



2021

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Recommended Citation

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https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_haslamschol/18

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University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Denial of Driver's Licenses as a Denial of Services for and Personhood of Unauthorized Latinx

Immigrants in Knoxville, Tennessee:

A Literature Review

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Abstract

After the events of September 11, 2001, the United States enacted and expanded multiple policies and programs aimed at addressing national security concerns and racialized anti-immigrant sentiments. These included the creation of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the REAL ID Act of 2005, Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, the Secure Communities Program, and the Criminal Alien Program, among others. These policies and programs, along with general anti-Latinx immigrant sentiments, have had far-reaching effects on the ability of this population to access basic needs, fully participate in society as members of the United States, and fully realize a sense of personhood in the United States. In this paper, I will analyze the existing literature on the topic and examine how it relates to this population in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Resumen

Después de los eventos del 11 de septiembre de 2001, los Estados Unidos promulgaron y ampliaron múltiples políticas y programas dirigidas a abordar preocupaciones de seguridad nacional y sentimientos racializados contra los inmigrantes. Estos incluyen la creación del Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas, el REAL ID Act de 2005, la Sección 287(g) del Immigration and Nationality Act de 1965, el programa de *Secure Communities* y el programa de *Criminal Aliens*, entre otros. Estas políticas y programas, con sentimientos generales contra los inmigrantes latinos, han tenido efectos de gran alcance en las habilidades de esta población para acceder necesidades básicas, participar completamente como miembros en la sociedad estadounidense y realizar completamente un sentimiento de persona en los Estados Unidos. En este trabajo, analizaré la literatura existente sobre el tema y examinaré como se relaciona con esta población en Knoxville, Tennessee.

Introduction

Knoxville, Tennessee is the center of the Knoxville metropolitan area and the county seat of Knox County. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Knox County has a population of 470,313 (United States Census Bureau, 2019), 187,603 of which live in the city of Knoxville (United States Census Bureau, 2019). Latinx immigrants have come to Knoxville due to its “relatively high economic growth and low cost of living,” as well as deindustrialization in the North and the subsequent growth of “poultry and other food processing plants, and in auto manufacturing and agriculture” in Tennessee and other “Nuevo South” states (Conley & Shefner, 2020).

As of 2016, there are an estimated 10,000 - 20,000 unauthorized immigrants in Knoxville, or roughly 1.5% of the population of Knoxville (Pew Research Center, 2019). Despite this relatively low number of unauthorized immigrants and the lack of evidence that high immigrant populations lead to any increase in crime (Akins, 2013), the Knox County Sheriff’s Office has recently decided to enter into a “Jail Enforcement Model” under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Naturalization Act in an effort to “protect the citizens of Knox County” (Knox County Sheriff’s Office, 2020). This program, combined with several others, has been part of “attrition through enforcement” efforts common in Knoxville and in the United States as a whole.

Immigration Enforcement

A. Real ID Act of 2005.

After the events of September 11, 2001, Congress passed the REAL ID Act of 2005, which established minimum federal standards for the issuance of driver’s licenses. This Act was

marketed as an attempt to deter future foreign terrorist attacks, to better verify the identities of those applying for a license or identification card, to deter identity theft, and to generally strengthen national defense. While these standards were aimed at immigrants who may seek to harm the United States and those living in the United States, it seems that its effects were and continue to be far-reaching, working against many groups living in the United States in a variety of ways.

The main relevant elements of the REAL ID Act of 2005 are the requirements that must be met to obtain a federally-recognized driver's license, which the Department of Homeland Security defines as a "motor vehicle operator's license, as defined in section 30301 of title 49, United States Code," or State-issued identification card, which is defined as a "personal identification card, as defined in section 1028(d) of title 18, United States Code, issued by a State" (109th Congress, 2005). The requirements for federal recognition are a photo identity document or non-photo identity document that includes legal full name and date of birth, date of birth, proof of Social Security number or that the person is not eligible for a Social Security number, and documentation of the person's name and address of principal residence. Based on the language in the Act, in order for drivers' licenses and personal identification cards to be recognized by the federal government for "official purposes," such as "accessing Federal facilities, boarding federally regulated commercial aircraft, entering nuclear power plants, and any other purposes that the Secretary [of Homeland Security] shall determine" (ibid., 2005). While it is not mandatory for states to comply with this law for non-official purposes, as of September 10, 2020, 54 states and territories are fully compliant with the REAL ID requirements, and all states are on track to begin issuing compliant licenses and IDs by the October 1, 2021 deadline (United States Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). This is further

complicated by a Tennessee law prohibiting local governments and law enforcement agencies from creating and authorizing any form of municipal identification (110th General Assembly, 2018).

