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Immigrant Nonprofit Organizations and the Fight for Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Catherine E. Wilson

Abstract

This paper examines the central role played by immigrant nonprofit organizations in the fight for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) in the City of Philadelphia from 2009-2010. Relying on sixteen months of ethnographic research (April 2009-August 2010), including over seventy interviews of nonprofit, public, and private sector leaders, this paper explores how immigrant nonprofit organizations participated in the one-year lifecycle of the Reform Immigration for America (RI4A) campaign in Philadelphia. Furthermore, the paper analyzes the institutional legacy the campaign left on these organizations, as they continue to promote immigrant integration and engage in political advocacy at the local level. Finally, the paper shares lessons learned from the Philadelphia-based campaign as immigrant coalitions throughout the United States grapple with the prospect of immigration reform amid political polarization and an uncertain economic climate.

KEYWORDS: immigrant nonprofit organizations, social movements, political incorporation

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INTRODUCTION

The politics of immigration continues to be an area of contentious debate in American public life. Recent attention has focused on state-level activity following the April 2010 passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1070 – an Arizona immigration enforcement initiative – and the subsequent adoption in 2011 of copy-cat legislation in states such as Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina, and Alabama. As reported by the National Conference on State Legislatures, there was a record level of state legislative measures (208 in total) enacted in 2010, with the issues of enforcement, identification, and employment ranking at the top of the list (2011a). For the first quarter of 2011, these three same issues, with the addition of health care, remained salient for state legislatures, and states witnessed an acceleration of immigration-related laws during this period – 63 in total (National Conference on State Legislatures 2011b).

While these immigration measures demonstrate how states have inserted themselves into the immigration debate in the absence of federal legislation on the matter, the figures above only capture one side of the story – that of immigration enforcement and control. Viewing the figures more closely, a large number of state legislatures passed both laws and resolutions during 2010-2011 that were more welcoming to immigrant presence. For the most part, these laws and resolutions included: increased funding for refugee resettlement programs, migrant health and naturalization assistance, task forces to study and prevent human trafficking, and public ceremonies honoring immigrant contributions. During 2011, the governors of Massachusetts, Illinois, and New York criticized the continuance of federal immigration enforcement programs operating in their states. Moreover, a number of states passed versions of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act¹ and Utah enacted comprehensive immigration legislation in 2011.² Finally, national and local movements –

¹ A bipartisan piece of legislation, the DREAM Act has been debated in the U.S. Congress since 2001. The most recent version, sponsored by Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) in May 2011, includes the following two provisions: (1) the granting of temporary legal status to undocumented youth who have attended two years of college or have served two years in the military (after a six year waiting period, these youths would be granted permanent legal status), and (2) the elimination of a federal provision that penalizes states who provide in-state tuition to undocumented students. There are currently 13 states that have passed a version of the DREAM Act, allowing for in-state tuition of undocumented students (National Immigration Law Center 2011).

² In March 2011, Utah was the first state in the U.S. to pass a Comprehensive Immigration Reform package. This legislation was informed by the Utah Compact, a set of immigration principles developed with the support of the religious, business, nonprofit, and law enforcement communities (Utah Compact 2011). The legislation's comprehensive nature continues to be debated, however, due to the bill's emphasis on immigration enforcement and control.

advanced, supported, and funded by nonprofit organizations – played an active role in the fight for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR).

This paper examines the central role played by immigrant nonprofit organizations in the fight for CIR in the City of Philadelphia during 2009-2010. Generally speaking, CIR is a federal immigration reform policy dedicated to: (1) strengthening border security, (2) enforcing immigration laws, (3) reforming visa programs, (4) creating a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, and (5) encouraging immigrant integration. The Reform Immigration for America (RI4A) campaign – a nonprofit, national movement dedicated to the advancement of CIR – relied heavily on immigrant nonprofit organizations in Philadelphia to advance the cause of immigration reform during the movement's one-year appointment of a RI4A Pennsylvania state director from July 2009-July 2010. The campaign also depended in large part financially on the social justice grant-making of another nonprofit organization, The Atlantic Philanthropies (AP), during this period. And, in the campaign's aftermath, immigrant nonprofit organizations continue to dominate the political landscape in Philadelphia by advocating for immigration reform at the local and state levels.

Given the policy-oriented nature of this paper, its intended audience includes scholars, nonprofit leaders, and policymakers. This paper presents the one-year lifecycle of the RI4A campaign and evaluates the campaign's institutional legacy on immigrant nonprofit organizations in the Greater Philadelphia region. As the epicenter for immigration reform in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia is where the fight for CIR witnesses the most favorable receptivity in the state both by public officials and the larger political culture. However, in the absence of achieving CIR legislation during 2009-2010, immigrant nonprofit organizations now require a healthy dose of political learning in the campaign's aftermath. This learning – the use of constitutional framing mechanisms, public recognition in mainstream venues, and full-fledged political advocacy – is not limited to the local movement in Philadelphia. Other immigrant coalitions throughout the United States should be privy to the lessons learned in the City of Brotherly Love.

