Alienated
Undocumented Immigrant Youth

An EVC Study Guide
Acknowledgements

STUDY GUIDE
Writers: Lindsay Fauntleroy, Jen Meagher, and Christine Mendoza

ALIENATED: Undocumented Immigrant Youth was produced by six New York City youth who participated in EVC’s 2004-2005 Youth Organizers Television (YO-TV) Program.

Adam Gutierrez
Steven Kranston
Cesar Lazcano
Kyle Lorde
Rebecca Norton
Alina Ortiz

Original Music: Kyle Lorde

YO-TV Director: Lindsay Fauntleroy


Additional, in-kind support is provided by the New York City Department of Education and Satellite Academy High School. All of EVC’s activities are made possible, in part, with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Videotapes and accompanying study guide materials were produced by the Educational Video Center, Inc. Copyright © 2006.
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for Using This Tape</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Information</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The Educational Video Center is a non-profit youth media organization dedicated to teaching documentary video as a means to develop the artistic, critical literacy, and career skills of young people, while nurturing their idealism and commitment to social change. Founded in 1984, EVC has evolved from a single video workshop for teenagers from Manhattan’s Lower East Side to become an internationally acclaimed leader in youth media and education. EVC’s teaching methodology brings together the powerful traditions of student-centered progressive education and independent community documentary.

EVC Core Programs

Documentary Workshop is a 15-week credit-bearing course that teaches high school students from undeserved communities across New York City to research, shoot, and edit compelling documentaries that examine issues of immediate relevance in their lives.

Youth Organizers Television (YO-TV) is a ten-month pre-professional paid internship that jumpstarts the college and media careers of graduates of the Documentary Workshop.

External Education Programs provide workshops and resources in media production and EVC’s methodology, including EVC’s Youth-Powered Video DVD Curriculum, for K-12 teachers and after-school educators, nationally and abroad.

Community Engagement promotes civic engagement and social change through the distribution of EVC’s youth-produced documentaries in collaboration with strategic partners. An important component of the Community Engagement program is the Youth Speakers Bureau, a group of EVC alumni who receive training in public speaking and facilitation skills and who use this training to lead screenings in local schools and community organizations and encourage audience members to engage with important social issues.
Guidelines For Using This Tape

EVC documentaries are powerful, and often deal with sensitive issues. For this reason, we recommend that you preview the *Alienated* documentary and supporting materials before using them in the classroom. The curriculum we’ve prepared represents suggestions for using *Alienated*. If any of the activities are not useful to you, feel free to modify them and design your own.

Before using these materials, consider the following questions.

- How similar/different are your students and their experiences from the students who made this video?
- How does this video relate to the subject you are teaching?
- What results do you hope to see from using this video?
- What concerns do you have about your students’ responses to the issues raised in this video?
- What background information will your students need before viewing this tape?

Assumed in this guide are the following beliefs about teaching and learning:

- Writing deepens thinking and is one of the best ways to explore sensitive issues, even before discussion.
- All learning starts from the students’ own experiences.
- Diversity of opinion is useful in a classroom and must be respected.
- Students can make a difference in the world.
- Students can learn from each other.
- Social issues and community problems are an integral part of the school curriculum.
- Students learn from a variety of methods.
- Students learn best through experience.
- An active viewing experience leads to a richer understanding of the documentary.

For many teachers, having students write or take notes while viewing is not something new. For others, this aspect of active viewing is a bit controversial. Some feel it gets in the way of their viewing experience, while others feel it enhances it. You may want to show the tape twice: the first time to view it, and the second time to complete the viewing exercise. Your comments and questions are always welcome. Contact us at info@evc.org.
RUNNING TIME: 29 minutes

SYNOPSIS: Alienated gives voice to undocumented youth immigrants facing the challenges of life after high school with no options for legalized work or college. Licia from St. Vincent commutes long distances to work as a nanny for $4 an hour, while Tiffany tells how she was detained in seven U.S. prisons between the ages of 17 and 20. Meanwhile, anti-immigrant groups seek to impose harsher policies and to protect our borders. Featuring voices on both sides of the immigration debate, Alienated examines what it means to be young, able, and “illegal” in America.

INTERVIEWEES (in order of appearance):
Licia, an undocumented youth who works as a live-in nanny
Chris Nugent, an immigration attorney
Raza Ojeda, Education Supervisor for The Door, a youth service program
Aarti Shahani, Co-Founder of Families for Freedom
Tiffany, a green card holder detained for 3 years in 7 different U.S. prisons
Agatha, Tiffany’s mother
Barbara Coe, anti-immigration activist and co-author of California’s Prop 187
Christian Cox, Co-Organizer of the Minutemen Project
Brian Barton, lobbyist for the Hold Their Feet to the Fire campaign
Douglas Rivlin, Director of Communications, National Immigration Forum
Sheila Mirza, a lead organizer for the Youth Leadership Support Network

RELEVANT STATISTICS:

• Of the 3 million immigrants living in New York City, 500,000 are here illegally. There are an estimated 12 million illegal immigrants in the United States as a whole.