An article by Arnolando García argued that the REAL ID Act of 2005 “has made States’ individual determinations of eligibility nearly irrelevant,” converting state driver’s licenses into a “de facto national ID card, circumscribing the constitutional right to freedom of movement and travel for those without” and that the Act makes the millions of undocumented and marginally-documented Latinx immigrants “more and more readily detectable for detention and possible deportation if they cannot produce a ‘secure’ driver’s license proving ‘legal’ presence in the U.S.” (García, 2005). These two issues have made the REAL ID Act of 2005 a central challenge to unauthorized immigrants who lack driver’s licenses in Knoxville, and in the United States as a whole.

B. Immigration and Nationality Act Section 287(g).

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks also made another program’s expansion possible: the 287(g) program. Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act was added to the Act as a part of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. According to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement website, the 287(g) program “enhances the safety and security of communities by creating partnerships with state and local law enforcement agencies to identify and remove [immigrants] who are amenable to removal from the United States” (ICE, 2021). This program designates local and state officers to “perform limited immigration law enforcement functions” and utilizes two types of models (ibid., 2021). The Jail Enforcement Model (JEM) allows officers to “identify and process

removable [immigrants] with criminal or pending criminal charges who are arrested by state or local LEAs” (ibid., 2021), while the Warrant Service Officer Model (WSO) allows officers to “safely serve and execute administrative warrants to incarcerated noncitizens in their agency’s jail” (ICE, 2020). According to ICE’s 287(g) website, ICE has JEM agreements with 72 agencies in 21 states and WSO agreements with 76 agencies in 11 states (ICE, 2021).

In June of 2017, former Knox County Sheriff J.J. Jones signed on to this agreement. Jones was initially denied in 2012, after which he drew large amounts of criticism for publishing on the Knox County Sheriff’s Office website, “I will continue to enforce these federal immigration violations with or without the help of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. If need be, I will stack these violators like cordwood in the Knox County Jail until the appropriate federal agency responds” (Downes, 2013). The agreement has since been renewed twice by current Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler, who has said he will continue to renew the program “as long as he is sheriff (WBIR, 2020). The Knox County Sheriff’s Office signed onto the Jail Enforcement Model, meaning that KCSO personnel who undergo Immigration Authority Delegation Program training and pass with a score of 70 percent or higher can identify and process removable immigrants who are arrested in Knox County on criminal charges or pending criminal charges and those who are arrested outside of Knox County and transported to the Knox County jail.

The program in Knox County is one of only two such programs in the state of Tennessee. The Knox County Sheriff’s Office has also entered into a detention bed contract, through which ICE can house immigration detainees in the Knox County jail in exchange for compensation for the costs of housing these detainees (Conley & Hilbert, 2020). While this agreement is technically only operated by the Knox County Sheriff’s Office, “everyone arrested by city police

ultimately ends up under KSCO jurisdiction” due to the location of Knoxville’s jail in Knox County (Conley & Shefner, 2020).

While the 287(g) program is presented as logical or beneficial for public safety, around 75 percent of immigrants who entered the Knox County jail on criminal charges were charges of “DUI; driving without a license; public intoxication; and misdemeanor assault” (Conley and Hilbert, 2020). Specifically, 20.86% of immigrants in the Knox County jail were arrested on charges “no more severe than driving without a license” (ibid., 2020). Many critics have pointed out that the program invites racial profiling (Alonzo, Macleod-Ball and Chen, 2011; Shahani & Judith, 2009), wastes public resources (American Civil Liberties Union; Khashu, 2009), threatens public safety (Shahani & Judith, 2009), targets immigrants who pose no public safety risk (Capps, Rosenblum, Chishti, & Rodríguez, 2011; American Civil Liberties Union; Conley and Hilbert, 2020), and increases distrust between immigrants and local law enforcement agencies (Khashu, 2009). Some critics also point to the lack of local and federal oversight and transparency (Flores, 2018). Indeed, there is some research that suggests arresting officers may not always be (and are often not) part of the program, having “no formal relationship with ICE... [and/or] little or no training in immigration law” (Capps, Rosenblum, Chishti, & Rodríguez, 2011). This program is important to spotlight here, as it acts as a method for immigrants without driver’s licenses to be forced into immigration proceedings.

