



# **Mythohistorical Interventions: The Chicano Movement and Its Legacies (Critical American Studies)**

*Lee Bebout*

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*Mythohistorical Interventions* explores how myth and history impacted the social struggle of the Chicano movement and the postmovement years. Drawing on archival materials and political speeches as well as music and protest poetry, Lee Bebout scrutinizes the ideas that emerged from the effort to organize and legitimize the Chicano movement's aims.

Examining the deployment of the Aztec eagle by the United Farm Workers union, the poem *Yo Soy Joaquín*, the document *El Plan de Santa Barbara*, and icons like La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe, Bebout reveals the centrality of culture to the Chicano movement. For Bebout, the active implementation of cultural narrative was strategically significant in several ways. First, it allowed disparate movement participants to imagine themselves as part of a national, and nationalist, community of resistance. Second, Chicano use of these narratives contested the images that fostered Anglo-American hegemony.

Bringing his analysis up to the present, Bebout delineates how demographic changes have, on the one hand, encouraged the possibility of a panethnic Latino community, while, on the other hand, anti-Mexican nativists attempt to resurrect Chicano myths as a foil to restrict immigration from Mexico.



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