The next three sections of this paper lay a theoretical foundation for the analysis of the RI4A campaign by: (1) underlining the political significance of immigrant nonprofit organizations, (2) proposing an approach to the study of movement lifecycles, and (3) suggesting ways to measure movement effectiveness. These sections are followed by a presentation of the paper's research methodology – qualitative and ethnographic in nature. Drawing upon this research, the paper moves to a discussion of the RI4A campaign, elucidating key themes from interviews and participant observation. The paper concludes with a look at the effectiveness of the RI4A campaign in Philadelphia and lessons learned from the research study.

IMMIGRANT NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AS POLITICAL ACTORS

Studies show that immigrant nonprofit organizations engage in the dual role of cultural preservation and immigrant integration (Cantor and De Vita 2008; Hung, 2007; Somerville et al. 2008). Immigrant integration is defined as a process by which the “receiving community learns to respect the skills, languages, and cultures that [immigrants] bring and, simultaneously, play an active role in meeting their needs” (Grantmakers Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees, 2006: 26). In an effort to promote such integration, immigrant nonprofit organizations operate as holistic and multiservice providers, delivering a range of culturally sensitive services to their immigrant constituencies (De Leon et al. 2009).

Immigrant nonprofit organizations also take part in immigrant political incorporation, characterized both by participation in electoral politics (De Sipio 1996, 2001; Gerstle and Mollenkopf 2001) and by the wide range of non-electoral activities – from volunteering, to petition-signing, to attendance at rallies, marches, and demonstrations – promoted by these organizations (Jones-Correa 1998a, 1998b; Putnam 2001; Verba et al. 1995). These non-electoral activities should be included when discussing immigrant political incorporation (Bloemraad 2006b; Cordero-Guzmán et al. 2008; Marrow 2005; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2005), given the inability of many undocumented immigrants to pursue American citizenship and, as a result, to exercise voting privileges. Immigrant political incorporation is generated largely by the efforts of nonprofit organizations as opposed to political parties (Andersen and Cohen 2005; Cordero-Guzmán et al. 2008; De Graauw 2008; Jones-Correa 2005; Pantoja et al. 2008), due to the initial contact immigrants make in their neighborhood with nonprofits, ranging from congregations, to community centers, to ethnic-based organizations (Jones-Correa, 2005).

Immigrant nonprofit organizations were primarily responsible for organizing the immigration marches of Spring 2006 (Cordero-Guzmán et al. 2008; Pantoja et al. 2008), and they continue to display their political influence in the fight for CIR today. Despite being constrained by their 501 (c) (3) status to engage openly in political activities, immigrant nonprofit organizations are indeed political actors (De Graauw 2008), regularly forming and participating in coalitions to advocate for political causes. Participation in these coalitions affords these organizations a larger platform to influence local and national policy debates on immigration issues that affect their clients on a daily basis (Cordero-Guzmán et al. 2008; De Leon et al. 2009; Fujiwara 2005; Pantoja et al. 2008).

THE LIFECYCLE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Scholars claim that the lifecycle of a social movement is influenced by shifts in political opportunity structures, and these shifts cause both opportunity expansion and contraction for movement participants (McAdam et al. 1997). Thus, the interplay between activist efforts and the political context in which activists are situated is a prime determinant in a movement's lifecycle (Meyer 1993). Assuming the central role played by nonprofit organizations in movement leadership and participation, the paper lays out four stages of a social movement's lifecycle: (1) incubation, (2) coordination, (3) direct action, and (4) expansion and division of labor. These stages are informed by a particular kind of social movement, one which has not achieved its desired policy outcome through legislation or policy reform (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1
SOCIAL MOVEMENT LIFECYCLE

Incubation: At this stage, the movement is typically characterized as a local phenomenon (De Filippis et al. 2010) with a loosely organized group of actors coming together to voice common political cause. Generally speaking, movement formation is sparked by the presence or absence of a controversial legislative measure. Constrained by a lack of material and non-material resources to support their cause, (Della Porta and Diani 1999), movement leaders engage in a “diagnostic framing” (Benford and Snow 2000) of the issue at hand, dedicating

their time to problem identification and relationship-building among like-minded groups.

Coordination: During this stage, the movement begins to look like an “organizational field” of multiple “actors, actions, and relations” (McAdam and Scott 2005: 10). Outside leadership – generally funded by a national organization – takes charge of local leadership development, planning events, and mobilizing constituent groups. Movement supporters dedicate their time to a “prognostic framing” of the issue, laying out a plan of attack (Benford and Snow 2000) for the desired political outcome. Supporters increase their issue’s salience (Goldstone 2004) by forging strong relationships with and providing relevant information to constituent groups and local public officials. Supporters also endeavor to influence the direction of political decision-making, by strategically linking the desired fate of the issue to officials’ election campaigns (Burstein and Linton 2002).

