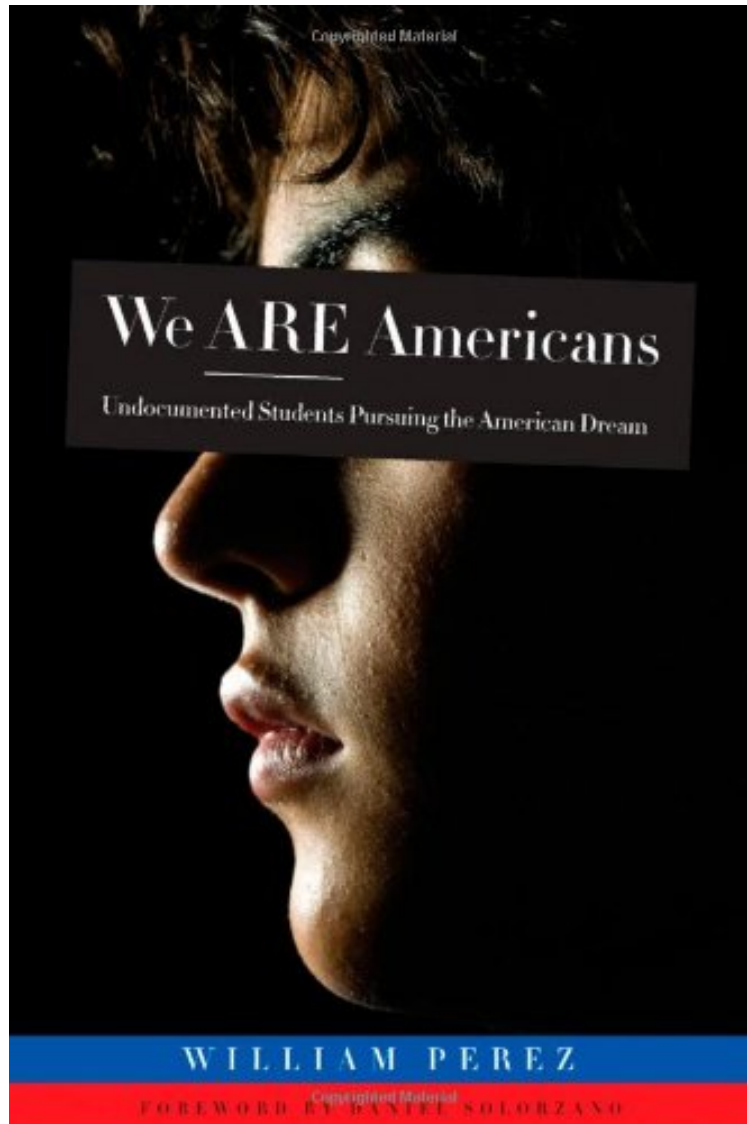


[Ebook pdf] We Are Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream

We Are Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream

William Perez

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William Perez : We Are Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised We Are Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream:

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Heather T Thought provoking. A glimpse into a world I will never fully understand. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *We Are Americans* - Book (purchased at) By Thelma G. Alcala This book gave me an insight as to some very real problems facing the US regarding Education and our future. How can students excel and feel excited about school when they are being refused a "future" in this country. They feel lost and rejected before they even finish school. Our youth seem to be more bitter than previous generations, so add to it this uncertainty and you have the makings of troubled young people instead of happy prosperous individuals and their families. A must read in order to understand the problems facing us and undocumented students.

Winner of the CEP Mildred Garcia Award for Exemplary Scholarship About 2.4 million children and young adults under 24 years of age are undocumented. Brought by their parents to the US as minors many before they had reached their teens they account for about one-sixth of the total undocumented population. Illegal through no fault of their own, some 65,000 undocumented students graduate from the nation's high schools each year. They cannot get a legal job, and face enormous barriers trying to enter college to better themselves and yet America is the only country they know and, for many, English is the only language they speak. What future do they have? Why are we not capitalizing, as a nation, on this pool of talent that has so much to contribute? What should we be doing? Through the inspiring stories of 16 students from seniors in high school to graduate students William Perez gives voice to the estimated 2.4 million undocumented students in the United States, and draws attention to their plight. These stories reveal how despite financial hardship, the unpredictability of living with the daily threat of deportation, restrictions of all sorts, and often in the face of discrimination by their teachers so many are not just persisting in the American educational system, but achieving academically, and moreover often participating in service to their local communities. Perez reveals what drives these young people, and the visions they have for contributing to the country they call home. Through these stories, this book draws attention to these students predicament, to stimulate the debate about putting right a wrong not of their making, and to motivate more people to call for legislation, like the stalled Dream Act, that would offer undocumented students who participate in the economy and civil life a path to citizenship. Perez goes beyond this to discuss the social and policy issues of immigration reform. He dispels myths about illegal immigrants supposed drain on state and federal resources, providing authoritative evidence to the contrary. He cogently makes the case on economic, social, and constitutional and moral grounds for more flexible policies towards undocumented immigrants. If today's immigrants, like those of past generations, are a positive force for our society, how much truer is that where undocumented students are concerned?

