NONCITIZENSHIP STATUS:
THE SIXTH FACE OF OPPRESSION

By
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Abstract

Current U.S. immigration policy coupled with public anti-immigrant sentiments have appeared to set up oppressive conditions for noncitizens. Iris Young’s “Five Face of Oppression” provides a framework useful for identifying conditions of oppression for citizens. However, in this thesis I argue that she is missing an important face of oppression, noncitizenship status. Through applying noncitizen’s experiences to Young’s faces and my additional face, their oppression can be identified, and the structures and systems in our society that facilitate such oppression can be found as well.
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I. Introduction

Hiu Lui Ng came to New York from Hong Kong when he was 17 with his parents and sister on a tourist visa. Soon after its expiration, Ng applied for asylum and got issued a work permit during the review of his application. Despite the denial of his asylum, fifteen years later, Ng was a member of society in almost every way that matters. He held a job as a computer engineer, had a house in Queens, and an American wife and two American-born sons. Despite having previously overstayed a visa, he applied for his green card interview. In turn, he was detained with intentions to deport because of his prior visa overstay. Immediately, Ngo was ripped apart from his family and put into jail despite his time spent in country, his strong family ties, and being a contributing and otherwise law abiding member in society. The simple factor that he lacks legal status disregards any of his achievements or societal roots.

Ng was never deported, as he died before the removal date. He was severely mistreated and neglected by detention supervisors, and as a result, he suffered through a broken spine and liver cancer until his death (Carsen 2009; Bernstein 2008). While Ng’s tragic death in detention is not typical of most immigrants, the acts of his detention and removal proceedings are indeed a potential reality for all undocumented immigrants and even legal permanent residents.

The changing landscape of immigration law has appeared to set up conditions of injustice for noncitizens. For this reason, I turn to Iris Young’s framework “The Five Faces of Oppression” as lens to evaluate the experiences of noncitizens to provide an explanatory accounts of why noncitizens are oppressed and in which ways. Particularly, Young’s framework is very useful for identifying oppression of citizens; however, in thesis I will argue that she is missing an important face of oppression which I call noncitizenship status. This thesis serves two
purposes: evaluating noncitizen’s oppression through Young’s original faces of oppression, and constructing a new face of oppression to better address the injustices to noncitizens.

To begin, part II provides a general description of noncitizens, specifically undocumented immigrants. Part III introduces Young’s concept of oppression and her five faces of oppression, which are then used to evaluate the conditions of noncitizens. Part IV and V examine the concept of citizenship and noncitizenship and the different way for understanding each term. In part VI I provide my contribution to Young’s framework, proposing a sixth face of oppression: noncitizen status.

II. Who Are Noncitizens?

Because of increasing movement across state borders, not all persons in a state are members. These individuals without full membership are noncitizens. They are foreign-born and have not been naturalized to become U.S. citizens. While some individuals may just be visiting, I include only those who are intending to settle in the United States as noncitizens. There are 25.5 million noncitizens in the United States according to 2010 numbers.¹ Not only are the people of the United States divided into citizenship and noncitizenship status, people of noncitizenship status are also divided into types: legal permanent residents (green card holders), recent entry asylees and refugees, legal temporary migrants, and unauthorized immigrants.

A. Noncitizen Categories

Legal permanent residents represent 49% of the noncitizen population (Passel 2011, 10). In order to obtain legal permanent resident status, one must first be eligible and then apply to the

¹ See Passel (2011, 10). His findings show 25.3 million, but did not include recent refugee and asylee arrivals. I added Martin’s (2010) numbers for estimated recent refugee and asylee arrivals.
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Eligibility for legal permanent residences includes: family based, employment based, and refugee or asylum status based. Each category has specific requirements, a set amount of visas to give out, and an established priority system of preferred circumstances. Family based only includes parents of U.S. citizens over the age of 21, spouses of U.S. citizens, and unmarried children under the age of 21 of a U.S. citizen. Employment based includes eligibility for job offers, investors and entrepreneurs, self-petitions for “Aliens of Extraordinary Ability”, and special categories of jobs. Asylees and refugees are those who seek protection from another country “because they have suffered persecution or fear they will suffer persecution due to race, religion, nationality, social group membership, or political opinion” (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services).

The rights of legal permanent residents include: living permanently in the U.S., work, and protection by all laws of the U.S. The responsibilities include: obeying all laws, filing taxes, support the democratic form of government, males age 18 through 25 register with the Selective Service (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services). Legal permanent residences also have social benefits access such as, welfare and medical programs, but their access may be limited due to the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act which gave states the authority to limit permanent legal residents from certain programs. Their permanent resident status, however, does not protect them from deportation. If they commit certain crimes, they may be subject to deportation (Varsanyi 2009).

Refugees must first undergo an admittance process to obtain refugee status outside the United States through the United Nations and are then placed into an accepting country, in this

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2 These are the main categories of becoming a permanent resident. See U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for other unique ways to do so.
3 Categories established by the USCIS: Afghan/Iraqi translator, broadcaster, international organization employee, Iraqi who assisted the U.S. government, NATO-6 nonimmigrant, Panama Canal employee, physician national interest waiver, religious worker (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services).
case, the United States. Asylees must also undergo an admittance process to be granted asylum, but asylum-seekers must be physically present in the U.S. to begin the process. There are two ways to carry out asylum processing: defensive and affirmative. Defensive occurs when an individual has been placed in removal proceeding due to immigration violations or illegal entry into the United States. These individuals are usually apprehended when crossing the border. It is during their court removal proceeding that an immigration judge reviews their asylum application to decide whether to grant asylum. Until they are granted asylum or if they are denied asylum, they are considered unauthorized immigrants. Affirmative processes are for individuals who are not subject to removal proceedings and simply submit an application, and are reviewed by an USCIS officer in a non-adversarial interview (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services). Obtaining refugee or asylum status does not signify legal permanent residence, but are temporarily authorized to reside, apply for employment, and receive certain social services in the United States. They are also eligible to apply for legal permanent residence 1 year after receiving asylee or refugee status.⁴

Legal temporary migrants are a small portion of the noncitizen population, representing 6% of all noncitizens (Passel 2011, 10). They are those who have been admitted under a set of specific authorized temporary statuses for longer-term residence and work. There are many different temporary worker classifications, some of which include: seasonal agriculture workers, temporary non-agriculture workers, and North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) temporary professionals from Mexico and Canada (such as accountants, engineers, lawyers, scientists). The temporary agriculture and non-agriculture classifications require an employer to first apply for visas on the worker’s behalf. In doing so, the employers must demonstrate that there are not sufficient U.S. workers to fill the temporary positions and that the employment of

⁴ Refugees are required to apply for legal permanent residence after one year (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services).
alien workers will not negatively affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers. The alien worker must then apply for the visa outside the United States. These visas authorize a 1-3 year period of stay. Legal temporary migrants have similar rights, obligations, and deportation standards that those of legal permanent residents with the exception of authorized permanent residence, requirement to sign up with the Selective Service, and social benefits access (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services).

Unauthorized immigrants make up 44% of the noncitizen population (Passel 2011, 10). They are all foreign-born noncitizens residing in the country without documentation or proper visas. A portion of unauthorized immigrants enter legally with a visa, but continue their stay after the visa expiration date. The rest of unauthorized immigrants enter without inspection at a port of entry. Unauthorized immigrants are thus considered “illegal immigrants” because they entered the country without valid documentation or violated the length of stay terms of their visa. Because their presence is unauthorized, they are residing in the United States illegally.

As previously stated, asylum seekers need to be physically present in order to apply for asylum, but those from countries that require a visa application for any type of U.S. entry face significant obstacles to enter legally. As result, almost half of asylee applicants enter illegally (Martin 2010, 4). Despite their asylum claims, they are considered illegal immigrants until they are granted asylum.

Unauthorized immigrants do not have the right to reside or work in the United States. They are always subject to deportation, particularly if found to be employed using false documents or violating other U.S. laws. Unauthorized immigrants are also ineligible for social benefits; however, states have authority to provide state and local benefits if they pass a law giving them eligibility (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services). Including unauthorized immigrants and other noncitizens, everyone in the United States has constitutional rights that the Constitution does not expressly reserve to citizens. Particularly, noncitizens are entitled to equal protection of laws, freedom of speech, free primary education, and due process (Cole 2003). All noncitizens are also entitled to emergency medical services.  

While all noncitizen categories are provided certain rights, their status still consists of vulnerabilities for oppression that citizenship status would otherwise prevent. In this essay, I will examine the unauthorized immigrant noncitizen group because their oppression is the most constant and severe. For this purpose, the term “noncitizen” refers only to unauthorized immigrants from this point on.

