

## Excerpt 1

Excerpt from: Bazo Vienrich, A., & Torres Stone, R. A. (2022). The Educational Trajectories of Latinx Undocumented Students: Illegality and Threats to Emotional Well-Being. *Socius*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23780231221135966>

Research question: How does legal status impact the emotional well-being of undocumented Latinx students?

Claim: Even when undocumented students gain access to higher education, barriers to legal status generate chronic feelings of despair and hopelessness that shape their education trajectories.

In 2016, just a month before the presidential election, Bazo Vienrich met Rafael, a community college DACA-benefited Mexican student, at a fast-food restaurant in North Carolina. Rafael had graduated from high school that same year, and during a three-hour-long conversation he described how his high school years were filled with feelings of hopelessness. He recalled going through the motions as he did what it took—or so he thought—to be a high-achieving high school student. He knew that his path to college would not be linear like it seemed to be for his classmates and friends. But Rafael was a hard worker, and his high school grade point average (GPA) exceeded 4.0. He achieved all the things he thought would help him overcome his immigration status. When asked how being undocumented affected his educational dreams and goals, Rafael appeared overcome by hopelessness. He reflected,

Throughout all high school they told me, join clubs, do community service, do sports, get honor roll, do this, do that, and at the end I achieved it, but at the end, when I graduated high school, I graduated with a four something GPA, vice president of a club, I was in swimming, soccer varsity, I feel like I achieved more than the average student that went to a decent school, but at the same time, the fact that they were gonna go, in the fall, to higher education, to enjoy life, while I was gonna stay home in community college. It crushed my heart.

As a DACA beneficiary living in North Carolina, Rafael was not eligible for in-state tuition. As such, the most affordable college option for him was to attend a community college where he could pay tuition as an out-of-state resident and live at home with his parents. Despite Rafael's impressive academic record and extracurricular accomplishments, the realization that he would have to follow a different path than his legally privileged peers took an emotional toll on him. He went on to describe how knowing that his dream of attending a four-year-college would not come to fruition caused him to uninvite his parents from his high school graduation. Rafael said, "I felt like I accomplished nothing." These feelings persisted even as he made progress toward the completion of his associate's degree. Rafael's experience illustrates how the legal violence of states' denial of in-state tuition to undocumented students can bring their hopelessness and despair to a climax even before they get to college. Rafael's decision to uninvite his parents from his graduation stemmed from the hopelessness he felt after working so hard to accomplish his dream of attending a four-year college, only to have it deterred by his legal status.

Like Rafael, Rita described the anxiety and despair that filled her transition from high school to college. In discussing her decision to apply to college, Rita stressed the uncertainty she felt about her chances of attending college, saying, "I fluctuated [on whether I would attend college] a lot in high school because of my [immigration] status." At times, Rita really wanted

to go to college. At other times, she was overcome with doubt and asked herself, “Wait a minute, can I even go to college at all?” Although paying for college was an important component in her decision to apply, Rita also worried about what colleges would admit her without legal documentation. More than once she asked herself, “Am I even legally allowed to be in college?” For Rita, the college application process, coupled with her uncertainty surrounding whether she had the right to matriculate because of her immigration status, negatively affected her emotional well-being in high school. She kept her head down and buried her feelings in work. However, it was not long before her feelings of confusion and hopelessness turned into depression:

There were moments when I was working towards college and there were moments when I just felt depressed and unmotivated about it and I would still do fine in school but I was also working at the same time so like my friends were being part of after school clubs and doing all these things, and I was always working.

Although Rita did not let her grades drop during her depression, her resilience enabled her to persevere in school and achieve high grades. She was frustrated by the fact that keeping her grades up and being involved in extracurricular activities (both of which conflicted with her work responsibilities) would not be enough to get into college. Her uncertainty partly stemmed from the “guidance” of her high school counselor. After multiple meetings, Rita decided to finally disclose her immigration status to a school official. She recalled that the counselor “didn’t exactly have all the right information and wasn’t the most helpful.” The fact that Rita was trying to go to college in Massachusetts before the implementation of DACA, meant that she too experienced legal violence and was made ineligible for personhood by the state’s refusal to grant undocumented college students, including DACA beneficiaries, in-state tuition.