Direct Action: Marked by a polarized political environment, movement supporters take part in a “boundary framing” of the issue at hand (Benford and Snow 2000), singling out movement allies and movement opponents. During this stage, movement leaders put forth directed mobilizing tactics, due to diminishing resources and political power. Supporters actively consult with activists from outside the field (Oliver and Myers 1998) in an effort to highlight successful organizing strategies. From an agenda-setting perspective, supporters also perform a series of targeted direct actions – usually nonviolent in nature – around the issue in an effort to create a sense of urgency and gain political traction (Andrews and Edwards 2004).

Expansion and Division of Labor: During this stage, two opposite but related activities are taking place: (1) the movement experiences a widening of its core supporters, and (2) movement leaders divide responsibility for specific tasks. Setting forth a “motivational framing” of the issue at hand to sustain movement participation and spur collective action (Benford and Snow 2000), leaders begin to seek support from other disaffected groups. At this stage, the movement tends to advance collective action rhetoric with the goal of forging a common identity pathway (Klandermans et al. 2008) among the groups. The movement, however, simultaneously advances a “divide and conquer” strategy, allowing leaders to recalibrate movement tactics by enacting distinct grassroots, political, and cultural approaches to the issue.

MEASURING MOVEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

Nonprofit organizations are not solitary agents. Rather, they belong to a larger organizational field shared not only with clients, volunteers, and activists, but also with the media, public sector, foundations, and other allies. In addition to

providing an institutional venue where trust is fostered between the client and staff (Passy 2003), nonprofit organizations build relationships with activists through their participation in coalitions and social movements (Diani 2003). These movements also are in constant interaction with the media and public officials, as well as with other activists from outside the movement, who provide the movement with organizing strategies and framing mechanisms. In addition, nonprofit organizations engage with foundations which shape social movements through resource mobilization around a particular cause. Entrusted with developing a broad-based arena of like-minded actors and allies, foundations appropriately have been referred to as “field builders” (Bartley 2007).

Social movements rise and fall with the presence or absence of support from public officials who afford the movement with legitimacy and enhanced visibility. Additionally, social movements are more likely to flourish where there is higher receptivity of the cause by both residents and the local political culture (Marrow 2005). Furthermore, social movements are affected by political and economic cycles, which quickly serve to heighten popular support or opposition around the issue. Social movements – and the nonprofit organizations that participate in them – are constantly learning from external actors, whether they are movement allies or movement opponents. The hope is that the movement sharpens its political sensibilities around its cause after taking into account the platform and strategic interests of its opponents (De Filippis et al. 2010; Oliver and Myers 1998).

Keeping the relationship of activist efforts and the political context in mind, this paper singles out two general criteria by which to determine movement effectiveness: cultural resonance and policy outcomes. Cultural resonance comprises two central areas of concern – credibility and salience. While credibility examines the reliability of the movement’s chief articulators and their messaging strategies, salience refers to the accessibility of movement rhetoric to the larger public (Benford and Snow 2000). An effective movement answers the following questions in the affirmative. Does the movement make space for moderate voices to be heard and represented (Meyer 1993)? And, is movement rhetoric in tune with the everyday experience of its central mobilizing targets (Benford and Snow 2000)? Policy outcomes, on the other hand, occur when movement activities and resources achieve the public purposes for which they were intended (Andrews et al. 2010).

DATA AND METHODS

This paper employs both qualitative and ethnographic research. During April 2009 – August 2010, the author attended various community events, rallies, policy roundtables, public forums, and town hall meetings, as well as a session of

City Council, to understand the rhetorical strategies and political tactics employed by leaders and participants in the RI4A campaign. In order to have a better grasp of RI4A's opponents, the author also observed a number of Tea Party rallies and press conferences taking place during that time. Finally, the author participated in a half-day community organizing training session – led by a veteran community organizer from outside the field of immigration – designed specifically to train RI4A members in the skills of direct action in the wake of the passage of the Arizona law, SB 1070.

Philadelphia was chosen as the research site for a number of reasons. First, there has not been, to date, a formal, scholarly study conducted on the number, kind, and scope of immigrant nonprofit organizations in the Greater Philadelphia area. The absence of such a study is likely attributable to the fact that the Philadelphia region does not have a high ranking with respect to foreign-born persons living there.³ Although Philadelphia is the sixth largest city in the United States the Greater Philadelphia region ranks 16th for its foreign-born population. Second, only since the decade of the 1990s has Philadelphia reemerged as an immigrant destination. In response to a 45 percent growth in its foreign-born population during the 1990s and a 75 percent labor market growth since 2000, public administrators and nonprofit leaders have touted the benefits of implementing policies of immigrant integration in the region. Third and last, Philadelphia's foreign-born population is extremely diverse, with 39 percent of immigrants from Asia, 28 percent from Latin America and the Caribbean, 23 percent from Europe, and 8 percent from Africa (Singer et al. 2008). This diversity creates both challenges and opportunities for inter-ethnic collaboration among immigrant groups.

