“LET’S FUCK SHIT UP!”: INSIDE THE IMMIGRANT YOUTH MOVEMENT IN RURAL WASHINGTON

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Undocumented youth have been at the forefront of immigration reform efforts and have shaped public perception on immigration as well as federal and state policies. This dissertation investigates how the life experiences, namely (im)migration and K-12 schooling experiences, of Latinx undocumented youth shape their higher education attainment and involvement in immigrant youth movements. Drawing from Latino Critical Theory and undocumented intelligence, I shed light on the intricate ways undocumented students’ organizing experiences, while triggered by recent political events, are grounded in previous experience. This project centers the testimonios of seven undocumented youth leaders in the New Latino Diaspora and their efforts to gain basic protections and dignity. The testimonios expand mainstream narratives about undocumented youth and disrupt the DREAMer narrative by providing a nuanced account of undocumented youth leaders and organizers working for immigrant justice in a hostile political climate.