

The altered socio-political landscape of a post-9/11 United States has forced us to reexamine existing notions of identity and citizenship, insider and outsider, documented and undocumented. Today, immigration-related concerns are at the forefront of American politics and international relations.

The call for this special issue of *InterActions* invited authors to view these concerns through the lenses of education and information studies, and to explore the largely unmapped spaces where immigration, education, and information intersect. It is of crucial importance to examine both the problems related to the education of immigrant students and the ways in which information and disinformation about immigrants are recorded and disseminated. Because the topic of immigration is not limited to the United States, neither is the scope of this special issue. We hope it will encourage a closer examination of the roles of both education and information studies in the immigration debates, as well as of the legal, social, philosophical, economic, and cultural factors that shape these debates. *Border Interactions: Immigration – Education – Information* brings together both first-hand accounts of immigrant experiences and scholarly articles that apply new critical paradigms to this domain.

In the first commentary, *Unpacking Immigration*, Marjorie Orellana provides a thoughtful analysis of the term and the concept. Immigrant experiences and identities are in part shaped by information that is distributed about them, which in turn impacts educational attainment. Orellana calls for addressing a number of issues concerning legal status, social and cultural wealth, and previous educational experience.

Orellana's call is echoed in an interview with Patricia Gándara and Gary Orfield, co-directors of the Civil Rights Project / El Proyecto de CRP. In this interview, Nolan Cabrera highlights the importance of Gándara's and Orfield's work and the benefit of their partnership. The issue of immigration continues to benefit from the scholarly expertise and rigor provided by the Project, which has been relocated to UCLA.

In a second interview, Clara Chu, Information Studies scholar-activist and "Peruvian-born Chinese Canadian Living in the U.S.," discusses the key role that information institutions can play in immigrants' lives. The ethics and goals of information institutions implicate information workers and educators in the immigration debate, for the willingness of these professionals to take on the problems of linguistic and cultural diversity can play a large role in determining the success of a given immigrant experience. Chu makes the point that all institutions—not just the government—have an ethical responsibility to deal with the immigration question.

This issue features three pieces of original research. The first, *A Comparative Analysis of Bangladeshi and Pakistani Educational Attainment in London Secondary Schools* demonstrates the interest of a rigorous statistical

approach. Co-authors Divya Sunder and Layli Uddin compare Bangladeshi and Pakistani attainment in secondary schools in London. They provide an in-depth analysis of how different groups of London-area South Asian Muslims negotiate the educational system and how that system responds to those immigrants' needs. For U.S.-based researchers, this study serves as a compelling reminder to look beyond national borders and recognize immigration as a global phenomenon that must be studied in many specific contexts.

A second research article by Daysi Diaz-Strong and, Erica Meiners, *Residents, Alien Policies and Resistances: Experiences of Undocumented Latina/o Students in Chicago's Colleges and Universities*, presents a collection of oral histories that document and analyze the experiences of a group of students at various stages of documentation/legalization in their quest for higher education in Chicago. Diaz-Strong and Meiners' interviews reveal the tensions between the urgent need for documentation and the obstacles to securing that documentation. The article also explores the human impact of legislation such as House of Representatives Bill 4437, which makes aiding undocumented persons a crime.

Irum Shiekh follows this theme in *Deported for Life: For Helping a Friend to Get an Apartment and a Car*, which documents the case of Ansar Mahmood, a green-card-holding Pakistani immigrant who was deported for life in the wake of 9/11. Shiekh's piece is both a reflection on and performance of oral history as a corrective to the limits of the American legal system's own documentation as a mode of history-telling.

The Spencer Symposium on Immigration and Education, held in May 2007, specifically addressed the experiences of immigrant students from the perspective of the students themselves. Spencer Fellows Lindsay Perez Huber, Yiching Huang, Rosa Jiménez, and Veronica Velez report on the student-organized event, which revealed the many forms that action research may take. The report emphasizes how participants are working to bring the community and the academy together into meaningful and ongoing interactions.

In the short history of *InterActions*, our collaborative group of scholars, practitioners, and activists has focused on the mission of promoting liberating visions, methodologies, and practices. It is our hope that this issue of *InterActions* will inspire and expand our readers' understanding of the importance of action research. The scope of possibilities is wide and the opportunities are great. We encourage you to share this issue and other resources on immigration with others in your realm of influence. *InterActions* is delighted to offer another timely and reasoned contribution to the scholarly dialogue by providing critical commentary on current issues and promoting perspectives in educational and information systems that can serve the cause of social justice.

The editors would like to thank everyone who contributed to and supported the production of this issue. We have received an enthusiastic response

to our call for this important discussion, and we owe a nod of acknowledgement to Ryan Gildersleeve for originally suggesting the topic. We especially wish to thank Paula Carbone, Renate Chancellor, Shari Lee, and Nancy Sayer for work above and beyond the call of duty.