For this study, the author conducted 55 elite interviews of nonprofit leaders, among whom numbered leaders (or former leaders) of eight RI4A affiliate groups in the Greater Philadelphia area (ACORN, Irish Immigration Center, Sisters of St. Joseph, New Sanctuary Movement, Congreso de Latinos, Misión Santa María, and the Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Committee) as well as the outgoing RI4A Regional Community Organizer for Southeastern Pennsylvania, one of the newly self-appointed volunteer leaders of the Voices for Safe and Diverse Neighborhoods, and RI4A's Northeast Regional Organizer.⁴ In addition, the author interviewed 10 leaders from the public sector

³ As of 2008, the Greater Philadelphia region registered a foreign-born population of over 500,000 persons (Singer *et al.* 2008).

⁴ Note that the interview of leaders of the Sisters of St. Joseph and Misión Santa María took place during 2006, when original research on the topic was first collected. The author, however, engaged in informal conversations with representatives of these organizations throughout the 2009-2010 year. Furthermore, additional interviews of the leaders of the Voices for Safe and Diverse Neighborhoods and the RI4A Northeast Regional Coordinator were conducted in September and December 2010, respectively.

and 7 private sector leaders, whose professional work directly ties to the field of immigration. In some cases, the author interviewed multiple leaders and/or staff members at a particular organization. Some leadership and staff were interviewed more than once.

All 72 interviews (with the exception of five telephone interviews) were conducted face-to-face and unrecorded. While interviewees were chosen due to their direct relationship to the issue of immigration in the Greater Philadelphia area, a technique known as a “snowball sampling” method was employed which allowed the author to gain additional public, private, and nonprofit contacts after each and every interview. The average length of each interview lasted one hour and thirty minutes. Each interview included open-ended questions, covering a range of categories, including: organizational service delivery, local knowledge, cultural competency, and perspectives on immigration policy. Some of the specific questions addressed: the types of services the organization provides, examples of collaboration with other public, private, and nonprofit organizations, the kinds of ethnic and racial minorities served by the organization, immigration challenges in the region, and how the general public could be better educated about issues related to immigration. Key themes emerging from the interviews included: (1) the demand for culturally competent services, (2) political advocacy as an outgrowth of service provision, (3) relationship-building with a range of external actors, and (4) messaging of the immigration reform movement.

Those leaders who were interviewed recognized that Philadelphia faces formidable challenges due to its heterogeneous immigrant population. As one nonprofit leader put it, “how [can] we have a true coalition...bringing different immigrant groups together?” (Cooper, 2009). Due to such immigrant diversity, nonprofit leaders acknowledged the critical need of having services offered in a culturally competent way, whether that meant having multicultural and bilingual staff (Bergson-Shilcock 2009; Nguyen 2009), explicit language access policies (Shapiro 2009), or opportunities for ethnic community-building among clients (Ramic 2009). These leaders viewed their organizations as multiservice providers that simultaneously advanced cultural preservation and immigrant integration (Mirkil 2009).

All nonprofit leaders shared the fundamental belief that political advocacy was an outgrowth of service provision. Unquestionably, all leaders interviewed favored the passage of CIR in order to alleviate the daily challenges faced by their undocumented clients due to their immigration status. Indeed these leaders affirmed that political advocacy was part of the “one-stop shopping” model that their clients both desired and expected (Maldonado 2010; Swartzendruber-Landis 2009). This point can be summed up by one nonprofit leader, who commented that her organization supported immigrants with “whatever comes across the door” (Lyons 2009). At the same time, however, some leaders saw inherent limits

to political advocacy. “We want to inform the debate and move [the debate]” said one leader. “We don’t want to work to polarize the debate” (Bergson-Shilcock 2009).

Collaboration was the preferred model of community engagement for immigrant nonprofit organizations (Deegan 2009). Nonprofit leaders affirmed their desire for relationship-building among different immigrant groups, all the while making sure that cultural traditions and practices were respected (Pedemonti 2009, Swartzendruber-Landis 2009). Furthermore, leaders voiced support for building relationships with immigrant allies – those unaffected by immigration legislation – and with local policymakers and the media (Dadalt 2009; Peyton 2009). All those interviewed stressed the need for public dialogue with the native-born community in Philadelphia so as to make a strong case that the services provided to immigrants were “service[s] for everyone” (Sprague 2009). Messaging played an additional role in helping nonprofit organizations get the word out about immigrant contributions in the region. As in the RI4A campaign, the proper messaging would inspire both electoral and non-electoral forms of political activity on the part of immigrants and immigrant allies. In addition to crafting the message, emphasis was placed upon “who’s delivering the message and how it’s delivered” (Bernstein-Baker 2009).

