



Reading Chican@ Like a Queer: The De-Mastery of Desire (Cmas History, Culture, & Society)

Sandra K. Soto

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A race-based oppositional paradigm has informed Chicano studies since its emergence. In this work, Sandra K. Soto replaces that paradigm with a less didactic, more flexible framework geared for a queer analysis of the discursive relationship between racialization and sexuality. Through rereadings of a diverse range of widely discussed writers—from Américo Paredes to Cherríe Moraga—Soto demonstrates that representations of racialization actually depend on the sexual and that a racialized sexuality is a heretofore unrecognized organizing principle of Chican@ literature, even in the most unlikely texts. Soto gives us a broader and deeper engagement with Chican@ representations of racialization, desire, and both inter- and intracultural social relations.

While several scholars have begun to take sexuality seriously by invoking the rich terrain of contemporary Chicana feminist literature for its portrayal of culturally specific and historically laden gender and sexual frameworks, as well as for its imaginative transgressions against them, this is the first study to theorize racialized sexuality as pervasive to and enabling of the canon of Chican@ literature. Exemplifying the broad usefulness of queer theory by extending its critical tools and anti-heteronormative insights to racialization, Soto stages a crucial intervention amid a certain loss of optimism that circulates both as a fear that queer theory was a fad whose time has passed, and that queer theory is incapable of offering an incisive, politically grounded analysis in and of the current historical moment.



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