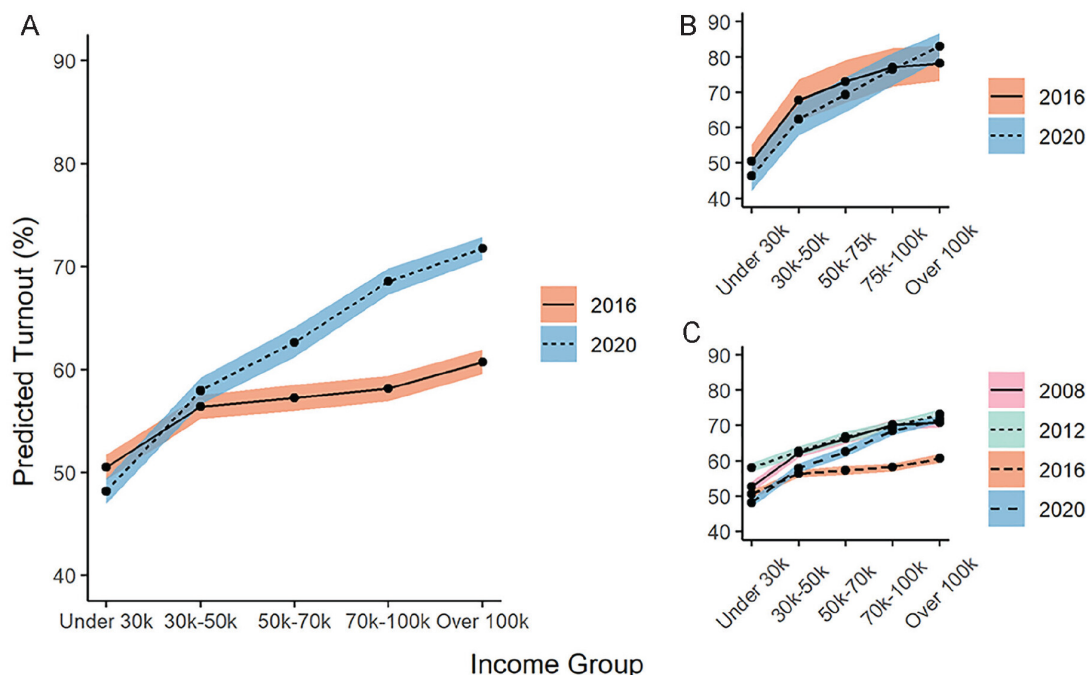
Viv, like Rita and Rafael, felt that her immigration status dampened her hopes for attending college. Viv had come to Massachusetts from Brazil with her parents as a young child and was a 23-year-old senior in college in 2017 when she was interviewed. As a high school student prior to the announcement of DACA, she had not envisioned a future in which she would benefit from DACA and thereby qualify for in-state tuition. Viv was critical of her parents’ actions in bringing her to the United States, and she bitterly said, “part of me will always hate my mom and dad for making me this stereotype.” Viv was angry that she had to be “illegal,” as she referred to herself and her family, and did not see the structural forces that had *illegalized* (Bacong and Menjivar 2021) her and her family once their tourist visas expired. She not only blamed her parents, but also herself for the difficulties she faced. As Viv shared, it was not until middle school or high school that she had learned about her legal status. She described how hopelessness tainted her experiences in high school: “I didn’t care. I thought, I was like, ‘you’re illegal. There’s no way they’re going to pass DACA.’ When I brought up the DREAM Act in a classroom once, no one knew what it was.”

## Excerpt 2

Excerpt from: Laurison, D., & Rastogi, A. (2023). Income Inequality in U.S. Voting: A Visualization. *Socius*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23780231231154358>

Research question: In comparison to 2016, how did voter turnout in 2020 change across income groups?

Claim: Voter turnout in 2020 increased among the highest income households. There was at least as much income inequality in voter turnout in 2020 as in 2016, if not more.