THE RI4A CAMPAIGN IN PHILADELPHIA

Reform Immigration for America (RI4A) is a unified national effort of individuals and grassroots organizations whose central objective is to “build support for workable comprehensive immigration reform.” This national organization represents over 800 groups throughout the United States including: faith-based groups, small businesses, labor unions, human rights groups, and immigrant nonprofit organizations (Reform Immigration for America 2010). RI4A is a subsidiary of the National Immigration Forum (NIF) in Washington, DC. Founded in 1982, NIF is considered the leading immigrant advocacy organization in the United States through the kinds of policy expertise and communications it advances and the broad-based coalitions it builds (National Immigration Forum 2010). RI4A does not have its own Board of Directors or staff and, its leadership structure is tied directly to the NIF. On its website, RI4A showcases a list of its state affiliates, differing in size and scope, from small grassroots organizations, to faith-based organizations, to political advocacy groups.⁵

RI4A began its national campaign for CIR in 2008 in response to multiple conversations taking place across the country with immigrant advocacy groups (Barrios Ponce 2010). During July 2009- July 2010, RI4A assigned state

⁵ In the aftermath of its one-year campaign, RI4A has witnessed a significant reduction in the number of its state affiliates (RI4A 2011).

directors – operating in the role of community organizers – to sites around the country in an effort to push for CIR at the local level. Funded in large part by Atlantic Philanthropies (AP), a private foundation dedicated to social justice grant-making, the RI4A campaign helped unleash a social movement throughout the United States around the issue of immigration reform. According to Ali Kronley, former RI4A Pennsylvania State Director, the national campaign dedicated itself to four central pillars: (1) grassroots efforts, (2) legislation, (3) communications, and (4) policy. Given RI4A’s corporate structure, Kronley envisioned her role as the “conduit of community between the local and national” where immigrant rights activists and immigrant allies would find common cause (2010). Indeed, Celina Barrios Ponce, Northeast Regional Organizer for RI4A, described Philadelphia as having a unique coalition, one less dominated by immigrants than by immigrant allies who were unaffected by immigration legislation (2010).

In July 2010, RI4A relieved its state directors of their responsibilities due to the lack of new funding streams for the campaign. This has left the fight for immigration reform in Philadelphia in the hands of several immigrant nonprofit organizations: Pennsylvania Immigrant and Citizenship Coalition (PICC), an interagency coalition providing advocacy and leadership development in the field of immigration, and New Sanctuary Movement (NSM), an interfaith coalition committed to justice for immigrants, as well as the recently established grassroots coalition, Voices for Safe and Diverse Neighborhoods, and DREAM Activist Pennsylvania – led by a core team of undocumented youth. Never achieving its desired CIR legislation, RI4A has redirected its present focus to supporting organizational capacity at the local level and to finding “tangible wins where we can.” To this day, Barrios Ponce ranks Pennsylvania, along with Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Maine, as one of the more active RI4A coalitions in the Northeast region. In addition, she considers Philadelphia as “one of the bright spots of this whole campaign,” for its ability to form a lasting coalition with a range of smaller organizations and to build relationships with external actors (2010).

MOVEMENT LIFECYCLE AND IMMIGRATION REFORM

Through an examination of the one-year lifecycle of the RI4A campaign, this section takes into account the relationship between activist efforts and the local, state, and national political circumstances. Before elaborating on the three pertinent stages of the RI4A lifecycle – *coordination*, *direct action*, and *expansion and division of labor* – this section provides a brief description of the movement’s *incubation*.

Incubation (2006-Summer of 2009): Nonprofit organizations serving the immigrant community slowly began to fashion a local movement in support of immigrant rights at the grassroots level, lobbying for immigrant-friendly local initiatives in Philadelphia and CIR legislation. This activity was organized in direct response to the passage of The Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (H.R. 4437) by the U.S. House of Representatives in December 2005, mandating the criminalization of illegal immigrants (Sec. 203) and those individuals and organizations that aided them (Sec. 205). Not only did these nonprofit organizations take part in a diagnostic framing of the prospects for immigration reform by engaging in a series of public discussions, but also they spent time building mutually beneficial relationships with a range of public and private actors in the region.

Coordination (Summer 2009- April 2010): Immigrant nonprofit organizations joined the RI4A campaign as affiliates, and an even larger number actively participated in the range of events set into motion by the RI4A Pennsylvania state director. During this stage, movement leaders engaged in a prognostic framing of the immigration issue, setting out a plan of attack to achieve CIR. RI4A hosted a number of rallies at local churches in mid-January 2010, following the introduction of Representative Luis Gutiérrez's (D-IL) Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity (CIR ASAP) bill before the House of Representatives on December 15, 2009. RI4A also invited supporters to attend a session of Philadelphia City Council on January 28, 2010, where Councilwoman María Quiñones-Sánchez presented a unanimous resolution in favor of CIR, inviting those present to "join what is the beginning of this movement" (2010).

Information exchanges between the public and nonprofit sectors also began taking place regarding the shared goal of immigrant integration in the region. These exchanges ranged from the cross-circulation of a Brookings publication (Singer et al. 2008), to a Welcoming Center report (2004), to more recent work on immigrant contributions to the local economy issued by the city's Department of Commerce. The exchanges in question drew those service organizations vested in the work of immigrant integration into the decision-making process, thereby influencing the political debate. As opposed to holding local politicians' feet to the electoral fire, these organizations opted instead to collaborate closely with local government officials to "enhance understanding between [the] immigrant community and native community" (Colon 2009).