• The top three countries from which immigrants come to the United States are Mexico, India, and the Philippines.

• Since the 1996 Immigration Laws, over 1 million immigrants have been deported compared to 70,000 deported before these laws went into effect.

• There are 2 million people in prison in the United States – more than any other developing country in the world. Immigrant detainees are the fastest growing prison population in the U.S. There are 250 prisons nationwide that hold immigrant detainees.
CURRENT U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICIES:

- In 1996, President Clinton signed two bills known as the 1996 Immigration Laws. These laws made many more people eligible for detention and deportation including: undocumented workers earning less than minimum wage (like Licia) and green card holders with any contact with the criminal justice system (like Tiffany).

- The Real ID Act of 2005 claims to deter terrorism by measures such as creating national standards for state-issued driver's licenses and ID cards and tightening policies around asylum and deportation of immigrants for terrorist activity, among other things. However, opponents of this law argue that this serves as no real deterrent against terrorism. Instead, it deters undocumented immigrants from getting liability insurance, and it makes it more difficult for persecuted immigrants seeking asylum to plead their case.

- H.R. 4437 (also known as The Border Protection Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005) was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on December 16, 2005. This bill is currently under consideration by the U.S. Senate. H.R. 4437 requires up to 700 miles of fence along the U.S.-Mexican border. It requires employers to monitor their employees' legal status through electronic means. It prohibits grants to federal, state, or local government agencies that provide sanctuary to undocumented immigrants. Under this law, undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. are considered felons, and those "assisting" them may also be charged as criminals.

- S.R. 2611 or The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act was passed in the U.S. Senate on May 25, 2006. This bill also proposes to increase security along the U.S.-Mexican border, but, unlike H.R. 4437, it allows a path towards citizenship for long-time illegal immigrants and proposes to increase the number of guest workers over and above those already present in the U.S. through a new "blue card" visa program. This visa allows employers to bring in outside workers for up to 6 years, after which the employee must spend one year in their original country. There is also a system proposed where undocumented immigrants will need to pay back taxes and fines, depending on the number of years they have lived in the United States without papers.
Lesson Plan

FOCUS QUESTION: What are some of the challenges that undocumented immigrant youth face today in the United States?

OBJECTIVES:
• To raise awareness about the struggles and injustices undocumented immigrants face.
• To introduce students to the organizers of the anti-immigration movement, their lobbying tactics, and the fervor of their rhetoric.
• To encourage students to question how the deportation of immigrants impacts the economy and culture of the United States.

EDUCATION STANDARDS
NYS Language Arts Standard 3; NYS Arts Standard 3; NCTE Standard 12; NYS Mathematics, Science, & Technology Standard 7

PREPARATION: Make sure your students will have paper for note taking and that you will have markers and newsprint (or you can use the chalkboard). Test out the TV and VCR and make sure the TV volume is set to a good level. Ideally, all students will sit close enough to the TV that they can read all the captions in the video. If this isn’t possible, we recommend that you use your remote to pause the video long enough to read important captions aloud.

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: (5 minutes)
Explain to your students that many undocumented immigrants come to the United States with their parents when they are very young. Although they may have lived here for as long as they can remember, without a green card or full citizenship, there are many things they can’t do – privileges that U.S. citizens often take for granted. Ask your students to think of things they couldn’t do without proof of identity and citizenship.

What very ordinary things would it be difficult or impossible to do without an I.D.? (Prompt students to brainstorm as many examples as possible.)

Possible Answers:
• Get into clubs or drink or buy alcohol.
• Get a good job.
• Apply for college.
Possible Answers (continued):
- Travel by plane, train, or bus.
- Get a driver’s license.
- Rent a car.
- Buy tickets for an R-rated movie.
- Get a credit card.
- Get a bank account.
- Join certain clubs, gyms, or organizations.
- Rent an apartment.
- Get a library card.
- Leave the country and return.
- Get public assistance.
- Seek medical help.

Based on prior knowledge, your students may or may not be able to generate many ideas. Explain that through the video they’re about to watch, they’ll learn more about the challenges that undocumented youth face without legal status.

**INTRODUCTION:** (2 minutes)

In the documentary you’re about to see called *Alienated: Undocumented Immigrant Youth*, six high school students from the Educational Video Center in New York City explore how current immigration laws affect undocumented immigrant youth. The stories you’re about to see are all true. Some of the people interviewed are still struggling with issues of citizenship and have asked to have their identities concealed.