These figures show the predicted margins for voter turnout by household income groups, produced by logistic regression with controls for age, gender, race, and state or region. The CES (Figure 1A) and the American Trends Panel (Figure 1B) show that participation in the 2020 election was at least as unequal as in 2016 and that the highest income households pulled away from the rest; the CES indicates that most of the increase in voting in 2020 came from households in the top 63 percent of the income distribution (>\$50,000), whereas turnout declined among the poorest households (<\$30,000). Figure 1C shows a steeper income slope for 2020 compared with 2008 and 2012 as well, indicating greater inequality.

Supplemental analyses show similar patterns for education: in both data sets, the difference in turnout between those with a bachelor's degree or higher and those with a high school degree or lower was greater in 2020 than 2016 (Appendix Figures 1 and 2). We also found that the highest turnout increases were among White and Asian people (Appendix Figure 3), and that the class pattern is as strong or stronger if we look at White people alone (Appendix Figure 4).

We are confident on the basis of our analyses of the two data sets that there was as much income inequality in turnout in 2020 as 2016, likely at least a bit more. Although validated turnout in surveys is more reliable than self-reported voting, it is still subject to all the known issues with survey data: thus we see large differences between the CES and Pew data, and weighted turnout estimates often do not match actual vote counts.

### Excerpt 3

Excerpt from: Medley-Rath, S. (2022). How Do Sociologists Know What They Know? An Examination of Sociology Textbooks for Evidence of Sociological and Scientific Thinking. *Socius*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23780231221138728>

Research question: How do sociology textbooks represent the process of sociological research and construction of knowledge?

Claim: Introductory sociology courses model asociological and unscientific thinking and provide little explanation of how scholars gather or analyze data or draw conclusions about data.

About half of the sampled textbooks used false equivalence practices to present disagreement among scholars or perspectives. False equivalence practices included using citations or unnamed critics or comparing related but different social phenomena. False equivalence practices worked to establish “both sides” of controversial topics.

Books used citations as the basis of “both sides” arguments. Texts used recent peer-reviewed sources for one side and no citations, dated peer-reviewed sources, or non-peer-reviewed sources for the other side (and there were never more than two sides). Instead of showing how sociologists used peer-reviewed research to understand social phenomena, textbooks treated all sources of information as equally valid. For example, Kendall (2017:313) suggested disagreement among scholars:

Why does gender inequality increase in agrarian societies? Scholars cannot agree on an answer; some suggest that it results from private ownership of property. . . . However, some scholars argue that male dominance existed before the private ownership of property (Firestone, 1970; Lerner, 1986).

This example illustrated how textbooks fail to use sources (i.e., “some suggest”) and rely on dated references (i.e., “However, some scholars”) to present disagreement. Textbooks also cite reprinted dates without the original publication dates, making debates appear current (e.g., Thompson, Hickey, and Thompson 2019).

Books presented debates between sociologists and others (e.g., social conservatives). For instance, Griffiths et al. (2017:309) wrote,

The question of what constitutes a family is a prime area of debate in family sociology, as well as in politics and religion. Social conservatives tend to define the family. . . . Sociologists, on the other hand, tend to define family . . . .

The text provided no citations for this debate. Moreover, the text treated sociological research as equivalent to the opinions of unidentified social conservatives and suggested agreement among sociologists.

Textbooks also compare things that appear similar but are not. For example, Macionis (2019:322–24) includes separate sections on violence against women and men. This organizational choice appears balanced because the text includes men and women. However, his examples for each group are for different forms of violence. Macionis addressed rape and female genital mutilation for women and murder and suicide for men. He tipped his hand when writing by citing only statistics for murder and suicide and in his introduction to the men’s section: “If our way of life encourages violence against women, it may encourage even more violence against men” (p. 323). Conley (2019:354–55) contrasted the reported statistics on hate crimes against Sikhs with the experience of the media’s reports of one White woman who converted to Islam:

Even more *striking* [emphasis added] is what happens to Caucasian Americans who convert to Islam. One woman, despite having fair skin and green eyes . . . wears . . . the *hijab* . . . [and has] even been told, “Go back to your own country.”

Comparing different social phenomena as if they were two sides of the same coin, consequently, reinforced the notion that groups with privilege were also disadvantaged.