Direct Action (April 2010 – mid-July 2010): The movement witnessed a rapid acceleration of events headlined by the RI4A campaign after the passage of SB 1070 in Arizona, authorizing federal-state cooperation in the enforcement of immigration laws in Arizona. These direct actions were aimed specifically at signaling a sense of urgency in the region, due to the increasing likelihood of

Arizona-like legislation in Pennsylvania. On July 15, 2010, PICC hosted a roundtable entitled "Taking Action on Anti-Immigration Legislation" to reset the political agenda. Concerned with boundary framing, the purpose of the roundtable was how best to mobilize the pro-immigrant base in the aftermath of "real and present threats" of state legislative activity throughout the country (Blazer 2010).

On July 10, 2010, RI4A hosted a training session – with strong support from NSM – in order to showcase successful organizing tactics from external activists. Daniel Hunter, Co-Founder of Casino-Free Philadelphia, an organization dedicated to the prevention of casinos in the region, encouraged participants to employ the direct action in a creative manner, thinking about realistic goals, targets, and tactics in light of CIR (RI4A Training Session 2010). Four days later, RI4A staged a direct action, or counter-protest, across the street from Geno's Steaks in South Philadelphia, where a fundraiser was held to help Arizona offset its legal fees regarding SB 1070. Sponsored by the 1210 AM "Big Talker" radio program, the fundraiser featured key national and state political figures in support of SB 1070 on the air as well as the presence of Mariann Davies, Co-Founder of the Tea Party Immigration Coalition (TPIC) and a large crowd of Tea Party supporters (Geno's Steaks Rally 2010). By obstructing the radio broadcast in a nonviolent, but rowdy manner, RI4A viewed its direct action as a tactic both to expose the moral crisis of immigration and to demonstrate the RI4A movement's political power (2010).

Expansion and Division of Labor (mid-July 2010 – present): In the absence of full-time RI4A coordination, immigrant nonprofit organizations planned an additional direct action in protest of the Arizona Diamondbacks playing at Philadelphia's Citizens Bank Park on July 27, 2010. Jen Rock, Co-Director of NSM, commented on how the idea to protest Arizona's baseball team at its every away game came directly from the playbook of the Puente Movement – a global movement for migrant justice with headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona (Citizens Bank Park rally 2010). At Citizens Bank Park, a number of labor union representatives joined the rally, including members of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), while flyers were handed out for an upcoming lecture at the William Way Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Community Center on "The Struggle for Immigrant Rights and Social Justice." Throughout the campaign, labor union representatives and the faith community were regular participants and speakers at RI4A events, as they were naturally invested in the cause of CIR. During this time of movement expansion, the local coalition in Philadelphia invited other progressive groups to join the cause, such as the LGBT community, African Americans, and university students.

In the wake of the RI4A campaign, the grassroots coalition, Voices for Safe and Diverse Neighborhoods, has turned to public media campaigns such as the December 13, 2010 screening of *9500 Liberty* – a documentary about Prince William County, Virginia’s controversial (and Arizona-like) battle over immigration policy – at the WHYY headquarters in Philadelphia. The intention here is to create a common identity pathway among political progressives and other disaffected groups, like the LGBT community, African Americans, and university students. Meanwhile, a central objective of DREAM Activist Pennsylvania is to draw new and varied immigrant allies to plight of undocumented youth by highlighting the overarching theme of social justice (Marroquin 2011).

Concerned with sustaining participation at immigration events, PICC and NSM have put forth a motivational framing of the immigration issue, albeit in distinct ways. Whereas PICC continues to engage its membership at the political level through a “mix of national messaging and Pennsylvania messaging” (Cooper 2009), NSM has advanced a cultural approach to the issue, driving home the larger themes of accompaniment and radical hospitality (Pedemonti 2009). Recent PICC initiatives include a mix of electoral and non-electoral political activity: lobby days in Harrisburg, nonpartisan phone banking sessions during elections, and an upcoming conference on immigrant and disability rights. With the objective of accompaniment in mind, NSM continues to pressure public officials to end the Preliminary Arraignment Reporting System (PARS) agreement⁶ between the City of Philadelphia and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which has caused the deportation of thousands of undocumented immigrants from the region. Meanwhile, recent cultural events sponsored by NSM including, a photographic art auction of immigrants, a cultural celebration of Mexico’s Day of the Dead, and a prayer service for immigrants at the St. John Neumann Shrine in Philadelphia, drive home the organization’s belief in the radical hospitality of immigrants – both legal and the undocumented.