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<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Types of Noncitizens</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Noncitizen Population, 2010:</strong></td>
<td>25,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Permanent Residence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population:</strong></td>
<td>12,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description:</strong></td>
<td>People granted legal settlement in the state, but are not citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obtained through:</strong></td>
<td>Ties to citizens through marriage, employment, family (OR) One year of asylee or refugee status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights:</strong></td>
<td>Constitutional, employment, certain social services, permanent U.S. residence, eligible for citizenship (pending particular requirements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refugees and Asylees:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population:</strong></td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description:</strong></td>
<td>People who prove to have been persecuted or fear they will be persecuted on account of race, religion, nationality, social group membership, or political opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obtained through:</strong></td>
<td>Approved by U.S. Citizenship and Migration Services (OR) Admitted as a refugee through the U.N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights:</strong></td>
<td>Employment, certain social services, temporary U.S. residence until circumstances of home country improve, eligible for legal permanent residence after one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Temporary Migrants:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population:</strong></td>
<td>1,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description:</strong></td>
<td>People admitted under a set of specific authorized temporary statuses for longer-term residence for school and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obtained through:</strong></td>
<td>Temporary work visas must be applied for by employer, then perspective worker applies outside of the U.S.; authorized time to stay varies according to type of visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights:</strong></td>
<td>Constitutional, employment, temporary U.S. residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unauthorized (Illegal):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population:</strong></td>
<td>11,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description:</strong></td>
<td>All foreign-born noncitizens residing in the country who are not &quot;legal immigrants&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode of unauthorized entry:</strong></td>
<td>Entered the country without valid documents (OR) Arrived with valid visas, but stayed past their visa expiration date or otherwise violated the terms of their admission (OR) Asylum applicants undergoing review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights:</strong></td>
<td>Constitutional</td>
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B. Demographics

Overall, unauthorized immigrants are more likely to be from Mexico and other Latin American countries, younger, male, living as a family, and less educated than the citizen and other noncitizen populations.

1. Country of Origin

As of 2010, there were 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants residing in the United States (Passel 2011, 10). Unauthorized immigrants come from a multitude of countries, but the majority migrates from Mexico (58%) and other Latin American countries (23%).

![Figure 2](image)


2. Geographic Distribution

Unauthorized immigrants state settlement patterns are dispersed amongst the country, but California had the highest unauthorized immigration population (22%) in 2010. Texas, Florida, and New York follow California; in fact, the four states together contain of half of the

| States with Largest Unauthorized Immigrant Populations, 2010 (thousands) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| U.S. Total                      | 11,200          |
| California                      | 2,550           |
| Texas                            | 1,650           |
| Florida                         | 825             |
| New York                        | 625             |
| New Jersey                      | 550             |
| Illinois                        | 525             |
| Georgia                         | 425             |
| Arizona                         | 400             |
| North Carolina                  | 325             |
| Maryland                        | 275             |
| Washington                      | 230             |
| Virginia                        | 210             |


3. Age and Gender

In 2008, the unauthorized population was 56% adult men, 36% adult women, 10% children (Passel 2009, 4). The ages of unauthorized immigrants are unevenly represented, with only a 1.2% share of individuals 65 and older and a 58% share of ages 18-35. Unauthorized men were more likely to represent the 18-35 age group, as 35% were men compared to the 23% of women.
4. Household Arrangements

There is a general assumption that unauthorized immigrants are single men\(^6\), however statistics show that is not the case work. Three-quarters of unauthorized immigrant households were families in 2008. These family households contained married or cohabiting couples with no children, married or cohabitating couples with children, or single adults with children (Passel 2009, 5).

5. Educational Attainment

Half (53\%) of unauthorized immigrant adults ages 25-64 had a high school education in 2008. This figure compared to the rest of the population shows that unauthorized immigrants are notably less educated. The number of unauthorized immigrants without a high school education doubles the number of legal permanent residents and is six times the number of U.S. citizens with similar education levels (Passel 2009, 10).

C. U.S. Immigration Policy

Before discussing the circumstances of noncitizens, a general overview of U.S. immigration policy is necessary. First I want to demonstrate how legal entry, even for vacation, can be an obstacle, especially for those from certain countries. Any foreign person who is not a U.S. citizen and wants to enter the country must first get a visa, regardless of entry purpose. However, there are 35 countries involved in a visa waiver program, so citizens of any of those countries do not need a visa for stays up to 90 days. Notably, the countries that represent significant amounts of the illegal immigrants are not on this list. Visa applications can be complex, expensive and only consider limited types of circumstances. In order to obtain a visa,

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\(^6\) See Capps and Fix (2005).
travelers must do so through the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in their home country. This could pose burdens for those living in rural areas, lack transportation, or do not live near a U.S. Embassy. The fees associated with apply for a visa range from $160 to $700 depending on visa type (U.S. Department of State).

In addition to the limited admissions of immigrants as discussed in the different categories of noncitizens, escalated enforcement reflects a strict immigration policy of the United States. For instance, deportation poses an unprecedented threat to immigrants. In 2011 there were 396,906 deportations, while 2001 accounts for 120,000 deportations (Silverleib 2011). Immigration enforcement has increased both along and inside the border. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) doubled border enforcement spending since 1990 and increased Border Patrol agents from 3,000 in 1986 to over 20,000 in 2010. ICE officials have set high quotas for deportations and do so through invasive tactics such as workplace raids, citizenship inspections, and identifying petty offenses as basis for deportation (Spencer and Becker 2007; Romero 2006; Capps et al. 2007, Nicks 2009). Since 2006, enforcement through worksite and home raids has become much more prevalent (Rosenblum & Brick 2011). In fact, 17% of illegal immigrants were apprehended at work or home in 2010, which is a significant increase from the 3% in 2005 (Passel 2012, 24).

Additionally, Department of Homeland Security has expanded immigration enforcement duties to state and local law enforcement agencies to identify illegal immigrants when they commit a crime. Prior to enactment of the 287(g) program, state and local police officials did not have the authority to hold unauthorized immigrants, so officials would generally let them go back into the community if they did not face serious criminal charges. Moreover, the Supreme Court’s 2005 decision in *Meuler v. Mena* held that “police do not need ‘reasonable suspicion’ to
inquire into a person’s immigration status where the person has been lawfully stopped or detained for another reason” (Kittrie 2006, 1462). This holding increases states’ ability to discriminate against unauthorized immigrants. Law enforcement officials can target suspected unauthorized aliens of other crimes, such as traffic offenses, to conduct immigration inquiries.

The Antiterrorism Act and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) and Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996 also contribute to record high deportation rates. The acts made deportation and detainment a consequence for more offenses and limited judicial review in deportation cases. Prior to 1996, only “aggravated felonies” were punishable for deportation, such as murder and drug trafficking. The Antiterrorism Act expanded deportable offenses to include all offenses involving “moral turpitude” (Clapman 2011, 592). These crimes can include minor offenses such as driving with a suspended license, DUI’s, first time drug offenders, and shoplifting (Diamant 2010; Clapman 2011, 586; Lipton 2009). As a result, a vast amount of immigrants, many of whom pose no threat to the U.S., are subject to removal proceedings. Through increasing enforcement, expanding deportable offenses, providing state’s immigration enforcement rights, and police authority to question citizen status, more immigrants become increasingly susceptible to deportation.

Once immigrants undergo their deportation trial, they are then refused legal protections such as an appointed counsel or thorough judicial review. These due process rights are not required because immigration proceedings have been deemed civil, not criminal (Hagan, Eschbach, and Rodriguez 2008, 651). Consequently, immigrants facing deportation lack representation and judicial review of their circumstances, weakening their protection in deportation cases.
Illegal entry into the United States or prolonged overstay of a visa leaves illegal immigrants with few options for legal status. Even if an illegal immigrant fits the qualification for legal permanent residence (family or employer ties), they are still ineligible. The only way to obtain eligibility is to return to their country of origin and apply through a U.S. consulate. However, illegal presence in the U.S. for 1 year bars re-entry for 10 years and any amount of time over 1 year can permanently bar re-entry (Lewin 2006).

In regards to immigration regulation of employment, every worker in the United States must fill out an I-9 form, which requires a Social Security numbers. Immigrants without proper documentation must either use a nonexistent number or one that belongs to someone else. Without this number, they cannot be hired. And they cannot apply for their own number because they don’t have immigration papers (Beacon 2008, 4). Additionally, a provision of the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986 prohibited the employment of people without an immigration visa allowing them to work. The law also made it a crime for undocumented workers to hold a job (5). As a result, obtaining a job is very risky and difficult for noncitizens.

D. Possible Causes of Illegal Immigration

Immigration in general is escalating internationally because of globalization. Increased economic openness and advanced modes of communication and transportation facilitate heavy immigration flows (Hollifield 2004). The drivers behind illegal immigration do not differ from any other immigration types; however, the immigration policy of destination states determines the outcome of illegal immigration. Immigration drivers can be explained by three categories of structural factors: push factors, pull factors, and social networks. Push factors are incentives for to leave their country of origin due to poor economic opportunities, corrupt governments, wars,
or natural disasters. The factors pressure individuals to emigrate in order to seek political, economic, and personal protection. Pull factors create the attraction of a destination state. These include job availability, safety, and equality before the law. Social networks generate connections between migrants to host-state jobs and immigrants living in the destination state, facilitating assistance with their emigration. Illegal immigration depends on how immigrant admission and enforcement policies match structural and market forces (Rosenblum & Brick 2011, 2).