C. Secure Communities Program and Criminal Alien Program

The Secure Communities Program and the Criminal Alien Program (CAP) both act as two more methods for collaboration between local law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and ICE. The Secure Communities Program, which was started in 2008 and is mandatory in all

jurisdictions, “uses a federal information-sharing partnership between DHS and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that helps to identify in-custody [immigrants] without imposing new or additional requirements on state and local law enforcement” (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, n.d.). This procedure uses a “simple, non-interview-based biometric fingerprint scan run against federal databases” (Coleman & Kocher, 2019). As with 287(g) programs, critics have pointed out that the “centrality of traffic infractions...suggests strongly that racial profiling...is core to the devolution of immigration enforcement to state and local police (ibid., 2019).

The Criminal Alien Program (CAP), or some version of the program, has existed since its creation in response to the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). This program provides ICE with more “direction and support” in identifying, arresting, and deporting immigrants who have been arrested by local law enforcement agencies (ICE, 2021). This program allows ICE to identify unauthorized immigrants who the Secure Communities program misses who do not have records in DHS databases. As with the 287(g) program and the Secure Communities Program, CAP leads to the detention and deportation of unauthorized immigrants who may not be dangerous to public safety.

These two programs, combined with the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database, serve as ways for local LEAs to become more and more involved in immigration enforcement, making even a routine traffic stop a potentially dangerous situation for unauthorized people. Michele Waslin described the process for a traffic violation, stating, NCIC, a database of crime information, “can be immediately queried.” (Waslin, 2013). Then, even if the query produces nothing,

“police officers can arrest the person and, upon booking, the individual’s fingerprints will be shared with ICE through Secure Communities at which time ICE may place a detainer and initiate deportation proceedings. If there is no database match through Secure Communities, a jail model 287(g) officer or a CAP officer can interview the individual and initiate deportation proceedings” (ibid, 2013).

In other words, Waslin wrote, “there are now multiple and overlapping mechanisms for translating a traffic violation by an unlicensed driver into immigration proceedings” (ibid, 2013). This is an important process, as it exposes millions of people to potential arrest, detention, and deportation for simply driving without a license.

Lack of Access

A. Lack of Access to Transportation

The automobile is often seen as a fundamental part of life in the United States. Presently, access to some form of transportation is a necessity, particularly for those living outside of a major city with public transportation, such as Knoxville. According to the United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, the average American drives 13,476 miles per year, or almost 37 miles per day (Federal Highway Administration, 2018). Hendricks (2014) wrote, “Individual immigrants must travel to get to work, to the grocery store, to church, to community functions, and to health clinics—and must generally travel by car—like the rest of the population living in the United States.” Without the ability to legally drive a car, undocumented and marginally-documented people face the dangers of arrest, detention, and deportation every time they attempt to get to the places they need to go. This limits their access to work, healthcare, and education, as will be explored in the next sections.

In the United States, the ability to drive is a “privilege,” rather than a right, and must be applied for and given to the applicant by the proper authority. For this reason, the act of driving without a license is a punishable offense (Justia, n.d.). The punishment for this can vary, however, due to the aforementioned interior enforcement policies, including the 287(g) agreement that the Knox County Sheriff’s Office has with ICE, along with discretionary arrest and policing practices. Utilizing language from Mark Krikorian, executive director of the anti-immigrant think tank, the Center for Immigration Studies, Anil Kalhan (2008) wrote that interior enforcement and restrictions seek to “construct virtual border checkpoints throughout the country’s interior, identifying ‘events necessary for life in a modern society’ where it may be possible to ‘exercise control’ over unauthorized immigrants. These “virtual border checkpoints” make the act of driving without a license extremely dangerous for unauthorized immigrants in Knoxville.

When we consider the state of public transportation in Knox County, this challenge is made even more difficult. The American Society of Civil Engineers, in their 2016 Infrastructure Report Card, ranked Tennessee’s transit opportunities a “D+” (American Society of Civil Engineers, 2016). The report then recommended Tennessee “increase access to transit in urban, suburban, and rural communities so that all Tennesseans have more and better transportation choices” (ibid., 2016). This is to say, Tennessee’s public transportation system does not and cannot serve as a viable option for immigrants without driver’s licenses, and Knoxville is not an exception to this.

