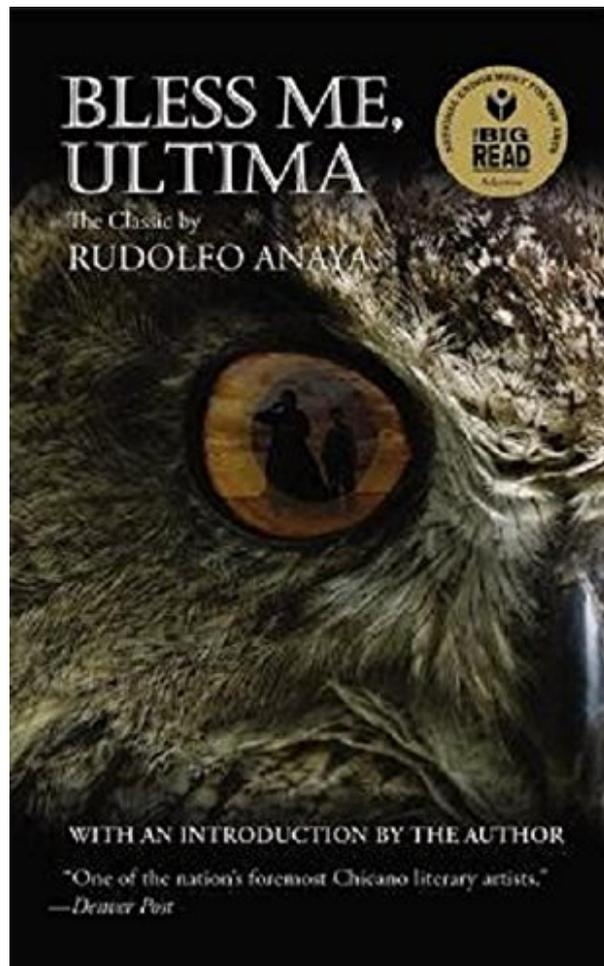
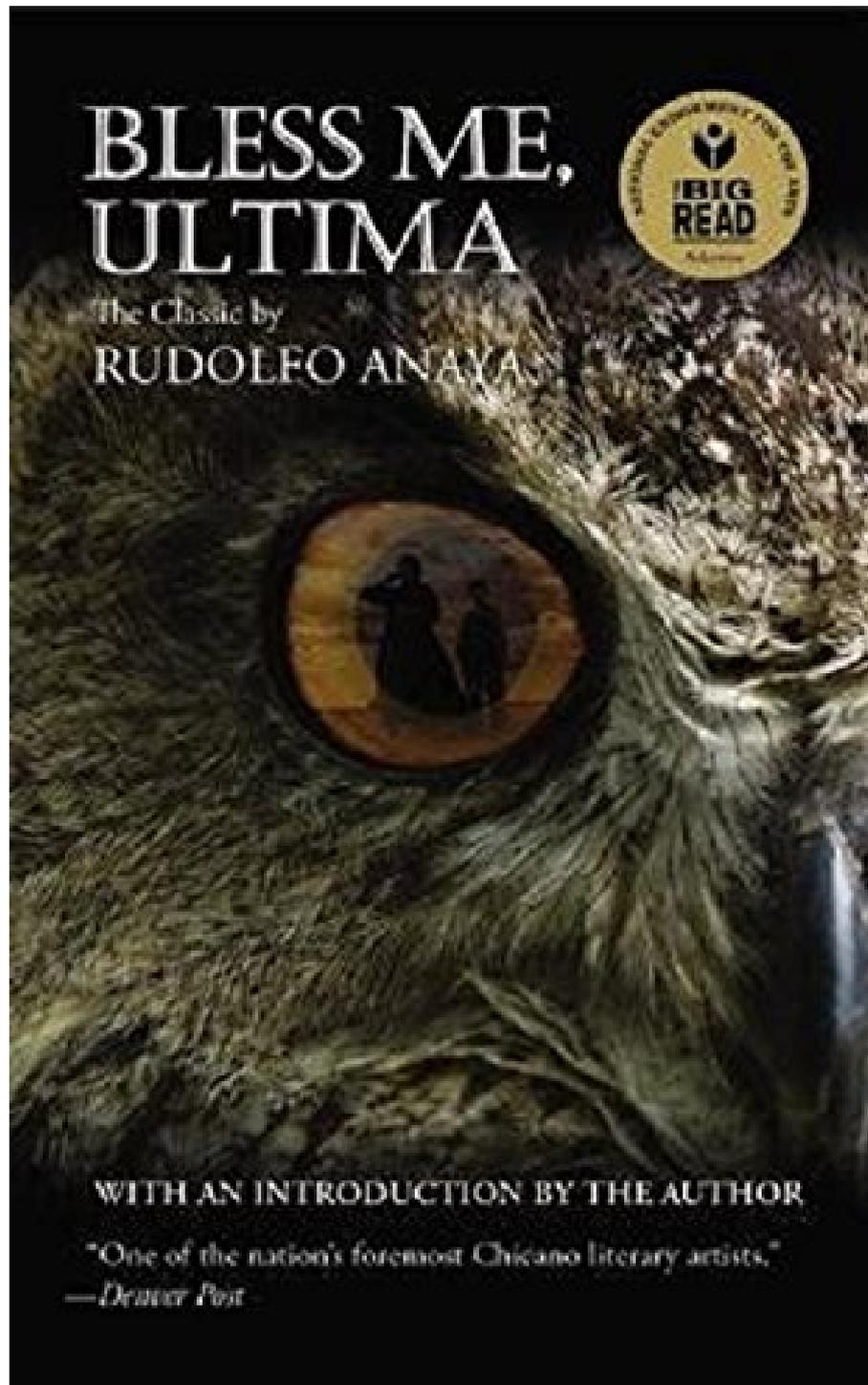


