



# **In the Spirit of a New People: The Cultural Politics of the Chicano Movement (American Literature Initiative)**

*Randy J. Ontiveros*

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Reexamining the Chicano civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, *In the Spirit of a New People* brings to light new insights about social activism in the twentieth-century and new lessons for progressive politics in the twenty-first. Randy J. Ontiveros explores the ways in which Chicano/a artists and activists used fiction, poetry, visual arts, theater, and other expressive forms to forge a common purpose and to challenge inequality in America.

Focusing on cultural politics, Ontiveros reveals neglected stories about the Chicano movement and its impact: how writers used the street press to push back against the network news; how visual artists such as Santa Barraza used painting, installations, and mixed media to challenge racism in mainstream environmentalism; how El Teatro Campesino's innovative "actos," or short skits, sought to embody new, more inclusive forms of citizenship; and how Sandra Cisneros and other Chicana novelists broadened the narrative of the Chicano movement. *In the Spirit of a New People* articulates a fresh understanding of how the Chicano movement contributed to the social and political currents of postwar America, and how the movement remains meaningful today.

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