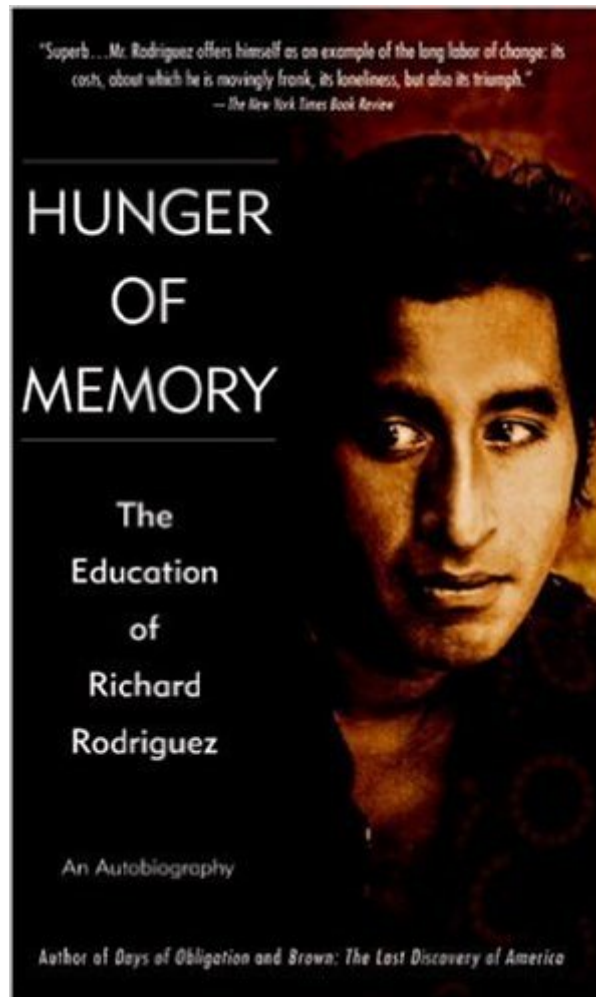


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Hunger Of Memory : The Education Of Richard Rodriguez



Synopsis

Hunger for Memory is the story of Mexican-American Richard Rodriguez, who begins his schooling in Sacramento, California, knowing just 50 words of English, and concludes his university studies in the stately quiet of the reading room of the British Museum. Here is the poignant journey of a "minority student" who pays the cost of his social assimilation and academic success with a painful alienation "from his past, his parents, his culture" and so describes the high price of "making it" in middle-class America. Provocative in its positions on affirmative action and bilingual education, Hunger for Memory is a powerful political statement, a profound study of the importance of language ... and the moving, intimate portrait of a boy struggling to become a man.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this autobiographical work, the author attempts to put forth his views on a number of topics within a personal context. He does this within the framework of his being Mexican-American. His parsing of the effect that education had on his life is both interesting and food for thought. While education provided a means of connecting to the world outside his cultural enclave, it also created a distance between him and his cultural roots. As he assimilated into the larger world outside his immediate cultural milieu, it created a divide between him and his parents. As they remained in their self-contained, unassimilated world, only their mutual love for each other was able to bridge the chasm that education created, for figuratively they no longer spoke the same language. Likewise, the impact and influence that his early Catholic parochial school experience had on him resonated

with me, as I myself was a product of such schooling. His reminiscences brought back many memories for me, most of them positive ones, despite some of the obvious pitfalls inherent in that sometimes narrow, parochial education framework that often favored rote learning over intellectual or critical thinking. Indeed, his love of reading, as is mine, emanated from that early educational experience, which greatly emphasized reading. The impact and influence that Catholicism had on him had are fertile grounds for discussion in the context of liturgical reform and its effects upon community. As a Catholic having lived through the reforms initiated by Vatican II, I understand and appreciate his analysis on the demystification of the liturgy and the loss of the mystical in its transition from Latin into a vernacular language in its celebration of the concept of community.

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