POLICY CHANGE AND CULTURAL RESONANCE

The institutional legacy of the RI4A campaign had both short-term and long-term effects on immigrant nonprofit organizations in Philadelphia. From a short-term

⁶ The PARS agreement grants federal agents access to the Philadelphia Police Department’s (PPD) arrest database. On July 16, 2010, the City of Philadelphia decided to extend the PARS agreement for one year with the new condition that ICE would no longer have access to victim or witness information (City of Philadelphia 2011). On June 23, 2011, Philadelphia’s City Council passed a non-binding resolution to end the collaboration between PPD and ICE; however, the agreement still stands in Philadelphia.

perspective, the RI4A campaign provided these organizations with a progressive mind-set, mobilizing strategies, and instant credibility. From a long-term perspective, the campaign offered strong organizational infrastructure and success in coalition-building, paying the way for enduring local engagement by these organizations today. When the RI4A campaign ended in July 2011, however, the desired policy change of the movement – CIR legislation – had not been accomplished. There were several reasons for this. At the national level, many Americans, inspired by the platform of the Tea Party, quickly became disenchanted with any policy labeled “comprehensive,” in the wake of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. While the Tea Party officially did not provide a unified position on immigration policy, local groups, such as the Tea Party Immigration Coalition (TPIC), sprang up in response to CIR and to the variety of initiatives advanced by the City of Philadelphia which they deemed extremely costly to local taxpayers. With support from State Legislators for Legal Immigration – a national coalition of legislators in favor of immigration enforcement and control – the discussion by TPIC of the negative economic impact of undocumented immigrants was well-timed (TPIC Press Conference 2010). After all, the United States was in the throes of a devastating financial crisis with rising levels of unemployment.

At the state level, RI4A activists commented on how they were blindsided by immigration initiatives taking place not only in Arizona, but also throughout the country. In Pennsylvania, two E-Verify bills passed the state legislature in a bipartisan manner by overwhelming majorities.⁷ Regan Cooper of PICC discussed the “tremendous need for on-the-ground capacity” in Northeastern Pennsylvania, a region experiencing rapid growth both in its immigrant population and immigration control initiatives (2009). Cesar Marroquin, Secretary of DREAM Activist Pennsylvania, confirmed that there is little support for immigration reform policies in Allentown, Harrisburg, and Pittsburgh (Marroquin 2011). And yet, a major failing of the RI4A campaign in Philadelphia was never to consider linking its desired immigration reform policies to electoral consequences for Pennsylvania state legislators. In retrospect, perhaps the campaign should have considered targeting one of SB 1070’s biggest supporters in Pennsylvania, State Rep. Daryl Metcalfe (R-Butler County), also the Co-Founder of State Legislators for Legal Immigration and chief sponsor of the state’s E-Verify bills.

A word about the cultural resonance of the RI4A campaign is now due. Largely funded by Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) – a generous supporter of comprehensive health care reform in the United States – the campaign dedicated itself to “building progressive power on the left” (Kronley 2010). Gara La

⁷ House Bill (HB) 1502 and HB 1503, requiring all state contractors (regardless of their receipt of federal grants) in the construction sector to use the federal E-Verify system, passed the Pennsylvania State Legislature in June 2010.

Marche, President of AP, recently commented on the intricate relationship between movement building and the strengthening of the progressive cause, driving home the point that movement building is a “vital path to changing the political narrative” (2011). Employing progressive rhetoric, the local coalition invited other disaffected groups – such as African Americans, university students, and the LGBT community—to join the fight for immigration reform during the final stage of the RI4A campaign. However, only the coalition’s appeals to university students have had any lasting effects as the entire core leadership team of DREAM Activist Pennsylvania is comprised of university-aged, undocumented students.

RI4A’s desire to change the political narrative met its own set of adverse consequences. Despite its decision to host events at culturally relevant landmarks – such as Independence Hall, the National Constitution Center, and William Penn’s Welcome Park – the campaign never offered a response to the constitutional rhetoric of the Tea Party that would appeal to both political moderates and conservatives, and thereby broaden the movement’s base. Given its inattention to the articulation of constitutional principles, RI4A messaging was not accessible to a larger American public concerned both with the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. This was particularly significant during a time in which TPIC – RI4A’s chief movement opponent in Philadelphia – had claimed this constitutional territory.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The political learning arising from the completion of the RI4A campaign is not limited simply to the City of Philadelphia but to immigrant coalitions invested in the cause of immigration reform throughout the United States. Thus, this paper’s intention was to pique the interest of scholars, nonprofit leaders, and policymakers at work in the immigration sector at the national, state, and local levels. Immigrant nonprofit organizations today are still the central torchbearers in the push for piecemeal forms of immigration legislation, such as the DREAM Act. However, these organizations now should turn to the lessons learned from the RI4A campaign in Philadelphia as they plot their next political steps.

There are three main lessons to be learned from the RI4A campaign: (1) messaging, (2) public recognition, and (3) political advocacy. Whereas messaging and public recognition relate to the theme of cultural resonance, political advocacy tackles the subject of policy change. First, one of the RI4A campaign’s central mistakes was its failure to respond to the constitutional rhetoric of the Tea Party platform. The messaging employed by the campaign was rooted in a progressive mind-set, one which equated movement building with a fundamental change in the political narrative, instead of narrative continuity.