Knoxville Area Transit, or KAT, is the City of Knoxville’s public transportation system. In 2011, Time Magazine named KAT the worst public transportation system in the country, citing its lack of residents near a transit stop, its high median wait times during rush hour, and its

lack of useful and timely routes (TIME Staff, 2011). While KAT no longer finds itself at the bottom of this list, there are still many problems with accessing its services. One study from 2014 examined 290 urbanized areas with populations over 65,000 people and found that Knoxville ranked 216th in trips per capita with only 6.0 (Fischer-Baum, 2014). Another study that ranked major cities on how well its residents fare without a car ranked Knoxville 132nd overall and 58th in regard to commuting methods and time (LawnStarter, 2021).

According to its website, KAT's "23 fixed routes and three trolley lines reach over 80% of the City of Knoxville's entire population within half a mile" (Knoxville Area Transit, n.d.). Worth noting here is that the City of Knoxville does not encompass the entirety of Knox County. While KAT states that they reach "more than 80,000 Knoxville residents within a quarter mile of a bus stop" (Knoxville Area Transit, n.d.), more than 470,000 people live in Knox County (United States Census Bureau, 2019). While there is another option in the Knox County Community Action Committee Transit service, this service charges higher rates than KAT, is limited in funding, and requires scheduling "no later than 11:00 a.m. the [working] day before" the service is needed (Knox County Community Action Committee, n.d.). Due to this lack of a robust, reliable public transport system, unauthorized immigrants without a driver's license in Knox County must find another way to travel, or they must risk driving without a license.

A publication from Mary Jo Dudley and Robin Blakely (2007), while focused on New York, argued that the issue of access to transportation is "particularly important to immigrant farmworkers" who live and work in rural areas. These people are forced to either rely on friends or family or to drive illegally to get to the places they need to be. While research does suggest that immigrants are more likely to carpool than the US-born (Blumenberg & Smart, 2014), this is not always a reliable form of transportation either. Because of the aforementioned combination

of immigration enforcement policies and their exclusionary nature, immigrants can often be isolated from society as a whole (Priya & Uteng, 2009), living in secluded neighborhoods and lacking the social group that could provide this transport, meaning that driving illegally is their only option. Even if this opportunity for ride-sharing is available, it only provides a “limited solution” as it constrains when and where an immigrant may travel, and may mean that working a specific job or “working overtime, or changing work schedule or work location in order to maximize one’s abilities, advance in the job, or gain additional responsibilities” may not be available to the person reliant on others for transportation (Hendricks, 2014).

B. Lack of Access to Employment

Multiple policies related to driver’s licenses and identification cards have negatively affected undocumented and marginally-documented immigrants’ right to work in the United States. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, or IRCA, and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, or IIRIRA, both mandated that employees show some form of identification to prove citizenship or government permission to work. In many states, including Tennessee, employers are required to “verify employment eligibility through E-Verify” (Karloly & Perez-Arce, A Cost-Benefit Framework for Analyzing the Economic and Fiscal Impacts of State-Level Immigration Policies, 2016), utilizing a driver’s license or some other form of “valid documentation.”

These policies often mean that those who lack the proper identification are not allowed to work or are forced to work in harsh, exploitative conditions. A study by Pia Orrenius and Madeline Zavodny (2009) which examined data regarding work-related fatalities, nonfatal injuries, and illnesses from the American Community Survey and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This study found that due to a variety of factors, immigrants often find themselves in riskier jobs with higher rates of workplace fatalities, injuries, and illnesses. Another article by Lance Compa and Jamie Fellner (2005) stated that the workers who are facing risks of injury are predominantly Latinx immigrants. Many factors, such as lack of English-speaking ability, education, and skills could be used to explain this discrepancy; however, it must also be understood that, even with these skills and abilities, these policies act as obstacles to obtaining safer, higher-paying jobs. Many employers fear the repercussions of the IRCA and IIRIRA, which were made even harder to meet with the restrictions of the REAL ID Act. This means that unauthorized immigrants are often forced to choose a risky job, as they do not have any other opportunities (Orrenius & Zavodny, 2009).

Beyond these employment policies, a lack of access to transportation may limit access to the labor market, as is suggested by John Kain's spatial mismatch hypothesis, which examined the "mismatch" between where people live and where employment opportunities are located (Kain, 1992). The farther an unlicensed person has to drive to get to their place of employment, the more opportunities exist to be stopped and subsequently detained and deported. Oftentimes, "the ability to drive tends to be assumed and expected of all workers," meaning immigrants face a "catch-22" in which their need and desire to work and their inability to obtain a driver's license for traveling to work are at odds (Hendricks, 2014). For many, this means they must "rely on an employer's goodwill, risk driving without a license, or hire a *raitero*, an informal economy driver, who may charge exorbitant rates" (Guzmán & Medeiros, 2019).