Illegal immigration is on the rise in the United State because current immigration policies do not correspond with current market forces. The United States is a strong participant in international trade, which requires economic openness. The U.S. openly accepts flow of goods, technology, currencies, and ideas across its borders, but not labor and people. Hollifield (2004) calls this the “liberal paradox” because international trade is inherently coupled with migrant workers. In attempting to increase economic openness and also prevent security and economic threats of immigration, states find themselves with a large illegal immigration population (905). Varsanyi (2008) develops Hollifield’s liberal paradox purposing that “high demands for inexpensive, flexible labor to fuel the growth of, inter alia, the construction, service, and hospitality industries” are other powerful pull factors for labor migration in the U.S. She furthers that immigration itself is not illegal based on a constant, overarching standard of right and wrong, but varying laws determining what is against the law produce illegality (882). To summarize, in managing the tensions of the liberal paradox, the United States has adopted contradictory policies of narrow immigration admission and increased enforcement, yet established pull factors through economic openness and lax enforcement of migrant employers (879). For this reason, illegal immigration is highly prevalent in the United States.
IV. Iris Young’s Five Faces of Oppression

Iris Young’s *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990) provides a framework for identifying oppression in our current society. She contends that the term oppression is too vague for providing a clear account of the differing conditions of oppression experienced by particular groups, so she seeks to create a more effective mechanism for describing the varying oppressive conditions. For this reason, she analyzes the conditions of groups that have participated in political movements claiming to be oppressed including: “women, Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other Spanish-speaking American, old people, working class people, and the physically and mentally disabled” (40). She finds that injustices experienced by these oppressed groups are comprised of a “family of concepts and conditions” sufficient for describing oppression of any group, or the Five Faces of Oppression: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence (40).

In order to understand Young’s contribution, it is necessary to discuss the traditional way of understanding oppression as an exercise as tyranny. Oppression has generally been used to describe other societies, such as Communist societies or those under colonial domination. In other words, the term oppression is reserved for undemocratic societies, in which a tyrannical ruling group has complete control over society and its people. As a result, indentifying injustice in our society as oppression is viewed illegitimate (41). To contrast this notion, Young introduces updated conceptions of both injustice and oppression that are indeed compatible with our society.

She first expands the conception of justice as fair distributional outcomes to also include institutional practices that facilitate collective participation and development. With this in mind, injustice then constrains individuals from participatory structures in society. In essence, injustice
signifies oppression, as oppression from tyranny can also be described as exclusion from societal participation. Young demonstrates a relationship between oppression and injustice, indicating that oppression involves injustice. In other words, all oppressed people experience injustice from obstacles preventing the development of their skills and expression of their perspectives in significant and public contexts (40). Unlike oppression’s traditional concept as acts inflicted by individuals, its new usage refers to oppression as a structural concept. Oppression in this sense is the result of “systematic constraints on groups” caused by societal norms and institutional practices, instead of acts of individuals (41). In sum, oppression is a structural feature of society; it is systematic suffering, not just the “pain” of individuals. Because the oppressed are constrained by institutional practices, it is necessary to investigate commonly accepted social structures and institutions to identify possible sources of oppression such as: laws and public policy, enforcement procedures, education, bureaucratic administration, [and] production and distribution of consumer goods (41).

To fully comprehend Young’s conception of oppression, one must acknowledge that oppression is a condition of groups and understand what a group is. While individuals surely experience oppression, Young indicates that individual oppression can only occur because of their group identification. In other words, an individual cannot be oppressed if they do not belong to an oppressed group. A group refers to social groups, which Young describes as a “collective of persons differentiated from at least one other group by cultural forms, practices, or way of life” (43). Accordingly, individuals with similar experiences tend to associate with each other, creating a group based on a shared sense of identity. It is important to note that groups exist as “forms of social relations” and are not an actual arranged body of people.
Young emphasizes that groups arise only in relation to another group because group identification develops through an awareness of differences from others. Additionally, social processes differentiate groups because those with similar experiences in social processes tend to associate with each other and differentiate themselves from those with contrasting experiences. Social processes also create the conditions in which certain groups are oppressed, such as the division of labor or stereotyping and exclusion by established groups. Notably, Young declares that “for every oppressed group there is a group that is privileged in relation to that group,” motivating the privileged group to maintain the inferior group’s oppression (42).

I have demonstrated Young’s general conception of oppression and social groups; however, as previously stated, she insists that oppression cannot be effectively identified with only one definition. To further demonstrate her framework, Young advocates that her use of dividing oppression into five categories and applying it to different oppressed groups allows oppression to be evaluated more effectively and thoroughly. She also contends that her five faces of oppression are objective. In other words, they operate as criteria to analyze “observable behavior, status relationships, distributions, texts and other cultural artifacts” in identifying oppression (64). She declares that different groups experience different combinations of oppressive conditions, and that experiencing conditions of any category signify oppression. I will soon go into deeper detail of each of the five faces of oppression and apply it to the noncitizen group, but first I will provide a brief description of the faces.

1. **Exploitation** is defined as one group controlling another to expend their own energies for the benefit of the controlling agent, resulting in a systematic reinforcement of their power over others. Young demonstrates exploitation in terms of Marxist class relations.
maintaining a divide between the wealthy and poor, but she also demonstrates that exploitation occurs in gender and race-specific ways through both paid and unpaid activities. The injustices of exploitation are material deprivation and inferior societal status due to wealth and power disparities.

2. Marginalization is defined as the exclusion of a group of people from both the labor system and useful participation in social life, consequently creating an underclass of marginals. Possible injustices of marginalization include: material deprivation, restricted societal participation, and being rendered as useless.

3. Powerlessness is defined as inferiority and inefficacy from constant subjection to taking orders from agents of power without ever having the right to give them. This power relationship is based on whether or not one’s position in the division of labor provides autonomy and opportunities to develop capacities. The privileges of the powerful and the lack of privileges of the powerless transcend into social life, producing status and respectability accordingly. Injustices associated with powerlessness include: restricted development of capacities, lack of autonomy in the workplace, and susceptibility to disrespectful treatment because of status.

4. Cultural Imperialism is defined as the dominant group establishing societal norms based on the group’s own perspective and culture. This control creates unjust conditions for oppressed groups through rendering their perspective invisible, while at the same time stereotyping that group as “Other.”
5. **Violence** is defined as the constant fear of being subject to random, unprovoked, and irrational attacks on group member’s persons or property. This includes physical attacks and less severe acts of harassment, intimidation, and ridicule.

A. *First Face of Oppression: Exploitation*

In this section and following four sections, I will separately describe Young’s faces of oppression. Then, I will use each oppressive concept as a lens to evaluate the experiences and societal structures regarding noncitizens to identify if, and in which faces, the group is oppressed. Exploitation occurs when a social group uses another group’s labor results for their own benefit. The concept of exploitation produces oppressive conditions because of its one way transfer of energy and labor from the exploited to the advantage the exploiter. Exploitative acts are first unjust because they facilitate wealth disparity, subjecting the exploited to material deprivation while the exploiter’s wealth flourishes without effort on their behalf. The second, and arguably more severe, injustice of exploitation lies in exploitation’s creation of structural relations between social groups. This factor is especially harmful because through carrying out exploitative acts, “social rules about what work is, who does what for whom, how work is compensated, and the social process by which the results of work are appropriated” are established by exploiters to function as means to unequally distribute power (50). As a result, a systematic process that constantly reinforces a one way transfer of energies from the deprived to enhance the power and status of the privileged is enacted.

In addition to wage and class specific forms of exploitation, Young seeks to demonstrate a concept of exploitation that is racially specific. She does so through identifying the category of
menial labor as the mechanism for the transfer of labor and energies of a racial group to benefit another, while also maintaining a relation of domination between them. Menial labor refers to servant-type work; and according to Young, racism generates the notion that oppressed racial groups members belong in jobs attributed to those of servants for the elite group. Through observations of any restaurant or hotels, one can see servant-type jobs assisting high-status professionals. Moreover, these observations frequently show a significant representation of Blacks and Latinos in menial labor type positions such as busboys, dishwashers, or bellhops.

The significance of Blacks and Latinos concentration in the menial labor category is that all of these jobs requires energy expenditure that the “servers enhance the status of the served” (52). The injustice of racial exploitation through menial labor increases when recognizing other menial labor elements. Not only is it associated with service, but also with low-skilled, poorly paid work that lacks autonomy. In this sense, menial workers enhance the status of supervisors or “skilled” workers because their work is often “instrumental to the work of others, where those others receive primary recognition for doing the job” (52).