BLESS ME, ULTIMA BY RUDOLFO ANAYA



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From Library Journal

Besides winning the Premio Quinto Sol national Chicano literary award, this novel of a young boy in New Mexico in the 1940s has sold more than 300,000 copies in paperback since its 1973 debut. Here, however, the book gets the hardcover treatment, with a few illustrations added for color. LJ's reviewer asserted that "the novel has warmth and feeling" (LJ 2/1/73) and a place in all fiction collections, especially those serving Chicano populations.

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About the Author

Rudolfo Anaya is professor emeritus of English at the University of New Mexico. He was one of the first winners of the Premio Quinto Sol National Chicano literary award. Winner of the PEN Center USA West Award for Fiction for his novel *Albuquerque*, he is best-loved for his classic bestseller *Bless Me, Ultima*. His other works include *Zia Summer*, *Rio Grande Fall*, *Jalamanta*, *Tortuga*, *Heart of Aztlan*, and *The Anaya Reader*. He has also written numerous short stories, essays, and children's books, including *The Farolitos of Christmas* and *Maya's Children*.

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*Please note: There are two versions of this cover. The content is the same.

Exquisite prose and wondrous storytelling have helped make Rudolfo Anaya the father of Chicano literature in English. Indeed, Anaya's tales fairly shimmer with the haunting beauty and richness of his culture. The winner of the Pen Center West Award for Fiction for his unforgettable novel *Albuquerque*, Anaya is perhaps best loved for his classic bestseller, *Bless Me, Ultima*... Antonio Marez is six years old when *Ultima* comes to stay with his family in New Mexico. She is a curandera, one who cures with herbs and magic. Under her wise wing, Tony will probe the family ties that bind and rend him, and he will discover himself in the magical secrets of the pagan past—a mythic legacy as palpable as the Catholicism of Latin America. And at each life turn there is *Ultima*, who delivered Tony into the world...and will nurture the birth of his soul.

