

Ursidae: The Undergraduate Research Journal at the University of Northern Colorado

Volume 8

Number 1 *Research Day 2018 - Undergraduate
Research Excellence Award Winners & Finalists*

Article 20

April 2019

DACAmented: LatinX Youth Immigrant Struggle, Activism Through Images

Nicole Rivera

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Recommended Citation

Rivera, Nicole (2019) "DACAmented: LatinX Youth Immigrant Struggle, Activism Through Images," *Ursidae: The Undergraduate Research Journal at the University of Northern Colorado*: Vol. 8 : No. 1 , Article 20.
Available at: <https://digscholarship.unco.edu/urj/vol8/iss1/20>

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Humanities

Poster

Title: DACAmended: LatinX Youth Immigrant Struggle, Activism through Images

Presenter: Rivera, Nicole

Faculty Sponsor: Alcantar, Jonathan

Abstract:

Many social changes have transpired since Chicana youth walked out of their classrooms during the 1968 grassroots mobilizations demanding equal access to education. Currently, young people continue to lead different social movements around the country, transforming activism and advocating for equality. In this new era of activism, Latinx youth immigrant communities have utilized digital photography and social media networks as platforms to promote changes in immigration policies. More importantly, their activism has brought visibility to the lives of immigrants, especially DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipients. Although previous research has examined the pivotal connection between Latinx youth activism and the visual arts, especially muralism and printmaking, there are not enough studies that explore the impact of digital photography and social networks within Latinx youth immigrant activism. Through this research project, I seek to respond to the following questions: How has Latinx youth immigrant activism in Colorado evolved through history? How have digital photography and social media articulated new spaces of expression and activism for DACAmended youth? I use the term DACAmended to include individuals who are undocumented in the US but are not part of the DACA program; both groups, regardless of their participation in this federal program, still strive to legalize their immigration status and be granted equal rights. To dissect this powerful relationship between digital photography, social networks, and Latinx youth immigrant activism, I use a multidisciplinary approach (humanities and social sciences) to show the trajectory of the Latinx immigrant movement in Colorado and its contemporary form and representation. My objective is to demonstrate not only that Colorado is an immigrant state, but also how Latinx youth immigrants are transforming activism by creating a visual aesthetic for social change. These actions validate their presence and socioeconomic, political, and cultural contributions of their communities to mainstream America.