Leaders and participants in the immigration reform movement would do well to link movement objectives to the constitutional narrative of the American political order, thereby drawing in a greater diversity of movement supporters from both moderate and conservative camps. As most successful social movements have demonstrated throughout American history, policy change occurs when movement leaders rhetorically extend the promise of constitutional ideals to disenfranchised groups in public life. The recent lawsuit against Alabama's new immigration enforcement legislation (HB 56) is case in point. Opponents characterized HB 56 as a violation of Alabama's Constitution (1901), citing areas in the document which state that "emigration shall not be prohibited" (Art 1, Sec. 30) and that foreigners who become state residents shall enjoy in the same property rights as native-born citizens (Art 1, Sec. 34).

Second, there is little public recognition not only of comprehensive immigration legislation but also of the work of immigrant nonprofit organizations in the Greater Philadelphia area. As a result, those organizations often find themselves in "progressive silos" (Kronley 2010) instead of amidst progressive, moderate, and conservative populations simultaneously. According to Judith Bernstein-Baker, Executive Director of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, "immigrants need to be encouraged to participate in mainstream American organizations. [Then] people can work with them side-by-side" (2009). The same holds true for leaders of immigrant nonprofit organizations. One of the best mainstream venues is catch-all organizations, such as the recent establishment of the Global Philadelphia Association – a nonprofit committed to the promotion of global activity in the region through coordination of activities and messaging. In addition to representation from the business, legal, medical, and academic professions, two leaders of immigrant nonprofit organizations – Dennis Mulligan of the Nationalities Service Center and Anne O'Callaghan of the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians – form the association's core leadership team. It is in larger associations such as these that the work of immigrant nonprofit organizations can become recognized, understood, and appreciated.

Third and last, if nonprofit organizations are committed to the fight for immigration reform, they will need to find ways to move beyond client advocacy to a full-fledged political advocacy. While nonprofit leaders repeatedly remark that advocacy is an outgrowth of service provision, such advocacy is oftentimes limited to the individual client, as opposed to the political system. Zeina El-Halabi, Associate Director of the Arab American Community Development Corporation, stated, "I think we need to be more aggressive" about advocacy and civic engagement work (2009). It is true that many immigrant nonprofit organizations supported particular pieces of immigration legislation during the campaign; however, these organizations did not work to hold local and state politicians electorally responsible for their positions on immigration. Perhaps this

was due to the political constraints placed on these organizations as a result of their 501(c) (3) status. One possible solution to enhance the political advocacy around the issue of immigration would be the formation of a 501(c)(4) organization, a political action committee, or a hybrid organization that has a separate 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and political action committee status at the local level.⁸

For the last five years, every major piece of immigration reform legislation – both comprehensive and piecemeal—has failed at the national level. In response, states have decided to take immigration legislation into their own hands in a variety of ways. Some states like Indiana, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama have followed Arizona’s lead by enacting immigration enforcement legislation. Other states – with California being the most recent – have put forth their own versions of the DREAM Act. Disillusioned with both political parties, new social movements like the Tequila Party have entered the national political scene to advocate on behalf of CIR legislation and the Latino voting bloc. At the local level, Philadelphia’s City Council – in collaboration with immigrant nonprofit organizations – adopted The Pennsylvania Compact, replicating Utah’s legislative design for CIR in Pennsylvania. A non-binding resolution, this compact represents a symbolic gesture of the continued political support for CIR in the City of Brotherly Love. Meanwhile, at the state level, DREAM Activist Pennsylvania braces for an uphill battle regarding the issue of in-state tuition for undocumented youth, relying on massive support from the state’s most immigrant-friendly region – Philadelphia. As the local Philadelphia coalition recalibrates its policy objectives, those nonprofit leaders invested in the fight for immigration reform are saying, however piecemeal, “we need a victory” (Barrios Ponce 2010). The RI4A case study demonstrates that the political role that immigrant nonprofit organizations play at the national, state, and local levels has never been so significant or timely. However, if these organizations are ever to effect real policy change, they must aim to do three things: adopt constitutional messaging strategies, participate in mainstream venues, and hold legislators electorally accountable.

⁸ The key political difference between 501(c)(3) organizations (public charities) and 501(c)(4) organizations (social welfare organizations) is that 501(c)(4)s may engage in electioneering and nonpartisan campaign-related activities as well as lobby without restriction, “as long as it is not the primary focus of their organizational operation.” Meanwhile, the most partisan of tax-exempt organizations, political action committees (PACs), “raise and expend money in election campaigns” (Reid, 2006: 360, 361).

APPENDIX: GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AP	The Atlantic Philanthropies
CIR	Comprehensive Immigration Reform
CIR ASAP	Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity
DREAM Act	Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act
HB	House Bill
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
ISO	International Socialist Organization
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
IWW	Industrial Workers of the World
NIF	National Immigration Forum
NSM	New Sanctuary Movement
PARS	Preliminary Arraignment Reporting System
PICC	Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition
RI4A	Reform Immigration for America
SB	Senate Bill
TPIC	Tea Party Immigration Coalition

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