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Most helpful customer reviews

90 of 95 people found the following review helpful.

Book review for "Bless me Ultima"

By Jorge Giraldo

"Bless me Ultima" is a wonderful story based on the "Chicano" or Northern New Mexico native people culture, religion, and customs that tells us about the relationship between a six year old boy called Antonio

and an Old wise Lady called Ultima who is a "curandera" or healer, and how Anotonio faces a lot of difficulties and has to deal with curses, healings, dead people and mean friends and becomes a man of learning throughout his childhood with Ultima's help.

Since the author is from Northern New Mexico and the book takes place in two real small villages called Las Pasturas and Puerto de Lunas wich are located North of New Mexico i think Rodulfo Anaya put a little bit of his life experience into the story to remark the origins of a culture that tends to dissappear as new Chicano generations come to this world which makes the book more exciting and more valuable.

I really enjoyed reading this book because i could follow the story very well considering that english is my second languaje and that i'm still having some problems with grammar and sentence structures and because i like reading mythical stories and i'm very familiar with them. Another aspect of this book that i liked and i found familiar was that New Mexican culture and Colombian and Latin America culture in general have a lot of things in common such as believing in ghosts, witches, curses, spirits, etc; and that the religion is the same and that there are not really too many differences within it.

110 of 119 people found the following review helpful.

A Hispanic boy's coming-of-age story

By Peggy Vincent

Set in NM on the border between a small village and the huge llano (plains), Bless Me, Ultima is Rudolfo Anaya's much acclaimed and award-winning coming-of-age novel from the Hispanic perspective. Antonio is torn betw his father's cowboy side of the family who ride on the llano and his mother's village and farming relations. Many conflicts are presented here: Hispanic vs American culture, Catholicism vs paganism, parents' expectations vs the child's desires, Spanish blood vs native blood.

Antonio's life is forever altered when his aunt Ultima, a curandera (healer) comes to live with the family; she teaches Antonio many things, most importantly how to gather the self-knowledge that will help carry him into adulthood.

60 of 67 people found the following review helpful.

A poignant coming-of-age story....

By Lauren Wu

I have just finished reading Bless Me, Ultima in my English class and I can say that it is a good choice.

The book is about a young Mexican boy, Antonio Marez, growing up in New Mexico during the mid 1940s. It begins when he is six years old, and Ultima, a curandera or healing woman, comes to live with his family because she is getting too old to live by herself. Through Ultima's gentle guidance and support, Antonio faces his uncertainties and learns to go on with life.

Antonio's parents are opposites, his father being a Marez, people of the llano (the desert land in New Mexico), and his mother being a Luna, farmers and people of the moon and the earth. His father wants Antonio to grow up free to roam the land and become a vaquero, as he once was. His mother wants Antonio to be a priest, a man of learning. Antonio is torn between them regarding his future.

Throughout the story, Antonio also faces confusion over religion and spirituality. Ultima believes in God, but she also believes and works magic. But there is no evil in Ultima and Antonio is confused over Catholicism. His mother wants him to become a priest, and though he does believe in God, he wants understanding from Him, answers to his many questions.

From a very young age, Antonio witnesses death. Death of a war-crazed man, Lupito. Death of a good family friend, Narcisco. And finally the unjust death of Ultima, killed by an evil man vowing revenge on Ultima for the death of his two daughters who were brujas (witches).

Through the trials he is faced with and the death of his beloved mentor, Ultima, Antonio learns to go on with life and leave the past behind. He realizes the power of good over evil and understands that truth is more powerful than that which is prescribed by custom.

A lot of what goes through Antonio's mind through the story is similar to the questions I have had through growing up. I can relate to him and to the other characters in the book. And I have learned that mankind is no

different in spite of age, race, religion, culture, and upbringing.

Kudos to Rudolfo Anaya for his first novel that brings Mexican-American culture to the reader and a genuinely poignant "growing up" story that can be read by all ages.

See all 547 customer reviews...

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