C. Lack of Access to Healthcare

There is also research that suggests that local immigration enforcement policies, including the refusal to distribute driver's licenses, also negatively affect many aspects of undocumented and marginally-documented Latinx immigrants' healthcare experiences. According to an editorial on the topic, "approximately 3.6 million Americans miss or delay health care because of transportation barriers, resulting in increased health care costs and potentially serious long-term health consequences" (Joyce, Zullo, Ahluwalia, Pfeiffer, & Curry, 2019). The authors went on to say that those who lack driver's licenses "limit their trips to those considered 'essential'" (ibid., 2019), meaning they may take risks related to healthcare that could have negative impacts on future health outcomes. Another article which explored the barriers to healthcare unauthorized immigrants face wrote that undocumented immigrants who drive without a license face dire consequences, instead being forced into "retreating into the shadows, forgoing screenings, medications and other essential medical care" (Hoffman, 2017).

While more research is needed on the subject, one study evaluated a Utah program that allowed undocumented immigrants to apply for a driver privilege card and found that "Hispanic immigrants lacking any sort of state identification have the poorest prenatal care outcomes" and that allowing immigrants to apply for a driver privilege card improves adequacy of prenatal care utilization (Korinek & Smith, 2011). Another study conducted vital records data, along with focus groups and in-depth interviews to explore the effects of policies on access to and utilization of public health services among Latinx people. The study found that "driver's licenses and threats of police enforcement while driving were 2 key barriers...from accessing and utilizing health services," which led to many harmful healthcare practices among interview participants (Rhodes, et al., 2015). Some of the other findings from the study included that Hispanic mothers were "more likely to have late and inadequate prenatal care," that participants

“delay important preventive services and remain sicker for longer periods of time” and had “reduced mental health...resulting from high levels of fear,” including “isolation, frustration, decreased self-esteem, anxiety, and depression,” and that children “did not obtain necessary diagnoses, care, and treatment” due to enforcement policies (ibid., 2015).

D. Lack of Access to Education

Approximately 5.1 million children under the age of 18 in the United States live with an unauthorized immigrant parent (Capps, Fix, & Zong, 2016). In Tennessee alone, over 56,000 children (or four percent of children in the state) lived with “at least one undocumented family member” between 2010 and 2014 (American Immigration Council, 2020). For this reason, Conley and Shefner (2020) wrote that access to education for immigrant children is “limited by real and perceived threats from the immigration authorities.” Furthermore, Waslin (2013) wrote “the denial of mobility is, in itself, undoubtedly a limitation with a profound impact, the secondary implications of immobility on education, health, work, recreation, and family means the repercussions are experienced beyond the individual. This means that school-aged children of unauthorized immigrants who lack access to driver’s licenses also feel the repercussions of this denial.

Because of the intersection of immigration policies that have been discussed through this review, among others, these children face a number of risk factors related to education, including “lower preschool enrollment, reduced socioeconomic progress, and higher rates of linguistic isolation, limited English proficiency, and poverty” (Capps, Fix, & Zong, 2016). This impact on early childhood education (ECE) has been echoed by various authors. Fede (2018) found that access to a driver’s license was associated with “small but consistent differences” in ECE

participation. Additionally, Karoly and Gonzalez (2011) found that “getting a child to and from an ECE provider can also be a barrier,” particularly for undocumented immigrants who are unable to obtain a driver’s license. This also applies to older schoolchildren, who may not be able to participate and utilize “extracurricular opportunities or additional educational programming” (Hendricks, 2014).

Personhood

A. An Introduction to Personhood

The definition and criteria of personhood are ideas that have sparked debate among philosophers for centuries. It is a complex and difficult concept which has no obviously-correct solution. With this said, for the purposes of this paper, and as this paper is not a philosophical analysis of personhood, I will merely assume a vague, wider notion of personhood that inherently belongs to all people. This is to say that I will begin this paper with the basis that undocumented and marginally-documented Latinx immigrants possess personhood and should be afforded the features that come along with personhood.