Noncitizen group members experience oppression in this face similar to Young’s racial specific forms of exploitation. The group’s high concentration in low-skilled, low-paying occupations reflects their association with menial labor. A study by Jeffrey Passel and D’vera Cohn with the Pew Hispanic Center (2009) found that undocumented immigrants tend to work in the industries such as construction, agriculture, leisure and hospitality, services, and manufacturing. More specifically, they make up a large share brickmasons, drywall installers, agriculture workers, dishwashers, dry cleaning and laundry occupations, maintenance workers,

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7 See Passel and Cohn (2008, 16) for report of undocumented immigrants are 14% of the construction industry, 13% of the agriculture industry, 6.5% of the manufacturing industry, 7.5% of the services industry and 10% of the leisure and hospitality industry. There is a higher share of undocumented immigrants in each of these industries than their overall share of the labor force, 5.4%. These rates exceed of the overall percentage representation in the respective industry).
and food preparation workers among other low-skilled occupations (see table 1). These types of labor certainty correspond with Young’s idea of “menial labor”, as these jobs are “servile, unskilled, low-paying”, and lack autonomy and recognition (52). The chart’s representation of undocumented immigrants hold 2% of other occupation types is also particularly critical, as it could be argued that all the other occupations listed on the chart are menial labor.
*“Unauthorized” occupations have a higher percentage of workers who are unauthorized that the national average but do not qualify for a separate listing.  
Source: Passel (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detailed Occupation</th>
<th>Total Workers</th>
<th>Unauthorized Immigrants Workers</th>
<th>Unauthorized Immigrants Share</th>
<th>U.S.-born Share</th>
<th>Legal Immigrant Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brickmasons</td>
<td>154,135</td>
<td>8,258</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drywall installers, ceiling tile installers and tapers</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roofers</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural workers</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpers, construction trades</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishwashers</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction laborers</td>
<td>2,055</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maids and housekeepers</td>
<td>1,555</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement masons, concrete finishers and terrazzo workers</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounds maintenance workers</td>
<td>1,413</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packers and packagers, hand</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butchers and other meat, poultry and fish processing workers</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpet, floor, and tile installers and finishers</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painters, construction and maintenance</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking lot attendants</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chefs and head cooks</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing machine operators</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse and recyclable material collectors</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooks</td>
<td>2,219</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other &quot;unauthorized&quot; occupations*</td>
<td>34,979</td>
<td>3,130</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other occupations</td>
<td>106,407</td>
<td>1,928</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through distinct evidence of material deprivation affecting noncitizens as a whole, it can be inferred they are indeed targets of exploitation and oppressed in this face. Poverty rates of undocumented immigrants provide basic indicators of material deprivation. In 2007, 20% of undocumented immigrants lived in poverty, doubling the rates of U.S.-born adults at 10% (see figure 4). Furthermore, Passel and Cohen (2009) found an unequal distribution of wages between citizens and noncitizens (see figure 3). These discrepancies are not surprising since menial labor generally is low-paying. The median annual household income of undocumented immigrants was $36,000 and $50,000 for U.S.-born Americans. These differing household incomes are especially pronounced because the households of unauthorized immigrants contained on average more workers than U.S.-born households (16). Because noncitizens are overly represented in low-paying menial occupations and citizens are not, noncitizens, as a group, suffer from income disparity. More troubling, perhaps, is that undocumented immigrants lack income mobility. They are confined to low-paid, low-skilled jobs. Passel and Cohn explain that “as a group, their median income barely rises even after they have been in the United States for more than a decade; the median income of legal immigrant households, by contrast, rises by nearly a third” (17).
To conclude this face of oppression, I want to revisit a part of Young’s concept of exploitation. Particularly, her argument that exploitation determines social rules intended to
generate unequal power relationships between groups. The social rules refer to those that define work, designate where people belong in the workplace, mandate how work is compensated, and affect the social process that contributes to how work is dispersed (50). After evaluating how noncitizens experience exploitation, Young’s notion of social rules from exploitation becomes significant. For this reason, her notion is most relevant when compared with the combination of all economic experiences of noncitizens that reflect exploitation. Their concentration in undesirable, low-paying jobs especially those serving others, coupled with their significantly low incomes supports that there are some sort of constructed social rules contributing to their economic inequality.

To illustrate, I address each factor determined by social rules and propose what the social rules indicated in regards to noncitizens based on their economic statistics. To being, “what work is”—social rules deem noncitizens to belong in undesirable, hard labor such as: agriculture workers, bricklayers, roofers, or construction (see table 2); “who does what for whom”—social rules indicate noncitizens should serve others through occupations including: maids, dishwashers, construction workers, cooks, or dishwashers (see table 2); “how work is compensated”—social rules provide noncitizens with barely livable wages (see figures 3 and 4); “the social process by which the results of work are appropriated” (50)—social rules signal that noncitizens are a bottom priority for receiving sufficient work results as they do not occupy autonomous jobs and have low incomes (see table 2, figure 3, and figure 4). The social rules are simply my predictions; nevertheless, noncitizens as a group prove to be heavily exploited and clearly demonstrate effects of material deprivation and confinement in menial labor. There are other factors contributing to their exploitative conditions that do not correspond with this face; however, these factors will be addressed later in my contribution of noncitizenship as the sixth
face of oppression.

B. Second Face of Oppression: Marginalization

Marginalization is the second face of oppression, by which a group of people are limited to an inferior social position due to their exclusion from society. Particularly, marginals are expelled from the labor system because it cannot or will not use them. Further, because economic independence is valued as a requirement for full societal inclusion and respect (Young 1990, 55), exclusion from the labor system generates additional exclusion from useful participation in social life. According to Young, there are many people who suffer from marginalization in the United States, such as racially marked groups, old people, mentally and physically disabled people, and single mothers. She adds that middle aged people experience marginalization when laid off from their jobs and cannot find work, as well as young people who struggle to find first jobs (53). Marginalization causes injustice in the form of material deprivation since individuals will not be used by the workforce. Material deprivation in this face differs from that of exploitation because marginals simply do not work, so they do not receive wages; whereas the exploited indeed work, but are not paid fairly. Other injustices of marginalization include: curtailed citizenship rights, uselessness, inability to exercise capacities, and lack of recognition.

Young notes that the injustice of material deprivation caused by marginalization has actually been attempted to be resolved in advanced capitalist societies through welfare services. However, she argues that the institution of welfare actually generates injustice through denying welfare dependents certain rights and freedoms that they would otherwise have (54). Dependence on receiving aid from the state assumes individuals unqualified to manage their
wellbeing. The resulting reliance on bureaucratic institutions for support or services requires invasive regulation by associated policies and professionals, which subjects dependents to patronizing and demeaning treatment. Involvement of this process implies “a sufficient warrant to suspend basic rights to privacy, respect, and individual choice” (54), indicating the notion of dependency is understood as a legitimate condition to undermine equal rights. While Young indicates that dependency produces injustice, she insists that our society’s conception of dependency, not dependency in itself, facilitates oppression. She explains that society has a “deeply held assumption that moral agency and full citizenship require that a person be autonomous and independent” (55), thus stigmatizing dependents as unfit for meaningful participation and recognition in social activities.

Young explains that even if marginals have enough resources to live comfortably, injustices would occur through being blocked from society’s productive and recognized activities. She specifies that “social structures and processes that close persons out of participation…involves the deprivation of cultural, practical, and institutionalized conditions for exercising capacities in a context of recognition and interaction (55). Mechanisms for exclusion include devaluation due to dependence, racial discrimination, and employment status. For example old people, disabled people, single mothers and racial minorities may be blocked from societal inclusion simply based on their designation as incompetent. Their exclusion is likely to extend to the labor force, so their exclusion also relates to employment status. Those who are unemployed may be blocked from societal inclusion based on lack of integration into the labor force, as work is an essential activity for societal participation. Furthermore, the unemployed or low-skilled workers may be excluded from societal participation due to a lack of respect, as work often represents one’s self-worth in society. Exclusion has significant effects on a person’s self-
esteem, development, and social participation; their group membership becomes stigmatized as an outsider, rendering them invisible from society.

Noncitizens experience marginalization through their invisibility, lack of recognition, and specific instance of mass expulsion from society. While noncitizens are incredibly discriminated against, they are also ignored as contributing members to society. To illustrate, Alabama’s harsh immigration law, H.B. 56, has literally expelled undocumented immigrants and their family members out of the state due fear of deportation. The law creates state crimes for renting property to illegal immigrants, for failure to carry documents proving legal status, and for transporting illegal immigrants. H.B. 56 also mandates that public school determines students’ legal status (Preston 2011). As a result, Alabama is facing major problems in its agriculture industry due to a massive loss of employees, as many farm workers were undocumented immigrants. Crops are rotting because there are no workers to pick and box them. Agriculture employers explain that they have tried to fill the jobs with American workers, yet find they are either notably less efficient or quit after a day or two. One of the intents of the bill that caused immigrants to flee was to open up jobs for U.S. citizens that undocumented immigrants were “stealing”. However, the aftermath of the bill’s enactment shows that perhaps undocumented immigrants may be an asset to society with their hard work ethic and ability to carry out difficult jobs that American seem to have trouble with (Jacoby 2011). This is not to advocate that noncitizens’ place in society is to fill grueling type of jobs, just to highlight how Alabama policy makers completely disregard the contributions noncitizens make to society.