**ACTIVE VIEWING ASSIGNMENT:** Before showing the documentary, break students into three groups. Assign one group to take notes on the struggles that Licia faces as an undocumented worker. Ask the second group to take notes on the struggles Tiffany faces with the U.S. criminal justice system. Ask the third group to take notes on why the protestors at the FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform) rally feel the way they do about immigration.

**SCREEN THE VIDEO:** (29 minutes)

If you need to save time for discussion, stop the video at 23 minutes and 30 seconds – just after we learn that Tiffany was released. She explains that some people still don’t believe her. “When you go through it, you’ll know,” she says.
Lesson Plan

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** (10 minutes)
Ask student volunteers to share the notes they took while watching the video. Students from either group should be invited to contribute their ideas to the discussion. Below are possible answers to the three assigned viewing questions. We’ve also included two follow-up questions.

What struggles does Licia face as an undocumented worker?
Possible Answers:
- She works up to 80 hours a week for $4.50 an hour.
- Her former job paid her only $3 an hour (1/2 the New York City minimum wage).
- She doesn’t have set hours, so her employer can increase or decrease her hours at any time.
- She has to leave her home and travel to another state 5 days a week for work.
- She can’t go to college because she can’t get financial aid.
- She has no health care and can’t get treatment for her tumor.

What struggles does Tiffany face even though she has a green card?
Possible Answers:
- She was arrested and sent to detention because of a marijuana charge that was supposed to have been sealed.
- She was sent to 7 different detention centers across the U.S.
- She was housed with major offenders and experienced horrible prison conditions.
- She is still on supervised parole and is fighting her deportation.

Why do you think the protestors at the FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform) rally feel the way they do?
Possible Answers:
- Fear of losing their jobs.
- Fear of people they don’t know or understand.
- Racism.
- Lack of education on the issues.

At the beginning of class, we talked about ordinary things that would be difficult or impossible to do without citizenship. After watching the video and hearing about Tiffany and Licia’s experiences, what other things can we add to our list?
How would you feel growing up knowing you would never have access to these things because of your immigration status?

Possible Answers: Angry, sad or depressed, hidden or invisible. I would want to live somewhere else. I would think it’s unfair. I would feel like I couldn’t succeed.

**TAKE A STAND:** (15 minutes – if time allows)
This exercise allows students to critically analyze issues raised in the Alienated documentary. Place five sheets of paper around the room, each with one of the following statements: Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Unsure, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree. Read two or three of the following points to the students and ask students to “take a stand” by the sheet that best reflects their point of view:

1. Young people should be jailed or punished if their parents bring them into the country illegally.

2. There should be laws that make it possible for undocumented youth to become American citizens.

3. American citizens would gladly work for $3 an hour doing tasks like doing take-out delivery or cooking in restaurants.

4. I would rather pay $6 for a glass of orange juice from a farm that employs American citizens only than $2 for orange juice from a farm that hires undocumented workers.

5. People should be shot and killed for trying to illegally cross the U.S. border.

6. I would like the chance to live in another country if it presented better opportunities for myself and my family.

7. American culture needs to be protected from the influence of other cultures.

After each point, ask one or two students who either agreed or disagreed to say why they chose to stand where they did, encouraging debate and allowing students the chance to present persuasive arguments about their choice.
Resources

As a follow-up assignment, you can ask your students to research one of the organizations listed below and write a short paper that includes what these organizations are doing to support undocumented immigrants and what ordinary citizens can do to get more involved.

ORGANIZATIONS & WEBSITES:

American Civil Liberties Union
http://www.aclu.com/immigrants/
The ACLU has been one the nation’s leading advocates for the rights of immigrants, refugees, and non-citizens, challenging unconstitutional laws and practices, as well as countering the myths upon which many of these laws are based.

American Friends Service Committee
http://www.afsc.org/immigrants-rights/
With strong roots in the Quaker tradition of non-violence, the AFSC carries out service, development, social justice, and peace programs throughout the world, including an extensive immigrant rights campaign.

The American Immigration Law Foundation
http://www.ailf.org
The American Immigration Law Foundation (AILF) was established in 1987 as a tax-exempt, not-for-profit educational and charitable organization. The Foundation is dedicated to increasing public understanding of immigration law and policy and the value of immigration to American society; to promoting public service and excellence in the practice of immigration law; and to advocating fundamental fairness and due process under the law for immigrants.

Amnesty International
http://www.amnesty.org
Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for internationally recognized human rights. They have a current campaign on refugees and migrants.
Immigration History Research Center
http://ihrc.umn.edu
The IHRC enriches society by preserving and promoting understanding of the history of the American immigrant experience. In doing so, it acts in partnership with various ethnic communities, historical agencies, educators, among others. It develops and maintains a library and archival collection, provides research assistance, produces publications, and sponsors academic and public programs.

