if we take a common policy stance among family members as our measure of socialization. However, we do find political dialogue, and one in which the child has an active part. Such conversations reinforce the legitimacy of talking about politics, and might increase information about current issues as the various parties to the discussion try to convince each other of their viewpoint (McDevitt & Chaffee 2002).²⁶

<H2> Sites of Mobilization

The size of the mass mobilizations from March to May 2006 was made possible in part because many Latinos were receiving information and encouragement from numerous sources. Among those we interviewed, most mentioned the role of the ethnic media, including Spanish language television and two nationally-syndicated radio DJs, Renán Almendárez Coello (“el Cucuy”) and Eduardo Sotelo (“el Piolín”). Both parents and teens said that friends and acquaintances talked about the marches as people tried to figure out whether they should go and who else was going. The strong push to participate from the ethnic media combined with interpersonal conversations to help convince many that they should join in, too. These dynamics were readily apparent among both teens and their parents.

Yet teens and parents also experienced mobilization pressures and political interactions unique to each generation. Taking a family-based, bi-directional approach to political socialization allows us to see families as places where diverse sources of information, social networks, institutional influences and opportunities for mobilization are brought together by different family members. To the extent that youths and adults access different institutions, organizations and networks, parent/child interactions expand the opportunities for all members of the household to become more political knowledgeable and engaged. We speculate that this would be particularly evident in immigrant families, where immigrant members might be more oriented to co-ethnics while U.S.-born children may be more focused on a diverse, “American” set of networks and institutions. Here we very briefly consider some of the knowledge, networks and institutions upon which different generations drew.

<H3> *Teen Mobilization: Schools, Youth Groups and Peers*

Not surprisingly, schools played a crucial role in the narratives that teens gave of their participation in the marches. Schools provide sites where teens come together to talk with each other and a physical location at which to rally. Adults in positions of authority at school, especially teachers, but also administrators, counselors and others, at time helped organize marches, facilitated the diffusion of information about the proposed immigration legislation and provided legitimacy to the protests, though in some cases, authorities worked to dissuade students from participating by demanding that students remain in school. Maria's account of the first march she attended in April, which started at her school, shows the uncertainty around the early protests and suggests that without the support of key individuals at school, adolescents such as she could have been demobilized rather than encouraged to participate:

In the morning, we went [to school] and there were people with posters and stuff, and they were like, "What are we going to do, what are we going to do?" I guess they just wanted to stand there and hold the signs and wait for people to pass or something... So we were standing outside and the security guard came outside and he was like, "You guys have the right to protest but only at lunchtime. You can't do it during school hours." And he said that he would start suspending people, so then I did not want to get suspended... I guess the people organizing it said, "We are going to the walk to [downtown]," and we [Maria and her friend] are like, "Should we go? Or should we stay?" And then we decided to go, so we marched all the way [downtown]... a couple of hours. It was fun

because you and your fellow classmates are part of something and so then we had signs and people would honk at us and people were taking pictures. Oh, and one of the principals went with us, so it was like all protected, and the police was with us, too. And when we got there, the superintendent [of the school district] was there, and some people spoke about what they believe and then afterwards there was a bus there that took us back to school.

Students at Maria's school played a key role in mobilizing and organizing this early march, but the support of school authorities gave it added legitimacy and made it appear safe to students like Maria.²⁷ Participation itself was a positive experience, setting the stage for further participation at future rallies such as the May 1st protest.

The importance of schools in mobilizing teens can be seen in the case of a young woman who did not attend the marches, though she sympathized with the goals of the protests. When asked why she decided not to attend, she responded that friends had gone but, "they didn't even tell me" about the marches or that they were planning to go. If they had asked, she said, she would have gone. Importantly, this young woman also told us that "I kind of got sidetracked last year, I kind of dropped out, you can say." The teen reported hearing about the immigration debates on television, but the media alone was not enough to spur her to participate, absent the invitation from her friends. Since she skips classes frequently, she was less likely to be mobilized by school networks.

Having children at school also mobilizes parents, either because children bring home information acquired at school or because of parents' own direct contact with their children's school. A number of the parents said that they participated in the marches

because someone at their child's school encouraged them to do so. Interestingly, elementary schools seemed particularly important in this regard, perhaps because parents came into more regular contact with teachers and school officials.