Other than the invisibility, noncitizens do not experience marginalization as conceptualized by Young. First of all, they are surely not excluded from the labor force, for noncitizens represent 5.4% of the U.S. workforce and male noncitizen workers make up a larger
percentage of the total male noncitizen population than male U.S. citizen workers in the citizen population (Passel 2009, 12). Moreover, the notion that respect and useful societal inclusion requires economic independence is a condition only of citizens. Indeed, noncitizens experience lack of respect and societal inclusion, but it is certainly not the result of economic dependence. Rather, it is their exclusion from citizenship driving their societal exclusion and inferior status.

Young does actually state that an injustice of marginalization is exclusion from citizenship. So then, it could be argued that noncitizens experience marginalizing because of this connection. However, after minimal examination that argument would be quickly found false. Loss of citizenship rights in this face refer to abstract limits to particular rights through informal social processes. Young exemplifies marginalization’s exclusion from equal rights as being treated without respect, privacy, or choice due to dependency. While those suffering from such conditions are surely oppressed, they are still deemed *citizens*. For the most part, they are not vulnerable to violence due to their loss of rights; and certainly still obtain formal citizenship rights such as voting and guaranteed legal protection. Noncitizens’ exclusion from citizenship is a completely different matter, as it is formal, not a result of dependency, and carries with it a multitude of injustices that undoubtedly surpass the scope of marginalization’s injustices. For this reason, noncitizens’ exclusion to citizenship does not apply to marginalization; nevertheless, their lack of citizenship is absolutely an injustice that requires discussion in its own face, noncitizenship status, which I will later discuss.

**C. Third Face of Oppression: Powerlessness**

Young’s third face of oppression, powerlessness, occurs due to differentiated power relations created in the workplace. Young insists that powerlessness “is perhaps best described
negatively: the powerless lack the authority [and] status… that professionals tend to have. The status privilege of professionals has three aspects, the lack of which produces oppression for nonprofessionals” (56). The first aspect that affects professional status is gaining specialized knowledge through a college education. Acquisition of such expertise facilitates professional advancement and increased status, respect, and dignity. While this is not oppressive in itself, Young explains that “the life of the nonprofessional by comparison is powerless in the sense that it lacks this orientation toward the progressive development of capacities and avenues for recognition” (57).

Second, professionals experience some sort of work autonomy and often authority over others, which translates to superior status. In contrast, nonprofessionals lack work autonomy, “and in both their working and their consumer-client lives often stand under the authority of professionals” (57). This differentiation creates a division between professional and nonprofessionals not only in working life, but also social life. Young suggests that each group belongs to a different culture, resulting in groups to mostly socialize with others of the same status. She also notes that there is little group mobility between generations, as children generally maintain their parents’ group status.

The third aspect relates to “respectability” of professionals beyond the workplace. Young defines the privilege of professional respectability as being “prepared to listen to what they have to say to do what they request because they have some authority, experience, or influence [indicated through their professional status]” (57). She argues that women and certain races must first prove their professional status in order to receive this respectability; whereas white men are often assumed professional and receive respectful treatment, unless their unprofessional status is revealed (58).
Each of these privileged aspects of professionals results in their deficiency among nonprofessionals. Thus, the injustices of powerlessness are restricted ability to exercise capacities, lack of decisionmaking power at work, and disrespect due to inferior status (58). Young proposes the oppression of powerlessness lies in the division of labor between task-planning and task executing work because it also produces a social division between the labor types.

Young specifies that “being a professional usually requires a college education” (57), so if a person wants to gain professional status they can do so through going to college. While noncitizen children are guaranteed the right to attend public school from kindergarten to high school graduation,\(^8\) they face barriers to obtaining a college education that are not experienced by any other groups. They do not have the right to in-state tuition and both public and private universities consider them as international students, charging them tuition three to seven times higher than that of legal residents or US citizens (Abrego 2006, 216). In addition, undocumented immigrants are barred from financial to help ease the tuition costs. Substantial financial restrictions limit noncitizens’ access to higher education, especially with the likeliness their parents are undocumented immigrants and working low-paying jobs. In fact, only 26% of unauthorized immigrants between ages 18-24 had attended some college or had a college degree, in 2008, which is over half that of legal immigrants (60%) and U.S. born citizen (58%) (Passel 2009, 12). Near impossible higher educational attainment can eliminate noncitizen youths’ chances for upward mobility, maintaining their nonprofessional status.

D. Fourth Face of Oppression: Cultural Imperialism

According to Young, cultural imperialism refers to how society’s dominant meanings transform the particular perspective of one’s own group to become invisible, while simultaneously stereotyping one’s group as marked Other (59). Cultural imperialism occurs because some groups have control of society’s means of interpretation and communication, causing their goals, values, and achievements to determine the norms of society. These dominant groups establish their experiences and perspectives as representative of society; which results in disregard for other groups’ perspectives, and then determines those groups’ identity and status based on the dominant culture.

Additionally, group differences are understood as lack and negation of the dominant group’s universalized cultural products, which translates to inferiority or otherness. Young claims that because the culturally dominated are then limited to characterizations in relation to the dominant group, they cannot exist as individuals. This is especially harmful because group members are influenced by the dominant culture’s generation of the group’s stereotypes and inferior images. They struggle to maintain their own perspective and sense of self, becoming trapped by dominant culture’s stigmatizing discourse and losing sight of their individual and positive capabilities. In sum, the injustice of cultural imperialism is that the experiences and interpretations of oppressed groups “finds little expression that touches the dominant culture, while that same culture imposes on the oppressed group its experience and interpretation of social life” (60).

In relation to noncitizens, citizens are the dominant group because they have primary and exclusive access to the means of communication. This factor isn’t unjust in itself, as Young acknowledges that dominant groups often establish culture without noticing they do so. It is
harmful, however, to deny space and understanding for the differences of other groups; which is what noncitizen group members are currently experiencing by American public discourse. Additionally, American dominant culture has determined a common identity of noncitizens based on its own definitions and experiences. These conceptions of noncitizens are widely dispersed throughout the public discourse, especially with the use of stereotypes and metaphors. Specifically, popular media narrowly portray immigrants as a danger to society, without acknowledgement of their human stories and considerations of the reasons underlying migration or the potentially positive contributions (Cisneros 2008, 592). These generalizations can be particularly effective in constructing a common group identity because they are incessant in everyday communication, create a conceptual framework, and are often uncritically accepted as the standard (Santa Ana 1999, 217). In particular, stereotypes and metaphors can be problematic because they close off other possibilities for understanding groups, allowing for severe and widely accepted negative characterizations that may not be truly representative.

Common metaphors used when referring to immigrants include comparisons to animals and pollutants, both degrading immigrants. Otto Santa Ana (1999) tracked all immigration metaphors printed in *Los Angeles Times* during the 1994 political debate and campaign in California over the anti-immigration legislation, Proposition 187. His study found that the most common type of immigrant metaphor for immigrants as animals (199). Such a metaphor obviously dehumanizes immigrants. The connotations of animal metaphors also refer to a hierarchy of living creatures subordinate to human beings, thus creating a clear exclusion of “primitive” noncitizens (or animals) from citizens.
Public discourse has stigmatized noncitizens as synonymous to criminals due to accusations of responsibility for high crime rates. In fact, many policy makers and public officials support strict immigration enforcement in order to protect society. The anti-immigration group consisting of 12 U.S. policy makers, State Legislators for Legal Immigration (SLLI), describes illegal aliens as culprits for “[i]ncreasingly documented incidences of homicide, identity theft, property theft, seriously infections diseases, drug running, gang violence, human trafficking, terrorism, and growing cost to tax payers.” The group’s founder, Republican Pennsylvania State Rep. Daryl Metcalfe, insists that “the personal and economic safety of all Americans is threatened by the ongoing invasion of illegal aliens” (Beirich and Potok 2011, 5).

SLLI has a partnership with the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) make new state legislation regulating immigration. FAIR was responsible for Arizona’s S.B. 1070 and also has been designated a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center since 2007 (Beirich and Potok 2011, 6).

Similar to SLLI, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer urges the need for strict immigration enforcement, remarking that, “They’re coming here, and they’re bringing drugs. And they’re doing drop houses, and they’re extorting people and they’re terrorizing families” (Politifact 2010). Being deemed a criminal carries notions of immorality, thus lacking social decency and value. Additionally, dominant culture has established a highly regarded norm that members of society must be law-abiding, so noncitizens’ criminal stereotype drastically denigrates their image. An interview with an Arizonian women from the documentary “Two Americans” speaking about undocumented immigrants, expressed that we are "afraid of people [undocumented immigrants] who don't obey the law, those people are nasty.” Her statement exemplifies how disdain towards immigrants relates to their criminal stereotype.