Families For Freedom
http://www.familiesforfreedom.org
Families for Freedom is a New York-based multi-ethnic defense network by and for immigrants facing and fighting deportation. Families seeks to repeal the laws that are tearing apart homes and neighborhoods; and to build the power of immigrant communities – as communities of color – to provide a guiding voice in the growing movement for immigrant rights as human rights.

National Immigration Forum
http://www.immigrationforum.org
The mission of the National Immigration Forum is to embrace and uphold America’s tradition as a nation of immigrants. The Forum advocates and builds support for public policies that welcome immigrants and refugees and are fair and supportive of newcomers to the United States.

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
http://www.nnirr.org
The National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR) is a national organization composed of local coalitions and immigrant, refugee, community, religious, civil rights, and labor organizations and activists. It serves as a forum to share information and analysis, to educate communities and the general public, and to develop and coordinate plans of action on important immigrant and refugee issues. NNIRR has published BRIDGE, a curriculum complete with hand-outs and lesson plans, to educate students on immigration issues.

BOOKS:

Diary of an Undocumented Immigrant
By Ramon Tianguis Perez
Perez, an undocumented worker from a small town in Oaxaca, depicts his life living in the United States in the mid-1980’s and ending with his return to Mexico after the passage of the Simpson-Rodino Immigration Law.
Resources

BOOKS (continued):

**Opposing Viewpoint Series: Immigration**
By Mary E. Williams
The United States is known as a nation of immigrants, but not everyone agrees that continued immigration benefits our country. This anthology’s chapters include sections titled: *Historical debate: Should Immigration Be Restricted?* and *How Should Immigration Policy Be Reformed?*

**Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882**
By Roger Daniels
Farm laborers from Mexico, computer programmers from Taiwan, political refugees from Vietnam—recent immigrants to the U.S. perpetuate a national tradition stretching back to America’s colonial beginnings. In this study, Historian Daniels traces changing attitudes among the American lawmakers who have set the conditions for legal entry into the country. Beginning with his chronicle of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, Daniels probes the politics behind immigration law, offering a context for key issues in the immigration debate in a world divided by international terrorism.

VIDEOS:

**America’s Invisible Backbone**
EVC youth producers explore what the United States would be like without immigrants. They interview politicians, activists, and new Americans about the current debate on immigration reform, and the link between immigration rights and the foundations of American democracy.

**Farmingville**
Directed by Carlos Sandoval and Catherine Tambini
The hate-based attempted murder of two Mexican day laborers catapults the Long Island town of Farmingville into national headlines, unmasking a new frontline of the border wars -- suburbia. Blending the stories of town residents and day laborers, Farmingville reveals the human impact of mismanaged national policies that lead to fear, racism and violence.
**Teens In Between**  
*A MHz NETWORKS original*  
Teens in Between is an 84-minute documentary that follows 5 recent immigrant teens through a year at Annandale High School in Northern Virginia.

**The Empire’s New Clothes*  
*Chris Ho & Greg Shapley & WITNESS*  
New York is one of the fashion capitals of the world, but few people know that up to 75% of the city's garment factories are, in fact, sweatshops. The majority of workers in these sweatshops are immigrants and undocumented workers, who are particularly vulnerable to unfair labor practices, exploitation, and hazardous working conditions.

**Persons of Interest*  
*Alison Maclean and Tobias Perse*  
After the Sept.11 terrorist attacks, more than 5,000 people, mainly non-U.S. nationals of South Asian or Middle Eastern origin, were taken into custody by the U.S. Justice Department and held indefinitely on grounds of national security. Muslim immigrants were subject to arbitrary arrest, secret detention, solitary confinement, and deportation. Many were denied access to legal representation and communication with their families. Following an unconventional format, Persons of Interest presents a series of encounters between former detainees and directors Maclean and Perse in an empty room which serves visually and symbolically as an interrogation room, home, and prison cell.

**Uprooted: Refugees of the Global Economy**  
*Produced By: National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights with Sasha Khokha, Ulla Nilsen, Jon Fromer, and Francisco Herrera*  
UPROOTED is a compelling documentary about how the global economy has forced people to leave their home countries. This 28-minute video presents 3 stories of immigrants who left their homes in Bolivia, Haiti, and the Philippines after global economic powers devastated their countries, only to face new challenges in the United States. These powerful stories raise critical questions about U.S. immigration policy in an era when corporations cross borders at will.


**Available on the EVC website at [http://www.evc.org/screening/cat_civic.html](http://www.evc.org/screening/cat_civic.html) or call 212-465-9366**