The influence of teens on parents is thus direct, as discussed earlier, and indirect, by bringing parents in contact with new networks through the activities of children. We see both of these dynamics in the case of Eduardo's family. Eduardo, a 17 year old soccer enthusiast, plays in an organized team that includes a number of friends from school. His mother also volunteers for the team.

Eduardo explains that he took the lead in his family in becoming part of the spring 2006 protests. He and his friends got together to organize a group of youth to participate in a March 25 rally. Although his parents did not participate—indeed, they were initially unenthusiastic about his activities—Eduardo encouraged his parents to participate in later events. Before the May 1st march, “I told them, like, how me and my friends are going to go and, if they go, it would be better ‘cause at least if one more person [goes], that can make a difference.” He initially met with resistance, “they weren't that into it,” but after a while, “they were agreeing with me, then they started to talk to me, like, about the other stories of how they worked.” Both of Eduardo's parents are now legal residents, but the protests played an important role in encouraging his parents to discuss more openly their history as undocumented migrants and the hardships they encountered.

From the perspective of Eduardo's mother, her son's encouragement and, importantly, the fact he plays soccer led her to participate in the marches. Eduardo's mother reported that she heard about the marches through TV and at church, but the main push was through the soccer team. The marches were announced at practices and games,

and then friends from soccer would talk about how important it was to support the protests, and they would ask each other whether they planned to attend, mutually reinforcing the importance of participation.

Finally, almost all the teens interviewed mentioned hearing about or coordinating participation in the marches through new technologies such as social networking sites like MySpace.com and cell phone text messaging. No parents reported using such technologies, although in a few cases parents mentioned that teens would do internet searches for them or talk about information gleaned from the web. With new technologies, teens clearly have the edge over their immigrant parents, allowing them to serve as a conduit of information for their parents.

<H3> Parents' Mobilization: Work, Church, and Ethnic Media

The experiences of the parents we interviewed find echo in other studies of adults' civic and political engagement. As Verba and colleagues (1995) argue, workplaces are important sites for skill acquisition, mobilization and political information. Señor Rivera, a custodian at a large East Bay employer, participated in a series of demonstrations at his workplace two years prior to the 2006 immigrant rights rallies. These demonstrations ultimately led to a successful union organizing campaign. The union was able to address some longstanding grievances, and in spring 2006, it was pressing for better wages for the custodial staff. According to Señor Rivera, these past organizing successes partially shaped his attitude and participation in the immigrant rights marches since "you can see how the process is going, because sometimes it is by a process... it is by steps." Señor Rivera was one of only a few respondents to explicitly mention the role of unions, but he was not the only one to talk about how workplaces

served as sites of information, political experience and mobilization. Another parent, who worked for a large company of over 400 people, discussed the marches with others during work. These workers came together to request time off on May 1st, and they were accommodated by their employer.

Few of the adult respondents could speak English fluently, so parents were more likely to rely on co-ethnic organizations where the dominant language of discussion was Spanish. Such organizations included the Catholic Church, which played an important role, especially in Richmond. The May 1st rallies began at three Richmond Catholic Churches, and a number of the respondents mentioned hearing about the protests through acquaintances at church or from the priest. Some teens were also active in church, but the number mentioning the church as a source of influence was lower than among parents. Similarly, while some teens paid attention to ethnic media, almost all parents relied on Spanish-language media for information. These “ethnic” influences sometimes spilled over to children, as when a parent would be watching the evening news on Spanish-language television, and the teen would listen in. Parents thus widened their children’s sources of information about immigration beyond mainstream American institutions.

<H1> Toward a Bi-directional Model of Political Socialization and Mobilization

Though limited, recent scholarship on bi-directional political socialization begins to offer an important corrective to traditional views, stressing how children can transmit cognitive information and influence political orientations or attitudes (McDevitt & Chaffee 2000; Wong & Tseng 2008). We found similar examples of information and

opinion exchange among members of Mexican-origin families in Richmond and Oakland, California. However, our interview data also offer evidence for direct behavioral influences, with parents and teens spurring each other into unprecedented political action during the immigrant rights events of 2006. We believe that the breadth of participation in these protests was due, in part, to family dynamics. Families act as sites where information, networks and institutional experiences can be pooled, they allow bi-directional political socialization across generations and they facilitate the interactive process of political learning, opinion-formation and mobilization.