I will also assume that basic human rights are inherent to any being possessing personhood. According to Richard Sobel (2002), human rights “exist by presumption, and are not subject to ID checks before they can be exercised.” These human rights are rights that seek to protect people from abuses and promote their wellbeing, such as those laid out by the United Nations, particularly the right to life, liberty, and security of person, recognition as a person before the law, freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile, freedom from interference with privacy, family, and home, freedom of movement, and the right to work, healthcare, and education (United Nations, 1948). I will also assume that the duty to make sure that these rights

are respected and facilitated is to be placed on the government of a given society, in this case, the United States government.

Despite these human rights being laid out by the United Nation, it is difficult to argue that these criteria are met by the United States. As has been laid out in the previous section, a combination of immigration policies in cities like Knoxville has created situations in which undocumented people do not have access to the rights laid out by this declaration, such as rights to work, healthcare, and education. Even the right to “recognition as a person before the law” is something that Knoxville often fails to do, often opting instead for language involving the terms “illegal alien” or “alien.” These terms are “highly inaccurate and pejorative,” and they have “shaped public opinion on immigration policy” and “been used to dehumanize immigrants and divorce ourselves from thinking of them as human beings” (Border Crossing Law Firm, n.d.). Once this dehumanization process has begun, the path towards violence becomes far easier, as is seen in the implementation of the 287(g) program in Knoxville and the language used by former Knox County Sheriff J.J. Jones, who has previously referred to unauthorized immigrants as “cordwood” to be stacked in jails (Downes, 2013).

B. Framing Citizenship Status as Personhood

In his aforementioned article, Richard Sobel (2002) stated that rights “become degraded when an individual may only exercise them by having an ID card, number, or place in a databank.” This is to say that human rights are inherent to persons, and to require persons to meet certain criteria before recognizing their rights is fundamentally antithetical to the common good and personhood. To require an identification card to access various rights suggests that

personhood is based not on a person's existence, but rather their citizenship status in a given country. Again, this is seen in access to education, healthcare, work, etc.

By placing federal standards for driver's licenses and identification cards that must be in place for the license or cards to be accepted by the federal government, many argue that the federal government is moving towards a national identification system with the passage of the REAL ID Act. According to Sobel, moving towards a national identification system transforms personhood from "an intrinsic quality inhering in individuals into a quantity designated by numbers, represented by physical cards, and recorded in computer databanks" (ibid., 2002). He argued that a NIDS demeans political values of identity by replacing identity based on personhood with "ersatz-identities," or a faux or pseudo-identity. Additionally, he argued that "the requirement to prove identity or appear in a national databank in order to obtain and exercise certain rights demeans the foundation on which free governance is based" (ibid., 2002).

These policies act to create a social hierarchy of belonging and personhood based on citizenship status and documentation. According to Maria Pabon Lopez, the process of applying for a driver's license creates a "Foucauldian control binary" of citizen/noncitizen, legal/illegal, or some way of punishing the "other," who does not belong based on the judgments of those in power (Lopez, 2004). This binary ensures that while they are excluded from any of the protections or rights the United States offers to its citizens, undocumented and marginally-documented Latinx immigrants are also still accountable to the laws of the United States (Menjívar & Abrego, 2012). Lopez argued that this process falls into this type of control function because authorities lay out a double mode and exercise "coercive assignment and differential distribution" (Lopez, 2004), in this case by precluding unauthorized Latinx immigrants from obtaining a driver's license or state identification card that serves all of the same function as a

citizen's. This binary places those without the necessary documentation "outside the sphere of membership and belonging in our society" (ibid., 2004). In terms of differential distribution, Lopez wrote that the treatment of immigrants creates preconceived notions of how an immigrant is, where they must be, how they are to be characterized and recognized, and how they must be treated, especially in terms of surveillance (ibid., 2004).

In his aforementioned work, Sobel (2002) also argued that ID requirements assume everyone to be an illegal alien or potential terrorist until proven innocent, reversing the popular belief that all people are innocent until proven guilty. Due to media portrayals of Latinx immigrants as "criminal illegals" and potential terrorists, along with the racialization of illegality (Enriquez, Vazquez Vera, & Ramakrishnan, 2019), these requirements affect undocumented and marginally-documented Latinx immigrants to a great extent (Branton, Cassese, Jones, & Westerland, 2011; Menjivar, 2016). This in turn, diminishes their sense of personal identity and their deserved respect as persons. By racializing the issue, this also gives way to racial profiling and the stopping of Latinx people based on perceived criminality or "illegality," as many critics of 287(g) programs have pointed out. By labeling the crossing of the border a crime, media and politicians can label Latinx immigrants criminals before they have done anything that actually creates harm.