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9 See Stumpf (2006), for a full discussion on how immigration and criminal law has converged.
Stereotypes wholly characterizing noncitizens as criminals completely override noncitizens experiences and perspectives, such as: family and community ties, business interests, achievements, or time living in the U.S. In being deemed criminal, noncitizens become incapable of gaining recognition or an identity unique to their individual experiences. The strong hold of undocumented immigrants’ criminal stereotype is especially concerning because quantitative studies do not show undocumented immigrants as being associated with crime. For example, violent and property crimes rates decreased as the undocumented immigration population doubled, and both immigrants in general and immigrants from nations that make up majority of undocumented immigrants have lower incarceration rates than U.S. born citizens (Immigration Policy Center 2007, 2)

Interestingly, dominant culture’s value of upholding the law in society falls weak when citizens are the law breakers of immigration policies. A study examining the relationship between different national identification expressions and immigrant enforcement revealed that individuals with a strong sense of nationalism tend to have immigration enforcement bias (Adams, Molina, and Mukherjee 2011). They advocate for harsh enforcement policies against undocumented immigrants, yet do not endorse punishing law-breaking Americans to employ and exploit undocumented immigrants (9). If one truly values upholding the law and regulating immigration, then it would be expected to have similar support for tough immigration enforcement for anyone involved in perpetuating immigration—both undocumented immigrants and employers. Drawing from this assumption, tough immigration policies are rooted more from group differentiation intolerance than concern for upholding the law. The authors propose that immigration enforcement bias “reflects denial of human rights and imposition of unjust burdens

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10 Support for punishing immigrants who break the law but not American employers who break the law by knowingly hiring undocumented immigrants
on people with devalued or racialized identities...[and] awarding of undue privilege to American citizens, especially those who occupy positions of racial dominance” (10).

E. Fifth Face of Oppression: Violence

For Young, the fifth face of oppression, violence, refers to both physical and property attacks as wells as “less severe incidents of harassment, intimidation, or ridicule simply for the purpose of degrading, humiliating, or stigmatizing group members” (61). Violence is not an act against certain individuals, but against groups. For example, any woman has a reason to fear rape by virtue of being a woman, who are overwhelmingly rape victims (61). Accordingly, this face is not only about “direct victimization,” but also the living in constant fear of a threat of attack. Violence, or the constant susceptibility to violence, produces oppressive conditions that hinder freedom and dignity. Constant fear affects how one conducts their life, often constraining themselves from certain activities or places that may enhance one’s fear of violence. Being forced to live with frequent consideration for possible attacks is certainly a burden on one’s freedom. Furthermore, vulnerability in general interferes with dignity, because to be vulnerable means to be inferior. Group violence is especially unjust because “institutions and social practices encourage, tolerate, or enable the perpetuation of violence against members of specific groups” (63).

Members with noncitizen group affinity are always susceptible to random, systematic violence in multiple settings. For instance, noncitizens are increasingly being target of hate crimes. According to FBI Uniform Crime Reports, there has been a 32% increase of hate crimes against Latinos between 2003 and 2008 (US DOJ 2009, 561). Moreover, of all hate crimes motivated by ethnicity or national origins prejudice in 2008, 64% were committed against
Latinos. This increase is notable, as hate crimes in general have decreased by 6% and every other victim group offenses were unchanged or decreased (Amnesty International 2012, 64). While not all Latinos are immigrants, hate groups target people they think they are illegal and three-quarters of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. are Latinos (Passel 2008, iii). These statistics demonstrate how noncitizens are subject to random, unprovoked attacks of violence.

Detained undocumented immigrants awaiting deportation proceedings are targets of violence from guards. After numerous complaints of harassment by noncitizen detainees, the Department of Justice investigated Arizona jails. They found that jail staff routinely abused and discriminated against Latino inmates with limited English skills. They would place them in solitary confinement for extended hours and refuse to accept inmates’ forms including basic daily service requests and grievance forms, which allow for inmates to report alleged mistreatment.

IV. Conception of Citizenship

In this thesis, I will explain how the five faces of oppression relate to noncitizens and then discuss my sixth face of oppression, noncitizenship status. To begin, I want to discuss the conception of citizenship to better understand its relationship to noncitizenship status. To follow, I will discuss the relationship between citizenship and noncitizenship.

Citizenship is generally defined as an assemblage of practices and rights that determine an individual’s membership in a state (Herzog 2011, 79). This definition, however, does not provide an understanding of citizenship, such as how we conceptualize the determination of who can be a citizen and the status, identity, and norms it entails. For this purpose, understanding citizenship is often based on a legal perspective of inclusionary regulations regarding who is
eligible to become a citizen and the associated rights and responsibilities. Particularly, Herzog suggests that the two main theories of the notion of citizenship are generated from a broad legal-political framework of inclusionary practices. Both assert that the eligibility, rights, and obligations of citizenship are determined based on a state’s citizenship principle(s).\(^{11}\)

Herzog argues that limiting the conception of citizenship to a legal perspective is problematic because it ignores the nature of citizenship itself, such as “the meaning of the tie between the individual and the state, the social and cultural assumptions behind it, and the social order that citizenship represents” (79). To provide a more comprehensive understanding of citizenship, Herzog utilizes a sociological framework and shifts the focus from inclusionary practices to exclusionary practices. Laws that exclude people from membership and revoke citizenship are an important element of citizen that can provide another perspective. In his analysis of expatriation laws, Herzog focuses not only on what the laws declare, but also what went on in the deliberation of the policies and the current environment of the state to identify the nature of the law or what citizenship principle the policy was dependent on.

Herzog observes that the fact the United States enacted any sort of expatriation laws\(^{12}\) reflects the nation’s concept of citizenship and the relationship between the individual and the state. The notion that allegiance to a state (citizenship) can be completely removed from birthplace represents that the “relationship between the American individual and the state is contractual” (92). Individuals then have the ability to transfer state allegiance and the state has the power to revoke citizenship from those who do not deserve to be a member. For instance, Herzog found that polices revoking citizenship were intended to maintain exclusive national

\(^{11}\) The three accepted traditional principles of citizenship that each theory refers to are ethnic, liberal, and republican. The ethnic principle requires a biological relation to the state for citizenship. The liberal principle determines birth within state’s borders as basis for citizenship. The republican principle connects citizenship rights to a person’s conduct that advances the common good of the state. \textit{See} Herzog (2011, 81).

\(^{12}\) \textit{See} Herzog (2011) for a full discussion of each expatriation law throughout American history.
allegiance through operating as a punishment for acts of national disloyalty. These views demonstrate that citizenship understood through exclusion means to follow acceptable conduct to prove state allegiance.

Young’s *Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship* provides a deeper analysis of Herzog’s notion of citizenship as an acceptable standard of conduct through focusing on the consequent social and cultural assumptions. She, too, argues that the conception of citizenship relies too heavily on its legal context, arguing that a legal indication of equality among citizens can actually prevent full citizenship status to all groups. Young specifically refers to the modern ideal of universal citizenship, which includes all citizens as having equal protection under the law and giving everyone the same political status. This notion of extending equal rights and treatment to all citizens generates a cultural ideal of citizenship as adhering to the general will of the public. For Young, equality under the law elicits a cultural understanding of citizenship as homogenous, which requires addressing general needs of the public, as opposed to particular needs of individuals or groups. Citizens are then pressured to put aside their self-interests and needs to maintain a coherent viewpoint of the public good or acceptable standards of conduct. This is problematic because a public requiring commonness over difference “will tend to exclude or put at a disadvantage some groups, even when they have formally equal citizenship status” (Young 1989, 257). Different groups have differing needs and perspectives, but privileged groups are most likely to dominate the conception of the general public good. As a result, underprivileged groups are disadvantaged with their needs overlooked and status degraded.
V. Noncitizenship’s Relationship to Citizenship: The Conceptualization of Noncitizenship

The concept of noncitizenship status has not always been oppressive; nevertheless, its conception has transformed to cause oppression. Like citizenship, the construction of the notion of noncitizenship varies according to particular ideals and current events. This section discusses the relationship between citizenship and noncitizenship, how that relationship affects the transformation of the conception of noncitizenship status, and then demonstrates how noncitizenship’s current conception causes oppression. Examining the conception of noncitizenship is significant because it affects the societal and legal circumstances of noncitizens that contribute to their oppression.

In addition to legal elements, there are cultural and social expectations to uphold in order to have citizenship. These views provide insight about noncitizenship and how noncitizens are created. By looking at who can lose citizenship or certain citizenship rights, we can better understand noncitizenship. Herzog’s discussion of the revocation of citizenship presents the notion that citizenship requires maintaining state allegiance. This opens up the space to define what is required to show loyalty as member of a polity. Therefore, citizenship is not only defined by what political and legal rights you have, but also by constructed social and cultural conduct. Young conveys that these cultural expectations are made into a unified criterion that constitutes belonging; which all citizens must follow regardless of differing experiences to perpetuate the common good. Groups that differ from the public viewpoint experience decreased citizenship status and rights since their perspectives and needs are not addressed. If citizenship requires a homogenous public viewpoint, then immigrants that are perceived as unable to adopt the general viewpoint are excluded, creating noncitizens.
An additional discovery of Herzog’s study shows that exclusionary practices are associated with perceived threat. He found a pattern that most of the expatriation laws were introduced in response to events that created fear for the nation. The construction of citizenship from an exclusionary perspective show citizenship is contingent upon the needs of state, particularly national threats. While Herzog’s focus is on specific expatriate laws and citizens, I contend that his views correlate with the revocation of rights of noncitizens and their exclusion from pathways to citizenship. The assertions that citizenship’s construction varies according to the current environment of the state and that the exclusion of citizenship is associated with perceived threat are particularly useful in understanding noncitizenship. His concepts provide a lens for examining not only how noncitizens are created, but also oppressed; which I will explain in my discussion of “noncitizenship status” as a face of oppression.