While child-to-parent political socialization has been documented in native-born American families (McDevitt & Chaffee 2000, 2002), we speculate, in line with Wong and Tseng (2008), that such dynamics are even more pronounced in immigrant families. Immigrant adults' access to "mainstream" media and institutions can be limited by language, legal status and other obstacles of foreign birth. U.S.-born citizen children face fewer of these barriers, and they enjoy legally guaranteed political rights as well as the symbolic legitimacy of citizenship. For scholars of political socialization, expanding their studies to immigrant families will allow them to better specify the process of "trickle up" socialization and perhaps find that in the case of immigrant parents, the process is more akin to an upward "stream" than trickle.

Conversely, the rich literature on the second generation produced by immigration scholars should be expanded to include political outcomes and political socialization. The phenomenon of child translators and language brokers is regularly identified in such studies, often to highlight the negative repercussions of having children forced to take adult roles while parental leadership and authority are undermined. Interestingly, this

same negative view of disruption and breakdown in family structure also rests at the heart of some studies of political socialization in native-born families (McDevitt & Chaffee 2002). Without downplaying these concerns, the interview data we collected suggest, at least in the context of the 2006 spring protests, that political discussion and reciprocal interaction served to tighten family bonds, facilitated inter-generational communication (including in some cases where it was limited to begin with), and led to numerous instances of family participation in rallies and marches. Child to parent socialization is not necessarily all bad.

Given the potential benefits of child to parent socialization, we need to learn more about the conditions under which bi-directional learning and information sharing emerges as well as when it fails to materialize. In a number of families participating in this study, interactions and conversations between parents and their children are limited by language (neither generation is fluent in the primary language of the other), by time (especially when parents work long hours) and by the inter-generational frictions that are found in all families, in addition to the unique tensions faced by immigrant families that must negotiate multiple cultural backgrounds and expectations. Some families were working poor or living in economically precarious positions, a situation that can increase stress within the family and hinder positive inter-generational relations. Future research must be sensitive to the important role that socio-economic status might play in creating a context that allows for bi-directional socialization within the family. We also need studies that compare immigrant families from different national origins, as well as those of U.S. birth. For example, if the preservation of inter-generational hierarchies is important for maintaining family stability, as suggested by McDevitt and Chaffee (2002),

immigrants from countries with stronger norms of parental authority and respect for elders might be less open to bottom-up political socialization than parents in families with more egalitarian views of parent-child relations.

One limitation of the present study is its focus on a specific geographical area, the East Bay of the San Francisco area. While neither Richmond nor Oakland have particularly long or rich traditions of Latino activism, relative to places like Los Angeles or Chicago, at least one of the schools we used to recruit participants had a recent history of activism.²⁸ Future work must examine how local and regional contexts influence or mediate bi-directional political socialization and mobilization.²⁹ Political socialization might be more limited in places with histories of greater political repression or less civic engagement, though we would underline that the 2006 protests occurred across the United States, in large cities and small towns (Wang & Winn 2006).

Indeed, the spring 2006 protests were extraordinary for the breadth and depth of participation by millions of people across the United States. Some might suggest that these events were a unique occurrence, especially since they were not followed by further mass demonstrations in the two years that followed. In this article we have often use the terms political socialization and mobilization interchangeably, but it is possible that the collective effervescence in opposition to H.R. 4437 was an extraordinary, one-time *mobilization*, not an event with real power to influence long-term political *socialization*. To determine the extent to which participation in the events of 2006 was a formative political experience and acted as a catalyst for continued political engagement, we need follow up studies of those who participated in the events of 2006 and those who sat out. Many of the respondents in this study described their participation as positive and even

empowering, including those who participated for the first-time. Did these feelings persist, and if so, did these experiences lay the groundwork for further activism, around immigration issues or other public concerns?

We speculate that participation in the events of 2006 will indeed be a case of political socialization, not just mobilization. This hypothesis is based largely on the premise that it is easier to contemplate subsequent engagement after the initial fear of participation has been overcome, as in the case of those who had never done any political activity prior to 2006. Of course, it is possible that the lack of resolution over comprehensive immigration reform disillusioned marchers, or that participants do not view their activities in spring 2006 as political. Only further research will be able to answer these questions. Determining the long-term effects of participation in the protests, and especially for youths, is critical. If, as we suspect, first-time participation has greater effect in the formative moments of one's life, such as the transition from adolescence to young adulthood, then the widespread participation of minors may mark the beginning of a generational shift in American and Latino politics and a new era of heightened political activism among the youngest citizens of our democracy.