While anti-immigrant sentiments have been around since this country's founding, the racialized aspect of Latinx immigration, along with this binary and subsequent hierarchy have allowed for more cruel and dehumanizing treatment, such as mass detentions and deportation. Historically, identification systems, especially those that place some sort of "badge" or deviation for those who do not fit every criterion, have been negative for groups not in power or in favor of those in power. Sobel laid out multiple examples, such as in 1933 when the British government

issued identification cards to distinguish Hutus and Tutsis which later contributed to the Rwandan genocide, in 1940, when the German Army invaded many European countries and examined records to identify Jewish people and other “undesirable” groups to be sent to concentration camps, in 1958 when the South African government required Black people to carry passes that prohibited their freedom of movement, and in 1963 when South Africa did the same thing for Black women (Sobel, 2002). When this is paired with the United States’ history of racial classification, discrimination, and oppression, one begins to fear what a national identification system could mean for undocumented and marginally-documented Latinx immigrants. This transitions to the final section of this review, the end result of devaluation of personhood: legal violence (Menjívar & Abrego, 2012).

C. Legal Violence

In their article about legal violence, Cecilia Menjívar and Leisy Abrego examined the effects of various immigration laws on Latinx immigrants and how these laws constitute legal violence against these immigrants (Menjívar & Abrego, 2012). In the article, the authors stated that legal violence “incorporates the various, mutually reinforcing forms of violence that the law makes possible and amplifies,” such as structural and symbolic violence (ibid., 2012). Structural violence refers to the violence that people experience in the form of uncertainty, inequality, exploitation, etc., which has been perpetrated by a social structure or institution (Galtung, 1969). Symbolic violence typically refers to violence in the form of the legitimization of inequality, discrimination, etc. These types of violence are “codified in law and produce immediate social suffering but also potentially long-term harm” (Menjívar & Abrego, 2012). In short, legal

violence is violence that is “legal, sanctioned, and legitimated through formal structures of power that are publicly accepted and respected” (ibid., 2012).

As has been explained by a variety of conservative, anti-immigrant thinkers, denying access to driver’s licenses is just one policy that is aimed towards “attrition through enforcement.” The essence of this strategy is to make life in the United States as an undocumented immigrant so intolerable that these people make the decision to “self-deport” or voluntarily leave the country and return to the potential economic hardships, trauma, and/or violence that they may be fleeing from in the first place. This suggests that these policies lead to direct and indirect violence towards unauthorized Latinx immigrants, denying them rights in the hopes that life will become so unbearable they will return to the very place they originally may have sought to escape.

This violence can be seen in a variety of spaces and from a variety of state agents. At the local level, the very existence of unauthorized immigrants is increasingly being criminalized, which, along with the dehumanization and racism of immigration policies, has opened the door for human rights abuses. Through the denial of driver’s licenses, the criminalization of immigration, and the utilization of interior enforcement policies, we can see how this violence takes place within the United States. In their article exploring the lives of undocumented 1.5-generation Latinx immigrants in the United States, Gonzales and Chavez (2012) utilized and expanded upon Michel Foucault’s ideas of biopolitics and biopower, along with Giorgio Agamben’s idea of “states of exception” to explore the lives of “(im)migrant and racialized populations.” In this article, they interviewed around 80 people, one of whom stated, “I [don’t] want to break the law, but everything you do is illegal because you are illegal. Everything you do will be illegal. Otherwise you can’t live” (ibid., 2012).

This condition of “illegality” means that unauthorized immigrants are “allowed to participate in some aspects of society...but not others...” and “contributes to subjective understandings of the world and to identity” (ibid., 2012). Indeed, “para sobrevivir y ser aceptados” in the United States, immigrants often “están obligados a ser ‘invisibles’” (Escarbajal Frutos, Izquierdo Rus, Maquilón Sánchez, García Correa, & Giménez Gualdo, 2011). This also means that immigrants often suffer from “una doble ausencia,” or “double absence,” in which they do not feel a sense of belonging in the country in which they currently reside or their country of origin (Sayad, Macey, & Bourdieu, 2004).