Currently, noncitizens are resentfully rejected from belonging in society because they lack citizenship status, reflecting noncitizenship conceptualized as distinctly separate from citizenship. On the contrary, noncitizens have not always been viewed this way, as noncitizens and citizens have a vast history of compatibility. In fact, the United States is unique because of its characterization as a nation of immigrants or a melting pot of different cultures. These ideals represent America as a new frontier for people to build themselves a better life. Those of noncitizenship status were first understood as necessary for America’s success and lacked distinction from citizenship status. Moreover, the notion of the “illegal immigrant” was nonexistent. Since colonial times, both documented and undocumented immigrants have entered the United States and significantly contributed to the country’s development. For this reason, unrestricted migration was a necessity for the settlement and industrialization of the United States (Ngai 2003, 73; Lipman 2006, 4). Notably, the nation operated without federal regulation
of immigration for the most of the nineteenth century and provided similar rights to citizens and noncitizens. While there were racial and gender exclusions to rights and citizenship; all white, male aliens had the same economic rights as citizens and could even vote in some states. Many years throughout American history, property ownership and paying taxes signified the right to vote, not citizenship status (Demleitner 1997, 38; Lipman 2006, 4).

Open immigration policy and compatibility between statuses lasted until the 1920s when the notion of noncitizen began its transformation to its current conception. Anti-immigration sentiments developed due to increased immigration in the late 1800s. The public perceived that immigration caused poverty and disease throughout the U.S. Additionally, World War I generated a heightened sense of nationalism and anti-foreign attitudes (Ngai 2003, 75). The divide between citizenship status and noncitizenship widened when immigration regulation and enforcement began to escalate in the 1920s. The Immigration Act of 1924 placed national origin quotas, mandated any entry without a valid visa or inspection as illegal, and expanded grounds for deportation. Accordingly, undocumented immigrants become an unprecedented majority of deportees. The introduction of immigration restrictions and enforcement created the “illegal immigrant.”. This direction of immigration policy redefined the meanings of social desirability, and inclusion and exclusion. That is to say, the legality of status mandates one’s deservingness to belong in society (Ngai 2003, 77).

While the notion of the “illegal immigrant” did not disappear, the 1960s and 1970s reflected compassion, or at least tolerance, for unauthorized immigrants. Immigration was viewed as a civil rights issue and undocumented immigrants were viewed as victims society could help; accordingly, enforcement was limited. Immigration was regulated through particular inclusionary practices such as giving Illegals procedural rights in detention and
deportation proceedings, providing welfare benefits, and loosely enforcing the general illegal population but focusing on dangerous criminals instead (Miller 2003, 614-615). It must noted that this was not an open immigration period; immigration was still restricted and enforced, but focused more on dangerous criminals and provided noncitizens more rights and privileges than today.

By the late 1970’s and early 1980’s the public experienced “compassion fatigue,” signaling a change to noncitizenship status’ conception similar to its current construction. Welcoming attitudes of the public and global events caused high influxes of immigrants from poor countries; in turn, increased immigration highlighted welfare dependency and prevalent multilingualism. Social resistance to these factors grew, setting up a public attitude that mass immigration from poor countries causes social disorder. Noncitizens also became associated with crime and welfare dependency, contributing to society’s rejection (Miller 2003, 626).

These negative views of noncitizens have gradually intensified. For the past couple decades, society has constructed those with noncitizenship status as threats to the nation; and following Herzog’s findings, immigration exclusionary practices have increased according to heightened perceived threats of noncitizens. The public views noncitizens as threats to law and order and the economy; all of which represent general public good and societal values. Undocumented immigrants are immediately associated with being lawbreakers since their sole presence in the United States is illegal. This factor is often reflected as noncitizens having a general disregard for the law; therefore noncitizens as a whole are constructed as a constant societal threat.

Furthermore, Young (1989) suggests that coherent public values causes exclusion of groups that are deemed incapable to adopting these general ideals. The circumstances of

13 “Resetting close to a million Southeast Asian refugees after 1975. burgeoning numbers of Mexican surreptitiously crossing the border and entering the United States illegally after Mexico’s economic collapse in 1983” (Miller 2003, 626).
14 Exclusionary practices are associated with perceived threat to the nation.
noncitizens as threats demonstrate her arguments. In this case, the entities that noncitizens are perceived to threaten actually reflect societal values that contribute to the public good. Since they are characterized as threat to important American values, noncitizens are surely judged as unable to adopt them.

The resulting exclusionary practices from noncitizens understood as threats and unable to follow societal values are demonstrated with current immigration policy. Through examining recent immigration policies, Miller (2003) observes immigration control consisting of practices and priorities similar to the criminal justice system (613). This strategy of criminalizing immigration law appears to act as social control based on protecting the nation. In general, immigration policy has converted to a system of criminal control through two ways: escalating criminal punishment within immigration regulation and increasing criminal consequences for immigration violations noncitizens (619). Some highlighted elements of immigration policies resulting from its criminalization include: increased enforcement at the border and within communities through home and work raids, the authorization of local and state police officials to enforce immigration, lack of judicial review for detention and deportation proceedings, expanding deportable crimes, preventing a pathway to from illegal to legal status, and enacting state level legislations to create crimes of simply being undocumented and mandating it grounds for deportation.

On the whole, criminalizing immigration regulation escalates the vulnerability of all noncitizens to deportation. It is the vulnerability to deportation that constructs noncitizenship as illegal, which also contributes to their oppression. Ngai (2003) develops this insight stating that

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15 The United States values law-abiding persons, demonstrated from its high incarceration rates and strict penal system (Western and Pettit 2010). American individualistic ideals shows honor for economic independence and contribution (Vandello and Cohen 1999). It is highly important to Americans to have sufficient resources (M.A. Zarate et al. 2003, 100).

16 See this paper’s earlier section: “U.S. Immigration Policy” on page 12 for a more develop description of current immigration policies.
the illegal immigrant cannot be constituted without deportation—the possibility or threat of deportation, if not the fact. The possibility derives from the actual existence of state machinery to apprehend and deport illegal aliens” (72). Indeed, current immigration enforcement provides the sufficient “machinery” for widespread deportation.

VI. Proposed Addition of a Sixth Face of Oppression: Noncitizenship Status

I propose a sixth face of oppression called noncitizenship status. It is necessary for this addition because Young’s five faces of oppression lack applicability to the injustices produced by noncitizenship status. I have demonstrated that exclusionary immigration policies both results from and causes the stigmatization of noncitizens as a rejected outsider. Subsequently, both work in concert to generate oppression of noncitizenship status. This face of oppression constructs a criminal identity and elicits constant susceptibility to punishment for illegality; therefore, those with noncitizenship status are always vulnerable to deportation and social condemnation, enacting fear of being subjected to such inflictions. The injustices of noncitizenship status are its obstacles to individual recognition, self-efficacy, participation and development in society.

Conditions of susceptibility to deportation and the imbedded illegal notion of noncitizens effectively inhibit individual recognition. Noncitizens are always “illegal” first and individual second. Despite their skills, experiences, and perspectives, noncitizenship status takes precedence. A noncitizen could, and frequently does, live a life similar to citizen, but the exception of their noncitizenship status disregards all other factors. Even more problematic is the abstract construction of citizenship and noncitizenship status as more dependent on numbers and papers than on experiences. As a result, all noncitizens are vulnerable to deportation proceedings that are increasingly unforgiving due to the lack of judicial review.
While deportation can be a necessary consequence in certain situations, I do not seek to determine the appropriate conditions for deportation. Instead, I intend to focus on the vulnerability of deportation that all noncitizens experience. After all, this vulnerability has psychological and cultural effects from feelings of fear of deportation and disgrace of living a lie. The constant fear of deportation is a major factor in the lives of those with noncitizenship status. Essentially, one’s life is at stake when they are subject to deportation, especially in cases of noncitizens who have lived in the United States for an extended time.