<H1> Endnotes:

¹ We would like to acknowledge the generous financial support of the Russell Sage Foundation and excellent research assistance by Edwin Ackermann, Vanessa Cruz, Abril Díaz, Monica Gudino, Sara Levine, Angela Fillingim, Ricardo Huerta Niño, Heidi Sarabía and Robert Vargas. Feedback and suggestions from Tomás Jiménez, Lisa García Bedolla, Kim Voss, two anonymous reviewers and attendees at the conference “Understanding the Immigration Protests of Spring 2006: Lessons Learned, Future Trajectories,” held at the University of California, Berkeley, in April 2007 helped improve this article.

² In California, urban school districts reported absentee rates of about one in five in the public K-12 system: 20 percent in San Diego, 18 percent in San Francisco and 16 percent in San Jose (Sebastian, Knight and Asimov 2006). Among Los Angeles middle and high school students, the absent rate climbed to 27 percent. One heavily Latino West Contra Costa high school used in this research to recruit study participants reported an absentee rate of about 70 percent.

³ IRBs consider children and adolescents unable to give independent informed consent. Thus, interviewers working on an important survey of participants at Chicago’s May 1st immigrant rights march could only approach people who were “clearly” over the age of 16 (Flores-Gonzalez et al. 2006).

⁴ Niemi and Hepburn trace the rise of political socialization research from the 1950s to its “premature death” in the 1970s (1995: 7). In the mid-1990s several prominent scholars, including Niemi, called for a “rebirth” of political socialization, and by 1999, Niemi

remarked that the field “has been making a comeback as of late,” although he conceded, “we have a way to go” (1999: 471, 474).

⁵ Sociologists of childhood express reservations about the term “socialization” (e.g., Thorne 1987; Orellana 2001). While in many ways a useful term, they contend that socialization implies that children have little or no agency in the present and that they are unformed and continuously preparing (or developing) for the future, when they can begin their productive lives as workers, parents, voters, etc. We retain the term political socialization since it is the dominant way of talking about these learning and development processes. However, we also argue that this socialization occurs at all stages of the life course, and can work in multiple directions across generations.

⁶ Beyerlein & Hipp (2006) instead suggest a two-stage model of mobilization where biographical availability may predict willingness to join a movement, but cannot help gain purchase on who, among those ideologically inclined, will actually participate. Munson (2007) argues for an alternative concept of “transition points,” moments in a person’s life when daily routines are drastically and irrevocably changed, and when social networks are shaken up and reconfigured.

⁷ The 2006 protests also differ from prior Chicano youth protests in two other respects: the 2006 marches were, on the whole, more focused on a particular issue than a broad societal critique and they were immigrant-focused rather than centered on protesting racism and discrimination faced by the long-standing U.S.-born Mexican American population. Indeed, today’s Latino youth are much more likely to be living in mixed-status families, our focus here, than youth in the 1960s. In 1970, those born in Mexico made up less than 17 percent of the total Mexican-origin population in the United States,

while in 2000, over 40% of Mexican-origin residents were themselves born in Mexico (Bean & Stevens 2003: 54).

⁸ Glanville notes, however, that “access to participation in various types of activities has been shown to differ by race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status and academic ability,” with the implication that such programs produce political stratification with more socialization in some populations than others (1999: 291, see also McNeal 1998). More generally, while classroom-based civic education can lead to significant increases in political knowledge, especially for twelfth-graders, participation in curriculum-based service learning yields mixed results in shaping youths’ political participation and attitudes (Galston 2001, see also Niemi & Junn 1998; Melchior, et al. 1999).

⁹ In two cases, we interviewed youth born in Mexico who migrated to the United States as small children (one was seven months old, the other was seven years old). Both acquired U.S. citizenship through a parent’s naturalization.

¹⁰ In three of the 40 families, we were only able to complete an interview with one family member, either the parent or teen, but not both. In two other families, both parents (not always of the same legal status) were interviewed, either separately or together. All youth and parent interviews were conducted separately, to preserve confidentiality.