This, the authors wrote, speaks to Agamben’s idea of “states of exception” through which people’s lives are “bracketed as in the nation but not part of the nation, which allows them to become the object of laws and other techniques of regulation,” which can include “everyday experiences of ill treatment by the larger society, discrimination, and target police actions” (ibid., 2012). At the same time, however, Gómez (2018) described the life of an unauthorized immigrant as a life “afuera del orden político, sin acceso a las protecciones legales adquiridas por aquellos ‘dentro’ del sistema.” This allows us to see the inconsistency in the treatment of unauthorized immigrants who are subject to the law and punishment but who are not protected by the law.

Through these practices can emerge a new set of practices which “mark off or bracket a group as different, less than, unworthy, illegitimate, undeserving,” which can, when taken to the extreme, lead to circumstances in which the state can target these people, “isolate them into ‘zones of social abandonment,’ and even engage in practices of genocide, extermination, or ethnic cleansing” (Gonzales & Chavez, 2012). Nowhere are these ideas seen more than in the detention and deportation of immigrants.

In the context of detention, we see that immigrants are often held in miserable conditions, being denied access to clean water (Glawe, 2016), adequate healthcare (Chotiner, 2020), and even basic needs like soap, toothbrushes, and diapers (Castillo Ramírez, 2019). In recent years, there have been reports of physical abuse and mistreatment, family separation, and even the death of immigrants in ICE facilities. These occurrences are not met with widespread outrage or government action because of the dehumanization of immigrants in the United States.

In terms of deportation, in the United States over the last two decades, there has been a significant shift towards a “regimen de deportación,” or a “regime of deportation” (Montes, 2019), or even what some call “Departheid” (Kalir, 2019). In his book on the topic, Nicolas De Genova (2010) wrote that,

“In deportation, the whole totalizing regime of citizenship and alienage, belonging and deportability, entitlement and rightlessness, is deployed against particular persons in a manner that is, in the immediate practical application, irreducibly if not irreversibly individualizing.”

According to another article by De Genova, we understand susceptibility to deportation to be a “principal and defining distinction that separates citizenship and non-citizenship” (De Genova, The deportation power, 2018). Those on the “outside” of legality or citizenship are constantly in danger of deportation, making their lives less safe and enjoyable. This constant threat of deportation, De Genova argued, also illustrates the perceived “disposability of human life,” where people are seen as “undesirable” and to be discarded. When examining deportation, De Genova, utilizing the language of Michel Foucault, stated that we must consider it as a “technique or tactic of domination, a ‘positive mechanism’ of ‘the real functioning of power’”

(ibid., 2018). Through this shift in immigration policy and the creation of “zones of abandonment,” it is clear that something must be done about this abundant legal violence.

Conclusions and Recommendations

I have argued that the acts of denying driver’s licenses and enacting harsh interior immigration enforcement policies have culminated in the denial of accessibility to crucial services and of personhood and human rights for unauthorized Latinx immigrants in Knoxville, Tennessee. While this is focused on Knoxville, this is not the only city that these policies have affected nor is it the most affected. Because of the United States’ role in economic and political issues in the region, their position as the world’s economic leader and world power, and the relative ease of immigration policy changes, moving forward, the United States must work towards more equitable, less barbarous immigration policies and practices in order to secure the wellbeing of all of its residents and to protect their human rights and personhood. This must start with ending “enforcement through attrition” policies, terminating the outsourcing of federal immigration to local LEAs, abolishing the use of dehumanizing language in government policies and writings, and expanding access to state and municipal driver’s licenses or certificates. Rather than focusing on limiting pull factors, perhaps, we may choose to look instead at the push factors that have contributed to the recent influx of migrants, especially those from Central and South America, such as neoliberal economic policies like NAFTA or the use of political destabilization tactics in Latin America by the United States.

In the non-profit sector, there are some steps that can be taken to aid in accessibility of services and to reduce the harm enacted by these immigration policies and practices. These would include expanding educational opportunities for immigrants, both children and adults,

forming trauma-informed mental health groups, and creating and utilizing Know Your Rights interventions related to education and healthcare rights. These would all be attempts to subsidize the lack of accessible opportunities afforded to immigrants by existing organizations and to ensure that people are aware of and utilizing available opportunities. Of course, these services may also be reliant on transportation, which means these programs could be adapted to an online format or offered with consideration to transportation. In terms of transportation, the non-profit sector could work to form ride-sharing programs or networks. These could work to aid in the communication and collaboration of people with whom people may be able to carpool or with people who may be willing to give their time and resources towards assisting unauthorized immigrants. Of course, as has been mentioned, these are not sustainable or completely reliable networks, and work must be done to push for more-robust public transportation and for an end to harmful immigration policies and practices.

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