Individuals form significant connections where they live, for it is their home. It is their home where many noncitizens frequently carry out a normal life like that of an American citizen: own a home, have a job, pay taxes, have families and friends in the community. The only difference, however, is their noncitizenship status (Carens 2009, 1). The creation of noncitizen’s unconditional “illegality” serves to justify the state’s use of deportation against them. State Senator, Lawrence Grooms, makes noncitizens’ threat clear, stating that his proposed immigration bill “is intended to make South Carolina a very hostile place for those who are in this country illegally” (Severson 2011). Simple day-to-day practices generate extreme stress and anxiety among all noncitizens. Despite 287(g) intention to better target criminals, it has been used by many local and state governments to apprehend otherwise law-abiding unauthorized immigrants through minor infractions, such as traffic offenses (Southern Poverty Law Center 2010, 50). Such general hostilities from a representative and enforcement officials’ ability to apprehend any unauthorized immigrants further demonstrates a general disregard to recognize noncitizens’ individual capacities and experiences.

A simple traffic stop or car accident can be the cause for their removal from the country; and arguably their life, their community, and often their family. Uprooting someone from their
life is surely unjust; in fact, the Supreme Court deemed forced expatriation of American citizens as “cruel and unusual punishment” (Herzog 2009, 98). Stripping away an American’s citizenship rights is considered “cruel and unusual punishment,” yet mass immigrant deportations are acceptable or even encouraged. Simply the lack of citizenship status depletes any sort of compassion or empathy, again their status takes away their individuality.

Consistent fear of deportation contributes to noncitizen’s societal exclusion since isolating oneself from public participation is the safest way to avoid deportation. Some noncitizens are even too scared to leave their homes (Strassman 2011). In other cases, noncitizens are discouraged from participating in protests, a timeless American ideal and right provided to all persons within U.S. borders. For instance, three illegal immigrant students staged a peaceful sit-in at Senator John McCain’s Tucson office in protest to the Senator’s withheld support for legislation that would provide a path to citizenship for young immigrants brought to the U.S. at a young age. Nevertheless, they were arrested by local police for trespassing and then turned them over to ICE to initiate deportation proceedings (Dwyer 2010). Other ways noncitizenship status causes societal exclusion include traveling. Anthony Vargas, for example, recalls turning down trips to other countries both for pleasure with friends and for work (Vargas 2011).

Fear of deportation is not the only driver excluding noncitizens from participation in society. Specifically, noncitizen children’s personal connections, experiences, and opportunities are partly dependent on their residing neighborhood (Suarez-Orozco 2001, 130). For this reason, their inclusion into society is also affected. Suarez-Orozco finds that immigrant parents of lesser means tend to settle in poverty stricken neighborhoods that prevent few formal economic and other societal opportunities to immigrant adolescents. There are, however, markets for drugs and
gangs, which children in these areas are more likely to participate and stay in. Lack of participation in society is also apparent in the taxation of undocumented immigrants. They are required to pay taxes through sales, property, income, and payroll taxes, yet cannot vote or receive government benefits (Lipman 2006, 5). Currently, noncitizens cannot vote on federal, state or local matters, including taxes they are required to pay, and are also prohibited from receiving the benefits that their taxes contribute to. Despite noncitizens significant stake in the functions of society, they are excluded from participating solely because of their status.

A common anti-illegal immigration attitude is that noncitizens deserve to be punished because they entered illegally; that hardships are their own fault and they should have just entered legally. However, this is often not an option for many individuals as none of the pathways for legal status many not apply to them (Southern Poverty Law Center 2010, 9). Because citizens may not understand the complex circumstances of noncitizens’ exclusion from legal status, they assume it is a simple process. This belief constructs noncitizens as having complete disregard for the law, therefore rationalizing a lack of compassion.

Criminal stigmatization of noncitizenship status is one of the main contributors to its oppressive conditions; and at the same time, this criminalization is indeed exaggerated. First, by adopting a different perspective of immigration violations, they appear much less severe. Immigration violations are generally treated administratively, so they are not criminal offenses. While the rules regulating immigration are certainly laws, the same is true for traffic laws. Still, we do not call those who drive over the speed limit illegal drivers or criminals (Carens 2009, 6). It appears as though there is an unprecedented criticism of noncitizens breaking the law,  

Noncitizenship status prevents the right to work in the United States, and if they are caught working they can be deported. For this reason, noncitizenship status allows for exploitation different from the first face of oppression. Employers often hire noncitizens for their status because they can subject them to working extreme hours and withholding wages without consequences. Both the employer and noncitizen employee know that any reports of abuse by a noncitizen can lead to their own deportation. Carens (2009) argues that rich, liberal democratic states truly do not want to exclude illegal immigrants because their particular status makes them “desirable as workers because their vulnerability makes them tractable and easy to exploit” (10).

This “desirability” is due to their designation of noncitizens, degrading them to carry the conception that they are lesser persons and, therefore, acceptable to endure exploitative acts that citizen status would otherwise prevent. Maintaining undocumented immigrations illegality renders them vulnerable to degrade, which is apparent in their restriction to menial labor as demonstrated in Young’s first face of oppression, exploitation. The menial labor that noncitizens are confined to degrades them as a group, designating them as a lesser class who ought to be attendants to citizens. While U.S. citizens do fill menial occupations, noncitizens as a group are concentrated in such jobs. This differentiation between citizens in superior occupations and noncitizens in menial occupations represent the power of citizens over noncitizens. Noncitizen’s exploitation would not be facilitated if it weren’t for their illegal identity produced by citizens.

Constraints to self-efficacy from illegal identity are exemplified in the Southern Poverty Law Center (2010) survey of various female immigrant agriculture workers. The majority admitted to having their wages withheld, enduring dangerous conditions and consistently experiencing humiliation and abuse at work. Furthering their oppression, noncitizenship status facilitates the vulnerability to these dangerous circumstances, while at the same time
noncitizenship status prevents seeking justice and safety. Accordingly, all of the women do not seek justice due to fear of retaliatory violence, unemployment, and deportation.

Illustrating vulnerability and its constraints to development and mobility is Anthony Varga’s recollection of his experiences as a noncitizen. At 12 years old, he was sent from the Philippines to the United States by his mother so that he could have better life. He lived with his grandparents, who were naturalized citizens. After Vargas’ grandfather made him a false social security card, he reflects that his grandfather had “always imagined I would work the kind of low-paying jobs that undocumented people often take. (Once I married an American, he said, I would get my real papers and everything would be fine.) But even menial jobs require documents, so he and I hoped the doctored card would work for now.” His false documents worked without fail for all the menial labor jobs he filled, such as at working at Subway. However, when it came time to apply to an internship at the Seattle Times, he was turned away because he lacked proper documents. While he eventually worked his way to a desired job at Huffington Post, his noncitizen status still managed to limit his success. He expresses:

The more I achieved, the more scared and depressed I became. I was proud of my work, but there was always a cloud hanging over it, over me. I decided to leave The Huffington Post. In part, this was because I wanted to promote the documentary and write a book about online culture — or so I told my friends. But the real reason was, after so many years of trying to be a part of the system, of focusing all my energy on my professional life, I learned that no amount of professional success would solve my problem or ease the sense of loss and displacement I felt. (Vargas 2011).

Anthony Vargas’ experiences not only indicate how noncitizen status both confines people to nonprofessional jobs and prevent them from obtaining professional jobs, but also portray the
negative effects on self-esteem and loss sense of self efficacy. Clearly the identity constructed by noncitizenship status took over his sense of self, creating an additional obstacle to his development.

Noncitizenship status is especially unjust because its oppression is constantly reinforced. The status traps individuals, unless laws are changed. Noncitizens have developed a life in the U.S., but have no pathway to legal status. For this reason, they have no control over changing their status in attempts to improve their circumstances. Moreover, because noncitizenship status creates certain life obstacles, there is always additional lack of control in attempts for improving one’s situation. It is indeed a circle the will remain unchanged as long a there are policies criminalizing and deporting noncitizens.

VII. Conclusion

Through analyzing the transformation of the concepts of both citizenship and noncitizenship, surveying immigration policies of the past and today, and evaluating the experiences of noncitizens to apply to Young’s five faces of oppression and my additional oppressive face, the injustices to noncitizens could not be more clear. Each entity of my research contributes to the overarching injustice of treating noncitizens as less than human solely because of their legal status. Despite the reality that these people live here, work here, go to school here, raise families here similar to citizens; they are treated as an underclass with compromised rights and vulnerability to abuse, discrimination, and deportation.

Understanding noncitizens’ experiences through Young’s oppression connects immigration policies and negative public attitudes to their oppression. Their heightened vulnerability places obstacles to their development and participation in almost every part of their
life; while at the same, our society unofficially accepts their cheap labor in which is so often exploited. What can be drawn the noncitizen status face of oppression is that noncitizens vulnerability to deportation and lack of individual recognition significantly contributes to their inhibitions. Moreover, their unjust, and often false, characterizations as threatening, offensive and disgraceful persons who come with ill-intent to victimize Americans correspond with increasingly strict immigration law. This signifies that public stereotypes and imagined fears are surely affecting noncitizens as a group in contributing to their oppression.

If we live in a society in which a large group of people simply living their lives and trying to create a better life for themselves can be demonized, excluded, and justifiably discriminated against, what else are we capable of?
VIII. Works Cited


Two Americans. Dir. Dan De Vivo and Valeria Fernández. 2012. Film.