¹¹ The origins of this project predate the spring 2006 protests, but as the momentum of the protests built through March and April 2006, we modified the interview schedule to include questions on these events.

¹² This is the modal level of educational attainment among Mexican-born residents of the United States; 70% of Mexican immigrants in the United States do not hold a grade 12 high school diploma

(<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/foreign/datatb1s.html>). Among the four families with U.S.-born parents, we restricted our interviews to those with less than a four-year college degree. We also required that Mexican-born parents had lived in the United States at least five years, to ensure that they had had some time to learn about local opportunities for civic engagement and U.S. politics in general.

¹³ Interviews were conducted with bilingual and bicultural interviewers, all but one of whom are of Mexican-origin themselves. Almost all parents chose to be interviewed in Spanish, and almost all teens chose English. Interviews lasted from 45 minutes to two hours, and were transcribed for analysis.

¹⁴ We used a variety of recruitment techniques. In one school we sent bilingual Spanish-English fliers to almost all parents; in two others, we set up tables in the common areas of the schools to recruit participants or did class presentations. In some schools, we also called families based on a (non-exhaustive) list of Latino students. Although none of our youth respondents had completely dropped out of school, a few were close to doing so, attending classes sporadically at best. We consequently feel that we were able to capture a wide variety of youth experiences within the socio-economic constraints placed on recruitment.

¹⁵ Population statistics are from the 2005 American Community Survey, available at http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_submenuId=&_lang=en&_ts (last accessed February 28, 2007). School data are from the California Department of Education, available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/> (last accessed February 28, 2007).

¹⁶ Participation numbers cited here and below are drawn from newspaper reports collected by the author, as well as those collected and compiled by Fox, Selee and Bada (2006) and Wang and Winn (2006).

¹⁷ We make this estimate by taking the mid-point between the lowest and highest estimate of the number of protestors at the Oakland and Richmond rallies, and divide this by the number of Latinos resident in each city. Such a rough calculation clearly has problems since not all participants were Latino or city residents, and not all Latinos in these cities participated in a local protest. (Indeed, some interviewees attended rallies in San Francisco or even Los Angeles). It nonetheless gives a rough sense of participation.

¹⁸ This figure is much higher than the estimate of 15-35% Latino participation in the May 1st rallies in Oakland and Richmond. In large part, this is because we included participation in *any* demonstration between March and May 2006, as well as participation in the boycott by not going to work or school. It is also possible that those families willing to participate in a research study such as ours are more willing to participate in activities such as immigrant rights rallies. Given the non-random sampling employed, such a possibility must be taken seriously. However, as we discuss below, we did not have the sense that most of the study's families were inordinately politically engaged; indeed, for many of the respondents, the events of spring 2006 were the first political activities in which they ever engaged.

¹⁹ These figures, and those reported below, exclude those interviewed before the protests gained steam. Our interviews also suggest that the number of teens participating might have been higher had some parents not insisted that their children attend school on the day of the May 1st protest, which was a Monday. Of those who went to school, some

wore white t-shirts in solidarity with marchers. Wearing a white t-shirt is clearly a sign of engagement and sympathy with the movement, but we did not count this as active participation in the rallies.

²⁰ We assigned a point for each time a respondent reporting having done one of these activities at least once, to create an eight point scale. Of the parent respondents, 16 reported no political activities, eight report one, nine reported two, two reported three activities, one reported four, two reported six activities and two parents reported having engaged in seven different types of political activities. Strikingly, three of the four parents who reported six or more activities were undocumented migrants; the fourth was born in the United States. To the extent that our sampling methodology might have been biased toward those who are more politically or civically engaged, the most pronounced bias likely occurred in the undocumented category, given the potential risks faced by those without papers. Broken down by legal status, the median participation score, before the protests, were 3 of 8 activities among the U.S.-born, 1 of 8 for the naturalized citizens, 0 of 8 for the legal permanent residents, and 2 out of 8 for the undocumented.

²¹ Of the teens, 9 reported no political activity, 12 reported one, 11 reported two, three reported three, and three reported having engaged, at least once, in four of the seven political activities we listed. (We did not ask teens if they had made a financial contribution to a political campaign.) We saw much less variation among the teens, based on parents' legal status. Teens of immigrant parents, regardless of their citizenship or documentation status, all reported a median participation of 1 out of 7 activities. The teens of U.S.-born parents reported a median of two activities.

