

"Shut Down ICE!" 30 Arrested in Civil Disobedience at Bloomington Facility



I cropped this picture down to focus on these two. This was the most dramatic picture I had, so I put it at the top.

Section One

There's a signless pinkish building at the corner of American and Metro in Bloomington Minnesota. Like US immigration policy, this building is hidden in plain sight--visible to immigrants and their allies but ignored by the rest of the nation. This is the local Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility, a nondescript place where deportees are held on the last night before they're driven to the airport and sent away. Sometimes they leave behind families and children; sometimes they return to countries they last saw while still too young to remember. One woman left her autistic and medically vulnerable son.

"My father would never get to see me graduate high school," said Nick Espinosa, one of the activists who spoke at today's action in front of the ICE facility. Espinosa's father came to the US at the age of 18. Despite years of ordinary employment and participation in

society, he was taken away by immigration agents in front of his family. ICE "sees immigration as a statistic," said Espinosa. "Immigration has a human face."

"If people don't listen to these words then we must act," Espinosa continued. He would later be arrested during a blockade of the facility.

Headline: Should identify who did what. Should use attention-getting language--"arrested", for example. "Confront", "demand", "celebrate", "occupy", "speak out". We used a short, dramatic quote too, since we had one.

First section: Because we had some good quotes and a dramatic location to describe, we decided to open with those instead of with a summary of the event. This pulls the reader in to the story. I tried to make the ICE facility sound as evil as possible by emphasizing the "last night" before people are deported. I got the information about the woman with the autistic child from a speech at the rally.

Quotes: I took notes during the speeches. When I listen to a speech, I listen for exciting sentence rather than trying to write down everything. It's great to interview people at the rally--especially people who don't get interviewed a lot. But sometimes you need a good quote quickly--I know Nick, so I asked him to talk about the issue. You can even get a quick quote before or after the event.

Format: When you first refer to someone, it's best to identify them by their first and last names, describe them and then use last name, like this: " 'This is really important,' said Activist Impassioned, a speaker at the rally. Impassioned, a long-time member of Group, did Thing at today's action."

Identifying people in print. If someone speaks at an event using their real name, you can assume that you can use their name in the story. If not, you should ask first. Before you start interviewing someone, you can ask if they would like to use their name or be anonymous. If they're anonymous, you can describe them like this: "a participant in the action," "a local woman", "a student", "a striker", etc.

Why would somebody be anonymous? They're at a protest against their employer. They're transgendered but they're not out at work. They're an undocumented immigrant. They've been targeted by the cops. They've been stalked or harassed for personal or political reasons. They're planning on engaging in an illegal action like blockading a road, etc.

Section Two

Immigrant rights activists and allies took action today at ICE headquarters, holding a conference just after 7am to demand that Obama sign an executive order to end all raids and deportations pending the passage of a just immigration reform act. Veronica Mendez described the climate of fear created by immigration raids:

undocumented workers afraid to go to the police when robbed or assaulted, employees unable to fight back against employers who cheat them of wages or create unsafe working conditions, families whose children are citizens but whose parents are deported. "We in Minnesota have our own dark secrets of raids,...the times that in the middle of the night or in a parking lot you are simply rounded up and taken away," said the Reverend Loren McGrail.

This paragraph leads with who/what/where/when/why. The quotes are from speeches at the rally. We violated our own rule and forgot to identify Mendez and McGrail as speakers. We could also have written, for example, "We in Minnesota have our own dark secrets of raids," said the Reverend Loren McGrail, of the Interfaith Immigrants' Rights Coalition." We summarized what Veronica Mendez said, because she gave a very informative talk that had too much information to squeeze into a single quote.

I chose the McGrail quote because she refers to immigrants as "you"--this was a political point that I wanted the article to make; undocumented immigrants are part of our community and I wanted my readers to identify with the experience of being taken away and deported.

Section Three

After the press conference the legal demonstration continued while those who planned to commit civil disobedience moved into place.

About 30 activists were arrested as they blocked the entrances to the Bloomington Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility as a support rally took place nearby. After activists had blocked all four driveways, Bloomington police clad in helmets and carrying extended batons, marking rounds and chemical canisters congregated around the activists at the east side of the facility. As activists from the initial blockade were arrested one by one and loaded onto a city-owned bus, others came from the other blockades to take their place. On the bus activists chanted and rocked vigorously. After the approximately twenty activists were arrested, the full bus was driven to the police station, returning thirty minutes later when the remaining activists were arrested.

As one protestor lay on the ground, detained activists called for medical assistance. Police refused the assistance of one of the activist medics over her protests that she held medical certification. A police paramedic got the protestor up and loaded into a squad car. According to police he was driven to the Bloomington police station for booking. Another arrestee screamed from inside the bus for a

medic to cut the plastic handcuffs off of another arrestee. Jail support is currently taking place.

This section describes the civil disobedience in detail. We took notes about what equipment the police had and we took lots of photos. We chose to describe these things in detail both to build sympathy for the protesters and to show how the state is always ready to use violence when opposed.

Section Four

Update 6:45pm: Four arrestees are still in jail. One arrestee seems to be facing a felony trespassing charge for no clear reason. Two arrestees are vegan and aren't being given vegan food, which means they haven't eaten since before the demonstration very early this morning. The legal collective has requested calls to the jail at 952-563-4900 to demand release and vegan food.

Update 8:08pm: All arrestees out!

We added updates all through the day.

[MN Immigrant Rights Action Coalition](#) | Related: [Photos from May 1 March for Immigrant Rights](#) | [Community Members Call for Protest at ICE HQ](#) | [Statement of Support from OWOWorkday Minnesota: Supreme Court Bans Key Tool in Immigration Raids](#)

We created links to related content on the Indymedia site.

Photos



We chose this photo because it showed the whole group.



This photo documents that speeches were given. I chose this one because it's an action shot and a little unusual--we see one person talking, one looking at notes, etc. I chose this picture partly because it showed a woman speaking and I wanted to show the fact that this group has women in leadership positions.



I liked this sign.



And this sign. But I wish I had been able to take the picture without facing into the sun.

This photo also shows that people marched around! It documents what happened!



Documenting the media is always good for a laugh!



Shows conflict! Also interplay between the casually-dressed protesters in light colors, the cop in a black uniform (when I was little cops wore blue, but I guess it wasn't scary enough) and the neat green lawn.



I was taking lots and lots of photos while this happened, and most of them are blurry or don't show faces. This was the best one. I like that we get a clear view of the arrestee in the middle, nicely contrasted with the cops. Also, that white-haired cop was a real jerk.



If the cops bring batons, make damn sure you show them!



This picture I took mostly because the arrestee got dizzy during the arrest and I wanted to document events if needed for the future. I also took lots of other pictures of this. As it happened, of course, he was completely fine.