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Perez, a developmental psychologist and professor in Southern California, plumbs the stories of students living with the constant threat of deportation for an answer to the question, "What does it mean to be an American?" Raised in this country by parents who gained access illegally, the 16 high school, college and post-graduate students profiled here (standing in for 65,000 nationwide) have each embraced our language, culture and collective dream, but are denied pathways to success. Perez, who has worked at a variety of research institutions, including the RAND Corporation and the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, makes a compelling argument for changing legislation on many fronts, including bottom line economics. Vitaly, he argues, undocumented students are prevented from giving back to the communities that have raised them, thus limiting the country itself. No matter what one's position is on legalizing immigrants, this collection of inspiring, heartbreaking stories puts a number of unforgettable faces to the issue, making it impossible to defend any one side in easy terms or generalities. *We Are Americans* is a great and easy read which makes for a great contribution to the already existing conversation of humane and comprehensive immigration for all. Hopefully we steer this into a more humanitarian approach and less of a political punch line for points." (Immigrant Magazine) "This is a short introduction to undocumented students in the US. Perez records case histories from interviews with undocumented students, who continue to live a precarious future in a country that does not welcome them. These honest, heartrending biographical stories are the bulk of the book. Perez includes questions for discussion to facilitate group study and a brief three-page index. The introduction is informative and provides background on how these students come to live in the US without citizenship; changing demographics, including economic contributions of undocumented immigrants; use of public services; and crime statistics. Perez traces the laws that have affected these students, from *Plyer v Doe* (1982) in Texas to the present. He includes statistics, e.g., "in California about 25,000 undocumented students graduate from high schools each year, yet fewer than 7,000 enroll in community colleges" and fewer still in the state university systems. He briefly gives information about statewide higher education access, in-state tuition legislation, and the DREAM Act that would extend conditional legal status to undocumented youth who meet several criteria. Perez concludes his introduction with rationales for an immigration policy that is in the national self-interest. Summing Up: Recommended" (Choice) "After reading *We ARE Americans*, I realized that keeping a young Latino group in a second-class citizen status may be the new manifest destiny. Hispanics living in the shadows ensure a population at the ready; ready to mow lawns, wash windows and work in restaurant kitchens. Perez stresses that passage of the DREAM Act would grant undocumented students equal access to scholarships and other forms of financial aid. In defense of those brought

here by their parents, he says, 'It's time to do the right thing.' " (Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education)"This book should encourage us to pass new legislation, like the DREAM Act, that would help not just these young people, but our entire nation." (Fellowship Magazine)"In-depth description and numerous quotes from Perez's interviews make this book a useful resource for students and scholars of immigration and education, as well as for general readers looking for first-person stories of immigration." (Library Journal)"This fascinating look at the next generation of undocumented immigrants unpacks the complexities of the debate and puts unforgettable human faces to its subjects. Perez, a developmental psychologist and professor in Southern California, plumbs the stories of students living with the constant threat of deportation for an answer to the question, What does it mean to be an American? Raised in this country by parents who gained access illegally, the 16 high school, college and post-graduate students profiled here (standing in for 65,000 nationwide) have each embraced our language, culture and collective dream, but are denied pathways to success. Perez, who has worked at a variety of research institutions, including the RAND Corporation and the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, makes a compelling argument for changing legislation on many fronts, including bottom line economics. Vitaly, he argues, undocumented students are prevented from giving back to the communities that have raised them, thus limiting the country itself. No matter what one's position is on legalizing immigrants, this collection of inspiring, heartbreaking stories puts a number of unforgettable faces to the issue, making it impossible to defend any one side in easy terms or generalities. (Aug.)" (Publishers Weekly)In the process of describing the lives of undocumented students in the United States who aspire to live the American dream of working hard and going to college, Perez makes the powerful case that our current caste system for persons living without legal status undermines core egalitarian American ideals and violates the essence of our constitution which brings all persons under its mantle." (Mara Blanco, Executive Director, Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Race, Ethnicity and Diversity)"We ARE Americans begins by placing undocumented people at the center of the story and in a much-needed historical and contemporary context. Professor Perez provides the evidence to challenge the notion that undocumented people are drain on social services and makes the argument that they have contributed, and continue to contribute, significantly to our nations economic and social well-being. Starting with Penelope, a highly motivated and tenacious high school senior and ending with Nicole, a newly minted Ph.D., Professor Perez has crafted 20 compelling portraits of resilience and survival in a social and educational world that continuously places barriers in the path of these gifted and talented scholars." (From the Foreword by Daniel Solorzano)"Professor Perez paints a portrait of undocumented students that is as inspiring as it is tragic. We ARE Americans emphasizes the need to rethink current immigration policies to be more inclusive and welcome immigrants as equal citizens who contribute to making America great. (California State Senator Gilbert Cedillo (D-Los Angeles), author of the CA Dream Act)The stories of the undocumented students in this book represent the talented members of society that could potentially be lost if we don't act soon; and force us to rethink our current immigration policies to be more inclusive and welcoming. (Dolores Huerta, Dolores Huerta Foundation, co-founder of United Farm Workers)The voices we hear through the pages of William Perez's book are powerful and compelling; student voices that need to be at the center of our discussions on immigration and, more specifically, on the DREAM Act. We ARE Americans reinforces that education is the surest route to empowerment, and the need for all of us to be working together to ensure that students with so much talent and determination are given the opportunity to contribute fully to this country. (James Montoya, Vice President, The College Board)About the AuthorWilliam Perez is Professor of Education at Claremont Graduate University and an applied developmental psychologist. His research focuses on immigrant adolescent social development. Before joining CGU, he worked at various research institutes including the RAND Corporation, the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute, the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, and the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research.Daniel G. Solorzano is Professor of Social Science Comparative Education, and Director of UC/ACCORD, University of California, Los Angeles.