²² All respondent names are pseudonyms.

²³ Feelings of solidarity or the desire to engage in direct political action was combined with other motivations. Many youth were also caught up in the idea that everyone was participating and they should not be left out—it was the thing to do—and a number liked the idea of skipping school to do something very different from their normal day-to-day routine.

²⁴ In ranking people as low, average or high participants, we used the scale discussed above and also included participation in the 2006 protests as an additional item. The median parental score was 2 out of 9, and for the kids it was 2 out of 8. Those with scores of zero or one activity were categorized as “low” participation, those with two activities as medium, and those with more than two as “high” participation.

²⁵ Families showed continuity if teen/parent scores both had low or low/medium scores, or if teen/parent scores were both high, or high/medium. In discontinuous cases, a parent or teen had a low score and the other family member had a high political engagement score.

²⁶ McDevitt and Chaffee (2002) call this process “trickle-up” influence. They argue that kids can indirectly and unintentionally affect parents’ political socialization when parents feel that their leadership and authority in a family are challenged by the child’s autonomous political discussion. They suggest that parents react by seeking more political information, strengthening opinion formation and increasing concept-oriented communication. While we agree that teens’ political discussions have an affect on parents through an increase in political exchange, we do not share the functionalist view of the family underlying McDevitt and Chaffee’s trickle-up model.

²⁷ This is in stark contrast to the experience of Chicano students during the 1960s walk outs, when school authorities harassed students and, in some cases, had student leaders jailed (Muñoz 1989).

²⁸ Some students at Richmond High played an important role in protesting and encouraging a court challenge to California's mandatory High School Exit Exam, an exam that critics claim hits minorities and English language learners particularly hard.

²⁹ For example, Sanchez-Jankowski's (1986) research on Chicano youth suggests important differences in political attitudes and activities between those living in Los Angeles, Albuquerque and San Antonio.

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Table 1: Statistical Profile of Oakland and Richmond, California, 2005

	Oakland		Richmond	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total Population	373,900		97,600	
18 years and older	282,000	75.4%	71,100	72.8%
under 18	91,900	24.6%	26,500	27.2%
enrolled in grades 9-12	18,100	4.8%	6,700	6.9%
Race/Ethnicity				
Hispanic/ Latino	93,600	25.0%	32,700	33.5%
non-Hispanic black	113,800	30.4%	27,500	28.2%
non-Hispanic white	88,000	23.5%	19,700	20.2%
Asian	60,700	16.2%	15,400	15.8%
Foreign-born				
naturalized citizen	104,800	28.0%	32,100	32.9%
non-citizen	43,600	11.7%	14,400	14.8%
	61,200	16.4%	17,700	18.1%
Socio-economic Characteristics				
Median household income (dollars)	44,100		52,800	
Unemployed (%)		10.5%		9.7%
Families under poverty line (%)		16.9%		15.2%
Children under 18 in poverty (%)		25.3%		24.4%

Source: 2005 American Community Survey, Census Bureau

Table 2: Profiles of Primary Recruitment Sites, 2005-2006 school year

	Richmond High	Kennedy High	Castlemont BIT	Castlemont Leadership
Total Enrolled Students	1,774	861	486	450
Latino or Hispanic students	72%	44%	54%	37%
English learners	53%	32%	29%	18%
Spanish EL (% total enrolled)	48%	27%	26%	15%
Low Income*	70%	72%	67%	75%
CA High School Exit Exam				
% passing English	37%	44%	29%	42%
% passing math	40%	45%	40%	40%

* Students eligible for free or reduced fee lunches.

Source: California Department of Education, Data & Statistics

Table 3: Interview Conducted, by Parent's Status

	U.S. Born Citizen	Naturalized Citizen	Legal Permanent Resident	Undocumented Resident	Total Interviews
Parents	4	14*#	13#	10##	41
Teens	4	12	13**	9	38
Total Interviews	8	26	26	19	79

* Both parents interviewed in 1 family; status of both parents was the same.

** Only teen interviewed in 1 family.

Only parent interviewed in 1 family.

Both parents interviewed in 1 family; mother's status was undocumented and father's status was legal permanent resident.